



# Staff Code of Conduct

Last revised: July 2023

Date of next review: \_\_\_\_\_ July 2024 \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ *Ed Currie* \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ 20.7.23 \_\_\_\_\_

Printed: \_\_\_\_\_ Ed Currie \_\_\_\_\_

Chair of Governors

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ *Andrew Rudkin* \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ 21.7.23 \_\_\_\_\_

Printed: \_\_\_\_\_ Andrew Rudkin \_\_\_\_\_

**(HEAD TEACHER)**

## **Policy Statement**

This is a whole school policy and applies to all members of Lyndhurst School including Early Years (Reception – Nursery).

This policy has been prepared with reference to Surrey County Council's Model Staff Behaviour Policy and NSPCC Behaviour Code for Adults working with children.

## **Introduction**

This code of conduct has regard to the DfE statutory guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2023 and includes extracts from Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who Work with Children and Young People in Education Settings May 2019.

Whilst this code predominantly refers to 'staff', the school expects all those working for and on behalf of Lyndhurst School, including in a voluntary capacity, to reflect the standards of conduct and behaviour contained within this document.

References to 'staff' throughout the policy relate to all the following groups:

- All members of staff including non-teaching, teaching and support staff
- Volunteers, including Governors
- Directors
- Peripatetic Teachers
- Temporary and supply staff either from agencies or engaged directly
- Student placements including those undertaking initial teacher training and apprentices



Lyndhurst School requires that all staff have read and agree to comply with this policy.

Breach or failure to observe this policy will result in action being taken under the school disciplinary procedures including, but not limited to dismissal.

This Code of Conduct is not an exhaustive list of acceptable and unacceptable standards of behaviour. In situations where guidance does not exist in this policy, staff are expected to exercise their professional judgement and act in the best interests of the children, staff and the school. The Staff Code of Conduct is there to help us protect children from abuse. Lyndhurst School is responsible for making sure everyone taking part in our activities has seen, understood and agreed to follow the Staff Code of Conduct.



## **The Role of Staff, Governors, Directors and Volunteers**

Lyndhurst School staff, Governors, Directors and Volunteers are acting in a position of trust and authority and have a duty of care towards the children we work with. Staff are a role model for the children and are expected to act appropriately. This includes behaviour that takes place outside Lyndhurst School and behaviour that takes place online.

## **Statement on Personal Conduct**

Lyndhurst School expects all staff to promote and maintain high standards of personal and professional conduct and to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people.

Staff are expected to:

- Perform their duties with honesty, integrity and impartiality and be accountable for their own actions.
- Maintain the confidence and respect of the public and those with whom they work.
- Treat everyone with respect, fairness, and dignity always.
- Staff should show fairness in their treatment of children and avoid behaviours such as embarrassing or humiliating children, making jokes at the expense of children, discriminating against, or favouring children and sarcasm.
- Communicate immediately any relevant concerns they may have about the quality of provision or the safety and welfare of children.
- Familiarise themselves with systems and procedures, including reporting requirements, within the school that support the protection of children and to attend training and read all safeguarding briefings provided to ensure that they remain up to date.
- Be aware that their behaviour inside and outside the workplace, as well as the behaviour of others in their personal lives, could compromise their position within the school in relation to the protection of children, loss of trust and confidence or bringing the employer into disrepute. It could also result in action by regulatory bodies.
- Follow and support the school's aims.

In addition to this Code of Conduct, teachers are also expected to meet the professional conduct standards outlined in the [DfE Teachers' Standards](#) and the Learning Assistants to meet the professional standards outlined in the School's Learning Assistant Standards.

## **Compliance with School Instructions**

Lyndhurst School expects all staff to comply with lawful written and oral instruction unless to do so would result in a health and safety risk or safeguarding risk.

## **Data Protection**

Lyndhurst School takes its obligations under data protection laws very seriously. All staff must familiarise themselves with the school's Data Protection policy and any associated procedures which govern day-to-day working practices as well as how to report a suspected data breach and to recognise when someone may have made a subject access request. If in any doubt employees should consult their line manager promptly or contact



Lyndhurst School's Data Protection Officer, whose details can be found on the Data Protection Policy and emailed on [GDPR@lyndhurstschool.co.uk](mailto:GDPR@lyndhurstschool.co.uk) .

### **Disclosure of Information**

Many employees have access to personal information relating to other employees, students and other members of the public. All employees must treat this information in a discreet and confidential manner in line with the Data Protection Act 1998 and adhere to the following guidelines:

- Written records and correspondence should be kept securely at all times.
- Information relating to staff/students/public must not be disclosed either orally or in writing to unauthorised persons.
- Information relating to students/public must not be given over the telephone unless the caller has given details of their right to be given such information. Employees must ensure the caller has established their right to information by obtaining their telephone number and calling back to check their identity or by asking for a written request for information.
- Confidential matters relating to staff/students/public should not be discussed in areas where they may be heard by passers-by, i.e. corridors, reception, lifts, staff room, etc.
- Any files sent to outside agencies working and supporting the school must be encrypted.
- Any breach of confidentiality may be regarded as misconduct and be subject to disciplinary action, see the Disciplinary Policy.

Employees must not make statements or write letters to the media about Lyndhurst School. All such matters should be referred as a minimum to the Headteacher.

### **Sharing Information about Children**

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

If a child – or their parent / carer – makes a disclosure regarding abuse or neglect, the member of staff should follow Lyndhurst School's Safeguarding Policy and follow the child protection procedure.

The adult should not promise confidentiality to a child or parent but should give reassurance that the information will be treated sensitively.

If a member of staff is in any doubt about whether to share information or keep it confidential, he or she should seek guidance from the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to promote the welfare and protect the safety of children.

Staff must also be aware of their duty to report any breach of GDPR to the Data Protection Officer.



## **Media / Legal Enquiries**

Any media or legal enquiries should be passed to the senior leadership team and only approved persons should communicate to the media about the school.

## **Low Level Concerns**

The term 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant, it means that the behaviour towards a child does not meet the safeguarding threshold.

All staff are expected to know and understand the school's reporting policy and procedure for all concerns including low-level concerns immediately. Low-level concerns must be reported to the Headteacher.

A low-level concern is any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' - that an adult working in or on behalf of the school or college 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 Local Authority Designated Officer, LADO.

Examples of such behaviour include, but are not limited to:

- being over friendly with children.
- having favourites.
- taking photographs of children on their mobile phone or other smart devices.
- engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door; or,
- using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating, or offensive language.
- using inappropriate banter.

Cumulative low-level concerns may reach the threshold when the concern will be taken to the LADO.

## **Whistleblowing & Allegations Against Staff and Volunteers**

All staff must read and understand the policy, guidance and procedures in place for managing allegations against staff and volunteers. Dealing with Allegations against People Working with Children - Surrey Safeguarding Children Partnership ([surreyscp.org.uk](http://surreyscp.org.uk)) They must also be aware of the reporting and recording procedures for when they have concerns about the behaviour or conduct of a member of staff

If staff become aware of activities which he/she believes to be illegal, improper, unethical, unsafe or otherwise inconsistent with this Behaviour Code, the staff member should report the matter in accordance with Lyndhurst School's Whistleblowing Policy.

This means that staff should escalate their concerns if they believe that a child or children are not being protected, report any behaviour by colleagues that raises concern and report allegations against staff and volunteers to the Headteacher, or where they have concerns



about a Headteacher report these directly to the Chair of Governors. This includes those that are no longer at the school and historic concerns.

Staff should be familiar with their establishment's arrangements for reporting and recording concerns and allegations, how to contact the Headteacher, Chair of Governors and Ofsted directly if required and take responsibility for recording any incident and passing on that information where they have concerns about any matter pertaining to the welfare of an individual in the school or setting.

All staff are required to comply with any investigation undertaken as a result of such allegations being raised.

### **Appearance and Dress**

A person's dress and appearance are matters of personal choice and self-expression and some individuals will wish to exercise their own cultural customs. However, staff should select a manner of dress and appearance appropriate to their professional role and which may be necessarily different to that adopted in their personal life.

Staff should ensure they are dressed decently, safely and appropriately for the tasks they undertake. Staff need to be conscious of the school's expectation of the children's dress and appearance and must be a role model for the children. Those who dress or appear in a manner which could be viewed as offensive or inappropriate will render themselves vulnerable to criticisms or allegations.

Members of staff act as role models and often have a professional relationship with a range of other stakeholders.

For most staff, appropriate dress will be smart office - worn with discreet jewellery and make-up. Hair should be always neat and tidy.

Footwear must be safe, sensible, in good order, smart and clean and have regard to health and safety considerations. Trainers (unless specifically required for the job role), stiletto heels, open-backed shoes and plastic flip-flops or sliders are not acceptable.

In certain areas, an agreed uniform or protective clothing are in place Sports staff, catering and premises staff. Staff may wear sportswear or smart casual clothing and footwear for practical or physical activities, or on 'dress down Friday'.

Visible tattoos where present should not be offensive to others. Where they are deemed to be offensive, they must be appropriately covered.

Discreet earrings and other piercings are acceptable. If deemed inappropriate staff may be asked to remove them while on school premises.

When working remotely and taking part in video meetings via Teams staff appearance should be in line with the standards of this guidance.



## **Smoking, Drugs and Alcohol**

Staff must never arrive to school under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.

Drinking alcohol or taking drugs (apart from appropriately prescribed medication or over-the-counter remedies) at work or during breaks is also strictly prohibited.

The consumption of alcohol at staff events or meetings is subject to the authorisation of the Headteacher.

Lyndhurst School is a non-smoking site. Staff must not smoke or use e-cigarettes on the premises or outside the school gates/driveway. Any member of staff wishing to smoke or use an e-cigarette must leave the school grounds. Staff must not smoke or use an e-cigarette whilst working with or supervising children offsite.

## **Political Neutrality**

Staff should ensure that their own personal or political opinions do not interfere with any policy of Lyndhurst School.

This means that adults should not:

- enter or encourage inappropriate discussions that may offend or harm others
- undermine fundamental British values,
- express any prejudicial views
- attempt to influence or impose their personal values, attitudes or beliefs on children.

## **Appointment of Staff**

Staff should not be involved in a staffing appointment or in any decision relating to the discipline, promotion or pay and conditions of another staff member (or prospective staff member) to whom they are related or have a close personal relationship.

## **Personal living accommodation**

Staff should not invite any children into their living accommodation unless the reason to do so has been firmly established and agreed with their line manager and the children's parents /carers.

It is not appropriate for staff to be expected or requested to use their private living space for any activity, play or learning. This includes seeing children for e.g. discussion of reports, academic reviews, tutorials, pastoral care, or counselling. Line managers should ensure that appropriate accommodation for such activities is found elsewhere in the setting.

Under no circumstances should children (other than those that are family or family friends) be asked to assist adults with jobs or tasks, either for or without reward, at or in their private accommodation. This guidance should also apply to all other persons living in or visiting the private accommodation.



## **Equality, Diversity, Bullying and Harassment**

All staff and members of the local community have a right to be treated with fairness and equality. Staff must ensure that they always comply with the Lyndhurst School's Equality and Diversity Policy and other employment policies in relation to equality issues.

Lyndhurst is committed to promoting equality of opportunity regardless of gender, gender reassignment, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief or age. Everyone should be treated with respect and dignity and establish a culture where diversity is valued.

The bullying or harassment of other work colleagues, children or other members of the community is gross misconduct. Staff are expected to report any concerns or suspicions they may have about the treatment of others to their line manager or the Headteacher, concerns related to the behaviour of the Headteacher should be reported to the Chair of Governors.

## **Contractors and Competitive Tendering**

Contractors may include individuals who are temporarily working alongside school staff or employees of an external firm that has been awarded a contract to provide services. All contractors should be treated with courtesy and respect.

Any orders and contracts must be awarded by fair and open competition against other tenders. No special favour must be shown to current or recent former employees or associates in awarding contracts.

Staff must declare any relationship with a particular contractor or any potential contractors to the appropriate manager.

Staff should be clear on the separation of client and contractor roles. Senior Leadership members, who have both a client/contractor responsibility, must be aware of the need for accountability and openness.

Staff privy to confidential information on tenders of costs relating to contractors should not disclose the information to any unauthorised party or organisation.

## **Use of the School's Materials, Property or Resources**

Staff must ensure that school funds entrusted to them are used in a responsible and lawful manner.

Staff should not make personal use of any school property, facilities, equipment, materials, or resources unless properly authorised to do so.

Employees are not normally permitted to use office equipment, e.g. iPad, personal computers, facsimile machines, photocopiers and the like, for personal use. Employees must not allow Lyndhurst School's address to be used for personal mail deliveries except in exceptional circumstances approved by the Headteacher on each occasion.

Employees are only permitted to make personal use of telephones e-mail and Internet facilities at work at their Line Manager's discretion, or when there is a need to contact



someone in an emergency. The time spent should be kept to a minimum. Employees should also inform their family and friends only to contact them at work when it is necessary.

Employees should be aware that Line Managers may request reports on numbers dialled and may record telephone conversations for ensuring compliance with its policies and procedures and this code of conduct.

Employees should be aware that Lyndhurst School routinely monitors the content of e-mail and Internet usage for the purpose of ensuring compliance with its policies and procedures and this code of conduct. Employees must not access, store or send electronic material that uses un-authorized encryption, contains programme files, is obscene, indecent, sexist, racist, defamatory, abusive, in breach of copyright, or otherwise inappropriate. Electronic material of this nature sent in or out of Lyndhurst School's network, or electronic material found containing a virus, may be intercepted and stopped by the system. Line Managers may request access to an employee mailbox or gain access to Internet usage reports when necessary.

Lyndhurst School will not accept any abuse of e-mail/internet or telephones. Such behaviour may result in disciplinary action.

The downloading, sending or accessing of offensive material that affect the dignity of any individual or group of individuals at work may constitute harassment. Threatening, obscene or harassing messages including chain e-mails and material that will cause offence and/or degrade individuals or minority groups will constitute a disciplinary offence that may result in dismissal.

Under the Obscene Publications Act 1959 an employee may have criminal liability if an individual publishes material that could corrupt or deprave the persons likely to see the material, this includes the transmission of data stored electronically.

Employees should use the Internet and electronic mail in exactly the same way as they would correspond to anyone on School headed notepaper and must remember that all electronic mail falls within the framework of the Data Protection legislation. Employees must not correspond on any aspect of School business, unless it falls within the employee's job description.

Under no circumstances should any contracts be entered into by e-mail on behalf of Lyndhurst School (and even where email is sent it should be made clear that paper copy represents substantive agreement) without the express written permission of the Headteacher.

Where, in exceptional circumstances, companies are allowed to return tenders by e-mail they should be asked to also send a paper copy to arrive by the tender return date. They should in addition be advised that in the case of a discrepancy between the contents of the paper copy and the contents of the e-copy the contents of the paper copy will prevail.

### **Use of Peripherals**

The use of peripherals – removable media such as external hard drives, USB & SD card are not permitted on school devices. All external physical interfaces will be managed by the school and should be known by the school.



## **Hospitality and Acceptance of Gifts**

All school staff and those working on behalf of Lyndhurst School are expected to refuse the offer of inappropriate and disproportionate hospitality and gifts made as part of the discharge of their duties unless there are compelling reasons or exceptional circumstances for doing so.

The acceptance of gifts and hospitality must be treated with extreme caution and may be regarded as a breach of the Code of Conduct. The onus is on the individual to take responsibility for making informed judgements about any offers of gifts and hospitality made to them and for seeking advice if they are unsure whether they can accept the gifts.

As to what is 'inappropriate and disproportionate', something like a small token of appreciation to a teacher, a small bouquet of flowers sent in thanks or small and low value gifts given at the end of term by parents would not seem unreasonable whereas anything which is significant, such as tickets to football matches or concerts, have a value to them which could have the potential to be interpreted as recompense, inducement or endorsement.

Gifts or hospitality must not be accepted where it might be perceived to influence a decision in respect of purchasing goods or services, awarding contracts, preferential treatment or in the discharge of any other aspect of the school's day-to-day business. It is the responsibility of individual members of staff to refuse such offers and to report any conflict of interest and any cases where they believe that the school may be compromised.

It is a criminal offence for staff or those working on behalf of the school to corruptly receive any gift, loan, fee, reward or advantage for doing, or not doing anything, or showing favour, or disfavour, to any person in their official capacity.

In no circumstances should a statement ever be made in return for a personal gift or money.

It is expressly prohibited for staff to accept any gift or hospitality from an organisation if he/she is actively involved in a tender process with the organisation on behalf of the school. This prohibition commences at the point that an invitation to tender is published and extends to a period of three months after a contract has been awarded.

For reasons of probity and transparency, the principle of receipt of gifts or hospitality extends to the spouse, partner or immediate family of the employee.

If a staff member has any doubt about such an offer of a gift or hospitality, he/she is responsible for notifying and discussing this with his/her line manager.

## **Giving Gifts**

It is inadvisable to give personal gifts to children or their families. This could be interpreted as a gesture either to bribe or groom. It might also be perceived that a 'favour' of some kind is expected in return.



Any reward given to a child should be in accordance with agreed practice, consistent with Lyndhurst School's Promotion of Good Behaviour policy, recorded and not based on favouritism.

### **Working Relationships and Social Contact Outside the Workplace**

Some members of staff live and work in the same community. Members of staff will have both internal and external working relationships that are formed on a daily basis with colleagues, children, parents and contractors. These should be conducted in a professional, friendly and respectful manner. It is acknowledged that staff may have genuine friendships and social contact with parents of children, and families independent of the professional relationship.

If a child or parent seeks to establish social contact or if this occurs coincidentally, the member of staff should exercise her/his professional judgement. This also applies to social contacts made through outside interests or the staff member's own family. Staff need to be aware that they will be viewed as members of school staff, as well as friends at all times in these situations. Staff should also be aware that they should not discuss school matters with parents of children and should maintain professional barriers.

In general, there are extremely few situations where it is appropriate for parents to approach staff through personal routes in regard to school business and, in general, they should be referred back to the normal procedures.

Staff need to be mindful that professionals who sexually harm children often seek to establish relationships and contact outside of the workplace with both the child and their parents in order to 'groom' the adult and the child and/or create opportunities for sexual abuse, exploitation or radicalisation.

Staff should be aware and recognise that some types of social contact with children or their families may be perceived as harmful or exerting inappropriate influence on children and may bring the school into disrepute.

Staff should ensure that any type of social contact does not undermine fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. Staff must ensure that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways which exploit children's vulnerability or might lead them to break the law.

Some staff may, as part of their professional role, be required to support a parent or carer. If that person comes to depend upon the staff member or seeks support outside of their professional role this should be discussed with senior management and where necessary referrals made to the appropriate support agency.

Staff must not accept friend invitations or become friends with any child on any social media platform. Staff should also refrain from following the Twitter or similar social media accounts of children or their parents.



Staff must read the school's Online Safety Policy carefully and follow all advice and guidance within it.

The advisory document 'Guidance for Safe Working Practice for the Protection of Children and Staff in Education Settings' (2009), has been endorsed by the Governing body and staff are expected to be guided by it.

Personal phone numbers, email addresses and communication routes via all social media platforms must not be used and staff should not share their home address with children. If contacted via an inappropriate route, the member of staff must inform their line manager immediately.

If approached by ex-children, staff must act with integrity and must consider if the relationship might be considered to be an abuse of the position of trust.

### **Infatuations**

It is not unusual for children or, sometimes, their parents to develop infatuations towards members of staff. All such situations must be responded to sensitively to maintain the dignity of those concerned.

Staff should also be aware that such circumstances carry a high risk of words or actions being misinterpreted and for allegations to be made against staff. Any indications of an infatuation towards yourself or another member of staff should be reported to your line manager.

Members of staff should always report any indications (verbal, written or physical) that suggest a child may be infatuated with a member of staff to the Headteacher or another senior manager.

### **Communication with Children**

Staff should not seek to communicate, contact or respond to contact with children outside of the purposes of their work and should not give personal contact details e.g., email address, home or mobile telephone numbers, details of web-based identities to children.

Only equipment and services provided by the school should be used for communication and staff are expected to adhere to Lyndhurst School's IT Acceptable Use Policy.

Staff can communicate with parents via school portals, for example, through the 'weekly email' and 'weekly newsletter'. For other electronic communication staff must always use a professional email account e.g. [Johnsmith@lyndhurstschool.co.uk](mailto:Johnsmith@lyndhurstschool.co.uk) and under no circumstances use their private email account or personal phone number.

Employees are expected to report to their line manager any contact or correspondence with children they receive via personal contact mechanisms.



### **Sponsorship**

Where an external organisation wishes to sponsor a Lyndhurst School activity, whether by invitation, tender, negotiation or voluntarily, the basic principles concerning acceptance of gifts or hospitality apply. Particular care must be taken when dealing with contractors or potential contractors. All such matters should be referred to the Headteacher.

### **Matters of Conscience**

Where an employee believes he or she is being required to act in a way which is illegal, improper, unethical, or in breach of Lyndhurst School's conventions, which may involve possible maladministration, or which is otherwise inconsistent with the Policy for Conduct he or she should refer to their Line Manager or to a more senior member of staff or follow the Whistle blowing Policy.

Where an employee is aware, or has evidence of illegal, improper or abusive behaviour of another employee or a pupil he or she should refer to their Line manager or a more senior member of staff or governor.

Where an employee fails to report such concerns outlined in the previous 2 paragraphs, this may be construed as misconduct and lead to disciplinary action.

### **Absence from Work**

All leave should be approved prior to it being taken. This includes parental leave, special leave, etc. Failure to notify absence is unauthorised absence. Please refer to Lyndhurst School's Staff Attendance Policy for further details.

### **Poor timekeeping**

Line Managers must set a timekeeping standard that is known to all employees. This standard should be applied consistently with employees arriving and departing from their place of work at the agreed times.

Employees must inform their Line Managers/colleagues of their whereabouts and expected time of return when they are out of the office e.g. off-site meetings/visits etc. Please refer to Lyndhurst School's Sickness Absence Policy for further details.

### **Negligence**

Negligence arises from failure by the employee to exercise reasonable care in his or her work. Employees must not cause loss or damage through carelessness, negligence, a reckless act or breach of instructions. It is only a disciplinary offence if the individual is considered to be personally responsible.

### **Refusal to Obey a Reasonable Instruction**

It is the responsibility of all employees to carry out reasonable instructions. In those circumstances where an employee refuses to obey a reasonable instruction, it will be necessary to investigate the situation and depending on the outcome of an investigation it may result in disciplinary action. See the Whistle Blowing Policy, where refusal to carry out a reasonable instruction is linked to a matter of conscience.



## **Social Behaviour**

Employees should be aware of the following expected standards of behaviour when attending work related events in and outside of work time where attendance could be seen as representing Lyndhurst School:

- The Code of Conduct Policy will still apply e.g. regarding drug / alcohol abuse, harassment and discrimination.
- Consideration and respect for others
- Those in a position of management/supervision should not behave in any way that could undermine their position
- Lyndhurst School should always be seen in a favourable way by the public

## **Fraud and Corruption**

An employee who commits a fraudulent act is liable to disciplinary action, which may include dismissal and possible criminal prosecution even for a first offence. Fraud is defined as any manipulation of an accounting system or supply system to enable public money or material to be misappropriated.

## **False Statements**

Employees must not make any false statement e.g. on subsistence/mileage claims, etc. Where there is evidence of an employee submitting such claims, he or she will be liable to disciplinary action and/or prosecution under the Theft Act 1968.

Where an employee has witnessed misconduct i.e. a fraudulent activity; he or she will have a duty to report such an incident. See also – the Whistle Blowing Policy

## **Online-Safety**

Staff must follow Lyndhurst School's Online Safety Policy and the Acceptable Use Policy.

Staff must not engage in inappropriate use of social network sites which may bring themselves, the school or the school community into disrepute. Staff should adopt the highest security settings on any personal profiles they have.

Staff should remain mindful of their digital footprint and exercise caution in all their use of social media or any other web-based presence they have. This includes written content, videos or photographs and views expressed either directly or by 'liking' certain pages or posts or following certain individuals or groups. Staff should exercise care when using dating websites where staff could encounter students.

Staff should not communicate with children via social media, websites, instant messenger accounts or text message. The only acceptable method of contact is via the use of school email accounts or telephone equipment.

## **Mobile Electronic Devices**

The use of personal mobile phones and other personal electronic devices, such as iPads and tablets or smart watches are strictly limited to staffroom or a room where no children are present. They must not be used during formal school time.



The devices must be switched off (or set in silent) at all times. In circumstances where immediate contact is needed, then staff should let family/ their child's school know to call the school number as personal mobile devices will not be accessible.

Staff members are not permitted to use their own mobile phones for contacting students or their families in a professional capacity (either on or off duty) other than in an emergency.

Personal devices must not at any time permitted to use recording equipment on their mobile phones, for example, to take recordings of children, or sharing images.

Smart watches/wearable devices:

- Use of phones (including receiving/sending texts and emails on smart watches and mobile phones) should be limited to non-contact time when no children are present e.g. in office areas, staff room, empty classrooms.
- It is also advised that staff security protect access to functions of their phone/smart watch.
- Smart watches and Fitbits are permitted to be worn by staff but to be used only as a watch when working with children. Therefore, other functions must be disabled when staff are with the children. Turn off notifications, treat watch same as a phone.
- With regard to camera phones and the camera function on a smart watch, a member of staff should never use their phone or watch to photograph a child or allow themselves to be photographed by children.

Personally owned mobile electronic devices brought into school are the responsibility of the device owner and are allowed to be used in staffroom or away from the children. Lyndhurst School accepts no responsibility for the loss, theft or damage of personally owned mobile phones or mobile devices.

### **Physical Contact with Children**

There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate and proper for staff to have physical contact with children, however it is crucial that they only do so in ways appropriate to their professional role and in relation to the child's individual needs and any agreed care plan.

Any physical contact should be in response to the child's needs at the time, of limited duration and appropriate to their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background. Adults should always therefore use their professional judgement.

Members of staff should:

- Be aware that even well-intentioned physical contact may be misconstrued by the child, an observer or any person to who this action is described
- Never touch a child in a way which may be considered indecent
- Always be prepared to explain actions and accept that all physical contact be open to scrutiny
- Never indulge in horseplay or fun fights or playing sports with the children
- Always allow/encourage children, where able, to undertake self-care tasks independently
- Ensure the way they offer comfort to a distressed child is age appropriate.
- Always tell a colleague when and how they offered comfort to a distressed child or ensure that this comfort is provided publicly



- Establish the preferences of children
- Consider alternatives where it is anticipated that a child misinterprets or is uncomfortable with physical contact
- Always explain to the child the reason why contact is necessary and what form that contact will take
- Report and record situations which may give rise to concern
- Be aware of cultural or religious views about touching and be sensitive to issues of gender

In certain curriculum areas e.g. PE, drama or music, staff may need to initiate some physical contact with children, for example, to demonstrate technique in the use of equipment, adjust posture or support a child so they can perform an activity safely or prevent injury.

Physical contact should take place only when it is necessary in relation to a particular activity. It should take place in a safe and open environment i.e. one easily observed by others and last for the minimum time necessary.

The extent of the contact should be made clear and undertaken with the permission of the child. Contact should be relevant to their age/understanding and adults should remain sensitive to any discomfort expressed verbally or non-verbally by the child.

Staff working in these areas are expected to have regard to any particular guidance or protocols provided to them on appropriate physical contact.

Extra caution should be exercised where a child is known to have suffered previous abuse or neglect. Such experiences may sometimes make a child exceptionally needy and demanding of physical contact and staff should respond sensitively by deterring the child through helping them to understand the importance of personal boundaries.

Staff must read and follow the guidance in Lyndhurst School's Positive Handling Policy. Physical contact should be avoided, de-escalation strategies should be employed and support sought from a colleague. Restraint should only be used by those who have had MAPA (Management of Actual or Potential Aggression) or other appropriate training.

### **Intimate/Personal Care**

Lyndhurst School has an Intimate Care policy which must be adhered to. All members of staff who may be called upon to provide such care should ensure they are familiar with, and act in accordance with, this policy.

### **Showers and changing**

Children are entitled to respect and privacy whilst they are changing for PE/games or swimming or on residential trips. However, there needs to be an appropriate level of supervision in order to safeguard young people, meet health and safety requirements and to ensure that bullying does not take place. The supervision should be appropriate to the needs and age of the children and sensitive to the potential for embarrassment. Staff should be vigilant about their own behaviour and announce their intention of entering a changing room. Staff should not change in the same place as children.



## **Behaviour Management and Physical Intervention**

All members of staff must avoid any form of degrading or humiliating treatment to punish a child or use force as a means of punishment. Staff are expected to act as role models and should avoid shouting at children other than as a warning in an emergency situation.

Adults may reasonably intervene to prevent a child from committing a criminal offence, injuring themselves or others, causing damage to property or engaging in behaviour prejudicial to good order and to maintain good order and discipline.

The use of physical intervention should, however, be avoided wherever possible and, where necessary, should only use minimum force and for the shortest time needed.

All members of staff are expected to understand and to follow Lyndhurst School's Promoting Good Behaviour Policy and Positive Handling Policy as appropriate to their role.

## **Sexual Conduct**

**Any** sexual behaviour by a member of staff with or towards a child is unacceptable. It is an offence for a member of staff in a position of trust to engage in sexual activity with a child under 18 years of age and sexual activity with a child could be a matter for criminal and/or disciplinary procedures.

## **Lone Working and One to One Situations Involving Children**

Staff working one to one with a child, including visiting staff from external organisations, can be more vulnerable to allegations or complaints and should ensure that, wherever possible, there is visual access and/or an open door in one-to-one situations.

Members of staff should not arrange to meet with a child from the school away from the work premises unless the necessity for this is clear and approval is obtained from a senior member of staff, the child and their parents/carers.

Staff are expected to adhere to Lyndhurst School's policies on lone working.

Lyndhurst School will conduct risk assessments in relation to the specific nature and implications of one-to-one work and any planned home visits.

## **Transporting Children/ Educational Visits**

A designated member of staff will be appointed to plan and provide oversight of all transport arrangements and respond to any concerns that may arise. Staff should not offer lifts to a child unless the need for this has been agreed by a line manager. When driving children staff need to follow the Travelling Private Vehicle Risk Assessment and two adults must be present in the vehicle.

Wherever possible and practicable it is advisable that transport is undertaken other than in private vehicles and with at least one adult additional to the driver acting as an escort. Use of personal phones as satnavs in minibuses is only permitted if approved by the



Headteacher and only the data for navigation should be accessible and all other notifications switched off.

It is a legal requirement that all passengers wear seatbelts and the driver should ensure that they do so. They should also be aware of and adhere to current legislation regarding the use of car seats or booster seats for a younger child.

In certain circumstances, it may be appropriate for staff to transport a child offsite, for example sports fixtures, swimming lessons or other out of school activities with specific permission from parents and formally authorised by a member of the Senior Leadership team.

Staff should ensure that their behaviour is safe, that the driver is not distracted while the vehicle is in motion for any reason other than an emergency. Staff should never transport a child while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

Staff should ensure that the transport arrangements and the vehicle meet all legal requirements. They should ensure that the vehicle is roadworthy, that the driver has the appropriate license for the vehicle, has a valid MOT certificate and is appropriately insured and that the maximum carrying capacity is not exceeded. Staff should not transport a single, unaccompanied child, there must always be a chaperone adult present in the car too.

Staff should never offer to transport children outside of their normal working duties, other than in an emergency or where not doing so would mean the child may be at risk. In these circumstances the matter should be recorded and reported to both their manager and the child's parent(s).

Prior to transporting a child offsite consent must be obtained from the child's parent/guardian and staff should be aware that the safety and welfare of the children is their responsibility until this is safely passed back to their parent/carer.

Lyndhurst School's Use of Private Vehicles Risk Assessment sets out the arrangements under which staff may use private vehicles to transport children.

Educational visits will be undertaken in accordance with the school's Educational Visits Policy and any member of staff accompanying children on an educational visit are required to familiarise themselves with and adhere to this policy.

If a staff member drives a car for work they must fill out the Lyndhurst School Motor Insurance form and show the School's Bursar their original driving license.

### **Administering First Aid and Medication**

Any member of school staff may be asked to become a qualified first-aider or to provide support to children with medical conditions, including the administration of medicines, but cannot be required to do so unless this forms part of their contract of employment. In addition, the staff member must accept to be an active first aider.



Any such employee will receive suitable training and will be expected to adhere to school guidelines and policies on undertaking such responsibilities.

### **Health and Safety**

All employees have a shared duty to help prevent injuries or accidents occurring at work by complying with the school's Health and Safety Policy and all instructions relating to safety and security procedures.

### **Photography, Videos and Other Images**

The school has strict rules of the taking and use of images which are contained with the school's Safeguarding Policy. All members of staff should have regard to these rules. Under no circumstances should members of staff use their personal equipment to take images of a child at, or on behalf of, the school or display or distribute images of a child except as authorised by the school and with appropriate consent.

Many school activities involve recording images as part of the curriculum, extra school activities, publicity or to celebrate an achievement. In accordance with The Data Protection Act 2018 the image of a child is personal data. Therefore, it is a requirement under the Act for consent to be obtained from the parent/guardian of a child for any images made. It is also important to consider the wishes of the child, remembering that some children do not wish to have their photograph taken or be filmed.

Using images for publicity purposes will require the consent of the individual concerned and their parent/guardian. Images should not be displayed on websites, in publications or in a public place without their consent. Staff should also be clear about the purpose of the activity and what will happen to the photographs/images/video footage when the lesson or activity is concluded.

Photographs/stills or video footage of children should only be taken using school equipment for purposes authorised by the school and should be stored securely and only on school equipment.

Staff should ensure that the proposed use of photographic/video equipment and is recorded in lesson plans. All photographs/stills and video footage should be available for scrutiny and staff should be able to justify all images/video footage made.

Staff should remain aware of the potential for images of children to be misused to create indecent images of children and/or for grooming purposes. Therefore, careful consideration should be given to how activities which are being filmed or photographed are organised and undertaken. Particular care should be given when filming or photographing young or vulnerable children who may be unable to question how or why the activities are taking place. Staff should also be mindful that children who have been abused through the use of video or photography may feel threatened by its use in a teaching environment.

Staff should read and be aware of the advice in the school's Safer Use of Images Policy.



## **Declaration of Personal Interests and Outside Commitments**

Employees are responsible for ensuring that their private interest, beliefs and personal associations do not conflict with their professional duties.

All staff should declare any non-financial interest which might conflict with the ethos or work of Lyndhurst School or any relationship which, by the employee's association with that person, might adversely affect Lyndhurst School's reputation, attract negative publicity or potentially bring into question the employee's suitability to work with children and young people.

Declarations should be made via the school bursar, [bursar@lyndhurstschool.co.uk](mailto:bursar@lyndhurstschool.co.uk), or for the Headteacher via the Chair of Governors, who should ensure that a written record is made in accordance with the school's procedure.

Declarations must extend to acknowledging the involvement of a relative or partner of an employee in an organisation with which the school does business (or seeks to do business), particularly if they hold senior managerial positions in those organisations.

Where staff are in any doubt about whether any personal relationships, interest, or outside commitments should be declared circumstances, they should either declare the information in any case or else seek further advice from the Bursar or the Headteacher.

## **Secondary Employment**

Staff can take up additional employment other than at the school provided the employment concerned does not constitute a conflict of interest or adversely affect their employment at the school.

Staff should, however, keep the school informed of other employment they undertake so that the school may ensure that the 48-hour weekly working time limit under the Working Time Regulations 1998 is adhered to. If an employee's combined working hours are likely to exceed this figure, they will be asked to sign a working time 'opt out' agreement. Staff must email the school bursar regarding this matter [bursar@lyndhurstschool.co.uk](mailto:bursar@lyndhurstschool.co.uk).

## **Criminal Charges or Convictions**

All staff must inform the Headteacher immediately of any criminal conviction, caution, reprimand or final warning or if they are the subject of a police investigation during the course of their employment.

Staff should be aware that behaviour by themselves, those with whom they have a relationship or association, or other in their personal lives, may impact on their work with children.



## **School Policies**

Lyndhurst School has in place a range of policies, some of which have been referred to in this Code of Conduct. Staff are expected to familiarise themselves with any policy the school has provided or drawn to their attention and to ensure that they take account of any future policy changes communicated to them.

If in doubt about the application or interpretation of any policy a staff member should seek advice from his/her line manager in the first instance.

## **Upholding code of conduct**

All staff are expected to uphold the code of conduct and never rely on their reputation or that of Lyndhurst School to protect them. If a staff member has behaved inappropriately, they will be subject to our disciplinary procedures. Depending on the seriousness of the situation, they might be asked to leave Lyndhurst School. In addition, the school have to report the concerns to statutory agencies such as the police and/or the local authority child protection services. If a staff member becomes aware of any breaches of this code, they must report them to the appropriate person (DSL, Headteacher or Chair of Governors). If necessary, they should follow the whistleblowing procedure and safeguarding and child protection procedures.

In addition to this code of conduct all staff must uphold the overarching Lyndhurst School Our Values which applies to children, parents and staff. The philosophy is 'At Lyndhurst School we want you to be the best version of yourself by being brilliant, brave, curious, kind and you.'

## **Status of Code of Conduct**

The content and operation of this policy is reviewed as and when deemed necessary but at least every 3 years by the Senior Leadership Team. The policy is discretionary and does not confer any contractual rights.

**Staff will be expected to have regard to any updates to this code which have been brought to their attention.**



## APPENDIX ONE

### Adherence

All Staff Must Adhere to the following:

#### **Responsibility of Staff and Volunteers**

You are responsible for:

- prioritising the welfare of children
- providing a safe environment for children
- upholding Lyndhurst School values, policies
- staying within the law
- modelling good behaviour for children to follow
- challenging all inappropriate behaviour
- reporting any breaches of the staff code of conduct code
- reporting all concerns about abusive behaviour

#### **Respecting children**

You should:

- listen to and respect children at all times
- value and take children's contributions seriously
- actively involve them in planning activities wherever possible
- respect a child's right to personal privacy as far as possible

#### **Diversity and Inclusion**

You should:

- treat children fairly and without prejudice or discrimination
- understand that children are individuals with individual needs
- respect differences in gender, sexual orientation, culture, race, ethnicity, disability and religious belief systems
- appreciate that all participants bring something valuable and different to Lyndhurst School
- challenge discrimination and prejudice
- encourage children to speak out about attitudes or behaviour that makes them uncomfortable.

#### **Appropriate Relationships**

You should:

- promote relationships that are based on openness, honesty, trust and respect
- avoid showing favouritism
- be patient with others
- exercise caution when you are discussing sensitive issues with children
- ensure your contact with children is appropriate and relevant to the nature of the activity you are involved in



- ensure that whenever possible, there is more than one adult present during activities with children - if a situation arises where you are alone with a child or young person, ensure that you are within sight or can be heard by other adults- if a child specifically asks for or needs some individual time with you, ensure other staff or volunteers know where you and the child are
- only provide personal care in an emergency and make sure there is more than one adult present if possible

### **Inappropriate behaviour**

When working with children you must **not**:

- allow concerns or allegations to go unreported
- take unnecessary risks
- smoke, consume alcohol or use illegal substances
- develop inappropriate relationships with children and young people
- make inappropriate promises to children
- engage in behaviour that is in any way abusive
- let children have your personal contact details (mobile number, email or postal address)
- have contact with children via a personal social media account
- act in a way that can be perceived as threatening or intrusive
- patronise or belittle children
- use banter
- make sarcastic, insensitive, derogatory or sexually suggestive comments or gestures to or in front of children.



## APPENDIX TWO

### Lyndhurst School Our Values

# Our Values

*Be the best version of yourself!*

### Be Brilliant

- ★ Everyone is brilliant at something
- ★ You work hard and are part of the school community
- ★ You always give your best
- ★ You celebrate other people's successes and achievements





- ★ You are positive influencers and ask questions
- ★ You discover new and better ways to do things
- ★ You speak up if you have an idea and voice your opinion

### Be Brave



### Be Curious

- ★ You believe anything is possible and love to learn
- ★ You try and explore new things
- ★ You know you will sometimes make mistakes but that you will learn from them





- ★ You are kind to everyone
- ★ You care and are considerate of other people's feelings
- ★ You respect yourself, others and our environment

### Be Kind



### Be You

- ★ You are honest
- ★ You are true to your own feelings
- ★ Everyone is different, and you know that is good



### Nurturing Mind, Body and Soul

