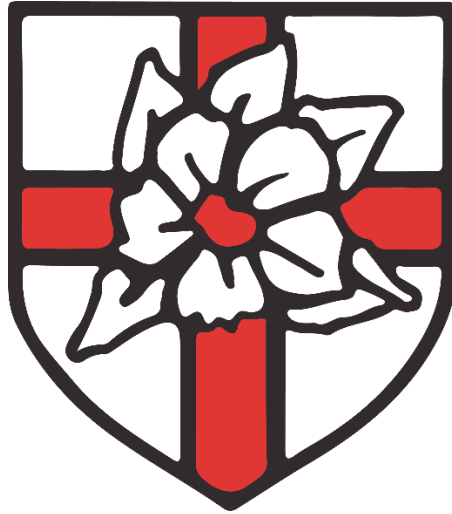


# Summerfield School



*The Best You Can Be - Everyone, Every Day*

## STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT

### DRAFT

Approved: March 2022  
Review: March 2023

## STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT

### **Introduction**

This policy aims to set and maintain standards of conduct that we expect all staff to follow.

By creating this policy, we aim to ensure our school is an environment where everyone is safe, happy and treated with respect.

Many of the principles in this code of conduct are based on the [Teachers' Standards](#). School staff have an influential position in the school and will act as role models for pupils by consistently demonstrating high standards of behaviour.

We expect that all teachers will act in accordance with the personal and professional behaviours set out in the Teachers' Standards. We expect all support staff, governors and volunteers to also act with personal and professional integrity, respecting the safety and wellbeing of others.

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.

The Code of Conduct outlines the expected conduct of staff at all times. All communication and interaction between members of staff, children, parents, carers, governors and visitors must reflect our Code of Conduct.

- Staff are expected to be conscientious and loyal to the Vision and Values of Summerfield School.
- In addition, staff are required to develop and maintain the professional character of the school.

All staff employed by Summerfield School are to follow the Code of Conduct. Staff should be aware that a failure to comply with the following Code of Conduct could result in disciplinary action including dismissal. Volunteers and governors are also expected to follow the Code of Conduct.

Throughout this document, the term "staff" should be taken to include any adult in the school (and in particular teachers, LSAs, other support staff, governors and volunteers).

We are required to establish procedures for the regulation of staff conduct under regulation 7 of [The School Staffing \(England\) Regulations 2009](#).

In line with the statutory safeguarding guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#), we should have a staff code of conduct, which should cover acceptable use of technologies (including the use of mobile devices), staff/pupil relationships and communications, including the use of social media.

## **General**

It is the expectation that all members of staff (and adult volunteers, governors and visitors) model courteous and respectful behaviour to the children through their appearance and all aspects of their conduct. This includes the way in which adults talk to the children as well as to each other. A number of other school policies make reference to expectations and these include the school policies on: Confidentiality; Equal Opportunities and Positive Behaviour.

A Code of Conduct is designed to give clear guidance on the standards of behaviour all staff are expected to observe, but it is not exhaustive. The school should notify staff of this code and the expectations therein. Staff may be in a unique position of influence and must adhere to behaviour that models the highest possible standards. Each employee has an individual responsibility to maintain their reputation and the reputation of the school whether inside or outside working hours.

## **Staff Rights**

To

- Work in an atmosphere of mutual respect
- Be treated fairly
- Be listened to and for views to be respected
- Be valued for the efforts and strengths of the work undertaken and to receive support for those areas that need developing
- Work in a clean, safe, secure, unthreatening, stimulating and well organized workplace
- Be kept appropriately informed through open channels of communication
- Have a workload that is conducive to work-life balance

## **Staff Responsibilities**

To

- Put children at the centre of all that we do
- Separate personal and professional lives by creating clearly defined boundaries
- Challenge prejudice in the workplace and support colleagues of all social, cultural and ethnic backgrounds
- Listen to and respect the opinions of others
- Support the development of others
- Promote positive relationships with pupils and the local community
- Safeguard the emotional and physical well-being of pupils
- Arrive on time for events/activities appropriately dressed
- Switch mobile phones off or to silent during teaching time, staff meetings and when on playground duty
- Inform the Headteacher of any police action against them upon or during their employment with the school
- Raise concerns in a non-threatening manner before they become a more serious problem
- Take responsibility for the working environment, leaving it as others would wish to find it
- Challenge unprofessional behaviour in an appropriate manner

## **The school will**

- To the best of its ability, provide high quality CPD for all staff
- Ensure appropriate performance management procedures are in place
- Value staff achievements and support their further development
- Treat the workforce both fairly and consistently
- Ensure the environment is clean, and that resources are well maintained and accessible
- Listen to the ideas and concerns of all staff
- Raise management concerns with staff appropriately
- Be aware of the requirement to ensure the work-life balance and wellbeing of staff
- Endeavor to make the school and enjoyable place to work

## **Setting an Example**

All staff who work at Summerfield School must set examples of behaviour and conduct which can be copied by pupils. Staff must therefore not use inappropriate or offensive language at any time.

All staff must demonstrate the highest standards of conduct in order to encourage our pupils to do the same.

All staff must also avoid putting themselves at risk of allegations of abusive or unprofessional conduct.

This Code of Conduct helps all staff to understand what behaviour is and is not acceptable.

## **Safeguarding Pupils**

Staff, governors and volunteers have a duty to safeguard pupils from:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Neglect

The duty to safeguard pupils includes the duty to report concerns about a pupil to the school's Designated Safeguard Lead (DSL) for Child Protection.

The school's DSL will follow policy and procedures linked to safeguarding.

Copies of the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Whistleblowing Procedure are available from the school. **Staff must be familiar with these documents.**

Staff must not demean or undermine pupils, their parents or carers, or colleagues.

Staff must take the upmost care of pupils under their supervision with the aim to ensuring their safety and wellbeing

Staff must not use their personal mobile phone as a camera in school. Any photograph/video must be taken using school equipment. Staff must only save images on school computers/devices.

## **Pupil Development**

Staff must comply with the school policies and procedures that support the well-being and development of pupils.

Staff must co-operate and collaborate with colleagues, schools and with external agencies where necessary to support the development of pupils.

Staff must follow reasonable instructions that support the development of pupils.

## **Honesty and Integrity**

Staff must maintain the highest standards of honesty and integrity in their work. This includes the handling and claiming of money.

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, 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 Procedure\*.

Staff have a duty to report any concerns they have about any adult or child in the school and the school has a duty to investigate and take appropriate action.

\* Staff should be aware that making a false accusation could lead to disciplinary action. The school and governors will differentiate between an honest mistake and willful misconduct in this matter; making an honest mistake will not lead to disciplinary action.

## **Keeping yourself safe**

Below is a list of practices and guidance Summerfield School expect staff to follow in order to keep themselves safe and limit any potential safeguarding concerns within the school and between staff and the pupils, parents and the wider community.

- Classroom practice – Staff should avoid being alone with a child in a room unless the door is open. Boys and girls in Early Years, Key Stage 1 and Year 3 will usually change together in the classroom for P.E. Year 4, Year 5 and Year 6 will use separate rooms for boys and girls changing. When children are changing before and after swimming, staff will give a verbal warning that they are about to enter the room.
- Physical contact – It is never acceptable to hit or strike a child. Staff should be aware that even well-intentioned physical contact may be misconstrued by the child or an observer. Adults should never engage in any physical horseplay with a child. Physical contact should be in response to a child's needs at the time, of limited duration and appropriate to the situation, e.g. a hug or pat on the back may be appropriate as positive affirmation or to comfort a distressed child. Children with special needs may require more physical contact as part of their care plan or to assist their learning. Staff should never instigate physical contact, only respond to the needs of the child.  
When demonstrating an activity e.g. giving instruction on the computer, care should be taken to avoid any unnecessary physical contact.  
Staff may legitimately intervene to prevent a pupil committing a criminal offence, injuring themselves and others, causing damage to property, engaging in behaviour prejudicial to good order and to maintain good order and discipline. In such situations staff should seek adult assistance. It may be appropriate at times to 'guide' a disruptive pupil out of the classroom by placing a hand in the small of their back. It is not acceptable to push, grab or pull. It may be more appropriate to remove the rest of the class from the room, but every situation will be different.
- Behaviour – the use of humour can help diffuse a situation. However, the use of sarcastic, demeaning or insensitive comments towards pupils is not acceptable in any situation.  
Staff should make themselves aware of and follow the school's Positive Behaviour Policy at all times.
- Gifts - It is perfectly acceptable for staff to receive gifts from children, e.g. at Christmas and the end of term. It is unacceptable to receive gifts on a regular basis or of any significant value. Any gift with a value of approximately £20 or more should be referred to the Headteacher who will decide if it is appropriate for the staff member to accept the gift. Similarly, it is inadvisable to give personal gifts to pupils. Gifts should be of insignificant value and given to all children equally. Gifts to individual

children, e.g. the handing on of worn dictionaries or unwanted sports equipment, should be handled sensitively and in consultation with the parents to avoid offence.

- Travel – Staff should not travel with a lone pupil in a car at any time. Current traffic legislation should be adhered to.
- Residential visits – Adults should not share a room with pupils. Adults should always be accompanied by another adult when attending to a child in need during the night time.
- Medication – All adults should adhere to the school policy on the administration of medicine. This will usually be administered by the school's First Aid team.
- Images of children – At the beginning of each year, parents may state that their child's image should not be used for publicity purposes. Staff should not keep images of any pupils on their personal devices.
- Personal Details – Personal telephone numbers should never be given to children. Children's telephone numbers should never be stored on private or personal phones. Staff should not establish or seek to establish social contact with pupils for the purpose of securing a friendship.
- Sex Education – Sex Ed is taught through a series of planned lessons. Staff should respond to pupils' questions with careful judgment. They should not enter in to or encourage inappropriate or offensive discussion about sexual activity. (please refer to the PHE Policy for further guidance).
- Reporting Incidents – The Safeguarding policy will be adhered to at all times.

All staff should be aware of the school's child protection procedures and all copies of policies relating to Safeguarding are kept in the staff room.

In the event of an incident occurring, which may result in an action being misinterpreted or an allegation being made against a member of staff, the relevant information should be clearly and promptly recorded and reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, or in their absence a senior staff member.

**All staff are required to record incidents or worries on My Concern to ensure all concerns are documented.** Early discussion with a parent or carer could avoid any misunderstanding.

Adults should report any behaviour by colleagues that raises concerns to the Head teacher or Chair of Governors.

Confidential information given by a child should be passed to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately.

## Confidentiality

In the course of their role, members of staff are often privy to sensitive and confidential information about the school, staff, pupils and their parents.

This information should never be:

- Disclosed to anyone unless required by law or with consent from the relevant party or parties
- Used to humiliate, embarrass or blackmail others
- Used for a purpose other than what it was collected and intended for

This does not overrule staff's duty to report child protection concerns to the appropriate channel where staff believe a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm, as detailed further in our child protection and safeguarding policy.

## Honesty and integrity

Staff should maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their role. This includes when dealing with pupils, handling money, claiming expenses and using school property and facilities.

Staff will ensure that all information given to the school is correct. This should include:

- Background information (including any past or current investigations/cautions related to conduct outside of school)
- Qualifications
- Professional experience

Where there are any updates to the information provided to the school, the member of staff will advise the school as soon as reasonably practicable. Consideration will then be given to the nature and circumstances of the matter and whether this may have an impact on the member of staff's employment.

### **Conduct Outside of Work**

Staff must not engage in conduct outside of 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 dismissal.

In particular, criminal offences that involve violence or the possession or use of illegal drugs, or sexual misconduct are likely to be regarded as unacceptable and could lead to dismissal.

Staff must exercise caution when using information technology and be aware of the risks to themselves and others. Staff must not engage with pupils or parents on social media, e.g. Facebook.

Staff must not engage in inappropriate use of social network sites which may bring themselves, the school or the wider community into disrepute. Staff should not disclose Summerfield School as their employer on social media sites.

Staff must only use their school email account for work purposes.

### **Confidentiality**

Staff will be familiar with the school's policy on the General Data Protection Regulations.

Where staff have access to confidential information about colleagues, 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 individual.

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 school's appropriate procedure. It must not be discussed outside of 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 role and authority to deal with the matter.

However, staff have an obligation to share with the Headteacher who is the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead 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.

### **Disciplinary Action**

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

### **Dress Code**

## **Standard of Dress**

All staff at the school should be dressed appropriately for their particular role. However, the school is also mindful of the need to avoid direct or indirect discrimination against any employee on the grounds of their sex, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, or age.

The school is aware of its responsibility to consider the possible health and safety issues in determining an acceptable dress code.

In general, the dress of all teaching and support staff must be tidy and smart, reflecting the standard of dress we would like to see in our pupils.

Staff engaged in caretaking, cleaning and lunchtime supervision will wear appropriate dress for their work. Jeans are not regarded as smart dress.

Footwear should also be smart and safe. Shoes, not trainers, should be worn for classroom activities and these should be closed for safety reasons – open-toed sandals are not deemed as safe footwear and any member of staff choosing to wear these do so at their own risk. Flip-flops are not permitted.

No inappropriately casual clothing should be worn including any items deemed to be too revealing or carrying logos that could be offensive in any way. The Headteacher is empowered to determine the standard of smartness that is acceptable.

## **Cleaning and Premises Maintenance**

Staff working in these areas, where particular dress is necessary for health and safety reasons, must wear appropriate dress. Staff should note that it can be a criminal offence not to wear safety dress in certain situations, e.g. headwear in kitchens, hard hats in construction areas. Failing to wear the correct safety dress can amount to gross misconduct which could lead to dismissal.

## **Religious Symbols, Ornaments and Dress**

Staff are permitted to wear religious symbols and ornaments, but these are expected to be discreet and worn in a safe manner. The Headteacher, in consultation with the governors, is empowered to determine whether the particular symbol or ornament is sufficiently discreet and commensurate with health and safety standards.

## **Religious Garments**

Garments which are generally considered as having an important religious (or racial) connotation (e.g. the Sikh turban, or headscarves worn by some religious sects) may be worn at all times. However, note the policy on head dress below.

## **Head Dress**

No caps or hats may be worn in school, except where necessary on health and safety grounds, or have been permitted by the Headteacher on religious or racial grounds. Head dress in line with the beliefs and traditions of various religions and sects are allowed, EXCEPT that the governors do not permit any head covering that covers a substantial part of a person's face. The reasons for this are:

- The school takes the view that in an institution where verbal communication and body language form an important and significant part of the work with children and young persons, it is not appropriate for any member of staff who comes in to contact with pupils in teaching and learning situations to have a substantial part of their face covered; and
- The Head teacher is concerned to ensure that the school remains vigilant about the safety and security of staff and pupils, and that no person employed by the school should have their faces covered, and



that the identity of persons visiting the school wearing clothes that cover the face should not be able to go beyond Reception until the Headteacher has ascertained their identity. (All visitors must wear identity stickers obtained in Reception).

### **Use of IT and Mobile Phones**

Staff will not use technology in school to view material that is illegal, inappropriate or likely to be deemed offensive. This includes, but is not limited to, sending obscene emails, gambling and viewing pornography or other inappropriate content.

We have the right to monitor emails and internet use on the school IT system.

The use of personal mobile phones by staff is only permitted at break times and in areas to which the children do not normally have access, i.e. the staff room. Mobile phones should never be used by staff while teaching or supervising the children. If a member of staff is expecting an urgent call, they should discuss this with the Headteacher who will agree an appropriate procedure for this.

### **Social Media**

Members of staff should exercise extreme caution when using all forms of social media. The school expects all members of staff to set high professional standards and to act as role models for children. The posting of messages or pictures that undermines this expectation could lead to formal disciplinary measures.

Staff must not engage with any pupil or parent on social media.

Staff must not advertise their employment with Summerfield School on social media.

### **Failure to Follow the Expectations of this Policy**

Everyone should always endeavour to follow the expectations of this policy. As has been stated above, in extreme cases or for persistent failure to uphold the code of conduct, a member of staff could be dismissed. Prior to this and for less serious breaches of the code, the following consequences may occur:

- An informal reminder from the Headteacher
- A formal, written warning of conduct
- A final written warning
- A meeting with Governors
- Dismissal

*If a member of staff believes that another member of staff is acting in a way that is not in accordance with the expectations set out in this policy they should report this to the Headteacher – **this should be in written form.***

### **Complaints**

Any complaints about the operation of this policy should be made first to the Headteacher in writing. If not satisfied, the complainant may take his/her complaint to the Governing Body. The Governors' decision will be final.

### **Monitoring and Review**

The Head teacher will report annually on the working of this policy, and any adult working or visiting the school may suggest amendments at any time to be considered by the Governors.

## **Appendix 1 – aide memoire for all staff**

Use your common sense and good judgment at all times – don't take any action (physical or verbal) in the heat of the moment. Always ask yourself "how will this look to others?".

When we speak to others we will:

- Use a positive statement rather than a negative one so that children can learn what we expect of them in any situation.
- Use a calm tone of voice at all times, to explain something or to instruct the children, so that they can follow our words without feeling threatened or uncomfortable.
- Avoid using sarcastic words or phrases as these demean children and prevent them from developing high self-esteem.
- Speak respectfully to other adults at all times, even if we disagree with them.

As professionals we will:

- Avoid workplace gossip and negativity as it breeds resentment and becomes a roadblock to effective communication and collaboration. We all have a duty to take active steps to divert conversations away from this as we come across it.
- Maintain confidentiality about anything that we see or hear in the workplace or in schools, so that colleagues, parents, children and outside agencies can trust us, and as a way of showing respect to our fellow professionals.
- Work as part of a team, contributing as well as learning from others and helping to build up a strong workforce.
- Work within the policies and practices set out by Summerfield School, so that what we do is consistent with what has been agreed between all members of staff.
- Treat everyone with respect.
- Dress appropriately to show we are here to work.
- Behave in a positive way despite any personal problems that we may have, especially in front of the children.

## **Appendix 2 – from Teachers' Standards Effective from 01<sup>st</sup> September 2012 (DfE)**

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 the school, by:

- Treating the 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.
- Show 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 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 3 – other sources of information and guidance at Summerfield School**

- The Staff Handbook
- The School policies and procedures
- The Staff Induction policy
- School risk assessments

### **Appendix 4 – Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2021)**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>