

Holme Grange School

Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers

Introduction

The success and joy of Holme Grange School comes from its fun, nurturing atmosphere. Because of our child-centred approach, pupils are enthusiastic and happy, we have had almost no incidents of bullying and our learning outcomes are excellent. The sensitive and caring attitudes and conduct of you, the staff, volunteers and club teachers working at the school, are the main reason for our ongoing success, and each one of you is crucial to the positive experiences and futures of our pupils. For this reason, we would respectfully ask you to read and sign the following code of conduct, which we hope captures the ethos and priorities of the school.

The School aims to offer a safe and supportive environment for all pupils. The staff code of conduct applies to all staff and volunteers. If a member of staff breaches this code it may lead to disciplinary procedures. This code of conduct has been adopted by the governing body in order to meet its duty to establish procedures for the regulation of the conduct of staff at the school.

If employees / volunteers are uncertain about what to do in a particular situation or require further information or guidance on the appropriate course of action to take in any situation they must contact the Head for advice before they taken any action.

Off-duty hours are an employee / volunteer's own personal concern. It is important, however, that people do not put themselves in a position where their duty to the School and their private interests conflict.

Employees and volunteers are expected to abide by the policies of the School. They must take care to ensure that their own personal or political opinions do not interfere with the provisions of balanced professional advice or their duty to carry out those policies.

The school believes:

- Pupils' welfare is of the highest priority
- Staff should avoid conduct which would lead anyone to question their motivation and intentions.
- Staff should discuss and/or take advice promptly from a senior manager over any incident which may give rise to concern. Records should be made of any such incident and of decisions made/further actions agreed.
- All staff and volunteers should know the name of their Designated safeguarding Lead (DSL). This is Mrs Jo Cooke – Head of Pastoral Care.
- All staff and volunteers must ensure they are totally familiar with safeguarding and child protection arrangements.

- Any breach of the law and other professional guidelines could result in criminal or disciplinary action.

The Code of Conduct for staff aims to:

- safeguard young people
- enable staff, irrespective of their roles and responsibilities, to ensure a safe learning and working environment and protect pupils from physical and emotional harm
- reduce the risk of staff being falsely accused of improper or unprofessional conduct

Expectations of staff

The School expects extremely high standards of staff. All staff and volunteers have a duty and responsibility to keep pupils safe and protect them from physical and emotional harm. This is done through respectful, caring and professional relationships between staff and pupils and behaviour by staff that demonstrates integrity, maturity and good judgement. Adults are expected to act, and be seen to act, in the pupils' best interests at all times. Adults must avoid conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions and follow the school safeguarding procedures, which are reviewed regularly, at all times. The school takes all possible measures to ensure adults are not placed in situations that may result in them being vulnerable. Always remember that adults are in positions of trust in relation to the pupils in their care.

In order to maintain a nurturing environment in which children are safe and comfortable staff and volunteers should:

- Treat all pupils, staff members and volunteers with respect and politeness at all times.
- Listen carefully to pupils' concerns and help them find solutions to their problems and worries.
- Read and adhere to the Safeguarding including Child Protection Policy, the Behaviour Policy, the e-Safety and Educational Visits policy, of the school.
- Maintain continual learning and development and excellent learning outcomes
- Use a child-centred approach to the learning process, responding to the questions and concerns of the pupils, as well as imparting information.
- Follow the agreed curriculum to ensure pupils have a wide and thorough education.
- Use fun and imaginative ways of engaging pupils in the learning process.
- Build the confidence and self-esteem of the pupils at Holme Grange to help them live positive and fulfilled lives:
 - Make sure all children are involved with activities and praised and supported.
 - Encourage pupils in their interests and talents, through extra-curricular activities.
 - Give children with identified needs, such as dyslexia etc., the time and support to achieve as well as others.
 - Make sure all children feel included in learning and play activities.

Medication

For the safety of all children and staff at Holme Grange School, it is not permitted for staff to hold prescription medication on their person, or bring over the counter medicine onto school premises. A stock of over the counter medication is held by Matron and can be used by staff if required during the school day.

If staff require medication prescribed by doctor, they should ensure that the medication will not impact on their ability to care for children.

Any medication brought in to school by staff must be stored in the following way:

- For **EYFS** staff in **Reception and Little Grange** any medication must be stored in a container marked Staff medication, and recorded in a hard-back book. This should then be locked in the Medicine Cupboard in the Little Grange Staff Room.
- All other staff must store their medication in a safe cupboard out of reach to pupils or the Medicine cupboard in the Medical room.

Security

You must not remove any school documents from the site nor take any photographs without due permission. It is acknowledged that many documents are required to enable teachers to carry out their work and this is perfectly acceptable and would be considered part of normal everyday practice. Removal of confidential documentation from the school site requires prior consent of the Head. The School reserves the right to search the outer clothing, bags, lockers and vehicles etc. of employees whilst on site. The employee may have a colleague in attendance on such (rare) occasions.

Smoking

The School is a non-smoking site.

Flexibility

Due to the demands and nature of the school, employees should be prepared to transfer upon request within departments, to undertake work of a different nature, *providing it is reasonable and safe to do so and the employee is adequately trained.*

Confidentiality

Members of staff / volunteers must not use information obtained in the course of their duties to the detriment of the School or for personal gain or benefit; nor should they impart this information to others who might use it in such a way.

Members of staff may have access to confidential information about pupils during the course of their work in order to undertake their everyday responsibilities. In some circumstances this may be highly sensitive or private information. Staff must never use confidential or personal information about a pupil for their own, or others' advantage.

Confidential information about pupils should never be shared with any person other than on a need to know basis. In circumstances where the pupils' identity does not need to be disclosed the information should be used anonymously. On occasion information about a pupil may need to be shared, for example when abuse is alleged or suspected. In such cases,

staff have a duty to pass information on without delay, but only to those with designated safeguarding responsibilities (see Safeguarding policy).

If a member of staff is in any doubt about whether to share information or keep it confidential he or she should seek guidance from a senior member of staff. Although it is important to listen to and support pupils, staff must not, under any circumstances, promise confidentiality or request pupils to do the same. Confidential information belonging to the School must not be disclosed to any person not authorised to receive it.

Members of staff / volunteers must not disclose personal or financial information about any other member of staff to any unauthorised person, external organisation or agency without the express consent of the individual concerned or that of the Head.

At all times staff must work within the requirements of the Data Protection Act and the Freedom of Information Act

Staff should take care not to gossip either with colleagues or parents or others outside the school

Convictions

Staff must notify the school in writing if charged with any criminal offence or if convicted of any criminal offence and this includes cautions.

Behaviour

All staff should adopt high standards of personal conduct in order to maintain the confidence and respect of their peers, pupils and the public in general. An individual's behaviour, either in or out of the workplace, should not compromise her/his position within the work setting so it is important to exercise due care and attention when outside of the School environment.

In accordance with our Equal Opportunities and Disciplinary Policies, Holme Grange School does not allow any kind of discriminatory behaviour, harassment or victimisation and expects its employees to demonstrate sensitivity, respect and care in the development of productive and professional relationships with colleagues in all aspects of work, from recruitment and performance evaluation to interpersonal relations. Whilst [The Teacher's Standards](#) (2021) set the required standard for conduct throughout a teacher's career, Holme Grange expects *all* its staff to support the School in its aims, through the maintenance of the highest standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school.

Staff should always behave and act as a role model to pupils. Staff should not drink alcohol when pupils are in the vicinity. This is especially so when supervising pupils or on school trips. This applies even when there are no pupils present, as the member of staff may be called to act in case of an emergency occurs.

Political indoctrination or attempts to radicalise pupils by staff is not tolerated and will lead to immediate suspension.

Promoting female genital mutilation is not tolerated and will lead to immediate suspension.

Professional behaviour

'Professional behaviour' is a generic term, but within this Code of Conduct includes such aspects as:

- Acting in a fair, courteous and mature manner to pupils, colleagues and others;
- Co-operating and liaising with colleagues, as appropriate, to ensure pupils receive a coherent and comprehensive educational service;
- Endeavouring to assist the School achieve its corporate and strategic objectives – in particular, by adopting a positive attitude to marketing and the achievement of quality and equality;
- Respect for School property;
- Maintaining the image of the School through standards of dress, general courtesy, correct use of School resources;
- Taking responsibility for the behaviour and conduct of pupils in the classroom and sharing such responsibility elsewhere on the premises;
- Being fit for work (i.e. not adversely influenced by drugs, alcohol, etc.);
- Being familiar with job requirements (e.g. proper preparation, use of suitable methods/systems, maintenance of appropriate/required records, etc), including keeping up-to-date with developments relevant to the job.
- Being familiar with communication channels and School procedures applicable to both pupils and staff; ensuring all assessments/exams/tests are conducted in a fair and proper (prescribed) manner, and that procedures are strictly followed with respect to confidentiality and security;
- Respect for the rights and opinions of others.
- Never promoting any forms of radicalisation, indoctrinating or influencing pupils in any way with a view to terrorist activities

Sexual behaviour

The law states that where a person aged 18 or over is in a 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. Where a person aged 18 or over is in a position of trust established with a person who has only recently left the school, any attempt to engage in sexual activity with that person will be a cause for concern and will be treated as a breach of trust established in that prior relationship.

Staff must never use their status and standing to form or promote a relationship which is of a sexual nature with a pupil or attempt to initiate a relationship with an ex-pupil, which is of a sexual nature. Any sexual behaviour by a member of staff with or towards a pupil is both inappropriate and illegal.

Pupils are protected by law in relation to non-consensual sexual behaviour. They are additionally protected by specific legal provisions regardless of whether or not they consent. The sexual activity referred to does not just involve physical contact including penetrative and non-penetrative acts. It may also include non-contact activities, such as causing pupils to engage in or watch sexual activity or the production of pornographic material or conversation that could be interpreted as sexually suggestive or provocative- i.e. verbal comments, letters, notes, electronic mail, phone calls, texts, physical contact.

'Grooming' is a course of behaviour where the sole purpose is to gain the trust of a child, and to manipulate that relationship so sexual abuse can take place. Staff should be aware that conferring special attention and favour upon a pupil might be construed as being part of a 'grooming' process, where the sole purpose may be interpreted as sexually suggestive or provocative- i.e. verbal comments, letters, notes, electronic mail, phone calls, texts, physical contact. Such behaviour is an offence and will be reported to police immediately.

All staff receive regular safeguarding training, in accordance with DoF timelimes, to ensure that an open and transparent culture, in which all concerns about all adults working in or on behalf of the school or college (including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors) are dealt with promptly and appropriately, is fostered. KCSIE makes a distinction between allegations that may meet the harms threshold and allegations/concerns that do not meet the harms threshold – referred to as 'low level concerns'. For School procedures regarding the approach to either allegations that meet the harms threshold, or low-level concerns, please refer to the Safeguarding Policy.

Physical Contact

It is understood that there may be times when physical contact may be necessary between pupil and teacher – for example, a sports teacher may need to touch a pupil to demonstrate correct technique. There must be, however, no unnecessary physical contact.

A 'no touch' approach is sometimes impractical, especially in the EYFS and pre-prep and may in some circumstances be inappropriate. When physical contact is made with pupils this should be in response to their needs at the time, of limited duration and appropriate. Staff should use their professional judgement at all times about the appropriateness of any physical contact.

Physical contact should never be secretive, or for the gratification of the adult, or represent a misuse of authority. If a member of staff believes that an action could be misinterpreted, the incident and circumstances should be made clear to senior staff. Any member of staff making physical contact with a pupil should be prepared to explain their actions.

Teachers and staff must be wary of physical contact that might be misinterpreted by a pupil, especially in "one to one" situations or circumstances in which a pupil might have a physical aversion to being touched.

Staff who work in one to one situations with pupils can be more vulnerable to allegations. Teachers and peripatetic staff should recognise this possibility and plan and conduct such meetings accordingly. No member of staff should be in an enclosed room without a window and with the door closed at any time. Every attempt should be made to ensure the safety and security needs of both staff and pupils are met and school policy is followed. Staff should avoid meeting with pupils in secluded areas of the school and always ensure there is visual access and/or an open door in one to one situations.

A teacher or member of staff must never touch a pupil below the waist unless there is a very good reason (such as attending to an injury). If touching a pupil is deemed necessary (for

example, administering First Aid), it is good practice to ask permission first and/or to make sure that there is another person present.

No teacher or member of staff may ever strike, manhandle, or intimidate a pupil.

Use of Physical Restraint

The School follows DfE guidance relating to physical intervention, 'Use of Reasonable Force' A Guide for Head Teachers, Staff and Governing Bodies, 2013: See the School's Restraint Policy for more details. A pupil must only be physically restrained to prevent danger to himself or others or very serious damage to property. Only reasonable and non-injurious means may be used and only for the minimum time necessary. Further assistance must be called at the earliest opportunity.

Any use of physical intervention must be reported to a Line Manager, who will inform the Head immediately and will be logged. There will be a regular review of the log.

Transporting Children

In certain situations, for example out of school activities, staff or volunteers may agree to transport children. A designated member of staff should be appointed to plan and provide oversight of all transporting arrangements and respond to any difficulties that may arise.

All staff planning to transport pupils must report the nature of the journey, the route and expected time of arrival to senior staff in accordance with agreed procedures. Parents should, wherever reasonably practicable be informed and consent sought. The use of private vehicles should only be considered when other avenues have been explored and are not possible however, if using private vehicles, it is best practice for children to be seated in the rear, with at least one adult additional to the driver acting as an escort. The driver must also have appropriate insurance.

Staff should ensure that their behaviour and that of pupils is safe and that the transport arrangements and the vehicle meet all legal requirements. They should ensure that the vehicle is roadworthy and appropriately insured and that the maximum capacity is not exceeded.

Dress and Appearance

The School is committed to promote diversity and will therefore respect individual preference in terms of customs, culture, religion and tradition.

Staff should consider the manner of dress and appearance appropriate to their professional role. To dress professionally shows pride, effort, respect for oneself and one's profession. Adults in school are role models for pupils. The image that staff project and the image of the school in the community is related to how adults in the school present themselves. It is therefore important to dress appropriately when acting in a professional capacity.

Staff should be neat, clean, smart and tidy, wearing clothes, including shoes, which are commensurate with their positions. Smart and professional appearance is expected at all

times for staff. Staff should ensure they are dressed decently, safely and appropriately for the tasks they undertake.

The school considers that those who dress or appear in a manner which could be considered as inappropriate or provocative (which might include multiple visible tattoos or piercings, flip flops and revealing clothes, such as short skirts or low-cut tops,) or whose clothes includes political or otherwise contentious slogans could render themselves vulnerable to criticism.

For avoidance of doubt staff at Holme Grange are requested:

- Not to wear any piercings other than one in each ear;
- Tattoos must be covered.
- No jeans or denim clothing should be worn
- Trousers should be tailored and skirts/ dresses should be at a discrete length
- Underwear should never be visible and low-cut tops or t-shirts should not be worn
- Appropriate footwear should be worn – no flip flops or high heels.
- Hair must be tidy and personal grooming should be of a high standard
- Skirts and dresses should be of a respectable length
- Men should wear suit/ sports jacket and a tie unless teaching sport. Staff who are not full time sports teachers should change into their sports clothes during the school day and not wear their 'kit' for teaching other lessons.
- For parent's consultation evenings all staff should wear more formal attire.
- For health and safety reasons jewellery should be kept to a minimum and be appropriate to the role.

If you feel you are too casual then you probably are!

Language

Teachers and staff must not swear, ridicule, verbally abuse pupils, gossip, discuss third parties or engage in salacious conversation. Such conduct can lead to misunderstandings or cause confusion in roles with undesirable consequences.

In general teachers and staff ought to refrain from using pupils' nicknames.

Searching

The School follows DfE guidance relating to searches from 'Screening, Searching and Confiscation Force, a guide for Head Teachers, Staff and Governing Bodies, 2013.

Teachers and staff should not physically search a pupil, although there may be occasions in which it is appropriate to ask a pupil to show you what is in his/her pockets. Teachers and staff may confiscate inappropriate items from pupils but their action must be reasonable and proportionate. Confiscated items should be given to the SMT Secretary or the Head.

When and Where to Meet Pupils

When speaking to pupils on a one to one basis staff should try to avoid rooms with closed doors (and windows in doors should always be kept clear). Depending on the circumstances it may be good practice to have another member of staff present or nearby. There should always be another member of staff within calling distance. Staff should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position with a child.

It is always advisable for interviews or work with individual children or parents to be conducted in view of other adults. Teachers and staff should not, as a rule, entertain pupils in their homes, although there are occasions when this might be acceptable for academic, pastoral or social reasons, and with the necessity at times of remote learning, delivery of lessons into the pupils' homes, from staff homes, is unavoidable: the School's Remote Learning Policy covers this in detail and should be read in the advent of a period of remote teaching.

Teachers and staff should not entertain pupils individually in their homes and if they do so careful thought must be given to which rooms might be appropriate. It would never be acceptable for a teacher or member of staff to allow a pupil into their bedroom. Teachers and staff must remain alert to potential problems that could arise if they saw a pupil too frequently or for too long.

Tutoring

Holme Grange Contracts of Employment state: *"You may not at any time without the Head's prior written consent (which shall not be unreasonably withheld) either receive any remuneration or reward for privately organised work with any pupil of the School, or accept any outside employment, past or appointment whether paid or unpaid"*

This includes Tutoring and permission **must** be sought from the Head if any member of staff is requested to tutor outside of school hours. In general, permission may be granted provided:

- Tutoring must not take place during Holme Grange term time
- Tutoring must never be offered to Holme Grange pupils
- Tutoring must never take place on the Holme Grange site

If any member of staff is asked to tutor a Holme Grange pupil, the Head should be informed of this.

Alcohol

In addition to the guidance above, there may be occasions when alcohol is provided at School events. In these instances, teachers and staff must always conduct themselves responsibly in the consumption of alcohol at School events. If a teacher or member of staff was to be worse for drink in any circumstance in which he or she might be expected to exercise duty of care for pupils, whether in the classroom or elsewhere, it would be regarded as a very serious offence which may well be Gross Misconduct. A member of staff or teacher who is driving pupils must not consume alcohol.

Acceptable Use, Communications (including social media) and use of technology – see AUP, Communications and Technology Policy and Procedures

All staff must have read and understood the above cited policy and will be asked to sign to confirm such.

Staff Use of School telephone:

If a member of staff needs to use the School telephone on **School business**, please use the one in the Staff Room. **No Personal local and long-distance calls** should be made without first seeking permission.

Under no circumstances should premium rate numbers or international calls be made from school telephones unless express permission is granted from the Head.

The school Finance Director obtains monthly reports of all numbers called from the school phones in order to manage the budgets effectively.

Sanctions

The School has a Behaviour Policy, including the process for Rewards and Sanctions and any sanctions used by staff and teachers must fall within the range of sanctions listed in it. All new staff must read the Behaviour Policy.

Bullying and Psychological Abuse

Teachers and members of staff must never bully or psychologically abuse a pupil. Teachers and staff should be aware that it is sometimes possible to bully or psychologically abuse a pupil through use of sarcasm, excessive criticism, referring to a pupil's personal characteristics, making a pupil the object of jokes or by the use of nicknames, the hurtful significance of which the teacher may be unaware.

Staff and teachers must not behave in a way that is physically intimidating nor engage in classroom behaviour such as throwing objects of any sort around, which could be misconstrued as assault or accidentally result in injury.

Inappropriate Behaviour by a Pupil

A teacher or member of staff who thinks that he or she is the object of inappropriate personal attention or remarks from a pupil should, in the first instance, discuss this openly and immediately with their Head of Department, Line Manager or member of the Senior Management Team, according to the context.

An appropriate course of action will then be agreed and acted upon.

Gifts

In light of the Bribery Act 2010, staff must always be circumspect about the implications of gifts or hospitality given to or received from pupils or parents. A fuller outline of steps that should be taken on receiving of such gifts is given in the School's Gifts and Hospitality Policy.

Criminal Offences Against Pupils

Physical assault and indecent assault of pupils are criminal offences. Teachers and other members of staff must be aware that legislation also makes the following into criminal offences:

- "Grooming"

- Having any sort of sexual relationship with a pupil, regardless of age, to whom the teacher owes a duty of care and in relation to whom the member of staff is in a position of trust.
- Possessing, downloading or transmitting obscene images of children.

Allegations of criminal acts by a member of School staff against a pupil, and any conduct which might lead to children being harmed or which might raise questions about the suitability of the member of staff for working with children, must be reported immediately and confidentially to the Head; if you are uncertain, discuss the matter confidentially with the Designated Members of Staff or his deputies.

Whistle-Blowing Policy

The school has a Whistle-blowing policy that all staff should read and ensure that they understand. Should a member of staff have any concerns over the behaviour of another member of staff, visitor or any individual who has contact with a child then they are to raise it immediately with the Headteacher, DSL (Jo Cooke Head of Pastoral Care) or one of the Deputy DSLs – please see the Safeguarding Policy for details. Full details are available in the School’s Whistle-Blowing Policy.

Reviewed Oct 2021. MJ

I have been issued with, discussed, read and understood the Holme Grange Staff Code of Conduct

Name of staff member:

Signature of staff member:

Date: