



# THE FOREST FEDERATION STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT

The Forest Federation holds a code of conduct which protects pupils and colleagues but which also has regard for the need to ensure that staff have freedom within the law to question, put forward new ideas, controversial or unpopular opinions, without placing themselves in jeopardy of disciplinary procedures.

*Relevant documentation: The Mission Statement / Values / aims statement, the Public Sector Equality duty, The Data Protection Policy, Harassment and bullying policy, The school staff Handbook, Contracts of Employment, Job Descriptions, Acceptable use policy (ICT) , Charging and remissions, Child protection guidance and safe working practices / safeguarding policy, Whistle blowing policy, Social networking, Complaints Policy, Pay policy, Performance management policy, Teaching and Learning Policy, CPD policy, Health and Safety Policy and Risk assessments.*

## **School Ethos**

Even if it were desirable to do so, it would not be possible to write an exhaustive list of rules governing staff conduct. Staff should be trusted in the discharge of their responsibilities, which implies allowing room for initiative and judgment. In fairness to staff, however, it is important to set out guidance as to where the exercise of that initiative and judgment could potentially bring them into conflict with others.

Whilst there are clearly areas of our professional lives, for example finance or health and safety, where rules simply have to be obeyed, the Staff Code of Conduct is, by and large, not a document that can be adhered to in that sense. Its purpose is to communicate to all staff, a shared expectation of each member of staff's duty to the rest of the school community. There may be occasions when a member of staff wants to know how a particular aspect of conduct might be regarded, when measured against the Staff Code of Conduct. Staff should seek the Headteacher's advice if they are in any doubt of this kind.

## **Responsibilities**

All members of the school community – teaching and non-teaching staff, parents, pupils and governors, work towards the school aims by:

- Working as a team in school in which all are fully aware of behavioural expectations
- Treating all children and adults as human beings and individuals by respecting their rights, values and beliefs
- Fostering and promoting good relationships and a sense of belonging to the school community
- Offering equal opportunities in all aspects of school life
- Encouraging, praising and positively reinforcing good relationships, behaviours and work
- Rejecting all bullying or harassment in any form
- Helping to develop strategies to eliminate undesirable behaviour
- Caring for, and taking pride in, the physical environment of the school
- Working as a team, supporting and encouraging each other
- Understand the current teaching standards (or relevant standards to role)
- Understand the pay and conditions and directed time (teaching) requirements.

## **Standard expectations:**

- **Attendance and Punctuality**  
Good attendance and punctuality include arrival at school, to classrooms before the children for the beginning of lessons and arriving at meetings on time.
- **Work Ethic**  
Ensures that staff are performing their duties to the maximum of their ability and that deadlines are met
- **Safety**  
Ensure the safety of all stakeholders and be aware of any potential hazards that could be harmful.
- **Confidentiality**  
Unauthorised disclosure of information regarding all stakeholders.
- **Personal Conduct**  
Employees are expected to act in a courteous, respectful manner at all times and have good / appropriate standards of dress\*.
- **Working Environment**  
Staff are prohibited from consuming alcohol and non-prescribed drugs whilst working.
- **Use of Schools Assets**  
Staff must not deliberately misuse or damage school property in their possession, care or custody and must not use school assets, intellectual property for private use or gain.

Please see the social networking policy.

## **Working with pupils:**

In their dealings with pupils the school expects that all staff will:

- Promote and safeguard the welfare of children and young persons you are responsible for or come into contact with.

- Ensure that all students receive a broad, balanced and stimulating curriculum at the appropriate level, using suitable materials.
- Ensure that lesson objectives and work requirements are clearly set out and progress is monitored carefully.
- Ensure that lessons start and end on time.
- Ensure that pupils are emotionally and physically safe in school.
- Make explicit, in a constructive and positive way, what behaviour is expected of pupils and staff and what is unacceptable.
- Establish productive working relationships with pupils and staff acting as a role model and setting high expectations.
- Ensure their relationships with pupils are never of a kind that could compromise their professional responsibilities.

### **Working with Colleagues**

All staff must at all times treat colleagues with respect and courtesy. This includes attending meetings on time and meeting other deadlines on which their colleagues depend. In order to assist their colleagues, staff must adhere to the schools policies and procedures.

**"There is no 'I' in team" Together we can Each Achieve More**

- Praise colleagues and celebrate success whenever possible
- Promote the sharing of good practice
- Acknowledge our own mistakes and understand how they happened so that we do not repeat them
- Speak well of colleagues to others and ensure that all criticism is constructive.
- Never criticise colleagues in public, if you have an issue, as far as possible speak directly to a colleague yourselves: if a comment comes via a third-party, it brings with it also a sense of misunderstanding, hurt and/or guilt
- Welcome and learn from constructive criticism
- Err on the side of caution in judging situations
- Consider confidentiality and never discuss matters of this kind with a third party – even when the third party asks on behalf of, or regards themselves as a perfectly acceptable proxy for, the colleague in question
- Be involved in and contribute to whole school policy development.
- Assist with the development of policies and procedures relating to child protection, health, safety and security, confidentiality and data protection, reporting all concerns to the Headteacher.
- All staff are expected to meet deadlines. A member of staff whose deadline is not met should expect an apology for the inconvenience caused to them. Staff who miss deadlines must be asked why. Support must be given to a member of staff who has repeated difficulty meeting deadlines.

Disagreeing with school policy is not poor performance; failing to adhere to it, is. Policy grows and develops and so disagreement and dialogue about it is a positive thing but the correct channels should be used in altering policy and the discussions surrounding this.

Similarly, saying no – if asked to do something unreasonable or unachievable – is also sensible: it forestalls failure.

### **Representing the school**

In order to preserve the reputation of the school, staff must:

- Wear their school ID at all times in school or on visits so that it is visible to others.
- Preserve the confidentiality of information relating to the school's staff, pupils, finances.etc. by not speaking detrimentally about the school's policies and procedures, about children and their families or staff in a public situation
- Gain approval from the Headteacher or chair of governors before speaking to the press or committing school resources other than those for which they have responsibility
- Take care over the use of school headed paper and the school logo
- Maintain professional standards of conduct towards others when acting in a school capacity
- Dress appropriately when acting in a professional capacity and with due regard for the conclusions others may draw from their attire.

### **Dress**

There is a no uniform policy for staff but you are asked to follow a few basic professional guidelines.

Please dress appropriately for your role. Aspects of appearance that are unsuitable for school include:

- Bare midriff, short skirts, low tops, transparent clothing, piercings and tattoos on the main part of the body except arms should not be visible and no denim.
- Staff work in close proximity of each other and with children. It is therefore most important that a high standard of personal hygiene and grooming is maintained.
- Please remember that extreme styles of dress or adornment may distract children from learning.
- Closed toe shoes to be worn at all times.

### **ICT Security**

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You annually review and sign an understanding of our ICT security policy. Please ensure you are clear of the expectations for school staff.

### **Social Networking**

Please review the social networking code of practice.

### **School Property**

In order to preserve the quality of the school's environment and physical resources staff must ensure that:

- They, and pupils for whom they are responsible, look after school premises and property which they use
- Procedures for borrowing school equipment is observed
- Energy is conserved wherever possible
- The security of the school property is maintained as well as possible and not put at risk
- Staff should also assist with the security of the school by directing to Reception anyone who they think might be a stranger on site and ensuring visitors sign in and receive a visitor badge.

### **Additional items – staff are to:**

- Reorganize duties / assemblies far enough in advance of being absent – with the exception of illness
- Provide planning, resources (everything needed) for cover supervisors - again with the exception of illness
- Minimum requirement for supply teachers is the learning objectives - in the event of an illness otherwise planning and at least 1 copy of expected activities for supply teacher to copy / prepare
- Answer the door (unless Rascals – unless you are next to it) or telephone if you hear them and the office staff are not available
- Formally present a written request for leave to the Headteacher (any relevant for governor approval will be taken to Full Governors meetings which are held 3 times a year). This includes funerals and appointments of yourselves or your children, special leave days etc.
- Complete new year signature forms for items ranging from DSE self assessment, viewing of risk assessments and policies to visit procedures
- Sign and pecuniary interest form stating any interest they may have regarding the appointment of staff, selection of pupils or contracts held or tendered for
- Exercise proper professional discretion and formal gratitude in the event of their being offered hospitality or gifts of any kind
- To remain open-minded about changes in the work place and to positively support and embrace new ideas which are put in place for the benefit of all stakeholders.

### **Absences.**

In the event of illness contact should be made with the headteacher or wither Deputy Headteacher at the earliest opportunity (from 7.30 am onwards); wherever possible by the member of staff. TEXT messages are only appropriate if additional verbal contact is be made to ensure this message is received. Where early contact cannot be made, leave a message on the Headteacher's, Deputies and school office telephone.

### **Examples of behaviours which will prompt disciplinary procedures**

(please see Appendix 3 for items which constitute gross misconduct)

- Insubordination
- Poor timekeeping: Lateness to school / lessons / meetings
- Inability to meet deadlines
- Bullying / harassment of colleagues including deliberate exclusion of others
- Inappropriate racial / gender / age comments
- Sexual harassment
- Homophobic comments
- other serious forms of harassment or discrimination
- Persistent negative attitude
- Deliberate refusal to maintain school policy
- Breach of data protection
- Inappropriate use of ICT / Serious infringement of IT policies
- Theft, fraud
- Fighting, assault on another person
- Deliberate damage to property
- Being unfit for work through alcohol or illegal drugs
- Gross negligence
- Serious infringement of Health and Safety rules
- Abusive/threatening behaviour

**Victimisation (See whistle blowing policy)**

Anyone who harasses or victimises someone who makes a protected disclosure will be subject to disciplinary action.

**Thank you for taking the time to read this document and whilst it seems heavy, it is written to protect children and staff and enable a harmonious working environment. If you have any questions please don't hesitate to ask.**