



'ALIS VOLAT PROPRIIS'

SEATON HOUSE SCHOOL

Staff code of conduct

Date Reviewed: October 2020
Next Review Date: Autumn 2022
Reviewed by: Head & SLT

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR STAFF

This policy applies to the whole school including the Early Years Foundation Stage

Introduction

Seaton House School expects all of its pupils to receive the highest possible quality of teaching and learning within a positive and respectful environment. Employees should understand that their own behaviour and the manner in which they conduct themselves with their colleagues, pupils, parents and other stakeholders, sets an example. The governing body of Seaton House School recognises that the majority of staff members act appropriately and treat each other with dignity and respect. However, we consider it important to clarify the expected standards.

Every member of staff should read this code of conduct in conjunction with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Equal Opportunities Policy, Health and Safety Policy, E-Safety Policy, Behaviour Policy and Mobile Phone Policy.

Our curriculum and pastoral systems are designed to foster the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all our pupils. All our teaching staff play a vital role in this process, helping to ensure that all of our pupils relate well to one another and feel safe and comfortable within the school. We expect all staff to lead by example, and to play a full part in promoting an awareness that is appropriate to their age amongst all our pupils on issues relating to health, safety and well-being. All the staff, including all non-teaching staff, have an important role in insisting that our pupils always adhere to the standards of behaviour set out in our behaviour policy and in enforcing our anti-bullying policy.

Appearance and dress

The expectations of the governing body are that staff members:

- Ensure that their appearance is clean and neat when at work or representing the school.
- Dress in a manner that is appropriate to their role.
- Remember that they are role models for pupils and that their dress and appearance should reflect this.
- Do not dress in a way that would cause embarrassment to pupils, parents, colleagues or other stakeholders.
- Jewellery should not be ostentatious.
- Have no visible tattoos.

Attendance

Our expectations are that staff members:

- Attend work in accordance with their contract of employment and associated terms and conditions in relation to hours, days of work and holidays.
- Make routine medical and dental appointments outside of their working hours or during holidays, where possible.
- Request leave if they need time off for any reason other than personal illness specifically from the Headteacher.

- Follow the school's absence reporting procedure when they are absent from work due to illness or injury.

Professional behaviour and conduct

Staff members are expected to treat other colleagues, pupils, parents, and external contacts with dignity and respect. Discrimination, bullying, harassment or intimidation, including physical and verbal abuse, will not be tolerated at the school.

Staff members must not misuse or misrepresent their position, qualifications or experience or bring the school into disrepute. Staff members must inform the Headteacher if they are subject to a criminal conviction, caution, ban, police enquiry, investigation or pending prosecution.

Safeguarding children

The Deputy Head (Mrs. Lesley Wilson) is the designated safeguarding lead. She has been fully trained for the demands of this role and inter-Agency working. She reports at least once a year to the Governors on safeguarding issues.

The school's records on child protection are kept locked in the Headteacher's office, and are separated from routine pupil records. Access is restricted to the DSLs. Staff also keep a log of minor concerns online in SIMS.

All staff should be aware that they have a duty of care to tell the DSL if a child discloses any information that may suggest that they are being abused, bullied, radicalised or at risk of being exposed to FGM or are likely to receive pressure to concede to forced marriages. These matters will result in the police being informed if there is a high likelihood of any of the above being carried out on a child. Any concerns relating to safeguarding should be recorded on a 'pink disclosure form' and given directly to the DSL. (Please also refer to safeguarding policy)

Our expectations are for staff members to:

- Act in an open and transparent way that would not lead to any suspicion about their actions or intent.
- Respect their duty to protect children and young people from harm and to maintain professional boundaries.
- Read and understand school policies on child protection and safeguarding, including their obligations to undertake a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.

During times of remote teaching staff should still be vigilant for safeguarding concerns and still report them using the procedures set out in the Safeguarding Policy.

Safer Recruitment

Seaton House School follows the Government's guidelines for the safer employment of staff who work with children. We refer to 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (September 2020) as our key guideline for recruiting and employing staff. We obtain enhanced Disqualification and Barring Service checks (DBS certificates) on all staff. Governors and parent helpers who have regular unsupervised access to children are also required to have up to date DBS certificates.

New staff and Governors receive safeguarding training as part of their induction process. This training is repeated regularly with at least yearly updates.

Probity of records

The deliberate falsification of documents is not acceptable. Where a staff member falsifies records or other documents, including those held electronically, this will be regarded as a serious disciplinary matter and potentially a criminal offence.

Financial inducements

Staff members must familiarise themselves and comply with the school's financial regulations and declare in writing, any gifts received, with the exception of low cost, functional items suitable for business rather than personal use and displaying the supplier's logo.

These items may be accepted:

- Gifts offered by parents or pupils to school staff to express their gratitude, but staff members should always refuse gifts of money and declare all gifts over the value of £50 to the Bursar.
- Hospitality in the shape of meals and drinks where it forms part of a normal business meeting, but offers to specific events should only be accepted after authorisation from the governing body.
- Authorised visits by employees to exhibitions, demonstrations, conferences, business meals and social functions in connection with the school's business, which shall be at the school's expense.
- Not accept a personal gift, payment, or other incentive, from a business contact, which should be returned.

Health and safety

The school operates a 'no smoking' policy and smoking (including e-cigarettes) is not allowed within the school or school grounds. It is good practice for employees to inform the Headteacher if suffering from a medical condition, or have personal circumstances that may adversely affect performance at work.

Staff members must:

- Be familiar with and adhere to the school's Health and Safety Policy and must ensure that they take every action to keep themselves and everyone in the school environment safe and well.
- Comply with health and safety regulations and use any safety equipment and protective clothing which is supplied to them.
- Comply with hygiene requirements.
- Comply with accident reporting requirements.
- Inform their line manager of any paid work which is undertaken elsewhere for compliance with Working Time Regulations.

Alcohol and illegal drugs

The taking of illegal drugs or alcohol during working hours is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Staff members are expected to attend work without being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs. If alcohol or drug usage impacts on a staff member's performance, the school has the right to discuss the matter with the employee and take appropriate action, including referral to the police.

Where an employee is taking prescribed drugs, he/she should inform the Headteacher where this may affect behaviour and/or performance at work. All drugs should be stored safely well out of the reach of any children.

School premises, equipment and communication

School equipment and systems are available only for school related activities and should not be used for the fulfilment of another job or for personal use, unless specifically authorised by the Headteacher. Illegal, inappropriate or unacceptable use of school equipment or communication systems may result in disciplinary action and, in serious cases, could lead to an employee's dismissal.

Employees receiving inappropriate communication or material or who are unsure about whether something he she proposes to do might breach this Policy, should seek advice from the Headteacher. The school reserves the right to monitor e-mails, phone calls, internet activity or document production, principally in order to avoid offensive or nuisance material and to protect systems from viruses, but also to ensure proper and effective use of systems.

Passwords should not be shared and access to computer systems must be kept confidential except on the express request of the Headteacher or Systems Manager. Breach of this confidentiality may be subject to disciplinary action. School equipment that is used outside school premises, for example laptops, should be returned to the school when the employee leaves employment or if requested to do so by the Headteacher. When using equipment for remote teaching staff should wherever possible use school laptops. In exceptional circumstances personal laptops may be used but only for accessing Google classroom platform and delivering remote lessons. Staff should ensure that school and personal work is kept separate and that all communication is made using agreed school programs and email accounts.

Networking websites

Employees must not access social networking sites for personal use during classes. Access to some journals, blogs and social networking sites is permitted during classes for the purposes of undertaking job related duties only. Employees must act in the best interests of the school and not disclose personal data or information about any individual, including staff members, children and young people.

Staff members should not 'friend' pupils on social networking websites. Access may be withdrawn and disciplinary action taken if there is a breach of confidentiality or defamatory remarks are made against any individual at the school.

Data protection & Confidentiality

Staff members are required, under the Data Protection Act 1998, to collect, maintain and dispose of sensitive or personal data in a responsible manner. Staff members should not disclose sensitive information about the school or its employees to other parties, unless it gives rise to concerns about the safety or welfare of a pupil. Staff members have the right to request access to data that is held about them and such requests should be made to the Headteacher.

Staff must not disclose any information that is confidential or that, if it were made public, may lead to a breakdown in the trust and confidence the school is required to provide to the community. It may be necessary to discuss confidential information with colleagues. Where this is the case, the discussions must take place in private.

Staff must not disclose any information about the school/children/parents to the press or other media unless expressly authorised to do so by the Headteacher. Staff must not disclose information about the school or its pupils on social networking sites or such similar sites. Staff should consider the information that they include on these sites and how the information may impact on the school and its reputation. Inappropriate disclosure of information may be dealt with under the disciplinary procedure.

Staff should not put confidential or sensitive information on memory sticks which have not been encrypted to ensure confidential information can't be accessed should the stick be lost or misplaced.

Promoting Awareness

Time is allocated in PSHE to discussions of what constitutes appropriate behaviour and on why bullying and lack of respect for others is never right. Assemblies, drama and RE lessons are used to promote tolerance and mutual respect and understanding. We use opportunities, such as the annual National Anti-Bullying week to teach about the unacceptability of bullying and abusive behaviour and to promote the safe use of the internet and mobile phones, inside and outside of school. Internet safety awareness is promoted through the year.

Interaction With Pupils

Staff need to ensure that their behaviour does not inadvertently lay them open to allegations of abuse. They need to treat all pupils with respect and try, as far as possible, not to be alone with a child or young person. Where this is not possible, for example, in an instrumental music lesson, or sports coaching lesson, it is good practice to ensure that others are within earshot. Any physical contact should be the minimum required for care, instruction or restraint. Staff should avoid taking one pupil on his/her own in a car. If this was required in an emergency two adults should be present if at all possible. School insurance would cover staff in this eventuality.

Staff should also ensure that they do not interact with pupils via phone, text or social media outside of any specific education programs set up by the school (e.g. Google Classroom & Century AI). Staff should not establish or seek to establish social contact with pupils for the purpose of securing a friendship or to pursue or strengthen a relationship. They should also ensure that their personal numbers and contact details are not given directly to pupils or parents (where possible). Staff should use school telephones for all communication with pupils and parents.

Staff should ensure that any messages put on Google classroom are: professional in tone; appropriate for the age of the pupils they are communicating with and related to the education or welfare of the pupils. Individual comments may be made to feedback on work or to 'check in' with pupils when they are working at home via remote learning.

Staff have a duty to remember that social media websites, should not be used to bring the school into disrepute or to engage with pupils or parents. They should also ensure that the content on their sites is appropriate and that pictures and posts portray staff in a professional capacity.

Physical Contact & Restraint

Physical contact with children. Staff may have cause to have physical contact with children for a variety of reasons:

- to comfort a child in distress
- to gently direct a child
- for curricula reasons, e.g in physical activities such a gymnastics, drama, art
- in an emergency to avert danger to the child or others
- in rare situations when physical restraint is needed

Staff must be aware of, and follow the guidance in the school's Physical Restraint policy.

In all situations when physical contact between staff and children takes place, staff must consider the following:

- the child's age and level of understanding as to why physical contact is made.
- the child's individual characteristics e.g whether physical contact might be misinterpreted or resented
- the location where the contact takes place. It should NEVER take place in private without a witness being present.
- minimum physical contact should be used
- Physical contact will NEVER be used as a punishment and **all forms of corporal punishment are prohibited.**
- Any complaints about any form of physical contact should be dealt with under the school's complaints procedure.

During COVID pandemic staff should wherever possible minimise contact with pupils and should ensure they maintain their bubbles. Wherever possible if needing to make close contact with a child appropriate PPE should be worn.

Any physical restraint is only permissible when a child is in imminent danger of inflicting an injury on himself/herself or on another, and then only as a last resort, when all efforts to diffuse the situation have failed. Another member of staff should, if possible, be present to act as a witness. All incidents of the use of physical restraint should be recorded in writing and reported immediately to the Headteacher who will decide what to do next.

Relationships with parents and carers

All staff should strive to establish productive relationships with parents and carers. This includes providing parents and carers with accessible and accurate information about their child's progress, involving parents and carers in important decisions about their child's education, considering parents and carer's views and perspectives and following the school policies on communication and involvement with parents and carers.

Where an interaction with a parent or carer becomes aggressive or offensive, the interaction should be ended politely and firmly, with assistance summoned where required. Risk assessments should be undertaken prior to any contact with parents/carers where aggression or violence is anticipated and the appropriate lone working procedures must be instigated.

Relationships with colleagues

Staff should strive to maintain co-operative and effective working relationships. Relationships should be courteous, reasonable and fair at all times. Staff should carry out all reasonable and lawful instructions given by those in authority to the best of their ability.

The Head and Deputy-head teachers should exercise any leadership and management responsibilities in a respectful, inclusive and fair way, and in accordance with school policies, contractual obligations and national standards.

The Head and Deputy-head teachers must ensure staff are aware of, and have access to, the relevant policies and procedures that affect their work.

Other employment

Members of the SLT must not engage in any other business or take up any additional appointment without the written consent of the Headteacher. Consent will not be unreasonably withheld.

Other employees may take up additional employment without consent providing the employment does not conflict with the interests of the school or in any way weaken the confidence of the community in the individual or school.

Where an employee undertakes additional employment he/she must notify the Headteacher of the number of hours he/she is working per week, to comply with the requirements of the Working Time Directive. If the work is childcare or babysitting of families associated with the school then staff must complete the babysitting log to ensure safeguarding requirements are adhered to.

Whistle-Blowing

Whistle-blowing is when someone reports suspected wrongdoing at work, also referred to as 'making a disclosure which is in the public interest'. This may be if they feel something is not right, or illegal, or if someone is neglecting their duties, including:

- someone's health, safety or welfare is in danger
- damage to the environment
- a criminal offence

- the company isn't obeying the law (for example not having the right insurance in place)
- covering up wrongdoing

Whistle-blowing is the mechanism by which staff can voice their concerns, made in good faith, without fear or repercussion. Early Years' staff have termly meetings with Sarah McGreevy (Deputy Head with responsibility for Early Years & Deputy DSL), and a log is kept of those meetings. These meetings provide an opportunity for staff to voice any concerns they may have.

Staff should acknowledge their individual responsibilities to bring matters of concern to the attention of the Senior Leadership Team and/or relevant external agencies. This is particularly important where the welfare of children may be at risk. (For full details refer to Whistleblowing policy)

REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed every two years.

Reviewed October 2020

Judith Evans

Chair of Governors

Ruth Darvill

Headteacher



I have read the Staff Code of Conduct 2020 and agree to abide by its contents

Name:

Signed:

Date: