

Poringland Primary School and Nursery

Staff Code of Conduct

Date of Policy: Summer 2021
Review Date: Autumn 2024

Members of staff responsible: Senior Leadership Team

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Statement of intent

Poringland Primary School and Nursery expects all of its pupils to receive the highest possible quality of teaching and learning within a positive and respectful environment.

Employees at the school should understand that their own behaviour, and the manner in which they conduct themselves with their colleagues, pupils, parents and other stakeholders, sets an example.

Poringland Primary School and Nursery recognises that the majority of staff members act appropriately and treat each other with dignity and respect; however, we consider it important to clarify the expected standards.

This document forms part of a staff member's contract of employment and failure to comply with it, and with the associated school policies, may result in disciplinary action being taken, including legal action where this is warranted.

This document applies to all staff members who are:

- Employed by the school, including the Head Teacher.

This document does not apply to:

- Peripatetic staff members who are centrally employed by the LA.
- School catering staff employed by Norse.
- Employees of external contractors.

These employees are governed by their employment contracts and any relevant laws pertaining to their activities within the school, for example, the Data Protection Act 1998.

1. Related policies

- 1.1. This Code of Conduct should be read and adhered to in conjunction with the following school policies:
 - Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
 - Health and Safety Policy
 - Data Protection Policy
 - Equal Opportunities Policy

2. Appearance and dress

- 2.1. The expectations of the governing body are that staff members:
 - Ensure that their appearance is clean and neat when at work or representing the school.
 - Dress in a manner that is appropriate to their role.
 - Remember that they are role models for pupils, and that their dress and appearance should reflect this.
 - Do not dress in a way that would cause embarrassment to pupils, parents, colleagues or other stakeholders.

3. Attendance

- 3.1. The school's expectations are that staff members:
 - Attend work in accordance with their contract of employment and associated terms and conditions in relation to hours, days of work and holidays.
 - Make routine medical and dental appointments outside of their working hours or during holidays, where possible.
 - Discuss with the Headteacher if they need time off for any reason other than personal illness.
 - Follow the School's absence reporting procedure when they are absent from work due to illness or injury.

4. Professional behaviour and conduct

- 4.1. Staff members are expected to treat other colleagues, pupils, parents, and external contacts with dignity and respect.
- 4.2. The use of foul and abusive language will not be tolerated.
- 4.3. Discrimination, bullying, harassment or intimidation, including physical, sexual and verbal abuse, will not be tolerated.
- 4.4. Staff members must not misuse or misrepresent their position, qualifications or experience, or bring the School into disrepute.
- 4.5. Staff members must inform their line manager if they are subject to a criminal conviction, caution, ban, police enquiry, investigation or pending prosecution.

5. Conduct outside of work

- 5.1. Staff must not engage in outside work if it 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 community. In particular, criminal offences that involve violence, possession or use of illegal drugs or sexual misconduct are unacceptable.
- 5.2. Staff may undertake work outside school, either paid or voluntary, provided that it does not conflict with the interests of the school. The nature of the work cannot be seen to bring the school into disrepute, nor be at a level that may contravene the working time regulations or affect an individual's work performance.
- 5.3. Staff must not engage in inappropriate use of social network sites which may bring themselves, the school, school community or employer into disrepute. This is explored further in [paragraph 14](#).

6. Safeguarding children

- 6.1. Our expectations are that staff members will:
 - Act in an open and transparent way that does not lead to any suspicion about their actions or intent.
 - Respect their duty to protect children and young people from harm and to maintain professional boundaries.
 - Read and understand School policies on child protection and safeguarding, including their obligations to undertake a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.

7. Declaration of interests

- 7.1. Staff members are required to declare their interests, both personal and financial, where the group or organisation they are affiliated with would be considered to be in conflict with the ethos of the School.
- 7.2. A financial conflict of interest is one where there is or appears to be opportunity for personal financial gain, financial gain for close relatives or friends, or where it may be reasonable for a third party to take the view that financial benefits may affect an individual's actions.
- 7.3. The term 'financial interest' means anything of monetary value, including:
 - Payments for services
 - Equity interests
 - Intellectual property rights
 - Hospitality or gifts
- 7.4. Examples of financial interests that must be declared include but are not limited to equity interests in services considered for use by the school.
- 7.5. Non-financial conflicts of interest can also come into conflict, or be perceived to come into conflict, with an individual's obligations or commitments to the school. These interests may include any benefit or advantage, including but not limited to, direct or indirect enhancement of an individual's career, or gain for immediate family or someone with whom the individual has a close relationship.

- 7.6. Examples of situations that could give rise to non-financial conflicts of interest include:
- Pressure or temptation to accept gifts, inducements or hospitality.
 - Participating in the appointment, hiring, promotion, supervision or evaluation of a person with whom the individual has a close personal relationship.
 - Where a member of staff has or develops a close personal relationship with a colleague.
- 7.7. Membership to a trade union or staff representative group does not need to be declared.
- 7.8. Staff members should also carefully consider whether they need to declare their relationship with any individual where this might cause a conflict with School activities.
- 7.9. Failure to make a relevant declaration of interests is a very serious breach of trust and, therefore, if employees are in doubt about a declaration, they are advised to contact the School or trade union.
- 7.10. All declarations, including nil returns, should be submitted in writing to the Head Teacher for inclusion on the Register of Business Interests.

8. Probity of records

- 8.1. The deliberate falsification of documents, such as references, academic qualifications or legal documents, is unacceptable. Where a staff member falsifies records or other documents, including those held electronically, this will be regarded as a serious disciplinary matter and potentially a criminal offence.

9. Financial inducements

- 9.1. Staff members must:
- Familiarise themselves and comply with the School's financial regulations.
 - Declare to the governing body, in writing, any gifts received, with the exception of:
 - Low cost, functional items suitable for business rather than personal use and displaying the supplier's logo. These items may be accepted.
 - Gifts, including vouchers, offered by parents or pupils to School staff to express their gratitude, e.g. at Christmas or at the end of the academic year. Monetary gifts would need to be considered by the Governing Body.
 - Hospitality in the shape of meals and drinks where it forms part of a normal business meeting.
 - Authorised visits to exhibitions, demonstrations, conferences, business meals and social functions in connection with the School's business, which shall be at the School's expense.
 - Not accept a personal gift, payment, or other incentive from a business contact. Any such gifts should be returned.
 - Declare any gift that cannot be returned to the governing body, who will decide how it will be used.
 - Only accept offers to specific events after authorisation from the governing body.

10. Contacts

- 10.1. Staff members shall not use School business contacts for acquiring materials or services at trade/discount prices for non-school activities, unless participating in concessionary schemes arranged by trade unions or other such groups.

11. Health and safety

- 11.1. Staff members must:

- Be familiar with and adhere to the School's Health and Safety Policy, and ensure that they take every action to keep themselves and everyone in the School environment safe and well.
- Comply with health and safety regulations and use any safety equipment and protective clothing which is supplied to them.
- Comply with hygiene requirements.
- Comply with accident reporting requirements.
- Inform their line manager of any paid work which is undertaken elsewhere, for compliance with Working Time Regulations.
- Follow the agreed procedure for signing in and signing out when entering or leaving the school premises.
- Wear a blue staff identification badge and lanyard whilst on the premises.

12. Alcohol and illegal drugs

- 12.1. The taking of illegal drugs or alcohol during working hours is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Staff members must never attend work under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.
- 12.2. If alcohol or drug usage impacts on a staff member's performance, the School has the right to discuss the matter with the employee and take appropriate action in accordance with the School's disciplinary procedures, including referral to the police.

13. Premises, equipment and communication

- 13.1. School equipment and systems are available only for school-related activities and should not be used for the fulfilment of another job or for personal use, unless specifically authorised by the Head Teacher.
- 13.2. Illegal, inappropriate or unacceptable use of School equipment or communication systems may result in disciplinary action and, in serious cases, could lead to an employee's dismissal.
- 13.3. Employees receiving inappropriate communication or material, or who are unsure about whether something he/she proposes to do might breach this policy, should seek advice from the Head Teacher.
- 13.4. The School reserves the right to monitor emails, phone calls, internet activity or document production, principally in order to avoid offensive or nuisance material and to protect systems from viruses, but also to ensure proper and effective use of systems.
- 13.5. Communication systems may be accessed when the School suspects that the employee has been misusing systems or facilities, or for the investigation of suspected fraud or

other irregularity. Access will be secured by the systems manager, only with the permission of the governing body.

- 13.6. Passwords should not be shared and access to computer systems must be kept confidential except on the express request of the Head Teacher or systems manager. Breach of this confidentiality may be subject to disciplinary action.
- 13.7. School equipment that is used outside School premises, for example laptops, should be returned to the School when the employee leaves employment, or if requested to do so by the Head Teacher.

14. Social networking websites

- 14.1. Employees must not access social networking sites for personal use during class time.
- 14.2. Access to some journals, blogs and social networking sites is permitted during classes for the purposes of undertaking job-related duties only.
- 14.3. Employees must act in the best interests of the School and not disclose personal data or information about any individual, including staff members, children and young people.
- 14.4. Staff members should not 'friend' or 'follow' pupils on social networking websites.
- 14.5.** Access may be withdrawn and disciplinary action taken if there is a breach of confidentiality or defamatory remarks are made against any individual at the School.

15. GDPR, data protection and confidentiality

- 15.1. Staff members are required, under the General Data Protection Regulation (2018), to collect, maintain and dispose of sensitive or personal data in a responsible manner.
- 15.2. Staff members should not disclose sensitive information about the School, its employees or the LA to other parties.
- 15.3. The only exception whereby it is acceptable for a staff member to disclose information which would otherwise be considered confidential is when the confidential information gives rise to concerns about the safety or welfare of a pupil.
- 15.4. Staff members have the right to request access to data that is held about them. Such requests should be made according to the procedure laid out in the school's Data Protection Policy.

16. Policy review

- 16.1. This policy is reviewed every 3 years by the governing body and the Head Teacher.