



STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY

In this policy the following members of staff are referred to:

TITLE	NAME OF STAFF MEMBER
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Claire Murdoch
Board Level Lead (BLL)	Deborah Livsey
Head Teacher	Claire Murdoch
CEO	Deborah Livsey

This Code of Conduct provides clear guidance on the behaviour and actions required of staff so as not either to place pupils at risk of harm, or to place staff at risk of allegations of harm to a pupil.

It also sets out the School's and NMS's expectations for all staff working as professionals in the school and their interactions with each other.

In general, pupils are encouraged to discuss with their parents or guardians any issues that are troubling them. Pupils are also made aware of "ChildLine", the counselling service available to children and young people in the UK which is provided by the charity NSPCC.

From September 2023, The Schools Counselling Partnership will work with the Head, staff and families to support children in school.

GENERAL BEHAVIOUR - Staff

Staff are required to ensure that their behaviour does not inadvertently lay them open to allegations of abuse. They need to treat all pupils equally with respect and try, as far as possible, not to be alone with a child or young person. Where this is not possible, for example, in an instrumental music lesson or sports coaching lesson, it is good practice to ensure that others are within earshot. Where possible, a physical gap or barrier should be maintained between

teacher and child at all times and any physical contact should be the minimum required for care, instruction or restraint.

Staff should not meet any pupils outside of school, including in their homes (unless agreed as part of a separate working arrangement, as approved by the Head).

Communication with Pupils including the use of social media and use of IT

Staff should not give their personal mobile phone numbers or email addresses to pupils, nor should they communicate with them by text message or personal email. If they need to speak to a pupil by telephone, they should use one of the School's telephones and email or video call using the School system.

The Teacher in Charge on all trips and visits involving an overnight stay should take a school mobile phone with them for communication with parents.

Staff are informed that their role comes with particular responsibilities of care and propriety regarding use of social media which are set out in The New Model School Company (NMS) Staff Handbook.

Staff should be aware that it is not appropriate to use social media to communicate with pupils. Staff are reminded that it is a criminal offence for a person aged 18 or over to have a sexual relationship with a child under 18 where that person is in a position of trust in respect of that child, even if the relationship is consensual.

Staff should ensure that all personal profiles on social media are private and the content is suitable for someone who works in a school environment where the content can easily be traced by others who may have the capability to do so. Bringing the organisation into disrepute is gross misconduct and may lead to dismissal.

The deletion of web browsing history which was carried out using the School's internet access and your school device is forbidden and would be considered a disciplinary matter. Any such deletion would in itself be cause for suspicion that the access and device had been used for non-school related business – See **Acceptable Use of I.T policy** for further details.

Further details on the use of electronic media can be found the School's **e-Safety Policy** which staff are required to familiarise themselves with.

Staff should take particular care in overseeing pupil's use of IT and understand their obligations for ensuring that monitoring and filtering remains in place and any concerns are reported to the e-safety coordinator /or the DSL. Failure to take responsibility in this area is regarded as misconduct.

In relation to electronic communication with pupils, staff undertake regular training on the internet and safety online.

Physical contact with pupils

There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate and proper for staff to have physical contact with pupils, but it is crucial that they only do so in ways appropriate to their professional role. Staff should, therefore, use their professional judgement at all times. Staff should not have unnecessary physical contact with pupils and should be alert to the fact that minor forms of friendly physical contact can be misconstrued by pupils or onlookers.

A member of staff can never take the place of a parent in providing physical comfort and should be cautious of any demonstration of affection.

Physical contact should never be secretive, or for the gratification of the adult, or represent a misuse of authority. If a member of staff believes that an action could be misinterpreted, the incident and circumstances should be recorded as soon as possible, the DSL informed who will then in turn decide on the best course of action, and, if appropriate, a copy will then be placed on the pupil's and staff member's file.

If such concerns apply to the DSL, the member of staff should inform the NMS Board Level Lead (BLL) who will make the necessary arrangements, if appropriate, a copy of the allegation and outcome will be placed on the staff member's file.

If, at any point, there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a child a referral should be made to children's social care immediately. Any member of staff, parent, director, advisor or member of the public can make a referral, please refer to the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Physical Restraint

Any physical restraint is only permissible when a child is in imminent danger of inflicting an injury on themselves or on another, and then only as a last resort when all efforts to diffuse the situation have failed. Another member of staff should, if possible, be present to act as a witness. All incidents of the use of physical restraint should be recorded in writing and reported immediately to the DSL/Head Teacher who will decide what to do next. Where this relates to the School's EYFS setting, parents will be informed of any physical restraint used on their child the same day or as soon as reasonably practicable.

Physical education and other activities requiring physical contact

Where exercises or procedures need to be demonstrated, extreme caution should be used if the demonstration involves contact with pupils and, wherever possible, contact should be avoided. It is acknowledged that some staff, for

example, those who teach PE and games, or who offer music tuition, will, on occasions, have to initiate physical contact with pupils in order to support a pupil so they can perform a task safely, to demonstrate the use of a particular piece of equipment/instrument or assist them with an exercise. This should be done with the pupil's agreement.

Contact under these circumstances should be for the minimum time necessary to complete the activity and take place in an open environment. Staff should remain sensitive to any discomfort expressed verbally or non-verbally by the child.

Managing Behaviour of children

Staff should not use any form of degrading or humiliating treatment to punish a child. The use of sarcasm, demeaning or insensitive comments towards children is completely unacceptable.

Where children display difficult or challenging behaviour, staff should follow the school's Behaviour Policy, using strategies appropriate to the circumstance and situation, and with careful use of language.

Children changing for PE

Staff should be aware that there is a fine line between supervising the children and helping them if they need it when they are changing, and also giving them privacy.

Younger children, for example EYFS, may need assistance in changing, and staff should be mindful of intimate care procedures (see below).

For older children, for example in the upper years, it may be more appropriate for staff to be within ear shot in case they need to step into a situation, and keep an eye on behaviour, but not in the classroom whilst children are changing.

Intimate care for EYFS

Intimate care includes the following:

- Body bathing other than to the arms and face, and to the legs below the knee
- Application of medical treatment other than to the arms and face, and to the legs above the knee
- Toileting, wiping and care in the genital and anal areas
- Dressing and undressing

Specific arrangements are in place for this within EYFS and must only be carried out by trained staff. Please refer to Appendix 2 below.

Transporting pupils

It is inadvisable for a teacher to give a lift in a car to a pupil alone. It is only permitted in an emergency and all other possible options have been exhausted.

Wherever possible and practicable it is advisable that transport is undertaken other than in private vehicles, with at least one adult additional to the driver acting as an escort. If it is an emergency situation which makes unaccompanied transportation of pupils unavoidable, the journey should be made known to the Head Teacher or a senior member of staff and preferably with the consent of the child's parent/carer. In the case of the Head Teacher driving in such circumstances, they should inform a member of the School's Senior Management Team.

Confidentiality

Staff members should never give unconditional guarantees of confidentiality to pupils or adults wishing to tell them about something serious. They should guarantee only that they will pass on information to the minimum number of people who must be told in order to ensure that the proper action is taken to sort out the problem and that they will not tell anyone who does not have a clear need to know. They will also take whatever steps they can to reassure the pupil and make sure they feel supported and protect the informing pupil or adult from any retaliation or unnecessary stress that might be feared after a disclosure has been made.

Staff should not share any confidential information, either about pupils or their families, that they know of because of their school role, with others, both within or outside of school, for example with other parents etc.

Action if a pupil is missing

N.B. Please refer also to the School's **Missing Child Policy and Procedures when a Child is not Collected on Time** which also includes the requirements of EYFS children in its content.

If a child attends school at the start of the day but subsequently goes missing and is not found within 45 minutes, the Head Teacher (or other staff member if so directed by the Head Teacher) will inform the police and, as appropriate, the social services and the NMS CEO of the child's disappearance. Thereafter, the Head Teacher will follow the instructions of the police regarding the continuation of the search for the child.

A record is kept by the School of any instances in which a pupil is missing from school without satisfactory permission and documentation, including the action taken and the parents'/carers' explanation. The School will report to the Local Authority a pupil who fails to attend school regularly or has been absent from school without the School's permission for a continuous period of 10 school days or more.

As part of the programme to ensure no Child is Missing From Education (often referred to as a CME) occurs, the School is also required to notify the Local

Authority within five days of every non-standard joiner and leaver (i.e. of who joins at any time other than standard transitions).

Equal treatment

We are committed to equal treatment for all pupils regardless of all characteristics, as defined by the Equality Act 2010. We keep a record of discriminatory incidents in the Engage Log Book.

We aim to create a friendly, caring and perceptive environment in which every individual is valued. We endeavour to contribute positively towards the growing autonomy, self-esteem and safety of each pupil. Our staff undertake regular consultation activities with our pupils e.g. through participation in the School's anti-bullying week and speaking to children about their experiences at lunchtime and play-times.

Staff are trained on Equality and Diversity and are expected to treat others with mutual respect but also be prepared to challenge others if required, for example if a staff member expresses opinions that go against fundamental British values or other inappropriate behaviour.

Bullying

Bullying, harassment, victimisation and discrimination will not be tolerated. We treat all our pupils, staff, and their parents fairly and with consideration and we expect them to reciprocate towards each other, the staff and the School. Any kind of bullying including cyber bullying or child on child bullying is unacceptable, and the School keeps a written record of any incidents that may occur. Please see our **Anti-Bullying Policy** which sets out further details.

Complaints

Copies of the School's **Complaints Policy** is available on the School's website and can also be sent to any parent on request. Any complaint arising from the implementation of this policy will be considered under this **Complaints policy**.

Whistleblowing

The School wishes to foster a culture of openness and safety and the School's Whistleblowing Procedure within the NMS Staff Handbook, given to every staff member, reflects this. Should any staff member have any concerns about the behaviour of another staff member towards a pupil, they should report it at once to the Head Teacher (or to the NMS CEO where the concern relates to the Head Teacher or a Director or Advisor) and any concern will be thoroughly investigated in accordance with the School's Whistleblowing Procedure. Such reporting will be without prejudice to the member of staff's position in the school. Where there are allegations of criminal activity, the statutory authorities will always be informed, and advice taken, before the School undertakes any investigation of its own. Wherever possible, and subject to the rights of the pupil, the member of

staff will be informed of the outcome of the investigation. No one who reports a genuine concern in good faith needs to fear retribution. Under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 the member of staff may be entitled to raise a concern directly with an external body where the circumstances justify it.

Low level safeguarding concerns and reporting

A low-level concern is any concern that an adult working in or on behalf of the school may have acted in a way that:

- is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work; and
- does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

A 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant. A concern may be a low-level concern, no matter how small, even if it does no more than give a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt'. Such behaviour can exist on a wide spectrum, from the inadvertent or thoughtless, or behaviour that may look to be inappropriate, but might not be in specific circumstances, through to that which is ultimately intended to enable abuse (for example, grooming-type behaviours).

The School takes all concerns about safeguarding seriously and recognises that addressing even low-level concerns is important to create and embed a culture of openness, trust and transparency in which the School's values and expected behaviour of its staff are constantly lived, monitored and reinforced by all staff.

The aim of the Staff Code of Conduct is to provide clear guidance about the standards of appropriate behaviour and actions of its staff so as to not place pupils or staff at risk of harm or of allegation of harm to a pupil. All staff are expected to comply with the standards contained within this code of conduct at all times.

Staff must share all concerns with the Head (or Deputy Head in their absence) without delay so that it can be recorded, (using the Low Level Concern form) and dealt with appropriately, sensitively, and proportionately and in a timely manner. The Head is the ultimate decision maker in respect of all low level concerns.

Where a low-level concern is raised about the Head, it should be shared with the Board Level Lead, (BLL) who is also the CEO .

Staff are also encouraged to self-refer in the event that they have found themselves in a situation which may be misinterpreted, might appear compromising to others, and/or on reflection they believe they have behaved in

a way that may be considered to fall below the expected professional standard. All concerns will be handled sensitively and will be dealt with appropriately and proportionately.

If a concern is raised by a third party, the Head will collect as much evidence as possible by speaking to the person who has raised the concern (if known), to the individual involved and any witnesses. The concern will be recorded in accordance with this policy, in the usual way.

The School will address unprofessional behaviour at an early stage and will support the individual to correct it.

All low-level concerns will be recorded in writing by the Head. The record will include details of the concern, the context within which the concern arose, and details of the action taken. The name of the reporting individual should also be included, unless they have asked to remain anonymous, which will be respected as far as reasonably possible. The records will be kept confidential, will be held securely and in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK GDPR at all times. The information will be retained for seven years after the individual has left our employment.

Low-level concerns will not be included in references unless they relate to issues which would normally be disclosed, for example, misconduct or poor performance.

The School will also reflect on reported concerns in order to identify any patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour which may indicate an unacceptable culture, or any weaknesses in the School's safeguarding system which may require additional training or modified policies. Where a pattern is identified, the School will decide on a course of action, either through its disciplinary procedures, or, where the pattern moved from a concern to meeting the harms threshold, it will follow the above procedure and refer the matter to the LADO..

Where a low-level concern relates to a person employed by a supply agency or a contractor, staff should share that concern with the Head. The concern will be recorded in accordance with the low-level concern recording process, and the individual's employer will be notified about the concern, so that any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

If the school is in any doubt as to whether a low-level concern in fact meets the harm threshold, the Head will consult with the LADO and take a more collaborative decision-making approach.

DAILY CONDUCT REQUIREMENTS FOR STAFF

Politeness

It is expected that all members of the school community will greet one another politely. It is important to model the behaviour and language that we as adults expect.

Attendance and Timekeeping

In accordance with the NMS Staff Handbook, should a staff member expect to be absent or late for any reason, they should ask or tell the Head Teacher in advance when possible. Calls can be made to the School Office and emails should be sent to the Head, and the Head of HR. If this is not possible, say if the staff member is sick, or in an emergency, they are asked to contact the School, Head or Head of at the earliest opportunity via a phone call or email. Please refer to the NMS Staff Handbook for further details regarding sickness or other absence.

Eating and Drinking

In accordance with school policy, no nuts should be consumed on the premises and staff should not walk around with hot drinks unless in non-spill leak proof cups. Smoking is also strictly prohibited; smoking breaks can only be had during a break or at the end of the School day after all the children have all left and smoking can only take place away from the school site where staff cannot be seen by pupils.

To promote a healthy and pleasant working environment and because of the fire risk, smoking (in any form, including the use of e-cigarettes) is not allowed anywhere on site.

Alcohol and Illegal Drugs and carrying of medicines

Consumption of alcohol or illegal drugs is not permitted on site unless, in the case of alcohol, it occurs at a school function or as otherwise agreed, when modest amounts of alcohol may be consumed. Employees' conduct and performance must not be adversely impacted by alcohol or drugs when undertaking their duties; this is a disciplinary offence.

Staff carrying non-prescribed or prescribed medicines must keep them in staff-only areas (i.e. not in the classroom)

Security

Staff must not remove any school documents from the site nor take any photographs without due permission. The School reserves the right to search the outer clothing, bags, lockers and vehicles etc. of staff members whilst on site. The staff member may have a colleague in attendance on any such (rare) occasions.

Personal Appearance

The School regularly receives visits from parents, potential parents and others, and naturally wishes to convey an impression of efficiency and organisation. Therefore, whilst the School does not wish to impose unreasonable obligations on staff, they are, nonetheless, required to look smart in appearance and adhere to the Dress Code, full details of which are to be found in the NMS Staff Handbook.

Mobility and Flexibility

Due to the demands and nature of the School, staff should be prepared to transfer upon request within Year groups, Key stage or departments where relevant, either temporarily or permanently, to undertake work of a different nature, providing it is reasonable and safe to do so and the staff member is adequately trained.

Use of Mobile Phones and Cameras

The School's policy on the use of mobile phones and cameras is set out in detail in the School's **E-Safety Policy, Taking, Storing and Using Images of Children Policy, Bring Your Own Device Policy** and **Acceptable Use of IT and Remote Working policy**. Staff are only permitted to use their personal mobile devices or cameras on a restricted basis:

- Staff must have their personal devices switched to silent during the working day.
- They may only use such devices during break-times and lunchtimes either in the School staffroom or in their classroom only when no children are present.
- Staff who wish to take photographs or video of pupils must always use a school device. Staff must never use their personal mobile device for filming/taking photos of children.
- Staff who act in breach of this policy may be subject to disciplinary action.
- Personal telephone numbers, email addresses, social media or other messaging systems may not be shared with pupils or parents / carers under any circumstance.
- Parents are not permitted to use their mobile phones or camera in or around the EYFS setting.
- Neither staff nor children may use their own mobile phones to take photographs within our EYFS setting of Reception year.

Where photographs or video footage are taken by staff to give evidence of children's progress, these can only be taken on school cameras/school mobile phones. Photographs and videos will only be taken by a designated staff member/s or contracted designated person on school equipment. They must then be downloaded onto school computers, where they will be monitored. With

this exception, photographs taken of individual children will only be taken and displayed with their parents' permission (provided in writing in advance via consent form).

Working for parents of current pupils

If a current member of staff wishes to work for existing parents, there must be clear boundaries between the roles and staff must also pay heed to their contractual duty of confidentiality regarding school matters. Because of this, staff should not work for any parents without the written permission of the Head, and this will need to be countersigned by NMS. Staff should also declare any pre-existing arrangements when they join the school.

Giving and receiving gifts

From time to time parents or pupils may offer gifts on an individual basis as a demonstration of their gratitude, and this is perfectly legitimate. However, in some contexts such gifts could be construed as an improper inducement to, for instance, accord preferential treatment in the future. Consequently, it is necessary for NMS to have rules applying to such gifts. We have placed a £50 limit for the monetary value of gifts.

The above list is not an exhaustive one, please refer to the Staff Handbook for further details on expected behaviours at work.

Claire Murdoch
Head Teacher
October 2023

Review approved by Deborah Livsey CEO
The New Model School Company Limited
October 2023

Next review date: August 2024

APPENDIX 1

RELATED SAFEGUARDING POLICIES

Please refer to the following policies, all available at our website, which relate to Safeguarding matters and which should be read in conjunction with each other:

- **Anti-Bullying Policy**
- **Behaviour Policy**
- **Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy**
- **Educational Visits - EYFS Policy**
- **Educational Visits Policy**
- **Health and Safety Policy**
- **Induction of New Staff, Board Members and Volunteers in Safeguarding Policy**
- **Missing Child Policy and Procedures when a Child is not Collected on Time**
- **e- Safety Policy**
- **Policy for Pupils on Confidentiality**
- **Recruitment, Selection and Disclosures Policy**
- **Staff Code of Conduct Policy**
- **Taking, Storing and Using Images of Children Policy**

APPENDIX 2

INTIMATE CARE CODE OF CONDUCT for EYFS STAFF

- Staff will always be respectful of the children's safety, dignity and privacy at all times.
- Staff have all had up to date Safeguarding training and will refer to the school's safeguarding policy.
- No child with a medical condition will be discriminated against.
- If a child has a care plan then the named member of staff will attend to the child's needs.
- A child will only ever be cleaned or changed by an employed member of staff.
- Careful consideration will be given to where the child should be changed.
- Staff should ask for another member of staff to be present and be in sight.
- Parents will always be informed if a child has needed to be changed.