



## Batford Nursery School & Day Care

### BATFORD NURSERY SCHOOL Code of Conduct for Employees

|                              |                                                                                       |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Version</b>               | 1.6                                                                                   |
| <b>Based on Model Policy</b> | HfL Model Code of Conduct for Employees (Sep 2022), incorporating Social Media Policy |
| <b>Review body:</b>          | Headteacher                                                                           |
| <b>Date issued:</b>          | Oct 2024                                                                              |
| <b>Review frequency:</b>     | Two years                                                                             |
| <b>Target audience:</b>      | All stakeholders                                                                      |

| Version | Date      | Notes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|---------|-----------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| V1.0    | Sep-2017  | HfL model policy with addition of own provisions 2.3-5, 3.7-.8, 5.3, 11.4                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| V1.1    | Feb 2019  | New model policy issued 16 April 2018<br>Removal of paras. not relevant to children in early years.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| V1.2    | Jan 2020  | Incorporation of social media guidelines (Section 9)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| V1.3    | June 2020 | New HfL model policy issued April 2020, - reference to Keeping Children Safe in Education (Section 2); School position on providing references (Section 6); Declaration of outside interests, Disclosing allegations made outside work, Work related social events (Section 7).<br>School's own policy removes paras. not relevant to early years and includes social media guidelines (Section 8) |
| V1.4    | Jan 2021  | Updated with key changes to Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2020                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| V1.5    | Oct 2022  | Updated in line with new model policy: minor changes to wording and references to other policies                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| V1.6    | Oct 2024  | Minor changes to wording – see highlighted wording.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |

Batford Nursery School and Day Care is committed to:

- Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.
- Eliminating discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations between different groups. These factors were considered in the formation and review of this policy and will be adhered to in its implementation and application across the whole school community.
- Promoting the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs: any school member or visitor expressing opinions contrary to fundamental British Values, including 'extremist' views, will be actively challenged.

## BUILDING STRONG FOUNDATIONS FOR OUR CHILDREN

Batford Nursery School and Day Care, Holcroft Road, Harpenden AL5 5BQ



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# 1. Objective, Scope and Principles

This Code of Conduct is designed to give clear guidance on the standards of behaviour that all Batford Nursery School staff and those acting on behalf of the school are expected to observe. All staff are role models, and are in a unique position of influence, and must adhere to behaviour that sets a good example to all the children within the school.

As a member of an early years community, each employee has an individual responsibility to maintain their reputation and the reputation of Batford Nursery School & Day Care, whether inside or outside working hours.

This Code of Conduct applies to all employees of Batford Nursery School. This Code of Conduct does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and it may be amended at any time.

In addition to this Code of Conduct, all employees engaged to work under Teachers' Terms and Conditions of Employment are required to adhere to the 'Teachers' Standards 2012', in particular in relation to this policy Part 2 of the Teachers' Standards – Personal and Professional Conduct.

This Code helps all staff to understand what behaviour is and is not acceptable. Regard should also be given to the disciplinary rules set out in the school's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure, which is published on the Shared Policies drive.

Staff should be aware that a failure to comply with the school's Code of Conduct could result in disciplinary action including but not limited to dismissal.

Where this policy requires an employee to disclose matters from their personal life the school will consider the circumstances and context of each matter before determining whether any further action is required.

## 2. Principles

All staff are expected to familiarise themselves and comply with all school policies and procedures.

Staff must not undermine fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

All staff must attend work in accordance with their contract of employment and associated terms and conditions in relation to hours, days of work and holidays.

### 2.1. Setting an example

All staff set examples of behaviour and conduct which can be copied by pupils. Therefore, all staff must:

- avoid using inappropriate or offensive language at all times
- demonstrate high standards of conduct in order to encourage our pupils to do the same
- avoid putting themselves at risk of allegations of abusive or unprofessional conduct.

## 3. Safeguarding Children

Staff have a duty to have regard to *Keeping Children Safe in Education* throughout their employment and to abide by the duties placed upon them within this.

Staff have a duty to safeguard children from physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse and neglect.

The duty to safeguard children includes the duty to report concerns about a child or colleague to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

The DSLs and Deputy DSLs are:

**Sarah Hedges**, Gemma Bacon, Laura Butler, Jenni Voskanian

Staff have access to the school's Child Protection Policy and Whistleblowing Procedure (published on the Shared Policies drive on the school server) and must be familiar with these documents.

Staff should treat children with respect and dignity and must not seriously demean or undermine pupils, their parents or carers, or colleagues.

Staff should not demonstrate behaviours that may be perceived as sarcasm, making jokes at the expense of children, embarrassing or humiliating children, discriminating against or favouring children.

Staff should not talk about children in a manner which could cause distress to them or their parents/carers or which may cause other children to perceive that they are seen as difficult or naughty.

Staff should always have regard to a child's developmental stage when dealing with children's behaviour, treating them with courtesy and kindness and using explanation and positive language as part of the learning.

Staff must take reasonable care of children under their supervision with the aim of ensuring their safety and welfare.

Staff should be aware that the management of any safeguarding concerns is dealt in accordance with the latest statutory guidance as detailed in Keeping Children Safe in Education and includes any allegations that meet the harm test and/or allegations considered to be low level concerns. (i.e. those which do not meet the harm test).

### **3.1. Low Level Concerns**

The term 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant, it means that the behaviour towards a child does not meet the harm test threshold.

A low-level concern is any concern that an adult working in or on behalf of the school may have acted in a way that:

- is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work
- does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:

- being over friendly with children
- having favourites
- taking photographs of children on their mobile phone
- engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door
- using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language.

## **4. Relationships**

Staff must declare any relationships that they may have with pupils, staff, clients, contractors suppliers or parents outside of the school. This may include mutual membership of social groups, tutoring, and/or family connections.

Existing or new personal relationships at work between colleagues should be declared to the Headteacher where there is a potential for this to impact upon the work of either (for example: a risk of allegations of bias or conflict of interest). The Headteacher will treat declarations in confidence.

Staff should not assume that the school is aware of any such connections and should use Appendix 2 and/or 3 to make a declaration.

#### **4.1. Relationships with pupils**

Relationships with children must be professional at all times. Physical relationships with children are not permitted and may lead to a criminal conviction.

Encouraging a relationship to develop in a way which may lead to a sexual relationship or any other inappropriate relationship will be viewed as a grave breach of trust.

Physical contact with children should be given careful consideration. Young children need physical comfort if they are distressed or injured. However, it is not appropriate to use force to make a child compliant. Staff should avoid rough play or lifting, swinging or throwing children.

Behaviour giving rise to concern should also be reported, which includes pupils seeking affection, being sexually provocative or exhibiting overly familiar behaviour.

If a member of staff is a parent of a child in school, it is understood that they will come into contact with students and parents outside of work, it is expected that staff would use their discretion and maintain appropriate relationships at all times.

### **5. Children's Development**

Staff must comply with all school policies and procedures that support the well-being and development of pupils.

Staff must co-operate and collaborate with colleagues and with external agencies where necessary to support the development of pupils.

Staff must follow reasonable instructions that support the development of pupils.

### **6. Honesty and Integrity**

Staff must maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their work. This includes the handling and claiming of money and the use of the school's property and facilities.

All staff must comply with the Bribery Act 2010. A person may be found 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 school's Whistleblowing procedure (published on the shared Policies drive).

For Hertfordshire schools, for further information see the HCC Anti Bribery Policy for Schools available on The Grid.

Gifts from suppliers or associates of the school must be declared to the Headteacher, with the exception of "one off" token gifts from children or parents. A record will be kept of all gifts received.

Personal gifts from individual members of staff to children are inappropriate and could be misinterpreted and may lead to disciplinary action.

Staff must not act on behalf of the school unless they have the authority to do so.

Professional references from the school will be provided by the Headteacher. References or endorsements on social media given by other members of staff must make clear that they are provided in a personal capacity.

### **7. Conduct outside of Work**

Staff must not engage in conduct outside work which could seriously damage the reputation of the school or Day Care or the employee's own reputation or the reputation of other members of the Batford community.

In accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education, any conduct or behaviour that indicates an employee may not be suitable to work with children, including such behaviour outside of the workplace which may or may not involve children, is likely to be regarded as unacceptable.

For example, should a member of staff be involved in domestic violence at home and no children were involved, the school will need to consider what triggered these actions and question whether a child in the school could trigger the same reaction, therefore be put at risk.

In addition, criminal offences that involve violence or possession or use of illegal drugs or sexual misconduct are likely to be regarded as unacceptable where it brings into question an employee's suitability or ability to do their role/work in an educational setting.

Staff may undertake work outside Batford Nursery School and Day Care, either paid or voluntary, provided that it does not conflict with the interests of the setting nor be to a level which may contravene the working time regulations or affect an individual's work performance in the setting.

It is recommended that permission is sought from the Headteacher in advance of entering into other work arrangements.

- Staff *must* disclose any work outside school or outside business interests where there is a potential conflict of interests with their employment at the school.
- If any allegation of wrongdoing occurs in a staff member's work outside school (whether or not they deny this) which may have a bearing on their employment, they must disclose this immediately to the Headteacher.

It is not acceptable for staff to enter into private childcare arrangements with parents.

Forming inappropriate relationships or friendships with children or young people who are pupils under the age of 18 at another school/college will be viewed as inappropriate and impact upon the school's ability to trust the member of staff to maintain professional boundaries with pupils at this school.

A work-related social event is considered to be an extension of the workplace and, as such, the standards of behaviour expected at these events is in line with this policy.

## **8. E-Safety and Internet Use**

Staff must exercise caution at all times both inside and outside of work when using information technology and should be aware of the risks to themselves and others.

You must not engage in inappropriate use of social media sites which may bring yourselves, us, our community or us into disrepute. You should ensure that you adopt suitably high security settings on any personal profiles you may have.

Employees must not abuse their position of trust with pupils including, but not limited to:

- Posting photographs of pupils on sites not owned by the school
- Commenting about or naming pupils.

Photographs or video footage of children should only be taken using School or Day Care equipment, for purposes authorised by the setting. Any such use should always be transparent and only occur where parental consent has been given. The resultant files from such recording or taking of photographs must be stored in accordance with the setting's procedures on School or Day Care equipment.

Batford Nursery School and Day Care reserves the right to monitor, intercept and review, without further notice, employee activities using School/Day Care IT resources and communications systems, including but not limited to social media postings and activities, to ensure that School/Day Care rules are being complied with and for legitimate business purposes.

Further details on this can be found in the Online Safety Policy and Acceptable Use Agreements in the Shared Policies file.

## 8.1. Social media

Staff should exercise caution in their use of all social media. This policy covers all social media platforms, including, but not limited to: Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube, TikTok and message boards. It also includes any website where you can contribute or edit content and instant messaging services i.e., WhatsApp, Snapchat etc.

All forms of social media use are covered by this policy, this can include but is not limited to; posting comments, pictures or videos, blogging, using forums, sending private messages, endorsing other people's content, re-tweeting/circulating posts or adding/editing content on a website.

Employees must limit their personal use of social media on their own equipment to rest breaks such as lunch or break times. The use of personal devices must be discreet and not in the presence of pupils. Personal use may not interfere with employment responsibilities or productivity and comply with this policy.

Staff must not engage in inappropriate use of social media sites which may bring themselves, Batford Nursery School & Day Care, its community or employer into disrepute, even indirectly. Employees must not use social media to:

- defame or disparage the school, its employees or any third party
- harass, bully or unlawfully discriminate against staff or third parties
- make false or misleading statements
- impersonate colleagues or third parties.

Staff must not include the school's logo or other trademarks in any social media posting, unless expressly authorised to do so.

Staff should ensure that they adopt suitably high security settings on any personal profiles they may have.

Staff should exercise caution in their use of all social media or any other web based presence that they may have, including written content, videos or photographs, and views expressed either directly or by 'liking' certain pages or posts established by others.

Employees should note that use of social media whilst absent from work can create the impression that they are well enough to be working. Although this is not necessarily the case staff are guided to be mindful of their use of social media during any absence from work.

The school reserves the right to monitor, intercept and review employees' use of social media. The school considers valid reasons for checking an employee's internet usage include suspicions that the employee has:

- been using social media when they should have been working;
- acted in a way that is in breach of the rules set out in this policy.

The employee may be required to remove any social media content that the school considers to constitute a breach of this policy. Failure to comply with such a request may in itself result in disciplinary action.

### Guidelines for responsible use of social media

- Employees should make it clear in social media postings that they are speaking on their own behalf. If it can be determined from your account that you work for Batford Nursery School & Day Care (either visually, verbally or written), employees must make it clear that any content and views are their own – please include "these views are my own and not that of my employer" on your profile.

- Employees should be respectful to others when making any statement on social media and be aware that the employee is personally responsible for all communications which will be published on the internet for anyone to see. Employees should ensure that they use privacy and access settings whilst being aware that they cannot control the use of their postings by others.
- Using emojis, GIF's or Memes do have their benefits, however it is important to use them correctly and appropriately. Employees should be aware that messages and comments that include emojis may affect the way text is read. Emojis may mean different things to different people, the use of them may mean the text is deemed inappropriate. If an employee chooses to use emojis, GIF's or Memes they should ensure they are appropriate and easily understood within the context.
- The employee should also ensure any content they post on social media are consistent with the professional image the employee presents to colleagues, pupils and parents.
- If the employee is uncertain or concerned about the appropriateness of any statement or posting, they are advised to refrain from posting it until they have discussed it with the Headteacher.
- If an employee becomes aware of social media content that disparages or reflects poorly on the school, they should contact the Headteacher.

#### Business use of social media

If an employee is contacted for comments about the school for publication anywhere, including in any social media outlet, the enquiry should be directed to the Headteacher and the employee should not respond without written approval.

## **9. Confidentiality**

Where staff have access to confidential information about children or their parents or carers, staff must not reveal such information except to those colleagues who have a professional role in relation to the child.

All staff may at some point witness actions which need to be confidential.

For example, where a child is bullied by another child (or by a member of staff), once reported and dealt with in accordance with the appropriate School or Day Care procedure, it must not be discussed outside the setting, including with other staff, parents or carers.

Staff have an obligation to share with the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead any information which gives rise to concern about the safety or welfare of a child. Staff must **never** promise a child that they will not act on information that they are told by the child.

Staff are not allowed to make any comment to the media about the setting, its performance, governance, children or parents without written approval. Any media queries should be directed to the Headteacher.

## **10. Dress and Appearance**

All staff must dress in a manner that is appropriate to their role and promotes a professional image.

Staff should dress in a manner that is not offensive, revealing or sexually provocative, e.g. no low cut tops, bare midriffs, very short shorts / skirts.

Staff should dress in a manner that is absent from political or other contentious slogans. If clothing has wording or pictures on it, this should not be offensive. Footwear should not pose a health and safety risk.

Where employees are transitioning to live in the gender with which they identify, the school will apply and adapt this code sensitively and flexibly.

The school understands that there may be circumstances that make it difficult for some employees to follow a code (for example, if an employee has a disability or is experiencing certain menopausal symptoms). If this is the case, the school will discuss with the employee how to support the employee and make reasonable adjustments where possible.

The Headteacher has the final say on whether clothing and appearance is appropriate.

Staff should dress in a manner which complies with the sun safety policy in hot weather, as an example to others.

## **11. Compliance**

All staff must complete the form in Appendix 1 to confirm they have read, understood and agreed to comply with the code of conduct. This form should then be signed and dated on an annual basis and/or each time the code is amended.

You should be aware that a failure to comply with the Code of Conduct could result in disciplinary action including but not limited to dismissal. Please see our disciplinary policy for further information.

## Appendix 1: Confirmation of compliance

I hereby confirm that I have read, understood and agree to comply with Batford Nursery School's code of conduct.

Name ..... Role .....

Signed ..... Date .....

Once completed, signed and dated, please return this form to the School Office

## Appendix 2: Relationships with children outside of work declaration

It is recognised that there may be circumstances whereby employees of the school are known to children outside of work. .

Staff must declare any relationship outside of school that they may have with children registered at Batford Nursery School & Day Care.

| Employee Name | Child's Name | Relationship |
|---------------|--------------|--------------|
|               |              |              |
|               |              |              |

I can confirm that I am fully aware of the code of conduct relating to contact out of work with children in line with this policy.

If I am tutoring a pupil outside of the School I am aware that the following must be adhered to:

- I do not, at any point, teach the child in question as part of my daily timetable - this is a stipulation of such tutoring.
- I emphasise to parents that this is done completely independently of the school
- No monies come through the school at any point, either informally (e.g., via the pupil) or formally
- No private tutoring has/will take place on the school premises.

I confirm that if these circumstances change at any time I will complete a new form to ensure the school is aware of any relationships.

Name ..... Role .....

Signed ..... Date .....

Once completed, signed and dated, please return this form to the School Office.

### Appendix 3: Relationships outside of work declaration

It is recognised that there may be circumstances whereby employees of the school are known to others connected with the school outside of work.

Staff must declare any relationship outside of the school that they may have with others that could create a conflict of interest.

| Employee Name | 3 <sup>rd</sup> party name | Relationship |
|---------------|----------------------------|--------------|
|               |                            |              |
|               |                            |              |
|               |                            |              |

I can confirm that I am fully aware of the code of conduct and relationships at work policy, and I am not in breach of these.

I confirm that if these circumstances change at any time I will complete a new form to ensure the school is aware of any relationships.

Name ..... Role .....

Signed ..... Date .....

Once completed, signed and dated, please return this form to the School Office.