



Plaistow & Kirdford Primary School

Code of Conduct

Approved by:                      Governors and SLT

Approval Date:                  September 2022

To be reviewed:                September 2023

## **Introduction**

The public is entitled to have trust and confidence in the integrity of the Plaistow and Kirdford Primary Community, its staff, governors and volunteers. The conduct of all must therefore be of the highest standard. This Code of Conduct has been prepared to help staff/governor and volunteers on issues of conduct by providing a framework of guidelines.

## **General Obligations**

Adults working at Plaistow and Kirdford Primary must all act with utmost good faith with regard to the business of the School, and do all in their power to promote the School's interests and not do anything which may adversely affect the School's reputation.

## **Public Duty and Private Interest**

Off-duty hours are the staff's own personal concern. It is important, however, that people do not put themselves in a position where their duty to the School and their private interests conflict, for example private tutoring of children at Plaistow and Kirdford School.

Staff/governors and volunteers are expected to abide by the policies of the School. They must take care to ensure that their own personal or political opinions do not interfere with the provisions of balanced professional advice or their duty to carry out those policies.

## **Confidentiality and Information Disclosure**

Members of staff/volunteers Plaistow and Kirdford Primary must conform to the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2002 and comply with GDPR guidance and must take all reasonable steps to ensure that the loss, destruction, inaccuracy or disclosure of information does not occur as a result

of their actions. This includes information relating to school business and pupil data.

Members of staff/governors/volunteers must not disclose personal or financial information about any other member of staff to any unauthorised person, external organisation or agency without the express consent of the individual concerned or that of the Headteacher.

Members of staff/governors/volunteers must not use information obtained in the course of their duties to the detriment of the School or for personal gain or benefit; nor should they impart this information to others who might use it in such a way.

Confidential information belonging to the School must not be disclosed to any person not authorised to receive it.

### **Staff Dress Code**

Adults in school are role models for learners in the school; therefore they have a responsibility to model appropriate dress and appearance. The image that we project as professionals is associated with how we present ourselves; the image of the school in the community is related to how all adults in the school dress. It is therefore important to dress appropriately when acting in a professional capacity.

Adults should be presentable and wearing clothes that are suitable for the day ahead in school. Open toe footwear should not be worn at school. Underwear should not be visible at any time.

When teaching specific subjects or lessons that may require specific clothing, for example PE, teachers and staff involved in teaching those subjects should be dressed appropriately i.e. trainers and tracksuit/shorts and polo shirts.

Jeans or hardier trousers may be worn for Forest Schools.

When on a trip teachers should observe the dress code but should use their judgement as to whether alternative clothing is needed e.g. jeans and wellington boots are entirely appropriate for one not another..

Tattoos that are explicit should also covered and facial piercings should be discrete. Hair should be worn in a style appropriate for school. For health and safety reasons jewellery should be kept to a minimum and be appropriate to the role. Staff/volunteer are encouraged to consider the jewellery they wear and its appropriateness for the school environment. Staff are advised not to wear, long earrings, necklaces or chains. Staff understand that if they choose to wear jewellery to school it is at their own risk. All employees should wear ID badges.

Plaistow and Kirdford Primary Primary School is committed to promoting diversity and will therefore respect individual preference in terms of choice, customs, culture, religion and tradition.

### **Social Media**

Social networking, e.g. Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, WhatsApp, Twitter, TikTok and texting and instant messaging is a way of life for many adults. Staff and governors should be aware of the potential risk to their professional reputation and that comments made on a social network site or which relate to the school, pupils, staff or governors or breach the professional standards for staff could lead to a disciplinary action. Please observe the following:

- Staff and governors should not use school equipment to access or update personal social media.
- Staff and governors should not engage on social media/online with children at school.
- Staff and governors should be mindful of the connections they make and accept on social media and be aware that some connections may bring themselves and school into disrepute. Staff and governors should use strong passwords and apply security settings so that all aspects of their profile are secure and controlled.
- Staff and governors should NOT post anything on personal social media that identifies the school or its community.
- Staff and governors are expected to uphold professionalism and dignity online, which would include the use of language, including profile name, and content, including photos. They should think of this in respect of being a role model. Staff and governors should not use inappropriate comments in relation to gender, race, disability, age, religion or sexual orientation.
- Images of pupils taken during school time or on educational visits must **never** be posted to a non-school based social media platform or website. Images of work colleagues or governors should not be posted without their permission.

### **Low level Concerns**

At Plaistow and Kirdford safeguarding is paramount and we operate with a view that “it could happen here”. Staff/Governors/Volunteers have a responsibility to raise any low level concerns. The term ‘low-level’ concern does not mean that it is insignificant. A low-level concern is any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a ‘nagging doubt’ - that an adult working in or on behalf of the school or college may have acted in a way that:

- is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work and
- does not meet the harm threshold or is otherwise not serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:

- being over friendly with children
- having favourites
- taking photographs of children on their mobile phone, contrary to school policy

- engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door without being able to reasonably justify why they have chosen that location, or
- humiliating pupils.

Low level concerns should be raised with the headteacher/chair of governors in line with the school's confidential/whistleblowing policy.

## **Technology**

Only school equipment should be used to take photos of pupils. Photos should be uploaded to the secure staff shared drive and images erased from the portable device.

Staff should ensure that the content they access online is appropriate for use in a school setting.

Staff should only be using the internet for learning/school purposes during lesson time. Any abuse of this privilege may result in disciplinary action.

Any data/school related information or content created at school should not be sent to a personal email address. Abuse of this may result in disciplinary action.

Staff are advised not to give their personal work email addresses to parents. Instead they should direct parents to the [office@plaistowkirdford.com](mailto:office@plaistowkirdford.com) email address.

Personal phones must be kept out of sight of children at all times. If a child is present then the phone should be put away. A personal phone out during a lesson or when a child is present poses a significant safeguarding and reputational risk to school and to the individual. Use of a personal phone when a child is present to either receive calls/make calls or messages could result in disciplinary action. This extends to the use of smart watches and similar connected devices.

Technology and staff well-being: Staff, for their own well-being, are not expected to access/respond to their work email outside of reasonable working hours. *Email is not an effective means of emergency communication. (In the event of staff sickness/absence please see the staff handbook for the appropriate action).*

Only the head/computing lead/IT technician should install software/apps onto school equipment.

## **Other Employment**

Staff and governors are not allowed to set up a business or accept employment with a business engaged in work which is in direct competition with the School.

If staff / volunteers do have another job it must not conflict with the School's interest or bring the School into disrepute.

If staff / volunteers have another job with another organisation they must not act as a messenger, go between or arbitrator between that organisation and the School. Formal channels of communication must be maintained.

Staff's / volunteers' working commitments to another employer must not interfere with their work for the School; they must be able to work for the School at the contracted/arranged times rested and refreshed.

### **Reputation**

Staff/governors/volunteers must be careful to ensure that nothing they say or do brings the school into disrepute. Staff/governors/volunteers should not speak inappropriately about the school or its partner schools, pupils, parents, staff or governors, including discussing incidents.

### **General**

In accordance with the School's Equality Plan staff/governors must ensure that they do not discriminate in recruitment and employment practices or in the delivery of services. They must also ensure that all members of the public are treated with respect and fairness.

Serious misconduct and/or criminal offences committed during or outside of working hours which bring employees or the school into disrepute will be the subject of disciplinary action which could lead to dismissal.

### **Financial Inducements, Gifts, Hospitality and Sponsorship**

Staff/governors/volunteers must not seek or receive preferential rates by virtue of your dealings on behalf of the school. Offers of hospitality, including visits to exhibitions, business meals, social functions, etc should only be accepted if there is a genuine need to represent the school in an official capacity.

Where an external organisation wishes to sponsor or is sought to sponsor a school activity, the above rule applies. Particular care must be taken when dealing with contractors or potential contractors.

Employees should not use loyalty cards or benefit personally from any purchase made for school.

### **Disciplinary Action**

Any breach of this Code of Conduct will be the subject of disciplinary action which could result in dismissal.

### **Further Information**

This Code of Conduct cannot cover every eventuality. Its purpose is to alert staff/governors/volunteers 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/governors/volunteers 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 contact the Headteacher for advice before they take any action.

