

Barley Lane School

Hard work, humility, kindness

BLS code of conduct

Recruiting: recruit, retain and develop staff who are well suited to our challenging work most importantly folk who are hard-working, safe and ethical people and achieve this by being diligent and rigorous throughout the recruitment process.

Wellbeing and safeguarding: we must be vigilant about the safety and welfare of everyone in our community including our own well-being and not least the children's and in our challenging and risky setting apply intelligent and pragmatic dynamic risk assessment to all we do: we will then constantly intelligently and pro-actively reflect and modify suitably our behaviour and work and interventions to keep everyone safe.

We are safer together: given the variety and multiplicity and nuance of risk and challenge in our work we must use each other as a resource and safety net to test and explore risks and how we manage them and never be isolated or maverick. We have a senior "school lead" each day, a day book-ended by team briefing/debriefing so there is no excuse for poor and risky decisions and actions that neglect open sharing, consultation and reflection.

Teamwork: in that spirit we are safer and the children are safer when we work in pairs, small groups and as a whole team. Working alone with individual children is of course risky but equally must happen sometimes for example accompanying a student to an interview or as we must sometimes taking them home but when we do we must share and risk assess with the school lead and note on CPOMs briefly our reasoning and any patterns that suggest grooming behaviours intended or accidental quickly identified and challenged.

Touch: carries risk, be careful to apply the school's positive handling training and guidance and whilst a brief congratulatory pat on the shoulder can communicate a great deal any greater physical contact beyond a physical intervention recorded in the established way should be noted and explained to the head-teacher (we must have the caveat that a distressed child can be comforted for example)

Language too carries risks: too often risks are created around the sloppy and careless use of language and this includes the use of sarcasm and "humour": polite self-deprecation and light touch humour and silliness that are wholly and reliably warm and respectful and inclusive are a part of all our wellbeing and humanity but always with kindness.

Be seen: being visible to others, staff and children, is a necessary protection and good working habit that requires rigour and pro-activity: open that door, pull up those blinds avoid corners and corridors. Be seen. Be open. Be obvious.

Be transparent: share errors and mistakes immediately and fully with the head-teacher do not allow the benign error to look malign because of a failure to promptly and openly and fully disclose it.

Be a positive safe role model: be boundaried, dignified and disciplined, courteous and measured. Retain the necessary formality and distance in your role. Never fall victim to trendy vicar syndrome. You can be friendly but never a friend: be sure all your behaviours always preserve that distinction and difference.

Be committed but separate: keep the boundaries absolutely, emphatically clear. Yours is a professional commitment and compassion confined solely to your professional duties in school. Never engage with children beyond or outside them. No child must ever see you as something more. Your relationship with families too must be positive but never close or over familiar and a professional distance and clear separation must be maintained: never socialise or engage or interact with children or their families beyond school and what are necessary, clear and safe professional interactions in any way including and significantly in these times the multiplicity and diversity of technology, social media, the internet, mobile telephones.....

Be challenging and be challenged: never sit on an anxiety or concern of any kind around any colleague and worries or concerns about each other should be shared with Mr MacCourt* who contacts the nominated child protection officers within the local education authority (these are called LADOs and deal with serious concerns about teachers and staff including head-teachers) ladosecure-mailbox@devon.gcsx.gov.uk. There is nothing to stop you as an individual going direct to LADOs. Any concerns about Mr MacCourt should be shared with the school's chair and safeguarding governor Damian Furniss damian.furniss@barleylane.devon.sch.uk

Be law abiding and more: in our setting any illegal activity however benignly it may be perceived in wider society compromises and diminishes us and therefore the children. We must strive to be model citizens.

Be cautious and consultative: be vigilant around the code and safe-working generally and if in doubt you must seek support and guidance and if necessary the clarity instruction to protect you and the children

* Sometimes worries and concerns are just hard to express to people in school: the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline 0800 028 0285 line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday and email: help@nspcc.org.uk