

Chipping Sodbury School

Staff Code of Conduct

Purpose

This Code of Conduct sets out the key principles and values for adults working or volunteering at Chipping Sodbury School. In accordance with the general principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Teachers' Standards in England, this Code states the standard of conduct and competence expected of adults within our school community. The Code of Conduct cannot address every possible circumstance in which colleagues might find themselves. However, it is intended that adults are mindful of the Code in relation to situations which may occur both within and outside the school context.

The behaviours raised in this document will be unthinkable to the vast majority of adults who choose to work in a school and to members of the public. However, it is imperative that the boundaries of professional conduct are clear.

All adults working at Chipping Sodbury School, either on a paid or voluntary basis, must adhere to the school's policies and procedures at all times. The Child Protection, Safeguarding, E-Safety and Whistleblowing, Health and Safety and Equal Opportunities Policies are all critical documents which must be read and followed to ensure all members of the school community are kept safe. All employees of the school must be aware of the DfE document 'Keeping children safe in education' April 2014, part one.

Staff and visitors in school may be called upon to make difficult decisions regarding students and therefore, in exercising judgement, must think very carefully of the implication and potential consequences of actions. Colleagues should consider how a decision and subsequent action may appear or be interpreted by others not fully aware of all the circumstances.

All adults within Chipping Sodbury School must maintain appropriate professional boundaries, avoid improper contact or relationships with students and respect the position of trust as an adult within a school setting. Situations must be avoided both within and outside the professional context which could be in breach of the criminal law, or may call into question a suitability to work within a school.

Relationships with students

Adults must establish professional boundaries with students and recognise the negative impact that actual or perceived breaches of these would have upon students and the confidence of parents and the wider community. With regard to relationships with students you should:

- Have knowledge of and adhere to behaviour management procedures and strategies and not harm or use physical violence against a student either within or beyond the school. This includes verbal assault.
- When conducting interviews with students in a disciplinary context, have due regard to their age, stage and individual circumstances.
- Great caution should be exercised when meeting students 1:1. Meeting on your own in an enclosed space or outside the school is best avoided. For your own protection, aim to meet with the door open or alert a colleague that you are in a specific room.
- Never make physical contact unless absolutely necessary to prevent injury to the student or another person including yourself and then only the minimum force necessary to achieve that goal would be considered legal. For example, it may be appropriate to grab the arm of a student to prevent him/her walking in front of a vehicle; it would not be appropriate to stop him/her leaving a room or school.

- Fully appreciate that the onus is on you as the adult and not the student to distance yourself from any potentially inappropriate situation. If you are getting out of control, leave the situation and follow up later when you feel calm. Use other adults in the vicinity to support the situation.
- Report any such situation you may be inadvertently caught up in to the Designated Teacher or the Headteacher – be up-front and honest to avoid misunderstanding.
- Report any incident you may witness with another adult to Designated Teacher or the Headteacher (refer to the Whistleblowing Policy).
- Avoid sexual contact with or remarks towards a student this includes innuendo whether intentional or unintentional and regardless of the apparent consent of the individual concerned.
- Be mindful that professional boundaries can be perceived to extend beyond a student's leaving date; therefore in situations of this nature, you should exercise great care and professional judgement.
- Sarcasm and/or making jokes at the expense of students must be avoided. Students must not be humiliated, discriminated against or shown favouritism.
- Do not attempt to establish an inappropriate relationship with any student by means which may include (but is not limited to):
 - Communication of a personal nature;
 - Engaging in an inappropriate way through the internet/social networking with students and/or parents. Always use school email if you need to communicate;
 - Sending messages or images of an inappropriate nature to students.
- As an adult working in a school setting, you must not discuss with students specific details about your own intimate and personal relationships. Be mindful to maintain an appropriate balance between formality and informality.
- Be aware of the potential dangers of being alone with a student in a private or isolated situation. Use common sense and professional judgement to avoid circumstances which are, or could be, perceived to be of an inappropriate nature. This includes via social networking sites. Staff should not be 'friends' with students or ex-students on social networking sites.
- Never view, make or access illegal or inappropriate images of children, young people or protected adults. Report any such behaviour immediately to the Designated Teacher or Headteacher.
- Behaviours that must be avoided include developing a very personal or sexual relationship with students (Sexual Offences Act 2003), using online or mobile technologies to groom a child. Such relationships are illegal between any person working in a school or any student even if he/she is 18 years old.

Personal conduct and behaviour

Teachers must be clear about the expectations of the Teachers' Standards regarding conduct and behaviour. The following points must be adhered to:

- Never attend work under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs. Smoking on the school site is against the law. Smoking in front of students during a trip or visit is not acceptable.
- Do not engage in any criminal behaviour inside or outside school especially, but not exclusively, related to sex, dishonesty, fraud, firearms, misuse of drugs, violence or public order offences. Report any such incidents to the Headteacher as soon as possible.
- Act with integrity and honesty and have due regard to the trust in you as a professional in a school. Ensure that your conduct in relation to making professional applications/submissions, writing references for colleagues or students and in the conduct of tasks in connection with examinations or assessment are correct, accurate and follow appropriate protocols. Professional references must be passed via the Headteacher.
- Do not knowingly hinder or refuse to engage with the school or LA in the discharge of its statutory functions.

- Be knowledgeable about health and safety matters at all times.
- Treat adults including parents/carers kindly and with respect. Do not make snide or unkind comments. Racist, homophobic or sexist comments are unacceptable at all times within the school.
- Malicious or unfounded criticisms or accusations about colleagues that may undermine them professionally are unacceptable.
- Colleagues must exercise great care when expressing opinions in public about the school; this includes the use of social network sites. Be aware of Data Protection Act requirements concerning handling information about parents/carers, students and colleagues. Emails can be requested and used in evidence hence ensure that any email sent is professional and factual. Do not use this system to vent your frustration or anger.
- Sharing personal information about other members of staff is unacceptable. Colleagues need to be mindful about privacy settings on social media to ensure information is not shared inadvertently.
- Everyone in the workplace should be able to work in an environment which is free from discrimination and harassment. An adult should work in a collegiate way and treat all colleagues professionally.
- Do not engage in inappropriate communication or behaviour towards other adults that could be perceived as unprofessional, unkind, discriminatory or harassing in nature.
- Choice of language should be professional and appropriate to the audience.
- Do not shout or aggressively argue with other adults. This is particularly unacceptable in front of students or parents/carers.

Dress Code

- All adults are expected to dress in a manner that is appropriate to a professional role and to promote a professional image. Adults should lead by example.
- The school ID badge must be worn at all times and any adult on the site should be challenged if a badge is not being worn.
- Jeans or beachwear including flip flops are unacceptable (unless on a school trip or mufti day where they may be appropriate). Excessively tight, short, low cut or revealing clothing is inappropriate at all times. Clothing must not be offensive, revealing or sexually provocative.
- Clothing, jewellery and badges must be free from political or contentious issues. Excessive piercings are not permitted.
- For health and safety purposes, colleagues must always wear suitable footwear for the activity they are engaged in.

Educational Visits/Residential Trips

- Physical safety must be of prime importance at all times. Colleagues leading or participating in trips/visits must be aware of the relevant risk assessments that have taken place.
- Professional boundaries must not be breached and the standard of conduct must be the same as within the structure of a normal working day.
- All situations must be avoided which could be reasonably perceived to be of an inappropriate nature eg. a member of staff alone with a student in a bedroom during a residential trip.
- Illegal drug-taking or excessive alcohol consumption during a visit or trip is not allowed.
- The school mobile phone may be used to communicate with students or parents but not personal devices.

Transporting Students

- If a member of staff is to transport students in his/her own vehicle, where possible consent from a parent/carer should be sought. If this is not possible, the Headteacher or a member of the Senior Team should be aware that a journey is to take place with an indication of travel times.

- Private vehicles are sometimes used to transport students to or from events such as fixtures or day trips. This is acceptable if the appropriate procedures are followed eg. indicated on a trip letter, correct insurance is in place.
- If there are any safeguarding concerns, a member of staff should have another colleague accompany him/her in the car and should not be alone with a student.
- A member of staff is responsible for making sure he/she is insured to transport students. If this is not the case, a journey MUST NOT take place.
- Students should not be transported in the vehicle of a member of staff if the journey is beyond the remit of the school eg. to or from a social occasion that is nothing to do with school.
- If a member of staff is friends with the parents/carers of a student and there is a private arrangement with the family to transport a student, this sits outside this Code of Conduct as long as the parents/carers are aware of and happy for their child to receive a lift.
- If ever in doubt or concerned, do not transport a student in a private vehicle.

Photography, video and images of students and/or children

- Photographs and images of students are part of school life where they support learning , recognise achievement and celebrate success/engagement.
- Staff must check permission has been given if images are to be used – information is kept on Sims. Images must not be used if parental permission has not been given.
- Images of students should only be stored on school and not personal devices.
- Inappropriate images of any description must not be stored, shared or used in any context.
- Students must be aware if they are being filmed or photographed. Covert filming/photography is not acceptable. If student states he/she does not wish to be filmed, this must be respected.

A breach of any of the above is likely to lead to some form of disciplinary action. In the event of a major breach or a series of minor breaches, the member of staff concerned may be suspended from the school pending an investigation. The Headteacher will prevent a volunteer from returning to the site. At this point, the school will follow the procedures specified in the 'Disciplinary Procedure for Staff Employed in Locally Managed Schools'. Any employee at this stage should engage his/her Professional Association Rep. to support him/her through the process. A serious breach of these guidelines could result in immediate termination of contract.

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Statement of Compliance

Please sign and date to indicate that you have read, understood and agree to comply with the Code of Conduct

Return to Julie Passco (Head's PA)

Name..... (print name)

I have read, understood and agree to comply with Chipping Sodbury School's Staff Code of Conduct

Signed.....

Date.....