

Code of Conduct

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RECORD OF POLICY AMENDMENT / HISTORY

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V1.3	Gemma Quantrill	17/03/25		Updates
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1. Aims, Scope, and Principles

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 reach is an environment where everyone is safe, happy and treated with respect.

Woodend Farm school staff have an influential position in the organisation and will act as role models for pupils by consistently demonstrating high standards of behaviour and integrity both in and outside of work.

We expect all staff and volunteers to act with personal and professional integrity, respecting the safety and wellbeing of others and upholding the ethos of the school. Staff are expected to work in line with the schools values - Kindness, Belonging, Believing and Achieving.

Woodend Farm school will provide an environment where success is built upon belief. Woodend Farm school expect its employees to be guided by it principles of fearless engagement with children, child-centered decision making and no limiting beliefs.

Failure to follow the Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action being taken, as set out in our staff Disciplinary Procedures.

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.

2. Legislation and Guidance

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, staff/pupil relationships and communications, including the use of social media.

3. A way of being

Woodend Farm school Kindness comes in many forms Our way of being	We will meet our children where they are and won't assume that we know how children are feeling	We will empathise and not judge. We will pro-actively listen and acknowledge concern however small we perceive they may be. Many will have heightened anxieties and hidden trauma. We need to facilitate a sense of safety – physically and emotionally.
We will ooze positivity by looking for the best in all and celebrating small steps forwards, showing exaggerated delight without sarcasm, even in jest.	We will go out of our way to check in with all.	We will focus on relational connections and regulation first, establishing relationships, routines, learning habits and responding to our children's voices.
We will prioritise emotional health and wellbeing offering support to those who may be struggling.	We understand that there are no shortcuts to success, we will therefore invest the time needed to get this right for all.	We will be emotionally present, smile and welcome children with words, body language, gestures, pitch, tone, prosody of voice sending the subtle but powerful cues of safety.
We will be child focused, remembering that children are little people not data stet! We are focusing on the road to success, ensuring the foundations are strong is our absolute priority. We are co-creating a secure based from which we can thrive and flourish.	We will connect, engage, enthuse our children into a love for learning.	We will go out of our way to look out for each other. Kindness will be a thread that give us a sense of belonging and enables us to connect and feel emotionally contained.

4. General Obligations

Staff set an example to pupils.

They will:

- Maintain high standards in their attendance and punctuality
- Never use inappropriate or offensive language within the school
- Treat pupils and others with dignity and respect
- Show tolerance and respect for the rights of others
- Not undermine fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
- Express personal beliefs in a way that will not overly influence pupils and will not exploit pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law

- Understand the statutory frameworks they must act within
- Employees are expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct
- Employees are expected to work to the requirements of their job and are required to respect managerial authority and follow reasonable instructions

Responsibilities of the employee include:

- To read, understand and comply with the Code of Conduct at all times
- To use this code, alongside other relevant School policies and professional codes, to guide them in their role
- To seek guidance from the Executive Headteacher/ Line Manager if they are unclear about the conduct or actions expected of them
- To alert the Executive Headteacher (or CEO in the case of the Executive Headteacher)
 at the earliest opportunity where an employee believes they may have acted in a
 manner which is inconsistent with the Code of Conduct and other relevant School
 Policies and professional codes.
- Employees must maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their work
- Should an Employee become aware of any conduct on the part of a colleague which raises concerns regarding health and safety, safeguarding or criminal activity they have a duty to disclose this.
- Should an Employee become aware of any conduct on the behalf of their family members or partners that raise concerns regarding safeguarding or criminal activity they have a duty to disclose this.
- Allegations concerning fraudulent, dishonest or corrupt practices or the falsification or withholding of information will be investigated under the School's Disciplinary Policy and formal disciplinary action taken where appropriate.

Responsibilities of the school include:

- Explain the provisions of the Code of Conduct to Employees and signpost Employees to other relevant policies, document and guidelines
- Provide additional advice and guidance to Employees in relation to queries they may have regarding the application of the Code of Conduct
- Coach, support and provide feedback to Employees on their performance in relation to the required standards of conduct
- Take appropriate action at the earliest opportunity to address breaches of the expected standards of conduct

This Code of Conduct is not exhaustive and does not replace the general requirements of the law, common sense and good conduct.

5. Signing in

Signing in and out of work is a vital part of maintaining a safe and accountable environment within a primary school team. It ensures that the school leadership is aware of who is on site at any given time, which is crucial for safeguarding, emergency procedures, and general operational oversight. Each staff member is responsible for signing themselves in and out—this must not be done by colleagues on their behalf. This policy helps maintain accurate records and reinforces personal accountability. It also prevents confusion or potential safeguarding concerns that could arise from incorrect attendance logs.

6. Safeguarding

Staff have a duty to safeguard pupils from harm and to report any concerns they have.

This includes physical, emotional and sexual abuse, or neglect. Staff will familiarise themselves with our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and the Prevent initiative, and ensure they are aware of the processes to follow if they have concerns about a child.

Our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy is available on our website and in the school's shared drive.

Allegations that may meet the harm threshold:

This section applies to all cases in which it is alleged that anyone working in the school, including a supply teacher, volunteer or contractor, has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child, and/or
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, and/or
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children, and/or
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children – this includes behaviour taking place inside or outside of school

We will deal with any such allegation quickly and in a fair and consistent way that provides effective child protection while also supporting the individual who is the subject of the allegation.

A 'case manager' will lead any investigation. This will be the executive headteacher, or the CEO where the executive headteacher is the subject of the allegation.

Low-level concerns about members of staff:

A low-level concern is behaviour towards a child by a member of staff that does not meet the harm threshold, but is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, and may be as simple as causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt'. For example, this may include:

- Being over-friendly with children
- Having favourites
- Taking photographs of children on a personal device
- Engaging in 1-to-1 activities where they can't easily be seen
- Humiliating pupils

Low-level concerns can include inappropriate conduct inside and outside of work. All staff should share any low-level concerns they have using the reporting procedures set out in our child protection and safeguarding policy. We also encourage staff to self-refer if they find themselves in a situation that could be misinterpreted. If staff are not sure whether behaviour would be deemed a low-level concern, we encourage staff to report it.

All reports will be handled in a responsive, sensitive and proportionate way.

Unprofessional behaviour will be addressed, and the staff members supported to correct it, at an early stage.

This creates and embeds a culture of openness, trust and transparency in which our school values and expected behaviour are constantly lived, monitored and reinforced by all staff, while minimising the risk of abuse.

Reporting and responding to low-level concerns is covered in more detail in our child protection and safeguarding policy. This is available is available in your staff online folder and on our website.

Our procedures for dealing with allegations will be applied with common sense and judgement.

Whistleblowing:

Whistle-blowing reports wrongdoing that it is "in the public interest". Examples linked to safeguarding include:

- Pupils' or staff members' health and safety being put in danger
- Failure to comply with a legal obligation or statutory requirement
- Attempts to cover up the above, or any other wrongdoing in the public interest

Staff are encouraged to report suspected wrongdoing as soon as possible. Their concerns will be taken seriously and investigated, and their confidentiality will be respected. The school aims to encourage openness and will support whistleblowers who raise genuine concerns under this policy, even if they turn out to be mistaken.

Staff should consider the examples above when deciding whether their concern is of a whistle-blowing nature. Consider whether the incident(s) was illegal, breached statutory or school procedures, put people in danger or was an attempt to cover any such activity up.

Staff should report their concern to the executive headteacher. If the concern is about the executive headteacher, or it is believed they may be involved in the wrongdoing in some way, the staff member should report their concern to the CEO.

Concerns should be made in writing wherever possible. They should include names of those committing wrongdoing, dates, places and as much evidence and context as possible. Staff raising a concern should also include details of any personal interest in the matter. The school will investigate any complaints in a timely, respectful and confidential manner.

For our school's detailed whistle-blowing process, please refer to our whistle-blowing policy. This can be found in the staff folder online or on our website.

7. Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is any unwanted physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct of a sexual nature that has a purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. It also includes treating someone less favourably because they've submitted or refused to submit to unwanted conduct of a sexual nature in the past, or harassment related to sex or gender reassignment. When this behaviour is unwanted, it includes (but isn't limited to):

- Unwanted physical conduct or 'horseplay' including touching, pinching, pushing and grabbing
- Continued suggestions for sexual activity after it has been made clear that such suggestions are unwelcome
- Sending or displaying material that is pornographic, or that some people might find offensive
- Unwelcome sexual advances or suggestive behaviour (which the harasser may perceive as harmless)
- Offensive emails, text messages or social media content
- Comments and jokes of a sexual nature
- Sexually suggestive looks and staring
- Sexual propositions and advances
- Promising things in return for sexual favours
- Physical contact such as massaging, hugging or kissing
- Sexual contact on social media

Staff will help create a positive environment that works to prevent sexual harassment. This

includes calling out sexual harassment that they witness. All witnesses will be provided with appropriate support and will be protected from victimisation.

If a staff member is concerned at any point about incidents of sexual harassment (either directed at them or someone else), they should report their concern to the executive headteacher. If the concern is about the executive headteacher, or it is believed they may be involved in the wrongdoing in some way, the staff member should report their concern to the CEO. The school will investigate any complaints in a timely, respectful and confidential manner.

All staff will receive training on recognising and responding to incidents of sexual harassment.

The school will monitor the treatment and outcomes of any complaints of sexual harassment or victimisation received to make sure that they are properly investigated and resolved, those who report or act as witnesses are not victimised, repeat offenders are dealt with appropriately, cultural clashes are identified and resolved, and workforce training is targeted where needed.

8. Staff/Pupil Relationships

Staff will observe proper boundaries with pupils that are appropriate to their professional position. They will act in a fair and transparent way that would not lead anyone to reasonably assume they are not doing so.

When working on a one-to-one basis, staff will ensure that:

- This takes place in a public place that others can access
- Others can see into the room
- Line manager knows where sessions are taking place and risk assessment has been filled out
- Staff should avoid contact with pupils outside of school hours if possible.
- Personal contact details should not be exchanged between staff and pupils. This includes social media profiles.

While we are aware many pupils and their parents may wish to give gifts to staff, for example, at the end of the school year, gifts from staff to pupils are not acceptable.

Behaviour which constitutes bullying and harassment, intimidation, victimisation, discrimination or abuse of authority will not be tolerated and may be addressed via the School's bullying and harassment and / or disciplinary policy. This includes physical and verbal abuse and use of inappropriate language (for example the use of profanity or vulgar expressions) or unprofessional behaviour (for example being rude or hostile) with colleagues, pupils and parents.

Employees should treat all stakeholders in a fair and equitable way and not behave in a manner which may demean, distress, offend or discriminate against others.

Employees should ensure that policies relating to equality issues are complied with.

Employees should be aware of the School's Complaint Procedure and address any concerns from parents / pupils and other stakeholders in accordance with this document.

If a staff member is concerned at any point that an interaction between themselves and a pupil may be misinterpreted, this should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) a member of the senior leadership team.

9. Communication and Social Media

School staff's social media profiles should not be available to pupils. If they have a personal profile on social media sites, they should not use their full name, as pupils may be able to find them. Staff should consider using a first and middle name instead and set public profiles to private.

Staff should not attempt to contact pupils or their parents/carers via social media, or any other means outside school, in order to develop any sort of relationship. They will not make any efforts to find pupils' or parents/carers' social media profiles.

Staff will ensure that they do not post any images online that identify children who are pupils at the school. Images of pupils will only be published with consent on the school website and school authorised social media platforms.

Failure to comply may result in Disciplinary Procedures.

Staff should be aware of the school's online safety policy which is available in the staff online folders.

10. Acceptable Use of Technology

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.

Staff will not use personal mobile phones and laptops, or school equipment for personal use, in school hours or in front of pupils. Any personal use must be in the employee's own time (before or after working hours or during unpaid lunch breaks). All personal use must comply with the standards and restrictions set out in this Code. They will also not use personal mobile phones or cameras to take pictures of pupils.

Staff will not share personal phone numbers with parents or pupils.

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

11. 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/carers.

This information will never be:

- Disclosed to anyone without the relevant authority
- Used to humiliate, embarrass or blackmail others
- Used for a purpose other than what it was collected and intended for

Specifically, all Employees must:

- Work in accordance with the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation (2018) and associated legislation
- Observe the School's procedures for the release of information to other agencies and members of the public

- Not use or share confidential information inappropriately or for personal gain
- Not speak inappropriately about the school community, pupils, parents, staff or governors including discussing incidents, operational or employment matters with parents / members of the public
- Ensure all confidential data is kept secure and password protected

Should employees be in doubt about the appropriateness of sharing information they should seek guidance from the Executive Headteacher.

This does not overrule staff's duty to report child protection concerns to the appropriate channel where staff believe a child is at risk of harm.

12. 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 the schools property and facilities.

During the course of their work Employees should ensure they do not:

- Willfully provide false / misleading information
- Destroy or alter information / records without proper authorisation
- Willfully withhold information or conceal matters which they could reasonably be expected to have disclosed
- Misrepresent the School or their position
- Accept or offer any form of bribe / inducement or engage in any other corrupt working practice

Staff will not accept bribes. Gifts that are worth more than £15 must be declared and recorded on the gifts and hospitality register.

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

Any criminal offences i.e. driving offences, incurred during the course of employment need to be disclosed to the executive headteacher and Business Manager.

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.

13. Dress Code

Staff will dress in a professional, appropriate manner.

Staff should wear uniform where provided.

Outfits will not be overly revealing.

Clothes will not display any offensive or political slogans.

Clothing should be fit for purpose i.e. PE, outdoor activities, professional meetings etc.

Employees should wear their identity badges at all times whilst in the workplace and/or whilst

out in the community representing the school.

The School recognises the diversity of cultures and religions of its Employees and will take a sensitive approach where this affects dress and uniform requirements.

14. Conduct Outside of Work

Staff will not act in a way that would bring the school into disrepute. This covers relevant criminal offences, such as violence or sexual misconduct, as well as negative comments about the organisation on social media, any conduct of this nature could lead to disciplinary action.

The school recognises that Employees are entitled to their private lives. In general, the choices and actions of employees outside of their job role are not the school's concern. However, in order to protect all parties, there are exceptions to this.

All Employees working in the School Community must be mindful that they have a responsibility to maintain public confidence in their own and the School's ability to safeguard the welfare and best interests of children and young people. It is therefore, expected that they will adopt high standards of personal conduct in order to maintain the confidence and respect of the public in general and all those with whom they work. In this regard Employees must not engage in conduct outside of work which has the potential to:

- Affect or is likely to affect the suitability of the Employee to undertake their job role or work with children/young people or in a School setting
- Impact on the operation or reputation or standing of the School
- Impact on the operation or reputation of the School's relationship with its staff, parents, pupils, or other stakeholders
- Seriously undermine the trust and confidence that the School has in the Employee to undertake their job role or work with children/young people or in a School setting

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

Concerns related to an employee's actions or inactions outside of work will be reasonably considered in light of the Employees job role, and the potential impact of the Employee's suitability to do their job within the context of the School Community. If relevant, formal action may be considered following the implementation of the School's disciplinary procedure. Depending on the seriousness of any established concerns dismissal may be a potential outcome.

15. Smoking and the use of drugs and alcohol

The School is a non- smoking environment. Smoking and the use of e-cigarettes or "vaping" is not allowed on School premises or during working time. Staff should also refrain from using the smoking area between the hours of 9am and 4pm. Should pupils and/or visitors be present on site before 9am and after 4pm, staff should refrain from smoking.

Employees must not consume alcohol or use illegal drugs in the workplace or be under the influence of such substances whilst at work. This includes the use of 'legal highs' or psychoactive substances.

Employees must ensure that any use of alcohol / illegal drugs outside of work does not adversely affect their work performance, attendance, conduct, working relationships, health and safety of themselves and others or damage the School's image and reputation. Employees are expected to behave in a manner which would not lead any reasonable person to question their suitability to work with children or act as a role model. For example, presenting for work with clothing or breath smelling of alcohol or drugs is likely to raise reputational concerns.

If an Employee has a drug or alcohol dependency which is impacting on their work or has the potential to impact on their work, they should discuss this with the executive headteacher. Where an employee engages with the school regarding addressing their dependency, consideration will be given on how to best to support the employee. External advice may be sought prior to or during the implementation of the school's disciplinary procedure where conduct issues arise due to alcohol or drug use.

16. Duty of Disclose

All Employees have a duty to immediately disclose to the executive headteacher or CEO in the case of a executive headteacher prior to the start of their employment, at the start of their employment or during the course of their employment, any change in their circumstances or any information which may affect or is likely to affect the suitability of the Employee to undertake their job role or work with children/ young people or in a School setting.

This includes but is not restricted to:

- the Employee being subject to any police investigation / enquiry, arrest, ban, charge, caution, reprimand, warning, fine or pending prosecution or criminal conviction. This includes any actions committed overseas which would be subject to a police investigation or formal action if such actions had been committed in any part of the United Kingdom
- the Employee being subject to any referral, made to, or any investigation, proceedings, or prohibition order being undertaken by the Teaching Regulation Agency, General Teaching Council for Scotland, or the Education Workforce Council in Wales
- the Employee being subject to the inclusion on the DBS Children's Barred List and any change in DBS status during employment, or any referral, made to, or any, investigation or proceedings being undertaken by the DBS
- the Employee being subject to any referral, made to, or any investigation, proceedings, or prohibition order being undertaken by any other regulatory or professional authorities or actions of other agencies relating to child protection and/or safeguarding concerns
- the Employee being subject to any orders made in relation to the care of children, the refusal or cancellation of registration relating to childcare, or children's homes, or being prohibited from private fostering
- the Employee being subject to any 'live' disciplinary process, formal sanction or any
 other relevant information arising from a previous or current secondary employment /
 voluntary work which may impact on the Employee's suitability to undertake their role
 or work with children/young people or in a School setting. This includes substantiated
 safeguarding allegations
- the Employee's close personal relationships outside of the workplace presenting a 'risk by association' to the safeguarding of children / young people.

This list is not exhaustive. Should an employee be unclear about whether it is appropriate to disclose a matter they are encouraged to seek guidance from the executive headteacher or CEO in the case of the executive headteacher at the earliest opportunity.

The school acknowledges the obligation to disclose protected convictions and cautions is governed by the requirements of the Rehabilitation of Offences Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (as amended in 2013).

Prospective Employees should be aware that when applying for particular jobs and activities, certain convictions and cautions are considered 'protected'. This means that they do not need to be disclosed to employers, and if they are disclosed, employers cannot take them into account.

Employees are advised that Guidance about whether a conviction or caution should be disclosed can be found here: Check if you need to tell someone about your criminal record: What information you need to give - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Employees must also report any current or historical information in the public domain or which is likely to come into the public domain which may be of relevance to their job role or their suitability to work with children/young people or in a School setting or matters which may be subject to adverse media attention or have a detrimental impact on the reputation of the School.

Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009

In addition in the case of individuals who work with, or manage the education of, early years pupils (under the age of five) during school hours, and children up to the age of eight in relation to activities outside of the school day (for example breakfast or after school club employees), the following legislative provisions also apply.

In accordance with the Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009 (Section 75 of the Childcare Act 2006) an Employee should immediately disclose to the executive headteacher or CEO in the case of the executive headteacher if, at any point during their employment, they:

• Are disqualified from providing childcare provision or being involved in the management of such provision, including where any application for an Ofsted waiver from disqualification has been made, regardless of whether such an application was successful

Such employees also have a duty to ensure that they are fully aware of their obligations and will be asked by the school to confirm that they understand and comply with these provisions.

Further guidance relating to Employee's obligations under the Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009 including details of the relevant offences which must be disclosed to the school is available at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/disqualification-under-the-childcare-act2006

Employees should seek clarification from the executive headteacher or CEO in the case of the executive headteacher if they are unclear whether they are required to disclose certain information under this provision.

How the school will respond to Employee disclosures

Disclosures will be handled sensitively and discretely, and with regard to data protection considerations.

The executive headteacher will consider carefully any disclosure which is made and the appropriate response.

This may result in a suspension from duties with normal pay while an investigation / risk assessment takes place or Ofsted waiver application made (where applicable). Suspension is not a sanction in itself and does not represent any prejudgment of the outcome of the response to the disclosure.

In instances where the information disclosed constitutes a risk to the safeguarding of children / young people or is incompatible with an employee's job role or their suitability to work with children/young people in a school setting, termination of employment may be considered, following due process.

Any failure to disclose any information required in the course of employment or any other information that may have a bearing on an individual's suitability to carry out their job role or work with children/young people or in a school setting may be the subject of disciplinary action which could lead to dismissal.

17. Misconduct

Failure to follow the Code of Conduct may result in further action being taken, as set out in the Schools Disciplinary Procedure and employment contract.

Employees should ensure they are familiar with type of conduct which may be regarded as a breach of School rules.

Examples of behaviours which are likely to be regarded to constitute misconduct are set out in the Appendix to the Staff Discipline policy.

Allegations of misconduct will be managed in accordance with the Staff Discipline policy.

18. Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed every year but can be revised as needed. It will be ratified by the board of governors.

19. Links With Other Policies

This policy links with our policies on:

- Staff Disciplinary policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding policy
- Staff grievance procedures
- Child protection and safeguarding
- Behaviour policy
- Online safety
- Whistleblowing

