

The Valley School

For Exceptional Learners



Review Date
Sept 2024

Code of Conduct Policy

David Pearce
Headteacher
Signature

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'D Pearce', written over a horizontal line.

Liz Ellis
Chair of Governors
Signature

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Liz Ellis', written in a cursive style.

KEY PRINCIPLES

“Different for Different”

This Code of Conduct is designed to give clear guidance on the standards of behaviour all school employees are expected to observe. School employees are role models and are in a unique position of influence and must adhere to behaviour that sets a good example to all the pupils within the school. As a member of a school community, each employee has an individual responsibility to maintain their reputation and the reputation of the school, whether inside or outside working hours.

This Code of Conduct applies to all employees of the school. This Code of Conduct does not form part of any employees' contract of employment.

In addition to this Code of Conduct, all employees engaged to work under Teachers' Terms and Conditions of Employment have a statutory obligation to adhere to the 'Teachers' Standards 2012' and in relation to this policy, Part 2 of the Teachers' Standards - Personal and Professional Conduct.

KEY STATUTORY REGULATIONS AND SIGNIFICANT LINKS

- https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/665520/Teachers_Standards.pdf
- https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/954314/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2020_Update_January_2021.pdf

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES & KEY PRACTICES

1. Setting an Example

- 1.1 All staff who work in schools set examples of behaviour and conduct which can be copied by pupils. Staff must therefore for example avoid using inappropriate or offensive language and should treat colleagues in a professional and courteous manner at all times.
- 1.2 All staff must, therefore, demonstrate high standards of conduct in order to encourage our pupils to do the same.
- 1.3 All staff must also avoid putting themselves at risk of allegations of abusive or unprofessional conduct.
- 1.4 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 Schools' Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.
- 1.5 All staff are expected to familiarise themselves and comply with all school policies and procedures. These are held on the shared area of the school network and on the website.

2. Safeguarding Pupils

- 2.1 All staff must have full regard to school policies on Safeguarding & Child Protection

3. Relationships with pupils

- 3.1 Staff must declare any relationships that they may have with pupils outside of school; this may include mutual membership of social groups, tutoring, or family connections. Staff should not assume that the school are aware of any such connections. A declaration form may be found in appendix 1 of this document.
- 3.2 Relationships with pupils must be professional at all times, physical relationships with pupils are not permitted and may lead to a criminal conviction.
- 3.3 Encouraging a relationship to develop in a way which may lead to a sexual relationship or any other inappropriate relationship is viewed as a grave breach of trust
- 3.4 Contact with pupils must be via school authorised mechanisms. At no time should personal telephone numbers, email addresses or communication routes via personal accounts on social media platforms be used to communicate with pupils.

- 3.5 If contacted by a pupil by an inappropriate route, staff should report the contact to the Headteacher immediately.
- 3.6 Behaviour of pupils which gives rise to concern must be reported and acted upon, This includes seeking affection, being sexually provocative and exhibiting overly familiar behaviours.
- 3.7 New personal relationships at work between colleagues should be declared to the Line Manager where there is a potential for this to impact upon the work of either. This may be due to a risk of allegations of bias or conflict of interest for example. The Line Manager will treat declarations in confidence.
- 3.8 Staff must inform the Headteacher of any relationships which may create an enhanced risk to children so that necessary steps can be taken, e.g. cohabitation with a person convicted of a serious offence.

4. Pupil Development

- 4.1 Staff must comply with school policies and procedures that support the well-being and development of pupils.
- 4.2 Staff must co-operate and collaborate with colleagues and with external agencies where necessary to support the development of pupils.
- 4.3 Staff must follow reasonable instructions that support the development of pupils.

5. Honesty and Integrity

- 5.1 Staff must maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their work. This includes the handling and claiming of money and the use of school property and facilities.
- 5.2 All staff must 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 policy.
- 5.3 Gifts from suppliers or associates of the school must be declared to the Headteacher, with the exception of "one off" token gifts from pupils or parents. Personal gifts from individual members of staff to pupils are inappropriate and could be misinterpreted and may lead to disciplinary action. A record will be kept of all gifts received.
- 5.4 Staff must not act on behalf of the school unless they have been given the authority to do so.
- 5.5 Professional references from the school must be given by the Headteacher. References given by other members of staff must be in a personal capacity and cannot comment on professional matters

6. Conduct outside of Work

- 6.1 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 community. In accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020, 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.
- 6.2 In particular, 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.
- 6.3 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 the school.
- 6.4 Any 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.

6.5 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 in the school. It is recommended that permission is sought in advance.

- 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 or their Line Manager.

7. Confidentiality

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

7.2 All staff are likely at some point to witness actions which need to be confidential. For example, where a pupil is bullied by another pupil (or by a member of staff), this needs to be reported and dealt with in accordance with the appropriate school procedure. It must not be discussed outside the school, including with the pupil's parent or carer, nor with colleagues in the school except with a senior member of staff with the appropriate authority to deal with the matter.

7.3 However, staff have an obligation to share with their manager or the school's Designated Senior Person any information which gives rise to concern about the safety or welfare of a pupil. Staff must **never** promise a pupil that they will not act on information that they are told by the pupil.

7.4 Staff are not permitted to make any comment to the media about the school, its performance, governance, pupils or parents. All media queries must be directed to the Headteacher.

8. Disciplinary Action

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

9. Compliance

All staff must complete the form in appendix 2 to confirm they have read, understood and agreed to comply with the code of conduct. This form should then be signed and dated.

Where relevant, staff must complete appendix 1

Appendix 1

Relationships with pupils outside of work declaration

It is recognised that there may be circumstances whereby employees of the school are known to pupils outside of work. Examples include membership of sports clubs, family connections, or private tutoring.

Staff must declare any relationship outside of school that they may have with pupils.

Employee Name	<i>Pupil Name</i>	Relationship

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

If I am tutoring a pupil outside of 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, informally (e.g. via the child) or formally
- No private tutoring is to 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 are aware of any relationships.

Signed

Date

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

Appendix 2

Confirmation of compliance

I hereby confirm that I have read, understood and agree to comply with the school's code of conduct.

Name Position/Post Held.....

Signed Date

Once completed, signed and dated, plea