

Staff Code of Conduct

Model Policy for Schools and Academies

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Exeter Nursery Schools Federation in December 2022

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Introduction

This Code of Conduct is designed to give clear guidance on the standards of behaviour which are to be observed in Chestnut and West Exe Nursery Schools (Exeter Nursery Schools Federation) and what behaviour is and is not acceptable.

Every person working in our Federation is a role model and in a position of influence and must demonstrate behaviour that sets a good example to all those who come into contact with our Schools, especially the children who attend the school. As a member of a school community, everybody has an individual responsibility to maintain their own reputation and the reputation of the school, whether inside or outside working hours.

The Governing Body of Exeter Nursery Schools Federation is committed to creating and maintaining an environment in which all those working in, or coming into contact with the Schools are treated fairly, with dignity and respect and where unacceptable behaviour will not be tolerated.

This Code of Conduct applies to all employees. Casual and self-employed workers, agency staff and volunteers working in the schools are also expected to observe the standards of behaviour set out in this document. For the purpose of this policy, the term 'you' is used to apply to all of these groups.

In addition to this Code of Conduct, all teaching staff have an obligation to adhere to the 'Teachers' Standards' and particularly in relation to this policy, Part 2 of the Teachers' Standards - Personal and Professional Conduct.

This policy is provided following consultation with trade unions/professional associations.

1. Compliance

All employees should confirm that they have read, understood and agree to comply with this Code of Conduct at Induction and any subsequent updates

2. Disciplinary Action

Failure to follow the code of conduct may result in further action being taken, as set out in the Disciplinary Policy.

3. Conduct Outside of Work

- 3.1 Criminal offences of any sort, particularly those that involve violence or possession or use of illegal drugs or sexual misconduct, may be regarded as unacceptable and dealt with under the school's Disciplinary Policy.
- 3.2 Behaviour or activities that have the potential to make you unsuitable for the role you perform at the school will be dealt with under the Disciplinary Policy.
- 3.3 You should not engage in conduct outside work which could damage the reputation and standing of the school, your own reputation or the reputation of other members of the school community.

4. Setting an Example

- 4.1 You should set good examples of behaviour and demonstrate high standards of conduct in order to encourage our pupils to do the same. A non-exhaustive example set of standards can be found in Appendix 1.
- 4.2 It is unlawful to discriminate, harass or victimise someone because they have or are perceived to have a protected characteristic as defined by the Equality Act 2010 or are associated with someone who has a protected characteristic. Protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.
- 4.3 You should not use inappropriate, foul or offensive language to, or in front of, any member of the school community, which includes but is not limited to, children, parents/carers, colleagues, governors, visitors to the school.
- 4.4 You should not put yourself at risk of allegations of abusive or unprofessional conduct.

5. Safeguarding Pupils

- 5.1 You have a duty to safeguard pupils from physical, sexual, emotional and/or verbal abuse and neglect. This includes a duty to report concerns about a child or colleague to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for Child Protection.

You must:

- 5.2 Make yourself aware of who the school's current DSL is. This information is available in Reception and on the website
- 5.3 Take reasonable care of pupils under your supervision with the aim of ensuring their safety and welfare.
- 5.4 Read and become familiar with the school's **Safeguarding Policy** and Whistleblowing Policy.
- 5.5 Read and become familiar with the DfE Statutory Guidance Document 'Keeping children safe in Education'.

You must not:

- 5.6 Promise a child that you will not act on information that you are told by them.
- 5.7 If given information by a parent/carer or other person which would reasonably cause concern for a child's safety or wellbeing, agree to keep that information confidential. In these circumstances, you must advise the person that you may be obliged to report what they are telling you.

6. Familial / Social Relationships with Pupils

- 6.1 You should declare any familial or social relationship that you may have with pupils outside of school. This may include mutual membership of social groups, tutoring, or family/friendship connections. You should not assume that the school is aware of any such connections. A declaration form is available at Appendix 2 of this document for declaration of such relationships. Where you have such connections with a child, you must maintain your professionalism during any contact and not act in any way which may bring yourself or the school into disrepute.
- 6.2 Be aware that physical relationships with pupils, regardless of their age, are strictly forbidden and may lead to a criminal conviction. This may also apply to former pupils and advice must be sought before commencing any such relationship.
- 6.3 You should not behave in a way that may be perceived as sarcastic, nor should you make jokes at the expense of children, embarrass or humiliate children, discriminate against or favour children.

7. Professional Relationships with Colleagues

- 7.1 You must strive to create a positive working environment and behave in a manner which ensures and promotes acceptable behaviour. Examples of acceptable behaviour and unacceptable behaviour can be found in Appendix 1.
- 7.2 You should promote harmonious and professional relationships with all colleagues. It is understood that, at times, differences of opinions can occur and at such times it is expected that you will attempt to resolve matters informally in the first instance unless you feel unable to do so in which case you should refer the matter to your manager.

8. Honesty and Integrity

- 8.1 Without fear of recrimination, you can report any impropriety or breach of procedures using the process laid out within the Whistleblowing Policy.
- 8.2 Maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in your work. This includes the handling and claiming of money and the use of school property and facilities.
- 8.3 You may be guilty of an offence of bribery under the Bribery Act 2010 if you offer, promise or give financial advantage or other advantage to someone; or if you request, agree or accept, or receive a bribe from another person. If you believe that a person has failed to comply with the Bribery Act, you should refer your concerns to the attention of the Head / Chair of Governors.
- 8.4 Make known to the Head / Governing Body all financial and non-financial interests that could bring you into conflict with the school's interests.
- 8.5 Make any personal relationships with contractors, or potential contractors known to the Head / Governing Body.
- 8.6 Do not accept gifts or hospitality from suppliers or associates of the school, with the exception of 'one off' token gifts from parents or at times such as Christmas or end of the school year. Personal gifts from any member of staff to pupils are

potentially inappropriate and could be misinterpreted and may lead to disciplinary action. Any intention to provide gifts to pupils must be authorised by a senior leader. A record will be kept of all gifts received.

- 8.7 You should advise the **Head/Chair of Governors** if you have a personal relationship with someone applying to work at the school, so that you are not involved in that recruitment process..

9. Additional Employment Outside of School

- 9.1 You may undertake work outside school, either paid or voluntary, provided that it does not conflict with the interests of the school and/or is not to a level which may contravene the working time regulations or affect your work performance in the school. You must seek the consent of the **Head / Governing Body** should you wish to take up other employment outside the school. This includes tutoring work.

10. ICT Use

- 10.1 Exercise caution when using information technology and be aware of the risks to yourself and others. Regard should be given to the school's **ICT Policy** at all times both inside and outside of work.
- 10.2 Only take photographs / still images or video footage of children using approved school equipment, for purposes authorised by the school and where parental consent has been given. The resultant files from such recording or taking of photographs must be stored in accordance with the school's procedures on school equipment.
- 10.3 You must not use school equipment to access or save any inappropriate material, including but not limited to pornographic, sexual or sexually explicit material.
- 10.4 Do not share your personal IT equipment, for example smartphone, iPad/tablet with a child unless with prior permission of the Head and/or where this is agreed as part of lesson planning or educational provision.
- 10.5 Do not access any personal material stored on your computer, smartphone, tablet in the presence of children.

11. Social Media

- 11.1 Be aware that anything you post online, either at work or outside of work, may be shared and/or viewed by those outside of your control and can potentially affect your reputation and/or the reputation of the school and is ultimately your responsibility.
- 11.2 You should exercise caution in your use of social media and/or any other web-based presence that you may have, your language and conduct on such sites, including written content, videos or photographs, and views expressed either directly or by 'liking' certain pages or posts established by others.

- 11.3 You should report to the Head if you have any concerns in regard to social media, either via contact you have received, or material you have seen or been party to.
- 11.4 As a member of the school and wider education community, you should exercise caution in posting comments about or relating to other schools and/or persons connected to other schools.
- 11.5 Only contact parents via school authorised mechanisms. At no time should personal telephone numbers, email addresses or communication routes via personal accounts on social media platforms be used to communicate with parents.
- 11.6 Do not engage in any inappropriate use of social media sites which may bring yourself, the school, or the school community into disrepute. To this end, you should ensure that you adopt suitably high security settings on any personal profiles you may have.
- 11.7 Do not 'befriend' or accept 'friend requests' or invitations to 'like' or comment on pages or similar, from children or parents/carers of the school, other than in exceptional circumstances for staff who may have family members who are pupils or where there is a genuine relationship, such as family and/or close family friends.
- 11.8 It is not advisable to identify yourself as an employee of the school on any social network other than with prior permission of the Headteacher.
- 11.9 You should not respond to comments posted about the school or any persons connected to the school on any social media or online platform. In these circumstances you should bring such comments to the attention of the Head.

12. Confidentiality

- 12.1 It is contrary to the General Data Protection Regulations to reveal confidential information about children or their parents/carers except to colleagues who have a professional role in relation to the pupil.
- 12.2 You should not discuss any action or incident which you have witnessed during the course of your duties, and which needs to remain confidential, with parent/carers or members of the community outside of school, for example a child behaviour incident. In these circumstances, disclosure to colleagues should be where you have authorisation to do so and on a 'need to know' basis.
- 12.3 If you are in any doubt as to whether to share information you have become aware of, you must consult the **Head**.

13. Dress and Appearance

- 13.1 You must dress in a manner that is appropriate to a professional role, and which, promotes a professional image. Clothing with political or other contentious or offensive slogans is not permitted.

Appendix 1

Examples of Acceptable Behaviour

People behave acceptably when they:

- Afford dignity, trust and respect for everyone and themselves;
- Have awareness of the effects of their behaviour on others and only make reasonable and manageable demands;
- Communicate honestly and openly, clearly stating what they need and expect of others;
- Provide and are receptive to honest feedback based on evidence; and
- Challenge discriminatory language and behaviour in an appropriate way.

Examples of Unacceptable Behaviour:

- Using aggressive language, threatening, ridiculing, ignoring people or repeatedly shouting;
- Telephoning people at home unnecessarily (for example, demanding work when the person is absent due to sickness or ill health);
- Focusing only on weaknesses;
- Bringing up details of someone's private life inappropriately;
- Leaving impossibly long lists of tasks and making unreasonable demands;
- Criticising people or maliciously gossiping about them in their absence;
- Ridiculing or demeaning someone – picking on them or setting them up to fail;
- Comments or jokes, about distinctive peoples and nationalities;
- Frequent comments about aspects of physical appearance or using forms of address that are demeaning;
- Threatening or implying, without reason, that, as a colleague, you will cause the person to lose his/her job or fail to get a promotion or suffer some other form of career difficulty or financial disadvantage;
- Coercing someone to join the harassment/bullying of another person;
- Excluding or marginalising someone or refusing to engage with them appropriately.

This list is not exhaustive. It is simply a guide to help individuals consider their own and others behaviour and gain understanding of what behaviours are unacceptable in the workplace.

Standards Expected of Employees

The standards expected of all employees include but are not limited to:

- Maintaining standards of behaviour in keeping with the interests and standing of the school. This includes behaviour outside of working hours and in any form that is visible to the public, including social networking or any other electronic medium
- Devoting full attention while at work to the duties of their position and in doing so acting with responsibility, good judgement and in good faith
- Carrying out any reasonable instructions given by those with authority to do so
- Not divulging to any unauthorised person or making personal use of confidential information connected with the school, either intentionally or through negligent behaviour

- Observing the rules, regulations and instructions adopted by the school
- Following appropriate safeguarding procedures
- Participating fully in any investigation into alleged incidents and/or allegations including attending meetings as directed
- Using electronic communications appropriately
- Ensuring that information brought to light as a result of any investigation is treated with discretion
- Carrying out their role consistently with any standards set by their appropriate professional body
- Taking steps to address any unacceptable behaviour
- Treating colleagues and third parties with dignity and respect.

In addition to the above, the expectations of those employed in management roles are to:

- Ensure the standards expected from all employees are role-modelled, monitored and managed effectively
- Effectively manage all applicable statutory and non-statutory obligations
- Appropriately manage all alleged incidents and/or allegations.

This list is not exhaustive.

Appendix 2

Relationships with children outside of work declaration

It is recognised that there may be circumstances whereby members of staff are known to children outside of work. Examples include membership of sports clubs, family connections, or private tutoring.

You must declare any relationship outside of school that you have with children.

You are not required to declare that you know children through either living in the same area as the school or where your own child(ren) attends the school and is in a friendship group with particular children although you should make the Head aware of this informally.

Employee's Name	Child Name	Relationship

I can confirm that I am fully aware of the code of conduct relating to contact out of school with children in line with this policy.

If I am tutoring a child outside of school I am aware that the following must be adhered to:-

- I do not, at any point, teach the child in question as part of my daily timetable - this is a stipulation of such tutoring
- I emphasise to parents that this is done completely independently of the school
- No monies come through the school at any point, informally (e.g. via the child) or formally
- No private tutoring is to take place on the school premises

I confirm that if these circumstances change at any time I will complete a new form to ensure the school are aware of any relationships.

Signed

Date

Once completed, signed and dated, please return this form to the Head

