

# PENNTHORPE

## STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT

THIS POLICY INCLUDES THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE



<b>ISI Code:</b>	7e Staff Code of Conduct
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### INTRODUCTION:

Every member of the Pennthorpe community has a responsibility to uphold the school's motto: "Born not for ourselves alone".

Staff aim to encourage excellence but never at the expense of inclusion and they strive always to ensure children enjoy a creative and inspiring education. Above all, Pennthorpe is a happy, family school and a community built on our core values of honesty, trust, respect, kindness, tolerance and perseverance.

### POLICY AIMS:

This policy sets out clear guidance on the standards of conduct expected from all staff at Pennthorpe School. The principles underlying the guidance aim to provide clear guidance about staff behavior and actions so as not to place pupils or staff at risk of harm or allegations of harm to a pupil.

School staff are in a unique position of trust and influence as role models for pupils/students. Therefore, staff must adhere to behaviour that sets a good example to all pupils/students within the school.

Staff also have an individual responsibility to maintain their reputation and the reputation of the school, both inside and outside working hours and the work setting.

This policy applies to all staff and volunteers in the school regardless of their position, role or responsibility. References to 'staff' throughout the policy relate to all of the following groups:

- All members of staff including teaching and support staff
- Volunteers, including governors
- Casual workers
- Peripatetic staff and club providers
- Temporary and supply staff, either from agencies or engaged directly
- Student placements, including those undertaking initial teacher training and apprentices.
- Visiting Speakers will be informed of the key expectations

Pennthorpe School requires that all staff have read and agree to comply with this policy on an annual basis.

Breach or failure to observe this policy will result in action being taken under the school disciplinary procedures including, but not limited to, dismissal.

This code of conduct is not an exhaustive list of acceptable and unacceptable standards of conduct. In situations where guidance does not exist in this policy staff are expected to exercise their professional judgment and act in the best interests of the pupils/students and the school.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following related policies and procedures:

- Safeguarding Policy;
- Equal Opportunities Policy;
- Use of Social Media Policy (in the Staff Handbook);
- Health & Safety Policy;
- Anti-bribery Policy (in the Staff Handbook);
- Whistleblowing Policy

Staff should ensure that they have read and are familiar with these policies and procedures.

Staff are also required to read and understand Part One of the Department for Education's statutory guidance on safeguarding children and safer recruitment in education, Keeping Children Safe in Education. All senior members of staff and those staff working directly with children will also be required to read Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education in addition to Part One.

## GENERAL EXPECTATIONS OF STAFF:

### 1. PUT THE CHILDREN FIRST:

Whether they are picking a team, handing out grades or delivering rewards and sanctions, staff should always ask themselves: "Does this action place the child's well-being, learning, progress and safety first?"

Staff should speak up on behalf of pupils if they feel this is not the case and use the appropriate channels to raise concerns if this is not happening.

Staff must be aware of the school Whistleblowing Policy and must be prepared to follow it when required – a copy is included in the Staff Annual Review Pack.

### 2. PRIORITISE THE SAFEGUARDING AND WELFARE OF ALL PUPILS:

Staff understand the expectations placed on them as staff members, including where relationships and associations in and out of school (including online) may have implications for the safeguarding of pupils.

Staff should uphold and respect the culture of the school whereby staff feel comfortable to discuss matters outside of work which may have implications for the safeguarding of children in school.

### 3. TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE QUALITY OF THEIR TEACHING:

Staff monitor the progress of the pupils in their care and use their assessment to inform the development of their own practice. Personal and pupil targets should be regularly set to ensure improvement and high standards.

Lessons at Pennthorpe should be *creative* and *fun*. Staff should monitor whether this is the case and continuously explore ways to make their lessons more enjoyable for their students echoing the school's educational philosophy.

### 4. HELP PUPILS TO BECOME CONFIDENT AND SUCCESSFUL LEARNERS:

Pennthorpe staff listen to children and involve them in decisions about their education. They express clear expectations regarding behaviour and learning.

Staff *challenge* and *inspire* pupils, encouraging them to be confident and well-motivated learners who work hard because they want to and are always willing to take risks and have a go.

## 5. DEMONSTRATE RESPECT FOR DIVERSITY, INCLUSION AND EQUALITY:

Staff create a fair and inclusive environment and act appropriately to all children regardless of age, gender, disability, race, religion or sexual orientation.

Staff foster a culture of *inclusion* and *respect* in which all people are valued and cared for.

## 6. STRIVE TO ESTABLISH PRODUCTIVE PARTNERSHIPS WITH PARENTS:

Pennthorpe staff communicate well with parents to ensure they can assess their children's progress and take an active role in their education.

By working alongside parents, staff ensure the child's best interests are observed.

## 7. WORK AS PART OF THE WHOLE SCHOOL TEAM:

Staff work together sharing information and always consider the whole school before making decisions.

Staff uphold school policies and support the school's development targets and ethos.

Staff are *punctual*, *positive*, and *professional* in all they do.

## 8. CO-OPERATE WITH COLLEAGUES:

Staff at Pennthorpe *support* each other and offer assistance above and beyond their own job descriptions.

Staff respect each other and treat others as they would like to be treated.

Staff understand it is their *responsibility* to get on with others.

## 9. DEMONSTRATE HONESTY AND INTEGRITY:

Staff at Pennthorpe are good **role models** and set the right example both in and out of school ensuring public trust in Pennthorpe and the teaching profession itself is upheld.

Staff understand their commitment to safeguard children comes first but otherwise acknowledge the rights of pupils, families and colleagues to confidentiality.

Staff do not gossip and always speak well of their school, both in person and on social media.

## **SAFEGUARDING GUIDANCE AND REQUIREMENTS:**

### **1. RELATIONSHIPS WITH PUPILS/STUDENTS:**

- Staff should maintain professional boundaries with pupils/students appropriate to their position and must always consider whether their actions are warranted, proportionate, safe and applied equitably. Staff should act in an open and transparent way that would not lead any reasonable person to question their actions or intent. Staff should think carefully about their conduct so that misinterpretations are minimised.
- Staff should not establish or seek to establish social contact with pupils for the purpose of securing a friendship or to pursue or strengthen a relationship. If a young person seeks to establish social contact, you should exercise your professional judgement in making a response and be aware that such social contact could be misconstrued.
- Staff should not develop personal or sexual relationships with pupils/students and should not engage in any sexual activity with a pupil/student. Sexual activity does not just involve physical contact including penetrative and non-penetrative acts.
- Working Together to Safeguard Children defines sexual abuse as . 'forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence,

whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).

- Staff should be mindful of section 16 of The Sexual Offences Act 2003.
- Staff should not make sexual remarks to a pupil/student, discuss their own sexual relationships with, or in the presence of, pupils/students or discuss a pupil's sexual relationships in an inappropriate setting or context.
- Contact with pupils/students should be through Pennthorpe's authorised mechanisms if it is necessary at all. Personal phone numbers, email addresses or communication routes via all social media platforms should not be used and staff should not share their home address with pupils/students. If contacted via an inappropriate route the member of staff should inform the Head immediately.
- Pennthorpe School staff must not accept friend invitations or become friends with any pupil/student of Pennthorpe School on any social media platform. Staff should also refrain from following the Twitter or other similar social media accounts of pupils/students or their parents. Staff should read the school's Online Safety Policy carefully and follow all advice and guidance contained within it.

## **2. INFATUATIONS AND CRUSHES:**

- It is not unusual for pupils or, sometimes, their parents to develop infatuations towards members of staff. All such situations must be responded to sensitively to maintain the dignity of those concerned.
- Staff should also be aware that such circumstances carry a high risk of words or actions being misinterpreted and for allegations to be made against staff. Any indications of an infatuation towards yourself or another member of staff should be reported to your line manager.
- The DSL should report any infatuations, where the DSL is also the Head, to the Chairman of Governors.

## **3. PHYSICAL CONTACT WITH PUPILS:**

- There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate and proper for staff to have physical contact with pupils, but it is crucial that they only do so in ways appropriate to their professional role. A 'no touch' approach is impractical for most staff and may in some circumstances be inappropriate. When physical contact is made with pupils it should be in response to their needs at that time, of limited duration and appropriate to their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background.
- Where feasible, staff should seek the child's permission before initiating contact. Staff should listen, observe and take note of the child's reaction or feelings and, so far as is possible, use a level of contact which is acceptable to the child for the minimum time necessary.
- It is not possible to be specific about the appropriateness of each physical contact, since an action that is appropriate with one child in one set of circumstances may be inappropriate in another, or with a different child. Staff should therefore, use their professional judgement at all times.
- Staff should be aware that even well intentioned physical contact may be misconstrued by the child, an observer or by anyone to whom this action is described. Staff should never touch a child in a way which may be considered indecent. Always be prepared to explain actions and accept that all physical contact be open to scrutiny. Staff should not engage in rough play, tickling or fun fights with pupils/students.

- Extra caution should be exercised where a child is known to have suffered previous abuse or neglect. Such experiences may sometimes make a child exceptionally needy and demanding of physical contact and staff should respond sensitively by deterring the child through helping them to understand the importance of personal boundaries. It is recommended that two members of staff are present on any such occasion.
- Staff supervising PE and games or providing musical tuition may be required to initiate physical contact with pupils/students to support a child to perform a task safely, to demonstrate the use of a particular piece of equipment/instrument or to assist them with an exercise. Contact under these circumstances should be done with the pupil/student's agreement, for the minimum time necessary and in an open environment. Staff should remain sensitive to any discomfort expressed verbally or non-verbally by the pupil/student.
- Physical contact should never be secretive, for the gratification of the adult or represent a misuse of authority.
- If a member of staff believes that an action could be misinterpreted, the incident and circumstances should be reported to your line manager, recorded and, if appropriate, a copy placed on the child's file.

**Reasonable force** (see also Behaviour Management and Sanctions Policy)

All members of school staff have a legal power to use reasonable force. Such force should only be used to prevent children from injuring themselves or others or damaging property, for example but not exclusively to prevent a pupil from attacking a member of staff or another pupil, to stop a fight in a playground or retraining a pupil at risk of harming themselves. Physical force is not permitted as a punishment and it would be unlawful to do so.

Reasonable adjustments should be made to the use of reasonable force for disabled pupils and those with SEN.

All occasions when physical intervention is used (as outlined above) should be recorded on the pupil's file on the school's MIS. The Assistant Head, Pastoral should be informed immediately should there be any occurrence of physical intervention and copies of all paperwork should be submitted to the Assistant Head, Pastoral as soon as reasonably possible. Parents should be informed that day or as soon as is reasonably practicable.

Further information can also be found in the Department for Education July 2013 paper 'Use of reasonable force; Advice for Headteachers, staff and governing bodies'.

**Action taken in self-defence or in an emergency**

The law allows anyone to defend themselves against an attack provided they do not use more force than is necessary. Similarly, where a pupil is at risk of immediate injury or on the point of inflicting injury on someone else, any member of staff would be entitled to intervene.

**4. SHOWERS AND CHANGING:**

- Pupils/students are entitled to respect and privacy whilst they are changing or showering after PE/games or swimming. However, there needs to be an appropriate level of supervision in order to safeguard young people, meet health and safety requirements and to ensure that bullying does not take place. The supervision should be appropriate to the needs and age of the pupils/students and sensitive to the potential for embarrassment.
- Staff should be vigilant about their own behaviour and announce their intention of entering a changing room. Staff should not change or shower in the same place as children.

**5. ONE TO ONE SITUATIONS:**

- Staff working individually with pupils/students should be aware of the potential vulnerability of pupils/students and staff in such situations. Staff should manage these situations with regard to the safety of the pupil/student and to themselves.
- Individual work with pupils should not be undertaken in isolated areas or rooms where there is no external viewing panel. Where it is necessary to close doors for reasons of confidentiality a colleague should be made aware of this and asked to remain vigilant.

## **6. TRANSPORTING PUPILS:**

- In certain circumstances, it may be appropriate for staff to transport pupils/students offsite, for example sports fixtures, swimming lessons or other out of school activities. A designated member of staff should be appointed to plan and provide oversight of all transport arrangements and to respond to any difficulties that may arise.
- Staff should not transport or accompany pupils/students offsite using their own vehicle and at least one adult additional to the driver should act as an escort. Staff should never transport an individual pupil/student.
- Staff should ensure that the transport arrangements and the vehicle meet all legal requirements. Staff should ensure that the driver has the appropriate license for the vehicle, that the vehicle is roadworthy, has a valid MOT certificate and is fully insured and that the maximum capacity is not exceeded.
- Staff should ensure that the driver is not distracted while the vehicle is in motion for any reason other than an emergency and should also ensure all passengers are wearing correctly fastened seatbelts. Staff should never transport pupils/students while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Prior to transporting pupils offsite consent must be obtained from pupil/students' parent/guardian and staff should be aware that the safety and welfare of the pupils/students is their responsibility until this is safely passed back to their parent/carer.
- Staff should not use their mobile device whilst transporting pupils.

## **7. ONLINE SAFETY:**

- Staff should follow Pennthorpe School's Online Safety Policy for staff and the Acceptable Use Policy at all times and have regard for Pennthorpe School's Online Safety Policy for pupils.
- Staff must not engage in inappropriate use of social network sites which may bring themselves, the school or the school community into disrepute. Staff should adopt the highest security settings on any personal profiles they have.
- Staff should remain mindful of their digital footprint and exercise caution in all their use of social media or any other web-based presence they have. This includes written content, videos or photographs and views expressed either directly or by 'liking' certain pages or posts or following certain individuals or groups. Staff should exercise care when using dating websites where staff could encounter students. The school reserves the right to monitor these and may implement the disciplinary proceedings should the school's reputation be brought into dispute.
- Staff should not make contact with pupils, should not accept or initiate friend requests nor follow pupils/students accounts on any social media platform. Staff should not communicate with pupils/students via social media, websites, instant messenger accounts or text message. The only acceptable method of contact is via the use of school email accounts or telephone equipment.
- Mobile phones and personally-owned mobile devices may not be used during lessons or formal school time. They should be switched off (or silent) at all times. The Bluetooth functionality of a mobile device should be switched off at all times and may not be used to send images or files to other mobile devices. Mobile phones and personal mobile devices are not permitted to be used in certain areas within the school site such as changing rooms and toilets.

- Mobile phones and personally-owned mobile devices brought in to school are the responsibility of the device owner. Pennthorpe school accepts no responsibility for the loss, theft or damage of personally-owned mobile phones or mobile devices.
- All staff in the Early Years Foundation Stage will be required to place their mobile devices in a storage cupboard away from the direct working area.

## **8. PHOTOGRAPHY, VIDEO AND IMAGES OF CHILDREN:**

- Many school activities involve recording images as part of the curriculum, extra school activities, publicity or to celebrate an achievement. In accordance with The Data Protection Act 1998 the image of a pupil/student is personal data. Therefore, it is a requirement under the Act for consent to be obtained from the parent/guardian of a pupil/student for any images made. It is also important to take into account the wishes of the pupil/student, remembering that some pupils/students do not wish to have their photograph taken or be filmed.
- Using images for publicity purposes will require the age-appropriate consent of the individual concerned and their parent/guardian. Images should not be displayed on websites, in publications or in a public place without their consent. Staff should also be clear about the purpose of the activity and what will happen to the photographs/images/video footage when the lesson or activity is concluded.
- Photographs/stills or video footage of pupils/students should only be taken using school equipment for purposes authorised by the school and should be stored securely and only on school equipment.
- Staff should ensure that a member of the Senior Management Team is aware of the proposed use of photographic/video equipment and that this is recorded in lesson plans. All photographs/stills and video footage should be available for scrutiny and staff should be able to justify all images/video footage made.
- Staff should remain aware of the potential for images of pupils/students to be misused to create indecent images of children and/or for grooming purposes. Therefore, careful consideration should be given to how activities which are being filmed or photographed are organised and undertaken. Particular care should be given when filming or photographing young or vulnerable pupils/students who may be unable to question how or why the activities are taking place. Staff should also be mindful that pupils/students who have been abused through the use of video or photography may feel threatened by its use in a teaching environment.

## **GENERAL GUIDANCE AND REQUIREMENTS:**

### **1. ATTENDANCE AND TIMEKEEPING:**

Should you need to be absent or expect to be late for any reason, you should seek permission from your Line Manager OR the Deputy Head. Appointments should be made outside of school time and during the school holidays except for emergencies.

All staff are expected to be punctual to lessons and be in the classroom before the children arrive. Lessons should finish on time in order to ensure the next lesson begins punctually. Please remember we are setting an example to young people.

### **2. EATING AND DRINKING:**

All staff are provided with sufficient time to take adequate breaks for refreshments, including tea and coffee and lunch.

No hot drinks are permitted in classrooms or teaching areas. Cold drinks are permitted but staff should be mindful of tidiness and the impression created by littered classrooms.

### **3. SMOKING:**

To promote a healthy and pleasant working environment and because of the fire risk, smoking (in any form, including the use of e-cigarettes) is not allowed anywhere on site. You must not smoke on school premises, any member of staff wishing to smoke must leave the school premises.

You must not smoke whilst working with or supervising children offsite.

#### **4. ALCOHOL AND ILLEGAL DRUGS:**

Consumption of alcohol or illegal drugs is not permitted on site save where at a school function or otherwise agreed when modest amounts of alcohol may be consumed. Your conduct and performance must not be adversely impacted by alcohol or drugs when undertaking your duties.

#### **5. CONDUCT OUTSIDE OF THE WORKPLACE**

Staff are required to behave in a manner which is considered professional at all times outside of the workplace and which best preserves and upholds the reputation of the school. This includes the use of social media.

#### **6. SECURITY:**

In the interests of security, employees are issued with staff badges which we suggest staff wear whilst in School. You must not remove any School documents from the site or take any photographs without due permission. The School reserves the right to search the outer clothing, bags, lockers and vehicles etc. of employees whilst on site. Staff may have a colleague in attendance on such occasions.

#### **7. HEALTH AND SAFETY:**

All Staff have a duty to ensure that a safe working environment exists. Fire and evacuation procedures must be adhered to at all times and Staff are required to familiarise themselves with the procedures and their responsibilities set out in the Health & Safety Policy.

#### **8. PERSONAL APPEARANCE:**

We regularly receive visits from parents, potential parents and others, and naturally wish to convey an impression of professionalism and organisation. Therefore, whilst not wishing to impose unreasonable obligations, Staff are nonetheless, required to look smart in appearance and appropriate for the role undertaken. Some items are not acceptable in school such as denim, leather, flip flops, Uggs or trainers (unless teaching sports) and fashionable trends such as having underwear on show.

#### **9. GENERAL TIDINESS:**

Staff need to be continually aware of the impression staff can create on young people and the role models we provide. Equally, as an independent school, we are effectively running a business with a fee-paying clientele. Classrooms should be left tidy at all times with all desks being clear and presentable in preference to being heaped with paper.

#### **10. GIFTS/HOSPITALITY:**

- Staff need to take care that they do not accept any gift/offer of hospitality that might be construed as a bribe by others or lead the giver to expect preferential treatment. However, there may be occasions where pupils/students or parents wish to give a small token of appreciation to staff, for example at religious festivities, or at the end of the year.
- It is unacceptable to receive gifts on a regular basis or to suggest to pupils/students that gifts are appropriate or desired. Money should not be accepted as a gift. If you are unsure whether to accept a gift you should consult your line manager.

- Staff should not accept significant gifts [a sum to be assessed by the school] or hospitality from pupils, parents, carers, actual or potential contractors or outside suppliers. All such gifts/offers of hospitality should be reported to your line manager and recorded.
- Personal gifts should not be given by staff to pupils/students and any reward to pupils/students should be in accordance with Pennthorpe School's Behaviour policy, recorded and not based on favouritism.

#### **11. COMMUNICATION:**

Good communication between all members of the School community is vital. All communication between Staff, pupils and parents should take place within clear, explicit and professional boundaries.

#### **12. COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS:**

Form tutors are expected to be the first point of contact between parents and the School, although enquiries will also come through the School Office. Staff can contact parents by telephone, email or letter. Staff should not contact pupils, parents or conduct any school business using personal email addresses.

Where a member of Staff receives an email from a parent, a reply should normally be made within 2 working days. If a full reply cannot be made within that time, the member of Staff should send a brief acknowledgment e-mail and let the parent know when a fuller reply can be expected.

Staff must inform the Head if they receive an offensive email.

#### **13. COMMUNICATION WITH PUPILS:**

Staff should carefully consider the manner in which they communicate with pupils so as to avoid any possible misinterpretation of their motives or behaviours.

Staff should not give their personal mobile phone numbers or email addresses to pupils, nor should they communicate with them by social media, text message or personal email. If they need to speak to a pupil by telephone, they should use one of the School's telephones and email using the School system. The group leader on all trips and visits involving an overnight stay should take a school mobile phone with him/her and may ask the pupils for their mobile numbers before allowing them out in small, unsupervised groups. The School mobile should be used for any contact with pupils that may be necessary. The group leader will delete any record of pupils' mobile phone numbers at the end of the trip or visit and should ensure that pupils delete any Staff numbers that they may have acquired during the trip.

Pupils should be encouraged to discuss with their parents or guardians' issues that are troubling them. It may be appropriate to suggest that a pupil sees the School counsellor or a member of the pastoral team.

#### **14. CONFIDENTIALITY:**

- Members of staff may have access to confidential information about pupils/students, their parents/carers or their siblings. Staff must not reveal such information except to those colleagues who have a professional role in relation to the pupil/student.
- Staff should never use confidential or personal information about a pupil/student or her/his family for their own, or others' advantage (including that of partners, friends, relatives or other organisations). Information must never be used to intimidate, humiliate, or embarrass the pupil/student.
- All staff are likely at some point to witness actions which need to be confidential. For example, where a pupil/student is bullied by another pupil/student, this needs to be reported and dealt with in

accordance with the appropriate school procedure laid out in the Anti-Bullying and Cyber-Bullying Policy. It must not be discussed outside the school, including with the pupil/student's parent or carer, nor with colleagues in the school except by a senior member of staff with the appropriate authority to deal with the matter.

- Staff have a statutory obligation to share with Pennthorpe School's Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead any information which gives rise to concern about the welfare or safety of a pupil/student or that might suggest a pupil/student is in need or at risk of significant harm. Staff should pass on information without delay in accordance with Pennthorpe School's Safeguarding policy and procedures and this should be recorded. Staff must never promise a pupil/student that they will not act on or pass on any information that they are told by the pupil/student.
- Staff should refer to the Department of Education's document Information sharing: advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services for further guidance on information sharing. If you are in any doubt about whether to share you should seek guidance from a member of the Senior Management Team.
- Any media or legal enquiries should be passed to the Senior Management Team and only approved staff and Governors should communicate to the media about the school. This will not occur without the Head's knowledge or permission.

#### **15. WHISTLEBLOWING:**

- Whistleblowing is the mechanism by which staff can voice their concerns, without fear of repercussion.
- All school staff have a duty to report any behaviour by a colleague which raises concern. Staff should refer to Pennthorpe School's Whistleblowing Policy for further guidance. This is particularly important where the welfare of pupils/students may be at risk.
- The schools Whistleblowing procedures are also referred to in the Safeguarding Policy and in the Staff Handbook.