



*Inspire Learning, Ignite Curiosity*

## **Marlow C of E Infant School Code of Professional Conduct for Staff 2023-24**

***Then God said, "Let us make humankind in our image, in our likeness"***

***Genesis 1:26***

### **Rationale**

At Marlow Church of England Infant School our curriculum aim is to inspire learning and ignite curiosity, within a welcoming Christian and spiritual community.

This bible verse above underpins our Christian vision. It tells us that every individual is created in God's image and so this leads us to conclude that everyone is precious and valuable. As a result of this we focus on treating everybody with respect and dignity because we acknowledge their God given value and unique identity.

To help us achieve our vision we concentrate on:

- Embracing the uniqueness of everybody and being inclusive of all
- Empowering all to be enthusiastic learners
- Ensuring that every child feels nurtured, supported and safe
- Enriching learning through progressive teaching methods and technology
- Being responsible to and for society
- Being good citizens of the planet
- Embodying a Christian and spiritual community
- Being guided by our values of respect, kindness, perseverance, forgiveness, thankfulness and service

As a school we support the rights of children and these rights are encompassed in UN Convention of the Rights of the Child. This policy focuses on helping to realise *Article 19: "All children have the right to be protected from being hurt and mistreated, in body or mind"* and *Article 28: All children have the right to a good quality education"*.

At Marlow C of E Infant School, we believe that a policy on child protection is founded on the right of all children to be safe and feel safe, and that it is the fundamental obligation on all schools to robustly secure this right.

### **Policy Aims**

This Code of Conduct is designed to give clear guidance on the standards of behaviour all staff are expected to observe. It is not exhaustive in defining acceptable and unacceptable standards of conduct and in circumstances where guidance does not exist individuals are expected to use their professional judgement and act in the best interests of the school and its pupils. Staff should be aware that a failure to comply with this Code of Conduct could result in disciplinary action including dismissal.

## Scope

All staff of Marlow C of E Infant School are required to develop and maintain the Christian character of the school, undertaking to support the ethos and work to demonstrate the values both in and out of work.

This Code applies to all those working in our school whatever their position, roles or responsibilities and includes:

- all members of staff (teaching and support staff)
- governors
- volunteers
- temporary and supply staff, either from agencies or engaged directly by the school
- students on placement
- those undertaking work experience

References to 'staff' throughout the Code of Conduct refer to all of the above groups.

This Code of Conduct:

- should be read in conjunction with:
  - [Guidance for safer working practice for adults who work with children and young people \(2022\)](#)
  - [Working Together, \(2018\)](#)
  - [Keeping children safe in education \(September 2023\)](#)
  - [Inspecting safeguarding in early years, education and skills. Updated September 2023](#)
- draws together all existing Marlow C of E Infant School policies and procedures
- requires that all employees treat colleagues and those they interact with during the course of their work with dignity and respect.
- is designed to give clear guidance on the standards of behaviour and will assist staff in performing their duties to the best of their ability.
- aims to ensure that no discrimination against any individual occurs on any grounds including grounds of sex, race, trade union activities, disability, age, sexual orientation, trans-gender status, religion, belief or any other personal characteristic or quality.

All staff employed under Teacher's terms & conditions of employment have a statutory obligation to adhere to the 'Teacher's standards 2012' and in relation to this Code of Conduct, Part 2 of the Teacher's Standards – Personal and professional conduct. (Appendix 3)

This Code of Conduct will be updated annually and shared with all staff. It will be reviewed by the Governing Body every year.

## Position of trust

School staff are in a unique position of influence and should model the highest possible standards of behaviour for all pupils within the school in order to encourage pupils to demonstrate the same high standards. (Appendix 4 an aide memoire for staff)

This Code enables all staff to understand what kind of behaviour is and is not acceptable. Adhering to the code should avoid staff putting themselves at risk of allegations of abusive or unprofessional conduct.

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 difference, and working together to build a climate of continuous improvement. Politeness and respect are essential ingredients: where differences occur they should be dealt with calmly and fairly and with the assistance of a line manager or a member of senior staff if required.

A similar approach is expected when dealing with parents, members of the local community or members of the public. Staff should act in accordance with the school's Equality Plan and any other relevant policies.

## **Dealings with Pupils**

Pupils and staff are expected to work together to build a school where relationships are characterised by mutual and appropriate respect. Praise and building on the positive should always come first. If firmness/admonition is called for it should be exercised calmly, and staff should avoid shouting at pupils unless there is a risk to health and safety.

Aim to celebrate children's hard work and effort as well as achievements.

All members of staff are expected to:

- work towards and encourage the highest possible levels of achievement and progress for all pupils understanding that pupils have different needs and that learning should aim to meet those needs
- value and respect all pupils equally, treating them in a polite, positive, responsive and considerate manner
- listen to children and give time for children to listen to each other
- get to know the children as individuals
- apply the School's Behaviour Policy as situations demand in order to encourage and develop appropriate behaviours
- act in accordance with the School's Child Protection Policy
- ensure that professional boundaries are not breached

## **Safeguarding**

All staff have the duty to safeguard and promote the well-being of the children in the school. This includes the need to ensure that all adults who work with or on behalf of children are competent, confident and safe to do so.

All staff have a duty to safeguard pupils from:

- Neglect
- Physical Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Emotional Abuse

The duty to safeguard pupils includes the duty to report concerns about a pupil to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (Mrs Sharon Reynolds, Headteacher) or the additional Designated Safeguarding Leads (Mrs Sarah Downing) who, in turn, has a duty to record such concerns and take any required action.

At Marlow C of E Infant school, safeguarding concerns are reported using the CPOMs system. There are copies of the 'Raising Concerns about a Child' flow chart in the staff room, medical rooms and other key areas of the school. (See Appendix 5)

Staff are provided with personal copies of the Marlow C of E Infant School Child Protection Policy and the Whistleblowing Policy and all staff must be familiar with these documents.

As part of the Induction process, school policies relating to the Safeguarding of pupils are shared with new members of staff. These policies form part of creating a 'Safeguarding Culture' in school and are shown in the diagram in Appendix 6 'School Policies for a Safeguarding Culture'.

## **Working Practices**

An atmosphere of mutual confidence, trust and respect between leaders and staff is essential to achieving the school's aims and targets and providing a high quality of teaching and learning.

All members of staff should:

- Understand that the school Christian vision applies to children and adults alike and aims to create an environment in which we are accepting of each other, valuing our differences and treating each other with dignity and respect.

- recognise that they are part of a team and that everyone should be working together to achieve similar aims for the overall benefit of the pupils, building relationships with each other and pupils which are characterised by mutual and appropriate respect
- Value each other's work
- Show empathy for each other
- Promote the School in a positive manner
- Work reliably and in accordance with the school's policies and practices as well as any other rules and regulations that apply to your work and/or the workplace
- Carry out any reasonable instructions given to them by their line manager or Headteacher
- Recognise that where firmness/admonition is called for this should be exercised calmly, and staff should avoid shouting at pupils unless there is a Health and Safety risk. The school behaviour policy and associated documents establish expectations and approved sanctions. All new staff should be issued with a copy of these policies, and any behaviour concerns should be dealt with in line with them. Where a member of staff is having difficulties managing pupil behaviour, they should discuss this matter with their line manager or the Headteacher at the earliest opportunity.
- Be aware of what physical contact with pupils is appropriate. They:
  - should only exercise physical restraint as a last resort to prevent injury to themselves or others.
  - are allowed to comfort a child who is hurt/distressed in a manner appropriate to the age of the child.
  - should not initiate any physical contact unnecessarily, and there should be clear boundaries:
- Avoid being in a room alone with a child where the door is closed and out of sight of others. If you need to talk to a child, either leave a door open and position yourself within sight of the door, or ask another adult to be present.

School leaders/line managers should, in addition:

- support and assist staff to carry out their work properly
- in dealings with staff, act in accordance with their relevant local and national conditions of employment
- in consultation with staff, set standards of work and objectives, as appropriate to their role
- give feedback and advice on areas for further development to assist staff in meeting objectives
- aim to continually develop staff to meet current and future needs of the school
- ensure compliance with the Working Time Regulations 1998, as amended, recognise the need for staff to pursue interests outside work and, therefore, be able to enjoy a reasonable work/life balance
- consider constructive suggestions for improvements to working practices and standards
- treat all staff fairly, consistently and with dignity
- provide a working environment free from discrimination and harassment
- provide a safe and healthy working environment.

### **Reporting Malpractice and Improper Conduct ('Whistleblowing')**

Most problems and concerns within the workplace can be fairly easily resolved, often informally. Sometimes it is necessary to use a more formal route, such as the school's Grievance Procedure. Very occasionally, however, more serious issues may arise involving, for example, unlawful conduct, financial malpractice, corruption, health and safety issues or other actions, which are not in the best interests of the pupils or the school.

The School Whistleblowing Policy provides guidance on how to raise concerns about malpractice at an early stage, in the right way.

### **Health and Safety**

The Governors aim is to promote good health and ensure safe working practices for staff, pupils, parents, other stakeholders and visitors. Staff of the school also have a legal responsibility to contribute

to a safe working environment. Failure to accept this responsibility may put themselves and/or others at risk. Staff should ensure that they:

- familiarise themselves with the school's Health and Safety Policy
- comply with Health and Safety Regulations and use any safety equipment and protective clothing which is supplied by school.
- comply with any hygiene requirements
- comply with any accident reporting requirements
- never act in a way which might cause risk or damage to any other members of the school community, or visitors.
- Inform their line manager of any paid work you undertake elsewhere. This is to comply with the Working Time Regulations, which are a Health and Safety initiative.
- Any member of staff asked to undertake private tutoring of pupils within the school must first discuss the situation with the Headteacher.

*(See Health & Safety Policy for further details)*

### **Appearance and Dress**

When at work, or representing the school, staff should ensure that their appearance is neat and clean and that they do not dress in a way that may cause embarrassment to pupils, parents, colleagues, other stakeholders of visitors.

It is expected that members of staff should wear clothing which:

- Promotes a positive and professional image
- Is appropriate to their role remembering that they are a role model for pupils and that their appearance and dress should reflect this important and unique position
- Is not likely to be viewed as offensive, revealing, or sexually provocative
- Does not distract, cause embarrassment or give rise to misunderstanding
- Is absent of any political or otherwise contentious slogans
- Is not considered to be discriminatory
- Any tattoos should be covered whilst at work

Ultimately, it will be for the Headteacher to decide whether a member of staff's appearance and/or dress is appropriate or not. The Governors and the Headteacher must ensure that the rights of employees to dress as they please, and in accordance with their principles and beliefs, is balanced with the need for the school to promote a suitable image to its stakeholders.

### **Hours of Work and Attendance**

It is important that all staff are in school at their agreed starting time and do not leave before their agreed finishing time. Bad timekeeping and poor attendance increases costs, causes disruption for others and has an adverse effect on pupils' education.

The Governors recognise that the majority of staff are punctual and do not take time off without good cause or obtaining prior permission.

School expectations are that:

- staff attend work in accordance with their contract of employment and associated terms and conditions in relation to hours, days of work and holidays
- wherever possible, routine medical and dental appointments are made outside of working hours or during holidays. The only exceptions to this requirement will be in the event of an emergency or particular difficulty, in relation to hospital appointments (which are rarely negotiable) or to attend for ante-natal care if a member of staff is pregnant.
- time off should be agreed with the member of staff's line manager at the earliest opportunity to ensure that adequate cover arrangements can be made. An absence form should be completed for the Headteacher to approve the absence.
- prior to making any request, you refer to the School's policy on Staff Absence if you need time off for any reason other than personal illness. Any member of staff taking such leave without permission will be subject to disciplinary action.

*(See Staff Absence Policy for further details)*

## **Sickness Absence**

All staff are expected to follow the School's absence reporting procedure when they are absent from work due to illness or injury. This procedure includes notification as early as possible on the first day of absence, keeping the school informed where absence continues, requirements for the provision of medical certificates and procedures on return to work.

*(See Staff Absence Policy for further details)*

## **Social Networking**

In their own interests, School staff need to be aware of the dangers of putting personal information onto social networking sites, such as addresses, home and mobile phone numbers. This will avoid the potential for pupils or their families or friends having access to staff outside of the school environment. It also reduces the potential for identity theft by third parties.

All staff, particularly those new to working in schools, should review their social networking sites when they join the school to ensure that information available publicly about them is accurate and appropriate. This includes any photographs that may cause embarrassment to themselves and the school if they are published outside of the site. It is advised that all staff regularly review their social networking privacy settings and that they don't assume that once set, they will always remain at that 'level of privacy'.

Staff must be aware of the potential outcomes of their use of social media where parents of pupils in the school may be able to access their 'posts'.

School staff should never make a 'friend' of a pupil at the school where they are working on their social networking page, and should be cautious about becoming 'friends' with ex-students where younger siblings continue to attend the school.

Confidentiality needs to be considered at all times. Social networking sites have the potential to discuss inappropriate information and employees need to ensure that they do not put any confidential information on their site about themselves, their employer, their colleagues, pupils or members of the public.

Employees need to ensure that when they are communicating about others, even outside of work, that they give due regard to the potential for defamation of character. Making allegations on social networking sites (even in their own time and in their own homes) about other employees, pupils or other individuals connected with the school, or another school, could result in formal action being taken against them.

Staff are also reminded that they must comply with the requirements of equalities legislation in their on-line communications.

## **Communication, Computer Usage and the Internet**

Use of the School's equipment and network is provided as part of an individual's work role.

School staff should be familiar with the relevant School policies surrounding computer usage, internet access and information technology (*Acceptable Use and Online Safety policies*)

Misuse of the equipment and network may be grounds for disciplinary action under the School's *Conduct & Discipline Policy & Procedure*, which, if found to constitute serious misconduct, could render an individual liable to dismissal.

Staff must exercise caution when using information technology and be aware of the risks to themselves and others.

Staff must only use their school email account or the school website platform when communicating electronically with parents, pupils and colleagues. When communicating with parents via email, the office email account should be used by teachers and teaching assistants.

Staff must not use their mobile phone as a camera in school.

Any photograph/video must be taken using school equipment. Staff must only save images of pupils, as part of keeping a record of their learning, on school computers.

Staff who are in contact with pupils should not use their mobile phones in school during their contact time with pupils. Mobile phones should only be used in areas of the school where pupils are not present. ie personal mobile phones should not be used in classroom or central areas.

Use of technology to contact students can suggest an informality which is inappropriate. Great care should be exercised over the use of communications technology such as mobile phones, text messaging, emails, digital cameras, videos, web cams, websites and blogs unless contact via these routes is required and for which permission has been given by a senior leader e.g. school trips  
(See the school's *Mobile Technology policy for more details*)

### **Smoking/Vaping**

The whole of the school premises, which includes the grounds, is a non-smoking/vaping area, and smoking or vaping is not permitted.

### **Disclosure of information and Confidentiality**

All School staff are expected to understand and follow the school's confidentiality policy.

Where staff have access to confidential information about pupils or their parents or carers, they must not reveal such information except to those colleagues who have a professional role in relation to the pupil. Some of the information may fall within the scope of the Data Protection Act 1998. The Governing Body requires that the confidentiality of this information be respected.

Staff must not use information obtained in the course of their employment for personal gain or benefit, nor should they pass it on to others who might use it in such a way unless it is necessary and within the law to do so i.e. where a police investigation is necessary.

Information concerning a member of staff's private affairs will not be supplied to any person outside of the School unless the consent of the employee is obtained first. This includes inappropriate use of social networking websites such as Facebook. Staff have, however, an obligation to share with School's Designated Safeguarding Leads any information which gives rise to concern about the safety or welfare of a pupil. Staff must **never** promise a pupil that they will not act on information that they are told by the pupil.

(See *Confidentiality Policy and Child Protection Policy for further details*)

### **Honesty and Integrity**

Staff must maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their work. This includes the handling and claiming of money and the use of school property and facilities.

All staff must comply with the Bribery Act 2010. A person may be guilty of an offence of bribery under this act if they offer, promise or give financial advantage or other advantage to someone; or if they request, agree or accept, or receive a bribe from another person. If a member of staff believes that another member of staff has failed to comply with the Bribery Act then the procedure detailed in the School Whistleblowing policy should be followed.

Gifts from suppliers or associates of the school must be declared to the Headteacher or the Chair of Governors if the Headteacher is the recipient, with the exception of "one off" token gifts from pupils or parents. Personal gifts from individual members of staff to individual pupils are inappropriate and could be misinterpreted.

Staff should never use their position for personal gain and should seek to uphold and enhance the reputation of the School by:

- maintaining a high standard of integrity in all professional relationships;
- fostering the highest possible standards of professional competence amongst those for whom they are responsible;
- complying both with the letter and the spirit of:
  - the law;
  - the Governing Body Standing Orders;
  - any additional guidance supplied by the Governing Body;
  - the Conditions of Service of Employees of the Governing Body.
- rejecting any business practice which might reasonably be deemed improper

### **Conduct outside of work**

Staff must not engage in conduct outside work which could seriously damage the reputation and standing of the school or the employee's own reputation or the reputation of other members of the school community.

In particular, criminal offences that involve violence or possession or use of illegal drugs or sexual misconduct are likely to be regarded as unacceptable.

Staff must exercise caution when using information technology and be aware of the risks to themselves and others.

Staff may undertake work outside school, either paid or voluntary, provided that it does not conflict with the interests of the school nor be to a level which may contravene the working time regulations or affect an individual's work performance.

Updated: September 2023

Reviewed by the Governing Body: October 2023

Next update due: September 2024

Next review by the Governing Body: October 2024



# **Appendix 1**

[Guidance for safer working practice for  
those working with children and young people  
in education settings  
February 2022](#)



## **Appendix 2**

[Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023](#)



## **Appendix 3**

Excerpt from the  
Teachers' Standards  
Effective from 1 September 2012 (DfE) updated 2021

## PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

All adults are 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 and teaching assistants uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, by: treating pupils with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to a teacher's professional position
- having regard for the need to safeguard pupils' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions
- showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others
- not undermining fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
- ensuring that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways which exploit pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law.
- Teachers and teaching assistants must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they teach, and maintain high standards in their own attendance and punctuality.
- Teachers must have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory

## Appendix 4

Marlow CE Infant School  
Code of Professional Conduct for Staff  
Aide memoire for all staff



*Inspire Learning, Ignite Curiosity*

**Marlow C of E Infant School  
Code of Professional Conduct for Staff  
Aide memoire for all staff**

When we speak to others we will:

- use a positive statement rather than a negative one so that children can learn what we expect of them in any situation.
- use a calm tone of voice at all times, to explain something to or instruct the children, so that they can follow our words without feeling threatened or uncomfortable.
- avoid using sarcastic words or phrases as these demean children and prevent them from developing high self-esteem.
- speak respectfully to other adults at all times, even if we disagree with them.

As professionals we will:

- avoid workplace gossip and negativity as it breeds resentment and becomes a roadblock to effective communication and collaboration.
- We all have a duty to take active steps to divert conversations away from this if we come across it.
- maintain confidentiality about anything that we see or hear in the school, so that parents and children can trust us, and as a way of showing respect to our fellow professionals.
- work as part of a team, contributing as well as learning from others and helping to build up a strong workforce so that we can provide the best possible learning opportunities for the children.
- work within the school's policies and practices, so that what we do is consistent with what has been agreed between all members of the staff and the governors.
- treat everyone with respect.
- dress appropriately, so that we set a good example for the children and to show that we are here to work.
- behave in a positive way despite any personal problems that we may have, especially in front of the children.
- Look after each other



## **Appendix 5**

**'Raising safeguarding concerns about a Child'  
Flow Chart**



Marlow C of E Infant School

Raising Safeguarding Concerns about a Child



Designated Safeguarding Lead:  
**Sharon Reynolds**

Additional Designated Safeguarding Lead:  
**Sarah Downing**

Designated Governor:  
**Jackie Cousins**

Concern logged using CPOMS  
*(Consider level of urgency, give verbal, follow up and log later)*

Concern will automatically be sent to DSL and additional DSL if you select them at the appropriate point in the CPOMS form

DSL reviews concern and makes a decision about next steps

Decision made to monitor the concern.

Decision made to discuss the concern informally with the parents/carers.

Decision made to refer the concern to social care.

Class teacher asked to monitor child and feedback to the DSL within an agreed timescale.

Once discussed with parents DSL decides to discuss with parents, monitor or refer to Early Help/Social Care.

DSL discusses decision with ESAS, First Response and the Head and agreement is made to refer to Social Care.

Discuss

Discuss

Refer

Record of concern and any follow up action will be maintained on CPOMS

*If you believe a child has suffered or is at imminent risk of harm make an immediate referral to children's social care*

*Take advice whether parents should be informed.*

The Local Authority Designated Officers (LADO) for concerns about an adult in a position of trust is:

**Jonathan Kempster:** 01296 383703  
**Main LADO No:** 01296 382070  
**Email:** Secure:  
LADO@buckscc.gcsx.gov.uk

Contact Details

**First Response:**  
0845 4600001  
or  
01296 383962  
**Out of Hours  
Emergency Duty  
Team** 0800 9997677

**ESAS (Education  
Safeguarding  
Advisory Service):**  
01296 382912

## **Appendix 6**

School Policies for  
a Safeguarding Culture



*Inspire Learning, Ignite Curiosity*

**Marlow C of E Infant School  
School Policies for a Safeguarding Culture**

