

Rollesby Primary School and Nursery Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers

'Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young people in Education Settings' Safer Recruitment Consortium 2015

Adults who work with children must understand that they are in a position of trust. This arises from the nature of their work and the responsibilities related to it. It is crucial that all adults who work with children know what is expected from them in terms of appropriate and safe behaviour. This applies to all adults whether paid or unpaid directly working with children or not. The Government issued the above guidance in 2015 and it is the document which underlies all behaviour in Rollesby Primary School and Nursery. The following 'Code of Conduct' highlights the key areas to which all staff and volunteers must adhere and is a summary of the Government document which should be read in conjunction with it.

The 'Code of Conduct' aims to:

- Raise awareness of illegal, unsafe, unprofessional and unwise behaviour towards children by staff.
- Reduce the risk of allegations being made against staff.
- Provide practical guidance about which behaviours constitute safe practice
- Enable staff to understand their responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils.

Underlying Principles:

Responsibilities

- All staff have a responsibility to keep pupils safe and to protect them from abuse.
- Pupils have a right to be treated with respect and dignity.
- Staff are accountable for their actions. Adults should always consider whether their actions are warranted, proportionate, safe and applied equitably.
- All those working with children in school are in a position of trust in relation to all the pupils on the roll. It is vital that adults in school understand this influence and the responsibility they must exercise as a consequence.
- It is an offence for any person in a position of trust to engage in sexual activity with or in the presence of a child, or to cause or incite a child to engage in or watch sexual activity.
- Staff should always maintain appropriate professional boundaries, avoid behaviour which could be misinterpreted by others and report and record any such incidents.

Confidentiality

- Staff should maintain confidentiality at all times and only share information when legally permissible to do so and in the interest of the child.
- Staff have a responsibility to pass on safeguarding information about a child without delay but only to those with designated safeguarding responsibilities.
- Where disclosures are made of a safeguarding nature to a member of staff, the adult should not promise confidentiality to the child or parent, but should give reassurance that the information will be treated sensitively.
- If a member of staff is unsure whether to share information or keep it confidential, s/he should seek guidance from the Designated Safeguarding Lead

Standards of Behaviour

- All staff have a responsibility to maintain public confidence in their ability to safeguard the welfare and best interests of children. They should adopt high standards of personal conduct in order to maintain confidence and respect of the general public and those with whom they work.
- Staff should be aware that their behaviour, either in or out of the workplace, could compromise their position within the work setting in relation to the protection of children, loss of trust and confidence or bringing the employer into disrepute. This means that staff should be aware that behaviour by themselves, those with whom they share a household or others in their personal lives, may impact on their work with children.

Dress and Appearance

- Staff should ensure they dress decently, safely and appropriately for the tasks they undertake.

Gifts, rewards, favouritism and exclusion

- Be aware of the school's guidance on rewards. Presents should not be bought for individuals or small groups of children, unless part of an agreed reward system. In addition, all forms of favouritism must be avoided including selecting pupils for school teams, specific work tasks etc. Methods of selection and exclusion should always be subject to clear, fair criteria.
- Staff need to take care that they do not accept or give any gift that might be construed as a bribe by others.

Social contact outside of the workplace

- It is acknowledged that staff may have genuine friendships and social contact with parents of pupils, independent of the professional relationship. Staff should however be aware that the boundaries between parents and professionals need to be maintained and they should inform senior management of any relationship with a parent where they may be concerned that this extends beyond the usual parent/professional relationship.

Communication with children (including the use of technology)

- Staff should ensure that they establish safe and responsible online behaviours. This means that adults should: not seek to make contact or respond to contact with pupils outside of the purposes of their work, not give out their personal details, use only equipment and internet services provided by the school, follow the school's Acceptable Use policy and ensure that their own use of technologies could not bring the employer into disrepute.
- Communication with children both in the 'real' world and through web based interactions should take place within explicit professional boundaries. This includes the use of computers, phones, emails, social media, blogs, digital cameras etc.
- Staff should ensure that their communications are open and transparent and avoid any communication which could be interpreted as 'grooming'.
- The use of personal mobile phones in Nursery and in classrooms is prohibited.

Physical contact

- Any physical contact between staff and pupils should only occur when appropriate to the staff member's professional role and in relation to the pupil's individual needs and any agreed care plan.
- Staff should be aware that even well intentioned physical contact may be misconstrued by the pupil, an observer or any person to whom the action is described.
- Any physical contact should be in response to the child's needs at the time, of limited duration and appropriate to their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background. Adults should therefore use professional judgement at all times.
- If a member of staff believes that an action by them or a colleague could be misinterpreted, or if an action is observed which is possibly abusive, the incident and circumstances should be immediately reported to the Headteacher and recorded.
- A general culture of 'safe touch' should be adopted, where appropriate, to the individual requirements of each child.

Other activities that require physical contact

- In certain curriculum areas such as PE, drama or music, staff may need to initiate some physical contact with children, for example, to demonstrate technique in the use of a piece of equipment, adjust posture, or support a child so they can perform an activity safely or prevent injury.
- Such physical contact should only take place when it is necessary in relation to a particular activity and should take place in a safe and open environment. The contact should be undertaken with the permission of the pupil.
- Any incidents of physical contact that cause concern or fall outside these protocols and guidance should be reported to the Headteacher and parent or carer.

Intimate / Personal care

- Staff should adhere to the Intimate care policy which ensures that the health, safety, independence and welfare of children is promoted and their dignity and privacy are respected.
- When helping a child with their personal care, staff should ensure that another appropriate adult is in the vicinity who is aware of the task to be undertaken and that where possible, they are visible and/or audible.
- Pupils are entitled to respect and privacy at all times and especially when in a state of undress, including, for example, when changing and toileting. However, there needs to be an appropriate level of supervision in order to safeguard pupils, satisfy health and safety considerations and ensure that bullying or teasing does not occur. This supervision should be appropriate to the needs and age of the young people concerned and sensitive to the potential for embarrassment.

Behaviour management

- Corporal punishment and smacking is unlawful in all schools and early years settings. This means that staff should not use force as a form of punishment.
- Staff should not use any form of degrading or humiliating treatment to punish a child.
- When pupils display difficult or challenging behaviour, adults should follow the school's behaviour policy using strategies appropriate to the circumstance and situation.

- Staff should always seek to defuse situations and avoid the use of physical intervention where possible.

Sexual conduct

- Any sexual behaviour by a member of staff with or towards a pupil is unacceptable and is an offence.
- Sexual activity involves physical contact including penetrative and non-penetrative acts, however it also includes non-contact activities, such as causing pupils to engage in or watch sexual activity or the production of pornographic material.

One to one situations

- Staff working in one to one situations with pupils can be more vulnerable to allegations or complaints.
- To safeguard both pupils and adults, a risk assessment in relation to the specific nature and implications of one to one work should be undertaken.
- Arranging to meet with pupils from the school or setting away from the work premises should not be permitted unless the necessity for this is clear and approval is gained from the Headteacher, the pupil and their parents / carers.

Home Visits

- All work with pupils and parents should usually be undertaken in the school or setting. However, there are occasions where it is necessary to make regular or one-off home visits.
- A risk assessment should be undertaken prior to any planned home visit. Visits should not be made alone.

Transporting pupils

- In certain situations, staff or volunteers may be required or offer to transport pupils as part of their work. As with any other activity undertaken at work, a risk assessment should be carried out.
- Staff should not offer lifts to pupils unless the need for this has been agreed by the Headteacher.
- Wherever possible and practicable it is advisable that transport is undertaken other than in private vehicles and with at least one adult additional to the driver acting as escort.
- Staff should never offer to transport pupils outside of their normal working duties, other than in an emergency or where not doing so would put the child at risk. In these circumstances, the matter should be recorded and reported to the Headteacher and the child's parents.

Photography, videos and other images

- Staff should take extreme care to ensure that children are not exposed to inappropriate or indecent images.
- Under no circumstances should staff be expected or allowed to use their personal equipment to take images of pupils on behalf of the school.
- Making and using images of pupils requires the consent of their parents / carers. Images should not be displayed on websites, in publications or in a public place without such consent.

- For the protection of children, it is recommended that when using images for publicity purposes that the following guidance should be followed:
 - If the image is used, avoid naming the child or use first names as a minimum.
 - If the child is named, avoid using the image
 - Images should be securely stored and used only by those authorised to do so.

Curriculum

- Many areas of the curriculum can include or raise subject matter which is sexually explicit or of a sensitive nature. Care should be taken to ensure that resource material cannot be misinterpreted. This can be supported by developing ground rules with pupils to ensure sensitive topics can be discussed in a safe learning environment.

Sharing concerns

- Whistleblowing is the mechanism by which staff can voice their concerns, made in good faith, without fear or repercussion. Staff should adhere to the Whistleblowing policy and report any behaviour by colleagues that raises concern.
- All staff should be aware of their establishment's safeguarding procedures and adhere to the policy.

Policy agreed by staffSeptember 2017

Policy due for review....September 2018