



Code of Conduct for Staff

To be read in conjunction with:

Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
Online Safety Policy
Acceptable Use Policy
Staff Dress Code
CAST Disciplinary Policy
Whistleblowing Policy
DfE Teachers' Standards
Staff Handbook
Security Policy
CAST Gifts & Hospitality
CAST Staff Expenses Policy

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR SCHOOL EMPLOYEES

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I declare that I have read and understood the Code of Conduct for School Employees and the associated “Required Reading”.

Name_____ Date_____

Signature_____

(Code of Conduct/schoolemployees/SCU/Nov’16)

1. Introduction

All employees have personal and legal responsibilities, including; treating others with dignity and respect; acting honestly, not undermining fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs, using public funds and school equipment appropriately, adhering to health and safety guidelines and practising equal opportunities at all times. These expectations are set out below and should be fully observed by **all** staff, including the Headteacher and Senior Management Team.

This document is not a prescriptive guide to what employees should and should not do. It highlights the principal areas where employees need to be aware of their responsibilities when working in the school and is a framework for behaviour. Employees should ensure they are familiar with the specific policies that underpin these behaviours through reference to the documents highlighted in the “Required Reading” throughout the Code. If these documents are not supplied at induction, the employee should ask the school for copies.

2. Compliance with the Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct forms part of an employee’s contract. Failure to comply with it and with the associated school policies (“Required Reading”) may result in disciplinary action being taken and the school reserves the right to take legal action against employees where breaches of the Code warrant such action.

3. Professional behaviour and conduct

3.1 Treating other people with dignity and respect

All employees are expected to treat other colleagues, pupils and external contacts, such as parents/carers with dignity and respect.

Staff are required to comply with the school’s equality policies / single equality scheme in respect of colleagues, students and other contacts such as parents. Unacceptable behaviour such as discrimination, bullying, harassment or intimidation will not be tolerated in schools. This includes physical and verbal abuse and use of inappropriate language or unprofessional behaviour with colleagues, pupils and parents.

3.2 Appropriate relationships with children

School employees are expected to act in an open and transparent way that would not lead any reasonable person to suspect their actions or intent. Employees in schools are in a position of trust and have a duty to protect young people from discrimination and harm and to maintain appropriate professional boundaries. It is equally important for staff to avoid behaviour that might be misinterpreted by others in order to protect both young people and themselves. Staff are required to read and understand school policies on child protection.

3.3 Professional behaviour

Employees must not misuse or misrepresent their position, qualifications or experience or bring the reputation of the school into disrepute. Such behaviour may lead to disciplinary action and where relevant, referral to the General Teaching Council. All staff who work in schools set examples of behaviour and conduct which may be used as a model for pupils. Staff should be aware that inappropriate conduct outside of work could seriously damage the reputation and standing of the school within our local community. Therefore, staff must not engage in any activity (including other work) that could impact on their reputation, or that of

the school community. In particular, criminal offences, especially those which involve violence, possession or use of illegal drugs or sexual misconduct are likely to be regarded as unacceptable.

3.4 Criminal actions

School employees must inform the Headteacher (governing Body if the employee is a Headteacher) immediately if they are subject to a criminal conviction, caution, ban, police enquiry, investigation or pending prosecution. The Headteacher or Governing Body will discuss this with the employee in the context of their role and responsibilities in order to help safeguard children and other employees at the school.

3.5 Out of School and After School Activities (and transporting children)

Staff should take particular care when supervising pupils in the less formal atmosphere of a residential setting or after-school activity. The more relaxed relationships that promote successful activities can be misinterpreted by young people. It is important to emphasise that the standards of professional conduct and behaviour expected of staff outside and after school are no different from those which apply within school.

In certain situations staff may agree to transport pupils. Staff should not transport pupils in their own vehicles, or alone, unless this is unavoidable, in which case specific approval from the Safeguarding Lead should be obtained in advance. In all cases where staff transport pupils in their own vehicles staff members must have appropriate motor insurance policy which extends to business cover.

3.5 Required Reading:

- School's Safeguarding policy and procedure / Handbook for staff: Child Protection
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2016)
- Additional guidance/policies provided by the school, in particular Behaviour Policy and positive handling /physical restraint.

4. Declaration of interests

An employee is required to declare this where the group or organisation to which the employee belongs would be considered to be in conflict with the ethos of the school. Membership of a trade union or staff representative group would not need to be declared.

Employees should also consider carefully whether they need to declare to the school their relationship with any individual(s) where this might cause a conflict with school activities. For example, a relationship with a governor, another staff member or a contractor who provides services to the school.

Failure to make a relevant declaration of interests is a very serious breach of trust and therefore if employees are in doubt about a declaration, they are advised to take advice from their school or union.

All declarations, including nil returns, should be submitted in writing to the Headteacher on a school Register of Business Interests.

5. Probity of records and other documents

The deliberate falsification of documents is not acceptable. Where an employee falsifies records or other documents, including those held electronically, this will be regarded as a serious disciplinary matter and potentially a criminal offence.

Where an employee who has claimed any benefit, including housing benefit, either directly or indirectly and has failed to disclose their full earnings, this will be treated as gross misconduct and the employee may be dismissed and referred to the police.

6. Financial inducements

6.1 Financial Regulations for schools

All school employees must comply with the schools and local authority's Financial Regulations. Employees should familiarise themselves with these Regulations: some of the principal employee requirements are summarised below.

Business Contacts

In this section, "*business contact*" refers to any person, body or organisation with which the school is involved on a financial or charitable basis (including contractors; developers; consultants; regional or national charities). This also includes business contacts who are potential suppliers (e.g. they are tendering for future business).

Declaration of gifts

Any gifts that are received should be declared in writing to the Governing Body on the Register of Gifts and Hospitality (Appendix 2) with the exception of those items specifically identified in sections 6.4 and 6.5 below. This document shall remain available for inspection by the authority's Internal Audit department.

6.4 Gifts or hospitality to an employee

Where a business contact offers a personal gift, personal payment or other incentive such as secondary employment to an employee, these should not be accepted and should be returned with a suitable official letter. Such offers should be declared to the Governing Body and recorded in the Register of Gifts and Hospitality.

If it is not possible to return gifts then the employee who deals with that supplier should declare the gift to the Governing Body who will keep a record of it and decide how it is to be used. Such gifts remain the property of the school and should be included in the Register of Gifts and Hospitality.

The only exceptions to these are:

- Low cost, functional items suitable for business use rather than personal use and displaying the supplier's logo e.g. diaries, calendars and pens. These items may be accepted and do not have to be included in the Register of Gifts and Hospitality.
- Gifts offered by parents or students to school staff to express their thanks, such as boxes of chocolates. However, only gifts with an individual value of £25 or less may be accepted. Such gifts do not have to be declared in writing to the Governing Body or be included in the Register of Gifts and Hospitality. For the avoidance of doubt employees must always refuse gifts of money.

Where hospitality in the form of meals and drinks is offered by a business contact, this is only acceptable where it forms part of a normal business meeting (for example, refreshments at training events or meals at evening meetings). Offers of hospitality to specific events, such as dinner or sporting event, should/ only be accepted after authorisation from the Governing Body. These should be approved where there is a clear and demonstrable benefit to the school and the hospitality would not expose the school to criticism that the business contract was exerting undue influence. These should be recorded in the Register of Gifts and Hospitality.

Visits by employees to exhibitions, demonstrations, conferences, business meals and social functions in connection with the school's business and authorised by the school, shall be at the school's expense.

6.5 Gifts or hospitality to the school

Where a business contact sends a gift to the school, (for example, a stationary supplier sending a gift), this should not be accepted and should be returned to the supplier. Such offers should be declared to the Governing Body and recorded in the Register of Gifts and Hospitality.

If it is not possible to return the gift, the employee who usually deals with the supplier should declare the gift to the Governing Body who will keep a record of it and decide how it is to be used. Such gifts remain the property of the school and should be included in the Register of Gifts and Hospitality.

The only exceptions to this are low cost, functional items suitable for business use (as opposed to personal use), such as diaries, calendars or pens, which may be accepted and do not have to be declared on the Register of Business Interests.

6.6 Use of school contacts

Apart from participating in concessionary schemes arranged by trade unions or other such groups for their members, employees shall not use school business contacts for acquiring materials or services at trade / discount prices for non-school activities.

6.7 Required Reading

- Financial Regulations for Schools – (insert school link)

7. Use of school premises and equipment

School equipment and premises are available only for school-related activities and should not be used for fulfilment of another job or post or for excessive or regular personal use, unless authorised in writing and in advance by the Headteacher.

This includes photocopy facilities, stationary, telephones and computers and premises. Any school equipment that is used outside of school premises, for example laptops, should be returned to the school when the employee leaves employment or upon request by the Headteacher.

8. Other employment

Employees are permitted to take up secondary employment outside the school, as long as the activity does not constitute a conflict of interest, adversely affect their primary employment at the school or exceed the legal maximum working week of 48 hours as defined by the Working Time Regulations.

The secondary employment must be undertaken outside the working hours of the employee's normal post and employees are required to keep the Headteacher (governing Body if the employee is the Headteacher) informed of their employment at other organisations.

9. Health and Safety

Employees must adhere to the school's Health and Safety policy, procedure and guidance and must ensure that they take every action to keep themselves and everyone in the school environment safe and well.

This includes taking immediate safety action in a potentially harmful situation (either at school or off-site) by complying with statutory and school guidelines and collaborating with colleagues, agencies and the local authority.

9.1 Required reading:

- School's health and safety Policy (insert school link)

10. Use of alcohol and illegal drugs

The taking of illegal drugs during working hours is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. All employees are expected to attend work without being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs and without their performance being adversely impacted by the consumption of alcohol or illegal drugs.

If alcohol or drug usage impacts on an employee's working life, the school has the right to discuss the matter with the employee and take appropriate action, having considered factors such as the school or local authority's reputation and public confidence.

11. Use of communication systems

The school has the right to monitor emails, phone-calls, internet activity or document production, principally in order to avoid offensive or nuisance material and to protect systems from viruses, but also to ensure proper and effective use of systems by employees.

Employees should be aware that the school has a right to access employees' personal email and computer files if required for investigation of misuse.

It is recommended that employees do not use school systems (phone, email, and computers) for personal use. Inappropriate usage, which includes excessive or regular use may result in disciplinary action for the employee and in serious cases could lead to an employee's dismissal.

Inappropriate use of email and internet systems also includes viewing, publication or circulation of illegal or offensive material, viewing, publication or circulation of junk mail, including chain letters, jokes or large attachments, gambling, gaming; these will be treated as disciplinary matters.

Passwords should not be shared and access to computer systems must be kept confidential. Breach of this confidentiality may be subject to disciplinary action.

Employees who receive inappropriate communications should inform their Headteacher or Senior Manager immediately.

12. Confidentiality

All employees at the school and the Governing Body come into contact with a significant volume of data and information in relation to pupils, staff, school activities and many other matters. There is an obligation to read and observe the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998.

12.1 Managing data

Under the Data Protection Act, staff are required to collect, maintain and dispose of sensitive or personal data in a responsible manner.

12.2 Confidentiality and Disclosing data

Staff should not disclose sensitive information about the school, its employees or the local authority to other parties, for example, parents, colleagues or internet bloggers. There are particular exceptions to this; for example disclosure of suspected or alleged abuse of a pupil to Child Protection officers; discussion with a person accompanying or representing an employee in a formal meeting or disclosure under the Whistle blowing procedure. All communication with the media must be directed through the Headteacher or their nominee.

There are circumstances in which staff are obliged to release pupil data, for example, parents seeking information about pupil progress or other colleagues in the school.

Staff should be aware that, from time to time, information about employees' salaries is matched with other public sector information (for example housing benefits) in order to prevent fraudulent claims.

12.3 Access to data

Everyone has the right to request access to data that is held about them and such requests should be made to the Headteacher who will address the request in conjunction with the Local Authority's Data Protection Officer.

12.4 Required Reading:

- Data Protection Guide – (insert where available)

13. Copyright

Copyright legislation should be displayed next to photocopier machines and employees are required to adhere to the guidance provided about use of educational resources.

13.1 Required reading:

- Copyright notices in school

14. Technology and Social Media

All staff should ensure that all communications are transparent and open to scrutiny. Staff should be circumspect in their communications with pupils so as to avoid any possible misinterpretation of their motives or any behaviour that could be construed as grooming.

Staff should not be friends with current or recent pupils on Facebook and should avoid other similar links on other social networking sites. Any friend requests from pupils should be declined and staff Facebook pages should have the highest privacy settings. Any pupils with

whom a relationship already exists (family member etc.) should be declared using the annual return for the E-Safety Policy. Any email, messaging, or use of Social Media sites between staff and pupils outside of these protocols may lead to disciplinary and/or criminal investigations.

Staff must not publish any content in the public domain that is detrimental to the teachings of the Catholic Church, the school's ethos or is considered to damage the reputation of the school or Plymouth CAST. This includes social media or discussions with the press or media.

Staff are allowed to take digital/video images to support educational aims, but must follow school policies concerning the sharing, distribution and publication of those images. Such images should not be taken on staff member's personal mobile phones and staff mobile phones should not be used during lessons.