

Perrott Hill Staff Code



Part 1 of this code lays out our values and educational principles. Staff are expected to support and promote these through their own good professional conduct.

Part 2, the Staff Code of Conduct, must be read and understood by all staff working at Perrott Hill. It is an important part of keeping children safe and making staff aware of expected professional conduct and behaviour.

1. Culture

Our aim is to have a culture where both pupils and staff can thrive.

Staff will be happiest, most willing and most effective when their own values and actions fit closely with the culture within which they work. Where this is not the case, conversely, staff can grow unhappy and ineffective. The following principles underpin the culture we seek to achieve at Perrott Hill and, as such, all staff – both existing and prospective – should feel aligned with them in order to enjoy thriving at the School and to form what will in turn be a thriving and supportive community:

Values

- Everything should be to the end benefit of the pupils. In working to this end, the School should have a positive impact on as many people as possible.
- We live by the values of honesty, kindness, respect, forgiveness and humility.*
- We believe in childhood, but understand our role in guiding and leading our pupils towards the next stage of their lives.
- Every child deserves to be championed.
- We should learn to look beyond what we can see.
- We admire a flexibility of mind and a generosity of spirit that means staff are prepared to go outside their formal remit in the interests of the pupils and as befits a school such as ours.
- In all ways, staff should be excellent role models for the pupils.
- We value a sense of humour as helping to develop a highly positive collegiate atmosphere
- We value an environment where staff's health in both body and mind is taken seriously and supported.

Educational principles

- We believe in great Education with a capital 'E', pursuing a breadth of opportunity and experience, promoting the development of character and interests.
- We value different forms of intelligence.
- We value enthusiasm and effort, praising wherever this is found.
- We value curiosity and an openness of mind.

* Humility can be misunderstood as a weak characteristic. On the contrary, humility is a powerful key to learning and growth; pride promotes mediocrity, as the proud feel they have nothing left to learn. Humility does not mean holding opinions more weakly than others; it means treating those with contrary opinions with respect and friendship.

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- We believe that examination success is one by-product of childhood and an excellent Education, not the measure or definition of it.
- We aim for the growth of both knowledge and skills in all pupils, believing that neither detracts from the other.
- We believe that literacy and numeracy are essential to good progress and should be supported by all teachers.
- We believe that feedback on work should be timely and respond to the needs of the individual pupil so that they can actively engage with the feedback.
- We believe that we can all continuously improve as teachers and we promote a 'teacher learning community'.
- Where pupil relations fray, we believe in restoration, not retribution, achieved through educating and supporting the children.

2. Staff Code of Conduct

The professional conduct and excellence of the staff is the foundation stone upon which the School is built. The Code of Conduct must be complied with at all times and failure to do so is likely to be dealt with through the established disciplinary procedures.

Staff are expected to adhere to the policies and procedures of the School. In particular, this Code of Conduct should be read in conjunction with the *Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy*, the *Use of Reasonable Force Policy*, the *Whistleblowing Policy*, the *Health & Safety Policy*, the *Behaviour & Exclusion Policy*, the relevant sections of the *ESafety Policy* and the *Staff Acceptable Use Policy*, and for colleagues teaching Pre-Prep, the *Intimate Care Policy*.

Staff are entrusted to create the best possible learning environment for the pupils, foremost in which is the need to safeguard and promote their wellbeing. Whereas a positive and supportive demeanour, common sense and good professional practice are the overriding ingredients needed to achieve this, together with following school policies, it is necessary to direct staff to two documents which should inform their conduct at all times:

- i. ***Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings (Oct 2015)***, adapted by the Safer Recruitment Consortium from an original ISRC/DfE document. <http://www.safeguardingschools.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Guidance-for-Safer-Working-Practices-2015-final1.pdf>

All particular points of guidance for staff within this document should be noted and the expectation is that they are followed unless there are exceptional reasons not to, or unless the elaboration below specifies otherwise. If staff have any queries or concerns relating to the duties of the School, as employer, as might be raised in the document, they should discuss these either with the Head or the Bursar as may seem appropriate to the particular matter.

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- ii. **Teachers' Standards (2012)**. These do not officially apply to the independent sector but should guide practice. They are comprehensive. https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/283566/Teachers_standard_information.pdf

The caveat with regards to these Standards at Perrott Hill is that the cultural context laid out above brings an additional dimension to certain amongst them. For example, the standard to 'demonstrate a critical understanding of developments in the subject and curriculum areas, and promote the value of scholarship' should not be done to the detriment of promoting the value of other intelligences and activities that fall within an all-round Education.

Extracts and elaboration

The following points from *Guidance for safer working practice...* are highlighted, but not to the exclusion of the remainder of the document and staff are to ensure they are familiar with the whole:

- 'Staff are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions. Staff should discuss and/or take advice promptly from either the Deputy Heads or the Head if they have acted in a way which may give rise to concern.'
- 'Staff should not make unprofessional personal comments which scapegoat, demean or humiliate *or might be interpreted as such.*' The italics are for this Staff Code and direct staff to consider the age and general wherewithal of a pupil to receive comments. When it is necessary to reprimand a child, staff should always do so advisedly and with this guidance in mind.
- Further to the above, staff should avoid shouting at children, particularly individual children, other than as a warning in an emergency/safety situation. (There is a difference between raising one's voice and shouting. The former may well be necessary to be heard amidst a large group of talking children or to gain children's attention in a non-emergency/non-safety situation. This is fine. The latter is contrary to the spirit of this code and the desired atmosphere at the School.)
- 'Adults should exercise care when selecting children for specific activities, jobs or privileges in order to avoid perceptions of favouritism or injustice. Similar care should be taken when pupils are excluded from an activity. Methods of selection and exclusion should always be subject to clear, fair and agreed criteria.' (The Director of Sport, Head of Music and Head of Drama in particular should ensure

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that general selection criteria and processes are outlined in the department handbooks for their respective department members to refer to as appropriate.)

- With so many staff having children in the school, Section 11, *Social contact outside of the workplace*, should be read carefully, along with advisory guidance on grooming appended to the *Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy*. Staff should always take care to note that such guidance is available to raise awareness of what typifies grooming behaviour and so to help guard against unwittingly replicating such behaviour in a way that might be *perceived* incorrectly.

Personal communication with other parents made in a social context does not need to be agreed by senior management. However, any direct communication with pupils does. (Note that invitations to birthday parties and play dates that are made via parents do not, therefore, need to be agreed by senior management.)

Staff with children at the school must take great care to keep the boundaries of parent and teacher clearly defined and be seen to act professionally and independent of their position as a parent at all times. A heightened awareness of how they may be perceived by a pupil who has, for example, had some bad relations with the member of staff's child is crucial in protecting both their own, their child's and the school's position. Staff should relate to all pupils in an absolutely professional manner.

- Staff should pay close attention to Sections 13 & 14 of *Guidance for safer working practice...* regarding forms of physical contact with pupils. To be clear, however, the School acknowledges the place of informal physical contact befitting a 'family atmosphere' such as 'High 5s' in congratulation or such as a pat on a shoulder as part of a greeting. So long as such instances are unambiguous and thus in keeping with the spirit of Sections 13 & 14, then they are acceptable.
- There may be rare occasions when professional judgements are made which directly contravene the guidance in *Guidance for safer working practice....* In these circumstances, staff will always advise the Head or Pastoral Deputy Head of the justification for any such action already taken or proposed.

Matters in addition to the contents of the national guidance documents above in i. and ii.

Staff wellbeing

Staff wellbeing is of the utmost importance. If any member of staff feels their wellbeing is suffering as a result of any aspect of their work, they should communicate in confidence

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with either the Head or the Bursar, as may seem appropriate to the matter in question, in order that the situation can be managed. Mike Johnston-Price (the School's affiliated life coach/counsellor) can be approached by staff for private work, should staff so wish.

Staff medication

All medication, prescribed or otherwise, is to be stored by members of staff only in their respective staff room (domestic or teaching). In the domestic staff room, there is a coded cabinet for this purpose.

In the unlikely event that a member of staff is well enough to be at work but requires medication that needs refrigeration – such as antibiotics – the only fridge to be used is that in the Surgery. It must be passed via the School Nurse for storage so that they are aware, and must be clearly labelled.

(The above requirements obviously do not apply to those living in and using on-site accommodation for the storage.)

Transportation of pupils

Staff needing to transport a child alone, either in a school vehicle or in their private vehicle, should fill in the relevant form, available from the School Office and as an appendix to the *Health & Safety Policy*.

Political Views

Through the PSHE syllabus and certain other curricular and extra-curricular areas, a respect for democracy and support for participation in the democratic process are promoted. Conversely, the promotion of partisan political views in the teaching of any subject in the School is not appropriate. When occasion arises, staff are expected to promote respect and tolerance through a balanced presentation of opposing views such as those views exist within what national and international law permits.