Newton Primary School

Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers

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Chair of Governors	Peter Roberts

1. Introduction

The school values and respects all members of the community. Colleagues are expected to work in co-operation and collaboration, within an ethos of mutual trust and confidence. All employees and volunteers must be committed to promoting the safety, welfare and interests of children as paramount. Staff are expected to place the wellbeing, development and progress of children and young people at the heart of their professional practice.

1.1 Standards of conduct

The public is entitled to expect the highest standards of conduct from all school employees. To serve the school, you should implement its policies and perform your duties with integrity, honesty, impartiality and objectivity.

1.2 Purpose of the Code

The purpose of the Code is to assist you in carrying out your role by making clear the standards of behaviour Newton Primary School requires you to meet. It incorporates the existing laws, regulations and conditions of service of which you should be most aware in your work for the school.

2. Scope

2.1 The Code applies to all employees of Newton Primary School. It also applies to contractors, agency staff, volunteers, governors and those on student or work experience placements working on behalf of the school.

2.2 You should read the Code alongside professional standards, school policies, requirements and guidance regarding standards of conduct in particular areas of work. This list is not exhaustive. You should familiarise yourself with any relevant guidance provided in relation to your role and raise any queries with a senior leader or the Headteacher.

3. Accountability

3.1 As an employee, you must act in accordance with the principles set out in this Code, recognising the duty of public sector employees to discharge public functions reasonably and according to the law.

3.2 Failure to comply with the Code's provisions may result in action under the school's Disciplinary Procedure.

4. Maintenance of Standards

4.1 Raising concerns

You should inform the Headteacher if you identify any deficiency in the service provided by the school resulting from a breach of this Code. If you have concerns about raising the matter with your line manager and wish to maintain confidentiality, you should use the school's Confidential Reporting Code / Whistleblowing Procedure. Disclosures about possible malpractice should be made to:

a) Your line manager.

b) Where (a) is inappropriate, the Headteacher or a senior leader.

c) Where (a) and (b) are inappropriate, the Chair of Governors.

d) Where the disclosure relates to potential harm or abuse of a child, follow the school Child Protection procedures and the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) process.

e) If the concern relates to financial irregularities or fraud, report it to the Headteacher or Chair of Governors. Where this is not appropriate, contact the Local Authority Audit Service.

4.2 Honesty and Integrity

You must maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in your work. You should treat all pupils, colleagues, parents/carers and visitors with respect and professional courtesy. You should maintain professional boundaries and avoid behaviour which may lead any reasonable adult to question your behaviour, motivations or intentions.

4.3 Safe Working Practice and Safeguarding Pupils

To maintain high standards of working practice with and around children, you are expected to comply with relevant safer working practice guidance.

You have a duty to safeguard pupils from:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Neglect
- Specific safeguarding issues outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education, including responsibilities in relation to Prevent.

You must take reasonable care of pupils under your supervision with the aim of ensuring their welfare and safety. Failure to do so may be regarded as neglect.

You must comply with school policy supporting the wellbeing of pupils, including co-operation and collaboration with external agencies that support the welfare of children and young people.

The duty to safeguard pupils includes reporting concerns about a pupil and having a working knowledge of the school procedures in place. You also have a professional responsibility to inform an appropriate person if you believe that a colleague is behaving in a way that compromises the wellbeing or safety of a child or group of children. You should know about, have access to and feel able to use the Confidential Reporting Code, Whistleblowing Procedure and Low-Level Concerns Process.

4.4 Setting an Example

All adults who work in school set examples of behaviour and conduct which may be copied by pupils. You must therefore demonstrate high standards of conduct, encourage pupils to do the same, and avoid putting yourself at risk of allegations of abusive or unprofessional conduct.

You must follow guidance in line with safer working practices.

You must not have electronic communication with pupils under the age of 18, including former pupils, other than through the school's approved platforms. You must not accept pupils or former pupils under 18 as friends or contacts through personal mobile phones, social networking sites or social media.

Expectations relating to staff use of electronic communication, including the internet and social media, are detailed in the school's Acceptable Use / IT policy. You are responsible for familiarising yourself with and adhering to these requirements.

4.5 Dress and Appearance

Your appearance, dress and behaviour are expected to promote appropriate boundaries and working relationships between pupils and staff/volunteers, as role models and responsible adults in a position of trust. You should dress in ways that are appropriate and relevant to your role and that are not likely to cause offence, embarrassment, distraction or misunderstanding.

4.6 Conduct Outside Work

You must not behave in a manner which would cause a reasonable adult to question your suitability to work with children or young people.

You must not engage in conduct outside work which could damage your own reputation or that of Newton Primary School. This is particularly important in and around the immediate local community and when using social media.

5. Disclosure of Information

5.1 The school is committed to openness and to rights of public scrutiny and participation. Relevant legislation requires that certain types of information are made available to the public, recognised third parties and employees. Advice and guidance on information governance requirements is available through the Headteacher and the Local Authority where appropriate.

5.2 You have a responsibility to safeguard the security and confidentiality of personal information you hold. You should ensure that only the appropriate amount of information required is provided to those who have a clearly established and legitimate need to use it.

5.3 You must not use information obtained in the course of your employment for personal gain or benefit, nor pass it to others who might use it in such a way.

6. Relationships

6.1 The Local Community, School Users and Other Employees

You should remember your responsibilities to the community you serve and ensure courteous, efficient and impartial service to all users, groups and individuals within that community. These responsibilities apply equally to your conduct with fellow employees, contractors, agency staff, volunteers and those on student/work experience placements.

You are expected to work as part of a whole-school team.

You should take positive steps to understand the roles of other colleagues in the children's workforce and co-operate with other professionals who have a role in enabling children and young people to thrive and succeed.

You should follow Newton Primary School's ethos and agreed approach in all communication with parents and carers.

6.2 Contractors

If you engage in the provision of work under contract, supervise contractors, have another official relationship with contractors, or have/have had a private or domestic relationship with contractors, you should formally declare that relationship to the Headteacher or Chair of Governors.

Orders and contracts must always be awarded on merit, in accordance with Financial Regulations and Standing Orders in Relation to Contracts. No special favour should be shown to businesses run by friends, partners or relatives, and no part of the local community should be discriminated against.

As a private citizen, you should be aware of possible conflicts of interest when buying goods or using services from firms that have dealings with the school and should follow official procedures for declaring any such transactions.

7. Equalities

You must comply with Newton Primary School's Equalities Policy and legal requirements relating to equality. The school is committed to promoting equality of opportunity, preventing unlawful discrimination in all its activities and valuing diversity.

8. Appointment and Other Employment Matters

8.1 If you are involved in appointing employees, decisions must be based on the ability of the candidate to undertake the duties of the post. To avoid any accusation of bias, you should not be involved in an appointment where you are related to an applicant or have, or have had, a close association with them.

8.2 You should not be involved in decisions relating to discipline, promotion, pay or conditions for another employee who is a relative or with whom you have, or have had, a close association.

8.3 Where you have been provided with a benefit in kind or other untaxed income funded from the school delegated budget, private school fund or parental contributions, this must be formally recorded for notification to the County Council. If you are unsure whether something must be declared, discuss it with the Headteacher, who should seek appropriate advice.

9. Taking Other Employment

9.1 You should not undertake additional employment, paid or unpaid, or allow your name to be put forward for such work, if it will or has the potential to:

- Create a conflict of interest.
- Overlap with official duties.
- Make use of material to which you have access by virtue of your position.
- Weaken public confidence in the school.

You should inform the Headteacher of proposed secondary employment if you consider any of the above points may apply. In general, there is no reason why someone should not work simultaneously in two or more schools where no conflict of interest arises.

9.2 Supply staff

Supply staff who have or are seeking additional employment should apply the same principles above. Where proposed work may conflict with these requirements, inform your line manager and seek agreement from the Headteacher/Governing Board where required.

10. Personal Interests

10.1 Personal interests must not conflict with your public duty. An official position or information acquired in the course of employment must not be used to further personal interests or the interests of others.

10.2 You must declare to the Headteacher or Chair of Governors any:

- External financial or non-financial interest in an existing or proposed contract with the school or other organisational decision.
- Membership of an organisation which could conflict with the school's interests.

10.3 Any declaration should be made in writing to the Headteacher. A declaration by the Headteacher should be made in writing to the Chair of Governors.

11. Stewardship

11.1 You must use public funds entrusted to you responsibly and lawfully and must not use school property, vehicles or facilities for personal use unless authorised in advance. You should seek value for money and avoid legal challenge to the school.

11.2 Personal use of the internet and email must be in accordance with the school's current Acceptable Use / IT Policy and guidance.

11.3 Personal telephone calls

- Personal mobile phones should be used for outgoing personal calls except in exceptional circumstances.
- Personal calls and texts should be infrequent and kept as short as possible. Staff working with children should not make or take personal calls or texts during lessons except in emergencies.
- School mobile phones should not be used for personal use except in an emergency.
- Accredited professional association/union representatives may use the school telephone in accordance with relevant facilities arrangements.

11.4 Intellectual property includes patents, copyright, trademarks, designs and software. Where developed in the course of your duties, such intellectual property is the property of the school. You should not use school intellectual property to conduct private work.

11.5 Copies of material taken for use within school must comply with copyright law and appropriate licensing agreements.

12. Corruption

You must be aware that it is a serious criminal offence to corruptly receive or give any gift, loan, fee, reward or advantage for doing or neglecting to do something, or for showing favour or disfavour to any person in an official capacity.

13. Hospitality and Gifts

13.1 You should only accept hospitality in the form of refreshments or attendance at events where there is a genuine need to impart information or represent the school. Other offers of hospitality or gifts should be firmly but politely refused where acceptance may create a conflict of interest or cause embarrassment to the school.

13.2 You should report offers of hospitality, whether accepted or not, to your line manager and ensure that offers are recorded in the appropriate hospitality register.

13.3 If gifts are offered and you suspect an improper motive, you should decline the offer and report it to the Headteacher or Chair of Governors. This includes preferential rates for goods and services. The Headteacher should report such offers to the Chair of Governors whether accepted or declined.

14. Sponsorship

14.1 Where an outside organisation seeks to sponsor a school activity, the provisions of this Code concerning hospitality, gifts and contractors apply. No sponsorship deal should be made without prior agreement of the Governing Board.

14.2 Where the school wishes to sponsor an event or service, you must declare in writing to the Headteacher any possible conflict of interest or benefit which you, a family member or close associate is likely to receive. Advice must remain impartial and conflicts of interest must be avoided.

15. Contact with the Media

15.1 Any media enquiry on work-related matters should be referred to the Headteacher and, where appropriate, the Chair of Governors. You must obtain formal authorisation from the Headteacher before speaking, writing or giving interviews to the media on behalf of the school.

15.2 If you wish to publish books, articles or letters written in connection with your duties, you must first consult the Headteacher, who may consult the Governing Board and seek appropriate advice.

Appendix 1 - Related Policies and Guidance

The following sources of guidance should be read alongside this Code where relevant. This list is not exhaustive. Staff should familiarise themselves with the policies and guidance relevant to their role and raise any queries with their line manager or the Headteacher.

- Terms and Conditions of Employment
- Confidential Reporting Code / Whistleblowing Policy
- Low-Level Concerns Process
- Disciplinary Procedure
- Acceptable Use of IT, Internet and Electronic Communication Policy / Guidance
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Grievance Procedure
- Procedure for dealing with complaints of harassment
- Managing Allegations of Abuse against School Staff
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Safer Working Practice guidance
- Financial Regulations and Standing Orders
- Freedom of Information requirements
- Computer Misuse Act 1990
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE)
- Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education Settings
- Teachers' Standards (see Appendix 2)

Appendix 2 - Teachers' Standards: Personal and Professional Conduct

The Derbyshire LA source document includes the conduct section of the Teachers' Standards. The following is retained for staff reference.

Preamble

Teachers make the education of their pupils their first concern and are accountable for achieving the highest possible standards in work and conduct. Teachers act with honesty and integrity; have strong subject knowledge, keep their knowledge and skills as teachers up to date and are self-critical; forge positive professional relationships; and work with parents in the best interests of their pupils.

Part Two: Personal and Professional Conduct

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.
- Teachers treat pupils with dignity, build relationships rooted in mutual respect, and observe proper boundaries appropriate to their professional position.
- Teachers have regard for the need to safeguard pupils' wellbeing in accordance with statutory provisions.
- Teachers show tolerance of and respect for the rights of others.
- Teachers do not undermine fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.
- Teachers ensure personal beliefs are not expressed in ways which exploit pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law.
- Teachers have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school and maintain high standards in their own attendance and punctuality.
- Teachers understand and act within the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities.

Staff / Volunteer Acknowledgement

I confirm that I have read and understood the Newton Primary School Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers and understand that I am expected to follow it alongside the school's safeguarding procedures, policies and professional guidance relevant to my role.

Name	
Role	
Signature	
Date	