



Preston & Wingham Primary Schools Federation



Learning together, we grow kind hearts
and healthy minds.

STAFF HANDBOOK

APPROVAL & ADOPTION

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

30th September 2024

Chair of Governors:

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 designated safeguarding lead. It is understood that many staff live in the neighbourhood and/or have children in the school 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 will 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. 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 way 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)
- staff undertaking physical activities/lessons should wear appropriate clothing

Staff Absence

All teachers, teaching assistants, office staff and breakfast club staff must inform the appropriate Head of School by telephone before 7.30am if they are unable to attend work. All other staff must 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. All planning must be saved on the Teacher Share Drive so this can be accessed in your absence. If you are absent you must let the school office know by 2.30pm if you will be fit for work the following day. 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. 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.

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. 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. Staff will usually be paid for the first day of any such absence to allow time for alternative arrangements to be made. If staff need to take further time off this will generally be authorised but will not be paid. If these absences become regular (over a number of weeks) paid days may not automatically be given. This would also result in a meeting with the Executive Headteacher.

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, social media 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.

Staff must read and familiarize themselves with the federation online safety, acceptable use and image use policies. Any action outside agreed protocols may lead to disciplinary and/or criminal investigations.

Supervision

Pupils not attending breakfast provision / travelling on the school bus are admitted to the school premises at 8.35am (Preston) and 8.40am (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. During inclement weather, the duty staff must ensure all areas of the building are adequately supervised.

At lunchtime, supervisors must ensure that they organise themselves effectively to ensure that all children (inside and outside the school building) are appropriately supervised. This will necessitate staff 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 playground 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 class teacher. If the injury is more serious and/or may warrant the child being sent home, a senior member of staff must be informed immediately. If a child sustains a head injury, a senior/designated member of staff must be informed and the parents must be informed immediately. If the child remains in school, the class teacher must be informed in order that the child can be monitored carefully.

Medication

Medicine must be administered in line with the 'Medical Needs' Policy. Medication must not be administered 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 medication form must be completed. A child must not be given Calpol without checking first that a general permission slip has been completed by the child's parent or carer and the time of any previous dose ascertained. The child's parent/carer must be informed that Calpol has been administered and at what time.

If a child is unwell and a member of staff feels they may need to go home, a senior member of staff must be consulted to make this decision.

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. 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.

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

Our federation values underpin all we do in school. We expect all members of the school community (pupils, staff and parents) to demonstrate these values. This creates a strong culture of trust.

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*. Due regard must be given the physical restraint aspect of the behaviour policy.

Child Protection

All staff will receive safeguarding training as part of their induction and at least annually thereafter. Staff must be familiar with the federation's Safeguarding Policy. All staff must read the updated version of Keeping Children Safe In Education (annually). All staff have a responsibility to safeguard children and must inform the DSL of any concerns they may have immediately using the procedures in place.

Educational Visits

The federation advocates children learning through direct experience. 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).

The visit should be well planned with clear learning objectives. Wherever possible the teacher leading the visit should undertake a preparatory visit. **The necessary Risk Assessment Forms must be completed prior to any visit and a copy given to the Head of School.**

Parental/Voluntary Assistance

Parent/Volunteer help in school or with educational visits can be 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. A requisition form should be completed first for approval of the Head of School or Executive Headteacher. Resources should be purchased by the school only. Any resources purchased by staff using their own money will not be able to be claimed.

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.

Fire Alarm Procedure

Upon hearing the alarm children and staff exit through fire doors and assemble on the playground. Designated members of staff check the school for pupils. Class teachers complete a register. Head of School communicates with staff and pupils next steps.

Lockdown Procedure

Upon hearing the signal to place the school in lockdown staff to follow the procedures in place- see lockdown poster in class.

Health and Safety

It is the responsibility of all staff, governors and visitors/volunteers to the school to take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and others to assist in the creation of a safe work environment.

Staff, governors and visitors/volunteers have a responsibility to inform the Executive Headteacher/Head of School of any medical condition/illness they have which may impact on their fitness to undertake their duties or on the health and safety of themselves, pupils, other staff and governors of the school.

Equality

Building on the Equality Act 2010, Preston and Wingham Primary Schools Federation community strive to eliminate unlawful discrimination, victimisation and harassment, and foster positive relations between people with a consistent approach to 'protected characteristics' including; age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation.

The Preston and Wingham Primary Schools Federation ensures that equality is embedded in all aspects of school life. Throughout our federation community we emphasise the importance of preparing pupils for life in modern Britain and develop an understanding of what is right and what is wrong, and a respect for the laws of the land.

Furthermore, our federation policies, including our Single Equality Scheme, Behaviour and Anti-bullying policy demonstrates that we both prevent and tackle discriminatory and derogatory language.

Data Protection

Preston and Wingham Primary Schools are data controllers for the purposes of the Data Protection Act. We collect personal information on pupils, staff and parents. We hold this personal data to support teaching and learning. Whilst the majority of information provided to us is mandatory, some of it is provided on a voluntary basis. We also share personal information which we inform about through our data protection notices. Under data protection legislation, staff, parents and pupils have the right to request access to the information about them we hold.

Staff must refer to GDPR policy to ensure all data held on the children is secure. Any data breaches must be reported to the Executive Headteacher and Head of School.