



FOREST OF DEAN COMMUNITY SCHOOLS FEDERATION

PARKEND PRIMARY & YORKLEY PRIMARY

Staff Code of Conduct Policy 2024 - 2026

Ratified: November 2024

Signed by:

Executive
Headteacher

Chair of Governors

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Aim of this code of conduct

The Forest of Dean Community Schools Federation expects all pupils to receive high-quality teaching and learning in a positive and respectful environment.

Employees at the school should ensure that their own behaviour, and the manner in which they conduct themselves with colleagues, pupils, parents and other stakeholders, sets a positive and professional example for pupils.

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

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

We recognise 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.

This policy forms part of a staff member's contract of employment and failure to comply with it, along with the associated school policies, may result in disciplinary action being taken, including legal action where this is warranted.

This Code applies to all people working within or on behalf of the Federation, regardless of the contractual basis of the engagement, including:

- Direct employment by the school under a contract of employment
- Secondments (both to and from school/other schools/other organisations)
- Temporary assignments, including agency workers, work placements, apprentices and trainees
- Governors
- Employees acting as members of companies or voluntary organisations

Reference to 'employee' and 'staff' throughout this CODE are taken to include all of the above categories and any similar working arrangements.

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.

1- Professional behaviour and conduct

Staff are expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct such that public confidence in their integrity is sustained.

Staff will:

- Have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school.
- Maintain high standards in their attendance and punctuality.
- Take care of themselves, their wellbeing and others affected by their activity at school.
- Cooperate with school leaders in meeting their duties under the relevant regulations.
- Treat pupils, parents, colleagues and external contacts with dignity and respect.
- Observe proper boundaries appropriate to their professional position, showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others.
- Inform the Executive Headteacher if they are subject to a criminal conviction, caution, ban, police enquiry, investigation or pending prosecution.
- Be aware that professional behaviour and conduct is expected to be extended to extracurricular trips and visits.
- Act appropriately in terms of the views they express – in particular, political views – and the use of school resources at all times.

Staff will not:

- Use foul or abusive language.
- Perpetrate discrimination, bullying, harassment, or intimidation, including physical, sexual and verbal abuse.
- Misuse or misrepresent their position, qualifications, or experience.
- Seek to bring the school into disrepute.
- Use school resources for political purposes.

2- Safeguarding pupils

In accordance with KCSIE, staff have a responsibility to safeguard pupils.

Employees must report all safeguarding concerns, including low level concerns, to a DSL / DDSL / Executive Headteacher. A low-level concern is any concern, no matter how small, that an adult working in or on behalf of the school has 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 Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

3- Appearance and dress

The school expects that staff will:

- 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.
- Not wear clothing that could have implications for the health and safety of themselves, or others in their care.
- Remember that they are role models for pupils, and that their dress and appearance should reflect this.
- Not dress in a way that would cause embarrassment to pupils, parents, colleagues, or other stakeholders.
- Ensure that, if visible, tattoos do not cause offence to others; if tattoos are likely to cause offence, they must be covered up whilst in work.
- Ensure that jewellery and piercings are minimal and, in the health and safety interests of both staff and children, avoid anything that could catch or be caught by pupils.

4- Attendance

The school expects that staff will:

- Attend work in accordance with their contract of employment and associated terms and conditions in relation to hours, days of work and holidays.
- Comply with the school's notification of sickness absence procedures.
- Make routine medical and dental appointments outside of their working hours or during holidays where possible.
- Refer to the school's Staff Leave of Absence Policy if they need time off for any reason other than personal illness.
- Follow the school's absence reporting procedure when they are absent from work due to illness or injury.

5- Conduct outside of work

Staff may undertake work outside school, either paid or voluntary, provided that it does not conflict with the interests of the school.

Staff will not engage in outside work, which could seriously damage the reputation and standing of the school, the employee's own reputation, or the reputation of other members of the school community. Staff will also not engage in outside work at a level, which may contravene The Working Time Regulations 1998 or affect an individual's work performance.

Staff committing offences that involve violence, possession or use of illegal drugs, or sexual misconduct is unacceptable, and will result in disciplinary procedures in line with the school's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

Staff will not engage in inappropriate use of social network sites, which may bring themselves, the school, school community or employer into disrepute.

6- Smoking, e-cigarettes, alcohol, and other substances

Staff will not smoke or vape on, or within the school / school boundaries, at the entrance of the school premises and whenever in the sight of pupils, parents or visitors.

Staff will not smoke or vape whilst working with or supervising pupils off-site, such as when on educational visits and trips.

Staff will report for work and remain in a condition to perform their duties free from the effects of drugs, alcohol or any other substances that may hinder judgement and cause changes in behaviour; this does not include over-the-counter painkillers such as paracetamol.

7- Health and safety

Staff will:

- Be familiar with, and adhere to, the school's Health and Safety Policy and ensure that they take every action to keep themselves and everyone in the school environment safe and well.
- Comply with health and safety regulations, adhering to any rules, routines and procedures in place, and cooperate with school leaders and colleagues on matters relating to health and safety.
- Use the correct equipment and tools for the job and any protective clothing supplied.
- Report any Health and Safety Concerns they have noted themselves and not rely or hope someone else will pass it on.

8- Conflicts of interests

The Federation is aware that situations may arise where family interests or loyalties conflict with those of the school; however, staff have an obligation to act in the best interests of the school community to avoid situations where there may be a potential conflict of interest.

All staff will be able to demonstrate that they do not have a vested interest in any decision-making or budget spending.

Failure to make a relevant declaration of interests is a serious breach of trust and, therefore, if employees are in doubt about a declaration, they are advised to contact the school or trade union.

Any member of staff found to be withholding information about a conflict of interest will be subject to disciplinary action in line with the Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

Staff and volunteers will be responsible for:

- Declaring any conflicts of interest.
- Identifying any conflicts of interest that have not been previously declared.
- Following the school's Whistleblowing Policy where there are concerns that a conflict of interest has not been declared, and an individual might have subsequently benefitted.
- Ensuring that all individuals in a discussion do not have a vested interest in the subject.

- Consider whether they need to declare their relationship with any individual where this might cause a conflict with school activities.

Financial inducements

Staff will:

- Familiarise themselves and comply with the school's financial regulations.
- Declare to the governing board, 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.
 - Non-excessive gifts offered by parents or pupils to school staff to express their gratitude, but staff members should always refuse monetary gifts.
 - Hospitality in the form of meals and drinks where it is part of a normal business meeting.
 - Authorised visits 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 – any such gifts should be returned.
- Declare any gift that cannot be returned to the governing board, who will decide how it will be used.
- Only accept offers to specific events after authorisation from the governing board.

Contacts

Staff members will not use school business contacts for acquiring materials or services at trade/discount prices for non-school activities, unless participating in concessionary schemes arranged by trade unions or other such groups.

9- Maintaining professional relationships with pupils

The school expects that staff will:

- Maintain professional boundaries and relationships with pupils at all times, and will consider whether their actions are warranted, proportionate, safe and necessary.
- Act in an open and transparent way that would not lead to others questioning their actions.
- Ensure that they do not establish social contact with pupils for the purpose of securing a friendship, or to pursue or strengthen a relationship.
- Ensure that they do not develop personal or sexual relationships with pupils: this includes sexual remarks and discussing their own sexual relationships with, or in the presence of, pupils.
- Only contact pupils via the school's established mechanisms: personal phone numbers, email addresses or social media platforms will not be used to contact pupils.

Staff are aware that they must not:

- Correspond in a personal nature through any medium with pupils, e.g. phone calls or text messages, unless it is within the staff member's role and via an approved communication method, e.g. school emails.
- Adopt an ongoing support role beyond the scope of their position.
- Save images, videos or audio recordings of pupils on personal devices, unless authorised by the SLT or parents.
- Upload images, videos or audio recordings of pupils to any location without consent from parents and the SLT.
- Discuss or share information regarding other pupils or members of staff; staff should be aware of their surroundings when speaking to others, as their conversations may be overheard.
- Ignore instances of sexual harassment and inappropriate behaviour amongst pupils.
- Allow pupils to access staff members' personal devices.
- Give personal gifts or special favours, or disproportionately single specific pupils out for special duties or responsibilities.

Where inappropriate contact is made with pupils, this will be raised with the Executive Headteacher, and handled in line with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Staff Code of Conduct.

If a pupil is consistently attempting to befriend or contact a member of staff on social media, the member of staff will inform the Executive Headteacher as soon as possible.

Staff are strongly discouraged from forming personal relationships with former pupils, including on social media, as well as with the parents of any pupils on social media.

In the event of the school becoming aware of a close relationship between a member of staff and a former pupil which may raise concerns about their suitability to work with children, the Executive Headteacher will contact the LA designated officer (LADO) for advice and guidance.

Appropriate language

Staff are aware that pupils should not be treated as friends. Staff will not:

- Use inappropriate names or terms of endearment.
- Allow inappropriate conversations or enquiries of a sexual nature to occur.
- Treat pupils disrespectfully or discriminatorily, based upon their perceived or actual protected characteristics.
- Subject pupils to humiliation, profanity, or vilification.
- Allow or partake in suggestive humour, banter, jokes or innuendos of a sexual nature.
- Use obscene or inappropriate gestures and language.
- Partake in personal conversations, including on the phone, where this may be overheard by pupils.
- Incorporate unconscious bias into their practise.

10- Physical contact with pupils

All staff members will respect the personal space and privacy of all pupils and will avoid situations which unnecessarily result in close physical contact.

The school understands that there are circumstances in which it is entirely necessary for staff to have physical contact with pupils, e.g. when applying first aid and assisting with intimate care, but staff will only do so in a professional and appropriate manner in line with relevant school policies.

The school acknowledges that situations may arise in which staff members will be required to use physical intervention, and in some cases reasonable force, in order to manage conflict, disruption and distressed behaviour when other measures have failed to do so. In these cases, staff will ensure that actions such as safe touch and reasonable force are used in a correct and safe manner, in accordance with the relevant legislation and national guidance and in line with the Federation 'Team Teach' training.

11-Acceptable use of technology

Staff are aware of the benefits and challenges associated with using technology in school. When using technology staff will always adhere to the various procedures, freedoms and limitations outlined in the relevant school policies, which include but are not limited to:

- Online Safety Policy including Acceptable Users.

Staff will be aware of how the use of technology can impact safeguarding and wellbeing issues, e.g. online abuse.

Staff will be vigilant to ensure their own behaviour is respectful and that pupils are using technology appropriately while under their care.

Personal devices

Personal devices are used in accordance with the provisions outlined in the policies. Any personal electronic device that is brought into school is the responsibility of the user.

Staff are not permitted to use their personal devices during lesson time, other than in an emergency.

Social media

Staff will be aware that their conduct on social media can have an impact on their role and reputation within the school.

Staff will remain mindful of their use of social media and their web-based presence including written content, videos or photographs, and views expressed directly or indirectly which may bring themselves, the school, or the school community into disrepute.

Staff are required to employ the highest security settings on any personal profiles they may have.

Staff will not engage in inappropriate use of social networking sites including contacting pupils or their family members, accepting or inviting friend requests from pupils or their family members, or following pupils or their family members on social media.

The school understands that some staff are also parents of pupils at the school and, therefore, may wish to contact other parents. When doing so, staff will exercise their professional judgement and will not contact family members on social media if this would lead to a conflict of interest.

12- Photography, images and videos

Photographs, images and videos will only be taken using school equipment – using personal mobile phones for this purpose is prohibited and taking images of pupils will not be taken for personal use.

Staff will not take images of a pupil's injury, bruising or similar (e.g. following a disclosure of abuse), even if they have been requested to do so by children's social care and staff members will not make audio recordings of any disclosure made by a pupil.

Consent for taking photographs will be obtained from parents, or the pupil themselves, if they are deemed old enough and able to make the decision for themselves.

Careful consideration will always be given to the activities which are being filmed or photographed, to ensure that images or videos are not indecent and cannot be misused.

13- Premises, equipment, and communication

Staff are responsible for:

- Being aware of and following the requirements of the School Security Procedures.
- Challenging any unidentified individuals and notifying the Executive Headteacher or member of SLT of any unauthorised person.
- Securing valuable equipment after use.
- Ensuring the security of school equipment when taken off the school premises, such as laptops.
- Accessing the school premises in accordance with the school's Key Holder Procedures and the Lone Working Policy.
- Acting in accordance with the school's Data Protection Policy.
- Reporting any security concerns.

Passwords should not be shared and access to computer systems must be kept confidential except on the express request of the Executive Headteacher or School Business Manager. Breaches of this confidentiality may be subject to disciplinary action.

School equipment that is used outside the premises, e.g. laptops, will be returned to the school when the employee leaves employment or if requested to do so by the School Business Manager and/or Executive Headteacher.

14- Data Protection and Confidentiality

All staff will be aware of their responsibilities as laid out in the schools Data Protection Policy and in line with the core principles of the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.

Staff members will not disclose sensitive information about the school or its employees. The only exception to this being when the confidential information 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. Such requests will be made to the Executive Headteacher in writing in accordance with the school's Data Protection Policy and Records Management Procedures.

Staff will ensure that:

- Confidential paper records are kept in a locked filing cabinet, drawer or safe, with restricted access, and will not be left unattended or in clear view anywhere with general access.
- Memory sticks are not used to hold personal information unless they are password-protected and fully encrypted.
- When sending confidential information staff will always check that the recipient is correct before sending.
- They involve the DPO in all data protection matters closely and in a timely manner.

Where personal information that could be considered private or confidential is taken off the premises, either in electronic or paper format, staff will take extra care to follow the same procedures for security, e.g. keeping devices under lock and key. The person taking the information from the school premises accepts full responsibility for the security of the data.

The school holds the right to take the necessary disciplinary action against a staff member if they believe them to be in breach of the above security measures.

15-Probity of records

The deliberate falsification of documents, such as references, academic qualifications, or legal documents, is unacceptable. 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.

16-Monitoring and review

All members of staff are required to familiarise themselves with this document as part of their induction programme.

17-Links with other Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

Online Safety / Acceptable Users
Allegations of Abuse against Staff

Intimate Care Policy
Complaints
Confidentiality
Mental Health and Wellbeing
Safer Recruitment
Safeguarding and Child Protection
Appraisal
Capability
Low Level Concerns