



# HEATH HOUSE PREPARATORY SCHOOL

## Staff Code of Conduct Policy

### Purpose and Application

#### Purpose

The purpose of this Code of Conduct (Code) is to set out a clear code of conduct for staff to ensure reasonable and mutually respectful relationships with other staff, employees, contractors, visitors, volunteers, pupils and their parents or guardians. This Code takes into account the Department for Education's (DfE) *Teacher's Standards* (2011), *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (2016) (KCSIE), *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (March 2015); the *Equality Act* (2010), and the school's Child Protection Policy.

#### The purpose of this Code is:

- To reinforce the professional responsibilities of both teaching and non-teaching staff;
- To make clear the legal position on staff/pupil relationships;
- To set out the school's expectations of standards and behaviour;
- To help staff reduce the risk of improper conduct and false accusations.

#### Application

The school is required to set out a Code of Conduct (Code) for all school staff. This Code provides guidance on the standards of behaviour all staff are expected to observe and has been agreed on by the school proprietors and Senior Management Team. The Code must be observed by all staff. Staff should also consult the DfE Teacher's Standards, guidance on *KCSIE*, and follow safeguarding procedures set out in the Child Protection Policy.

Staff should be aware that a failure to comply with the following Code could result in disciplinary action, including dismissal. Please see *Statement of Particulars of Employment* (i.e. employment contract), subsection *Disciplinary Procedure, Code of Conduct and School Rules*.

#### This Code of Conduct applies to:

All staff at Heath House employed by the school, whatever their position, role or responsibilities, including the Head Teacher.

This Code does not apply to external contractors and providers of services.

## Where to Find Information

**The DfE's Teachers' Standards** and guidance on the Teacher's Standards is available for consultation in the school Office, or can be viewed and downloaded from:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teachers-standards>

**KCSIE** and any update to **KCSIE** is sent electronically to staff. It is available for consultation in the school Office, or can be viewed and downloaded from:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/487735/Keeping children safe in education consultation.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/487735/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_consultation.pdf)

**The school's Child Protection Policy** is included in the Staff Handbook and reissued to staff when updates are made. The policy is available for consultation in the school Office, and available for download from the school's website: <http://www.heathhouseprepschool.com/>

**The school's Designated Person and safeguarding lead is Mrs Sophia Laslett, Head Teacher.** The Designated Person/Head Teacher should be contacted immediately should a member of staff have concerns about a child. Should a member of staff need guidance about anything contained in this Code, or about something not included in this Code, they should speak to Mrs Laslett.

**In Mrs Laslett's absence, Mr Richard Laslett, Deputy Head Teacher should be contacted.**

## Whistleblowing

Following guidance in *Working Together* the school aims to create an environment in which staff feel supported and able to raise concerns about safeguarding to the Designated Person. Should a member of staff feel there is unsafe practise, or a potential failure in the school's safeguarding policy and procedures, they should contact the Designated Person or member of the Senior Management Team immediately and follow the school's whistleblowing procedure (see Whistleblowing Policy). In keeping with the **KCSIE**, any member of staff can report a safeguarding concern to the appropriate local agency. Contact details for local agencies are set out in Appendix 1 of the Child Protection Policy.

## Guiding Principles

Heath House staff should put the safeguarding, welfare, development and progress of all children first, and at the centre of everything they do at work.

Staff should:

- Put the safety and wellbeing of pupils under their supervision first and take all reasonable steps to ensure this;
- Use professional expertise, experience and judgement for the best interests of pupils;
- Take responsibility for their own actions and for providing help and support to pupils;
- Always ask the Head Teacher for their guidance and support when needed;
- Raise concerns about teaching colleagues or other professionals where their actions may have a negative impact on pupils' progress, or may put pupils at risk;
- Be familiar with the school's safeguarding procedures and Child Protection Policy;
- Know the identity of the Designated Person and their Deputy;

- Be aware that they are in a position of trust, and as an adult working in a school have a position of power or influence over pupils. The relationship between staff and pupils is not a relationship between equals, and that this position must never be used to intimidate, bully, humiliate, coerce or threaten pupils.

Heath House staff should demonstrate respect for diversity and take steps to promote equality by:

- Acting in accordance with this Code and behaving appropriately towards all pupils, parents, guardians, carers, contractors, and colleagues;
- Complying with the school's Inclusion and Equality Policy;
- Having regard for the *protected characteristics* under the *Equality Act (2010)*:
  - age;
  - disability;
  - gender reassignment;
- Be marriage and civil partnership;
  - pregnancy and maternity;
  - race;
  - religion or belief;
  - sex;
  - sexual orientation.
- Complying with the school's Anti-Bullying Policy and Dealing with Discriminatory Behaviour Policy, and this Code of Conduct Policy;
- Addressing issues of discrimination and bullying when they arise, following the school's procedures;
- Helping to create a fair and inclusive school environment.

Heath House staff should work as part of a unified staff body by:

- Developing productive and supportive relationships with colleagues;
- Exercising any management responsibilities in a respectful, inclusive and fair manner;
- Complying with all school policies and procedures;
- Participating in the school's development and improvement activities;
- Recognising the role of the school in the local community and upholding the school's reputation, helping build trust and confidence in it.

**Additional Principles for Teachers**

Teachers should maintain the quality of their teaching by:

- Meeting and upholding the professional standards for teaching applicable to their role and position within the school;
- Reflecting on their current practice and seeking out opportunities to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills;
- Maintaining an effective learning environment;
- Helping pupils become confident and successful learners;
- Establishing productive relationships with parents, guardians and carers by:
  - Providing accessible and accurate information about their child's progress;

- Involving them in important decisions about their child's education;
- Complying with this Code;
- Always involving and seeking the Head Teacher's guidance on conversations and building relationships with parents.

Teachers should maintain public trust and confidence in the school by:

- Demonstrating honesty and integrity;
- Maintaining reasonable behaviour and high personal and professional standards in line with their professional status whether inside or outside normal working hours, and whether on or off the school's site, throughout the year during both term time and holiday periods;
- Understanding and upholding their duty to safeguard the welfare of children and young people by:
  - Following the school's procedures and Child Protection Policy;
  - Reading and having regard for DfE guidance on safeguarding children as set out in *KCSIE*.

### **Guidance on Staff/Pupil Relationships**

Staff should be aware that allegations of misconduct or improper contact may be made against staff. Professional boundaries between staff and pupils should be maintained at all times, and the safeguarding procedures set out in the Child Protection Policy should be followed by all staff to ensure the protection and welfare of children in our care, and to reduce the risk of allegations against staff. The school has a clear procedure for dealing with allegations made against staff, set out in the Child Protection Policy.

### **General Guidance**

Heath House staff are expected to:

- Be professional at all times and exercise their judgement in situations, always acting in keeping with behaviour and procedures set out in this Code;
- Discuss and consult with the Designated Person where there is ever any doubt about what to do in any situation where no guidance exists;
- Keep written records, including justifications of any action taken;
- Be aware of the school's Child Protection Policy and procedures;
- Always seek guidance from the Designated Person if in doubt about conduct;
- Report any incidents involving a pupil which could be misinterpreted to the Designated Person.

### **Behaviour that Causes Concerns about a Child**

In addition to the signs and symptoms detailed in the Child Protection Policy that may indicate a child has been or is being abused, staff should record and report to the Designated Person any child's behaviour which gives cause for concern. If a child:

- Appears emotionally distressed and vulnerable, and/or is seeking affection from you;
- Appears to hold a grudge against you;
- Acts in a sexually provocative way, or whose manner with adults/staff is over-familiar;
- Is inclined to fantasise about themselves or others;
- May have reason to make up an allegation to cover themselves for failure to work hard enough to pass an examination.

Some of these behaviours may be indicators that a child has been or is being abused and should immediately be reported to the Designated Person using the school's safeguarding procedures set out in the Child Protection Policy.

### **Record Keeping**

Good record keeping is essential and staff should always record any incident involving a child that gives, or could give, cause for concern.

Staff should:

- Follow the procedures set out in the Child Protection Policy;
- Use the 'Concern Form' available in Appendix 2 of the Child Protection Policy to record their concerns about a child;
- Always immediately report any incident to the Designated Person.

### **Attendance Registers and Children Missing From Education**

Heath House staff must have regard for the risks associated with children going missing from education as outlined in the Child Protection Policy and Children Missing Education Policy. The school's procedures for identifying and responding to children who go missing are set out in the Children Missing Education Policy.

Staff must:

- Understand and have regard for the risks associated with children going missing from education;
- Comply with the school's safeguarding procedures in the Child Protection Policy;
- Comply with the Children Missing Education Policy and Attendance Policy;
- Complete the attendance register for their class at the start of each morning and once during each afternoon session;
- Use the codes and instructions printed in the attendance register;
- Follow the guidance and processes for completing attendance registers set out in the Children Missing Education Policy.

### **Good Order and Discipline**

Staff in charge of children must maintain good order and discipline at all times, whether children are on the school premises or elsewhere engaged in authorised activities, for example, at the Waterfront Leisure Centre using the gym or having swimming lessons, and all trips and activities in and out of school.

Staff should use the School Rules and Behaviour Policy to support behaviour management of pupils.

### **General Conduct**

Staff must:

- Take care when using the school's property and not use it for unauthorised use or personal gain;
- Not carry out other work or activity on the school property or during hours of work other than as set out in your *Statement of Particulars of Employment* without prior written permission from the Head Teacher;
- Not carry out other employment apart from their work within the school, without prior written consent from the Head Teacher;

- Devote their full time, attention and abilities during hours of work for the school to your duties;
- Uphold high personal and professional standards in line with their professional status throughout the year, during both term time and holiday periods;
- Be aware that the behaviour of others - their partner or family members - may be cause for concern; if such concerns arise they will be given careful consideration as to whether a potential risk is posed to children at the school.

## **Meeting with Pupils**

### One-to-one Meetings with Pupils

If you are working or teaching one pupil, for example, a music lesson or one-to-one maths tutorial, or holding a one-to-one meeting with a child, you should:

- If this is an integral part of your role, conduct a full risk assessment and agree this with the Head Teacher;
- Keep the door to the room you are in open;
- Inform a colleague that the lesson or meeting is taking place;
- Always ensure there are other people about i.e. there are other staff in the building or location you are working in;
- Do not continue the lesson/meeting for longer than necessary to achieve its purpose;
- Avoid sitting or standing in close proximity to the pupil, except as needed to check work;
- Avoid idle discussion not relevant to the purpose of the lesson/meeting;
- Avoid all physical contact and apologise straight away if there is accidental physical contact;
- Avoid any conduct that could be taken as sexual advance;
- Follow the school's Child Protection Policy and procedures and;
- Report any incident that causes concern to the Designated Person;
- Report any occasion where a pupil becomes distressed/angry to the Head Teacher.

### Pre-arranged Meetings with Pupils and Parents of Pupils Outside of School

Pre-arranged meetings with pupils outside of school are not necessary, and are not permitted under any circumstances.

Staff should never:

- Arrange to meet with a pupil outside of school;
- Arrange to meet with a parent of a pupil outside of school;
- Accept an invitation from a pupil and/or parent of a pupil to meet with them outside of school.

Should a pupil or parent of a pupil invite a member of staff to meet with them outside of school then the staff member should:

- Decline and explain that it is the school's policy that staff do not meet with pupils and/or parents of pupils outside of school hours or the school premises;
- Record that the conversation took place and;
- Report to the Head Teacher that the conversation took place and discuss any concerns with her, if necessary seeking guidance on how to talk to parents.

## Language and Appearance

Heath House staff are expected to lead by example and model high standards of conduct to encourage pupils to do the same. The language used by staff, as well as their physical appearance, should be appropriate and professional at all times when they are in the presence of pupils, whether on or off the school premises, including outside of normal school hours, for example on a residential trip.

### Language

Staff should use appropriate language at all times. Inappropriate or offensive language may include, for example:

- Swearing, blaspheming, profanities/vulgar language;
- Derogatory and discriminatory language used towards people of different racial, cultural or religious identities; special educational needs (SEN) or disabilities; sexual orientation; gender identity; sex; or age.

Staff should:

- Not swear, blaspheme or use inappropriate or offensive language in front of children;
- Not use derogatory or discriminatory terms;
- Avoid words or expressions that have unnecessary sexual content or innuendo;
- Avoid any words or actions that are over-familiar;
- Avoid displays of affection personally or in writing, for example when writing messages in journals, birthday cards, get well cards, leaver's cards/books etc.;
- Avoid any aggressive or threatening language;
- Avoid use of sarcasm or derogatory words when managing a pupil's behaviour or misbehaviour;
- Avoid making unprofessional comments about anyone;
- Have regard for areas of the curriculum that may raise sexually explicit subject matters for example, PSHE. Staff should prepare clear lesson plans and always maintain personal and professional boundaries;
- Report any incidents of pupils using inappropriate/offensive language to the Head Teacher;
- Report any incidents of other staff using inappropriate/offensive language to the Head Teacher.

### Appearance

Staff should dress in an appropriate and professional manner at all times. This extends to trips out of school, and residential trips. Additionally, it is unreasonable for staff to ask pupils to maintain high standards of dress if the staff body does not do so itself.

Staff should:

- Dress appropriately for their timetable. In the classroom smart-casual attire is sufficient. Smart trousers and a collared shirt for male staff; female staff may wear smart trousers/skirt and top, or a dress.
- Staff must wear a Heath House staff games top, with navy or black tracksuit bottoms or leggings, suitable footwear, and the Heath House staff fleece for PE and Games lessons, or sports fixtures;
- Have only one piercing in each ear, stud earrings only;
- Cover any tattoos so they are not visible to pupils.

Staff should not:

- Dress in an offensive, distracting, embarrassing, discriminatory, revealing or sexually provocative way;
- Wear short dresses or skirts that risk staff exposing themselves;
- Wear long maxi-style dresses that pose a trip hazard to staff and children;
- Wear political slogans or badges;
- Wear tatty, damaged or unclean clothing;
- Wear leather or leather-look items of clothing;
- Wear blue jeans in the classroom. Smart blue jeans are acceptable on school trips;
- Wear unsuitable footwear for their role, for example high heeled shoes, platforms or wedges, and flip-flops are inappropriate for teaching staff;

## **Physical Contact, Physical Restraint and Use of Force**

### Physical Restraint and Use of Force

Teaching staff and other staff authorised by the Head Teacher to have control or charge of pupils should be aware that:

- All forms of corporal punishment are unlawful, and unwarranted physical force is likely to constitute a criminal offence;
- Physical intervention and restraint should only be used when no other form of control is available and it is necessary to intervene;
- Before intervening physically you should have told the pupil(s) to stop and explained what will happen if they do not;
- You should make it clear that the physical contact or restraint will stop as soon as it ceases to be necessary;
- You should avoid touching or holding a pupil in a way that might be considered indecent;
- In the event of physical intervention or restraint it is important that only the minimum amount of physical force is used;
- Force or physical contact should be reasonable and proportionate in the circumstances to prevent a pupil from doing or continuing to do any of the following:
  - Committing a criminal offence;
  - Causing injury to themselves or others;
  - Damaging property (including their own).

Following a physical intervention an incident form should be completed and the Head Teacher should always be informed.

### When Physical Contact May Be Appropriate

Physical contact may be necessary to demonstrate a required action or correct a technique, for example in PE or Games lessons, music lessons, and extra-curricular clubs such as Gym & Dance or Yoga. Physical contact could also be appropriate when offering comfort to a distressed child, and may be necessary when administering first aid or medication. The need for physical contact for a child in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) will be greater than for older children, for example, including support with toileting or changing clothes, and should always comply with the school's Intimate or Personal Care Policy. Any physical contact should always be:



- In response to a pupil's needs;
- Of limited duration;
- Appropriate to the pupil's age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background;
- Mindful of special circumstances relating to a child, for example, a child who has been abused may find physical contact difficult;
- Limited;
- Used with professional judgement;
- Comply with the school's Intimate or Personal Care Policy.

All staff should be aware of issues related to physical contact and the way in which this might be misinterpreted. Staff concerned about any instance or situation involving physical contact should immediately record the incident and contact the Head Teacher.

Please see the Intimate or Personal Care Policy.

### Administering First Aid and Medication

All staff should follow the guidance and procedures set out in the school's First Aid Policy and Medication Policy. When administering first aid or medication to a pupil you should explain what is happening, and where possible have another adult present or aware of the action being taken. Report and record the administration of first aid and medication as required by the First Aid Policy and Medication Policy.

Please see the First Aid Policy and Medication Policy.

### Pupils Entitlement to Privacy

Children are entitled to privacy when changing their clothes or showering. There must, however, be an appropriate level of supervision to ensure safety. Staff should:

- Avoid physical contact or visually intrusive behaviour when children are undressed;
- Announce yourself when entering changing rooms and avoid remaining unless necessary;
- Avoid working alone when supervising children changing or showering – work with colleagues, and ask them to stay to support you if necessary;
- Not shower or change in the same area as children or in view of children;
- Not assist with personal care task which a pupil can undertake themselves.

### Where a Child Has Been Abused

The Head Teacher will inform staff on a 'need to know' basis if a child has been previously abused. Where a child has been abused, staff should:

- Be extra cautious when considering the necessity of physical contact;
- Be aware that some children may seek inappropriate physical contact;
- Sensitively deter the pupil and help them understand the importance of physical boundaries;
- Report and discuss any incidents with the Head Teacher and parents, guardians or carers.

## Children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) or Disabilities

Children with SEN or disabilities may need more physical contact to assist their learning and everyday routines. Guidance should be sought from the Head Teacher and then discussed, agreed and understood by all concerned including the child's parents.

## **Code of Conduct for Contact Outside of School**

Heath House staff should avoid unnecessary contact with pupils outside of school. Staff should:

- Not give pupils your home address, home telephone number, mobile telephone number or email address;
- Not send personal communications, for example, birthday cards or holiday cards, text messages etc. to pupils without permission from the Head Teacher;
- Not make arrangements to meet pupils outside of school (see 'Meeting with Pupils' above);
- Not give a pupil a lift in your own vehicle other than on school business and with permission from the Head Teacher;
- Not invite pupils to your home;
- Not contact pupils at home unless strictly necessary and with permission from the Head Teacher;
- Report and record any situation which may place a child at risk or may compromise your or the school's professional standing;
- Never engage in secretive social contact with pupils or their parents, guardians, or carers.

## Social Contact Outside of School

Staff should be aware that social contact with pupils, parents, guardians or carers could be misinterpreted as grooming. Any social contact that could give rise to concern should be reported to the Head Teacher.

## Friendships with Parents, Guardians or Carers of Pupils

If a member of staff is friends with a parent, guardian, or carer of a pupil, they will of course have contact with those pupils outside of school. Members of staff should still respect the guidance and set out in this Code where possible and should always keep the Head Teacher informed of such relationships.

## Scope of Code of Conduct for Contact Outside School

The above guidance applies to after school clubs, school trips, and residential school trips that involve overnight stays away from school. The principles also apply to contact with children and young people who are pupils at another school.

## **Communication with Pupils Including the Use of Technology**

Heath House staff are expected to conform to this Code and limit their communications with pupils and parents of pupils to professional matters. All communications should be made using school property, for example, written notes in the child's journal, or telephone calls made via the school office or telephones in the Old Library and Tranquil Hall. The only exception to this is in an emergency situation.

Staff must comply with the school's policy on use of mobile phones and technology as set out in the Acceptable Use of Technology Policy Agreement. Additionally, staff should not communicate with pupils or parents of pupils using:

- Personal mobile telephones;

- Personal email accounts;
- Web-cameras or video-calling programmes, for example, Skype;
- Social Networking websites, for example, Facebook;
- Social media platforms, for example Twitter, Instagram, Vimeo;
- Internet blogs or chat rooms;
- Online gaming platforms.

Please see the Staff and Volunteer Acceptable Use of Technology Policy Agreement for further information.

### **Photographs and Videos**

Where staff take photographs or record video camera footage of pupils to provide evidence of their achievements for development records and displays, they should:

- Not take images of children using their personal mobile telephones;
- Only use equipment provided by or authorised by the school, for example the digital camera provided to class teachers;
- Ensure the purpose of the activity and what will happen to the photographs or videos is clear;
- Be able to justify the purpose of images in their possession;
- Make all images available to the school in order to determine acceptability;
- Not take images during one-to-one situations;
- Ensure that the pupil is appropriately dressed;
- Ensure that the pupil understands why the image is being taken and has agreed to the activity;
- Not display the child's name with any photo that the public have access to, for example on the school website;
- Store all images of children securely and only allow access by those authorised to do so;
- Never take images secretly.

Please see the Staff and Volunteer Acceptable Use of Technology Policy Agreement for further information.

### **Gifts and Rewards**

Heath House staff should be aware of the following guidance on accepting and/or giving gifts or rewards.

#### Receiving Gifts from Pupils or Parents

Staff should:

- Declare the gift where there is any possibility it could be misconstrued;
- Declare any gift of a value of more than £100;
- Be mindful that the Head Teacher may in her absolute discretion require you to decline the gift;
- Decline outright gifts that may be perceived as a bribe or that create an expectation of preferential treatment;
- Be mindful that while it is acceptable for pupils or parents to make small gifts to show appreciation, you must not receive gifts on a regular basis or of significant value.

## Giving Gifts and Rewards

Where staff are thinking of giving a gift or reward to a pupil, these should:

- Only be provided as part of an agreed reward system, for example, the Head Teacher gives pupils prizes as part of the Plus Points system, and at the end of the school year for academic progress;
- In all cases except the above, be of little monetary value and discussed and agreed with the Head Teacher *before* given to the pupil;
- Be based on a fair and transparent selection process, and agreed by more than one member of staff;
- Always be given openly, and not based on favouritism.

## Allocation of Gifts, Rewards, Privileges, and Admission to School Trips

Decisions about entitlement to gifts and rewards, classroom privileges/tasks, or admission to school trips must avoid perceptions of bias, favouritism or grooming. Staff must base decisions on selection processes that use transparent criteria.

## **Sexual Contact**

Staff must not:

- Have any type of sexual contact or relationship with a pupil;
- Have sexually suggestive or provocative communications with a pupil;
- Make sexual remarks to or about a pupil;
- Discuss their own sexual relationships in the presence of pupils.

It is an offence for a person aged 18 or over, such as a teacher, 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, in the case of those over 16, the relationship is consensual.

Sexual contact or relationships with pupils, or encouraging a relationship to develop in a way that may lead to a sexual relationship is a grave breach of trust that will lead to disciplinary action and may lead to criminal prosecution. The school also includes children that do not attend this school in the scope of this policy.

## **Consequences of Misconduct and Breaching the Staff Code of Conduct Policy**

It is in your interests to follow this Staff Code of Conduct Policy to maintain standards of behaviour and your own professional reputation.

Staff should be aware that any breach of this Code may be treated as misconduct, and may make you liable for disciplinary action, including in serious cases, dismissal.

Where a member of staff is unsuitable to work with children the school will make a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). Dismissal (or where a teacher would have been dismissed had he/she not resigned) for unsuitable professional conduct will lead to a referral to the National College for Teaching and Leadership. Please see the Child Protection Policy.

Please see your *Statement of Particulars of Employment* and the Child Protection Policy.

Internal use only

|                        |                   |
|------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Last reviewed</b>   | 13 March 2017     |
|                        | 23 September 2016 |
|                        | 21 September 2016 |
| <b>Date for review</b> | 13 March 2018     |