



3.1

PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT POLICY

Aim

Unlike 3.2, this policy is not founded in statutory law, rather it reflects the individuality and professional standards of the school.

It is vital for the staff at The Downs to reflect the exceptional ethos of the school, to model civilised behaviour for the children and to provide a professional service beyond the expectations of customers. This policy provides an outline as to expectations.

Code of Dress

- **The Downs's Preparatory School**

General Appearance: The appearance of the staff sends a vital message to the pupils, current and prospective parents, and visitors. Dress should therefore be professional, respectable and appropriate to the task. Casual dress is acceptable for meetings and inset days held before the beginning of term.

On a normal working day, men should wear a sports jacket or a suit, with a collar and tie. On more formal occasions such as Speech Day, Parents Evenings and the Carol Service, a suit should be worn. Men should not wear visual piercings and tattoos should not be visible.

On a normal working day ladies should wear suitable professional clothes that reflect the same standard as the gentlemen. Ladies should wear a jacket. They might also wear tailored trousers, a dress or a skirt and a blouse. On more formal days all ladies should wear dresses, skirts or suits. Tattoos should not be visible.

It is inappropriate for any staff to wear trainers other than for games.

PE & Games: Staff regularly taking PE may need to wear a tracksuit. As far as possible it should be the school's tracksuit, however on occasion it may be necessary to wear a personal tracksuit. This must be clean and presentable.

Staff who take games will change appropriately for the activity. They will look tidy and smart, usually wearing the School sportswear. Changing facilities are available in the Sports Hall. Games coaches should not wear tracksuits in the classroom unless it is essential.

Staff accompanying teams should dress as they would on a normal working day unless they are involved in umpiring or refereeing duties. Those umpiring cricket matches should wear a cricket sweater and not a tracksuit.

If you have any doubt about the code of dress, then please consult the Head or the Heads of Bertie's, the Pre-Prep and Prep School.

- **Bertie's Nursery School**

Staff at Bertie's are by the nature of the job likely to dress slightly more informally than those at the school. Some uniform is provided but at all times colleagues must look presentable and professional. Closed in shoes are essential.

Tattoos must not be seen by customers and children. Men may not wear jewellery that is visible.

Attendance

Punctuality is vital as it sends the right message to the children and ensures the effective and efficient running of the school. It is therefore important that members of staff are at the right place at the right time. It should be noted that school bells are rarely used at The Downs and never used at Bertie's.

- **Lessons**

Lessons should always begin on time. Pupils should not be released until the end of a lesson, although teachers should be mindful that pupils may have a commitment as soon as the lesson has concluded. Lessons should be well prepared and therefore there should not be any necessity for teachers to leave a classroom for the duration of a lesson.

- **Assembly**

Assembly is an opportunity for the whole community to celebrate success and to reflect on the School's values together. All members of staff attend assemblies unless the Head or a member of the Leadership Team has agreed otherwise.

- **House Meetings**

All staff are members of a house and therefore they are expected to attend House Meetings. These take place at least once every half term.

- **Friday Informal Concerts**

As staff would otherwise be teaching, they are expected to attend Friday Informal Concerts as it is important for staff to display an interest in the pupils' achievements and to value all cultures.

- **Lunch**

All members of staff attend lunch. It is an important social occasion and a time when staff are able to educate the children about their eating habits. Members of staff on duty are not expected to sit in the dining room as they may want to leave early before undertaking their duties when the children have been released. After lunch staff may wish to give notices to the School.

Illness

In the event of illness, members of staff need to inform the school or Bertie's as soon as possible. At school the Head of the Pre-Prep or Prep must be informed, thereafter any member of the Curriculum Group. At Bertie's the Head or the Deputy must be advised. If possible this contact should occur the evening before the absence to create the time to cover the absence. The school should be regularly informed of circumstances in the case of sustained illness, a doctor's note being necessary after a week. On return the Head and/or HR should be advised and furnished with a 'Fit for Work' note as relevant.

Absence

If a member of staff needs to be absent from school, the Head or the HR Officer should be consulted. The School will take a compassionate view as much as possible however, the effective running of the business that is The Downs School cannot be compromised.

Appellation at The Downs

While members of staff will be on Christian name terms socially, surnames and titles should normally be used in front of children.

When addressing children the staff should use Christian names. In any formal setting pupils' full Christian names should be used rather than nick names.

It is vital that pupils exhibit respect for adults. The children are expected to address male members of staff and visitors as 'Sir'. Female members of staff should insist on being addressed as 'Mrs' or 'Miss', for example Mrs Lake or Miss Wylde. If in doubt pupils should address ladies as "Ma'm" – as in 'farm'.

Staff Rooms

- **The Downs Preparatory School**

There are two staff rooms at The Downs. The Drawing Room is a social room where coffee and tea are available at all times. China mugs are restricted to this room and they should not be carried around the School. Use of a refillable flask should be limited. The daily papers are also available in this room.

The Staff Resources Room is a working room that is open all the time. Staff can access stationery, computers, a laminator, the photocopier and various

other resources in this room. Post and messages for members of staff are added to the appropriate pigeon holes which should be checked daily.

Parents must not be taken into staff rooms as there will be confidential notices displayed.

- **Bertie's**

The Staff Room at Bertie's is in the garden and known as "the pod". Colleagues can find some sanctuary during break time in this facility not least as it overlooks the rural landscape. Each member of staff has a lockup in room and there are tea and coffee making facilities.

Internal Communication

All members of staff are expected to check their emails at least once a day. Much of the communication at The Downs takes place by email.

Staff notice-boards are in the Resources Room. Members of staff are expected to check the boards every morning although notification of change is often also made by email.

At The Downs staff pigeon holes are in the resources Room. They should be checked daily.

A weekly 'updates timetable' is emailed and continually displayed in the Resources Room. Any other changes made to the termly calendar are displayed as far in advance as possible. Again these changes are usually also communicated by email.

Staff Meetings

- **The Downs Preparatory School**

All staff attend Staff Meetings. These are times when pertinent issues are discussed. Prompt attendance is necessary. Children are always the first item on the agenda.

A Staff Meeting is held at the beginning of every term as part of Inset Training. The dates of the Inset Meetings are published in the school calendar well in advance.

A weekly Staff Meeting is held during break at 10.35am. All members of staff except those on duty, attend. The dates are published in the School calendar and should be noted as the day changes each week. Members of staff are invited to raise pertinent issues during AOB. Minutes are published by email and stored in the Staff Resources "S" drive, after the meeting.

Each Wednesday evening (4.00pm) the Assistant Head: Pre-Prep holds a Staff Meeting for the Pre-Prep staff. All must attend. Minutes are distributed by email.

Three times a term Pastoral Care and Attainment Meetings are held. These take place in the evening after school at 5.00pm. The theme of the meetings is the all-round progress of individual children. Matrons, Teaching staff and members of the Learning Support Department attend. Minutes are shared on Onedrive.

- **Bertie's**

Staff Meetings are held once a month at 6.00pm. All staff attend. A buffet supper is provided as the meeting is usually 2 hours. The Nursery Manager drives the meeting but there are opportunities for all members of staff to contribute towards AOB.

External Communication

Should parents request a meeting or other form of communication (text, email, phone) staff must respond within 24 hours. This response should at least be a 'holding message' although a meeting or formal reply is much more desirable.

If it is necessary to meet parents for a formal discussion, staff should arrange the appointment after school or well before the beginning of school. In this way the school routine will not be adversely effected.

Team selections are published in two places; in the lobby and on SOCs via the website. Team sheets should be displayed at least 24 hours in advance. The Director of Sport will convey detailed instruction in this regard.

The Downs Diary is published by email at the end of every week to highlight any changes to the diary.

At Bertie's a newsletter is published every week containing general information for parents.

Customer Care

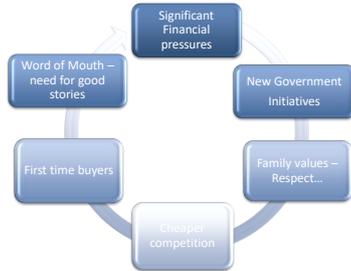
Exceptional customer service is a marketing advantage. At The Downs it is expected that all employees strive to provide exceptional customer service. In service training is often provided to assist all members of staff develop and understand essential customer service skills. The aim of all colleagues must be to convert customers (parents) and visitors to become advocates of the school.

Parents are paying customers and the success of the business that is The Downs School directly correlates to the number of paying customers. As with all service customers they should be treated with respect and courtesy and their concerns and anxieties should be carefully considered. They are not share-holders and they do not have the right to demand change in the business but they have a right and appreciate honest, straight forward answers presented in a sensitive manner. The professionalism of staff in this communication is absolutely essential.

The parents at The Downs School are very supportive. They are regularly involved in school events and they attend numerous activities. There then inevitably exist strong informal relations between staff and parents. These relations are to be applauded but staff must be mindful of the dangers of over familiarisation.

Exceptional Customer Service

- it's never been more important



ASM 3

7

Basic Customer Service



ASM 3

8

5 Elements of Customer Service



ASM 3

9

In the event of conflict or disagreement, members of staff should always consult with a member of the Leadership Team or the Head of Bertie's in the event of anxiety and / or doubt. In any event the following diagram illustrates an effective process of conflict resolution. Essentially members of staff should try to exceed the expectations of the customer.



ASM 3

Customer Service

10

Confidentiality

General gossip is detrimental to the reputation of The Downs School. Inaccuracies should be corrected however confidential information regarding children, staff, and school business must never become the preserve of parents and/or the public. Should staff compromise the school's privacy, the circumstances will be considered extremely seriously.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Code of Professional Conduct will be monitored by the Leadership Team by observation and discussion with staff.

This policy (or Handbook) was updated on	Signed on behalf of the School/Nursery	Date for next review
<i>01.03.2020</i>	<i>M Gunn</i>	<i>01.09.21</i>

Overview required by Safeguarding Committee - date	Policy upload to ISI Portal - date	Policy uploaded to website(s) - date
<i>01.03.2020</i>	<i>n/a</i>	<i>n/a</i>