



"Show me your way, Lord teach me your paths." Psalms (25.4)

Staff Code of Conduct Policy (aka Professional Code of Conduct)

The school is required to set out a Code of Conduct for all employees.

The Code of Conduct outlines the expected conduct of staff at all times. All communication and interaction between members of staff, children, parents, carers, governors and visitors must reflect our Code of Conduct.

Staff are expected to be conscientious and loyal to the aims and objectives of Almondsbury CE Primary School.

In addition, staff are required to develop and maintain the professional character of the school.

All staff employed by Almondsbury CE Primary School are to follow the Code of Conduct. Staff should be aware that a failure to comply with the following Code of Conduct could result in disciplinary action including dismissal. Volunteers and governors are also expected to follow the code of conduct. Throughout this document the term staff should be taken to include any adult in the school (and in particular teachers, teaching assistants, other support staff, governors and volunteers).

It is an expectation that all members of staff (and adult volunteers, governors and visitors) model courteous and respectful behaviour to the children through their appearance and all aspects of their conduct. This includes the way in which adults talk to the children as well as to each other.

A number of other school policies make reference to expectations and these include the school policies on: Confidentiality; Equal Opportunities and Race Equality. A Code of Conduct is designed to give clear guidance on the standards of behaviour all staff are expected to observe, and the school should notify staff of this code and the expectations therein. Staff may be in a unique position of influence and must adhere to behaviour that models the highest possible standards. Each employee has an individual responsibility to maintain their reputation and the reputation of the school whether inside or outside working hours.

Staff rights

- Work in an atmosphere of mutual respect
- Be treated fairly
- Be listened to and for views to be respected
- Be valued for the efforts and strengths of the work undertaken and to receive support for those areas that need developing
- Work in a clean, safe, secure, unthreatening stimulating and well organised work place
- Be kept appropriately informed through open channels of communication
- Have a workload that is conducive to work-life balance

Staff Responsibilities

- Put children at the centre of all that we do
- Separate personal and professional lives by creating clearly defined boundaries
- Challenge prejudice in the workplace and support colleagues of all social, cultural and ethnic backgrounds
- Listen to and respect the opinions of others
- Support the development of others
- Promote positive relationships with pupils and the local community
- Safeguard the emotional and physical well-being of pupils
- Arrive on time for events/activities appropriately dressed
- Switch mobile phones off during teaching time, staff meetings and when on playground duty
- Raise concerns in a non-threatening manner before they become a more serious problem
- Take responsibility for the working environment leaving it as others would wish to find it
- Challenge unprofessional behaviour

The school will:

- To the best of its ability provide high quality CPD for all staff
- Ensure appropriate performance management procedures are in effect
- Value staff achievements and support their further development
- Treat the workforce both fairly and consistently
- Ensure the environment is clean, and that resources are well maintained and accessible
- Listen to the ideas and concerns of all staff
- Raise management concerns with staff appropriately
- Be aware of the requirement to ensure the work-life balance of staff
- Endeavour to make the school an enjoyable place to work.

Setting an example

All staff who work at Almondsbury CE Primary School must set examples of behaviour and conduct which can be copied by pupils. Staff must therefore not use inappropriate or offensive language at any time. All staff must, therefore, demonstrate the highest standards of conduct in order to encourage our pupils to do the same. All staff must also avoid putting themselves at risk of allegations of abusive or unprofessional conduct. This Code helps all staff to understand what behaviour is and is not acceptable.

Safeguarding Pupils

Staff, governors and volunteers have a duty to safeguard pupils from:

- physical abuse
- sexual abuse
- emotional abuse
- neglect

The duty to safeguard pupils includes the duty to report concerns about a pupil to a school's Designated Lead for Child Protection. The school's DSL will follow policy and procedures linked to safeguarding. Copies of the school's Safeguarding Policy, Child Protection Policy and Whistleblowing Procedure are available from the school, along with the latest version of Keeping Children Safe in Education. This is updated annually along with the fore mentioned policies. Staff must be familiar with these documents. Staff must not demean or undermine pupils, their parents or carers, or colleagues. Staff must take the utmost care of pupils under their supervision with the aim of ensuring their safety and welfare. Staff must not use their personal mobile phone as a camera in school. Any photograph/video must be taken using school equipment. Staff must only save images on school computers/devices.

Pupil Development

Staff must comply with school policies and procedures that support the well-being and development of pupils. Staff must co-operate and collaborate with colleagues, schools and with external agencies where necessary to support the development of pupils. Staff must follow reasonable instructions that support the development of pupils.

Appropriate relationships

Pupils

Individuals who work or volunteer in a school environment are in a position of trust. Staff should be mindful of the need to maintain professional boundaries appropriate to their position and must always consider whether their actions are warranted, proportionate, safe and applied equitably.

Staff should act in an open and transparent way that would not lead any reasonable person to question their actions or intent. Staff should think carefully about their conduct so that misinterpretations are minimised.

Staff must try to avoid unnecessary physical contact with children. Where physical contact is essential, e.g. for safety reasons or to comfort a child, the pupil's permission must be gained for that contact wherever possible. If physical contact is made to remove a pupil from a dangerous situation or an object from a pupil to prevent either harm to themselves or others, then this should be recorded and reported to the Headteacher. In cases where accidental physical contact was made, it should be reported to the Headteacher. In all cases staff should act in accordance with the school's restraint policy located in the school office.

Parents

Staff are expected to interact with parents in a polite and respectful manner and recognise parents' entitlement to express any concerns they may have about their child's learning, safety or wellbeing. Staff shouldn't discuss school matters with parents outside school hours if approached and should instead refer the parent to the normal school communication channels.

Equal opportunities

The Governing Body of the school is committed to equality for all in the appointment, development, training and promotion of staff, and in all dealings with pupils and parents of the school. It also recognises that all members of staff have the right to work in a safe environment without fear of discrimination, harassment or abuse.

All pupils, colleagues, parents, members of the public and wider school community have the right to be treated with fairness and equality and must not be discriminated against. The school expects staff to uphold these principles.

Please refer to the school's equalities policy for further guidance located in the school office.

Honesty and Integrity

Staff must maintain the highest standards of honesty and integrity in their work. This includes the handling and claiming of money. All staff must comply with the Bribery Act 2010. A person may be guilty of an offence of bribery under this act if they offer, promise or give financial advantage or other advantage to someone; or if they 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 to the Whistleblowing procedure. Staff have a duty to report any concerns they have about any adult or child in the school and the school has a duty to investigate and take appropriate action. Staff should also be aware that making a false accusation could lead to disciplinary action, clearly the school and governors would wish to differentiate between an honest mistake and wilful mis-conduct in this matter, making an honest mistake will not lead to disciplinary action.

Declaration of interests

Staff should consider carefully whether they need to declare to the school any relationship with an individual where this might cause a conflict with the school's activities, for example, a relationship with a Governor, another staff member or a contractor who provides services to the school. Where such a declaration is necessary this should be made to the Headteacher. Staff may undertake work outside school, either paid or voluntary, provided it does not conflict with the interests of the school nor be at a level which may contravene the Working Time Regulations or affect an individual's performance at work.

Whistleblowing

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 (as amended) gives protection to people who disclose reasonable concerns about serious misconduct or malpractice at work. This is sometimes known as Whistleblowing. The Governing Body of the school will treat all matters of malpractice very seriously and allegations about such matters will be dealt with quickly and with appropriate confidentiality.

Staff should acknowledge their individual responsibilities in bringing matters of concern to the attention of senior leadership in the school. This is particularly important where the welfare of children may be at risk.

Health and safety

Staff must adhere to the school's Health and Safety policy and should ensure that they take every action to keep themselves and others in the school environment safe.

Please refer to the school's Health and Safety policy for further information located in the school office.

Gifts and hospitality

There may be occasions where children or parents wish to pass small tokens of appreciation to staff, for example as an end of year 'thank-you', and this is acceptable. However, it is unacceptable to receive gifts on a regular basis or of any significant value or to suggest to pupils that gifts would be appropriate or desired. Money should never be accepted as a gift.

Conduct outside Work

Staff must not engage in conduct outside work which could seriously damage the reputation and standing of the school or the employee's own reputation or the reputation of other members of the school. Any such conduct could lead to dismissal. In particular, criminal offences that involve violence or possession or use of illegal drugs or sexual misconduct are likely to be regarded as unacceptable and could lead to dismissal. Staff must exercise caution when using information technology and be aware of the risks to themselves and others. Staff must not use social media e.g. Facebook with pupils and parents. Staff must not engage in inappropriate use of social network sites which may bring themselves, schools or wider community into disrepute. Staff must only use their school email account for work purposes.

Work outside of school hours

Some members of staff may find that they are able to take on work outside of school hours, ie tutoring or another sort of employment. Whilst this time is not regulated by school such additional work must and should not interfere with the staff's ability to complete their primary roles and responsibilities, as laid down in the job descriptions, in a manner acceptable to the Headteacher and Governors. If this is not the case then the member of staff will need to discuss the issues with the leadership of the school and address these swiftly. It may be in extreme cases that the employee will be asked to withdraw from their additional work.

Confidentiality

Where staff have access to confidential information about colleagues, pupils or their parents or carers, staff must not reveal such information except to those colleagues who have a professional role in relation to the individual. All staff are likely at some point to witness actions which need to be confidential. For example, where a pupil is bullied by another pupil (or by a

member of staff), this needs to be reported and dealt with in accordance with the appropriate schools procedure. It must not be discussed outside of the school, including with the pupil's parent or carer, nor with colleagues in the school except with a senior member of staff with the appropriate role and authority to deal with the matter. However, staff have an obligation to share with the school's Designated Lead for Child Protection any information which gives rise to concern about the safety or welfare of a pupil/student. Staff must never promise a pupil/student that they will not act on information that they are told by the pupil.

Disciplinary Action

All staff need to recognise that failure to meet these standards of behaviour and conduct may result in disciplinary action, including dismissal.

Staff Dress Policy

The governing body (GB) takes the view that all staff at the school should be dressed appropriately for their particular role. The GB is also mindful of the need to avoid direct or indirect discrimination against any employee on the grounds of their sex, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, or age. The GB is aware of its responsibility to consider possible health and safety issues in determining an acceptable dress code. The GB is also aware that dress is a sensitive issue and has agreed the following policy after consultation with all groups of staff in the school. Any future review of the policy will also be preceded by further consultation.

Standard of Dress

The dress of all teaching and support staff must be tidy and smart, reflecting the business-like ethos that the governors wish to foster and maintain in staff and pupils. The governors accept those engaged in caretaking, cleaning and lunchtime supervision will wear dress appropriate for their work. In teaching and areas visited by pupils and visitors all staff will be expected to wear appropriate professional dress. Jeans or jean shorts should not be worn except by premises staff if necessary. Footwear should also be smart and safe. Shoes and not trainers should be worn for classroom activities. (An exception is if teachers or other adults are involved in PE lessons – in which case it is appropriate for adults to wear sensible PE kit including trainers, please be mindful of where and when you get changed – it is very strongly suggested you use the staff toilets). For safety reasons all footwear should be closed –flip-flops are not permitted. Any person choosing to wear open toed shoes does so at their own risk. No inappropriately casual clothing should be worn including any items deemed to be too revealing or carrying logos that could be offensive in any way. The Head Teacher is empowered to determine the standard of smartness that is acceptable.

Cleaning and Premises Maintenance Staff working in these areas, where particular dress is necessary for health and safety reasons, must wear appropriate dress. Staff should note that it can be a criminal offence not to wear safety dress in certain situations. (E.g. headwear in kitchens, and hard hats in construction areas). Failing to wear the correct safety dress can amount to gross misconduct which could lead to dismissal.

Religious Symbols, Ornaments and Dress Staff are permitted to wear religious symbols and ornaments, but the governors expect these to be discreet and worn in a safe manner. The Head Teacher in consultation with the governors is empowered to determine whether a particular symbol or ornament is sufficiently discreet, and commensurate with health and safety standards.

Garments which are generally considered as having an important religious (or racial) connotation (e.g. the Sikh turban, or headscarves worn by some religious sects) may be worn at all times. However, note the governors' policy on head dress below.

Head Dress

No caps or hats may be worn inside school, except where necessary on health and safety grounds, or have been permitted by the GB on religious or racial grounds. Head dress in line with the beliefs and traditions of various religions and sects are allowed, EXCEPT that the

governors do not permit any head covering that covers a substantial part of a person's face. The reasons for this are:

- the governors take the view that in an institution where verbal communication and body language form an important and significant part of the work with children and young persons, it is not appropriate for any member of staff who comes into contact with pupils in teaching and learning situations to have a substantial part of their face covered; and*
- the governors are concerned to ensure that the school remains vigilant about the safety and security of staff and pupils, and that no person employed by the school should have their faces covered, and that the identity of persons visiting the school wearing clothes that cover the face, should not be allowed to go beyond Reception until the Head Teacher has ascertained their identity. (All visitors must wear visitors badges obtained in Reception).*

Use of mobile phones

The use of personal mobile phones by staff is only permitted at break times and in areas to which children do not normally have access –ie staff room, offices, etc. Mobile phones should never be used by staff while teaching or supervising children. Never use your own mobile devices to take pictures of children.

Social Media

Internal e-mail and internet systems must be used only in accordance with the school's acceptable use of ICT policy located in the School Office.

Members of staff should exercise extreme caution when using all forms of social media. The school expects all members of staff to set high professional standards and to act as role models for children. The posting of messages or pictures that undermines this expectation could lead to formal disciplinary measures.

Social networking sites offer the opportunity for communication with children, young people and their parents outside normal professional boundaries. School staff must take care to protect their privacy and protect themselves from risk of allegations in relation to inappropriate relationships and cyberbullying. Staff must not develop or maintain online relationships with parents or pupils through social networking sites, instant messaging or other media, whether this is through school or personal IT facilities.

Please refer to the school's acceptable use of Computing and IT policy, for further guidance on acceptable and unacceptable use of IT, social media and mobile phones.

Complaints

Any complaints about the operation of this policy should be made at first to the Head Teacher. If not satisfied, the complainant may take his/her complaint to the governing body via the Clerk to the Governing Body. The governors' decision will be final.

Monitoring and Review

The Head Teacher will report annually on the working of this policy, and any adult working or visiting the school may suggest amendments at any time to be considered by the governors.

Appendix 1 – aide memoire for all staff

Use your common sense and good judgement at all times – don't take any action (physical or verbal) in the heat of the moment. Always ask yourself "how will this look to others?"

When we speak to others we will:

- use a positive statement rather than a negative one so that children can learn what we expect of them in any situation.
- use a calm tone of voice at all times, to explain something to or instruct the children, so that they can follow our words without feeling threatened or uncomfortable.
- avoid using sarcastic words or phrases as these demean children and prevent them from developing high self-esteem.
- speak respectfully to other adults at all times, even if we disagree with them.

As professionals we will:

- avoid workplace gossip and negativity as it breeds resentment and becomes a roadblock to effective communication and collaboration. We all have a duty to take active steps to divert conversations away from this if we come across it.
- maintain confidentiality about anything that we see or hear in the workplace or in schools, so that colleagues, parents, children and outside agencies can trust us, and as a way of showing respect to our fellow professionals.
- work as part of a team, contributing as well as learning from others and helping to build up a strong workforce.
- work within the policies and practices set out by Almondsbury CE Primary School, so that what we do is consistent with what has been agreed between all members of the staff.
- treat everyone with respect.
- dress appropriately to show that we are here to work.
- behave in a positive way despite any personal problems that we may have, especially in front of children.

Appendix 2 - from Teachers' Standards Effective from 1st September 2012 (DfE)

Personal and professional conduct

- A teacher is expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct. The following statements define the behaviour and attitudes which set the required standard for conduct throughout a teacher's career.

Teachers uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, by:

- Treating pupils with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to a teacher's professional position having regard for the need to safeguard pupils' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions.
- Show tolerance of and respect for the rights of others 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 ensuring that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways which exploit pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law.
- Teachers must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they teach, and maintain high standards in their own attendance and punctuality.
- Teachers must have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities.

Appendix 3 – other sources of information and guidance at Almondsbury CE Primary School

- The staff handbook
- The staff induction policy
- All the policies of Almondsbury CE Primary School – are on the school Teacher's drive
- School risk assessments

Appendix 4 – Guidance for schools and colleges on safer working practices (from the DSCB) This has been issued to all staff and volunteers as part of the school induction process:
www.swcpp.org.uk

Appendix 5 – Keeping Children Safe in Education – prepared by the DfE
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/550511/Keeping_children_safe_in_education.pdf