



# Springvale Primary School

**Policy Title: Staff Code of Conduct**

**Date of Review: Autumn 2022**

**Review by: Autumn 2025**

**Signed by:**

**Chair of Governors**

**All policies available at [www.springvaleprimary.org](http://www.springvaleprimary.org)**

## Staff Code of Conduct

Autumn 2022



### Introduction

This policy was created after a period of consultation with relevant stakeholders within school. It has been formally adopted by governors and reflects our approach at Springvale Primary School.

### Aims and Principles

The policy is underpinned by the central aims of Springvale Primary and values held by the school community:

#### Aims of the school

- Springvale is committed to promoting high standards of academic achievement for all learners in all subjects.
- As a school we will continue to develop and instil key life skills and values in our pupils.
- We will encourage positive relationships and communications between home, our community and the wider world.

In particular, Springvale School has an inclusive approach to our provision. Our aim is always to involve all our children and stakeholders in all areas of the curriculum and school life. In accordance with our **Disability Equality Scheme** we recognise that this may mean making special adaptations or arrangements from time to time for children with specific disabilities. We welcome the involvement of disabled adults in all areas of school life.

## Staff Code of Conduct

### Introduction and Objectives

At Springvale Primary School, we are committed to creating a safe school culture that promotes equality, excellence and an environment where children, young people and adults feel safe and valued.

Within school we promote the core principles of respect, fairness, justice, tolerance and understanding. We recognise that everybody within the school has the right to be treated in this way but is also responsible for promoting these values in the way they work within the school.

The objectives of the Code of Conduct are to:

- Safeguard pupils
- Give staff a safe environment in which to work
- Minimise opportunities for abuse within the school environment
- Enable all staff to feel confident to report concerns in a safe environment with appropriate levels of confidentiality
- Respond promptly to concerns, which have been fully documented and will be investigated and addressed
- Exercise appropriate sanctions
- Create an ethos of mutual respect, openness and fairness
- Respond to issues relating to the COVID pandemic by adapting our teaching and whole school provision to meet the needs of all pupils whilst upholding the highest standards of professional conduct

### The Code of Conduct in detail

- 1. All staff are required and expected to read, understand and follow the school's policies and procedures: Safeguarding and Child Protection, Anti-bullying and Behaviour. This also includes the annual release of the Keeping Children Safe in Education update which will feature in a special briefing for all staff and volunteers each September with regular reminders at briefings and further INSET training.**

Pupils and staff are expected to work together to build a school where relationships are characterised by mutual and appropriate respect. The recognition of positive behaviour should be a priority and any sanctions/disciplinary issues should be dealt with in an appropriate manner and in the appropriate environment e.g. not in an area in full view of visitors to the school.

All interactions should take place in a calm manner and staff should not excessively raise their voice at pupils wherever this is avoidable unless there is a health and safety risk.

In accordance with the latest Keeping Children Safe in Education and Teachers' Standards we all must ensure that we safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of our professional duties.

The school's Behaviour Policy and associated documents establish in more detail the expectations within school and the approved sanctions to be used. If there are

occasions when a member of staff is having difficulties managing a child's behaviour this should be discussed with their mentor and/or line manager at the earliest opportunity. Any actions to be taken should be recorded, monitored and reviewed.

All staff and Governors will have a zero tolerance approach to sexual harassment or violence of any pupil, staff member, parent/carer, visitor or Governor. See our policy on Sexual Harassment and Violence (SHAV). All matters of discrimination or harassment of any kind should be reported to safeguarding leads and handled in-line with the relevant policies.

**2. All staff should work within an environment where physical contact with children / young people is managed appropriately.**

Staff should only use physical restraint as a last resort and should use techniques from the school's training relating to managing difficult behaviour (Team Teach). Please refer to the school's Restraint Policy and ensure that any use of physical restraint is recorded and shared with school leaders and the parent/carer. All key staff must undertake this training every three years. Physical restraint should only be used where there is a need to prevent injury to a child or a member of staff. In certain circumstances a Personal Handling Plan is prepared between the school and parents for each appropriate child. This plan will indicate an agreed method for handling children to ensure their safety.

Staff should only initiate physical contact with a child which is appropriate to the situation i.e. comfort to a child who is hurt or distressed. Very rarely should physical contact be initiated for children in Year 1 or beyond. When children initiate physical contact, like a hug, the staff member should acknowledge the contact (assuming it is appropriate) and then move away.

Any physical contact should be within clear boundaries and should not leave the member of staff open to any allegations of inappropriate touching. Contact to build esteem like 'high fives' is appropriate where staff deem it to be necessary.

A level of physical contact may be necessary for a child / young person with medical/specific learning needs. This contact will be agreed within a health plan, be subject to the required risk assessments, manual handling plans, and in an appropriate private space with two adults if possible. Please refer to our Intimate Care Policy for further guidance.

If adults are required to be in a one to one setting with a child/young person the adult should consider how this can be managed effectively i.e. leaving a door open, using a room that has a window in the door, position yourself within sight of the door and consider if this is really necessary. Consideration may also be given to informing a colleague who may then monitor/join the member of staff.

Staff should not act in a way that is considered as exploiting young people e.g. identify pupils / young people as their "favourite" or act in any way that can be seen as an abuse of trust.

Staff should have professional boundaries if their own children attend the school. They should not be treated differently to other pupils or access areas of school where children would not normally be granted access (e.g. staff areas). Staff should not deal with behavioural/friendship issues for their own child. Staff should be addressed by their professional name by their own children in school time and whilst fulfilling their professional duties.

Staff are provided with, and trained in the effective use of, a range of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

**3. All staff are expected to treat each other with respect.**

Relationships between staff should be characterised by fairness, openness and respect. This means valuing all contributions, acknowledging differences and working together to build an environment where continuous improvement is the foundation.

Politeness and respect towards one another are essential requirements and where differences occur, they should be dealt with fairly, calmly and professionally. Children and/or visitors must not be present whilst differences of opinion are discussed.

Bullying, discrimination or racism from one member of staff to another will not be tolerated. Such incidents will be logged and dealt with immediately.

**4. All staff should treat resources responsibly and exercise due financial care.**

All staff should have a responsibility to look after the resources of the school.

This includes not wasting resources e.g. heat, electricity and school materials. The principles of “reduce, re-use, recycle” should be adopted wherever this is appropriate. Any materials taken home for lesson preparation should be signed for.

All money received in the classroom should be sent to the school office as soon as practicable clearly labelled and the full amount recorded.

Staff who handle money on a frequent or regular basis should familiarise themselves with the Council’s Financial Procedures and follow them at all times. All items purchased for school use should have a receipt which identifies the VAT element or has a separate VAT receipt.

**5. All staff are expected to behave professionally.**

All staff are expected to behave thoughtfully and responsibly. Staff should be punctual at all times and be well prepared to carry out the tasks required of them to the best of their ability. Staff must take breaks at appropriate times and ensure that they are available to supervise pupils in lesson times (including being prompt to meet children after break times).

Staff are expected to dress appropriately for the activities they are involved in. Teachers and teaching assistants should set a good example in what they wear led by the school management team. Clothing should not be overly casual or inappropriately provocative. Excessive jewellery or make up should not be worn. Safety should also be considered so that footwear, jewellery, etc. are appropriate for school and they should never present a risk to the safety of the staff member or other staff or pupils.

We recommend that visitors or staff with any tattoos keep them covered as much as possible whilst fulfilling their professional duties.

Since the onset of COVID a number of school activities have moved 'online' for a period of time. Staff behaviour during online team meetings, Zoom assemblies and lessons, whilst supporting pupils, etc should be of the highest standard. Staff should dress to the same standard as if they were in school, they should be mindful of any family members in the home and that they are dressed/acting appropriately too. Please consider background noise/music/TV and ensure that a professional ambience is set at all times. Staff holding meetings in school should ensure that their background is appropriate and that no data/images are shared that are inappropriate or against data protection regulations. All online meetings with pupils or parents are kept safe and appropriate through the following measures to protect our staff:

- Meetings have a 'waiting room' and are password protected
- The meeting is not created/details shared until shortly before it takes place and parents are reminded that they cannot share this information any wider to protect pupils and staff.
- All 'non hosts' have their microphones muted on entry and video turned on- we use the 'chat' facility for questions from the pupils and parents. This prevents any inappropriate images/language/behaviours being shared with other pupils or families.
- As ever, in-line with UK-GDPR policies our staff should be conscious when using data about pupils or families whilst working remotely. Screens should be locked when not in use and family members or children of staff should not have access to sensitive information.

**6. All absences relating to ill health will be reported to the Headteacher and the relevant absence monitoring procedures will be followed.**

Any concerns relating to absences will be managed in accordance with the BMBC Managing Illness Policy. This policy is shared with all staff and a copy can be found in the staff room. New procedures relating to absence have been adopted during the current COVID pandemic. They will apply until further notice.

Self-isolation should be adhered to immediately following the onset of any of the recognised and published COVID symptoms or after a positive test. The Government's latest guidelines must be followed at all time. Staff should set a good example in their conduct to protect our community from the risk of spreading COVID.

**7. Confidentiality**

Staff are privy to personal information relating to children and young people and their families. This information should be recorded appropriately, kept securely and only shared on a need to know basis. Breaches of confidentiality and/or UK-GDPR will be taken very seriously to protect our community and their privacy. Information might be shared where safeguarding is concerned to protect the wellbeing of our pupils.

**8. Staff should seek to establish a good and open relationship with parents.**

Staff should aim to create a welcoming and open relationship with parents and/or carers/extended family. All concerns raised by parents should be taken seriously and dealt with promptly, with feedback given to the parents. When parents or visitors report any safeguarding or welfare concerns, they must be logged, stored securely and treated with the strictest confidence by all staff. Information needs to be shared by school safeguarding leads from time to time so that staff at classroom level or on the

playground can monitor their wellbeing and happiness. This may be in the form of bulletin meetings or emails or in discreet conversation with safeguarding leads. Staff must make every effort to read and action the safeguarding points raised and they must always treat the information as private and confidential.

Concerns relating to parents' behaviour will be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead/Headteacher for further consideration.

Relationships with parents should remain on a professional basis at all times and should not be the catalyst for 'friendships' outside school to develop.

**9. All staff need to be aware of the school and Local Authority Child Protection Procedures.**

All staff need to take a proactive approach towards the school and Local Authority Child Protection Policies. All staff took further training in September 2021 on these areas, including the Keeping Children Safe in Education update for September 2021.

All staff should, on induction, familiarise themselves with the procedures, attend the required training and additional courses as agreed.

Staff will also need to familiarise themselves with and follow the procedures for reporting and dealing with concerns, including those relating to fellow professionals and/or the Headteacher. (See 10 Section below)

Child Protection, the reporting of concerns etc, is the responsibility of every member of the staff team. All staff need to take a proactive approach towards Safeguarding/Child Protection and Behaviour Policies through the creation of a positive classroom environment where all children are respected and encouraged to respect one another. All concerns need to be shared so that they can be logged in CPOMS and followed up by a Designated Safeguarding Lead.

**10. All staff need to be aware of how to record/report concerns relating to colleagues.**

Where staff have any concerns about a colleague in school or other settings, these should be reported immediately or as soon as is practicable to the Headteacher or Deputy. If the concern relates to the Headteacher the concern should be passed to the Chair of the Governing Body. The procedure for dealing with such concerns is dealt with comprehensively in the school's policy entitled 'Whistleblowing: the investigation of allegations of staff misconduct' or through the Local Authority Designated Officer where the concerns are of a child protection / safeguarding matter.

Now that staff are working in in a new way due to the COVID pandemic with less face-to-face contact with some colleagues and leaders, they should still have the highest standards of reporting concerns about health and safety, safeguarding or staff conduct issues. These can be shared through a telephone call or email at the earliest opportunity if reporting the matter face-to-face is not appropriate.

**11. All staff should take care of their physical and mental well-being.**

All staff are encouraged to look after their own physical and mental well-being. This can be supported by a healthy work/life balance. If a member of staff needs additional support for issues relating to stress / anxiety, support services are available. A staff well-being week will be planned each year.

**12. All staff need to be prudent in the use of the internet, particularly in terms of social networking.**

We understand that many staff will use aspects of internet technology as part of their daily life. Use of the internet in school should be for professional reasons only. Websites and content accessed should be entirely appropriate.

The use of mobile phones for personal reasons (e.g. calls/texts) in schools should not take place in view of children. Staff should not use personal devices to take or store images of children for their own use at any time whilst in the school building. Staff are allowed to use a mobile phone/device to capture appropriate images that are shared directly with parents/carers through the school Twitter feed at sporting events or school visits.

Any use of social networking sites should be with privacy settings in place and staff are encouraged to be selective with who follows their account. If someone only known to you in a professional sense attempts to message/follow/connect to your account then please do not accept it and ask the Headteacher to remind parents of our policy through a newsletter.

Social networking sites should not be used to bring the school, the local community or the Local Authority into disrepute. All staff should also ensure that no activities they are personally involved in, e.g. social situations, can be accessed so that their professional integrity is maintained at all times.

Staff should not engage with (i.e. follow, be followed by, message, etc) any child at the school for any reason. Staff should take significant precaution not to promote inappropriate content, apps or websites. Always ensure that any content (e.g. a YouTube clip) has been checked in full, with the sound on to ensure that it is completely age appropriate.

Online communications have increased considerably during the COVID pandemic. All shared work on the school's website or social media account should come through a parent, not directly from accounts, email addresses or sites set up by children. Where staff contact pupils, it should be through a monitored, parental account.

**13. All staff will carry out their duties relating to safeguarding diligently. All staff will ensure high standards of personal and professional behaviour.**

All staff should be aware of the dangers inherent in:

- working alone with a child
- physical interventions
- dealing with sensitive information
- disclosing personal details inappropriately
- using discriminatory vocabulary
- contacting children through social media, personal communication devices, etc



Please note that all staff will sign annually to accept receipt of this policy AND they will discuss the content of this policy (and any concerns arising against the expectation) during their annual performance review with a senior leader.

### **Conclusion**

The code of conduct is a framework for ensuring that all staff understand the requirements needed to ensure that the school is a safe, secure and stable environment for all pupils and staff. The code should be read in conjunction with other policies and procedures.

All newly appointed staff will read and acknowledge receipt of the Staff Code of Conduct as part of their induction. This policy will be displayed at all times in the staff room. This policy will be reviewed regularly and a new version will be ratified by Governors every three years as a minimum term.