AVON HOUSE PREPARATORY SCHOOL

CELEBRATING & SUPPORTING EVERY CHILD

Staff Code of Conduct and Acceptable Use Policy (7e)

Introduction

This Code of Conduct outlines the professional boundaries that must be maintained between staff, pupils, parents and visitors. The school has expectations and standards which need to be maintained. We expect our staff to be good role models and set high standards in all things. This Code of Conduct gives advice and instruction on how to deal with specific situations. It has been written to protect staff in all things and should be viewed in conjunction with school policies including safeguarding children. Staff must bear in mind how such relationships are viewed by third parties.

This Code of Conduct applies to:

- all staff who are employed by Avon House School including those in the Early Years;
- all temporary and agency staff, peripatetic staff, contract staff;
- young people and other adults on work experience placements;
- volunteers working in school; and
- the Governors and Trustees

This Code of Conduct should be read and understood in the context of:

- an agreed job description or contract;
- appropriate professional standards;
- school policies and procedures; and
- statutory requirements and regulations that apply to schools - in particular safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in schools.

The Acceptable Use Policy covers the security and use of all Avon House School information and IT equipment. It also includes the use of email, internet, voice and mobile IT equipment. This policy applies to all Avon House School employees, contractors and authorised volunteers.

Adults have crucial roles to play in the lives of children. The welfare of children and young people is paramount: this Code of Conduct helps establish the safest possible learning and working environment which safeguards children and reduces the risk of adults being falsely accused of improper or unprofessional conduct. The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to provide a clear framework of expected and appropriate standards and behaviour to which all staff, volunteers and Governors are required to adhere and to raise awareness of illegal, unsafe and inappropriate conduct. This Code is not an exhaustive list of unacceptable or inappropriate behaviours but is designed to provide guidance and raise awareness of issues and situations which may arise. There will therefore be times when staff are required to exercise their professional judgement in situations not covered explicitly by this Code. In such cases, staff are expected to provide the highest possible standards at all times, consistent with this policy. School staff and volunteers are in a unique position of influence and must adhere to behaviour that maintains public trust and set a good example to other staff and to all the pupils within the school.

Staff are reminded that under section 16 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003, it is a criminal offence for a person aged 18 or over to have a sexual relationship with children under 18 where that person is in a position of trust in respect of that child; even if the relationship is consensual or where the person does not teach the child.

If a teacher (anyone engaged to carry out teaching work) in the course of their work discovers that an act of Female Genital Mutilation appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18 the teacher must report this to the police. Other adults should report this to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) immediately.

Conduct in school

1. The school organises a number of functions and events where parents are present. Alcohol may only be consumed in moderation.
2. Staff must not chew gum during school hours.
3. Communication with pupils and parents by whatever method should always be in line with policy. Staff should not hold social media relationships with parents or pupils other than on systems set up by the school and on school devices. All communication with pupils should be transparent and in an open forum.
4. Staff should not use social media sites for personal reasons whilst in class. This includes mobile phones, text messaging, digital cameras, webcams, online gaming, blogs, Facebook and other social media sites.
5. Personal details, home addresses, email addresses and telephone numbers must not be shared with pupils or parents unless written consent is sought from the Head Teacher.
6. Mobile phones should only be used in designated places and at all other times should be switched off and kept in the tins provided in line with school policy. Phones should only be on with the permission of the Head Teacher.
7. Staff must speak to parents in a respectful manner and should not engage in a conversation that could compromise their position.
8. Staff should be careful when holding discussions about pupils that confidentiality is observed and should not be held in a public forum.
9. Staff should dress in an appropriate manner. They should follow the staff dress code and as appropriate wear the correct kit for sports events. Staff should be seen as good role models for the pupils.
10. Staff should be punctual for school and school events and where they have been delegated to lead should do so in a professional manner.
11. All online training must be completed in the time frame set.
12. All policies and policy updates must be read as instructed and if staff are in doubt regarding interpretation or meaning should seek advice from a member of the SLT or School Governor.
13. Staff must take proper care when using School property and must not use School property for any unauthorised use or for private gain.
14. Staff should only store school data in a designated encrypted device.
15. Staff must not pass on information about pupils, parents or colleagues. Where colleagues are concerned permission must be sought from them before it is given to another colleague. Personal information sharing with parents and pupils must be agreed in writing with the Head Teacher.

Conduct out of school

1. Staff should not normally socialise with pupils outside school other than at school events or excursions arranged by the school.
2. Staff must exercise caution when using information technology, including social networking sites, and be aware of the risks to themselves and others. Staff may undertake work outside school, either paid or voluntary, subject to the contractual obligations and consent from the Head which will not be unreasonably withheld.
3. Staff must inform the Head immediately if they are arrested or subject to a criminal conviction or caution. Where safeguarding concerns arise, the Head will inform the designated officer of the Local Authority ("Designated Officer") and carry out a formal risk assessment to identify and mitigate any potential risks to pupils and staff.
4. Staff should not give lifts to pupils other than in school vehicles. If extenuating circumstances arise then permission must be sought from a member of the SLT.
5. Staff should not have images of pupils stored on personal devices or home computers.

Relationships between staff and pupils should be positive and mutually respectful. This Code has been formulated in order to help staff to maintain this balance. It is hoped that staff will be reassured by this Code. Its purpose is to promote the highest standards of care for pupils and to protect teachers and other adults from making professional mis-judgements and from the potentially devastating consequences of false allegations, without compromising bona-fide school activities.

Some pupils may be reluctant to end the pupil-adult relationship they have enjoyed with members of staff in school. When a pupil leaves school the professional duty of care ends. However, it is important to continue to maintain professional standards of behaviour. Although current and former pupils may request meetings with staff for help, any associated correspondence should be conducted at school within office hours and in a professional manner. If you are in any doubt regarding appropriate contact with a current or former pupil you should seek advice from a member of the SLT.

Members of staff who are parents of pupils, friends with parents of pupils or who, for example, are voluntary workers in youth organisations attended by pupils, will of course have contact with pupils outside school. However, they should still use their professional judgement to respect the spirit of this Code.

One to one working

If an adult is alone with a pupil he/she should ensure that any such meeting or lesson is as visible as possible and that it takes place in public or semi-public places such as the library or classrooms. As such, he/she should ensure that the door to the room has a glass panel which is not obscured or is left open. If this is not possible then another adult must be close by. Furniture should also be positioned to allow easy access into or out of the room.

Pupil behaviour management

All staff must follow the agreed Behaviour Policy and Anti-Bullying Strategy. Corporal punishment, or the threat of corporal punishment, is not acceptable and is unlawful. Staff may not smack, strike or otherwise physically punish a pupil; deprive a pupil of food or drink; enforce food or drink; prevent contact by telephone to parents or any independent

listener or helpline; use sarcasm or demeaning comments towards children; withhold any aids or equipment needed by the pupil or impose any punishment which is intended to distress or humiliate a pupil.

Out of hours care

Staff must take particular care when supervising pupils in a residential excursion or after-school activity. The more relaxed adult-pupil relationships that may promote successful activities can be misinterpreted by children. It is important to emphasise that the standards of professional conduct and behaviour expected of staff outside and after school are no different from those which apply within school.

Transporting pupils on excursions and sporting fixtures

In certain situations e.g. out of school activities, staff or volunteers may agree to transport children. A designated member of staff is appointed to plan and provide oversight of all transport arrangements and respond to any difficulties that may arise. Staff should not transport pupils in their own vehicles or alone unless this is unavoidable; in which case specific approval from the designated member of staff should be obtained in advance, or as soon as possible thereafter. Where this is not possible, for example in an emergency, the incident should be reported to the Head Teacher. Staff should ensure that their behaviour is safe and that the transport arrangements and the vehicle meet all legal requirements. They should ensure that the vehicle is roadworthy and appropriately insured for business purposes and that the maximum capacity is not exceeded. All adults, whether staff or volunteers, in regulated activity must have undergone an enhanced DBS with barred list check. People whose suitability has not been checked will not have unsupervised contact with children being cared for.

Effective and proper use of information technology is fundamental to the successful and efficient running of Avon House School. However, misuse of information technology - in particular misuse of email and access to the internet - exposes both the School and all users to liability and is a drain on time and money. It is critical that all users read and understand this document and make themselves aware of the risks and exposure involved.

Acceptable use of ICT

It is the responsibility of all users of the School computing facilities to be aware of and follow all Avon House School guidelines and to seek advice in case of doubt. This policy is to be read in conjunction with the following policies: Data Protection, E-Safety, Taking, Storing and Using Images of Children, Mobile Phone, Technology, Security and Electronic Communications and Staff Use of Social Media and Networking Sites.

This policy may be updated or supplemented by specific standards or procedures to reflect further developments in technology or legislation or other relevant changes.

Definition

The phrase 'computing facilities' as used in this policy shall be interpreted as including any computer hardware or software owned or operated by Avon House School and any

allocation of time, memory, disk space or other measure of space on any of Avon House School's hardware, software or networks.

Computers and Portable Devices

Computers are at high risk from loss or theft and require additional security protection. All reasonable precautions must be taken to ensure that hardware is stored securely. Also, to protect the integrity of Avon House School systems and data procedures, passwords or authentication devices for gaining remote access to the School systems must not be stored with the computer. All passwords must contain 8 characters and must not be shared with other students or members of staff.

Mobile Storage Devices

Mobile devices such as memory sticks, CDs, DVDs and removable hard drives must be used only in situations when network connectivity is unavailable or there is no other secure method of transferring data. Only Avon House authorised encrypted USB devices must be used when transferring sensitive or confidential data.

Virus Protection

Anti-virus software is loaded on all computers as standard and is updated regularly via the network. Anti-virus software must not be de-installed or deactivated. Files received by or sent by email are checked for viruses automatically. Remote users are responsible for maintaining up to date anti-virus programmes on their computers and can contact Joskos for help as required. Users must not intentionally transmit computer viruses. Non Avon House School software or data files intended to be run on School equipment by external people such as engineers or trainers must be checked for viruses before use. If you suspect that a virus has infected a computer you should stop using the computer and contact Joskos immediately.

Clear Desk and Clear Screen

In order to reduce the risk of unauthorised access or loss of information, Avon House enforces a clear desk and screen policy as follows:

- Personal or confidential business information must be protected using security features provided eg secure print on printers.
- Computers must be logged off/locked or protected with a screen locking mechanism controlled by a password when unattended.
- Care must be taken to not leave confidential material on printers or photocopiers.
- All business-related printed matter must be disposed of by shredding prior to disposal.

Electronic Mail

Use and responsibility
Avon House School's electronic mail (email) system is provided for the school's business purposes. Email is now a critical business tool but inappropriate use can expose the School and the user to significant liability. Liability can arise in a number of ways including, among others, copyright or trademark infringement, misuse of confidential information,

defamation and liability for inaccurate statements. The email system must be used judiciously in the same manner as other school resources such as telephones and photocopying.

Content

Email messages must be treated like any other formal written communication. Email messages cannot be considered to be private, secure or temporary. Email can be copied and forwarded to numerous recipients quickly and easily and you should assume that they could be read by anyone. Improper statements in an email can give rise to personal liability and liability for Avon House School and can constitute a serious disciplinary matter. Emails that embarrass, misrepresent or convey an unjust or unfavourable impression of Avon House School or its business affairs, staff, suppliers, customers or competitors are not permitted. Do not create or send email messages that are defamatory. Defamatory email whether internal or external can constitute a published libel and are actionable. Never send confidential or sensitive information via email. Email messages, however confidential or damaging, may have to be disclosed in court proceedings. Do not create or send email messages that may be intimidating, hostile or offensive on the basis of sex, race, colour, religion, national origin, sexual orientation or disability. It is never permissible to subject a student or member of staff to public humiliation or ridicule; this is equally true via email. Copyright law applies to email. Do not use email to transmit or circulate copyrighted materials. It is School policy that email communication with the parents will be restricted to SLT members and the School office. Staff wishing to communicate with parents should do so via the School office.

Privacy

Email messages to or from users cannot be considered to be private or confidential. Although it is not policy to routinely examine the content of individuals' email, Avon House School reserves the right to monitor messages, at any time, for specific instances in which there is good cause for such monitoring or some legal obligation to do so. Good cause shall include the need to fulfil school obligations, detect employee wrongdoing, protect the rights or property of the school, protect IT system security or to comply with legal process. Messages sent or received may be copied and disclosed by the School for lawful purposes without prior notice. It is not permissible to access or to send email from another employee's personal account either directly or indirectly.

Non-School provided email

Avon House School provides an email account for all staff. Staff must not use a non-school provided account to contact pupils or parents or to conduct school business.

Internet Usage

Copyrights and licensing conditions must be observed when downloading software and files from the websites of authorised software suppliers. Files so protected must never be transmitted or redistributed to third parties without the express permission of the copyright owner. Any files or software found on the Avon House computing facilities which breach copyright rules will be removed and appropriate action taken against the user who has installed the material on the network.

Instant messaging

Instant messaging is free, fast, real-time and powerful. However instant messaging also carries inherent risks: lack of encryption (allowing the possibility of eavesdropping), logging of chat conversations without a user's knowledge and virus risks. Due to these risks Avon House School does not allow the use of instant messaging.

Proxy Server

A proxy server is a server, which sits between the user and the internet, and receives requests (such as a web page request) from a user. The proxy server will apply filters to the request and pass back to the user the result of that request. The filters are maintained and updated regularly by Joskos. The filters are intended to reduce the risks associated with the internet use in an educational environment. Attempting to bypass the proxy server will put individuals in breach of this policy and subject to disciplinary procedures. Staff must not share this staff proxy access with students or allow students to access their laptop.

Actions upon Termination of Contract

All Avon House equipment and data, for example laptops and mobile devices including telephones, smartphones, USB memory devices and CDs/DVDs, must be returned to school upon termination of contract. All Avon House data or intellectual property developed or gained during the period of employment remains the property of Avon House School and must not be retained beyond termination or reused for any other purpose.

It is your responsibility to report suspected breaches of security policy without delay to a member of the SLT. All breaches of information security policies will be investigated. Where investigations reveal misconduct, disciplinary action may follow in line with Avon House disciplinary procedures.

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