



# Staff Code of Conduct Policy

September 2021

**Committee Responsible:** Safeguarding Committee

**Governor Lead:** Rev M. Robinson

**Nominated Lead Member of Staff:** Mr J Baker

**Status & Review Cycle:** Statutory Annual

**Next Review Date:** October 2022

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## Safeguarding Statement 2021

### “It could happen here”

We recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children.

We make every effort to provide an environment in which children and adults feel safe, secure, valued and respected.

The purpose of this policy is to provide staff, volunteers and governors with the framework they need in order to keep children safe and secure in our school by ensuring all staff uphold the expected professional standards and behaviours.

#### Key Personnel

**Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is:** Mr J Baker

Contact details: [bakerj@fullbrook.surrey.sch.uk](mailto:bakerj@fullbrook.surrey.sch.uk)

**Deputy DSL(s) are:** Mr S Manley; Mrs C Smith

Contact details: [manleys@fullbrook.surrey.sch.uk](mailto:manleys@fullbrook.surrey.sch.uk); [smithc@fullbrook.surrey.sch.uk](mailto:smithc@fullbrook.surrey.sch.uk)

**The nominated safeguarding governor is:** Rev. M Robinson

**The Headteacher is:** Mrs K Moore

Contact details: [moorek@fullbrook.surrey.sch.uk](mailto:moorek@fullbrook.surrey.sch.uk)

**The Chair of Governors is:** Mr P Ballard

Contact details: [chairFB@gepacademies.com](mailto:chairFB@gepacademies.com)

**The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)**

Contact details: [LADO@surreycc.gov.uk](mailto:LADO@surreycc.gov.uk)

## **Terminology**

**Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children** is defined as:

- protecting children from maltreatment;
- preventing impairment of children's health or development;
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care;
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

**Staff** refers to all those working for or on behalf of the school, full or part time, temporary or permanent, in either a paid or voluntary capacity.

**Child(ren)** includes everyone under the age of 18. On the whole, this will apply to pupils of our school; however the policy will extend to visiting children and students from other establishments

**Parents** refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role, for example step-parents, foster carers and adoptive parents.

**Social media** refers to all forms of communication through internet, web based applications, text and instant messaging.

## **1. Introduction**

This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the Children Acts 1989 and 2004; the Education Act 2002.

The policy also reflects, both statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' 2021 (KCSIE), Teacher Standards 2012 and Surrey Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB) Procedures.

The Governing body takes seriously its responsibility under section 175 of the Education Act 2002 to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

This policy applies to all members of staff in the school as defined in the terminology

## **2. Policy Principles & Values**

This policy sets out the standards of behaviour expected from all staff at Fullbrook School.

Fullbrook requires that all staff have read and agree to comply with this policy. Breach or failure to observe this policy will result in action being taken under the school disciplinary procedures.

This policy is not exhaustive and all staff are expected to exercise their professional judgement to act in the best interests of the children and school at all times.

## **3. Policy Aims**

To demonstrate the school's commitment with regard to upholding staff professional standards.

To support staff with their responsibilities to safeguard children and to act appropriately by following the expected code of conduct.

To encourage staff to minimise the risk of inappropriate conduct occurring and thereby enable staff to set a good example to children within the school.

## **4. Compliance**

All staff must complete the form in appendix 1 to confirm they have read, understood and agree to comply with this policy. This form should be signed and dated and a copy retained on the member of staff's file.

## **5. Professional Behaviour and Conduct**

All staff are expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct.

All staff must uphold public trust in their professional position and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, by:

- treating children with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to professional position
- having regard for the need to safeguard children's well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions
- showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others not undermining fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
- ensuring that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways which exploit children's vulnerability or might lead them to break the law
- All staff must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they work and teach, and maintain high standards in their own attendance and punctuality
- All staff must have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities
- All staff should avoid any conflict of interest between activities undertaken outside school and responsibilities within school.
- Staff are expected to act in accordance with the school's policies and procedures at all times.

### **5.1 Parents as employees**

It is acknowledged that some staff also have children who attend the school. It is recognised that in these cases the staff fulfil a dual role of parent and employee.

Parents as employees should ensure that they uphold boundaries between the two roles and that their behaviour does not constitute a conflict of interest. For example, they must maintain the same level of confidentiality despite social expectations. Parent-staff should discuss any inter-role conflict with their line manager.

## **5.2 Dress and Appearance**

All staff are expected to dress in a manner that is appropriate to their role. (see Appendix A)

Staff dress and appearance must not be offensive, revealing or sexually provocative. Tattoos and body art should be covered while staff are in school.

Staff must dress safely and appropriately for the tasks they undertake, including suitable footwear.

Identity badges must be worn at all times.

## **5.3 Gifts & Hospitality**

Staff should not accept any gift/offer of hospitality that may be assessed as an inappropriate inducement by others.

It is unacceptable to receive gifts on a regular basis or to suggest to children that gifts are appropriate or desired. If you are unsure whether to accept a gift staff should consult their line manager.

Staff must not accept significant gifts (to the value of £25 or more) or hospitality from children, parents, actual or potential contractors or suppliers. Staff must report to their line manager all gifts/offers of hospitality and ensure these are recorded.

Personal gifts must not be given by staff to pupils and any reward to pupils should be in accordance with the appropriate school policy.

## **5.4 Smoking, alcohol, e-cigarettes and other substances**

School is a non-smoking site. Staff must not smoke or use e-cigarettes on the school premises or outside the school gates.

Staff must not smoke or use e-cigarettes whilst supervising children in a residential setting or offsite.

Staff must not consume or be under the influence of alcohol, drugs or unlawful substances on or near school premises.

Staff must refrain from the consumption of alcohol and other substances at school community activities, both on and off school premises.

## 5.5 Relationships

Staff must maintain appropriate professional boundaries in their interactions with children. Staff should act in an open and transparent way that would not lead any reasonable person to question their actions or intent.

Staff must not establish or seek to establish social contact with children for the purpose of securing a friendship or to pursue or strengthen a relationship. If a child seeks to establish social contact staff should exercise professional judgement when responding and be aware that such social contact could be misconstrued.

Staff must not develop personal or sexual relationships with children and must not engage in any sexual activity with a child.

Staff should be familiar with the contents of Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021, and the definition of sexual abuse.

Staff should be familiar with sections 15A and 16 of The Sexual Offences Act 2003, regarding communication with children and the abuse of a position of trust.

Staff must not make sexual remarks to a child or discuss their own sexual relationships with, or in the presence of, children or discuss a child's sexual relationships in an inappropriate context.

Contact with pupils should be through the school's authorised mechanisms (school email, school phone). Personal phone numbers, email addresses or communication via all social media platforms must not be used and staff must not share their home address with pupils. If contacted via an inappropriate route, staff must inform the Headteacher immediately.

Staff must not follow or become friends with any current pupil on any social media platform. Staff are discouraged from following or becoming friends with parents or former pupils on any social media platform.

Staff must ensure they are familiar with and comply with the school's e-safety policy.

It is not unusual for pupils or, sometimes, their parents to develop infatuations towards members of staff. All such situations must be responded to sensitively to maintain the dignity of those concerned. Staff should also be aware that such circumstances carry a high risk of words or actions being misinterpreted and for allegations to be made against staff. Any indications of an infatuation towards staff must be reported to their line manager.



## **5.6 Intimate/Personal care**

Staff must ensure that the health, safety, independence and welfare of children is promoted and their dignity and privacy are respected. Arrangements for intimate and personal care must be open and transparent.

Children should be encouraged to act as independently as possible and to undertake as much of their own personal care as is possible and practicable. When assistance is required, this should normally be undertaken by one member of staff, however, they should try to ensure that another appropriate adult is in the vicinity who is aware of the task to be undertaken and that, wherever possible, they are visible and/or audible.

Intimate or personal care procedures should not involve more than one member of staff unless the child's individual healthcare plan specifies the reason for this. A signed record should be kept of all intimate and personal care tasks undertaken and, where these have been carried out in another room, should include times left and returned.

Any vulnerability, including those that may arise from a physical or learning difficulty should be considered when formulating the child's individual healthcare plan. The views of parents, carers and the child, regardless of their age and understanding, should be actively sought in formulating the plan and in the necessary regular reviews of these arrangements.

Children are entitled to respect and privacy at all times and especially when in a state of undress, including, for example, when changing, toileting and showering.

However, there needs to be an appropriate level of supervision in order to safeguard children, satisfy health and safety considerations and ensure that bullying or teasing does not occur. This supervision should be appropriate to the needs and age of the children concerned and sensitive to the potential for embarrassment.

## **5.7 First Aid/Medication**

When administering first aid, wherever possible, staff should ensure that another adult is present, or aware of the action being taken.

After discussion with parents, children who are competent should be encouraged to take responsibility for managing their own medicines and procedures.

If a member of staff is concerned or uncertain about the amount or type of medication being given to a child, provided by a parent/carer or prescribed, this should be discussed with the relevant Head of Learning.

Staff taking medication which may affect their ability to care for children should seek medical advice regarding their suitability to do so and providers should ensure that they only work directly with children if that advice confirms that the medication is unlikely to impair their ability to look after children.

Staff medication on the premises must be securely stored and out of reach of children at all times. Staff should refer to the Medical Conditions policy where needed.

## **5.8 Physical contact with children**

There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate and proper for staff to have physical contact with children, it is crucial that they only do so in ways appropriate to their professional role.

When physical contact is made with children it must be in response to their needs at that time, of limited duration and appropriate to their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background.

Staff must seek the child's permission before initiating contact. Staff must observe and take note of the child's reaction or feelings and use a level of contact which is acceptable to the child for the minimum time necessary. Staff must use their professional judgement at all times.

Staff must never touch a child in a way which may be considered inappropriate.

Staff must not engage in rough play, tickling or fun fights with pupils.

Extra caution should be exercised where a child is known to have suffered previous abuse or neglect. Such experiences may sometimes make a child exceptionally needy and demanding of physical contact. Staff should respond sensitively by deterring the child through helping them to understand the importance of personal boundaries.

Staff supervising PE and games or providing musical tuition should demonstrate the use of a particular piece of equipment/instrument on another member of staff if possible. However, they may be required to initiate physical contact to support a child to perform a task safely or to assist them. Contact under these circumstances must be done with the pupil's agreement, for the minimum time necessary and in an open environment.

Physical contact must never be secretive, for the gratification of the adult or abuse a position of trust. If a member of staff believes that an action could be misinterpreted, the incident and circumstances should be reported to their line manager, recorded and, if appropriate, a copy placed on the child's file.

Staff must refer to the school's Supporting students with Medical Conditions policy for more information on Physical Intervention/Positive Handling/ Intimate Care procedures.

There may be occasions when a pupil is in distress and in need of reassurance. This may include age appropriate physical contact. Staff should remain self-aware at all times in order to avoid misinterpretation of their actions. Such incidents should always be recorded and shared with their line manager. If staff have a particular

concern about the need to provide this type of care and reassurance they should seek further advice from their line manager.

### **5.9 Showers and changing**

Children are entitled to respect and privacy whilst they are changing or showering after physical activity or swimming. Supervision by staff should be appropriate to the needs and age of the children and sensitive to the potential for embarrassment.

Staff should be vigilant about their own behaviour and announce their intention of entering a changing room. Personal and school devices with a camera or video function must not be taken into areas where children are showering or changing. Staff must not change or shower in the same place as children.

### **5.10 One to one situations**

Staff working individually with children should be aware of the potential vulnerability of the child and staff in such situations. Staff should manage these situations with regard to the safety of the child and to themselves.

Individual work with children must not be undertaken in isolated areas or rooms with no external viewing panel. Where it is necessary to close doors for reasons of confidentiality a colleague must be made aware of this and asked to remain vigilant.

### **5.11 Transporting pupils**

In certain circumstances it may be appropriate for staff to transport pupil's offsite for out of school activities. Staff should discuss the transport plan with their line manager, and risk assess for any difficulties that may arise.

Staff should ensure that the transport arrangements and the vehicle meet all legal requirements. Staff should ensure that the driver has the appropriate license for the vehicle, that the vehicle is roadworthy, has a valid MOT certificate, is appropriately insured, and that the maximum capacity is not exceeded.

Staff should ensure that the driver is not distracted while the vehicle is in motion for any reason other than an emergency and should also ensure all passengers are wearing correctly fitted, maintained and fastened seatbelts or if required appropriate child restraints/car seat. Staff should never transport pupils/students while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

Prior to transporting children offsite consent must be obtained from the child's parent. All staff must be aware that the safety and welfare of the child is their responsibility until the child is safely passed back to their parent.

## **5.12 Educational visits**

The duties in the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the supporting regulations apply to activities taking place on or off the school premises (including school visits) in the UK. The school has a Health and Safety policy, which includes policy and procedures for off-site visits, including residential visits and any school-led adventure activities.

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (1999) impose a duty on employers to produce suitable and sufficient risk assessments. This would include assessment of any risks to employees, children or others during an educational visit, and the measures that should be taken to minimise these risks.

Staff should take particular care when supervising children in the less formal atmosphere of an educational visit where a more relaxed discipline or informal dress and language code may be acceptable. However, staff remain in a position of trust and need to ensure that their behaviour cannot be interpreted as seeking to establish an inappropriate relationship or friendship.

Where out of school activities include overnight stays, careful consideration needs to be given to sleeping arrangements. Children, adults and parents should be informed of these prior to the start of the trip. In all circumstances, those organising trips and outings should pay careful attention to ensuring there is a safe staff/child ratio and suitable gender mix of staff.

## **6. Online Safety**

Staff must comply with the Online Safety policy and the Acceptable Use Policy at all times. The only acceptable method of contact is via the use of school email accounts or telephone equipment.

Staff must not engage in inappropriate use of social media which may bring themselves, the school or the school community into disrepute. Staff should adopt the highest security settings on any personal profiles they have.

Staff should exercise caution in use of social media or any other web based presence they have. This includes written content, videos or photographs, personal blogs, and views expressed either directly or by 'liking' certain pages or posts or following certain individuals or groups.

Staff must be vigilant when using dating websites/apps where staff could encounter pupils or ex pupils.

Staff must not make contact with pupils or initiate/accept friend requests on any social media platform with pupils. Staff must not communicate with pupils via social media or text. Staff are discouraged from accepting requests / communicating with former pupils over social media.

Staff should not make contact with a child's family member, accept or initiate friend requests or follow a child's family member's account on any social media platform.

School acknowledges that staff who are also parents may wish to make contact with other parents, who are friends, over social media. Staff must exercise caution and professional judgement in these circumstances and should not have any contact with pupils' family members via social media if that contact is likely to constitute a conflict of interest or call into question their professionalism.

Mobile phones and personally-owned devices such as tablets may not be used during lessons or formal school time. The Bluetooth functionality of a mobile phone or tablet should be switched off at all times. Mobile phones, personal recording devices, cameras and videoing equipment are not permitted in certain areas within the school site such as changing rooms and toilets.

The camera and filming functions of personal mobile devices must not be used in school, on school trips or on official school business.

Mobile phones and personally-owned mobile devices brought in to school are the responsibility of the device owner. School accepts no responsibility for the loss, theft or damage of personally-owned mobile phones or mobile devices.

## **6.1 Photography, video and digital images of children**

In accordance with The Data Protection Act 1998 the image of a child is personal data. Therefore, it is a requirement under the Act for consent to be obtained from the parent of a pupil for any images made. It is also important to take into account the wishes of the pupil, remembering that some pupils do not wish to have their photograph taken or be filmed.

Staff should obtain age-appropriate consent and consent from a child's parent for the use of images for publicity purposes. Images must not be displayed on websites, in publications or in a public place without consent.

Staff should ensure that a member of the Senior Leadership Team is aware of the proposed use of photographic/video equipment and that this is recorded in lesson plans. All photographs/digital images and video footage should be available for scrutiny and staff should be able to justify all images/video footage made.

Staff must ensure that photographs/digital images or video footage of children should only be taken using school equipment for purposes authorised by the school and should be stored securely on school equipment.

Staff should also be clear about the purpose of the activity and what will happen to the photographs/images/video footage when the lesson or activity is concluded.

Staff should remain aware of the potential for images of children to be misused to create indecent images of children and/or for grooming purposes. Therefore, careful

consideration should be given to how activities which are being filmed or photographed are organised and undertaken.

Staff should take particular care when filming or photographing young or vulnerable children who may be unable to question how or why the activities are taking place.

Staff should be mindful that pupils who have been abused through the use of video or photography may feel threatened by its use in a teaching environment.

## **7. Confidentiality and sharing information**

Staff may have access to confidential information about children, their parents and siblings. Staff must only reveal such information to colleagues on a need to know basis.

Staff should never use confidential or personal information about a child or a child's family for their own, or others' advantage.

All staff are likely at some point to witness actions which need to be confidential. For example, where a pupil is bullied by another pupil, this needs to be reported and dealt with in accordance with the appropriate school procedure. It must not be discussed outside the school, including with the child's parent, nor with colleagues in the school except by a senior member of staff with the appropriate authority to deal with the matter.

Staff have a statutory obligation to immediately share with the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead any information which gives rise to concern about the welfare or safety of a child. Staff should pass on information immediately in accordance with the school's safeguarding/child protection policies and procedures. Staff must never promise a child that they will not act on or pass on any information that they are told.

Staff should refer to the Department of Education's document *Information sharing: advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services* for further guidance on information sharing. If staff are in any doubt about whether to share they should seek guidance from a member of the senior leadership team.

Any media or legal enquiries should be passed to the senior leadership team and only approved staff and Governors should communicate to the media about the school.

### **7.1 Sharing concerns and recording Incidents**

All staff should be aware of their establishment's safeguarding procedures, including the procedures for dealing with allegations against staff and volunteers. In the event of an allegation being made, by any person, or incident being witnessed, the relevant information should be immediately recorded and reported to the Headteacher or if

the allegation is against the Headteacher it should be reported to the Chair of Governors.

## **7.2 Low-level concerns about members of staff**

A low-level concern is a behaviour towards a child by a member of staff that does not meet the harms threshold, 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 one-to-one activities where they can't easily be seen
- Using inappropriate language

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 member supported to correct it, at an early stage.

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

## **8. Whistleblowing**

Whistleblowing is the mechanism by which staff can voice their concerns, without fear of repercussion.

All school staff have a duty to report any behaviour by a colleague which raises concern. Staff should refer to the school's whistleblowing policy for further guidance. This is particularly important where the welfare of pupils may be at risk.

## Appendix A

### Dress Code

All staff are role models to all of our students. As such we should “demonstrate the positive values, attitudes and behaviour we expect from children and young people” (Professional Standards for Teachers).

The appearance of all staff should conform to the expectations of the school. The school is a professional organisation and dress should reflect this. Dress should be appropriate to the staff role. Dress and general appearance should not incite, intimidate, break Health & Safety regulations, or impede the ability to carry out our professional roles.

Identity badges should be worn at all times.

“Appropriate role” examples:

- Denim should not be worn
- PE staff are expected to wear tracksuits or other sporting clothing
- In hot weather, the need to be comfortable while teaching is recognised as important but staff should consider if the items worn are in line with the school ethos outlined above

### Footwear

Trainers are only appropriate for PE staff.

For health & safety reasons, teaching staff are strongly advised not to wear backless shoes/sandals.

Staff who work in workshops or laboratories are particularly advised to wear appropriate footwear.

Flip flops are not acceptable footwear.

The school may not be able to support staff who do not follow the Health & Safety advice, in the case of a claim for injuries where inappropriate footwear may have contributed.



**Confirmation of compliance**

I hereby confirm that I have read, understood and agree to comply with Fullbrook School's staff behaviour policy.

Name .....

Position/Post Held.....

Signed .....

Date .....

**Once completed please return this form to the HR officer**