

# STAFF HANDBOOK

## APPROVAL & ADOPTION

This policy was formally agreed and adopted by the Governing Body on:

\_\_\_\_\_2 October 2017\_\_\_\_\_

**Chair of Governors**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'N. J. ...', written over a horizontal line.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

This handbook is intended to be a helpful tool for all staff to ensure the smooth and safe running of Preston and Wingham Primary Schools for all concerned. Although you may have worked at one of the schools for a while, please take the time to read through the handbook to ensure you are familiar with all it contains. All adults who work with our children have a crucial role to play in shaping their lives. They have a unique opportunity to interact with children in ways that are both affirming and inspiring. This handbook has been produced to help adults working within the federation to establish safe and responsive environments which safeguard young people and reduce the risk of adults being unjustly accused of improper or unprofessional conduct. The document identifies the behaviours that the Governing Body expect of all adults who work with our children. All staff are also expected to work in line with all school/federation policies copies of which are available on the schools' websites. Adults whose practice deviates from this expectation and/or their professional or employment-related code of conduct may bring into question their suitability to work with children and young people and may result in formal proceedings.

### **Confidentiality**

Adults may have access to confidential information about children in order to undertake their responsibilities. In some circumstances they may have access to or be given highly sensitive or private information. These details must be kept confidential at all times and only shared when it is in interests of the child to do so. Such information must not be used to intimidate, humiliate, or embarrass the child concerned. If you are in any doubt about whether to share information or keep it confidential you should seek guidance from a senior member of staff or nominated child protection person. It is understood that many staff live in the neighbourhood in which they work and consequently have social contact with pupils' families outside of school. Staff will not discuss individual children or school business in these situations. Support staff should direct all parents raising queries to the class teacher.

### **Security**

All staff must login to the electronic entry system whenever they enter either school and logout when they leave. Should an emergency occur, we will then know who is in school and where they are. Visitors will be given a badge to wear whilst they are on the premises. If any unknown people are walking around school at any time during the day without a Visitor's Badge, Staff should politely approach them and ask them to obtain one from the school office. If any adults appear to be very close to the perimeter of the school for an unnecessary or unexplained length of time, please continue to monitor their presence and alert a senior member of staff.

### **Dress and Appearance**

A person's dress and appearance are matters of personal choice and self-expression. However, adults should dress in ways which are appropriate to their role and this may need to be different to how they dress when not at work. Adults who work with children

should ensure they take care to ensure they are dressed appropriately for the tasks and the work they undertake. Those who dress in a manner which could be considered as inappropriate could render themselves vulnerable to criticism or allegations. The federation expects children to wear the appropriate school uniform as this is part of the school's *system* to develop good behaviours for learning and a pride in attending their school. It is therefore essential that staff demonstrate their professionalism through the ways they dress for work. This means that adults should wear clothing which:

- is appropriate to their role
- 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 and is culturally sensitive
- denim is not to be worn (except for days when children are not required to wear uniform)
- trainers should not be worn (unless for physical education lessons)
- staff undertaking physical activities/lessons should wear appropriate clothing

### **Staff Absence**

Please would all teachers, teaching assistants, office staff, breakfast club staff and the site manager inform the appropriate head of school by phone if possible or otherwise by text before 7.30am if they are unable to attend work. Would all other staff please telephone the school office as soon as possible if they are unable to attend work. It is also helpful if teachers/teaching assistants could let their working partner know of their absence as soon as possible. It would be most helpful if teachers could email their plans for the day to the appropriate head of school **and** office email address. If at the end of the day you feel that you are likely to be absent from work the following day it is helpful to let the school office know by 3.30 pm so that contingency plans can be made. Upon your return to work you must report to Mrs Brazier (Wingham staff) / Mrs Taylor (Preston staff) to complete the necessary absence paperwork.

The Governing Body understand that although staff who work in school benefit from 13 weeks holiday per year they accept that the negative side of this is that the timing of the holidays is imposed upon staff and so occasionally can have a negative impact on the quality of family life. In order to try and alleviate this difficulty staff may make a written request to the Executive Headteacher for time off that is unpaid when the reason for the time off is out of their control or is a one off. Any staff absence impacts upon the education of the children and it is expected that class teachers will not ordinarily consider requesting additional leave. Staff must be aware that all parents have been told that we will not authorise time off for children during May and so staff will not be given time off in May unless the circumstances are exceptional. Consideration will be given to each appropriate request and, providing that suitable cover can be arranged to avoid or minimise the impact on the children, it will be authorised. Any planned absence must not have a negative impact on other staff entitlement e.g. PPA time. Staff who work extra hours will be paid for them.

The Governing Body appreciate the hard work and professionalism demonstrated by all members of staff and are sure that no advantage will be taken of this arrangement.

However, if frequent and/or inappropriate requests are made by any member of staff then the Governing Body will take appropriate action. This arrangement will be reviewed annually. As part of this review, the Governing Body will evaluate the impact of the arrangement on children's learning. In order to enable them to do this the Executive Headteacher will keep a record of all authorised absences.

The Governing Body also understand that at times it may be necessary for staff to care for immediate family members (spouse, child parent) who are unwell. The Governing Body are sure that staff will keep such absence to a minimum and the Local Authority policy relating to compassionate leave will be adhered to. In order for the school to support such compassionate leave it is essential that the employee discusses the situation with the Head of School/Executive Headteacher.

## **11. Communication with Children *(including the Use of Technology)***

Communication between children and adults, by whatever method, should take place within clear and explicit professional boundaries. This includes the wider use of technology such as mobile phones, text messaging, e-mails, digital cameras, videos, web-cams, websites and blogs. Adults should not share any personal information with a child. They should not request, or respond to, any personal information from the child, other than that which might be appropriate as part of their professional role. Adults should ensure that all communications are transparent and open to scrutiny.

Adults should also be circumspect in their communications with children so as to avoid any possible misinterpretation of their motives or any behaviour which could be construed as grooming. They should not give their personal contact details to children including e-mail, home or mobile telephone numbers, unless the need to do so is agreed with senior management and parents/carers. This also includes communications through internet-based web sites. If staff use social networking sites they should not communicate with pupils. Staff must not discuss individual children or school issues on social networking sites. Any action outside agreed protocols may lead to disciplinary and/or criminal investigations.

### **Photography and Videos**

Staff often take photographs/videos of pupils for use as evidence of learning or for school display/website purposes. It is not appropriate for adults to take photographs of children for their personal use. Such images must be taken with equipment provided or authorised by the federation. Staff must always ensure the school has parental permission to take and/or display photographs.

### **Supervision**

Pupils not attending breakfast provision / travelling on the school bus are admitted to the school premises at 8.40 (Preston) and 8.45 (Wingham). The designated member of staff (usually the Head of School) will be on duty from this time. Once children are permitted to enter the school building teachers are expected to ensure there is suitable adult

supervision in place at all times.

The Heads of School will draw up a rota for break time supervision. This will be displayed in the staff room. When staff know they will be unable to undertake their duty they must organise a 'swap' with another member of staff. Duty staff must regularly check the school building to ensure that all children are appropriately supervised. Where a teacher arranges for children to stay inside at break times the teacher must ensure the children are appropriately supervised. Duty staff must ensure that they adequately supervise all play areas available to children.

At lunchtime, Midday Supervisors (MDS) are responsible for supervising and attending to children. The team of MDS must ensure that they organise themselves effectively to ensure that all children (inside and outside the school building) are appropriately supervised. This will necessitate each MDS working in identified areas at specified times and continuously circulating.

At the end of the school day, the member of staff unlocking the gate must stay at the gate until the designated member of staff is in attendance. Close supervision must be maintained by EYFS / KS1 staff to ensure all children are collected by the appropriate person. It is expected that all teachers will accompany their classes to the cloakroom and gate at the end of the day.

## **Accidents**

If a child is injured the adult supervising the child must ensure that treatment is provided by a Designated First Aider. They should ensure that an accident form is completed, if appropriate, and passed to the School Secretary. This is essential if the child has sustained a head or face injury or received a wasp or bee sting. The Class Teacher should also be made aware of the injury as this may affect the child during the rest of the day and with a head injury, even if seemingly minor, the child should be monitored carefully.

## **Medication**

No member of staff should administer medicine to a child unless a 'medication permission' form has been completed by the child's parent or carer. The medicine must be checked carefully to ensure that it has the correct child's name on it. When the medicine has been administered, the time should be entered into the school medical record book. A child should not be given Calpol without checking first that a general permission slip has been completed by the child's parent or carer. The child's parent/carer must be informed that Calpol has been administered and at what time.

## **Physical Contact**

There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate for staff to have some physical

contact with children with whom they are working. However, it is crucial that in all circumstances, staff should only touch children in ways which are appropriate to their professional or agreed role and responsibilities.

Not all children feel comfortable about physical contact, and staff should not make the assumption that it is acceptable practice to use touch as a means of communication. Permission should be sought from a child before physical contact is made. When physical contact is made with a child this should be in response to their needs at the time, of limited duration and appropriate to their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background. 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, nevertheless, should use their professional judgement at all times, observe and take note of the child's reaction or feelings and – so far as is possible - use a level of contact and/or form of communication which is acceptable to the child for the minimum time necessary.

Physical contact which occurs regularly with an individual child or young person is likely to raise questions unless there is explicit agreement on the need for, and nature of, that contact. This would then be part of a formally agreed plan or within the parameters of established, agreed and legal professional protocols on physical contact e.g. sport activities or medical procedures. Any such arrangements should be understood and agreed by all concerned, justified in terms of the child's needs, consistently applied and open to scrutiny.

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 should be reported to the senior manager outlined in the procedures for handling allegations and an appropriate record made.

## **12. Transporting Children**

There will be occasions when staff are asked to transport children as part of their duties. There is no expectation that staff will agree to such requests. Staff who do agree to use their own vehicles for transporting children should complete a 'Transporting Children' form available from the school office before they undertake their first journey. Staff must ensure that the vehicle is roadworthy, appropriately insured and that the maximum capacity is not exceeded.

It is a legal requirement that all passengers should wear seat belts and it is the responsibility of the staff member to ensure that this requirement is met. Adults should also be aware of current legislation and adhere to the use of car seats for younger children.

It is inappropriate for staff to transport children without parental consent.

There may be occasions where the child or young person requires transport in an

emergency situation or where not to give a lift may place a child at risk. Such circumstances must always be recorded and reported to a senior manager and parents/carers.

## **Discipline and Behaviour**

Each school has a detailed behaviour policy. All staff are collectively responsible for ensuring that *all* pupils learn to be considerate to others and behave appropriately at all times. **All** staff should have the highest expectations of behaviour and endeavour to remark on good behaviour and manners, and to commend children for their positive actions. If pupils do have to be reprimanded regarding inappropriate or anti-social behaviour, this should be done in a constructive manner; condemning the *behaviour* without humiliating or "putting down" the *child*.

## **Child Protection**

Concerns for a child or young person may come to the attention of staff in a variety of ways for example through observation of behaviour or injuries or disclosure. Any member of staff who has a concern for a child or young person however insignificant this might appear to be should discuss this with the DCPC (the Executive Headteacher, Head of School or Inclusion Leader) as soon as is practically possible. More serious concerns must be reported immediately to ensure that any intervention necessary to protect the child is accessed as early as possible. All staff will receive training every three years.

If a child makes a disclosure of abuse to a member of staff, they should:

- Allow the child or young person to make the disclosure at their own pace and in their own way
- Avoid interrupting except to clarify what the child is saying (attentive listening/reflective feedback)
- Not ask leading questions or probe for information that the child or young person does not volunteer
- Reassure the child or young person that they have been heard and explain what you will do next and to whom you will talk
- Record the conversation as soon as possible
- Inform the DCPC

Any concerns that involve allegations against a member of staff should be referred immediately to the Executive Headteacher. If there is a concern regarding the Headteacher this should be reported to the the Chair of Governors. See our policy document for a full account of procedures.

Staff should be aware of the federation's Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy, Kent's

Positive Handling Policy and the school's own Behaviour Management Policy.

### **Educational Visits**

The federation advocates children learning through direct experience and educational visits / enrichment activities are encouraged. Before planning, any such activities that take children off the school site a discussion must be held with the Head of School (who is also the Educational Visit Co-Ordinator) and an Educational Visit form completed by the organising teacher. Please note that for any visits involving adventurous activities the EVC has to submit an application to the LA at least 6 weeks before the visit.

The visit should be well planned with clear learning objectives. Wherever possible the teacher leading the visit should have made a preparatory visit. The necessary Risk Assessment Forms must be completed prior to any trip/visit.

### **Parental/Voluntary Assistance in School**

Parents'/Voluteer help in school is most valuable. Class teachers are responsible for organising such help but potential 'helpers' must be discussed with the Head of School and the relevant DBS check undertaken before commencing help.

### **Resources**

All requests for resources must be made to the Head of School or Executive Headteacher. Wherever possible, resources should be purchased by the school and not personally by individual staff members.

Resources are a valuable commodity and it is the responsibility of all staff to ensure they are utilised effectively and well cared for. No member of staff should dispose of resources (unless they are broken beyond repair) or lend them to colleagues in other schools without checking first with a member of the SLT.

)