



Learning Together,
Growing Together



Bywell CE (C) Junior School

Staff Code of Conduct Policy

2023–2024

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1. Introduction

This code of conduct is designed to give clear guidance on the standards of behaviour all staff at Bywell C.E (C) Junior School are expected to observe. It recognizes that staff in school are in a unique position of influence and must maintain behaviour that sets a good example and acts as a role model to all of the pupils within the school.

While every effort has been made to ensure that the guidance provided is as detailed as possible, situations may arise which are not specifically covered in the code. Where this happens, employees are expected to use their professional judgement and act in the best interests of the school and its pupils.

2. Compliance with the Code of Conduct

Failure to comply with the code of conduct, and with associated policies and required reading, may result in disciplinary action being taken. Where clarification is needed on any aspect of this document, this should be sought from the Headteacher.

3. Professional responsibilities and conduct

It is expected that all people working in school will carry out their role in line with the requirements outlined in their job descriptions, professional standards and conditions of service, school policy statements and agreed practice.

3.1 Safeguarding of all children

- All staff are responsible for the safeguarding and well-being of children. Staff must familiarise themselves with the Safeguarding Policy and be aware of the signs of physical/sexual/emotional abuse and neglect. Basic procedures for Safeguarding and procedures for reporting concerns are displayed in classroom, the main office and other key areas.

- Appropriate relationships with children - Employees should maintain appropriate professional boundaries at all times.
- School employees will act in an open and transparent way that does not lead any reasonable person to suspect their actions or intent.
- Staff should avoid behaviour that might be misinterpreted by others in order to protect both young people and them.

Where an employee is in a specified position of trust with a child under 18, it is an offence for that person to engage in sexual activity with or in the presence of that child, or to cause or incite that child to engage in or watch sexual activity. This means the adult should not:

1. Use their position to gain access to information about children for their own or other's advantage.
 2. Use their position to intimidate, bully, humiliate, threaten, coerce, or undermine children or young people.
 3. Use their status and standing to form or promote relationships which are of a sexual nature, or which may become so.
- Personal association with Safeguarding matters - Employees must inform the Headteacher immediately if they, or a close family member, are being investigated in connection with child protection/safeguarding allegation/s out of school.

3.2 Treating other people with dignity and respect.

- All employees are expected to treat other colleagues, pupils and external contacts, such as Parents/Carers, with dignity, fairness, equality and respect.
- Unacceptable behaviour such as discrimination, bullying, harassment or intimidation will not be tolerated in school. This

includes physical and verbal abuse and use of inappropriate language or unprofessional behaviour with colleagues, pupils and Parents/Carers.

- There are occasions, however, when it is entirely appropriate and proper for staff to have physical contact with pupils, but it is crucial that they only do so in ways appropriate to their professional role. When physical contact is made with pupils this should be in response to their needs at the time, of limited duration and appropriate given their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background.
- Physical contact should never be secretive or casual, or for the gratification of the adult, or for the purposes of punishment.
- Physical interventions should be in line with the 'Behaviour Policy'.

3.3 Professional behaviour and appearance

- Employees must not misuse or misinterpret their position, qualifications or experience or bring the reputation of the school into disrepute. Such behaviour may lead to disciplinary action.
- All employees are expected to be open and honest at all times.
- All adults working with children will adopt high standards of personal conduct in order to maintain the confidence and respect of the public and to provide a role model. Employees should not:
 1. Behave in a manner which could lead others to question their suitability to work with children.
 2. Make, or encourage others to make, unprofessional personal comments which scapegoat, demean or humiliate others.
 3. Criminal Actions – School employees must inform the Headteacher (Governing Body of the employee is the Headteacher) immediately if they are subject to a criminal conviction, caution, ban, police enquiry, investigating or pending prosecution.
- Dress - What is worn for work is a matter of choice for individual staff members but the choice of clothes should ensure that staff appearance is professional at all times. (Staff leading sports sessions should change in to sports-wear; again there is an expectation that professional

appearance is maintained.) Footwear must ensure that if a member of staff needs to proceed with haste to ensure the safety of pupils that is remains on the foot. When choosing what is worn, staff should ensure the following:

- Is not likely to be viewed as offensive, revealing or sexually provocative
- Does not distract, cause embarrassment or give rise to misunderstanding
- Is absent of any political or otherwise contentious slogans
- Is not considered to be discriminatory and is culturally sensitive
- Tattoos are covered up

Required reading:

- School's Child Protection Policy
- Keeping children safe on education – part 1
- Behaviour Policy
- Job description and conditions of service
- Professional standards

4. Declaration of interests

- An employee is required to declare any associations with a group or an organisation which could be considered to conflict with the ethos of the school.
- Employees should also consider carefully whether they need to declare to school any relationship with any individual(s) which might cause conflict with school activities (e.g. a relationship with a Governor, other staff member or contractor who provides services to the school)
- Failure to make relevant declarations of interests is breach of trust – if in doubt, seek advice.
- All declarations should be submitted on a school Register of Business Interests form.

5. Probity of records

- Staff are expected to maintain pupil tracking and progress records which are accurate.
- The deliberate falsification of documents is not acceptable.

6. Financial Matters

- Financial Regulation for Schools – All school employees must comply with the school's Local authority Financial Regulations.
- Financial expenditure on behalf of the school should be agreed in advance and is subject to monitoring. Misuse of school finances will be considered as a matter for disciplinary/criminal action.
- Declaration of gifts – Any gifts received, other than the exceptions, should be declared in writing to the Governing Body.
- Exceptions would be:
 1. A gift offered by Parents/Carers/Children to express their thanks and gratitude.
 2. A low cost gift given to the school for the purpose of advertising a service or company, e.g. pens/diaries, do not have to be declared.

7. Other employment

- Employees are permitted to take up secondary employment outside the school, as long as the activity does not constitute a conflict of interest, adversely affect their primary employment at the school or exceed the legal working limit of 48 hours per week as defined by Working Time Regulations.

8. Health and Safety

- Employees must adhere to the school's Health and Safety policy, procedure and guidance – each employee must ensure they take every action to keep themselves and everyone in then school environment safe and well.
- Personal Health. It is wise and prudent, that if a member of staff has a health issue, i.e. asthma, then a health care plan should be drawn up so that at the very least the Headteacher is aware of the problem and with permission the school first aiders are aware to ensure the well-being of all staff. Personal medication should be stored safely and securely.

Required Reading – School's Health and Safety Policy and all related updates.

9. Use of alcohol and illegal drugs

- The use of illegal drugs or alcohol during working hours is unacceptable.
- All employees are expected to attend school in a fit state to work.

10. Use of school premises, equipment and communication systems

- School equipment and systems (e.g. phones, emails, I-Pads and computers) are available only for school related activities – they should not be used for another job/personal use unless this has been authorised by the Headteacher.
- Illegal, inappropriate or unacceptable use of school equipment/communication systems may result I disciplinary action and in serious cases could lead to employee dismissal. This list of prohibited use of not exhaustive but includes:
 1. Creating/sending/forwarding any message that would be considered inappropriate/unacceptable
 2. Committing or implying commitment to any contractual arrangements.

3. Access to publication of illegal, offensive, unacceptable or inappropriate or non-work related material.
4. Any illegal activities.
5. Posting confidential information about the school and/or other employees, children or parents.
6. Gambling or gaming.
7. Unauthorised use of school facilities (or employee's IT equipment), for personal use during employee's working time.
8. Employees who are unsure if something he/she receives or proposes to do might breach this policy should seek advice from the Headteacher.
9. The school has the right to monitor emails, phone calls, internet activity or document production (e.g. to detect misuse, protect systems from viruses and to investigate suspected fraud and/or child protection offences)

Required Reading – Online Safety Policy, Acceptable Use of IT for Staff Policy.

Social networking websites, social contacts and Online Safety

- Adults must ensure they are familiar with, and promote, the policy on Online Safety.
- Adults working in school should not seek or establish e-relationships with children/parents/carers through social networking sites.
- Internal email systems should only be used in accordance with the organisation's Acceptable Use Policy. This is for school emails that may contain sensitive information.
- Adults working in school must adhere to the Local Authority guidelines regarding their personal use of social networking sites – this is within the school's Online Safety policy and Acceptable use of IT policy for staff.
- Adults are strongly advised, in their own interests, to take steps to ensure that their personal data is protected from anybody who does not have permission to access it.
- This means that the adult should:
 - i. Refrain from identifying themselves as working for the school in a way which has the effect of bringing the school in to disrepute.
 - ii. Not identify other employees or children without their consent.
 - iii. Not make any defamatory remarks about the school, its employees, children, parents/carers or any other school community members
 - iv. Not disclose data or information about the school, employees or children that could breach the Data Protection Act 1998, for example posting photographs or images of children or young people.
 - v. Not allow pupils to access their personal social networking accounts.

- vi. Ensure that personal social networking sites are set as private and pupils are never listed as approved contacts.
 - vii. Never access the social networking sites if pupils.
 - viii. Not give their personal contact details to children including their mobile number.
 - ix. Not use internet or web-based communication channels to send personal messages to a child/young person.
- Adults who work with children should not seek to have social contact with the families of children they work with, unless the reason for this contact has been firmly established and agreed with senior leaders.
- Failure to comply with the guidelines on staff use of social networking sites may lead to disciplinary action being initiated.

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Personal equipment

- Employees must not use their own personal equipment such as mobile phones or cameras to make recordings of pupils, parents/carers or other employees.

13. Confidentiality

- All employees at the school and the Governing Body come in to contact with a significant volume of data and information in relation to pupils, staff, school activities and many other matters. There is an obligation to observe the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998.
- Under the Data Protection Act, staff are required to collect, maintain and dispose of sensitive personal data in a responsible manner. Use must be made of the school shredder.
- Staff should not disclose sensitive information about the school, its employees, children, parents/carers or the Local Authority to third parties.
- Exceptions would be the necessary disclosure of suspected/alleged abuse of a pupil to Child Protection officers; discussion with a person accompanying or representing an employee in a formal meeting or disclosure under Whistleblowing Procedure.
- Where employees are asked for school information outside the school environment, this request should be referred back to the school and / or a meeting arranged in school to discuss the matter.
- All media communication must be directed to the Headteacher.
- Staff must provide data to parents/carers seeking information about pupil progress or other colleagues in the school/transfer destinations.

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Copyright.

- All employees are required to adhere to the guidance on copyright.