



# Steam Mills Primary School

**Policy and Procedure: Safer Working Statement**

## Contents

1. [Suitability of employees](#)
2. [Duty of care](#)
3. [Confidentiality and personal information](#)
4. [Making a professional judgement](#)
5. [Abuse of position](#)
6. [Behaviour and personal life](#)
7. [Dress and appearance](#)
8. [Using personal living space for professional reasons](#)
9. [Favouritism and the giving and receiving of gifts](#)
10. [Infatuated children](#)
11. [Communicating with pupils](#)
12. [Social contact with pupils](#)
13. [Sexual contact with pupils](#)
14. [Physical contact with pupils](#)
15. [Behaviour management](#)
16. [Physical intervention](#)
17. [Distressed pupils](#)
18. [Intimate and personal care](#)
19. [First aid and supporting pupils with medical conditions](#)
20. [Working in one-to-one situations](#)
21. [Making home visits](#)
22. [Transporting pupils](#)
23. [Educational visits](#)
24. [Taking and storing photographs](#)
25. [Indecent images](#)
26. [Examinations and overnight supervision](#)
27. [Sex and relationships in the curriculum](#)
28. [Whistleblowing](#)
29. [Sharing your concerns](#)
30. [Declaration](#)

## **1. Suitability of employees**

If your practice deviates from the policy and procedures contained in this document and/or the school's code of conduct, it may bring into doubt your suitability to work with children.

You must:

- Read this document thoroughly and have a full understanding of the school's expectations, and the type of behaviour that may call your suitability into question.
- Discuss uncertainties with the Head Teacher.

## **2. Duty of care**

You have a duty to keep children safe and protect them from sexual, physical and emotional harm. You are expected to take reasonable steps to ensure the safety and wellbeing of pupils. Failure to do so may be regarded as professional neglect. Staff members who are subject to an allegation will be supported, and the principles of natural justice will be applied.

You must:

- Act in the best interests of the child.
- Avoid any conduct that could lead to someone questioning your intentions.
- Take responsibility for your actions.
- Be aware that sanctions will be applied if rules are breached.

To support you, the leadership team will:

- Provide a culture of openness and support.
- Put systems in place for concerns to be raised and recorded effectively.
- Not place staff in situations which render them particularly vulnerable.
- Ensure that all staff members are aware of expectations, policies and procedures.

To support you, the governing body will:

- Adopt appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies, and ensure they are properly implemented and monitored.
- Ensure that any third parties employed have appropriate safeguarding procedures in place.

## **3. Confidentiality and personal information**

You must never use confidential or personal information about a pupil or their family for your own or others' advantage. Information must never be used to intimidate, humiliate or embarrass a pupil. You must never share confidential information in

conversation, other than on a need-to-know basis. If the child's identity does not need to be disclosed, the information should be used anonymously.

You must:

- Treat information you receive in a discreet and confidential manner.
- Report all concerns to the Head Teacher

Pass all media or legal enquiries to the Head Teacher.

If you are in any doubt as to the whether to share information, seek guidance from the head Teacher.

### **Making a professional judgement**

You are expected to make behavioural judgements in order to secure the best interests and welfare of children. Always consider whether your actions are warranted, proportionate, safe, and applied equitably.

If no specific guidance is provided for a situation you encounter, you must:

- Discuss the circumstances that informed your action with the Head Teacher.
- Report any actions which could be misinterpreted, accidents or threats to the Head Teacher.
- Record any areas of disagreement about a course of action taken, and report them to the Head Teacher. where necessary.
- Record discussions leading to decisions and the reasons for actions taken.

## **4. Abuse of position**

You have a responsibility to ensure that an unequal balance of power is not used for personal advantage or gratification. You should always maintain appropriate professional boundaries and avoid any behaviour which might be misinterpreted by others.

You must:

- Record and report any incident with the potential to be misinterpreted to the Head Teacher.

You must not:

- Use your position to gain access to information to your advantage.
- Use your position to intimidate, bully, humiliate, threaten, coerce or undermine pupils.
- Use your status to form or promote sexual relationships.

## **5. Behaviour and personal life**

You must adopt high standards of personal conduct in order to maintain the confidence and respect of your colleagues, pupils and the general public. Safe practice involves using your judgement in places other than the work setting.

The behaviour of your partner or other family members may raise similar concerns and could raise questions as to whether there may be a potential risk to children.

The disqualification by association requirements will be adhered to by the school.

You must:

- Be aware that your behaviour in your personal life may impact on your work.
- Follow any codes of conduct deemed appropriate by the school.
- Understand that the behaviour of your partner or family may call into question your own suitability.

You must not:

- Behave in a manner which may lead a reasonable person to question your suitability to work with children.
- Make, or encourage others to make, unprofessional personal comments.

## **6. Dress and appearance**

Dress in ways which are appropriate to your role. This may be different to how you dress when not in work. Those who dress in a manner which could be considered inappropriate may leave themselves vulnerable to criticism or allegations.

You must wear clothing that:

- Is not provocative.
- Is appropriate to your role.
- Does not distract, cause embarrassment or potentially lead to misunderstandings.
- Does not display political slogans.
- Could not reasonably be considered to be discriminatory.

## **7. Using personal living space for professional reasons**

Do not invite pupils into your home. It is not appropriate for personal living space to be used for work with pupils. The school will not expect or request that you use personal living space for such purposes.

If you require space for activities, the school will ensure that an appropriate space is provided within school grounds.

You must:

- Be vigilant in maintaining privacy, and mindful of the need to avoid placing yourself in vulnerable situations.
- Challenge any request for accommodation to be used by the school as an additional resource.
- Maintain professional boundaries.

You must not:

- Ask pupils to undertake personal jobs or errands.

## **8. Favouritism and the giving and receiving of gifts**

The giving and receiving of gifts must be carried out in line with the school's policies and procedures. The giving of gifts as a reward is not prohibited, but the reasons must be clear, the gift suitable, and the plan agreed, recorded and discussed with the Head Teacher and the parent/carer of the child. The giving of gifts could be misconstrued as a bribe or attempt to 'groom'.

You must take care when accepting a gift that it is not construed as a bribe. There may be occasions when pupils wish to pass small tokens of appreciation to you – this is acceptable. It is unacceptable to receive gifts on a regular basis or of any significant value.

Methods of selecting and including pupils in activities must be transparent so as to avoid any misinterpretation.

You must:

- Be aware of the school's policy on the giving and receiving of gifts.
- Ensure that gifts which may be misconstrued are declared.
- In general, only give gifts as part of a reward system.
- Ensure that gifts are of insignificant value.
- Ensure that selection practices are fair.

## **9. Infatuated children**

If you become aware that a child is developing an infatuation with you or another member of staff, discuss it with the Head Teacher at the earliest opportunity.

You must:

- Report and record any incidents that suggest a child may have developed an infatuation with you.
- Always acknowledge and maintain professional boundaries.

## **10. Communicating with pupils**

It is your duty to behave responsibly online. Communication between pupils and adults should take place within clear and explicit boundaries. All communication should be transparent and open to scrutiny. Do not give your personal details to pupils unless there is a clear reason to do so and it has been agreed with the Head Teacher.

Communication outside of the agreed protocols may lead to disciplinary and/or criminal investigations.

You must:

- Adhere to the school's established policy and procedures regarding social media use.
- Ensure that personal social media accounts are set to private.
- Never accept pupils as contacts.
- Never give out your personal details.
- Only use school technology for its intended purpose.
- Only contact children for professional reasons.

To support you, the leadership team will:

- Have in place a policy concerning acceptable use.
- Monitor and review e-safety procedures in light of new and emerging technologies.
- Have in place a policy concerning communication.

## **11. Social contact with pupils**

You should not establish or seek to establish social contact with pupils for the purpose of securing a friendship or to pursue a relationship. Teachers and the parents of pupils may sometimes be part of the same social circle. These contacts should be openly acknowledged.

You must:

- Have no secret social contact with pupils or their parents.
- Consider the appropriateness of any social contact.
- Always obtain the approval of the Head Teacher prior to any planned social contact with children or parents.
- Report any social contact which may give rise to concern.
- Record any situation which may place a child at risk or compromise your professional standing.
- Be aware that sending personal communications, such as birthday cards, should be discussed with your Head Teacher.
- Be prepared to justify your contact with pupils and parents.

## **12. Sexual contact with pupils**

You must maintain appropriate boundaries. It is a criminal offence to engage in sexual activity, including non-contact activities, for example, causing children to watch pornographic material, with a child or young person (even when above the legal age of consent) with whom you work. Consistently conferring special attention to a pupil may be misconstrued as grooming.

You must:

- Ensure that all relationships with pupils take place within the boundaries of a respectful professional relationship.
- Take care to ensure that your language may not give rise to comment or speculation.

You must not:

- Have sexual relationships with pupils.
- Communicate with pupils in any way that could be interpreted as sexually suggestive or provocative.
- Make sexual remarks to, or about, a child.
- Discuss your sexual relationships with, or in front of, children.

## **13. Physical contact with pupils**

You must only make physical contact in a way that is appropriate to your professional role. It is not possible to establish the appropriateness of all instances; therefore, you should use your professional judgement to determine whether contact is appropriate. Contact should never be secretive, for your gratification or represent a misuse of authority. If you think an action may be misinterpreted, report it as soon as possible in the school's incident book.

Staff should seek permission prior to initiating contact and all contact should be for the minimum amount of time necessary. A culture of 'limited touch' is adopted by the school.

Some children may require a higher frequency of physical contact to assist with their learning. The arrangements for these children should be understood and agreed by all. Where a child makes contact, it is your responsibility to sensitively deter the child and reiterate the importance of personal boundaries.

If you work in a subject involving physical contact, such as PE or drama, and are required to engage in contact to demonstrate technique, you must ensure that the contact is necessary, in an open environment, observed by others and lasts for the minimum amount of time necessary.



You must:

- Be aware that all physical contact may be misconstrued.
- Never touch a child in a way that could be considered indecent.
- Always be prepared to explain your actions.
- Not indulge in 'horseplay'.
- Encourage children to undertake self-care tasks independently.
- Be aware of cultural and religious views regarding contact.

To support you, the leadership team will:

- Ensure there is a system in place for recording incidents.
- Provide copies of relevant professional guidance to staff.
- Establish explicit guidance regarding what contact is appropriate in schools.
- Make staff aware of the most recent DfE guidance regarding physical contact in schools.

## **14. Behaviour management**

You must not use any form of degrading treatment to punish a child. Sarcasm, demeaning or insensitive comments are unacceptable. In addition, corporal punishment is unacceptable and unlawful. You must follow the school's Behaviour Policy and only use physical intervention when necessary, and in line with DfE guidance.

You must:

- Not use force as a form of punishment.
- Try to defuse situations early.
- Inform parents of any behaviour management techniques used.
- Adhere to the school's Behaviour Policy.
- Be mindful of factors which may impact upon a child's behaviour.

To support you, the senior leadership team will:

- Have in place appropriate behaviour management policies.
- Develop positive handling plans where appropriate.

## **15. Physical intervention**

The use of physical intervention should be avoided. Where it is deemed necessary, it must be carried out in a way that maintains the safety and dignity of all concerned, be proportionate, and never as a form of punishment. The use of unwarranted physical contact is likely to constitute a criminal offence.

You must:

- Adhere to the school's policies and procedures regarding physical intervention.
- Seek to defuse situations.

- Use the minimum amount of force necessary for the shortest time period necessary.
- Record and report incidents where physical intervention has been used.

To support you, the senior leadership team will:

- Have in place appropriate physical intervention policies compliant with DfE guidance and legislation.
- Ensure that an effective reporting and recording system is in place.
- Ensure that staff members are trained appropriately.

## **16. Distressed pupils**

Use your professional judgement when comforting or reassuring a child to ensure that your actions are age-appropriate and maintain clear professional boundaries.

You must:

- Consider the way in which you offer comfort.
- Record any instances of comfort giving in one-to-one situations.
- Follow the school's code of practice.
- Never touch a child in a way which could be considered indecent.
- Record and report situations which may give rise to concerns.

## **17. Intimate and personal care**

All children have a right to safety, privacy and dignity when contact of a physical or intimate nature is required. They are also entitled to respect and privacy when in a state of undress, changing clothes, bathing or undertaking any form of personal care.

You must:

- Adhere to the school's policy and procedures regarding intimate care.
- Make other staff aware of the task being undertaken.
- Explain to the child what is happening.
- Consult with senior managers when any variation from agreed procedures is necessary.
- Record the justification for any deviation from normal procedures.
- Ensure that any changes to agreed care plans are agreed and recorded.
- Avoid any physical contact when children are in a state of undress.
- Avoid any visually intrusive behaviour.
- Announce your intention to enter any occupied changing room and wait for a response.

## **18. First aid and supporting pupils with medical conditions**

You are not required to undertake any first aid task, and appropriate training will be provided before you administer first-aid or medication. With the permission of parents, children should be encouraged to self-administer medication or treatments such as ointment, sun cream and inhalers.

You must:

- Adhere to the school's policies and procedures for administering medication.
- Comply with reporting requirements.
- Explain to the child what is happening.
- Act in the best interests of the child.

To support you, the leadership team will:

- Provide appropriate training.
- Ensure policies are in place.
- Ensure arrangements are in place to obtain parental consent.

## **19. Working in one-to-one situations**

One-to-one situations leave children more vulnerable to harm and adults more vulnerable to allegations. Sensible precautions should be taken to avoid both of these possibilities. Risk assessments may be required for one-to-one work; taking into account the needs of the child and yourself. You are not permitted to attend pre-arranged meetings with pupils away from the school unless approved by the Head Teacher.

You must:

- Ensure that you adhere to the school's established policy and procedures regarding lone working.
- Avoid meeting children in remote or secluded areas.
- Inform colleagues beforehand.
- Avoid the use of 'engaged' signs or equivalents.
- Report any situation where a child becomes distressed or angry.

## **20. Making home visits**

All work with children should, wherever possible, be undertaken in the school or other recognised workplace. Where necessary, home visits may be made but all appropriate policies and procedures must be adhered to.

You must establish a clear workspace and agree the work with the pupil and parents. You should establish the objectives, content, timing and duration of sessions, and set ground rules.

You must:

- Agree the purpose of any home visit with the Head Teacher.
- Adhere to risk management strategies.
- Ensure detailed records are kept.
- Discuss any situation which may give rise to concern to the Head Teacher.
- Never make a home visit outside of agreed working arrangements.
- Report all emergency situations to the police or social care, and to the Head Teacher, as appropriate.

To support you, the leadership team will:

- Ensure that suitable policies are in place.
- Ensure that all visits are justified.
- Ensure that you are not exposed to unacceptable risk.
- Ensure that you have access to a mobile telephone and an emergency contact.

## **21. Transporting pupils**

Transport in private vehicles will be prevented wherever possible. If private vehicle use is deemed necessary, at least one adult must act as an escort alongside the driver. If you are using your private vehicle, you must ensure that it is roadworthy, insured and that the maximum capacity is not exceeded. All passengers must wear seatbelts.

If you are driving a large vehicle, it is your responsibility to ensure that you have the appropriate licence and insurance. You must not offer children lifts outside of normal working duties. If an emergency situation requires you to transport a child, where not to give a lift may place the child at risk, you must report and record the incident as soon as possible.

You must:

- Ensure you are fit to drive.
- Ensure the vehicle is roadworthy.
- Ensure you have the appropriate licence and insurance.
- Record details of the journey.
- Ensure that behaviour is appropriate.
- Record any emergency situations.

## **22. Educational visits**

Where school activities require overnight stays, careful consideration must be given to sleeping arrangements – taking into account staff-to-child ratios and appropriate gender mixes.

You must:

- Always have another adult present in activities outside the workplace.
- Undertake risk assessments.
- Obtain parental consent.
- Ensure that your behaviour is professional at all times.
- Never share a bed with a child.
- Never share a bedroom, unless the arrangements have been discussed and agreed with the Head Teacher.

## **23. Taking and storing photographs**

Informed written consent should be sought from the parents of a child prior to an image being taken. You must ensure that all parties understand the implications of the image being taken, especially if it is intended for use in marketing materials or online publication. You must agree whether the images will be destroyed or retained for further use, and who will have access to them.

It is not appropriate for adults to take photographs of children for personal use.

When using a photograph, adhere to the following guidance:

- Avoid naming the pupil
- If a pupil is named in the publication, avoid using their image
- Establish whether the image will be retained
- Store all images securely

You must:

- Be clear about the purpose of the activity.
- Be able to justify images of children in your possession.
- Avoid taking images in one-to-one situations.
- Ensure that the child understands why an image is being taken.
- Obtain parental consent.
- Only use equipment provided by the school.
- Report any concerns about inappropriate photographs found.

You must not:

- Display or distribute images of children without parental consent.
- Use images which may cause distress.
- Use personal devices to take images.
- Take images in secret.

## **24. Indecent images**

No circumstances can justify you possessing indecent images of children. Staff members who access and possess such images will be viewed as a significant threat to children. Accessing and storing such images is illegal and will lead to criminal investigation. If proven, you will be barred from working with children.

You must not use any school equipment to access pornography; neither should any personal equipment be used to access such material in the workplace.

You must ensure that pupils are not exposed to any inappropriate images or links. Appropriate controls must be in place to prevent access to such material.

Where indecent images of children are found, the local authority designated officer (Jane Bee) will be immediately informed.

You must:

- Follow the school's guidance on the use of ICT equipment.
- Ensure that children are not exposed to unsuitable material.
- Ensure that any films shown are age appropriate.

## **25. Sex and relationships in the curriculum**

The curriculum can sometimes include or lead to the discussion of sexually explicit matters. You must use careful judgement when responding to pupils' questions. You must also ensure that resource materials cannot be misinterpreted, and that they clearly relate to the learning outcomes. You must acknowledge parents' rights to withdraw their child from sex education.

You must:

- Adhere to the school's policy regarding sex and relationship education.
- Have a clear, written lesson plan in place.
- Take care when encouraging self-expression.
- Never overstep professional boundaries.
- Be able to justify all curriculum materials.

## **26. Whistleblowing**

The school has a clear and accessible policy in place regarding whistle blowing. Your employment rights are protected when following the whistleblowing procedure.

You must:

- Report any behaviour by colleagues that raises concern.

## **27. Sharing your concerns**

The school has clear policy and procedures for dealing with allegations against staff. If you are the subject of an allegation, the school advises you to contact your professional association. You should discuss any difficulties and problems that may affect your relationship with pupils so that appropriate support can be provided.

You must:

- Be familiar with the school's system for recording incidents and follow them accordingly.

## **28. Declaration**

I have read and understood the above duties and agree to follow them. I understand that failure to follow them may lead to disciplinary action and/or criminal investigation in some circumstances.

Print name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_