



**WHITEHALL PRIMARY SCHOOL**

# **Staff Code of Conduct**

## *Safeguarding Statement*

*At Whitehall Primary School we respect and value all children and are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our pupils so they can learn, in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. We believe every pupil should be able to participate in all school activities in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from harm. This is the responsibility of every adult employed by, or invited to deliver services at Whitehall Primary School. We recognise our responsibility to safeguard all who access school and promote the welfare of all our pupils by protecting them from physical, sexual and emotional abuse, neglect and bullying.*

### **1. Purpose and principles**

This Code of Conduct aims to establish a set of principles which underpin the expected conduct of staff at Whitehall Primary School with the intention of encouraging staff to achieve the highest standards of conduct at work and of minimising the risk of improper conduct occurring.

The school requires that all staff have read and comply with the Code of Conduct. Where clarification is needed on any aspect of this document, this should be sought from the Headteacher.

Breach or failure to observe the provisions of this document may lead to action being taken under the school disciplinary procedure which staff can find on the school network/office.

This document is available to all staff from the School Office/website/network as well as being provided on induction to all new members of staff. It is also in the Staff Handbook.

The Code of Conduct is not exhaustive in defining acceptable and unacceptable standards of conduct and behaviour 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.

### **2. Scope**

The Code of Conduct applies to:

- all members of staff, including teaching and support staff;
- volunteers, including governors;
- casual workers;
- temporary and supply staff, either from agencies or engaged directly;
- student placements, including those undertaking initial teacher training, and apprentices.

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

### **3. Professional standards at work**

Staff are expected to demonstrate the highest possible standards of personal and professional conduct and behaviour and consistently act with honesty and integrity. The school expects staff to treat each other, pupils, parents and the wider school community with dignity and respect at all times.

Furthermore, 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, including in their dealings with those who come into contact with the school e.g. visitors.

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. In this and other ways staff should always maintain standards of conduct and behaviour which sustain their professional standing and that of the school.

Teachers are reminded of, and are expected to uphold, their wider responsibilities as set out in the **Teacher Standards**, including an understanding of, and acting within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities. (Appendix 1)

#### **4. Safeguarding**

Whitehall Primary School recognises its statutory and moral duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils and understands that staff play a vital role in meeting these responsibilities. Staff must be aware of their individual safeguarding responsibilities, including to provide a safe environment in which children can learn, to be aware of the signs of abuse and neglect, to identify children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm and to take appropriate action in such cases to prevent concerns from escalating.

All members of staff must be aware of the school's systems for supporting child safeguarding, including the role of the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

In this school the Lead DSL is Mrs A Boychuk and the Deputy DSL's are Mrs J Ruprai, Mrs N Sharma, Mr S Hill and Miss Chopdat.

Staff have a professional duty to report concerns about the welfare of a child. Any such concerns must be raised without delay to the school's DSL's in the first instance or to Associate Members of SLT, if DSL's cannot be located. There should be no delay in reporting a concern if there is risk of immediate serious harm to a child.

Staff should be familiar with the school's Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy, which is available to all staff from School Office/network/website. All staff will receive appropriate safeguarding training and will be provided with guidance on child safeguarding as part of their induction to the school.

In accordance with the statutory guidance published by the Department for Education 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (September 2022) all staff at Whitehall Primary School must be aware of their duties and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding children and keeping children safe as outlined in Part 1, Part 5, Annex B and C. Staff will be provided with a copy as part of their induction to the school. The full document is also available on the staff shared drive 'Safeguarding and Child Protection' section.

#### **5. Appropriate relationships**

##### **Pupils**

Individuals who work or volunteer in a school environment are in a position of trust. Staff should be mindful of the need to maintain professional boundaries appropriate to their position and must always consider whether their actions are warranted, proportionate, safe and applied equitably.

Staff should act in an open and transparent way that would not lead any reasonable person to question their actions or intent. Staff should think carefully about their conduct so that misinterpretations are minimised.

Staff must avoid unnecessary physical contact with children. Where physical contact is essential, e.g. for safety reasons, the pupil's permission must be gained for that contact wherever possible. If physical contact is made to remove a pupil from a dangerous situation or an object from a pupil to prevent either harm to themselves or others, then this should be recorded and reported to Mrs A Boychuk Headteacher/DSL. In cases where accidental physical contact was made, it should be reported to Mrs A Boychuk, Headteacher/DSL. In all cases staff should act in accordance with the school's Physical Intervention/Restraint Policy (found within the Positive Behaviour Management Policy).

Any sexual behaviour by a member of staff with or towards a pupil is unacceptable. Staff are reminded that under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, it is a criminal offence for a person aged 18 or over to have a sexual relationship with a child under 18, where that person is in a position of trust in respect of that child, even if the relationship is consensual.

### **Parents**

Staff are expected to interact with parents in a polite and respectful manner and recognise parents' entitlement to express any concerns they may have about their child's learning, safety or wellbeing. Staff should avoid discussing school matters with parents outside school if approached and should instead refer the parent to the normal school communication channels.

## **6. Use of IT including social media**

Internal e-mail and internet systems must be used only in accordance with the school's acceptable use of ICT policy.

Social networking sites offer the opportunity for communication with children, young people and their parents outside normal professional boundaries. School staff must take care to protect their privacy and protect themselves from risk of allegations in relation to inappropriate relationships and cyberbullying. Staff must not have any unauthorised contact or accept 'friend' requests through social media with any pupil (including former pupils and/or those who attend other schools) unless they are family members. Staff must exercise caution when having contact online through social media with parents so as not to compromise the school's reputation or school information.

Please refer to the school's acceptable use of ICT policy.

## **7. Confidentiality and disclosure of information**

Staff must ensure that they do not disclose confidential information to anyone who does not have the right to receive it. Where information is disclosed this should be in line with the principles of the General Data Protection Regulation 2018. Equally staff should not prevent another person from gaining access to information to which that person is entitled by law. If there is doubt about whether or not to share information, advice must be sought from the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher.

Information obtained during the course of an individual's work should never be used for personal gain or benefit, nor should it be passed onto others who might use it in such a way.

## **8. Dress and appearance**

An individual's dress and appearance is a matter of personal choice; however, staff should ensure that they dress appropriately, decently and safely for a school environment and for the role they undertake, as well as setting a good example to both pupils and visitors.

Staff should have particular regard to the health and safety risks involved with certain lessons i.e. physical education/food technology and the need to dress appropriately and safely when undertaking these activities, such as wearing appropriate footwear, removing jewellery etc.

The school recognises the diversity of cultures and religions of its staff and will take a sensitive approach when this affects dress and uniform requirements. However, priority will be given to health and safety, security and other similar considerations of other staff, pupils and the school.

## **9. Equal opportunities**

The Governing Body of the school is committed to equality for all in the appointment, development, training and promotion of staff, and in all dealings with pupils and parents of the school. It also recognises that all members of staff have the right to work in a safe environment without fear of discrimination, harassment or abuse.

All pupils, colleagues, parents, members of the public and wider school community have the right to be treated with fairness and equality and must not be discriminated against. The school expects staff to uphold these principles.

Please refer to the school's equalities policy for further guidance located in the school office/website/network.

## **10. Conduct outside work**

Care should be taken by staff to avoid any conflict of interest between activities undertaken outside school and responsibilities within school. In no case should outside activities bring the school into disrepute.

Staff must disclose any misconduct or alleged misconduct made against them, including any incidents arising from alternative or additional employment outside of this school. Disclosure must be made to Mrs A Boychuk, Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher, without delay, after which consideration will be given to the relevance or otherwise of the misconduct to their role in the school.

## **11. Declaration of interests**

Staff should consider carefully whether they need to declare to the school any relationship with an individual where this might cause a conflict with the school's activities, for example, a relationship with a Governor, another staff member or a contractor who provides services to the school. Where such a declaration is necessary this should be made to the Headteacher.

## **12. Whistleblowing**

The [Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998](#) gives protection to people who disclose reasonable concerns about serious misconduct or malpractice at work. This is sometimes known as Whistleblowing. The Governing Body of the school will treat all matters of malpractice very seriously and allegations about such matters will be dealt with quickly and with appropriate confidentiality.

Staff should acknowledge their individual responsibilities in bringing matters of concern to the attention of senior leadership in the school. This is particularly important where the welfare of children may be at risk.

See Whistleblowing Policy which forms part of the Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy located in school office/website/network.

### **13. Health and safety**

Staff must adhere to the school's Health and Safety policy and should ensure that they take every action to keep themselves and others in the school environment safe.

Please refer to the school's Health and Safety policy for further information located in school office/website/network.

### **14. Gifts**

There may be occasions where children or parents wish to pass small tokens of appreciation to staff, for example as an end of year 'thank-you', and this is acceptable. However, it is unacceptable to receive gifts on a regular basis or of any significant value or to suggest to pupils that gifts would be appropriate or desired. Money should never be accepted as a gift.

### **15. Use of school resources and funds**

The use of school resources, property and equipment is for school-related activities only, except where otherwise agreed.

All members of staff must use any public or school funds entrusted or handled by them in a responsible and lawful manner.

This Policy has been written to support staff and pupils by being as clear as possible about safe conduct. Inevitably, situations will arise that the Policy doesn't cover and staff should seek advice from the Headteacher/Deputy Headteacher/SLT.

*Whitehall Primary School  
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