



Whickham Parochial C of E Primary School

Staff Code of Conduct

FOR TEACHING AND NON-TEACHING STAFF

'Let your light shine before people, that they may see your good works you do and praise your Father in Heaven.'

Matthew 5:16

Mission Statement

At our Parochial school we aim to provide a stimulating and caring environment with Christianity at the heart of all we do, in which every child has the opportunity to let their light shine - for themselves, for their community and for the world.

Aims

At Whickham Parochial we believe that every child is entitled to enjoy their childhood, celebrate their individuality and reach their full potential. We aim to do this through:

- Creating a caring school family living by Christian values.
- Celebrating everyone's strengths and efforts.
- Valuing the opportunities we have to contribute to our community and the wider world.
- Offering wide ranging quality experiences that stimulate children's minds.
- Encouraging respect for others, positive behaviour and good manners, enabling all children to feel secure and valued.
- Building strong links between school, home and church.
- Preparing children for future challenges in a changing world

We wish every child to take with them happy memories of Whickham Parochial into their future life.



INTRODUCTION

At Whickham Parochial C of E Primary School we pride ourselves in ensuring that we all work to a high standard. This guide outlines the rules that apply to staff in our school. Our aim is to provide you with a framework that helps prevent misunderstandings, criticism of our staff, school and helps prevent staff putting themselves at risk professionally. This code is not exhaustive but is written to assist staff and it is important that staff should take advice and guidance if necessary. If in doubt, ask.

Our Responsibilities

Governing Body	Head Teacher	Staff
We have a role in ensuring that school have implemented and are adhering to appropriate standards / all statutory required policies and procedures. We may become involved if standards are breached.	I ensure that staff are aware of what is expected of them. I would become involved when there are concerns that staff have breached the standards.	We must ensure we maintain high standards within the school by following the school policies and the code of conduct. Failure to do so could result in disciplinary action including dismissal. We should report any concerns immediately.

A teacher is expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct. The following statements define the behaviour and attitudes which set the required standard for conduct throughout a teacher's career.

Teachers uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, by:

- ✓ treating pupils with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to a teacher's professional position
- ✓ having regard for the need to safeguard pupils' 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 pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law.
- ✓ having proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they teach, and maintain high standards in their own attendance and punctuality. This includes our Christian ethos.
- ✓ understanding, and always acting within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities.



2. CODE OF CONDUCT

2.1 EXCLUSIVITY OF SERVICE

1. Staff's off-duty hours are their personal concern, but they should avoid a position where duty and private interests conflict.
2. The School does not seek to preclude staff unreasonably from undertaking additional employment, but you are required to devote your full time, attention and abilities to your duties during your directed hours and to act in the best interests of the School at all times. Accordingly, you must not, without the written consent of the Governing Body, undertake any employment or engagement which might interfere with the performance of your duties or conflict with the interests of the School.
3. It follows that, regardless of whether you are employed on a full-time or part-time contract, you are required to notify the Headteacher of any employment or engagement which you intend to undertake whilst in the employment of the School. (including any such employment or engagement which commenced before your employment began with the School).

2.2 SPECIFIC ASPECTS

1. Discrimination: Staff must at all times observe the School's Equal Opportunities Policies for staff and pupils and treat pupils, parents and other stakeholders in accordance with those policies.
2. Health and Safety: Staff must take care of their personal hygiene, safety and welfare, and that of other persons who may be affected by their acts or omissions. All staff must comply with the requirements of the School Health and Safety policy and relevant legislation and regulations and ensure that pupils do likewise.
3. Fire: Staff must familiarise themselves with the fire precautions, procedures and drill routines. They must regard practice fire drills or building evacuations in a positive manner, and ensure they are perceived by pupils as an essential precaution to prevent risk of injury or fatality.
4. Personal care: whenever it is necessary to provide personal care for children (for example, changing a child who is soiled or helping to dress a child with additional needs) care must be taken to maintain the dignity of the child. Care must also be taken to protect the member of staff from any suggestions of wrongdoing. Any care, including first aid, which involves undressing or changing a child must be carried out by two staff members unless an agreed care plan is in place.
5. Sexual Harassment: the school is committed to providing a workplace where all employees are treated with dignity and respect. Sexual harassment is strictly prohibited and includes any unwanted behaviour of a sexual nature—verbal, physical, non-verbal, or digital—that makes someone feel uncomfortable, intimidated, or undermined. Examples include inappropriate comments, jokes, gestures, physical contact, or sharing sexual content. All employees must maintain professional boundaries, communicate respectfully, and ensure their behaviour cannot be misinterpreted. Concerns must be reported promptly to the head teacher. All reports will be taken seriously, handled sensitively, and investigated in line with the relevant policy. Misconduct may result in disciplinary action. Support will be available to anyone affected.



6. The school is committed to maintaining a safe and healthy workplace. Employees must not possess, use, distribute, sell, or be under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, controlled substances, or misused prescription or over-the-counter medications while at work, on school premises, or when representing the school in any capacity. Employees are also prohibited from bringing any items or substances intended for drug- or alcohol-related use into the school. Breaches of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, and may involve external authorities where appropriate. The school encourages employees experiencing substance-related challenges to seek support through available wellbeing or occupational health services.
7. Business Practice: Staff must maintain an impeccable standard of integrity in all their professional relationships.
8. Media: Other than on matters of publicity, only the Headteacher is authorised to speak or send any communication on behalf of the School to members of the press or broadcast media. This decision is to avoid any embarrassment or unfair pressure on staff. This authorisation may be extended by the Head Teacher to other staff members.
8. Copyright: Staff shall observe copyright laws on computer software, audio-visual and printed material.
9. Data Protection Act: it is the responsibility of all employees to ensure the School's compliance with the Data Protection Act. Personal data must only be used to assist you to carry out your work; it must not be given to people who have no right to see it. All staff should maintain the security of all computerised databases of information on individuals, whether they are staff, pupils or members of the general public. Staff should refer any queries to the Head Teacher.

2.3 GENERAL POINTS

1. Staff should display the highest possible standards of professional behaviour that is required in an educational establishment.
2. Staff should seek to co-operate with their colleagues, providing support, help and guidance as required by them and their line manager, and enable effective communication throughout the School.
3. Staff should not use their position in the School for private advantage or gain.
4. Staff should avoid words and deeds that might bring the School into disrepute or might undermine colleagues in the perception of others (staff/pupils/parents/community).
5. Staff should retain professional independent objectivity and not promote dogma or political bias to others in their working activities.
6. Staff should be aware of, and should follow School policies, systems and procedures. They should normally communicate through the line management structure, and should ensure pupils do likewise.
7. Continuing professional development and support shall be provided by the School and, where appropriate and agreed, will be based on the objectives of the School Development Plan. Periodically, employees will be required to attend certain training activities.
8. Staff should attend their place of work punctually in accordance with their conditions of service and at the times agreed with their line manager. Those unable to avoid being late or absent should,



whenever possible, give as much notice as possible to the Head Teacher so that alternative cover arrangements may be made. Notice can be given via phone to the Head Teacher's mobile phone number and should be given by 7:30am wherever possible.

2.4 SOCIAL MEDIA AND SOCIAL CONTACT

1. When accessing social networking such as Facebook and Instagram, be aware this is in the public domain. All social media accounts must be private and you must not accept students or parents as friends (this is for your protection). For staff members who are also parents, please see Appendix 4 below.

Be careful what of you write as it is in the public domain. 'Private' means private. Be careful who you accept as friends and what your 'friends' are posting. This does not mean you cannot have an account or comment on educational sites but be careful that you are not posting comments that reflect unprofessionally on you or the school. **Staff have a responsibility to represent our school professionally and positively at all times.**

2. No child should be invited into the home of an adult who works with them. You should not seek contact with a student or their family out of school time including holiday periods. If you are socialising, endeavour not be seen to be drinking alcohol or using any other age-limited substance in front of children from our school. If you are placed in this situation unintentionally (such as if a child and their family enter a social space where you are already drinking alcohol) you must behave in a professional manner and leave if the situation could be perceived as unprofessional. For staff who live in the area or have children that attend our school please seek guidance from Appendix 4 below, or from the Head Teacher.

3. Professional boundaries must be clear from the outset. Staff should remain professional with students and you should not share personal information with them, have inappropriate conversations or make inappropriate comments. All efforts should be made to avoid misinterpretation. Staff should never give out personal information, such as address, phone number etc.

2.5 USE OF DEVICES INC. MOBILE PHONES

1. Staff must only ever take photographs of children using phones or devices provided by the school. These devices stay in school unless they are taken on a school trip or residential. Devices will be checked regularly to ensure photos are deleted once they are used. This will be monitored regularly.

2. Phones and devices that belong to staff are for personal use and must not be accessed during lesson time or in a room where there are children present. They should be kept securely in a cupboard, a filing cabinet or a bag in an area that children do not access. On educational visits it is expected that, if a personal phone is taken, the member staff does not access it in front of children and it is kept securely in a bag.



3. Any necessary communication during the school day will be sent to work phones. In an emergency, staff should use walkie talkies. Any communication sent by school to personal phones can be considered non-urgent and can wait until the end of the school day.

4. In case of family emergency, staff are welcome to ensure that significant others (inc. children's schools) have access to our school office number.

2.6 ADMINISTRATIVE DUTIES

1. Teaching staff shall maintain and properly complete a register for all classes. The attendance register for each day must be sent to the office before 9.10am every morning together with the dinner register.

2. In order to ensure safeguards both for staff and pupils, staff must obtain permission from the Headteacher:

- before taking pupils off the School premises;
- before arranging for any visiting speakers;
- before incurring any expenditure on behalf of the School.

2.7 CONFIDENTIALITY

Staff shall maintain the appropriate levels of confidentiality with respect to student and staff records and other sensitive matters. They should take care not to discuss issues of particularly sensitive matters within the School community which could cause distress to School staff, pupils or parents.

2.8 WHEN IN DOUBT, ASK!

If any member of staff is in any doubt with regard to the guidelines of this Code, and how they apply in any particular situation, then please consult with the Headteacher. It is re-emphasised that this Code is intended to be a help and to enable fairness and equity between all staff.

Headteacher	Mr Russell Warren
Chair of Governors	Mrs Lorraine Ferguson
Date of Approval	September 2026
Date of Review	September 2027



APPENDIX 1

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 other stakeholders;
- 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 (**Appendix 3**), general courtesy, correct use of School stationery, etc.;
- 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, or other employment 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.

This list is not exhaustive, but the examples are given as a summary.



APPENDIX 2

DISCIPLINARY RULES

The following are examples of behaviour which the School finds unacceptable. The list is not exhaustive, and it is acknowledged that it will be necessary to exercise judgement in all cases and to be fair and reasonable in all the circumstances.

1. Any form of physical/verbal violence towards pupils.
2. Physical violence, actual or threatened towards other staff or visitors to the School.
3. Sexual offences, sexual insults or sexual discrimination against pupils, other staff or visitors to the School.
4. Racial offences, racial insults or racial discrimination against pupils, other staff or visitors to the School.
5. Theft of School monies or property and of monies or property of colleagues or visitors to the School.
Removal from School premises of property which is not normally taken away without the express authority of the Head Teacher or of the owner of the property may be regarded as gross misconduct.
6. Deliberate falsification of documents such as time sheets, subsistence and expense claims for the purpose of gain.
7. Acceptance of bribes or other corrupt financial practices.
8. Wilful damage of School property or of property belonging to other staff or visitors to the School.
9. Wilful disregard of safety rules or policies affecting the safety of pupils, other staff or visitors to the School.
10. Any wilful act which could result in actionable negligence for compensation against the School.
11. Refusal to comply with reasonable instructions given by staff with a supervisory responsibility.
12. Gross neglect of duties and responsibilities.
13. Unauthorised absence from work.
14. Being untruthful and/or engaging in deception in matters of importance within the School community.
15. Deliberate breaches of confidentiality particularly on sensitive matters.
16. Being incapable by reason of alcohol or drugs (not prescribed for a health problem) from fulfilling duties and responsibilities of employment.
17. Conduct which substantially brings the name of the School into disrepute or which seriously undermines confidence in the employee.



The following are examples of behaviour which could lead to formal disciplinary warnings.

- Unsatisfactory timekeeping without permission.
- Neglect of safety rules and procedures. Some offences of wilful neglect may be regarded as gross misconduct.
- Breaches of confidentiality. Deliberate breaches on sensitive matters may be regarded as gross misconduct.
- Failure to comply with reasonable work-related requirements or lack of care in fulfilling the duties of the post.
- Behaviour towards other employees, pupils, and visitors which gives justifiable offence. Certain behaviour giving rise to offence may be regarded as gross misconduct.
- Acting in a manner which could reasonably be regarded as rude, impolite, contemptuous or lacking appropriate professional demeanour. In certain circumstances such behaviour may be regarded as gross misconduct.
- Conduct which it is considered adversely affects either the reputation of the School or affects confidence in the employee. Certain conduct may be regarded as gross misconduct.

APPENDIX 3

Dress / appearance

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 must be worn at all times.

- No blue denim
- No revealing or excessively tight clothing (short skirts must be worn with opaque tights or leggings) – we shouldn’t be able to see up, down or through any clothing
- No shorts (except for PE lessons) – cropped trousers are acceptable
- No combat or cargo trousers unless for trips or outdoor education where it is appropriate
- If leggings are worn, they should be smart and opaque
- No inappropriate footwear e.g. flip flops which may contravene Health & Safety guidelines. Trainers are fine if they are smart and clean.
- Tops/t-shirts may be sleeveless but should not be ‘strappy’ (i.e. have narrow shoulder straps) or be strapless
- No large logos or offensive / political / inappropriate graphics
- No clothes that are excessively worn or faded
- No clothes with rips or tears



APPENDIX 4

Staff members who are also parents or relatives, or live locally

1. Professional Boundaries

Staff should maintain the same professional standards with colleagues and parents as their non-parent colleagues. During working hours, staff are considered employees first and foremost in the same way that their non-parent colleagues are.

Discussions about their own child should take place through normal parental channels (catch on yard after school for an informal chat / ring or email for an appointment or ask Mrs Baird) rather than informally in staffrooms or during class time. Staff parents should not use the personal contact details of other staff to ask 'parent' questions or otherwise communicate about their child in ways that non-staff parents cannot. Staff should avoid accessing information about their own child or other pupils via internal systems that would not normally be available to parents (the resources network / CPOMS / MIS system).

2. Confidentiality

Staff must not share information obtained through their role that relates to their child, other children or families. Any safeguarding or sensitive information must be kept confidential.

3. Communication and Contact

Professional courtesy must always be maintained, as would be expected from all staff interactions.

4. Impartiality

School appreciates the difficulty of navigating this aspect of parent/staff roles. It is important that staff are impartial and treat their children with fairness, as they would for any child. Time, care and support should be provided for all of our pupils on a professional basis. This will ensure that the staff member's child has access to the same support as others and is in no way unfairly benefitting or disadvantaged by their parent's presence in school.

When parents are invited to events in school, it may require cover to allow staff parents to attend. This should be arranged through the head teacher as it would be for all staff members, and the staff member should be counted in the tickets for their child unless they are already required to attend as staff.



5. Conduct Out of School

It is normal for parents to share social media presence with the parents of their children's friends and to invite their children's friends into their homes. However, this is an area which needs to be very carefully managed. Staff must remain professional at all times and not discuss school or any matter relating to school with other parents and pupils. They must be aware that they are always viewed by other parents as a staff member at Parochial and must follow the code of conduct very carefully. The same is true of staff members who live locally and have friendships among parents.

6. Parent and Class WhatsApp Groups

It is entirely acceptable for you to join WhatsApp groups for your child's class for both supportive and social reasons, but this is another area that is tricky to navigate. Please ensure that you do not share any confidential school matters. Be aware that your opinion may be seen as the school viewpoint (even when this is not the case) and do not be drawn into giving opinions about school or staff members at any point. If questions are raised about school matters in the group, and you are unsure whether your knowledge is from a staff or parent viewpoint, it is better to allow the question to be answered by someone else.

If in doubt, please ask SLT and the head teacher.

