

# Thurnham C E Infant School



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## Code of Conduct

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Member of Staff Responsible	Mr C James
Position	Headteacher
Dated	September 2021
Date of next review	September 2022

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

Staff Handbook 2021-22

Acceptable Use Policy

Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy

Intimate Care Policy

Mobile Phone Usage policy

***Any temporary Covid 19 related additional information is in bold and italics***

## THURNHAM C OF E INFANT SCHOOL STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT

### **RATIONALE**

This Code of Conduct is designed to give clear guidance on the standards of behaviour all staff are expected to observe. It is not exhaustive in defining acceptable and unacceptable standards of conduct and in circumstances where guidance does not exist individuals are expected to use their professional judgement and act in the best interests of the school and its pupils.

Staff should be aware that a failure to comply with this Code of Conduct could result in disciplinary action including dismissal.

### **SCOPE**

This Code applies to all those working in schools whatever their position, roles or responsibilities and includes:

- All members of staff (teaching and support staff)
- Governors
- Volunteers
- Temporary and supply staff, either from agencies or engaged directly by the school
- Students on placement
- Those undertaking work experience

References to 'staff' throughout the Code of Conduct refer to all of the above groups.

### **EXPECTATIONS**

- ***Follow any temporary Covid 19 protection arrangements and rules.***
- Staff are expected to demonstrate the highest possible standards of personal and professional conduct and each employee has an individual responsibility to maintain their reputation and the reputation of the school whether inside or outside working hours.
- Staff must have regard for the ethos and values of the school as well as its policies and procedures and act in accordance with these at all times.
- Staff should have a positive attitude, manner and appearance and work both efficiently and safely within the requirements of their contract.

- Staff are expected to treat each other, pupils, parents and the wider school community with dignity and respect at all times.
- Staff must act in accordance with their duty of care to pupils and ensure that the safety and welfare of the children and young people at the school are accorded the highest priority.
- Teachers are expected to uphold, their wider responsibilities as set out in the Teachers' Standards 2012, including an understanding of and acting within the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities (see Appendix 1)

### **CONFIDENTIALITY & INFORMATION DISCLOSURE**

- Staff are expected to have an awareness and high regard for the confidential, sensitive and important nature of their role and to be mindful of this at all times including during formal and informal discussions with parents, other members of staff, children and the wider school community. Particular attention should be paid in public areas of the school such as **corridors, the playground and the staff room**.
- Confidential information about pupils, parents/carers and colleagues must not be disclosed to any person not authorised to receive it and should only be shared on a 'need to know' basis.
- Confidential information must be stored securely and must not be held off the school site other than on security protected equipment.
- ***There may be occasional pupil or staff private information relating to Covid 19 testing or potential infection that will require confidentiality.***

### **USE OF IT INCLUDING SOCIAL MEDIA**

- Staff must not use social networking sites to post material which damages the reputation of the school or which causes concern about their suitability to work with children and young people. Those who post material which could be considered as inappropriate could render themselves vulnerable to criticism or allegations of misconduct or disciplinary action.
- When using social networking sites staff must take care to protect their privacy and protect themselves from risk of allegations in relation to inappropriate relationships. They must not name the school as their place of employment.
- Staff must not develop or maintain online relationships with parents or pupils through social networking sites, instant messaging or other media, whether this is through school or personal IT facilities.
- Staff and Governors must use their school email account when communicating electronically for work purposes - not a personal one.
- Staff must not give their personal details such as home/mobile phone number, home e-mail address to parents or pupils.

- Staff should not use personal phones and cameras to take photographs in school or on school trips.
- Under no circumstances should adults in school access inappropriate images. Deliberately accessing pornography on school equipment will be treated as gross misconduct and may be considered a criminal offence. Accessing indecent images of children on the internet, and making, storing or disseminating such material, is illegal and is likely lead to criminal prosecution and may result in barring from work with children and young people.
- The school has a separate policy on the on the acceptable use of the internet, GDPR, electronic communication and security. Please refer to these documents for further information and guidance.

### ***Mobile Phones (see the mobile phone policy)***

- Staff and volunteer's mobile phones must be limited for use during designated break times only and are not to be used in the classroom during teaching hours. Phones **must** be kept out of sight (e.g. staff cupboard) when staff are with children, this applies for parent volunteers and staff..
- Phones will never be used to take photographs of children, or in school, communicate with children or to store their personal data.

### **PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS**

With pupils:

- All pupils have a right to be treated with respect and dignity. When speaking to pupils, we should always consider how we would expect to be spoken to ourselves.
- Staff must not use any form of degrading treatment to punish or undermine a pupil. The use of sarcasm, demeaning or insensitive comments or shouting aggressively is not acceptable in any situation.

With other members of staff:

- Staff are expected to act in a professional manner towards colleagues, irrespective of their relative position or status within the school. This means:
- Speaking politely to one another
- Being approachable, friendly and welcoming to other adults in school – both staff members and visitors
- Being flexible and understanding of unexpected changes within the school day
- Communicating clearly and honestly
- Addressing concerns openly and honestly with the person to whom the concern is addressed, whenever possible, without publicly criticising anyone
- Never publicly undermining a colleague
- Taking responsibility for our actions and being prepared to apologise when we have made mistakes
- Not deliberately discriminating or ostracising certain members of staff

## **DRESS & APPEARANCE**

- An individual's dress and appearance is a matter of personal choice; however, staff should ensure that they dress appropriately for a school environment and for the role they undertake, as well as setting a good example to both pupils and visitors.
- Any outfit worn should be smart and one that is based on safety, comfort and practicality.
- Whilst it is not possible to list every possible clothing option here, it is expected that staff will dress in a way that reflects a professional appearance. The wearing of items such as sports clothing, football team clothing or items that could be deemed by others as too revealing such as short skirts, low cut tops, shorts etc. should be avoided.
- Choice of footwear should take account of the safety of the wearer and the safety of others. Therefore pointed heels, very deep soled shoes or sandals which offer little protection to the wearer should not be worn.
- Staff should have particular regard to the health and safety risks involved with certain lessons i.e. P.E. / cooking and the need to dress appropriately and safely when undertaking these activities, such as wearing appropriate footwear, removing jewellery etc.
- Body art is discouraged. Tattoos must be covered wherever the location of the tattoo makes it reasonably practical to do so. Discreet tattoos are at the judgement of the Headteacher, however, any imagery which is of a sexual or obscene nature or those depicting violent words or pictures are unacceptable.
- Where possible, body piercings should be limited to ears. If a nose stud is worn, it must be a small, flat, discrete stud. Staff wearing rings, shaped or large studs in their nose will be asked to remove them. No other facial piercings are acceptable. Staff are advised to consult the Headteacher for approval of piercings.
- The school is committed to promoting diversity and will therefore respect individual preference in terms of customs, culture, religion and tradition.
- ***During Covid 19 there may be necessary changes to what is worn to ensure safety.***

## **GIFTS**

- It is against the law for public servants to take bribes. Staff need to take care that they do not accept any gift that might be construed by others as a bribe, or lead the giver to expect preferential treatment. There are occasions when pupils or parents wish to pass small tokens of appreciation to staff e.g. at Christmas or as a thank-you and this is acceptable. However, it is unacceptable to receive gifts on a regular basis or of any significant value.
- Personal gifts must not be given to pupils. This could be misinterpreted as a gesture either to bribe, or single out the young person. It might be perceived that a 'favour' of some kind is expected in return. Any reward given to a pupil should be consistent with school policy, recorded, and not based on favouritism.

### ***CONDUCT OUTSIDE WORK***

- As an employee, staff must not put themselves in a position where duty and private interests conflict and must not make use of their employment to further private interests.
- 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 disciplinary action.
- 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.

### ***FURTHER INFORMATION***

- This Code of Conduct cannot cover every eventuality. Its purpose is to alert staff to some of the matters about which queries are received. It does not replace the general requirements of the law, common sense and good conduct.
- If staff are uncertain about what to do in a particular situation or require further information or guidance on the appropriate course of action to take in any situation they must seek advice from the Headteacher before taking any action.

### ***DISCIPLINARY ACTION***

All staff need to recognise that failure to meet these standards of behaviour and conduct may result in disciplinary action, including dismissal.

## Part Two: Personal and professional conduct

- A teacher is expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct. The following statements define the behaviour and attitudes which set the required standard for conduct throughout a teacher's career.
- Teachers uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, by:
  - treating pupils with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to a teacher's professional position
  - having regard for the need to safeguard pupils' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions
  - showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others
  - not undermining fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
  - ensuring that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways which exploit pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law.
- Teachers must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they teach, and maintain high standards in their own attendance and punctuality.
- Teachers must have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities.

## APPENDIX 2

### DISCIPLINARY RULES

The following are examples of behaviour which the School finds unacceptable. The list is not exhaustive and it is acknowledged that it will be necessary to exercise judgement in all cases and to be fair and reasonable in all the circumstances. Please make further reference to 'A Policy Statement and Code of Practice on Measures to combat Harassment for all staff in controlled schools...'

1. Any form of physical/verbal violence towards pupils.
2. Physical violence, actual or threatened towards other staff or visitors to the School.
3. Sexual offences, sexual insults or sexual discrimination against pupils, other staff or visitors to the School.
4. Racial offences, racial insults or racial discrimination against pupils, other staff or visitors to the School.
5. Theft of School monies or property and of monies or property of colleagues or visitors to the School. Removal from School premises of property which is not normally taken away without the express authority of the Principal or of the owner of the property may be regarded as gross misconduct.
6. Deliberate falsification of documents such as time sheets, bonus sheets, subsistence and expense claims for the purpose of gain.
7. Acceptance of bribes or other corrupt financial practices.
8. Wilful damage of School property or of property belonging to other staff or visitors to the School.
9. Wilful disregard of safety rules or policies affecting the safety of pupils, other staff or visitors to the School.
10. Any wilful act which could result in actionable negligence for compensation against the School.
11. Refusal to comply with reasonable instructions given by staff with a supervisory responsibility.
12. Gross neglect of duties and responsibilities.
13. Unauthorised absence from work.
14. Being untruthful and/or engaging in deception in matters of importance within the School community.
15. Deliberate breaches of confidentiality particularly on sensitive matters.
16. Being incapable by reason of alcohol or drugs (not prescribed for a health problem) from fulfilling duties and responsibilities of employment.
17. Conduct which substantially brings the name of the School into disrepute or which seriously undermines confidence in the employee.

The following are examples of behaviour which could lead to formal disciplinary warnings.

1. Unsatisfactory timekeeping without permission.



2. Neglect of safety rules and procedures. Some offences of wilful neglect may be regarded as gross misconduct.
3. Breaches of confidentiality. Deliberate breaches on sensitive matters may be regarded as gross misconduct.
4. Failure to comply with reasonable work related requirements or lack of care in fulfilling the duties of the post.
5. Behaviour towards other employees, pupils, and visitors which gives justifiable offence. Certain behaviour giving rise to offence may be regarded as gross misconduct.
6. Acting in a manner which could reasonably be regarded as rude, impolite, contemptuous or lacking appropriate professional demeanour. In certain circumstances such behaviour may be regarded as gross misconduct.
7. Conduct which it is considered adversely affects either the reputation of the School or affects confidence in the employee. Certain conduct may be regarded as gross misconduct.
- 8. Any deliberate refusal to not comply with our site procedures and approaches during the Covid 19 outbreak.**