



Staff Code of Conduct

Berkeley Primary School

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Berkeley Primary School Staff Code of Conduct



Introduction

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 and visitors must reflect our Code of Conduct.

Staff are expected to be conscientious and loyal to the aims and objectives of Berkeley Primary School, and must consistently apply and follow all policies. In addition, staff are required to develop and maintain the professional character of the school.

All staff employed by Berkeley 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.

This code describes the standards of conduct and practice that Berkeley Primary School employees should follow when working with children. It is designed to work with other advice or codes of conduct produced by employers or national bodies, not to replace or take priority over them. Teachers should also abide by the Teacher's Standards.

Whilst this document covers a wide range of situations, it is recognised that it cannot cover every eventuality, however the principles contained within it must apply in every circumstance. This policy should be read and cross-referenced with all other policies.

Purpose

The Code of Conduct is designed to give clear guidance on the standards of behaviour all staff are expected to observe. Staff are in a 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.

The purpose of the code is to protect and promote the interests of workers and the children they work with. All adults who come into contact with children and young people, in their work, have a legal and moral duty to keep children and young people safe and to protect them from sexual, physical and/or emotional harm. The duty that rests on an individual is to ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure the welfare of a child or young person is paramount.

The code aims to:

- Keep children safe by clarifying which behaviours constitute safe practice and which behaviours should be avoided;
- Assist adults working with children to work safely and responsibly and to monitor their own standards and practice;
- Support managers in setting clear expectations of behaviour and/or codes of practice relevant to the services being provided;
- Give a clear message that unlawful or unsafe behaviour is unacceptable and that, where appropriate, disciplinary or legal action will be taken;
- Support safer recruitment practice;
- Minimise the risk of misplaced or malicious allegations made against adults who work with children;
- Reduce the incidence of positions of trust being abused or misused.

Reporting incidents

Any incidents of concern should always be reported to a senior manager and recorded, or in cases where there is an allegation or risk of harm to a child to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or following the Whistle Blowing Policy.



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Berkeley Primary School Commitment

Berkeley Primary School has a duty of care to workers and as part of this duty it will ensure:

- Appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures are in place in all areas that undertake work with children, that they are continually monitored and reviewed and made easily accessible to all workers;
- Workers are treated fairly and reasonably in all circumstances and if subject to an allegation will be supported and the principles of natural justice applied;
- The safe practice of workers is continually promoted through supervision and training;
- Workers have readily available access to senior management or other emergency contact person;
- Guidance is readily available to both adults and children;
- A culture of openness and support is fostered;
- Readily known systems are in place for situations and concerns, from either party, to be raised and recorded and for their outcomes to be analysed in order to review procedures and working practices;
- Workers are not placed in situations which may render them vulnerable without appropriate safeguards and risk assessments being in place, this is particularly relevant where physical intervention may be required or lone-working;
- Clear and easily accessible Whistle Blowing policy and online safety policies are in place.
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Personal Conduct

Setting an example

Staff 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 and be punctual to school, meetings and other items on the school timetable;
- Demonstrate the highest standards of conduct in order to encourage our pupils to do the same;
- Meet deadlines and do what they have said they're going to do.

Pupil Development

Staff must:

- Comply with all school policies and procedures that support the well-being and development of pupils.
- Co-operate and collaborate with colleagues, schools and with external agencies where necessary to support the development of pupils.
- Follow reasonable instructions that support the development of pupils.

Confidentiality

Staff must:

- Keep private and sensitive information confidential at all times and only share it with relevant people when it is in the interests of the child to do so;
- Not use information to intimidate, humiliate or embarrass the child;
- Be aware of the need to listen and support children whilst understanding the importance of not promising to keep secrets;
- Never request a child to keep secrets.

Honesty and Integrity

Staff must:

- Maintain the highest standards of honesty and integrity in their work. This includes the handling and claiming of money.
- 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.



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Conduct Outside of 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 inform the Headteacher, as soon as able, if they or a close relative has been arrested.
- 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 (unless permission with the Headteacher has been sought).
- Staff must follow the 'Acceptable Use Policy'
- Not engage in inappropriate use of social network sites which may bring themselves, schools or wider community into disrepute.
- Inform the Headteacher if they work outside school. Staff may undertake work outside school, either paid or voluntary, provided that it does not conflict with the interests of the school nor be to a level which may contravene the working time regulations or affect an individual's work performance.

Making a professional judgement

Staff must:

- Make judgements about their behaviour in order to secure the best interests and welfare of the child;
- Record judgements taken and share them with a senior manager;
- Ensure actions taken are warranted, proportionate, safe and applied equitably;
- Discuss any misunderstandings, accidents or threats with a senior manager;
- Be aware of their position of trust and ensure an unequal balance of power is not used for their own or others personal advantage or gratification;
- Not use their position to intimidate, bully, humiliate, threaten, coerce or undermine children;
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries and avoid behaviour which might be misinterpreted by others;
- Not promote relationships which create a personal friendship or are of a sexual nature, or which may become so.

Dress Code

Staff must:

- Dress professionally to show pride, effort, respect for oneself and one's profession. Adults in the school are role models for learners in the school; therefore they have a responsibility to model appropriate dress and appearance;
- Be neat, clean, smart and tidy, wearing clothes, including shoes, which are appropriate, safe and conservative. The staff dress code is smart rather than casual. This is not a policy meant to detail every eventuality, it is up to individual staff to decide whether their appearance is appropriate guided by the principles above. On a normal working day, jeans and trainers are inappropriate dress for staff. Smart PE kit may be worn for whole days if you have PE;
- Ensure clothes cover themselves appropriately (particularly stomach and cleavage).

Personal/living space

Staff must:

- Not invite a child into their home or any home or domestic setting frequented by them, unless the reason for this has been firmly established and agreed with parents and senior managers or the home has been designated as a work place e.g. childminders, foster carers;
- Be vigilant in maintaining their own privacy and mindful of the need to avoid placing themselves in vulnerable situations;
- Not ask children to undertake personal jobs or errands;
- Maintain professional boundaries.



Gifts, rewards and favouritism

Staff must:

- Be aware of their organisation's policy on the giving and receiving of gifts;
- Ensure that gifts received or given in situations that may be misconstrued are declared;
- Only give gifts to an individual child as part of an agreed reward system;
- Ensure, that when operating reward systems, methods and criteria for selection of children for awards are fair and transparent.

Communication (including the use of technology)

Staff must:

- Follow the Acceptable Use Policy;
- Ensure communication takes place within clear and explicit professional boundaries, this includes the wider use of technology such as mobile phones text messaging, e-mails, digital cameras, videos, web-cams, websites and blogs;
- Always speak and behave to colleagues, parents and children in a professional manner;
- Listen to other people, not interrupt and be respectful of others opinions and beliefs;
- Not share any personal information with a child;
- Not request, or respond to, any personal information requests from a child, other than that which may be appropriate as part of their professional role;
- Not give their personal contact details to children, including their mobile number, home phone or personal e-mail address, unless the need to do so is agreed with senior management and parents;
- Only use equipment e.g. mobile phones, provided by their organisation to communicate with children, making sure that parents/carers have given permission for this form of communication to be used;
- Only make contact with children for professional reasons and in accordance with organisational policy;
- Use standard English when talking to colleagues, parents and children.

Photography and Videos

Staff must:

- Follow the Acceptable Use Policy;
- Be clear about the purpose of any activity involving photography and what will happen to the images when the activity is concluded;
- Be able to justify the reason for having images of children in their possession;
- Avoid making images in one to one situations or situations that may be construed as secretive or which show a single child with no surrounding context;
- Immediately report any concerns if any inappropriate or intrusive images are found;
- Have parental consent to take, display and/or distribute any images of children;
- Not use images that are inappropriate, may cause distress or offence;

Access to inappropriate images and internet usage

Staff must:

- Not access, make or store indecent images of children on the internet, to do so would be illegal and lead to a criminal investigation;
- Not store images of children, gathered as a result of their work, on personal equipment;
- Follow their organisation's guidance and Acceptable Use Policy on the use of IT equipment;
- Ensure that children are not exposed to unsuitable material through ICT;
- Ensure that any materials shown to children are age appropriate.

Social Contact

Staff must:



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- Not have social contact with children unless the reason for this has been firmly established and agreed with Senior Managers;
- Not have secret social contact with children and/or their parent(s);
- Advise senior management of any social contact that has occurred which may give rise to concern;
- Report and record any situation which may place a child at risk or which may compromise the organisation or their own professional standing.

Physical Contact

Staff must:

- Be aware that even well intentioned physical contact may be misconstrued by the child, an observer or by anyone to whom this action is described;
- Only have physical contact with a child when it is necessary and in ways which are appropriate to their professional or agreed role and responsibilities, never touch a child in a way which may be considered indecent;
- Be aware of the child's reactions or feelings and, as far as possible, only use a level of contact which is acceptable to the child and for the minimum time necessary;
- Seek permission from the child or the parent, if the child is very young, before physical contact is made and agree what contact is acceptable;
- Not assume that when a child is distressed they seek physical comfort;
- Always be prepared to report and explain actions and accept that all physical contact is open to scrutiny;
- Always encourage children, where possible, to undertake self-care tasks independently;
- Be aware of cultural or religious views about touching and sensitive to issues of gender;
- Where there is regular physical contact needed, the nature of this must be agreed with senior management and the parent as part of a formally agreed plan;
- Where a child initiates inappropriate physical contact, you must sensitively deter them and help them understand the importance of personal boundaries.

Personal/Intimate Care

Staff must:

- Adhere to the organisation's intimate care guidelines;
- Make other staff aware of the task being undertaken;
- Explain to the child what is happening;
- Carefully and sensitively observe the emotional responses of the child, and record and report any concerns to senior management and parents, if appropriate;
- Respect children's privacy at all times;
- Avoid any physical contact when children are in a state of undress, other than as part of an agreed care plan;
- Not change in the same place as children;
- Not shower or bathe with children;
- Not assist with any personal care task which a child can undertake themselves.

Sexual Contact

Staff must:

- Not engage in sexual activity with or in the presence of a child, or cause or incite a child to engage in or watch sexual activity, to do so would be considered a criminal offence;
- Not have any form of communication which could be interpreted as sexually suggestive or provocative or make sexual remarks to, or about a child either verbally, written or electronically;
- Not discuss their own sexual relationships with or in the presence of children;
- Ensure relationships take place within boundaries of respect and professionalism;
- Ensure language, attitudes and demeanour do not give rise to comment or speculation;
- Be aware that consistently conferring inappropriate special attention and favour upon a child might be construed as part of a grooming process, and as such will give rise to concerns about behaviour.



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Behaviour management

Staff must:

- Not use any form of degrading treatment to punish a child;
- Not use sarcasm, demeaning or insensitive comments;
- Ensure any sanctions and rewards are part of an agreed behaviour management policy;
- Try to defuse situations before they escalate;
- Never use corporal punishment;
- Follow the behaviour policy and only use physical intervention in exceptional circumstances and as a last resort;
- When using physical intervention, use the minimum force necessary and techniques in-line with recommended policy and practice and always report and document the incident;
- Be mindful of other factors which may be impacting on a child's behaviour, i.e. bullying, changes in home circumstances;
- Immediately report any concerns or if any inappropriate or intrusive images are found.

Classroom Environment

Staff must:

- Ensure classrooms and communal areas are orderly, tidy, safe and well kept;
- Ensure items that should be locked away are (i.e. medication);
- Ensure resources are labelled, stored correctly, of high quality and treated with respect;
- Keep displays current and ensure they are used to support and celebrate learning in line with the Display Policy.