

# Staff code of conduct

Stubbins Primary School



<b>Policy Created</b>	<b>September 2023</b>
<b>Next review</b>	<b>September 2024</b>
<b>Shared with Governors</b>	<b>November 2023</b>
<b>Signature of Chair of Governors</b> <b>Matt Dunkin</b>	<b>Signature of Headteacher</b> <b>Jill Cromeey</b> 

## Contents

1. Aims, scope and principles .....	2
2. Legislation and guidance .....	4
3. General obligations .....	4
4. Safeguarding .....	4
5. Staff-pupil relationships.....	7
6. Communication and social media.....	8
7. Acceptable use of technology .....	9
8. Confidentiality .....	9
9. Honesty and integrity.....	10
10. Dress code.....	11
11. Conduct outside of work.....	11
12. Monitoring arrangements.....	11
13. Links with other policies.....	11

---

### 1. Aims, scope and principles

This policy aims to set and maintain standards of conduct that we expect all staff to follow.

By creating this policy, we aim to ensure our school is an environment where everyone is safe, happy and treated with respect.

Many of the principles in this code of conduct are based on the [Teachers' Standards](#).

School staff have an influential position in the school and will act as role models for pupils by consistently demonstrating high standards of behaviour.

We expect that all teachers will act in accordance with the personal and professional behaviours set out in the Teachers' Standards.

We expect all support staff, governors and volunteers to also act with personal and professional integrity, respecting the safety and wellbeing of others.

Our school philosophy which underpins our school vision is “Nurture, Grow, Flourish”. As part of this we have developed 11 core values which were created by our school community. These values are:

- Resilience
- Independence
- Self belief
- Integrity
- Cooperation
- Pride
- Empathy
- Courage
- Determination
- Respect
- Curiosity

We expect all Stubbins staff to maintain and promote these core values alongside the fundamental British values which according DfE comprise:

democracy.

the rule of law.

individual liberty.

mutual respect for and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs, and for those without faith.

Failure to follow the code of conduct may result in disciplinary action being taken, as set out in our staff disciplinary procedures.

Please note that this code of conduct is not exhaustive. If situations arise that are not covered by this code, staff will use their professional judgement and act in the best interests of the school and its pupils.

## 2. Legislation and guidance

We are required to establish procedures for the regulation of staff conduct under regulation 7 of [The School Staffing \(England\) Regulations 2009](#).

In line with the statutory safeguarding guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#), we should have a staff code of conduct, which should cover low-level concerns, allegations against staff and whistleblowing, as well as acceptable use of technologies (including the use of mobile devices), staff/pupil relationships and communications, including the use of social media.

## 3. General obligations

Staff set an example to pupils. They will:

- Maintain high standards in their attendance and punctuality
- Never use inappropriate or offensive language in school
- Treat pupils and others with dignity and respect
- Show tolerance and respect for the rights of others
- Not undermine fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
- Not express personal beliefs in a way that exploits pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law
- Understand the statutory frameworks they must act within
- Adhere to the Teachers' Standards, Teaching Assistant Standards, Post Threshold Standards and Headteacher Standards

## 4. Safeguarding

Staff have a duty to safeguard pupils from harm, and to report any concerns they have. This includes physical, emotional and sexual abuse, and neglect.

Staff will familiarise themselves with our child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures, and the Prevent initiative, and ensure they are aware of the processes to follow if they have concerns about a child.

Our child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures are available on our network and website. It is updated in line with KCSIE yearly. New staff will also be given copies on arrival.

#### 4.1 Allegations that may meet the harm threshold

This section applies to all cases in which it is alleged that anyone working in the school, including a supply teacher, volunteer or contractor, has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child, and/or
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, and/or
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children, and/or
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children – this includes behaviour taking place inside or outside of school

We will deal with any such allegation quickly and in a fair and consistent way that provides effective child protection while also supporting the individual who is the subject of the allegation.

A ‘case manager’ will lead any investigation. This will be the Headteacher, or the chair of governors where the Headteacher is the subject of the allegation.

#### 4.2 Low-level concerns about members of staff

A low-level concern is a behaviour towards a child by a member of staff that does not meet the harm threshold, is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, and may be as simple as causing a sense of unease or a ‘nagging doubt’. For example, this may include:

- Being over-friendly with children
- Having favourites
- Taking photographs of children on a personal device
- Engaging in 1-to-1 activities where they can’t easily be seen
- Humiliating pupils

Low-level concerns can include inappropriate conduct inside and outside of work.

All staff should share any low-level concerns they have using the reporting procedures set out in our child protection and safeguarding policy. They should be logged using the Staffsafe application from CPOMs. We also encourage staff to self-refer if they find themselves in a situation that could be misinterpreted. If staff are not sure whether behaviour would be deemed a low-level concern, we encourage staff to report it.

All reports will be handled in a responsive, sensitive and proportionate way.

Unprofessional behaviour will be addressed, and the staff member supported to correct it, at an early stage.

This creates and embeds a culture of openness, trust and transparency in which our values and expected behaviour are constantly lived, monitored and reinforced by all staff, while minimising the risk of abuse.

Reporting and responding to low-level concerns is covered in more detail in our child protection and safeguarding policy and is in line with our whistleblowing policy. This is available on our website.

Our procedures for dealing with allegations will be applied with common sense and judgement.

### 4.3 Whistle-blowing

Whistle-blowing reports wrongdoing that it is “in the public interest” to report. Examples linked to safeguarding include:

- Pupils’ or staff members’ health and safety being put in danger
- Failure to comply with a legal obligation or statutory requirement
- Attempts to cover up the above, or any other wrongdoing in the public interest

Staff are encouraged to report suspected wrongdoing as soon as possible. Their concerns will be taken seriously and investigated, and their confidentiality will be respected.

Staff should consider the examples above when deciding whether their concern is of a whistle-blowing nature. Consider whether the incident(s) was illegal, breached statutory or school procedures, put people in danger or was an attempt to cover any such activity up.

Staff should report their concern to the headteacher. If the concern is about the headteacher or it is believed they may be involved in the wrongdoing in some way, the staff member should report their concern to the chair of the governing board.

Concerns should be made in writing wherever possible. They should include names of those committing wrongdoing, dates, places and as much evidence and context as possible. Staff raising a concern should also include details of any personal interest in the matter.

For our school’s detailed whistle-blowing process, please refer to our whistle-blowing policy on our website.

## 5. Staff-pupil relationships

Staff will observe proper boundaries with pupils that are appropriate to their professional position. They will act in a fair and transparent way that would not lead anyone to reasonably assume they are not doing so.

If staff members and pupils must spend time on a one-to-one basis, staff will ensure that:

- This takes place in a public place that others can access
- Others can see into the room
- A colleague or line manager knows this is taking place

Staff should avoid contact with pupils outside of school hours if possible and if they need to transport pupils in their car, must be accompanied by another member of staff, fully insured for this and should be agreed with a member of SLT.

Personal contact details should not be exchanged between staff and pupils. This includes social media profiles.

While we are aware many pupils and their parents may wish to give gifts to staff, for example, at the end of the school year, gifts from staff to individual pupils are not acceptable.

If a staff member is concerned at any point that an interaction between themselves and a pupil may be misinterpreted, or if a staff member is concerned at any point about a fellow staff member and a pupil, this should be reported in line with the procedures set out in our child protection and safeguarding policy on our website.

### Staff – Staff Relationships

Any experiences of bullying or all kinds of discrimination, no matter the position of the staff member in school should be reported to an Assistant Head, Headteacher or to the Chair of Governors if the Headteacher is the subject of an allegation.

### Staff – Parent Liaison

If staff have a concern relating to a particular child, even at a very early stage, an informal chat with a parent is useful to alert them to the issue and reassure them that this is something to work at

together. Often asking if the child has seemed low or distracted can open up dialogue which can be productive and supportive at first rather than presenting the parent directly with a particular difficulty you want to discuss.

A parent's emotional response will come first when discussing their child and this could be in the form of dismay, denial, tears, anger etc. and so it pays to begin with something positive. Sensitive conversations must take place in a private space.

Staff are the professional in these conversations and if a parent becomes emotional or angry should remain calm and refer to specific details recorded to refer to. Try not to see a complaint as a personal insult. Most parental issues can be quickly resolved and in many cases, giving parents the chance to talk can end up being productive. If, at any time, you feel threatened or need support during a meeting, ask any member of SLT to attend or be in the room. If a parent becomes abusive, tell them that the conversation will need to continue with a member of SLT present. The discussion should be recorded on CPoms and next steps and a second discussion should be offered.

## **6. Communication and social media**

School staff's social media profiles should not be available to pupils. If they have a personal profile on social media sites, they should not use their full name, as pupils may be able to find them. Staff should consider using a first and middle name instead, and set public profiles to private.

Staff should not attempt to contact pupils or their parents via personal social media, or any other means outside school, in order to develop any sort of relationship. They will not make any efforts to find pupils' or parents' social media profiles. The means of communication between teacher and parent is through Class Dojo and the school website and staff should always act with professionalism.

Social media sites such as Facebook should be used with extreme caution. Every effort should be made to ensure that your details and pages are completely secure for your own safety and wellbeing. It is the responsibility of all staff to notify the Head or SLT if they become aware of any 'lack of professionalism' relating to information on a social networking site. Staff should also be aware that where they have parents as 'friends' that the pupils will possibly have access to photos/information uploaded. Comments relating to the school day should not be posted. Teachers will use the school Twitter and Class Dojo account for class posts.



Staff will ensure that they do not post any images online that identify children who are pupils at the school without their consent.

Staff should be aware of the school's online safety policy on our website.

## **7. Acceptable use of technology**

Staff will not use technology in school or belonging to the school to view material that is illegal, inappropriate or likely to be deemed offensive. This includes, but is not limited to, sending obscene emails, gambling and viewing pornography or other inappropriate content.

Staff will not use personal mobile phones and laptops, or school equipment for personal use, in teaching hours or in front of pupils unless with the agreement with the Headteacher. Mobile phones must only be used during break times and lunch times. Phones should not be on view in the classroom during lesson times, unless agreed with the Headteacher or SLT for an emergency and not used when staff are on duty or supervising children. They will also not use personal mobile phones or cameras to take pictures of pupils.

We have the right to monitor emails and internet use on the school IT system.

As per the document "Meeting Digital and Technology Standards in Schools and Colleges", staff have the responsibility to lock iPads and laptops when not in use. They should also not allow pupils use individual teacher iPads or enter own personal apple IDs into school iPads. Staff should be responsible for ensuring that they maintain strong passwords and changing/ informing the Headteacher if they suspect that their password has been compromised.

Staff will not image search online at the front of the class without using the freeze facility on the screen or without previously attempting the search. The same is true for using You Tube in a class situation.

## **8. Confidentiality**

In the course of their role, members of staff are often privy to sensitive and confidential information about the school, staff, pupils and their parents.

This information should never be:

- Disclosed to anyone unless required by law or with consent from the relevant party or parties
- Used to humiliate, embarrass or blackmail others
- Used for a purpose other than what it was collected and intended for

This does not overrule staff's duty to report child protection concerns to the appropriate channel where staff believe a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm, as detailed further in our child protection and safeguarding policy.

## **9. Honesty and integrity**

Staff should maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their role. This includes when dealing with pupils, handling money, claiming expenses and using school property and facilities.

Staff will not accept bribes. Gifts of cash must not be accepted and this will be communicated with parents.

Staff will ensure that all information given to the school is correct. This should include:

- Background information (including any past or current investigations/cautions related to conduct outside of school)
- Qualifications
- Professional experience

Where there are any updates to the information provided to the school, the member of staff will advise the school as such as soon as reasonably practicable. Consideration will then be given to the nature and circumstances of the matter and whether this may have an impact on the member of staff's employment.

### Staff Sickness

Staff will follow the policy. The Headteacher (or the Assistant Heads failing contact with the HT) should be contacted by phone before 7.30am on the morning of absence if illness is going to prevent attendance at work. Staff should not ask another member of staff to relay sickness for them. It is assumed that regular dental and medical appointments for staff and dependents will be scheduled outside of school hours wherever possible. All staff should aim to notify school by 3.00pm if they are unable to return the following day. All staff absence is monitored. For a planned absence a request form should be completed and given to the Headteacher to sign. A 'return to work' form will need to be completed with the Headteacher or SLT on return to work for all absences.

The Headteacher's phone number is 07943848941.

## **10. Dress code**

Staff will dress in a professional, appropriate manner to their job. Jeans should not be worn unless on non-uniform days. PE kits are only worn when staff are carrying out PE.

Outfits will not be overly revealing, and we ask that tattoos are covered up where possible.

Clothes will not display any offensive or political slogans.

Nails should be a practical length and hair and cosmetic styles should not be distracting, with a natural look more appropriate to the profession

## **11. Conduct outside of work**

Staff will not act in a way that would bring the school, or the teaching profession, into disrepute.

This covers conduct including but not limited to relevant criminal offences, such as violence or sexual misconduct, as well as negative comments about the school on social media.

## **12. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed annually, but can be revised as needed. It will be approved by the full governing board.

Our governing board will ensure this code of conduct is implemented effectively, and will ensure appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard children and deal with any concerns.

## **13. Links with other policies**

This policy links with our policies on:

- Staff disciplinary procedures, which will be used if staff breach this code of conduct. It also sets out examples of what we will deem as misconduct and gross misconduct
- Staff grievance procedures
- Child protection and safeguarding
- Online safety
- Whistle-blowing
- Email and home/school communications