

Charlwood Village Primary School

Code of Conduct for Staff

Review Date: Autumn Term 2023

Next Review Date: Autumn Term 2024

Personal Conduct

The School expects all employees to promote and maintain high standards of personal conduct to sustain the good reputation of the School and the local authority.

- Employees must perform their duties to the highest possible standards, with honesty, integrity and impartiality and be accountable for their own actions.
- Employees have a duty of trust in relation to the School, the Council, pupils, parents and the local community.
- Employees are expected to treat others with respect, fairness and dignity at all times.
- Employees have a collective responsibility to communicate to the appropriate manager any relevant concerns they may have about the quality of provision, as this will help the leadership team to ensure that standards are achieved and areas for improvement identified.

In addition to this code of conduct, teachers are also expected to meet the standards outlined in the Teachers' Standards published by the Teaching Agency ('Personal and Professional Conduct').

Compliance with School Instructions

The School expects all employees to comply with lawful written and oral instruction unless to do so would result in a health and safety risk.

Disclosure of Information

All employees should develop a clear understanding about what information can be disclosed to the Council, auditors, government departments, parents, pupils and the wider public, and what information should remain confidential. Any information made available should be provided in a clear and concise way. Employees should seek the advice of their line manager if they are at all unsure of the level of confidentiality which is required.

Employees should not use any information gained in the course of their employment for personal gain, or pass it on to others who might use it in such a way. Information concerning another person's personal affairs should not be divulged without prior approval, except where that disclosure is required or sanctioned by law.

Declaration of Personal Interests and Outside Commitments

Employees are responsible for ensuring that their private interests or beliefs do not conflict with their professional duties.

All employees should declare any non-financial or financial interest which might conflict with the ethos or work of the School or local authority.

Declarations should be made via the School Business Manager who should ensure that a written record is made in accordance with the School's procedure. Declarations must extend to acknowledging the involvement of a relative or partner of an employee in an organisation with which the School does business (or seeks to do business), particularly if they are directors, partners or hold senior managerial positions in those organisations.

Where employees are in any doubt about whether any personal relationships, interests, or outside commitments should be declared in particular circumstances, they should either declare the information in any case, or else seek further advice from the Bursar.

Appearance and Dress

All members of staff are expected to ensure that they are dressed appropriately and safely for the work they are engaged to undertake and for the environment in which they are working.

Drugs and Alcohol

Employees must never arrive at work under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Drinking alcohol or taking drugs (apart from appropriately prescribed medication or over-the-counter remedies) at work or during breaks is also strictly prohibited. The consumption of alcohol at staff events or meetings is subject to the authorisation of the headteacher.

Working Relationships

Internal and external working relationships are formed on a daily basis with colleagues, pupils, parents and contractors. These should be conducted in a professional, friendly and respectful manner.

Political Neutrality

Employees should ensure that their own personal or political opinions do not interfere with any policy of the School or local authority.

Appointment of Staff

Employees should not be involved in a staffing appointment, or in any decision relating to the discipline, promotion or pay or conditions of another employee (or prospective employee) to whom they are related or have a close personal relationship.

Equality Issues

All employees and members of the local community have a right to be treated with fairness and equality. Employees must ensure that they comply at all times with the School's equality policy and other employment policies in relation to equality issues.

The bullying or harassment of other work colleagues, pupils or other members of the community is considered to be gross misconduct. Employees are expected to report any concerns or suspicions they may have about the treatment of others to their line manager or the headteacher.

Contractors and Competitive Tendering

Contractors may include individuals who are temporarily working alongside School staff, or employees of an external firm that has been awarded a contract to provide services. All contractors should be treated with courtesy and respect.

Any orders and contracts must be awarded by fair and open competition against other tenders. No special favour must be shown to current or recent former employees or associates in awarding contracts.

Employees must declare any relationship with a particular contractor, or any potential contractors, to the appropriate manager.

Employees should be clear on the separation of client and contractor roles. Senior employees who have both a client/contractor responsibility must be aware of the need for accountability and openness.

Employees privy to confidential information on tenders of costs relating to contractors should not disclose the information to any unauthorised party or organisation.

Use of the School's Materials, Property or Resources

Employees must ensure that public funds entrusted to them are used in a responsible and lawful manner. Employees should not make personal use of any School property, facilities, equipment, materials, vehicles or resources unless properly authorised to do so.

Hospitality and Acceptance of Gifts

All School staff and those working on behalf of the School are expected to refuse the offer of inappropriate and disproportionate hospitality and gifts made as part of the discharge of their duties unless there are compelling reasons or exceptional circumstances for doing so. The acceptance of gifts and hospitality must be treated with extreme caution and may be regarded as a breach of the code of conduct. The onus is on the individual to take responsibility for making informed judgements about any and all offers of gifts and hospitality made to them. As to what is "inappropriate and disproportionate", something like a small token to a teacher, a small bouquet of flowers sent in thanks or a small buffet lunch to facilitate networking, would not seem unreasonable whereas tickets to football matches or the opera have a value to them which could have the potential to be interpreted as recompense, inducement or endorsement.

Gifts or hospitality must not be accepted where it might be perceived to influence a decision in respect of purchasing goods or services, awarding contracts, or in the discharge of any other aspect of the School's day to day business. It is your responsibility to refuse such offers and to report any possible conflict of interest and any cases where you believe that the School may be compromised.

It is a criminal offence for employees or those working on behalf of the School to corruptly receive any gift, loan, fee, reward or advantage for doing, or not doing anything, or showing favour, or disfavour, to any person in their official capacity.

In no circumstances should a statement ever be made in return for a personal gift or money.

It is expressly prohibited for an employee to accept any gift or hospitality from an organisation if he/she is actively involved in a tender process with the organisation on behalf of the School. This prohibition commences at the point that an invitation to tender is published and extends to a period of three months after a contract has been awarded.

For reasons of probity and transparency, the principle of receipt of gifts or hospitality extends to the spouse, partner or immediate family of the employee.

If you have any doubt about such an offer of a gift or hospitality you are responsible for notifying and discussing this with your immediate manager.

Whistle Blowing

If an employee becomes aware of activities which he/she believes to be illegal, improper, unethical or otherwise inconsistent with this code of conduct, the employee should report the matter in accordance with the School's whistle blowing procedure. All employees are required to comply with any investigation undertaken as a result of such allegations being raised.

Safeguarding Children and Young People

All Schools have a legal duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils and all staff are expected to take responsibility for ensuring that young people are protected from harm, and conduct themselves appropriately with due regard to professional boundaries. The School has a Child Protection policy which all employees are required to read and familiarise themselves with. All staff have a duty to report any concerns they may have about the safety or welfare of a pupil, initially to the School's Designated Safeguarding Leads. Ms Lanham is the DSL and Ms Luck is the DDSL.

Low Level Concerns

Due to the changes in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2021), schools are now required to record 'low level concerns'. Staff are reminded to follow the "it could happen here" approach to safeguarding in school. Please share any concern, no matter how small, and even if it's just causing a sense of unease or a "nagging doubt" that an adult may have acted in a way that:

- is inconsistent with Charlwood Village Primary School's Staff Code of Conduct
- is inconsistent with information found within our Staff Handbook (including inappropriate conduct outside of work)
- does not meet the allegation threshold or is otherwise not serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

Concerns may be raised anonymously but those reporting should understand that named reporting will be kept securely and confidentially and may be necessary if further information is required. There is a Low Level Concern Form for staff to complete. A copy of this form is displayed in the staffroom and is available from both DSL's.

Criminal Charges or Convictions

All employees must inform the headteacher immediately if they are issued with any criminal conviction, caution, reprimand or final warning or are the subject of a police investigation during the course of their employment with the School. The headteacher will discuss the matter with the employee in the context of the role they perform and the duty to safeguard young people.

Health and Safety

All employees have a shared duty to help prevent injuries or accidents occurring at work by complying with the School's health and safety policy and all instructions relating to safety and security procedures.

Secondary Employment

Employees are able to take up additional employment other than at the School provided the employment concerned does not constitute a conflict of interest or adversely affect their employment at the School.

Employees should, however, keep the School informed of other employment they undertake so that the School may ensure that the 48-hour weekly working time limit under the Working Time Regulations 1998 is adhered to. In the event that your combined working hours are likely to exceed this figure you will be asked to sign a working time 'opt out' agreement.

Employment Policies

The School has in place a range of employment policies. You should familiarise yourself with any policy the School has provided to you and ensure that you take account of any future policy changes communicated to you.