



PATHFINDER SCHOOLS

Inspiring greatness

Pathfinder Schools Code of Conduct

Principles underpinning the Pathfinder Schools Code of Conduct

- The welfare of the child is paramount.
- Staff should understand their responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils
- Staff are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions
- Staff should work, and be seen to work, in an open and transparent way
- Staff should acknowledge that deliberately invented/malicious allegations are extremely rare and that all concerns should be reported and recorded
- Staff should discuss and/or take advice promptly from their line manager if they have acted in a way which may give rise to concern
- Staff should apply the same professional standards regardless of culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and sexual orientation
- Staff should not consume or be under the influence of alcohol or any substance, including prescribed medication, which may affect their ability to care for children
- Staff should be aware that breaches of the law and other professional guidelines could result in disciplinary action being taken against them, criminal action and/or other proceedings including barring by the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) from working in regulated activity, or for acts of serious misconduct prohibition from teaching by the National College of Teaching & Leadership (NCTL).
- Staff and managers should continually monitor and review practice to ensure this guidance is followed
- Staff should be aware of and understand their establishment's child protection policy, arrangements for managing allegations against staff, staff behaviour policy, whistle blowing procedure and their Local Safeguarding Children Board LSCB procedures.
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CODE OF CONDUCT FOR STAFF

If you are an adult who works or volunteers in school you are in a position of responsibility and trust towards the children in your care. This code of conduct is to establish a safe environment where children are protected from abuse and adults are protected from false allegations of abuse or misconduct.

Responsibilities

Staff are accountable for the way in which they: exercise authority; manage risk; use resources; and safeguard children.

All staff have a responsibility to keep pupils safe and to protect them from abuse (sexual, physical and emotional), neglect and safeguarding concerns. Pupils have a right to be safe and to be treated with respect and dignity. It follows that trusted adults are expected to take

reasonable steps to ensure their safety and well-being. Failure to do so may be regarded as professional misconduct.

The safeguarding culture of a school is, in part, exercised through the development of respectful, caring and professional relationships between adults and pupils and behaviour by the adult that demonstrates integrity, maturity and good judgement.

The public, local authorities, employers and parents/carers will have expectations about the nature of professional involvement in the lives of children. When individuals accept a role working in an education setting they should understand and acknowledge the responsibilities and trust involved in that role.

Employers have duties towards their employees and others under Health and Safety legislation which requires them to take steps to provide a safe working environment for staff.

Legislation also imposes a duty on employees to take care of themselves and anyone else who may be affected by their actions or failings. An employer's Health and Safety duties and the adults' responsibilities towards children should not conflict. Safe practice can be demonstrated through the use and implementation of these guidelines.

You have a 'Duty of Care'

All staff whether paid or voluntary have a duty of care to keep young people safe and to protect them from physical and emotional harm.

This means that adults should:

- Always act, and be seen to act, in the child's best interests
- Avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions and take responsibility for their own actions and behaviour.

You are in a position of power and trust

This means that adults should not:

- Use their position to gain access to information for their own advantage and/or a child's or family's detriment.
- Use their power to intimidate, threaten, coerce or undermine pupils.
- Use their status and standing to form or promote relationships with children, which are of a sexual nature or which may become so.

You must maintain confidentiality

Adults should:

- Treat information they receive about children and young people in a discreet and confidential manner.
- In any doubt about sharing information they hold or which has been requested of them should seek advice from a senior member of staff/designated safeguarding lead.
- Need to be cautious when passing information to others about a child/young person, whilst bearing in mind that the Data Protection Act 2018 states that staff who need to share 'special category personal data' can do so without consent if it is not possible to gain consent, it cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent or if to gain consent would place a child at risk
- Need to be clear about when information can/ must be shared and in what circumstances.
- Need to know the procedures for responding to allegations against staff and to whom any concerns or allegations should be reported.

- Need to ensure that where personal information is recorded using modern technologies that systems and devices are kept secure.

You should maintain propriety and behaviour

Adults should not:

- Behave in a manner which would lead any reasonable person to question their suitability to work with children or act as a role model.
- Make sexual remarks to or about a pupil (including email, text messages, phone or letter).
- Use inappropriate language to or in the presence of pupils
- Discuss their personal or sexual relationships with or in the presence of pupils
- Make (or encourage others to make) unprofessional personal comments which scapegoat, demean, discriminate or humiliate, or might be interpreted as such
- Have contact with children through the use of social networking sites such as Facebook or Twitter.
- Discuss their own sexual relationships with, or in the presence of, pupils
- Make (or encourage others to make) unprofessional personal comments which scapegoat, demean or humiliate, or might be interpreted as such.

Adults should:

- Inform the head/principal or specified person of any cautions, convictions, or relevant orders accrued during their employment, and / or if they are charged with a criminal offence
- Be aware that behaviour by themselves, those with whom they share a household, or others in their personal lives, may impact on their work with children.
- Understand that a person who provides Early Years education or Childcare may be disqualified because of their "association" with a person living or employed in the same household who is disqualified.

School leaders should:

- Have a clear expectation that staff will discuss with managers any relationship / association (in or out of school or online) that may have implications for the safeguarding of children in school
- Create a culture where staff feel able to raise these issues
- Safeguard their employees' welfare and contribute to their duty of care towards their staff and identify whether arrangements are needed to support these staff
- Consider whether there are measures that need to be put in place to safeguard children (e.g. by putting arrangements in place to stop or restrict a person coming into school where a potential risk to children has been identified)

School leaders should not:

- Ask intrusive questions of staff regarding those they live with or have relationships / associations with.

You should Dress and Act Appropriately

Adults should wear clothing which:

- Promotes a positive and professional image.
- Is appropriate to their role.
- Is not likely to be viewed as offensive, revealing, or sexually provocative.
- Does not distract, cause embarrassment or give rise to misunderstanding.
- Is absent of any political or otherwise contentious slogans, and is not considered to be discriminatory.
- Is compliant with professional standards.

You should not accept inappropriate gifts

Adults should:

- Ensure that gifts received or given in situations which may be misconstrued are declared.
- Generally, only give gifts to an individual young person as part of an agreed reward system.

- Where giving gifts other than as above, ensure that these are of insignificant value and given to all children equally.

You should not encourage infatuations

Adults should:

- Report any indications (verbal, written or physical) that suggest a pupil may be infatuated with a member of staff.
- Always maintain professional boundaries.

You should not have familiar social contact

Adults should:

- Always approve any planned social contact with senior colleagues, for example when it is part of a reward scheme or pastoral care programme.
- Staff should never offer lifts outside agreed requirements of their role.
- Out of school contact should be planned and agreed with senior staff and parents. Appropriate social contact will be easily recognised and openly acknowledged.
- Advise senior management of any regular social contact they have with a pupil which may give rise to concern.
- Refrain from sending personal communication to pupils or parents unless agreed with senior managers.
- Inform senior management of any relationship with a parent where this extends beyond the usual parent/professional relationship
- Inform senior management of any requests or arrangements where parents wish to use their services outside of the workplace e.g. babysitting, tutoring
- Report and record any situation, which you feel, might compromise the school or your own professional standing.

Communication with Children (including the use of technology)

Adults should:

- Staff should not be in personal communication with any pupil (or ex pupil)-, this includes children of personal friends including texting, messaging, social network etc until the child is over 18 years old.
- Not seek to communicate/make contact or respond to contact with pupils outside of the purposes of their work.
- Not give out their personal details to a pupil including personal mobile number or personal e-mail address.
- Use only equipment and Internet services provided by the school or setting.
- Follow their school / setting's Acceptable Use policy.
- Ensure that their use of technologies could not bring their employer into disrepute.
- Not discuss or share data relating to children/ parents / carers in staff social media groups

You should not have unnecessary Physical Contact

Adults should:

- 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.
- Never touch a child in a way which may be considered indecent.
- Always be prepared to explain actions and accept that all physical contact be open to scrutiny.
- Never indulge in horseplay, tickling or fun fights.
- Always allow/encourage pupils, where able, to undertake self-care tasks independently.
- Ensure the way they offer comfort to a distressed pupil is age appropriate.
- Always tell a colleague when and how they offered comfort to a distressed pupil.
- Establish the preferences of pupils.

- Consider alternatives, where it is anticipated that a pupil might misinterpret or be uncomfortable with physical contact.
- Always explain to the pupil the reason why contact is necessary and what form that contact will take.
- Be aware of cultural or religious views about touching and be sensitive to issues of gender.

The schools should:

- Provide staff, on a "need to know" basis, with relevant information about vulnerable pupils in their care.
- Record serious incidents and the outcome.
- Provide training and guidance on dealing with children with specific needs.

Physical Education and other activities which require physical contact.

Adults should:

- Treat pupils with dignity and respect and avoid contact with intimate parts of the body.
- Consider alternatives, where it is anticipated that a pupil might misinterpret any such contact, perhaps involving another member of staff, or a less vulnerable pupil in the demonstration.
- Always explain to a pupil the reason why contact is necessary and what form that contact will take.
- Seek consent of parents where a pupil is unable to give this e.g. because of a disability.
- Be familiar with and follow recommended guidance and protocols.
- Conduct activities where they can be seen by others.
- Be aware of gender, cultural and religious issues that may need to be considered prior to initiating physical contact.

Showers and Changing

Adults should:

- Avoid any physical contact when children are in a state of undress.
- Avoid any visually intrusive behaviour, where there are changing rooms:
- Announce their intention of entering.
- Avoid remaining in the room unless pupil needs require it, for example behaviour needs supervising.

Adults should not:

- Change in the same place as children.
- Shower with children.

Intimate/Personal Care

Adults should:

- Adhere to their organisation's intimate and personal care and nappy changing policies.
- Make other staff aware of the task being undertaken.
- Always explain to the pupil what is happening before a care procedure begins.#
- Consult with colleagues where any variation from agreed procedure/care plan is necessary.
- Record the justification for any variations to the agreed procedure/care plan and share this information with the pupil and their parents/carers.
- Avoid any visually intrusive behaviour.
- Where there are changing rooms announce their intention of entering.
- Always consider the supervision needs of the pupils and only remain in the room where their needs require this

Adults should not:

- Change or toilet in the presence or sight of pupils.
- Assist with intimate or personal care tasks which the pupil is able to undertake independently.

You should never have sexual contact with young people

Adults should:

- Not have any form of sexual contact with children and young people either in or out of school.
- Avoid any form of touch or comment which is, or may be considered to be, indecent
- Avoid any form of communication with a child or young person which could be interpreted as sexually suggestive or provocative i.e. verbal comments, letters, notes, electronic mail or social media, phone calls, texts, physical contact.
- Not make sexual remarks to or about a pupil
- Not discuss sexual matters with or in the presence of pupils other than within agreed curriculum content or as part of their recognised job role.

You need to exercise your judgement

This means that where no specific guidance exists staff should:

- Discuss the circumstances that informed their action, or their proposed action, with a senior colleague. This will help to ensure that the safest practices are employed and reduce the risk of actions being misinterpreted
- Always discuss any misunderstanding, accidents or threats with a senior manager always record discussions and actions taken with their justifications.

FURTHER ADVICE FOR STAFF:

When dealing with pupils in distress

Adults should:

- Consider the way in which they offer comfort to a distressed pupil.
- Always tell a colleague when and how they offered comfort to a distressed child.
- Record situations which may give rise to concern.

When dealing with challenging behaviour

Adults should:

- Not use force as a form of punishment.
- Try to defuse situations before they escalate.
- Keep parents informed of any sanctions.
- Adhere to the schools' behaviour management policy
- Adhere to the school's physical intervention policy.
- Always use minimum force for the shortest period necessary.

When working in a one to one situations

Adults should:

- Avoid meetings with pupils in remote, secluded areas of school.
- Ensure there is visual access and/or an open door in one to one situations
- Inform other staff of the meeting beforehand, assessing the need to have them present or close by
- Avoid use of 'engaged' or equivalent signs wherever possible. Such signs may create an opportunity for secrecy or the interpretation of secrecy
- Always report any situation where a child becomes distressed or angry to a senior colleague consider the needs and circumstances of the child/children involved.
- Avoid being alone with a pupil behind a closed, windowless door.

Home Visits

Adults should:

- Follow home visit and lone working policies.
- Agree the purpose for any home visit with their manager.
- Adhere to agreed risk management strategies.

- Avoid unannounced visits wherever possible.
- Ensure there is visual access and/or an open door in one to one situations.
- Always make detailed records including times of arrival and departure.
- Ensure any behaviour or situation which gives rise to concern is discussed with their manager.

When transporting Children

Adults should:

- Plan and agree arrangements with all parties in advance.
- Ensure that they are alone with a child for the minimum time possible.
- Take into account any specific or additional needs of the pupil.
- Be aware that the safety and welfare of the child is their responsibility until this is safely passed over to a parent/carer.
- Report the nature of the journey, the route and expected time of arrival in accordance with agreed procedures.
- Ensure that their behaviour and all arrangements ensure vehicle, passenger and driver safety.
- Take into account any specific needs that the child may have.
- Have an appropriate licence/permit for the vehicle.
- Ensure that their behaviour and all arrangements ensure vehicle, passenger and driver safety. This includes having proper and appropriate insurance for the type of vehicle being driven
- Ensure that any impromptu or emergency arrangements of lifts are recorded and can be justified
- Ensure they are fit to drive and free from any drugs, alcohol or medicine which is likely to impair judgement and/or ability to drive.

When taking Educational Visits and After School Clubs.

Adults should:

- Adhere to their organisation's educational visits guidance
- Always have another adult present in out of school activities, unless otherwise agreed with senior staff in school.
- Undertake risk assessments
- Have parental consent to the activity
- Ensure that their behaviour remains professional at all times.
- Never share beds with a child/pupil
- Never share bedrooms unless it involves a dormitory situation and the arrangements have been previously discussed with Head teacher, parents and pupils
- Refer to local and national guidance for educational visits, including exchange visits (both to the UK and abroad):

Department for Education's advice on Health and Safety (updated November 2018)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-and-safety-advice-for-schools/responsibilities-and-duties-for-schools>

School trips and outdoor learning activities (HSE)

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/services/education/school-trips.pdf>

When administering First Aid and Medication

Adults should:

- Adhere to the school's policy.
- Make other staff aware of the task being undertaken.
- Explain to the child what is happening.
- Have regard to pupils' individual healthcare plans.

Intimate Care

Adults should:

- Make other staff aware of the task being undertaken.
- Explain to the child what is happening.
- Consult with colleagues where any variation from agreed procedure/care plan is necessary.
- Record the justification for any variations to the agreed procedure/care plan and share this information with parents.

When teaching Sex and Relationship as part of the curriculum

This means that adults should:

- Have clear written lesson plans.
- Take care when encouraging pupils to use self-expression, not to overstep personal and professional boundaries
- Be able to justify all curriculum materials and relate these to clearly identifiable lessons plans.

This means that adults should not:

- Enter into or encourage inappropriate or offensive discussion about sexual activity which may offend or harm others.
- Undermine fundamental British values.
- Express any prejudicial views or attempt to influence or impose their personal values, attitudes or beliefs on pupils.

When using photography, videos and other Creative Arts

It is recommended that when using a photograph the following guidance should be followed:

- Only publish images of pupils where they and their parent/carer have given explicit written consent to do so
- If the photograph is used, avoid naming the pupil
- Only take images where the pupil is happy for them to do so
- Only retain images when there is a clear and agreed purpose for doing so
- If the pupil is named, avoid using their photograph
- Images should be securely stored on the school network and used only by those authorised to do so.

Adults should:

- Not use your own devices to take photographs of children
- Be aware of the dangers of social networking sites
- Where possible only use the school's equipment for taking photographs.
- Be clear about the purpose of the activity and about what will happen to the photographs when the lesson/activity is concluded.
- Ensure that a senior member of staff is aware that the photography/image equipment is being used and for what purpose.
- Ensure that all images are available for scrutiny in order to screen for acceptability.
- Be able to justify images of children in their possession.
- Avoid making images in one to one situations.

Adults should not:

- Take images of pupils for their personal use
- Display or distribute images of pupils unless they are sure that they have parental consent to do so (and, where appropriate, consent from the child)
- Take images of children using personal equipment
- Take images of children in a state of undress or semi-undress
- Take images of a child's injury, bruising or similar (e.g. following a disclosure of abuse) even if requested by children's social care
- Make audio recordings of a child's disclosure
- Take images of children which could be considered as indecent or sexual

When using the Internet

In the computer suite, on standalone machines or on a laptop used in school

Adults should:

- Follow the school policy on the use of IT equipment.
- Report any concerns about unsuitable material to the Senior Management.

Exposure to inappropriate images

Adults should:

- Ensure that children cannot be exposed to indecent or inappropriate images.
- Ensure that any films or material shown to children are age appropriate.

Whistleblowing

Whistleblowing is the mechanism by which staff can voice their concerns, made in good faith, without fear of repercussion. Education settings should have a clear and accessible whistleblowing policy that meets the terms of the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998. Staff who use whistle blowing procedures should have their employment rights protected.

Adults should:

- Report any behaviour by colleagues that raises concern.
- Report allegations against staff and volunteers to their manager, or registered provider, or where they have concerns about the manager's response report these directly to the DO.

When Sharing Concerns and Recording Incidents

Members of staff should feel able to discuss with their line manager any difficulties or problems that may affect their relationship with pupils so that appropriate support can be provided or action can be taken.

Adults should:

- Should take responsibility for recording any incident, and passing on that information where they have concerns about any matter pertaining to the welfare of an individual in the school or workplace.
- Report any behaviour by colleagues that raises concern.

All adults working in education settings should know the name of the school's designated teacher for child protection, or the equivalent individual, and know and follow relevant child protection policy and procedures. All staff have a duty to report any child protection concerns to their designated person for child protection and know how to contact the LA Designated Officer and Ofsted/regulatory body directly if required. Anyone who has concerns or is in doubt should refer to the document "What To Do If You're Worried a Child Is Being Abused" and follow that guidance.