

Code of Conduct



Agree Date	Review Date	Person Responsible
September 2025	September 2027	Mr Smith

All actions concerning children must uphold the best interests of the child as a primary consideration. Staff must always be mindful of the fact that they hold a position of trust, and that their behaviour towards the children in their charge must be above reproach. This Code of Conduct is not intended to detract from the enriching experiences children gain from positive interaction with staff within the education sector. It is intended to assist staff in respect of the complex issue of child abuse, by drawing attention to the areas of risk for staff and by offering guidance on prudent conduct.

There are two parts to this policy:

Part 1: Staff and Volunteer Code of Conduct

Part 2: Code of Conduct for Parents, Carers, Visitors

Part 1: Staff and Volunteer Code of Conduct

Objective, Scope and Principles

This Code of Conduct, which applies to all staff and volunteers, is designed to give guidance on the standards of behaviour which should be observed. School staff and volunteers are role models, in a unique position of influence and trust and their behaviour should set a good example to all the pupils within the school.

It does not form part of any employee's contract of employment. It is merely for guidance and specific breaches of the Code may not be viewed as a disciplinary offence.

The Code includes sections on:

- Setting an Example
- Relationships and Attitudes
- Private Meetings with Pupils
- Physical Contact with Pupils
- Honesty and Integrity
- Conduct Outside of Work
- E-Safety and Internet Use
- Confidentiality

1. Setting an Example

- 1.1 All staff and volunteers in schools set examples of behaviour and conduct which can be copied by pupils. Staff and volunteers should therefore, for example, avoid using inappropriate or offensive language at all times, and demonstrate high standards of conduct in order to encourage our pupils to do the same. All staff and volunteers should be familiar with all school policies and procedures and to comply with these so as to set a good example to pupils.
- 1.2 Staff and volunteers must always comply with statutory requirements in relation to such issues as discrimination, health and safety and data protection.

2. Relationships and Attitudes

- 2.1 All staff and volunteers should treat pupils with respect and dignity and not in a manner which demeans or undermines them, their parents or carers, or colleagues. Staff and volunteers should ensure that their relationships with pupils are appropriate to the age and maturity of their pupils. They should not demonstrate behaviours that may be perceived as sarcasm, making jokes at the expense of pupils, embarrassing or humiliating pupils, discriminating against or favouring pupils. Attitudes, demeanour and language all require thought to ensure that conduct does not give rise to comment or speculation. Relationships with pupils must be professional at all times and sexual relationships with current pupils are not permitted and may lead to criminal conviction.
- 2.2 Staff and volunteers may have less formal contact with pupils outside of school; perhaps through mutual membership of social groups, sporting organisations, or family connections. Staff and volunteers should not assume that the school would be aware of any such relationship and should therefore consider whether the school should be made aware of the connection.
- 2.3 Staff and volunteers should always behave in a professional manner, which within the context of this Code of Conduct includes such aspects as:
- acting in a fair, courteous and mature manner to pupils, colleagues and other stakeholders;
 - co-operating and liaising with colleagues, as appropriate, to ensure pupils receive a coherent and comprehensive educational service;
 - respect for school property;
 - taking responsibility for the behaviour and conduct of pupils in the classroom and sharing such responsibility elsewhere on the premises;
 - being familiar with communication channels and school procedures applicable to both pupils and staff and volunteers;
 - respect for the rights and opinions of others;

- Dress in a professional manner appropriate for the activity.
- All staff members will assist to maintain a professional learning environment.
- Staff and volunteers must not consume alcohol or use substances during working hours or at school events unless pre-approved by the Principal. Being under the influence of alcohol or drugs while on duty is strictly prohibited and may result in disciplinary action.
- Staff and volunteers should not use personal mobile phones or devices during lessons or when supervising pupils, unless explicitly authorised. Personal devices must not be used to take photographs or videos of pupils. All digital interactions with pupils must be conducted using school-approved platforms.

3. Private Meetings with Pupils

3.1 It is recognised that there will be occasions when confidential interviews with individual pupils must take place. As far as possible, staff and volunteers should conduct interviews in a room with visual access or with an open door and ensure that another adult knows that the interview is taking place. Where possible, another pupil or (preferably) another adult should be present or nearby during the interview.

4. Physical Contact with Pupils

4.1 To avoid misinterpretations, and so far as is practicable, staff and volunteers are advised not to make unnecessary physical contact with a pupil.

4.2 Staff and volunteers should therefore be cognisant of the guidance issued by the Department on the use of reasonable force (Circular 1999/09 and guidance document 'Towards a Model Policy in Schools on Use of Reasonable Force').

5. Physical Contact Between Staff

5.1 To minimise the risk of misunderstandings, staff and volunteers should avoid physical contact with one another unless it is necessary and appropriate in the context of their role. Wherever possible, interactions should be conducted in a way that maintains personal boundaries and professional standards.

6. Honesty and Integrity

6.1 All staff and volunteers are expected to maintain the highest standards of honesty and integrity in their work. This includes the handling and claiming of money and the use of school property and facilities.

6.2 Gifts from suppliers or associates of the school (eg a supplier of materials) must be declared to the Principal. A record should be kept of all such gifts received. This requirement does not apply to "one off" token gifts from pupils or parents eg at Christmas or the end of the school year. Staff and volunteers should be mindful that gifts to individual pupils may be considered inappropriate and could be misinterpreted.

7. Conduct outside of Work

7.1 Staff and volunteers should not engage in conduct outside work which could damage the reputation and standing of the school or the staff/ volunteer's own reputation or the reputation of other members of the school community.

7.2 Staff and volunteers may undertake work outside school, either paid or voluntary and should ensure it does not affect their work performance in the school.

Advice should be sought from the Principal when considering work outside the school.

7.3 Staff and volunteers are reminded that their online behaviour, including activity on social media, can have a significant impact on the reputation of the school. Posting negative or inappropriate comments about the school, its staff, students, or wider community is unacceptable and may be treated as a disciplinary matter. Online actions are public and lasting, and all staff are expected to uphold the same professional standards online as they do in person.

8. E-Safety and Internet Use

8.1 A staff member or volunteer's off duty hours are their personal concern but all staff and volunteers should exercise caution when using information technology and be fully aware of the risks to themselves and others. For school-based activities, advice is contained in the school's Online Safety Policy.

8.2 Staff and volunteers should exercise particular caution in relation to making online associations/friendships with current pupils via social media. Staff and volunteers must maintain professional boundaries when communicating with pupils online. Messaging apps, social media, and personal email accounts must not be used for communication with pupils. All digital contact should be through school-approved channels. It is preferable that any contact with pupils is made via the use of school email accounts or telephone equipment when necessary.

In particular School staff should not participate in parental WhatsApp groups or similar informal messaging platforms. These groups are not official channels for school communication and may lead to misunderstandings, breaches of privacy, or the perception of favouritism.

8.3 Teaching staff are required to check their emails daily (when working). Non-Teaching are required to check at least every other day when working.

8.4 Staff members are not to delete school documents from the staff or shared server without permission from the Principal or Vice Principal.

8.5 Staff members are not to delete events from the school's electronic calendar without either the permission from the person who create the event or the Principal / Vice Principal.

9. Confidentiality

9.1 Staff and volunteers may have access to confidential information about pupils including highly sensitive or private information. It should not be shared with any person other than on a need to know basis. In circumstances where the pupil's identity does not need to be disclosed the information should be used anonymously.

9.2 There are some circumstances in which a member of staff or volunteer may be expected to share information about a pupil, for example when abuse is alleged or suspected. In such cases, individuals should pass information on without delay, but only to those with designated child protection responsibilities.

9.3 If a member of staff or volunteer is in any doubt about whether to share information or keep it confidential he or she should seek guidance from a senior member of staff. Any media or legal enquiries should be passed to Mr. Smith or whoever is acting in his capacity.

9.4 Staff and volunteers need to be aware that although it is important to listen to and support pupils, they must not promise confidentiality or request pupils to do the same under any circumstances. Additionally, concerns and allegations about adults should be treated as confidential and passed to the Principal or a member of the safeguarding team without delay.

9.5 The school's child protection arrangements should include any external candidates studying or sitting examinations in the school.

9.6 Data Protection and GDPR

Staff and volunteers must comply with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the school's Data Protection Policy. Personal data must be handled securely and only shared on a need-to-know basis. Breaches of data protection may result in disciplinary action. See our policies on the school website for further details.

10 Conflict of Interest

Staff and volunteers must declare any personal or financial interests that could conflict with their role in the school. This includes relationships with suppliers, external employment, or family members working at the school. Any potential conflicts should be disclosed to the Principal. This needs to be declared annually Appendix 1.

11 Annual Declaration

All staff and volunteers are required to read and acknowledge the Code of Conduct annually. This ensures continued understanding and compliance with the standards expected by the school. Staff should sign this acknowledgement on the conflict of interest from Appendix 1.

12 Mental Health and Wellbeing

The school is committed to promoting the mental health and wellbeing of both staff and pupils. We encourage all staff to seek support when needed and to contribute to a positive, supportive working environment. A range of wellbeing resources and support services are available to staff. Mr. Smith and Mrs. Dennison are approachable and available to discuss any concerns or support needs in confidence. Additionally, staff can access confidential, 24/7 support through Inspire Workplace Solutions by calling 0808 800 0002.

13 Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion

The school is committed to creating an inclusive environment where everyone is treated with respect and dignity. Staff and volunteers must actively promote equality and avoid any form of discrimination based on race, gender, disability, religion, sexual orientation, or other protected characteristics.

14 Whistleblowing

Staff and volunteers are encouraged to report any concerns about misconduct, malpractice, or breaches of policy within the school. The school's Whistleblowing Policy outlines the procedures for reporting concerns confidentially and without fear of reprisal. All staff should be familiar with this policy and know how to access it. See our policies on the school website for further details.

15 Safeguarding Responsibilities

All staff and volunteers have a duty to safeguard pupils and promote their welfare. This includes attending regular safeguarding training, understanding the signs of abuse or neglect, and reporting concerns immediately to the Safeguarding Team. Staff must follow the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy at all times. See our policies on the school website for further details.

16. CONCLUSION

It would be impossible and inappropriate to lay down hard and fast rules to cover all the circumstances in which staff interrelate with children and young people, or where opportunities for their conduct to be misconstrued might occur.

In all circumstances, employees' professional judgement will be exercised and for the vast majority of employees this Code of Conduct will serve only to confirm what has always been their practice. If employees have any doubts about points in this document, or how they should act in particular circumstances, they should consult the Principal or a representative of their professional association.

From time to time, however, it is prudent for all staff to reappraise their teaching styles, relationships with children/young people and their manner and approach to individual children/young people, to ensure that they give no grounds for doubt about their intentions, in the minds of colleagues, of children/young people or of their parents/guardians.

Part 2: Code of Conduct for Parents, Carers, Visitors

At our school – we want to build good relationships within the whole of our school community – that includes parents, staff and pupils. The key to a happy school is one where everyone feels respected and valued. To this end we have an agreed Code of Conduct for parents, carers and visitors.

- Follow the school's signing in and out procedures for visitors
- Respect school staff and support them in the things they do to help children learn
- Set a good example by behaving appropriately and not using inappropriate language
- Ask the school about their view on incidents so that you can determine if it is the same as your child's view before taking things further
- Ensure that your child knows how to behave in school and towards others
- Ask the school for help if you need more information about something or do not understand something the school is doing

In order to have a peaceful and happy school environment – parents, carers and visitors must not:

- Disrupt classes or any area of the school
- Question decisions made by the school in front of the children
- Use loud or rude language; swear or show temper
- Threaten to hit/push staff, other parents or carers
- Deliberately damage or destroy school property
- Criticise school staff, pupil or other parents and carers – on school premises or on social media sites
- Send abusive or threatening emails or make abusive or threatening phone calls to the school
- Physically punish your child on school premises
- Go up to another child and ask them or tell them off for something that has happened to your child
- Smoke or consume alcohol at school events (other than as pre-agreed) or on school premises
- Spit on school premises or discard chewing gum on school premises

Appendix 1

Earlview Primary School and Nursery

Annual Declaration of Interests and Relationships

1. Background and Purpose

The Register of Interests records any financial or personal interests that could be perceived as influencing a governor or staff member's independent judgment. This includes interests held directly or through a partner, spouse, or close relative (e.g. parents, children, siblings, or their partners).

The purpose of this register is to promote transparency and accountability in school decision-making and to identify any potential conflicts of interest. Only the existence and nature of the interest need to be disclosed—no financial values are required.

Completed registers must be available upon request to the Principal, governors, staff, parents, and relevant authorities (e.g. Education Authority, Northern Ireland Audit Office, Department of Education). They may also be subject to Freedom of Information requests.

You must sign sections 3 and four if you do not complete any other section of this paperwork.

2. Declaration of Relationships with Pupils/Students Outside of Work

Section a: Employee Details

- Full Name: _____
- Job Title: _____
- Classroom / Department: _____
- Date of Declaration: ____ / ____ / ____

Section b: Pupil/Student Details

- Full Name of Pupil/Student: _____
- Date of Birth: ____ / ____ / ____
- Year Group/Class: _____
- Nature of Relationship: _____

Section c: Contact Outside of Work

Please describe the nature, frequency, and context of any contact with the pupil/student outside your professional role:

Section d: Declaration

I confirm that the information provided is accurate and complete. I understand this declaration supports safeguarding and professional standards.

Signature: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / ____

School Register of Business

Individuals should include interests of both themselves or through a partner, spouse or close relative (eg personal partner, parents, children, brothers, sisters and the personal partners of any of these). Completion of this register does not remove the legal duty upon governors and members of staff with financial responsibility to declare personal interest in any item of business at a meeting and for the person concerned to withdraw whilst the matter is considered.

Relevant interests in this context are as follows: -

- Directorships/Partnerships, including non-executive directorships of public or private companies likely or possibly seeking to do business with the school or with any of its associated or related operations.
- Employment by public or private companies likely or possibly seeking to do business with the school or with any of its associated or related operations.
- Significant shareholdings in public or private companies or ownership or part-ownership of or employment by businesses or consultancies likely or possibly seeking to do business with the school or with any of its associated or related operations

(Note: Significant shareholdings may be considered to be 5% or more of the issued capital).

- Remunerated or honorary positions and other connections with other schools or educational institutions (including universities, schools and/or institutions of further and higher education) which may give rise to a conflict of interest.
- Public appointments (paid or unpaid) or election to office which may give rise to a conflict of interest.
- Membership of clubs or other organisations which may give rise to pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests.

Name of Individual

Person/Relationship (self/partner)	Name of Business	Nature of Business	Nature of Interest	Date of Appointment or Acquisition	Date of Cessation of Interest	Date of Entry

If you have no such interests please write "NIL" in the table above.

I certify that I have declared all beneficial interest which I or any person connected with me have with businesses or other organisations which may have dealings with the school. I also undertake to inform the school of any change in these business interests.

Signed: (governor/staff member*)

Date:

I have noted the interests declared above:

Signed: (chair of governors/principal*) Date:

* delete as appropriate

3. Conflict of Interest Declaration

I declare that I have no personal (other than relationships stated above) or financial interests that could conflict with my role at Earlview Primary School and Nursery, including relationships with suppliers, external employment, or family members working at the school.

I understand that I must disclose any future conflicts to the Principal and that this declaration must be reviewed annually.

Signature: _____

Name (Print): _____

Date: ____ / ____ / ____

4. Annual Code of Conduct Declaration

I confirm that I have read and understood the Earlview Primary School and Nursery Code of Conduct. I accept my responsibility to uphold the standards and expectations outlined in the Code.

I understand that this declaration is required annually and that failure to comply may result in disciplinary action.

Signature: _____

Name (Print): _____

Date: ____ / ____ / ____