

Crosslee Community Primary School

Code of Conduct for School Staff

Changing Lives in Collaboration – Together We Make the Difference

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Introduction

Academies and Local Governing Committees (LGC) have an obligation in line with the School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009 to establish procedures for the regulation of conduct of staff at the school. In line with the Education Act 2002, the LGC of Crosslee Community Primary School has a duty to exercise their function with a view to safeguarding and promoting welfare of children. This obligation is further outlined within the statutory guidance, 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' September 2023 (to which all schools must have regard) which stipulates the role that school staff must play in safeguarding pupils. Furthermore, in line with this statutory guidance, schools should have a staff behaviour policy or code of conduct, which should be provided to all staff.

In order to adhere to these obligations and to ensure that safeguarding children is at the focus of our school, this code of conduct has been compiled.

This Code of Conduct applies to employees, supply staff and governors of the school.

This policy must be read in conjunction with the school's safeguarding policy and e-safety policies, whistle blowing policy and disciplinary policy. These policies can be found on the school website(www.crosslee.manchester.sch.uk) or a copy can be requested from the school office.

Objective, Scope and Purpose

The code of conduct establishes the clear standards of behaviour that are expected of all school staff, and clearly enables staff to understand what is and is not acceptable.

The purpose of this code of conduct is:-

- to ensure that staff to act as role models within their professional capacity;
- to ensure that staff maintain their own professional reputation;
- maintain the reputation of the school and;
- to ensure that conduct and behaviour of all staff both safeguards and sets the example for pupils and students.

Staff should understand the responsibilities and behaviours that are a fundamental part of their role in school. This code of conduct cannot be exhaustive. In addition to the actions and behaviours identified within this code of conduct, staff should ensure they continuously exercise their professional judgement in work and their personal life and avoid any conduct which may be in contravention with their professional role and responsibilities, and/or the ethos of the school.

In addition to this policy, all staff employed under Teacher's Terms and Conditions of Employment have a statutory obligation to adhere to the 'Teachers Standards 2012' and in relation to this policy, Part 2 of the Teachers' Standards – Personal and Professional Conduct.

In addition to this policy, it is expected that Teaching Assistants will adhere to the non-statutory 'Professional Standards for Teaching Assistants 2016' and in relation to this policy, Part 1 of the TA standards - Personal and Professional Conduct. For staff employed as Higher Level Teaching Assistants, in addition to this policy, they must adhere to the 'Professional Standards for HLTAs 2003' and particularly in relation to this policy, Section 1 of the HLTA standards - Professional Values and Practice.

School staff work within the public sector, delivering public education, and are consequently accountable for the ethical and high quality delivery of this public service. Therefore, in addition to this policy, staff are expected to adhere to the 7 principles of public life (the Nolan principles 1995), established by the Committee on Standards in Public Life; selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.

Staff Behaviours

Setting an example:

- Members of public, your colleagues and the wider school community are entitled to expect the highest standards of conduct from school staff.
- Staff are privileged to work with children and young people on a daily basis. This privileged position provides the authority and opportunity to influence children and young people. Staff must ensure they do not abuse this influence and instead use their position to act as role models and influence pupil/student behaviours positively.
- Staff must not behave in a manner which would lead any reasonable person to question their suitability to work with children or act as a role model
- Staff must avoid using inappropriate or offensive language at all times
- Staff must treat others with dignity, courtesy and respect at all times.
- Staff must remain professional towards each other at all times.
- Staff must also avoid putting themselves at risk of allegations of abusive or unprofessional conduct.
- Staff engaging with pupils and / or parents online have a responsibility to model safe practice at all times.

Honesty and Integrity:

- The public and school community are entitled to expect honesty and integrity on the part of all school staff and staff must uphold this.
- Staff must maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their work. This extends to handling/ claiming money and the use of school property, facilities and equipment.
- Staff must treat resources responsibly and consider both the financial and environmental impact, ensuring that resources are not wasted unnecessarily.
- All staff must comply with the Bribery Act 2010. A person may be guilty of an offence of bribery under this act if they offer, promise or give financial advantage or other advantage to someone; or if they request, agree or accept, or receive a bribe from another person. If a member of staff believes that a person has failed to comply with the Bribery Act, this should be reported in accordance with the school's Whistleblowing procedure.
- Gifts from suppliers or associates of the school are not normally acceptable and must in any event be declared to the Headteacher, with the exception of "one off" token gifts from students or parents such as at the end of the academic year. This includes gifts in the form of hospitality and sponsorship.
- Personal gifts from individual members of staff to students are inappropriate and could be misinterpreted.

- A failure to adhere to this may lead to disciplinary action.

Conduct outside of work:

- Staff must not engage in conduct outside of work which could potentially damage the reputation of the school, the employee's own reputation or the reputation of other staff. This extends to usage of social media and staff must adhere to the school's social media policy.
- Staff must not allow their own personal interests to conflict with the school's expectations and professional requirements.
- Staff must not use personal interests or their position of authority to improperly apply influence. Please discuss this with the Headteacher if you are unsure how this may affect you.

Confidentiality:

- Staff may be party to information which is confidential as part of their professional role. Staff must not reveal confidential information about a pupil/student, parents/carers or colleagues other than in circumstances that necessitate this disclosure to a colleague as part of their professional capacity and safeguarding responsibility.
- Staff must not seek out information that is not relevant to them when carrying out their professional duties.
- Staff must not use information for their personal advantage.
- Staff must work within the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998, ensuring that they follow the 'data protection principles.'
- If a child or other individual reports a safeguarding concern to a staff member in confidence, the staff member must report the concern to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. For the avoidance of doubt, staff must not make promises of confidentiality to a pupil/ student in these circumstances and must escalate their concerns through the school's appropriate channels only.

Safeguarding

This code of conduct must be viewed in conjunction with the school's Safeguarding policy and the Keeping Children Safe in Education Statutory Guidance 2023 and The Prevent Duty 2015. These documents can be found on the school website (www.crosslee.manchester.sch.uk) or a copy can be requested from the designated safeguarding lead.

- All staff have a responsibility to create a safe environment for learning and to take responsibility for the pupils in their care with the aim of ensuring their safety and wellbeing. This duty extends to challenging any unauthorised adults on the premises and escalating any safeguarding concerns immediately.
- Staff must ensure their approach is child-centred with a focus on the best outcomes for

that child.

- All staff have a duty to safeguard pupils from physical, sexual and emotional abuse and neglect. Staff must be aware of the signs of abuse and neglect and escalate any concerns to the School's Designated Safeguarding Lead. This duty includes following procedures and raising safeguarding concerns about colleagues.
- All staff have a duty to identify pupils at risk of radicalisation and escalate any concerns to the School's Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for the school is Mrs Dawson, Deputy Headteacher. In their absence, please report any concerns to the Headteacher or in their absence the safeguarding team.
- If a child reports a concern to a staff member in confidence, the staff member must report the concern to the DSL.

Interactions with pupils:

- Staff must maintain professional relationships with pupils at all times.
- Physical relationships with pupils are strictly prohibited.
- Pupils/ students should only be contacted by staff via the school's approved mechanisms. For the avoidance of doubt, staff must not provide pupils/students with personal email addresses, telephone numbers or befriend them on personal social media accounts. This includes ex-pupils. If staff require further clarification, please contact the Headteacher.
- If staff are contacted by students/ pupils via an inappropriate route, they must report this to the Headteacher immediately.

Home visits:

- All work with pupils and parents should usually be undertaken in the school setting. There are, however, occasions, in response to urgent, planned or specific situations or job roles, where it is necessary to make one-off regular home visits.
- Staff should undertake home visits with a colleague.
- Staff undertaking welfare visits should always try to give parents/carers advance warning unless there is a good reason not to; e.g. because the visit has been prompted by safeguarding concerns and / or is at the request of children's social care. In these cases, one of the staff members should be a member of the safeguarding team. The purpose of the visit should be clarified and staff should be aware of the circumstances in which emergency services or partner agencies should be contacted.

Allegations about Safeguarding:

Allegations that may meet the harms threshold

Following the statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023, where there is an allegation that an employee has: -

- behaved in a way that has, or may have, harmed a child; or
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates that they would pose a risk of harm to children.

- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates that they may not be suitable to work with children.

The last bullet point above includes behaviour that may have happened outside of school, that might make an individual unsuitable to work with children, this is known as transferable risk.

The Headteacher or Designated Safeguarding Lead (as the case may be) must immediately contact the LADO who has a statutory duty to ensure all allegations about safeguarding are handled properly and expeditiously.

Any concerns raised regarding the Designated Safeguarding Lead should be shared with the Headteacher. Any concerns raised regarding the Headteacher should be shared with the CEO of the trust Jo Ashcroft.

If an allegation is made against a governor, the school will follow the local reporting procedures and contact the LADO. Where an allegation is substantiated, the school will follow the procedure and consider removing the governor from office. Please see the Governor code of conduct for more information.

Further details of the process relating to allegations about safeguarding can be found in the schools Disciplinary and Dismissal Policy.

Concerns that do not meet the harms threshold

At Crosslee, we create and embed a culture of openness, trust and transparency in which the school's values and expected behaviour are constantly lived, monitored and reinforced by all staff. Creating a culture in which all concerns about adults are shared responsibly and with the right person, recorded and dealt with appropriately.

As stated in the Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 statutory guidance, the term 'low level concern' does not mean that it is insignificant. A low-level concern is any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' – that an adult working in or on behalf of the school or college may have acted in a way that:

- is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work and
- does not meet the harm threshold as stated above or is otherwise not serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:

- being over friendly with children
- having favourites
- taking photographs of children on their mobile phone
- engaging with a child on a one to one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door
- humiliating pupils

- using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language

It is crucial that any such concerns are shared responsibly with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Headteacher, who will record the concerns and deal with it appropriately. There will be a responsive, sensitive and proportionate handling of such concerns when they are raised.

Any concerns raised regarding the Designated Safeguarding Lead should be shared with the Headteacher. Any concerns raised regarding the Headteacher should be shared with the CEO of the trust Jo Ashcroft.

Low-level concerns will be recorded on the Confide system. These records are kept confidential, held securely and comply with the Data Protection Act 2018. Records will be reviewed half termly so that potential patterns of concerns, inappropriate, problematic or concerning behaviour is identified.

Health and Safety

Staff have a responsibility for their own safety and the safety of others. Staff must report any potential hazards or unsafe working practices and act in accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.

Staff must complete health and safety training and read and comply with the Health and Safety Policy. Please see Michelle Toy with any questions.

Equality

The school holds its obligations in line with the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty with the utmost importance. The school's equality objectives can be located on the school's website(www.crosslee.manchester.sch.uk), as part of the Equalities Policy. Crosslee Primary School is committed to equality and expects staff to uphold these principles.

- Staff must not discriminate on any grounds throughout their professional role
- Staff must act as role models in promoting equality of opportunity and fostering good relations and mutual respect between different groups.
- Staff must be able to recognise acts of prejudice, discrimination or stereotyping and challenge this if appropriate and/or report this to the Headteacher.

ICT, Internet and E-safety

This should be read in conjunction with the school's Social media policy and guidance, IT policy and IT Acceptable use policies. These can be found on the school's website (www.crosslee.manchester.sch.uk) / staff shared drive.

Staff must use school IT equipment responsibly and for professional purposes only. This includes the use of school email address and mobile phone, if applicable.

Any data held on school networks must be accessed appropriately and stored securely. Staff must not disclose their passwords.

Staff must be aware of the risks to themselves, pupils and the school that the use of the internet and social media can bring. Staff must therefore be responsible users of the internet and social media both at work and in their personal life and continue to act as a role model throughout their internet usage.

Staff should be aware that they are accountable for any information or views expressed on social media or other internet sites. This includes views expressed directly and through affiliation with internet pages, such as 'liking' a page. Staff must not engage in any internet or social media usage that may bring the school into disrepute or bring into question their professionalism and suitability for them, or other colleagues, to work within a school.

Staff must ensure that they have activated high privacy settings on all social media sites. If you are unsure how to do this, please contact your line manager to discuss this.

Staff should not discuss their professional role online. Staff should not disclose their workplace and/or their role on social media.

Staff must not communicate or become 'friends' or 'followers' of pupils via personal accounts online.

If any staff member identifies practices of 'cyber-bullying' this should be reported in line with the normal school procedure.

Wherever possible, staff should use school devices and contact pupils, parents and carers only via the school email address/log in. This ensures that the settings filtering and monitoring software is enabled.

Staff engaging in online learning should display the same conduct that they would in the real world. Ensure any images or videos of lessons or similar shared with pupils, parents and carers are in living/communal areas with appropriate backgrounds. Any resources/videos shared with pupils must be age appropriate.

Dress and Appearance

Staff must present themselves in a manner that is respectable and appropriate for their role within the school environment. Staff should ensure that they promote a professional image.

Staff must not dress provocatively, nor in a manner that may offend, including through the wearing of controversial, political or offensive slogans.

Examples of inappropriate clothing are as follows; jeans, miniskirts, tracksuit bottoms (unless a role requirement), shorts, baseball caps or hats and cropped tops. This list is non-exhaustive and staff must use their professional judgement to ensure their attire is appropriate.

Footwear must be safe, sensible, smart and clean. Trainers - (unless a specific role requirement), or flip-flops are not acceptable.

Absence Reporting

If staff are unable to attend work due to sickness or emergency reasons, they must follow the school's absence reporting procedures. Staff must notify the Head teacher of the reason for their absence, and likely duration of their absence by telephone, no later than 7.30am in the morning on their absence. The employee must provide details of the reason for absence and give an indication of the anticipated duration of the illness/incapacity.

Staff must call by 2pm on each day of their absence or state their length of absence and agree a day for their next call.

A fit note is required for any sickness absence of more than 7 calendar days and a copy must be submitted to the school without any undue delay.

Upon return to work, staff must complete a return to work form as soon as is reasonably possible along with their line manager.

Please see the staff absence policy for more details.

Leave of Absence

For term time staff, leave of absence, not relating to sickness or emergency reasons, will not be routinely granted and requests should be made in exceptional circumstances only.

If staff wish to submit a leave of absence request, they must follow the leave of absence procedures and complete the appropriate request form. Each request will be considered on its own merits and the impact on the school.

Other Employment

Staff are permitted to undertake additional paid or voluntary work outside of school. This is providing that the work does not;

- conflict with the interests, ethos or reputation of the school,
- take place during contracted working hours or school hours,
- have an adverse effect on your role at school, including an individual's work performance and attendance,
- contravene the working time regulations.

Staff must notify the Headteacher prior to commencement of this work, or declare the additional work at the time of appointment.

Criminal Convictions

In line with the Keeping Children Safe in Education document 2023, all new staff engaging in regulated activity with children must complete a satisfactory Disclosure Barring Service check prior to commencing a role at school.

Existing staff (employees and volunteers) within school must notify the Headteacher in writing of any suspected changes to their DBS and specifically if they are arrested, cautioned, charged or convicted of any offence; even if it does not relate to children.

Staff must notify the Headteacher on the next day following an arrest, caution, charge or conviction. For the avoidance of doubt this includes being questioned under caution without charge.

A failure to notify the school may lead to disciplinary action against the employee.

Supply staff must contact their agency immediately should there be any changes to their DBS status.

Publications and Dealing with the Press

If staff are approached by the media in relation to any school issues, this must be escalated to the Headteacher immediately. Staff must not provide any statements or comments to the media without authorisation from the Headteacher to do so.

Professional References

If staff complete a Professional Reference for a colleague working in school the reference needs to be sent to the Headteacher for approval to be granted before sending it on. Please see the Headteacher if you wish to discuss this.

Disciplinary action

A failure to comply with this code of conduct may result in disciplinary action being taken.