



Symphony Learning
TRUST

Staff Code of Conduct 2018-2019

Adopted by Symphony Learning Trust	Summer 2018
Ratified by Trustees	20 th June 2018
Next Review Due	Summer 2019

A Code of Conduct is designed to give clear guidance on the standards of behaviour all school staff are expected to observe, and each school should notify staff of this code and the expectations upon them. School staff are in a unique position of influence and must adhere to behaviour that sets a good example and acts as a role model to all the pupils within the school.

In conjunction with the Staff Code of Conduct, all staff must also refer to 'Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings' October 2015 from...



<http://www.rrrecruitment.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/Guidance-for-Safer-Working-Practice-October-2015.pdf>

Which is adapted and updated by the Safer Recruitment Consortium from an original IRSC/ DfE document and with thanks to CAPE (Child Protection in Education)

Setting an Example

All staff have a responsibility to maintain public confidence in their ability to safeguard the welfare and best interests of pupils. They should adopt high standards of personal conduct in order to maintain the confidence and respect of their peers, pupils and the public in general. An individual's behaviour, either in or out of the workplace, should not compromise her/his position within the work setting or bring the school or the Trust into disrepute. All staff who work in schools provide a role model for behaviour and conduct which can be copied by pupils. All staff must, therefore, demonstrate high standards of conduct in order to encourage our pupils to do the same.

This Code helps all staff to understand what behaviour is and is not acceptable.

Conduct Outside Work

Staff must not engage in conduct outside work which could seriously damage the reputation and standing of the school, the Trust or the employee's own reputation or the reputation of other members of the school community. In particular, criminal offences that involve violence or possession or use of illegal drugs or sexual misconduct are likely to be regarded as unacceptable. Staff may undertake work outside school, either paid or voluntary, provided that it does not conflict with the interests of the school nor be to a

level which may contravene the working time regulations or affect an individual's work performance.

Staff Dress Code

A person's dress and appearance are matters of personal choice and self-expression. However staff and volunteers should recognise that they are role models to the children and their choice of dress should uphold the school's expectations for the children. Staff and volunteers must ensure they are dressed decently, safely and appropriately for the tasks they undertake. Those who dress or appear in a manner which could be considered as inappropriate could render themselves vulnerable to criticism or allegations of misconduct.

Whilst it is not possible to list every possible clothing option here, it is hoped that staff will support the safer code of professional conduct and will dress in a way that reflects a professional appearance. The wearing of casual items such as jeans, sports clothing, football team clothing or items of clothing that could be deemed by others as too revealing should be avoided. Due to the impressionable nature of young children, the Trust would appreciate that tattoos and other body art is covered up whilst in school. Staff should wear PE clothes and trainers when teaching PE lessons. To be consistent with the expectations for the children, staff should change into these for the morning or afternoon session whenever the lesson is taught and PE clothes should not be worn throughout the day.

Teaching assistants attending to support the learning of pupils in a PE lesson should at a minimum have a change of appropriate shoes.

Confidentiality, Integrity and Security

We expect staff to have an awareness and high regard for the confidential, sensitive and important nature of their role and will be mindful of this at all times including formal and informal discussions with parents, other members of staff, children and the wider school community. **Particular attention should be paid in public areas of the school such as corridors, the playground and the staff room.**

A "needs to know" approach should be adopted to safeguard this principle and to ensure no child or group of children is unfairly stereotyped or unnecessarily spotlighted. Where possible no names should be explicitly mentioned whether for positive, negative or information purposes in public areas, unless it is on a needs to know basis for all present to hear.

Confidential information about pupils must be held securely. Confidential information about pupils must not be held off the school site other than on security protected school equipment.

Sexual Contact with Children and Young People and Abuse of Trust

Any sexual behaviour, whether homosexual or heterosexual, by a member of staff, volunteer or governor with or towards a child or young person is illegal. Children and young people are protected by the same laws as adults in relation to non-consensual sexual behaviour. They are additionally protected by specific legal provisions regardless of whether there is consent or not. All adults working in the school who have contact with pupils are in positions of trust.

The Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act 2000 specifically established a criminal offence of the abuse of trust in relation to teachers and others who are in relationship of trust with 16 - 18 year olds.

There are occasions when adults embark on a course of behaviour known as 'grooming' where the sole purpose is to gain the trust of a child or young person, and manipulate that relationship so that sexual abuse can take place. Staff and volunteers should be aware that conferring special attention without good reason or favouring a pupil has the potential to be construed as being part of a 'grooming' process, which is a criminal offence.

Gifts

Staff need to take care that they do not accept any gift that might be construed by others as a bribe, or lead the giver to expect preferential treatment. There are occasions when pupils or parents wish to pass small tokens of appreciation to staff e.g. at Christmas or as a thank-you and this is acceptable. However, it is unacceptable to receive gifts on a regular basis or of any significant value.

Personal gifts must not be given to pupils. This could be misinterpreted as a gesture either to bribe, or single out the young person. It might be perceived that a 'favour' of some kind is expected in return. Any reward given to a pupil should be consistent with school policy, recorded, and not based on favouritism.

Social Contact and Social Networking

Social networking sites and blogging are extremely popular. Staff must not post material which damages the reputation of the school or which **causes concern about their suitability to work with children and young people**. Those who post material which could be considered as inappropriate could render themselves vulnerable to criticism or allegations of misconduct or disciplinary action.

Staff in school should not establish or seek to establish social contact with pupils for the purpose of securing a friendship or to pursue or strengthen a relationship. This includes social networking and blogging. Even if a pupil seeks to establish social contact, or if this occurs coincidentally, the member of staff should exercise her/his professional judgment in making a response and be aware that such social contact in person, by phone or on the internet could be misconstrued and may place the member of staff in a very vulnerable position.

Staff and volunteers must not give their personal details such as home/mobile phone number; home address or e-mail details to pupils unless the need to do so is agreed with senior management.

Internet Use and Electronic Communication

Each school has a separate policy on internet use, electronic communication and security which forms part of this Code of Conduct.

Under no circumstances should adults in school access inappropriate images. Deliberately accessing pornography on school equipment will be treated as gross misconduct and may be considered a criminal offence. Accessing indecent images of children on the internet, and making, storing or disseminating such material, is illegal and is likely lead to criminal prosecution and may result in barring from work with children and young people. Personal property of a sexually explicit nature such as books, magazines, DVDs or such

material on any electronic media must not be brought into or stored on the school premises.

Physical Contact and Personal Privacy

There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate and proper for staff to have physical contact with pupils, but it is crucial that they only do so in ways appropriate to their professional role. When physical contact is made with pupils this should be in response to their needs at the time, of limited duration and appropriate given their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background. It is not possible to be specific about the appropriateness of each physical contact, since an action that is appropriate with one pupil in one set of circumstances may be inappropriate in another, or with a different pupil.

Physical contact should never be secretive or casual, or for the gratification of the adult, or represent a misuse of authority. If a member of staff or volunteer believes that an action could be misinterpreted, the incident and circumstances should be reported.

Professional Relationships

With pupils:

All pupils have a right to be treated with respect and dignity. Staff and volunteers must not use any form of degrading treatment to punish or undermine a pupil. The use of sarcasm, demeaning or insensitive comments towards pupils is not acceptable in any situation.

When speaking to pupils, we always consider how we would expect to be spoken to ourselves. **Shouting aggressively is not acceptable in any situation.**

With other members of staff:

We act in a professional manner towards colleagues, irrespective of our relative position or status within the school hierarchy, for example:

- Speaking politely to one another;
- Being approachable, friendly and welcoming to other adults in school – both staff members and visitors;
- Being flexible and understanding of unexpected changes within the school day;
- Communicating clearly and honestly;
- Addressing concerns openly and honestly with the person to whom the concern is addressed, whenever possible, without publicly criticising anyone;
- We never act in a way that publicly undermines a colleague
- We all take responsibility for our actions and are prepared to apologise when we have made mistakes and undertake to learn from those errors;
- Not deliberately discriminating or ostracising certain members of staff;
- Avoiding the establishment of 'cliques' within the staff body;
- Supporting the professional development of all colleagues;