



Staff Code of Conduct

Policy statement:

Watchorn Christian School is built upon Christian principles and strives to be a safe, loving and happy place for children to learn. Staff members are required to conduct themselves in a manner that is in-keeping with the ethos of the school and reflects the love of Jesus Christ.

Watchorn Christian School recognises its responsibility to safeguard the children in its care at all times and the key role of the staff in implementing this responsibility.

Staff at all times **must** act in a professional, polite and appropriate manner in regards to actions, behaviour, attitude, speech and lifestyle befitting their position of trust and responsibility in the care and development of the children in the school.

The code of conduct applies to all staff members, volunteers and extended staff members. The staff should also have read all of the school's policies during their induction period and adhere to these. All employees and volunteers must be committed to promoting the safety, welfare and interests of children (pupils/students) as paramount. Staff are expected to place the wellbeing, development and progress of children/young people at the heart of their professional practice.

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

Procedures:

Accountability

As an employee, you must act in accordance with the principles set out in this Code, recognising the duty of all public sector employees to discharge public functions reasonably and according to the law. If you fail to comply with the Code's provisions, this may result in action under the School's Disciplinary Procedure.

Personal Conduct

All staff and volunteers are expected to conduct themselves as outlined below:

- Be honest and trustworthy in word and deed.

- Be hard working and willing to do as directed.
- Be friendly and a positive role model to everyone, children, parents and other staff.
- Show initiative.
- Treat others as you would like to be treated yourself.
- Be punctual.
- Never use offensive language or blasphemy.
- Maintain the appropriate levels of confidentiality with respect to student and staff records and other sensitive matters. They should take care not to discuss issues of particularly sensitive matters within the school community which could cause distress to school staff, pupils or parents.
- Staff must ensure that they upheld part 2 of the teaching standards.

Conduct when working with others

- Speak to others respectfully.
- Speak about children and parents respectfully and sensitively.
- Do not gossip about other members of staff, if you have a difficulty with another member of staff, speak to the head teacher about it.
- Act as part of a team and value the contributions of others.
- Do not let your personal feelings towards another member of staff or service user effect your work.

Staff Dress Code

Staff must dress modestly, professionally and safely adhering to the following guidelines:

- Maintain a clean, neat appearance and wear the name badge provided.
- Clothing must be safe, comfortable and practical for the range of indoor and outdoor tasks that the role requires. This includes always having a coat on site for outdoor duty.
- Skirts and shorts must be knee length or longer.
- Leggings should be covered by a top of suitable length.
- Clothing must not be low cut, strappy or expose bras/ underwear or midriff or back.
- Footwear should be practical for safe movement around the classroom.
- Jewellery and make up should be kept to a minimum.
- Tattoos and body piercings must be covered.

Failure to adhere to this policy may result in staff being asked to return home to change into more suitable attire.

Staff taking medication/other substances

- Inform the head teacher/deputy of any medical conditions or medication that may affect their daily work.
- Staff must not be under the influence of alcohol or any other substances that may affect their ability to care for children.
- Staff medication on the premises must be securely stored and out of reach of children at all times.

Consumption of alcohol

Consumption of alcohol on school site is not permitted. You must not drink alcohol during the working day at all; including unpaid breaks. You must be mindful of the affect your behaviour will have on the reputation of the school and the Disciplinary action will be taken against you. See the disciplinary rules for more information.

Illegal substances It is a criminal offence to produce, possess or supply an illegal substance. You must not use, or be under the influence of an illegal substance during the working day at all; including unpaid breaks. Where these offences come to light disciplinary action will be taken. You must be mindful of the effect your behaviour will have on the reputation of the School and the impact illegal substances, or the misuse of legal drugs, will have on your ability to perform your duties. Disciplinary action will be taken against you if your ability is impaired by illegal substances or the misuse of legal drugs while on school premises. You have a duty to inform the head teacher if you are taking any medication which interferes with the safe performance of your role.

Medical/ Dental Appointments

- Due to the nature of the job, staff are requested, if possible, to attend doctor, dentist or hospital visits outside of school hours.

Holidays

- Staff are requested not to take holiday during term times.

Staff Illness/ Absence

- Staff should personally inform the head teacher of any reason for absence.
- Staff should telephone the school as soon as possible to inform of an absence so that cover can be found before the school day starts.
- SMS text or email is not an appropriate form of communication, always telephone the school.
- Staff suffering from sickness and diarrhoea should follow government guidelines and remain absent from work for at least 48 hours after the last bout of sickness or diarrhoea.

Additional employment

Employees may carry out additional work, employment or outside activity if it is not in conflict with the School's business. You must disclose and seek approval from your line manager who will determine if there is likely to be a conflict of interest. The Head teacher will also assess hours worked in line with the Working Time Regulations 1998 and discuss this with you. You must not do personal work of any sort during the hours you are carrying out your work for the school or use the school's facilities in connection with additional employment.

Conflict/disclosure of personal interests

Employees must not allow personal interests to conflict with the school's business. This means you must not use your school position, facilities or equipment to benefit yourself, family, friends or a private company/interest. You must register any interest you/your spouse/partner has which may conflict with the school's interest. This includes any employment by, substantial shareholding in or membership of any external company or body which has, or may enter into a contractual relationship with the school or which is involved in campaigning or lobbying in respect of any school activity. The same principles apply to work carried out through partnership arrangements. So, if you are involved in any type of partnership working with other agencies/companies and there appears to be a potential conflict of interest, you must also register this as described above. Disclosure must be made as soon as it becomes evident there is or may be a conflict of interest. It may come to light in processes such as recruitment, tendering or during committee meetings. It must be declared immediately if you, a relative or friend has, or could be perceived as having, a personal interest in the process. Arrangements should be made to protect both the School and the employee's position. You must also declare membership of any organisation not open to the public, which requires allegiance and which has secrecy about rules, membership or conduct.

Criminal charges

Any employee facing criminal charges must notify the Head teacher immediately, who will consider the impact on their contract of employment.

Disclosure of information

Legislation requires that certain information must be available to the school, Ofsted, auditors, government departments, customers and the public. The school publishes its performance results and discloses information in line with the Freedom of Information Act. You must always treat personal data obtained through your duties as confidential and only disclose personal data in accordance with the Data Protection Act Policy. Further information about data protection is available from the head teacher.

Safeguarding children

Staff should adhere to the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection policy at all times. Staff have a duty to safeguard pupils/students from:

- physical abuse
- sexual abuse
- emotional abuse
- neglect
- The duty to safeguard pupils/students includes the duty to report concerns about a pupil/student to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Staff must not demean or undermine pupils, their parents or carers, or colleagues.

Staff must take the upmost care of pupils/students under their supervision with the aim of ensuring their safety and welfare.

One to one situations

One to one situations have the potential to make a young person more vulnerable to harm and ourselves more vulnerable to unjust or unfounded allegations being made against us. Reasonable and sensible precautions should be taken.

Therefore, we should:

- ensure that when lone working is an integral part of your role, full and appropriate risk assessments have been conducted and agreed
- avoid one to one meetings with pupils in remote, secluded areas
- keep our door open
- when possible, inform another colleague about the contact beforehand, assessing the need to have them present or close by
- avoid the use of 'engaged' or equivalent signs wherever possible. Such signs may create an opportunity for secrecy or the interpretation of secrecy
- always report any situation where a child becomes distressed or angry to a senior colleague

Physical Contact/Social Contact

It is crucial that in all circumstances, adults should only touch children in ways which are appropriate to their professional or agreed role and responsibilities. Physical contact should never be secretive, or for the gratification of the adult, or represent a misuse of authority. If an adult believes that their action could be misinterpreted, or if an action is observed by another as being inappropriate or possibly abusive, the incident and circumstances must be reported to the Head teacher and an appropriate record will be made. Parents/carers will be informed in such circumstances. In all circumstances where a young person initiates inappropriate physical contact, it is the responsibility of the adult to sensitively deter the child and help them understand the importance of personal boundaries. Such circumstances must always be reported and discussed with the Head teacher or Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Therefore, we 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
- never touch a child in a way which may be considered indecent
- never touch a child in temper or frustration
- always be prepared to report and explain actions and accept that all physical contact is open to scrutiny
- always encourage children, where possible, to undertake self-care tasks independently
- work within Health and Safety regulations

Social Contact

We must not seek to establish social contact with students that could be misconstrued as grooming.

Therefore:

- have NO secret social contact with students or their parents
- discuss with a senior colleague any social contact with a student or parent which could give rise to concern
- the sending of birthday/faith cards should be discussed with the Head teacher

Staff Risk Awareness & Health & Safety

- All staff are required to read the Health & Safety Policy and Risk Assessment Policy as part of their induction process and adhere to the guidelines.
- The induction training for staff and volunteers includes an explanation of Health and Safety issues so that all adults are able to adhere to our policy and understand their shared responsibility for health and safety. The induction training covers matters of employee well-being, including safe lifting, the storage of potentially dangerous substances, risk assessments, health & safety and safeguarding children.
- As necessary, Health and Safety training is included in the annual training plans of staff, and Risk Awareness & Health and Safety is discussed regularly at staff meetings.

Accepting gifts

- Staff members should not accept gifts from parents if they are thought to be compromising (either very frequent or over the value of £25). Small token gifts may be accepted as a 'thank you' at Christmas or the end of term but staff members should not treat parents or children with more favour due to this.

Mobile Phones

- The use of personal mobile phones in the classroom by staff, parents and carers' is **forbidden** to ensure the safety of the children. Personal mobile

phones will be kept in a locked cabinet in the school office at the start of the day and can be used in the office/ reception area during break times.

ICT and Social Networking Sites

Staff are required to adhere to their professional responsibilities when using information systems and social network sites. Please read our Online Safety policy for further information.

Staff should be clear about the purpose of any activity, which involves photography or video of children. Staff must not take, display or distribute images of children, unless they have consent to do so.

- It is a criminal offence to use the School ICT system for a purpose not permitted by the manager. ICT includes a wide range of systems, including mobile phones, PDAs, digital cameras and email.
- The School information systems may not be used for private purposes.
- Staff will respect copyright and intellectual property rights.
- Staff will promote e-safety with children in their care and will help them to develop a responsible attitude to system use, communications and publishing.
- Staff should understand that they should not post any visual images, recordings or comments that relate to school life including those of children or parents on to any Social Networking sites under any circumstances.
- Staff should avoid accepting parents as friends on Social Networking sites.
- Staff must never write anything negative about the school, its children or parents on Social Networking sites.
- Staff must not post anything on Social Networking sites that could cause people to question their ability to care for children.

Videos and photographs

Working with young people will involve the taking or recording of images. Informed written consent from parents will be sought at the start of the year.

It is not appropriate for adults to take photographs of children for their personal use.

Therefore, we must:

- only use equipment provided and authorised by the school

Therefore, we must not:

- display or distribute images of children unless we have consent to do so from parents/carers
- use mobile telephones to take images of children

There are no circumstances that will justify adults possessing indecent images of children. Adults who access and possess links to such websites will be viewed as a significant and potential threat to children. Accessing, making and storing indecent images of children on the internet is illegal. This will lead to criminal investigation and the individual being barred from working with children and young people, if proven.

We must not use equipment belonging to the school to access adult pornography; neither should personal equipment containing these images or links to them be brought into the workplace. This will raise serious concerns about the suitability of the adult to continue to work with children.

We should ensure that young people are not exposed to any inappropriate images or web links. Therefore, we ensure that they are not accessed without having previously checked content and we ensure internet equipment used by children have the appropriate controls with regards to access. e.g. personal passwords should be kept confidential.

Any breach should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Curriculum

Some areas of the curriculum can include or raise subject matter which is sexually explicit. Therefore:

- have clear lesson plans and stick to them
- be professional at all times; do not over step personal and professional boundaries
- be able to justify all curriculum materials
- do not enter in to or encourage discussions about sexual activity which may offend or harm others
- seek help/support if you are in any doubt and report any incident that could lead to concern or offence.

Whistle blowing and Incident Reports

- Staff must report any behaviour by colleagues that raises concerns, by following the School's Whistle Blowing Policy. Staff must take responsibility for recording and reporting any incident, which may result in being misinterpreted and/or an allegation being made.
- It is essential that accurate and comprehensive records are maintained wherever concerns are raised about a young person or the conduct of adults working with young people.
- Therefore, we must: be familiar with the school's system for recording concerns (referrals in the staff room)
- take responsibility for recording any incident, and passing on that information where they have concerns about any matter pertaining to the welfare of an individual in the workplace.

Any member of staff found in breach of this policy may be subject to disciplinary action by the school

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