



Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers

In Shaftesbury Nursery School, we believe that children should be treated with respect and dignity.

Objective, Scope and Principles

This Code of Conduct is designed to give clear guidance on the standards of behaviour all school staff and volunteers are expected to observe. School staff and volunteers are role models and are in a unique position of influence and trust and must adhere to behaviour that sets a good example to all the pupils/students within the school. As a member of a school community, each person has an individual responsibility to maintain their reputation and the reputation of the school, whether inside or outside working hours.

This Code of Conduct applies to all staff and volunteers of the school.

This Code of Conduct does not form part of any employees 'contract of employment.'

1. Setting an Example

1.1 All staff and volunteers who work in schools set examples of behaviour and conduct which can be copied by pupils/students. Staff must always therefore for example avoid using inappropriate or offensive language.

1.2 All staff and volunteers must, therefore, demonstrate high standards of conduct in order to encourage pupils to do the same.

1.3 All staff and volunteers must also avoid putting themselves at risk of allegations of abusive or unprofessional conduct.

1.4 This Code helps all staff and volunteers to understand what behaviour is and is not acceptable and regard should also be given to the disciplinary rules set out by the employing authority.

1.5 All staff and volunteers are expected to familiarise themselves and comply with all school policies and procedures.

2. Safeguarding Pupils/Students

2.1 All staff and volunteers have a duty to safeguard pupils from physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, neglect and exploitation.

2.2 The duty to safeguard pupils includes the duty to report concerns about a pupil or colleague to a member of the school's Safeguarding team (Designated Teacher (DT)/Deputy Designated Teacher (DDT) for Child Protection or the Principal).

2.3 The school's **DT** is the Principal, Mrs Stephanie Gillespie and the **DDT** is Miss Rebecca Dickson, Assistant Teacher.

2.4 All staff and volunteers are provided with personal copies of the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and must be familiar with these documents and other relevant school policies.

2.5 All staff and volunteers should treat children with respect and dignity. They must not demean or undermine pupils, their parents, carers or colleagues.

2.6 All staff and volunteers should not demonstrate behaviours that may be perceived as sarcasm, making jokes at the expense of students, embarrassing or humiliating students, discriminating against or favouring students.

2.7 All staff and volunteers must take reasonable care of pupils under their supervision with the aim of ensuring their safety and welfare. Staff should also complete risk assessments where appropriate in accordance with school policies.

3. Relationships with Students

3.1 All staff and volunteers must declare any relationships that they may have with pupils outside of school; this may include mutual membership of social groups, tutoring, or family connections. Staff and volunteers should not assume that the school is aware of any such connections. A declaration form, at Appendix 1, can be found attached to this document.

3.2 Relationships with students must be professional at all times, sexual relationships with students are not permitted and may lead to an abuse of trust and criminal conviction.

4. Pupil/Student Development

4.1 All staff and volunteers must comply with school policies and procedures that support the well-being and development of pupils.

4.2 All staff and volunteers must co-operate and collaborate with colleagues and with external agencies where necessary to support the development of pupils.

5. Honesty and Integrity

5.1 All staff and volunteers must maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their work. This includes the handling and claiming of money and the use of school property and facilities.

5.2 Gifts from suppliers or associates of the school must be declared to the Principal with the exception of "one off" token gifts from students or parents. Personal gifts from individual members of staff or volunteers to students are inappropriate and could be misinterpreted and may lead to disciplinary action. A record will be kept of all gifts received.

6. Conduct Outside of Work

6.1 All staff and volunteers must not engage in conduct outside work which could seriously damage the reputation and standing of the school or the staff/ volunteer's own reputation or the reputation of other members of the school community.

6.2 Criminal offences that involve violence, possession or use of illegal drugs or sexual misconduct are to be regarded as unacceptable.

6.3 Staff may undertake work outside school, either paid or voluntary, provided that it does not conflict with the interests of the school. It should not contravene the working time regulations or affect an individual's work performance in the school. Staff should seek advice from the Principal when considering work outside the school.

7. E-Safety and Internet Use

7.1 Staff must exercise caution when using information technology and be aware of the risks to themselves and others.

7.2 Staff and volunteers must not engage in inappropriate use of social network sites which bring themselves, the school, the school community or employer into disrepute. Staff and volunteers should ensure that they adopt suitable high security settings on any personal profiles they may have. For example; staff should list their place of work as **EA Belfast**, rather than naming 'Shaftesbury Nursery School.'

7.3 Staff should exercise caution in their use of all social media or any other web-based presence that they may have, including written content, videos or photographs, and views expressed either directly or by "liking" certain pages or posts established by others. This may also include the use of dating websites where staff could encounter students either with their own profile or acting covertly.

7.4 Contact with students or their families must be via school authorised mechanisms. At no time should personal telephone numbers, email addresses or communication routes via personal accounts on social media platforms be used to communicate with students or their immediate or extended family. In addition, staff must not discuss issues/enquiries relating to Shaftesbury Nursery school on any social media platform. All enquiries/comments relating to Shaftesbury Nursery school must be directed to the Principal (*Mrs Stephanie Gillespie*) to address. If contacted by a student or parent by an inappropriate route, staff should report the contact to the Principal immediately.

7.5 Photographs/stills or video footage of students should only be taken using school equipment for purposes authorised by the school. Any such use should always be transparent and only occur where parental consent has been given. The resultant files from such recording

or taking of photographs must be retained and destroyed in accordance with the schools Records Management Policy and Disposal Schedules.

7.6 Staff/ student mobile phones must not be used to film or photograph pupils and must be kept locked in the staff cloakroom areas. Mobile phones should only be accessed during staff breaktimes, unless previous consent has been requested from the Principal, as a case of emergency contact.

8. Confidentiality

8.1 Members of staff and volunteers may have access to confidential information about students in order to undertake their everyday responsibilities. In some circumstances staff may be given additional highly sensitive or private information. They should never use confidential or personal information about a student or his family for their own, or others advantage. Information must never be used to intimidate, humiliate, or embarrass the student.

8.2 Confidential information about students should never be used casually in conversation or shared with any person other than on a need to know basis. In circumstances where the student's identity does not need to be disclosed the information should be used anonymously.

8.3 There are some circumstances in which a member of staff may be expected to share information about a student, for example when abuse is alleged or suspected. In such cases, individuals have a duty to pass information on without delay, but only to those with designated child protection responsibilities.

8.4 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 the Principal. Any media or legal enquiries should be passed to the Principal.

8.5 Adults need to be aware that although it is important to listen to and support students, they must not promise confidentiality or request students to do the same under any circumstances.

8.6 Additionally, concerns and allegations about adults should be treated as confidential and passed to the Principal or Assistant Teacher without delay.

9. Dress and Appearance

9.1 All staff and volunteers must dress in a manner that is appropriate to a professional role and promoting a professional image.

9.2 Staff and volunteers should dress in a manner that is not offensive, revealing or sexually provocative.

9.3 Staff and volunteers should dress in a manner that is absent from political or other contentious slogans.

10. Disciplinary Action

Staff and volunteers should be aware that a failure to comply with this Code of Conduct could result in disciplinary action including but not limited to dismissal.

11. Compliance

All staff and volunteers must complete the form in Appendix 2 to confirm they have read, understood and agreed to comply with the code of conduct. This form should then be signed and dated. All actions concerning children must uphold the best interests of the child as a primary consideration. Staff must always be mindful of the fact that they hold a position of trust, and that their behaviour towards the children in their charge must be above reproach. This Code of Conduct is not intended to detract from the enriching experiences children gain from positive interaction with staff. It is intended to assist staff in respect of the complex issue of child abuse, by drawing attention to the areas of risk for staff and by offering guidance on prudent conduct.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's policies on:

- Behaviour Management Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Inclusion Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Intimate Care Policy
- E-Safety Policy
- Mobile Phones Policy

Relationships with Students Outside of Work Declaration.

Appendix 1

It is recognised that there may be circumstances whereby staff and volunteers of the school are known to students outside of work. Examples include membership of sports clubs, family connections, or private tutoring.

Staff must declare any relationship outside of school that they may have with students.

Employee Name.

Student Name (s)

Relationship

I can confirm that I am fully aware of the code of conduct relating to contact out of school with students in line with this policy.

If I am tutoring a student outside of school, I am aware that the following must be adhered to:

I do not, at any point, teach the child in question as part of my daily timetable - this is a stipulation of such tutoring.

I emphasise to parents that this is done completely independently of the school.

No monies come through the school at any point, informally (e.g. via the child) or formally. No private tutoring is to take place on the school premises.

I confirm that if these circumstances change at any time I will complete a new form to ensure the school are aware of any relationships.

Once completed, signed and dated, please return this form to the Principal.

Signed.....

Date

Confirmation of Compliance

Appendix 2

I hereby confirm that I have read, understood and agree to comply with the school's code of conduct.

I understand that in line with the child protection policy, all mobile phones must be kept locked in the staff cloakroom areas and may only be used during breaktimes, or with prior consent from the Principal, in the case of emergency contact.

Name: _____

Position/Post Held: _____

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Once completed, signed and dated, please return this form to the Principal.

Signed..... Date

Monitoring and evaluation

Policy Ratified:

Signed by Principal:

Signed by Chair of Governors:

Policy reviewed: September 2025