



## ***Theale C of E Primary School***

### **Staff and Volunteers Code of Conduct**

At Theale CE Primary School the children come first. They are central to every decision made in school. We will ensure that our children are happy and successful. They will grow to be ambitious and resilient and their talents will be nurtured so they become highly skilled. Our children will be courageous and always behave with integrity.

“And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.’ This *is* the first commandment. And the second, like *it*, is this: ‘You shall love your neighbour as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.” *Mark 12: v 30-31*

“I have come that they may have life and that they may have it more abundantly.”  
*John 10:10*

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## **Introduction**

Our Code of Conduct outlines the expected conduct of staff and volunteers. All communication and interaction between members of staff, children, parents, carers, governors and visitors must reflect our Code of Conduct. Staff are expected to be conscientious and loyal to the ethos, aims and objectives of Theale CE Primary School. In addition, staff are required to develop and maintain the professional character of the school. It is an expectation that all members of staff (and adult volunteers, governors and visitors) model courteous and respectful behaviour to the children through their appearance and all aspects of their conduct. This includes the way in which adults engage with each other as well as the children. This is important because the conduct, behaviour and practice of all school staff will have an influence on the development of children and young people. This code provides clear guidance on what is acceptable conduct and what is not for staff working at the school. This Code of Conduct does not cover every eventuality. This procedure applies to all staff working in the school.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

The Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team are responsible for ensuring all staff in the school are made aware of, and adhere to, the Code of Conduct and for providing support and encouragement to ensure staff maintain the highest standards of integrity, honesty, accountability and openness. All staff are responsible for reading and adhering to the Code of Conduct and for reflecting on their own conduct and practice and ensuring they meet the standards required of them.

## **General Conduct**

All employees are expected to apply the values of the school in their conduct at work, demonstrating honesty and integrity at all times. The school expects that the conduct of its staff is such that no justifiable complaint can be made by parents, pupils, colleagues, governors, other bodies or agencies or members of the community in relation to conduct and behaviour of school staff. Any complaints about inappropriate conduct will be dealt with fairly and reasonably, using the agreed procedures.

All staff are expected to use their professional expertise and judgement to put the wellbeing, development and progress of pupils first, within the context of their role. All individuals associated with the school have the right to be treated with respect and dignity. All employees are therefore expected to treat colleagues, pupils, parents, governors, schools' partners, other bodies or agencies or members of the community with dignity and respect.

Employees should not use their position within the school for any purpose other than school business.

All staff are expected to obey the law relating to their work and general conduct. Where an employee breaks the law outside of working time and the offence is one that could damage public confidence or has a direct effect on work, the employee must inform the headteacher and maybe be subject to the disciplinary procedure.

Employees are required to adhere to all health and safety policies and practices. The school operates a no smoking policy and smoking is not allowed within the school or school grounds. Where an employee is taking prescribed drugs, he/she should inform his/her line manager where this may affect behaviour and/or performance at work. It is good practice for employees to inform their line manager if they are suffering from a medical condition, or have personal circumstances, that may adversely affect performance at work.

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The private use of personal mobile phones by staff is only permitted at staff break times and in areas in which children are not present. Mobile phones should never be used for personal reasons by staff while teaching or supervising children. Some staff will be informed that during an emergency situation, such as a lock down or on a school trip their phone will need to be turned on, but on silent mode. Teaching staff may take photographs of pupils on their personal mobile phones to capture school events/lessons only with prior permission from the Headteacher; these images should be uploaded to a school computer/device and deleted from their personal phones as soon as possible.

All members of staff should exercise extreme caution when using all forms of social media. Staff must not be “friends” with current or past pupils on Face Book or any other social media site. Staff must be mindful of linking themselves with the school on social media sites. Being “Friends” with parents on social media sites is not recommended. The school expects all members of staff to set high professional standards and to act as role models for children. The posting of messages or pictures that undermines this expectation could lead to formal disciplinary measures.

### **Gifts and hospitality**

Employees of the school may from time to time be offered gifts or hospitality, for example from students or parents. The following advice should guide decisions on receipt of such gifts/hospitality:

- Small individual thank you gifts may be accepted. Gifts resulting from collections are exempt (e.g. weddings, baby showers & leaving presents).
- Always refuse a gift/offer of hospitality if you suspect the giver is trying to gain or has an ulterior motive. Always be sensitive to the possibility the giver may think that even small gift/offer hospitality may elicit preferential treatment.
- Never accept a gift/offer of hospitality from someone who is, or may be in the foreseeable future, tendering for any contract with the school, seeking employment with the school, or in any form of dispute with the school.
- If you are in any doubt about the acceptability of a gift/offer of hospitality, consult your line manager/Headteacher.

### **Financial and personal interests**

School staff must at all times be seen to be acting fairly and impartially and personal needs or interests, or those of family or friends, must not influence actions or decisions.

Where an employee has a friend, associate or relative who is providing goods or services to the school, of a kind that the employee deals with directly or monitors in the course of his/her work, this should be disclosed. Disclosures must be made in writing to the headteacher, who will advise any other school staff who may need to know.

Off-duty hours are generally the personal concern of the employee, though employees must not engage in any outside activity that may conflict with the interests of the school or could damage the confidence of the community in the school or the role of the employee.

Employees must inform their line manager if they have a close personal relationship with another employee or a client or customer of the school which could be considered by colleagues, pupils or others, as impacting on the way they conduct themselves at work.

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Employees should register with the Headteacher any membership of an organisation not open to the public that has secrecy about rules, membership and/or conduct (e.g. Freemasons).

## **Other employment**

Members of the School Leadership Team must not engage in any other business or take up any additional appointment without the written consent of the Headteacher. Consent will not be unreasonably withheld.

Other employees may take up additional employment without consent providing the employment does not conflict with the interests of the school, interfere with their ability to carry out their duties in school, or in any way weaken the confidence of the community in the individual or school.

Where an employee undertakes additional employment, he/she must notify his/her line manager of the number of hours he/she is working per week, to comply with the requirements of the Working Time Regulations.

## **Confidentiality**

Confidential information must not be disclosed to anyone who does not have a right to know. Paper-based and electronic information must be stored securely and confidentially with access limited to those who have a right to view it.

Employees must not disclose any information that is confidential or that, if it were made public, may lead to a breakdown in the trust and confidence the school is required to provide to the community. It may be necessary to discuss confidential information with colleagues. Where this is the case, the discussions must take place in private.

Employees must not disclose information about the school or its pupils on social networking sites or such similar sites. Inappropriate disclosure of information may be dealt with under the disciplinary procedure.

Employees will be responsible for keeping memory sticks safe and will do everything possible to ensure that potential exposure is kept to a minimum.

## **Recruitment and Appointment**

Employees involved in recruitment and appointment must apply the school's recruitment and selection processes and ensure fairness and equality is applied at all times.

Where an employee is involved in recruitment or making an appointment, he/she must advise his/her line manager or Headteacher where he/she is closely associated with any of the candidates (e.g. close friend, relative).

Employees applying for a post or other work-related opportunity within the school (e.g. promotion, secondment) must not seek the help or influence of school governors.

## **Dress and Presentation**

In school we expect staff to dress to create a professional impression in smart, casual dress. This means no jeans. Trainers and tracksuits should only be worn on days where you are teaching PE, and for these lessons jewellery should be removed and long hair tied back. Clothes should be modest so as not to cause offence, for example logos that could cause offence, very low cut tops or exceptionally short dresses, skirts or shorts should not be worn. Foot wear should be appropriate and should allow you to move around the school, classrooms and children safely. Personal protective equipment and appropriate clothing must be worn where required for example for maintaining the site or in the kitchen area.

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## **Safeguarding**

All employees and volunteers are responsible for following and adhering to the school's child protection and safeguarding policies and procedures.

All employees and volunteers are expected to use the appropriate channels, as set out in the relevant procedures, to raise concerns about the practice of others if there is suspicion that their conduct has a negative impact on learning or causes harm to pupils.

Employees and volunteers must inform the Headteacher immediately if they are subject to a criminal investigation or have received a conviction, caution or have been banned from working with children.

## **Relationships with parents and carers**

All employees should strive to establish productive relationships with parents and carers. The school will communicate with parents and carers in line with school policies. Teaching assistants are not allowed to meet with parents routinely as this is the class teacher's responsibility. To protect confidentiality sensitive conversations about children must not take place in public areas such as the school entrance area, the playground and school corridors. In line with school policies we will provide parents and carers with accessible and accurate information about their child's progress, involve parents and carers in important decisions about their child's education and consider parents and carer's views and perspectives. Where an interaction with a parent or carer becomes aggressive or offensive, the interaction should be ended politely and firmly, with assistance summoned where required. All such interactions must be reported to the Headteacher. Risk assessments should be undertaken prior to any contact with parents/carers where aggression or violence is anticipated and the appropriate lone working procedures must be instigated.

## **Relationships with line manager**

Employees and line managers should strive to maintain co-operative and effective working relationships. Relationships should be courteous, reasonable and fair at all times. Employees should carry out all reasonable and lawful instructions given by the line manager to the best of their ability. Line managers should exercise any leadership and management responsibilities in a respectful, inclusive and fair way, and in accordance with school policies, contractual obligations and national standards. Line managers should use the appropriate performance management frameworks to appraise the performance of direct reports and provide feedback. Line managers should provide honest, accurate and justifiable comments when providing feedback, and encourage staff to undertake training and development opportunities, within the context of the school needs and budget.

## **Working with School Governors**

When working with governors or dealing with enquiries from governors, all employees are expected to be courteous and efficient. Employees should expect similar levels of courtesy from governors. Employees should use the appropriate school procedure to deal with any work-related personal issues and should not engage governors in such issues unless it is in accordance with a relevant procedure.

Similarly, employees should not use governors to by-pass formal school procedures in any way, for example to influence the outcome of a disciplinary matter. This does not affect the rights of trade union representatives to take up matters on behalf of their members through appropriate channels, or for governors to be formally involved in Council procedures where appropriate – for example, acting as a member of a governor disciplinary appeal panel.

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Employees must not try to influence governors prior to any appointment/decision. This excludes providing views to governors as part of an information-gathering or consultation exercise.

### **Working as part of a whole-school team**

Employees should endeavour to develop productive and supportive relationships with all school colleagues and to participate in whole-school development and improvement activities. Employees should uphold all school policies and procedures and raise any concerns about the life or running of the school in an appropriate and responsible way. Gossip and complaining in places such as the staffroom or playground is not acceptable. Employees should recognise the important role of the school in the life of the community and take responsibility for upholding its reputation and building trust and confidence in it. Employees should cooperate with other professionals in the children's workforce, establishing effective and productive relationships with other professional colleagues. Employees should at all times ensure they act within their sphere of their own competence and responsibilities and seek clarification where this is needed.

### **Respect for diversity and promoting equality**

All employees must act appropriately towards all children and young people, parents, carers and colleagues, whatever their socio-economic background, age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, race, religion or belief. Employees must take responsibility for understanding and complying with school policies relating to equality of opportunity, inclusion, access and bullying (see Positive Behaviour Policy). Employees should help to create a fair and inclusive school environment by taking steps to improve the wellbeing, development and progress of those with special needs, or whose circumstances place them at risk of exclusion or under-achievement. Employees should strive to address discrimination, bullying or stereotyping, or seek assistance from their line manager or head teacher where issues are identified.

### **Working with money**

Employees receiving or responsible for school money need to take particular care and must adhere to the appropriate financial procedures (FMSIS) at all times. Employees submitting claims for reimbursement of legitimate expenditure must ensure the correct procedures are followed, the details of the claim are within set limits and can be substantiated (e.g. with receipts).

### **Using the school's resources and premises**

School equipment should not be used for excessive personal use unless authorised by the Headteacher. This includes photocopy facilities, stationery, telephones, computers and premises. School ICT systems, particularly email and internet, should only be used for professional purposes. ICT passwords should be kept confidential at all times and not disclosed to any other individual.

### **Working Safely**

Both the school and its employees are responsible for ensuring that a healthy and safe working environment is maintained. Actions or omissions of any individual that place others in danger may lead to disciplinary action.

Employees are expected to:

- adhere to the school's health and safety policy and rules,
  - advise the head teacher/line manager/appropriate person of any unsafe situations or practices,
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- take appropriate steps to ensure the health and safety of other employees, pupils and any other users of the school premises,
- wear any safety clothing/equipment and ensure all pupils are wearing and use appropriate equipment,
- report any injuries, accidents or near misses to the appropriate responsible person and complete any necessary paperwork such as the accident book,
- report incidents of abusive/aggressive or bullying/threatening behaviour that is experienced or witnessed to the appropriate responsible person,
- advise line manager when taking any medication that could affect the ability to work safely,
- 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,
- comply with hygiene requirements.

## **Protecting the School and its standards**

Where an employee has reason to suspect that colleagues, senior managers or governors are acting improperly, the employee should report these suspicions to the headteacher (or the chair of governors if the suspicions concern the head teacher). The employee will be assured the concerns, when made in good faith, will be heard without fear of victimisation, discrimination or disadvantage in accordance with the confidential reporting code.

Improper conduct can cover a wide range, including financial irregularity, abuse of pupils, abuse of power or position, neglect of duty, discrimination, bullying or harassment in accordance with the Whistleblowing Procedure.

Only the Headteacher is authorised to speak or send any communication regarding the school, or members of the school community, to members of the press or broadcast media. This authorisation may be extended by the Headteacher to other staff members.

All staff employed by Theale CE Primary School are to follow the Code of Conduct. Staff should be aware that a failure to comply with the Code of Conduct could result in disciplinary action including dismissal. Volunteers and governors should also be made aware of the Code of Conduct before serving the school.

## **Appendix 1 – Teachers’ Standards**

Teachers are expected to comply with the standards of personal and professional conduct set out in the Teachers’ Standards

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.

Teachers must have 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.

Teachers must have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities.

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