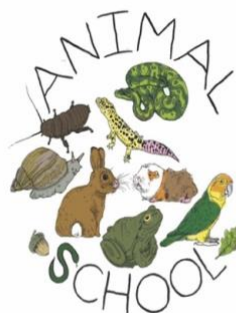


Code of Conduct for All Staff



1. Purpose of This Code

This Code of Conduct outlines the expected standards of behaviour for all staff, volunteers, and visitors working at Animal School. It ensures we create and maintain a safe, respectful, and therapeutic environment for our **students, animals, and team**.

Everyone working here is expected to act with integrity, professionalism, and kindness — upholding our values of **compassion, inclusion, and respect** in everything we do.

2. Key Principles

At our centre, we are committed to:

- **Protecting children and vulnerable people**
- **Treating animals with care and respect**
- **Working as positive role models**
- **Upholding confidentiality and trust**
- **Maintaining safe and professional relationships**
- **Promoting a calm and supportive environment**

3. Professional Behaviour and Communication

All staff and volunteers must:

- Be **punctual, reliable**, and **appropriately dressed** (including suitable footwear for the environment)
- Use **calm, respectful language** at all times
- Avoid shouting, sarcasm, or humiliating language
- Maintain **professional boundaries** with students and families
- Avoid any behaviour that could be misinterpreted as overly familiar, suggestive, or inappropriate

Personal phones must be used only during breaks and **never in front of students or animals** unless authorised or for emergency use.

4. Conduct with Students

Staff and volunteers must:

- Always **act in the best interests** of the student
- Treat students with **respect and dignity**, even during moments of crisis or challenge

- Never initiate or accept **personal relationships** or social media connections with students
 - Maintain **clear physical boundaries** — no inappropriate contact or private communication
 - Support students **calmly and non-punitively** when dysregulated
 - Be aware of and responsive to signs of trauma, distress, or safeguarding concern
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5. Safeguarding and Child Protection

All staff and volunteers must:

- **Know and follow** the centre's Safeguarding Policy
- **Report any concerns** immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- Record concerns **factually and confidentially**
- Never promise to keep secrets for a student
- Never engage in, or ignore, behaviour that could be harmful, abusive, or unsafe

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

6. Behaviour and Relationships with Colleagues

All team members must:

- Foster a **positive, collaborative working environment**
 - **Respect diversity** and avoid any form of bullying, gossip, or discrimination
 - Handle disagreements **professionally and discreetly**
 - Maintain confidentiality about students, staff, or incidents
 - Disclose any **conflicts of interest or personal relationships** that may affect professional conduct
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7. Respect for the Animals

Working with animals is a privilege and a responsibility. All staff and volunteers must:

- Treat all animals with **kindness, patience, and care**
- Follow agreed **handling and welfare protocols**
- Never shout at, hit, or force animals into distress
- Understand and recognise **animal stress behaviours**
- Supervise students carefully when they are with animals
- Prioritise **both student safety and animal wellbeing** in every activity

Feeding, cleaning, and animal interaction protocols must be followed exactly to prevent harm or stress.

8. Health, Safety, and Risk Awareness

All staff and volunteers are expected to:

- Be aware of **fire, medical, and emergency procedures**
 - Keep **walkways and exits clear**
 - Report any hazards, injuries, or unsafe behaviour immediately
 - Support students with **calm evacuation** during fire drills and during emergencies if needed
 - Follow hygiene protocols, especially around animal areas and their food
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9. Use of Social Media and Confidentiality

Staff must not:

- Share **photos or names** of students or the setting on personal accounts
- Discuss students, families, or incidents publicly or on social media
- Speak to the press or post about the centre without approval

Confidentiality extends to **students' backgrounds, behaviours, and medical needs**. Information must only be shared **on a need-to-know basis** and with appropriate consent.

10. Breaches of the Code

Breaches of this Code of Conduct will be taken seriously and may result in:

- **Verbal or written warnings**
- **Suspension or termination** of employment or voluntary placement
- **Safeguarding referrals** to the Local Authority or DBS where appropriate

We recognise that mistakes happen — early disclosure and willingness to reflect are key to a supportive response.

11. Declaration

All staff and volunteers are required to **read, sign, and agree** to this Code of Conduct before working with students or animals at the centre.

Date:

Name:

Signed: