



# CUMNOR HOUSE SUSSEX

NURSERY, PRE-PREP & PREP SCHOOL



*Staff Handbook*

## THE STAFF HANDBOOK - INTRODUCTION

The Staff Handbook is for all teaching and support staff and offers information on a wide range of subjects, related to the School and your employment. All employees should familiarise themselves with its content.

It is designed to help you settle into the School by telling you a little about our background, objectives, the facilities, amenities and benefits open to staff, the employment policy framework within which we operate and the codes of conduct and safety standards required.

This document will develop and change, and we will endeavour to keep it up to date. We reserve the right to vary the terms of the Handbook at any time and will endeavour to give you one month's notice of any variation.

The contents of this Handbook do not form part of your contract of employment, but you are required to comply with the provisions, rules and procedures set out within it. Where there is any difference between the terms and conditions set out in your contract of employment or offer letter, and the contents of this Handbook, the terms and conditions of your contract of employment will prevail.

We hope that you will read the handbook in its entirety, but the table of contents offers ready reference and will help you quickly locate those subjects in which you are particularly interested.

Although it is designed to answer many of your questions, please feel free to ask your Department Head/Line Manager/HR about anything which remains unclear.

The Head of HR will welcome any suggestions you may have to improve the handbook.

In addition to the policies and procedures contained within this Staff Handbook it is important that you also read and are aware of all other policies, rules, and procedures appropriate to your role at the School, which can be found on the school drive; <https://cumnorhousesussex.sharepoint.com/sites/SchoolPoliciesPDF>

Some of these policies and procedures are appended to this handbook for reference but to read the full policy and procedures refer to our school drive.

# Welcome

Welcome to Cumnor House Sussex (referred to throughout this handbook as “We” or “the School”).

Our strength as a School is due to the skills and abilities of colleagues like you. We look forward to a long and successful working relationship with you and sincerely hope that your time with us is enjoyable and rewarding.

Cumnor House School, Sussex has a particular pride in our reputation for delivering excellence, born out by our excellent recent Inspection reports, over 125 scholarships to senior schools over the past five years, and an outstanding co-educational offering that includes recent national sporting, musical and dramatic success. At Cumnor House we recognise that this success is built very much on the commitment and skills of our staff.

The success of the School and the well-being of its staff depend very largely on co-operation, trust and respect between all levels of staff, and to promote this, the handbook contains information on the standards that must be maintained.

I hope you will find the handbook useful and that it helps you to become part of our team.

**Fergus Llewellyn**  
Head  
Cumnor House School, Sussex



## ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Cumnor House School, Sussex is a leading independent Prep School offering day and flexi-boarding to some 400 girls and boys aged between 2 and 13.

It is a traditional but forward-thinking family school with an ethos built on Christian values, creating a safe and unhurried childhood for active and ambitious children.

The School provides every aspect of a broad and excellent education within beautiful country surroundings. Founded over 80 years ago in Croydon, the School moved to its current location in 1948. It now comprises a thriving Nursery, Pre-Prep and Prep, with a variety of boarding options offered in the last two years. Extensive investment in recent years has provided Cumnor with facilities unrivalled in the prep school sector, including a superb Nursery (recently extended), a Science Centre (three laboratories with prep room and a DT studio), a full-size all-weather pitch, a nine-hole golf course and a Forest School.

These are exciting and important times for the School as it looks to solidify its reputation as a leading independent prep school in the South of England. Alongside a boarding provision for Years 7 and 8, the School offers flexible wrap-around childcare from 7.00 am until 7.00 pm for all children throughout the School. Nursery children can be delivered in time to have breakfast alongside the older boarders and then picked up ready for bed at night. For older children, from Reception onwards, there is a Breakfast Club, after-school activities, after-school clubs, extended care, a Supper Club and supervision. Flexible childcare is also offered out of term time, and the Nursery is open 50 weeks a year, available to the whole community. Holiday Clubs and Sports Camps are also offered throughout the year. Ethos Cumnor's guiding tenet is that happiness and security for a child are paramount.

The School aims to inspire children to become the very best version of themselves. Teachers take pride in discovering each child's individual talents, building confidence, and encouraging questioning minds, enabling each one to realise their personal potential both inside and outside the classroom. The School aims to seek the best in and for each child and to be ambitious for every one of them, providing a balanced, broad and happy education for all. The success of this commitment is clearly evidenced in the confident and well-rounded children who leave the School at the end of Year 8, ready for the next stage of their educational journey, whilst having achieved impressive results, to a range of the top national and local senior schools and colleges across the country.

Cumnor is committed to creating and sustaining an environment that values and celebrates the diversity of both staff and pupils. The School believes in equal opportunity for everyone, irrespective of age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, nationality or national or ethnic origins, religion or belief, sexual orientation or socio-economic background.

- **Our Staff**

We recognise the benefit derived from investing in people through training and development to constantly improve efficiency and quality of service.

- **Simplicity**

Constant attention is paid to keeping all systems as simple and straightforward as possible.

- **Integrity**

We undertake to demonstrate the highest standard of integrity in all elements of our school.



# Cumnor House Sussex

## Vision & Strategy

### Excellence

#### Cumnor is renowned for excellence

- Outstanding staff and exemplary recruitment, retention, training and development
- Superior safeguarding, compliance and pastoral care
- Professional, responsive and efficient internal and external communication
- Senior school entry and scholarship success
- Inspiring facilities and grounds
- Development of IT provision
- Curriculum review
- Sustainability review including uniform design and procurement

### Encouragement

#### Cumnor has a big-hearted community founded on kindness and encouragement

- Inspiration, aspiration and achievement
- Warmth, praise, support and fun
- Celebration of success
- Enhanced pupil voice and pupil leadership
- Embedded charitable strategy and fundraising goals
- Parent partnerships, guidance and resources

### Inclusivity

#### Cumnor is warm, welcoming and inclusive, putting families and their needs first

- Committed to encouraging and supporting increased diversity
- The Cumnor Foundation
- Increased formal and informal social activities and engaged parent social reps
- Agile and flexible wrap around care including holiday clubs and Boarding provision

### Individual Care & Response

#### Cumnor is founded on strong personal relationships; staff to pupil, staff to parents and staff to staff

- Increased use of individualised data and tracking
- Streamlined admissions process and onboarding
- Enhanced pastoral care including The Wellbeing Hub and AS Tracking
- Curriculum review
- Increased parent interaction with Headmaster and SLT
- Development of our Learning Enhancement Department
- Bespoke Senior School guidance



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## 1. ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURES

### Governors

Our dedicated and committed team of School Governors bring a wide range of skills and experience to their role, spanning business, politics, law, medicine and of course, academia and education.

James Tanner - Chair of Board and F&GP  
Jason McCaldin - Deputy Chair of Board and F&GP  
Sarah McConnell - Head of F&GP, & Safeguarding  
Caroline Brand - Head of Safeguarding  
Nicky Collins - Head of Education  
Annie Emery - F&GP  
Fred Reynolds - F&GP (Development Governor)  
Steve Miller - Education and F&GP  
Gill Siebert - Safeguarding and Education  
James Hempsted-Kingham - Safeguarding (Boarding Governor)

All Governors can be contacted via the Clerk to the Governors, Leigh Stark (Bursar)

### The Senior Leadership Team (SLT)

The Head is responsible for the day to day running of the School in all its departments and also, in conjunction with the Governors, for long term planning.

The top level of management comprises the Head, Fergus Llewellyn, Bursar, Leigh Stark the Deputy Head of Academic, Bruno Shovelton, Deputy Head Pastoral and DSL, Mike Matthews, Head of Pre-Prep, Sarah Gibson

### Senior Management Team (SMT)

SENCO – Fiona Merritt  
Director of Pupil Welfare – Caroline Park  
Director of Pastoral Tracking and Enrichment – Henry Tresidder

## 2. STAFF WELLBEING AND BENEFITS

We depend upon our staff, each one of whom is valued for the contribution they make to the reputation and success of the School, which we recognise by the tangible benefits described in more detail in this handbook.

### 2.1 Employee Assistance Programme

We support staff by offering access to WeCare, which offers employees a modern and easy way to access a wide range of services.

WeCare looks after employees' wellbeing with a 24/7 UK-based online GP, mental health counselling, a get fit programme, legal and financial guidance, plus much more. Using your phone, tablet or desktop, employees and their immediate family have 24/7 access to thousands of experts.

What is included:

- Health and Wellbeing
  - Mental Health – up to 10 sessions of counselling and guidance
  - Life events counselling – personalised counselling following a life event
  - Burnout prevention – Tackle burnout before it becomes a problem

- 24/7 GP Consultation – available through a video or phone call, if the GP thinks a prescription is needed employees can also have private prescriptions delivered to their front door.
  - Smoking Cessation – stop smoking with support from experts
  - Second medical opinion – Get a second opinion on a diagnosis, treatment or the need for surgery.
- Healthy Living
    - Get fit programme
    - Diet Support
    - Health diet at work
  - Financial and legal Wellbeing
    - Financial guidance
    - Legal Guidance

MyStrength – Personalised support based on your situation and preferences. Chat with a myStrength guide for one-to-one support with exercises. Exercises and practical guidance on mindfulness, meditation, improving mood, managing anxious thoughts, pregnancy, early parenting, improving sleep, reducing stress and much more.

Toothfairy - Connect and chat to a UK dentist in minutes for personalised advice. To manage issues early and prevent costly treatment in the future. Save time visiting a dentist with prescriptions issued in 24 hours. Access support and advice to help you improve your oral health.

To access the different apps please contact HR, or check posters placed around the school for the QR codes, our scheme number is **A23198** to access.

## **2.2 Pensions**

The School abides by all relevant pension regulations and thus, where applicable, staff will be auto enrolled into a suitable pension after 3 months from start of employment..

The School's chosen pension provider and the terms of any pension scheme offered are subject to regular review and may change from time to time. Our current pension scheme is with Royal London.

If you wish to opt out of the pension, please contact our Accounts team.

We currently contribute up to 12% of salary into the pension scheme for all eligible staff. Please inform either HR or accounts with the amount you wish to contribute to the scheme.

## **2.3 School Fee Remission**

Employees who have children eligible to attend the School, and who have satisfied the entry criteria as set out in the School's Admission Policy and awarded a place, may receive a fee remission in accordance with this policy.

Fee remissions are granted at the absolute discretion of the Governors and are subject to amendment or withdrawal.

## **2.4 Catering**

Holdroyd Howe are the school's caterers, school dinners are served every day between 12.00 and 14.00 in the dining hall/bistro, supper is served from 6pm on Tue/Wed/Thu. There is no charge to staff for catering served on site.

There is a coffee machine in the bistro available all day along with a variety of teas. Tea and coffee are served at break times in the Common Room.

There is also a kitchen for staff use with microwaves in the main building next to the dining room.

Kitchens located around the school offer staff coffee or tea making facilities.

### **2.5 Death in Service Benefit**

We currently offer death in service benefit, the offer is three times annual salary, subject to constant review. Please ensure you complete an expression of wish form and hand to HR.

### **2.6 Staff Parking**

Staff car parking is available in the car park next to the hockey pitches, parking is not permitted in the main car park. Vehicles must not be parked in any place within the school grounds other than which has been allocated for the purpose. On Wednesday, match days we request that staff use the furthest part of car park to allow room for overflow for parent parking. Out of hours it is barrier operated.

### **2.7 Swimming Pool**

Our indoor and outdoor swimming pools can be utilised by staff in the designated times, please check those timings with the Pool Manager.

### **2.8 Dogs in the workplace**

Employees must contact HR should they wish to bring their dog to work, they will only be permitted at the discretion of the Head and the following will be taken into account;

- Must be adequately trained
- Not allowed in the classrooms, eating areas, labs, basements, places with sensitive materials or eating areas
- Be clean, properly vaccinated and free of parasites
- Ensure the pet will not cause allergies or other medical problems for their co-workers
- Have the agreement of colleagues they will share the space with
- Sign waivers that state they are solely responsible for their dog's behaviour and well-being, including any mess created
- Supervise their pets at all times
- Wander around without their owner

If the dog misbehaves the owner will be responsible for any expenses and cleaning resulting in their dog's behaviour.

Owners can leave work to walk their dogs on their lunch breaks. They should avoid using up excessive work time to look after their dogs.

## **3. OFFICE /RECEPTION**

In the main building you will find the Office;

- All visitors must be directed to and collected from the Office in the main building.
  - All visitors must sign in on the Electronic Sign In system and take a badge and sign out in the same way handing in the badge to the office
- Keys and team sheets for matches can be found in the office.
- Booking coaches and minibuses
- Trip forms and visiting speaker forms.
- Phone office for minor emergencies or 999 for all other emergencies.

### **3.1 Post**

Post is collected from the entrance of the main building at 4pm, Mon to Fri. Postage can be arranged by the office.

Incoming post will be put in staff pigeonholes located in the staff Common Room in main building.

Cumnor House School, Sussex  
London Road  
Danehill  
Haywards Heath  
Sussex  
RH17 7HT

T: 01825 790347 E: [office@cumnor.co.uk](mailto:office@cumnor.co.uk)  
[www. Cumnor.co.uk](http://www.Cumnor.co.uk)

### **3.2 Office Equipment and Supplies**

Request a form from the office or email stationary code from KCS (Supplier) for ordering resources.

Stationary cupboard located in the main building foyer, please check with office.

Photocopiers are situated in the office in the main building, in the cupboard in main building foyer both are capable of collating and stapling. Other photocopiers are located around the site. You will be given a printer code when you start, this can be obtained from the IT Department.

Audio visual equipment is available from the IT Department, Jason Street.

Any breakdowns or faults should be reported to IT Department.

### **3.3 Telephones**

Requests for additional or specialised equipment should be made to the Bursar.

Faults and telephone directory amendments should be reported to the Office.

## **4. ELECTRONIC SIGN IN FOR STAFF**

All staff are required to use the electronic sign in pad each day both when arriving and when leaving the site, including for any breaks or off site visits during the day.

This is essential to ensure we have accurate fire safety records and can account for everyone in the event of an emergency

Failure to comply with this requirement may be considered a breach of health and safety procedures and could amount to misconduct.

## **5. PERSONAL PROPERTY**

Whilst the school will take all reasonable precautions, it regrets that it is unable to accept responsibility for personal property, including vehicles brought onto the site. Valuables should not be brought to work and you should keep essential belongings with you, secured in safe place.

## 6. OUTSIDE INTERESTS

You are expected to be loyal to the stated aims and objectives of the School and may not engage in any outside activities or undertake any additional work, whether paid or unpaid, which in the reasonable view of the Head/Bursar might conflict with the School's interests or might interfere with the efficient discharge of your duties, without the written consent of the Head/Bursar.

## 7. RIGHT TO SEARCH

In the interests of security, you are required to agree, on request from any authorised person, to search of your outer clothing, bag, vehicle, etc. Failure to give such a permission may result in disciplinary action.

## 8. CHANGE OF TERMS

The content of this Handbook is for guidance only, although it applies to all employees. It is non contractual and in the case of conflict your contract of employment will usually take precedence. The School reserves the right to vary this handbook at any time and will endeavour to give you one month's notice of any variation.

## 9. EXPENSES

Cumnor House School, Sussex will refund all expenses incurred by staff wholly and exclusively on school business, any expenses need to be pre-approved by the Bursar/School Accountant.

Employee should neither gain nor lose.

Reimbursement of expenses must be authorised by the Bursar and is subject to the production of satisfactory receipts.

### 8.1 Travel

Provided it has been cleared with the Bursar first and evidence of adequate insurance cover provided, employees may use private cars for journeys on school business. However, school pupils should not be carried in private vehicles.

- Mileage rates are available from the Accounts Team
- Mileages should be based on the distance between the School and destination, or home and destination, if less.
- Rail travel should be by Standard Class

### 8.2 Professional Subscriptions

The School will consider the payment of subscriptions for employees who belong to various bodies where membership is directly relevant to the employee's job. Requests for reimbursement of subscriptions must be made to the Bursar.

## 10. OVERTIME

We may be required on occasion to work additional hours, any overtime must be by prior agreement by the Head/Head of PP or Bursar.



Occasionally when carrying out this overtime or any request over and above your contractual duty you may require use of our childcare facility, such as an extra nursery session or after school club, these sessions would be paid by the employee (fee remission applies), unless by prior agreement with the Head.

## **11. REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS AND OBLIGATIONS**

### **10.1 Child Protection – Induction and Training**

The School supports its staff and volunteers who work with children in providing them with appropriate training to carry out their individual responsibilities for child protection effectively. New staff will be made aware of the School's arrangements for safeguarding and child protection and their own responsibilities with regard to safeguarding and the welfare of pupils at the School.

Induction training for staff will include;

- Definitions and signs and indicators of physical, emotional, sexual abuse and neglect, online safety, plus other specific safeguarding issues, for example, harmful sexual behaviours, (including peer on peer sexual violence and harassment) cyberbullying, forced marriage, female genital mutilation, radicalisation, and bullying.
- A copy of the School's Child Protection Policy. The identity and contact details of the School's designated safeguarding leads, plus information on the School's procedures for reporting abuse and allegations of abuse.
- Part One of the statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025' which all staff must read. All senior members of staff and those staff working directly with children will also be required to read Annex A of Keeping children Safe in Education in addition to Part One.
- The School's whistleblowing procedure and the acceptable use of technologies policy, staff/pupil relationships and communications including the use of social media.
- The safeguarding response to children who go missing from education.

Copies of the documents referred to above are provided to all staff during induction.

All staff and volunteers are required to attend regular refresher training or online training in line with advice from the School's local safeguarding partners. In addition, all staff receive safeguarding and child protection updates as required, but at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively. The designated persons will receive training every two years in order to provide them with the knowledge and skills to carry out their role. In addition to their formal training, the designated persons should update their knowledge and skills (for example bulletins, meeting other designated safeguarding leads, or taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments) at regular intervals, but at least annually, to keep up with any developments relevant to their role.

### **10.2 Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006**

The Childcare (Disqualification) and Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlement) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 ("the Regulations") provide that a person who is disqualified under the Regulations may not provide relevant childcare or be directly involved in the management of such a provision. Further, the Regulations provide that we are prohibited from employing a disqualified person in connection with relevant childcare provision and it is an offence to knowingly employ such an individual.

Disqualification means disqualification from providing childcare. The list of criteria for disqualification is long (the full version can be seen in the DfE guidance online. If you are not sure, then please contact HR.

- a. Inclusion on the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Children's Barred List;
- b. Being found to have committed certain violent and sexual criminal offences against children and adults which are referred to in regulation 4 and Schedules 2 and 3 of the Regulations;
- c. Certain orders made in relation to the care of children which are referred to in regulation 4 and listed at schedule 1 of the Regulations;
- d. Refusal or cancellation of registration relating to childcare, or children's homes, or being prohibited from private fostering, as specified in Schedule 1 of the Regulations;
- e. Being found to have committed an offence overseas which would constitute an offence regarding disqualification under the Regulations if it had been committed in any part of the United Kingdom.

The disqualification requirements apply to all staff.

In order to demonstrate compliance with the Regulations it is important that we make you aware of the legislation.

With this in mind you must inform the Head/Bursar immediately of any circumstances that may impact on your suitability to work with children in accordance with the Regulations. You will be required to complete an annual self-declaration form to ensure that the information we hold in this regard is up to date.

Any failure to disclose such information may be treated as a disciplinary matter in accordance with the School's Disciplinary Procedure. If you are unsure as to whether you are covered by the Regulations or whether a disclosure is required, you must seek guidance from HR.

### **10.3 Disclosure of circumstances impacting on your suitability to work with children**

In addition, staff are required to notify the School immediately if there are any reasons why they should not be working with children. You must immediately disclose to HR or the Head/Bursar:

- Any circumstances in which you are cautioned for, convicted of or charged with a criminal offence;
- Any circumstances impacting on your suitability to work with children;
- Any circumstances where you behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates that you may not be suitable to work with children; and
- Any medical conditions or medication that may impact on your suitability to work with children and/or the safety of pupils and/or staff generally.

A failure to make such a disclosure may be considered a disciplinary matter and could lead to dismissal. If you are unsure whether a particular circumstance impacts on your suitability to work with children you must seek guidance from HR, or Head/Bursar.

## **12. DATA PROTECTION POLICY**

Data protection is an important legal compliance issue for the School. During the course of the School's activities, it collects, stores and processes personal data (sometimes sensitive in nature) about staff, pupils, their parents, its contractors and other third parties (in a manner more fully detailed in the School's Privacy Notice. The School as "data controller", is liable for the actions of its staff and Governors in how they handle data. It is therefore an area where all staff have a part to play in ensuring we comply with and are mindful of our legal obligations, whether that personal data handling is sensitive or routine.

The law changed on 25 May 2018 with the implementation of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) – an EU Regulation that is directly effective in the UK, regardless of Brexit.

Any known breach of this policy must be reported to the Bursar.

### **13. HEALTH AND SAFETY**

Cumnor House School Trust acknowledges and accepts its responsibilities for securing the health, safety, and welfare of its employees, of contractors working on the premises over which it has control, and of members of the public (including pupils). It will seek to provide safe, healthy and hygienic working practices for all its employees.

The Operations and Safety Manager has overall responsibility for compliance with Health & Safety regulations. Any concerns should be reported to the Operations and Safety Manager or the Bursar. See our full policy on the staff portal.

To log an issue: <https://auth.every.education/Account/Login> find the Every page on the staff portal to log maintenance or Health and Safety issues.

The School also considers that it is the individual responsibility of all employees to ensure strict adherence to safety regulations and policies, and to fulfil their obligations under the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 and subsequent legislation in the following respects:

1. To take reasonable care of his/her own health and safety and of other persons (including pupils) who may be affected by his/her acts or omissions at work;
2. To co-operate with management as regards any duty or requirement imposed on management or any other person by the Act, so far as is necessary to enable that duty or requirement to be performed or complied with;
3. To engage in conversation with those responsible for H&S, to have two-way dialogue on limiting any hazards in the workplace;
4. Not to interfere intentionally or recklessly with or misuse anything provided in the interests of health, safety, or welfare in pursuance of the requirements of the Act.
5. To report any defects or hazards without delay to their immediate superior and/or colleagues or direct to the Bursar.
6. To report any accident or injury occurring at work or as a consequence of their work to their superior, the Bursar or the medical team as soon as possible. An accident report form must be completed by the person concerned and submitted to the medical team or the Bursar.

### **14. GOOD FAITH AND LOYALTY**

The employment relationship is one built on trust, and we all have a mutual interest in making the relationship a success. The School has a duty to provide reasonable support to employees and employees have a duty of good faith towards the School.

In practice, this means not doing anything that undermines the School's position by acting in competition with it, providing information to competitors or undermining the School's standing with pupils, parents, and fellow employees. All communication whether verbal or electronic (i.e., via social media) must not undermine the School in anyway. Professional boundaries must be upheld at all times whether during or outside of working hours. Any employees found to be discrediting the School in any manner may face disciplinary action.

### **13.1 Ethical Conduct**

The School aims for the highest possible standards of ethical conduct in all of its activities and expects the conduct of individual employees to reflect this. Dishonesty of any kind will be treated as a serious matter, which may amount to gross misconduct and therefore to dismissal without notice.

### **13.2 Gifts and Hospitality**

The School is committed to the highest standards of ethical conduct and integrity in its business activities. The School will not tolerate any form of bribery by, or of, its employees, agents or consultants or any person or body acting on its behalf. Senior management is committed to implementing effective measures to prevent, monitor and eliminate bribery.

As a general rule, small tokens of appreciation, such as flowers or a bottle of wine, may be retained by employees. Any gift received over the value of £100 pounds must be declared.

## **15. WHISTLEBLOWING**

The School has adopted this policy and the accompanying procedure on whistleblowing to enable members of staff to raise concerns internally and in a confidential fashion about fraud, malpractice, health and safety, criminal offences, miscarriages of justice, and failure to comply with legal obligations or unethical conduct. The policy also provides if necessary, for such concerns to be raised outside the organisation.

### **14.1 Elements of the Policy**

The School's policy on whistleblowing is intended to demonstrate that the School:

- Will not tolerate malpractice.
- Respects the confidentiality of staff raising concerns and will provide procedures to maintain confidentiality so far as is consistent with progressing the issues effectively.
- Will provide the opportunity to raise concerns outside of the normal line management structure where this is appropriate.
- Will invoke the School's disciplinary policy and procedure in the case of false, malicious, vexatious or frivolous allegations;
- Will provide a clear and simple procedure for raising concerns, which is accessible to all members of staff.

### **14.2 Procedure**

This procedure is separate from the School's adopted procedures regarding grievances. Employees should not use the whistleblowing procedure to raise grievances about their personal employment situation.

This procedure is to enable members of staff to express a legitimate concern regarding suspected malpractice within the School.

Malpractice is not easily defined; however, it includes allegations of fraud, financial irregularities, corruption, bribery, dishonesty, acting contrary to the staff code of ethics, criminal activities, or failing to comply with a legal obligation, a miscarriage of justice, or creating or ignoring a serious risk to health, safety or the environment.

### **14.3 Confidentiality**

Employees who wish to raise a concern under this procedure are entitled to have the matter treated confidentially and their name will not be disclosed to the alleged perpetrator of malpractice without their prior approval. It may be appropriate to preserve confidentiality that concerns are raised orally rather than in writing, although members of staff are encouraged to express their concern in writing wherever possible. If there is evidence of criminal activity, then the Police will in all cases be informed.

#### **14.4 The Investigation**

A member of staff will be at liberty to express their concern to the Head, Deputy Head, Bursar or Head of HR.

Any concern raised will be investigated thoroughly and in a timely manner, and appropriate corrective action will be pursued. The member of staff making the allegation will be kept informed of progress and, whenever possible and subject to third party rights, will be informed of the Resolution.

A member of staff who is not satisfied that their concern is being properly dealt with will have a right to raise it in confidence with the Governors.

#### **14.5 External Procedures**

Where all internal procedures have been exhausted, a member of staff shall have a right of access to an independent external person/body. Under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, there are circumstances where a member of staff may be entitled to raise a concern directly with an external body where the employee reasonably believes: -

- That exceptionally serious circumstances justify it;
- That the School would conceal or destroy the relevant evidence;
- Where they believe they would be victimised by the School;
- Where the Secretary of State has ordered it.

#### **14.6 Malicious Accusations**

False, malicious, vexatious or frivolous accusations will be dealt with under the School's Disciplinary Procedure.

#### **14.7 Protection from Reprisal or Victimisation**

No member of the staff will suffer a detriment or be disciplined for raising a genuine and legitimate concern, providing that they do so in good faith and following the Whistle blower procedures.

For full details of the policy please refer to the School's Whistleblowing Policy.

## **16. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY FOR STAFF**

Cumnor House Sussex is an equal opportunities employer.

In order to promote an environment within which the school can call upon the widest possible range of knowledge, skill and experience, as well as ensuring compliance with the relevant legislation and codes of practice, we are committed to achieving and maintaining a workforce which represents the population within our recruitment area in terms of race or colour, nationality or ethnic origins, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, marital or civil partnership status, gender reassignment, age, and disability (together known as "Protected Characteristics").

To this end, we shall regularly review the operation of our recruitment, promotion, training, and development policies to ensure that no applicant for employment or member of staff is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be justifiable.

No employee or prospective employee will receive unfair or unlawful treatment on the grounds of a Protected Characteristic, because they are perceived to have a Protected Characteristic or because they are associated with someone who has a Protected Characteristic, in particular but not only, in relation to:

- Recruitment and selection
- Promotion, transfer, and training opportunities
- Benefits, terms and conditions of employment



- Grievance and disciplinary procedures
- Termination of employment including redundancies
- Conduct at work
- Procedures that ensure fair and equitable treatment in relation to admission and assessment of students.

The principles of non-discrimination and equality of opportunity also apply to the way in which staff must treat visitors, pupils, parents, suppliers, and former members of staff.

The School with the assistance of the staff will:

- Break down any barriers to equality of opportunity which may prevent staff members realising their full potential or accessing benefit.
- Advertise vacancies and ensure job selection criteria are appropriate for the job.
- Promptly and fully investigate all complaints of discrimination and harassment, taking appropriate action where necessary.
- Ensure that all members of staff are fully informed and trained on this policy.
- Monitor the composition of the School and the effects of its recruitment practices.
- Existing procedures are reviewed and examined to ensure they are not discriminatory in their operation.
- Language used in official communication reflects the letter and spirit of the policy.

## 17. SAFER RECRUITMENT

Cumnor House Sussex follows the Government's guidelines for the safer employment of staff who work with children. Checks with the Disclosures and Barring Service (DBS) and the Prohibited Teachers list are carried out on all new members of staff, temporary staff, supply staff, visiting staff, contractors' employees, such as catering staff, who work unsupervised in the school. Governors, together with parent helpers who have regular unsupervised access to children, are also required to have up to date DBS certificates. DBS certificates are also required for the adult members of the families of members of staff who are accommodated in boarding houses.

The staffing process is governed by the School's principles of non-discrimination and is designed to achieve the best match between, the individual's knowledge and skills, experience and character and, on the other hand, the requirements of the vacant post, recognising the need for flexibility to respond to changing conditions.

- The capability of the individual to perform in the position will be the major selection criterion but the ability to work with others and to be trained, coupled with individual potential will be taken into account.
- All applicants will be dealt with courteously and as expeditiously as possible.
- Carefully selected and validated skills may be used as part of the selection process.
- Appointments will be confirmed on receipt of satisfactory pre-appointment checks. Examples include references, DBS checks, medical fitness, prohibition from teaching orders, prohibition from management checks, disqualification from child-care check and satisfactory completion of a probationary period.
- In accordance with The Childcare Act 2006 and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025, members of staff who teach or have contact with pupils in the EYFS or Later Years (children up to the age of 8 in before and after school care) must self-declare if they are disqualified from working with children.
- By definition, a person who is disqualified cannot lawfully do the work from which they are disqualified. If a person is found to be disqualified, including by association, or if there is doubt over that issue, then pending resolution they must be removed from the work from which they are or may be disqualified. There is no requirement automatically to suspend or dismiss all individuals found to be disqualified; there is scope in principle to redeploy them with other age groups or in other work from which they are not disqualified, subject to assessing the risk and taking advice from the LADO when appropriate.

- Cumnor House Sussex requires staff to disclose immediately if they are disqualified from working with children. Staff will be asked to complete an annual declaration.

### **16.1 Interviews**

Assessment will be by a face-to-face interview, and where possible, the same panel will see all the applicants for the vacant position. The interview process will explore the applicant's ability to carry out the job description and meet the person specification. It will enable the panel to explore any anomalies or gaps have been identified in order to satisfy themselves that the chosen applicant can meet the safeguarding criteria (in line with the Safer Recruitment Training). There must be at least one member of staff who has current Safer Recruitment Training on the panel.

Candidates will be required to offer references to be taken prior to interview, particularly when working with children, they will also be subject to a social media check.

Any information in regard to past disciplinary action or allegations, cautions or convictions will be discussed and considered in the circumstance of the individual case during the interview process.

All applicants who are invited to an interview will be required to bring evidence of their identity, address, right to work in the UK and qualifications. Original document will only be accepted and photocopies will be taken. Unsuccessful applicant documents will be destroyed following at the end of the recruitment programme.

### **16.2 Offer of Appointment and New Employee Process**

The appointment of all new employees is subject to the receipt of a satisfactory DBS Check, references, medical checks, copies of qualification, proof of identity and a social media check. A personal file checklist will be used to track and audit paperwork obtained in accordance with the Safer Recruitment Training. The checklist will be retained on personal files.

### **16.3 The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974**

The exemption provisions under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 does not apply to positions which involve working with or having access to pupils. Therefore, any convictions and cautions that would normally be considered 'SPENT' must be declared when applying for any position at the School.

### **16.4 DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) Certificate**

All staff at the School require an enhanced DBS Certificate and therefore a DBS Certificate must be obtained before the commencement of employment of any new employee.

The School uses an online DBS checking company; upon offer of employment, the applicant will receive a link to complete. Once the DBS certificate has been issued, the school will be notified via the online system.

### **16.5 Overseas Checks**

It is the responsibility of the applicant to notify the School when an overseas check is required. All future (and current) employees who have lived or worked overseas for longer than 3 months in the last 5+ years must undergo an overseas check in that country. These checks can only be requested by the applicant and not via a 3<sup>rd</sup> party. The School reserves the right upon offer of employment, to delay an applicant's start date if the relevant overseas check is not in place. Please note all offers of employment are conditional upon receipt of satisfactory UK and overseas background checks.

For further details regarding overseas checks please see:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-records-checks-for-overseas-applicants>

## 16.6 Requested References

All requests for references should be communicated to the Head, Head of Pre Prep or the Bursar, as appropriate. No reference should be given **on behalf of the School** by any other employee, and references should be completed in conjunction with the Head of HR.

Mortgage, rent or legal references will only be given in response to a specific written request to the Head of HR, and no information will be supplied without your permission.

## 16.7 Disability

A disability will not of itself justify the non-recruitment of an applicant for a position at the School. Such reasonable adjustments to the application procedures shall be made as are required to ensure that applicants are not disadvantaged because of their disability. For example, where written tests are used, alternative arrangements will be made for visually impaired applicants.

Before an applicant is judged because of a reason related to their disability to have failed to meet the requirements of a job description and person specification, or to have been less suitable than other applicants, full consideration will be given to whether a reasonable adjustment can be made which will counteract this disadvantage.

The School will make such adjustments to work arrangements or school premises as are reasonable to enable a disabled staff member to carry out their duties. This will include, but is not limited to, consideration of the provision of specialist equipment, job redesign, re-training, flexible hours.

The School recognises the importance of taking pro-active measures to remove barriers to disabled people from the working environment.

Where during the course of their employment a disabled member of staff recognises their need for a reasonable adjustment to be made to work arrangements or school premises, he or she should discuss this requirement with the Head of HR. The expertise of the disabled staff member, concerning their own disability, will be recognised.

Where the School does not have the relevant expertise to resolve the problem, an outside specialist may be consulted. Once an adjustment has been made its operation may need to be reviewed at agreed intervals, to assess its continuing effectiveness.

# 18. EMPLOYEE RELATIONS AND CONDUCT

The School places great value on good working relationships between employer and employee and between employees. Efforts are continuously directed towards maintaining a constructive relationship and finding mutually acceptable solutions to workplace problems and issues. To this end the following basic principles apply:

- Achieve high performance standards by encouraging employee commitment and teamwork and promoting an attitude of trust.
- Maintain a work environment in which the personal dignity of everyone is respected, and discrimination and harassment are not tolerated.
- Provide employment conditions that are competitive.
- Communicate regularly with employees about the School's objectives, achievements and significant developments.
- Recognise the right of every employee to present a complaint, to appeal against a decision and to receive a response within a reasonable time.

Many employers set out detailed disciplinary rules which apply to employees. Notwithstanding this, we have attempted to keep such rules to a minimum to demonstrate trust in our staff and confidence that normal standards of behaviour will prevail through self-discipline rather than through a rigid application of rules.

The rules we do have, therefore, are for a practical purpose and are in addition to the expectations which society has regarding acceptable behaviour. The aim is to promote efficient and safe working.

### **17.1 Dignity at Work**

You should not engage in any behaviour or conduct which may amount to harassment of another person at work. Harassment of any kind is regarded as a disciplinary offence and in serious instances may lead to instant dismissal.

Harassment may take the form of unwanted conduct which is of a sexual or racial nature, or other conduct based on someone's race, religion, age and/or gender or sexual orientation which is perceived as affecting their dignity at work. It may also take the form of unwanted conduct towards someone based on their disability, appearance or other personal characteristics which is perceived as affecting their dignity at work. It is not only unwanted physical contact, assault, or propositions; it includes suggestive remarks or gestures, pin-ups, graffiti, offensive comments, jokes, and banter. Harassment may include bullying, intimidating behaviour, horseplay, persistent teasing, or constant unfounded criticism of the performance of work tasks, unfair allocation of work and responsibilities, or exclusion from normal workplace conversation. It may be directed towards one individual or a group. A single incident can amount to harassment if sufficiently grave.

### **17.2 Procedure**

If you consider that you have been the recipient of unwanted conduct amounting to harassment, it is open to you to try to resolve the problem informally with the other person, either face to face or in writing. If this is not appropriate or has not been successful, you may raise a grievance in accordance with the procedure in this document. All such grievances will be dealt with sensitively and in confidence as far as reasonably practicable to progress the complaint. Breach of that confidence by either party or the person dealing with the grievance will be dealt with as a disciplinary offence. Both during the investigation of the complaint and afterwards (whatever the outcome), consideration will be given to ensuring that you and the alleged harasser are not required to work together against your wishes.

The School will seek to ensure that you are not in any way penalised whether directly or indirectly for bringing a complaint and the situation will be monitored to ensure that the harassment has stopped.

False or malicious allegations will be treated as a disciplinary offence. Retaliation against a member of staff who complains of harassment can be expected to lead to disciplinary action.

## **19. DAILY CONDUCT REQUIREMENTS OF STAFF**

This section should be read in conjunction with the DfE *Teachers' Standards* and the School's *Child Protection Policy on Interaction with Pupils: Code of Conduct for Staff*, which can be found in Handbooks & Policies.

Teaching Staff are also required to read and understand Part 1 and Annex A of the Department for Education's statutory guidance on safeguarding children and safer recruitment in education, *Keeping Children Safe in Education* 2025. Non-Teaching Staff are required to read and understand Annex B.

### **18.1 Eating and Drinking**

Teaching staff are to attend school meals and assist in the supervision of children during mealtimes. Hot drinks are not allowed in teaching areas, unless in an enclosed cup.

### **18.2 Smoking**

To promote a healthy and pleasant working environment and because of the fire risk, smoking (in any form, including the use of e-cigarettes) is not allowed anywhere on site.

### **18.3 Alcohol and Illegal Drugs**

Being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs is not permitted. Alcohol may only be consumed during an after school function, in which case modest amounts of alcohol may be consumed. Staff who reside on site may consume alcohol in their private accommodation when they are off duty.

If a staff member is reported of smelling of alcohol or there is reasonable suspicion that alcohol has been consumed in breach of this policy, the school reserves the right to request to breathalyse and suspend further to investigation. Consuming alcohol whilst on duty is gross misconduct and will likely result in dismissal.

#### **18.4 Gambling**

You are prohibited from gambling or betting on the School's premises whether during or outside of working hours including the use of gambling or gaming websites.

#### **18.5 Security**

You must not remove any School property from the site nor take any photographs without due permission. Mobile phones should not be used anywhere near any EYFS buildings; otherwise, mobile devices should not interfere with the care and education of children. The School operates a CCTV system around the site for security purposes. This data can be used to assist in investigations if required.

#### **18.6 Personal Appearance**

We regularly receive visits from parents, potential parents, and others, and naturally wish to convey an impression of efficiency and organisation. Your appearance, personal hygiene and what you wear at work are all very important. Therefore, whilst not wishing to impose unreasonable obligations on staff you are, nonetheless, required to look smart in appearance. For example, men should wear ties and jackets when not taking games, and the equivalent standard of dress should be maintained by women. Jeans (denim or otherwise) should not be worn, and shoes must be appropriate and similarly smart. Staff should only wear sports kit when actively teaching sports lessons. Wearing sports attire at other times during teaching is not considered appropriate.

If you require further guidance on suitable professional attire, please speak with your line manager or HR.

If you arrive at work inappropriately dressed, we reserve the right to require you to go home and get changed and not to pay you in respect of any time lost.

#### **18.7 Timekeeping**

Good timekeeping is essential in any team. A late arrival at work can put unfair pressure on colleagues and affect the smooth running of the business. The School therefore requires all employees to take responsibility for attending work promptly in accordance with their contract of employment. You should arrive in time to begin working at your appointed start time.

Where you depend on public transport to come to work you should allow adequate time, including likely delays, for your journey so that you can arrive on time. Similarly, employees who drive to work should make themselves familiar with the level of traffic to be expected and make adequate allowance for rush hour congestion, this includes any industrial action which may impact your journey.

Persistent lateness without proper acceptable explanation will be treated as misconduct under the disciplinary procedure.

Where it is clear that you are going to be late for work you must contact [absencesupport@cumnor.co.uk](mailto:absencesupport@cumnor.co.uk) for support staff, as soon as possible to explain the situation and give an estimate of your arrival time. For teaching staff, you must email the relevant cover email, [absenceprep@cumnor.co.uk](mailto:absenceprep@cumnor.co.uk), [absenceprep@cumnor.co.uk](mailto:absenceprep@cumnor.co.uk) 7:30am to inform of your lateness, so that pupils are adequately supervised in your absence.



If personal or domestic circumstances make it difficult for you to attend work on time, then you should discuss this with HR. In some cases, the School may be able to accommodate a reasonable need for flexibility, but this will be subject to the needs of the School and the need to avoid placing an unfair burden on your colleagues and should not be at the detriment of the pupil.

### **18.8 Adverse Weather and Traffic Disruption**

The School's primary duty is to provide a safe place of work. If adverse weather means that this cannot be achieved, and the individual School needs to close then all employees will be sent home or told not to come in. In these circumstances employees will be paid in full for any working time that they have lost.

If the School remains open, it is the responsibility of employees to attend work if they possibly can. While the School understands that this is not always possible, additional paid leave will not be provided for employees who are unable, for whatever reason, to travel into work.

Where it is clear that you are not going to be able to get to work you must contact the School as soon as possible (in line with the absence reporting procedures) to explain the situation.

### **18.9 Rest Breaks**

The School encourages all employees to take full advantage of scheduled rest breaks. These are provided not only for comfort, but also to protect the health of employees and prevent excessive fatigue from causing accidents.

A rest break should be taken away from your workstation or classroom wherever possible. If you leave the premises, you should bear in mind the time that it will take you to return from the break so that you can ensure that you begin work again on time. Always inform the office if you are leaving the site.

### **18.10 Social Media**

An employee's behaviour on any social networking or other internet site must be consistent with the behaviour required of employees generally. Where it is possible for users of a social media site to ascertain who you work for, then you should take particular care not to behave in a way which reflects badly on the School.

Inappropriate or disparaging comments about the School, colleagues, pupils, or parents will be treated as misconduct. Because social media interactions can be copied and widely disseminated in a way that you may not be able to control, the School will take a particularly serious view of any misconduct that occurs through the use of social media.

You must not take or retain images of any pupils on your own personal device or post any pupils' image on any social networking site.

You must not communicate with or request / accept links from pupils on any social networking sites or other online forums including X Box etc.

You must not operate a social media account or profile that purports to be operated on or on behalf of the School without express permission to do so from the Head.

You should not attempt to access personal social networking sites, such as Facebook/Twitter or similar on School computers or devices. This includes during break times.

### **18.11 Driving**

Where driving is required as part of your job, it is your responsibility to ensure that you are legally qualified to drive.

Licences will go through the School inspection procedure which requires us to check individual licences once a year with the DVLA, or as otherwise requested. The School will require you to share your driving licence

information by supplying it with your driving license number and a check code provided by the DVLA. If you receive any points on your licence, you must inform the School of this immediately.

If you use your own vehicle to drive on work-related business, it is your responsibility to arrange to be insured for that business use. The School may require you at any time/annually to allow a copy of your insurance and any MOT test certificate to be made and kept in our records.

You are responsible for any driving offences committed while driving as part of your duties, including any parking fines. Dangerous, careless, inconsiderate, or aggressive driving as well as causing a risk to others can be damaging to the School's reputation and can amount to gross misconduct. If you are banned from driving for any reason, the School is not obliged to find alternative work for you and may choose to dismiss you if the ban renders you incapable of performing your duties as required.

**It is illegal to use your mobile phone whilst driving. This includes texting etc.**

Employees should **never** use their mobile phone whilst driving on School business unless they do so on a properly installed hands-free system and traffic conditions mean that it is safe to do so. In most cases, it would be preferable to make any calls when the vehicle is stationary.

Any journey carried out on School business must be scheduled in such a way as to allow adequate rest breaks.

Safety is the School's prime responsibility, and you should not be required to compromise safety in any way when driving on School business. If you are concerned about any driving requirements you may have, then you should discuss these with your line manager and appropriate arrangements will be made to ensure that any work-related journey can be completed safely.

— **School Vehicles**

You may be entitled to use the School's minibus on a pool vehicle basis when it is necessary for the purposes of carrying out your duties.

Employees permitted to drive the School's minibuses are required to comply with the following requirements, which are conditions of entitlement: -

- To ensure that all children are wearing their seatbelts throughout the journey, and that when driving they must comply with speed limits.
- To take reasonable care of the minibus and to keep it in a clean condition.
- To report at the earliest opportunity to the Operations and Safety Manager any damage to the minibus or any accident arising from its use, regardless of how such damage or accident occurred. Failure to do so may lead to loss of insurance cover for such damage or accident, in which event the employee will be liable to indemnify the School for such loss;
- To report at the earliest opportunity any incident concerning the police which arises from the use of the minibus directly to the Bursar.
- To comply with the provisions and conditions of any policy of insurance relating to the minibus and the School's requirements in respect of assisting with insurance claims or investigations into accidents, damage or police enquiries arising from the use of the minibus. No person other than the authorised employee is allowed to drive the minibus.
- To undertake a visual inspection of the minibuses
- To undergo all necessary training that relates to the handling of such vehicles this includes but is not limited to:

- Are over the age of 25
- Have category B1 on their licence to drive a minibus
- Have at least two years' experience as a qualified driver
- Hold a current full driving licence with no more than 6 penalty points. If a driver has less than 6 points, the driver may still be precluded if the points are for dangerous driving.

An employee who is permitted to drive any of the School's minibuses will be required to have their driving licence checked by the School each year and to report immediately any points received or loss of licence.

### **18.12 Dealing with the Media**

Any enquiries from the press or media about our activities must be referred to the Head or Bursar. You must not respond directly to any questions raised by the media.

## **20. ABSENCE OWING TO ILLNESS AND INJURY**

If you expect to absent due to illness or injury, you must email, by 7.00 each morning of absence, as follows, according to your role:

Prep Staff: [absenceprep@cumnor.co.uk](mailto:absenceprep@cumnor.co.uk)

Pre-Prep Staff: [absencep-p@cumnor.co.uk](mailto:absencep-p@cumnor.co.uk)

Administrative Staff: [absencesupport@cumnor.co.uk](mailto:absencesupport@cumnor.co.uk)

Grounds and Maintenance: [absencesupport@cumnor.co.uk](mailto:absencesupport@cumnor.co.uk)

Domestic Staff: [cmifsud@cumnor.co.uk](mailto:cmifsud@cumnor.co.uk)

If you would prefer not to state your reasons for absence on the cover emails then please send a separate email to [HR@cumnor.co.uk](mailto:HR@cumnor.co.uk) where your reason for absence will be treated confidentially.

You must keep the Head, Head of PP, or Bursar, as appropriate, *and* the Head of HR informed of ongoing absence owing to sickness or injury:

- In respect of absence lasting seven calendar days or less you need not produce a medical certificate unless specifically requested to do so. You will be asked to attend a return to work meeting on return to work after each absence.
- In respect of absence lasting more than seven calendar days you must on the eighth day of absence provide a medical certificate stating the reason for absence, and thereafter provide a medical certificate each week to cover any subsequent period of absence.
- Failure to comply with the notification or certification requirements as set out within this clause may result in non-payment or delayed payment of sick pay, and/or disciplinary action.

### **Sick Pay – See Appendix 1**

The School at all times reserves the right to withhold or discontinue payment of additional sickness benefit at its discretion:

- If it is satisfied that there is/has been abuse or misrepresentation.
- If injury from an accident at work was caused by the employee's own misconduct.
- If an employee has failed to follow the school's absence rules and procedures

- If, in the opinion of the employee's doctor or Occupational Health, our own medical team, the employee behaves in a manner likely to delay recovery.

The School reserves the right to change the provisions of the sick pay scheme at any time and in particular if there are alterations to the State scheme or to the statutory sick pay scheme.

All statutory sick pay will be deducted from the School's sick pay.

Employees excluded or transferred from SSP must claim all social security benefits to which they are entitled, as such benefits will be deducted from School sick pay, including benefits for dependants where applicable.

Should the employee's manager (when completing the school's return to work meeting with the employee) not authorise payment, deduction of monies already paid for the period concerned will be made at the next convenient pay period. Should SSP be part of this payment, the matter will be discussed between the employee's manager and the Bursar before action is taken.

### **19.1 Medical Examinations**

The School reserves the right to require you at any time to have a medical examination with a medical professional of its own choice and at its own expense. The purpose of such medical examinations is to determine whether there are any matters which might impair your ability to perform your duties, and accordingly you will give such authority as is required for the School's nominated medical professional to disclose to the School the findings. Your own doctor shall be entitled to receive a copy of the report.

The School reserves the right to submit an employee for examination by an Occupational Health provider at any time and in particular but not limited to the following circumstances.

- Before or after resuming work following an accident due to an industrial accident.
- To establish capability for role.
- To consider any reasonable adjustments required by employee.
- During or after a prolonged or regular absence due to illness.
- In order to comply with statutory regulations.
- At the request of management when there is doubt regarding the validity of periods of self-certified absence.

### **19.2 Leave of Absence**

- Statutory Paid Leave
  - Pregnant women may take time off for ante-natal care in accordance with the Maternity section of this document.
  - Employees under notice of redundancy, who have at least two years' service, may take reasonable time off to seek work or arrange training.
- Statutory Unpaid Leave
  - The holders of certain public offices may take reasonable time off to fulfil their duties.

### **19.3 Special Leave**

In addition, staff may be granted paid leave at the discretion of the Head, as follows:

- Study leave for examinations for an approved course of study.
- Compassionate leave e.g., bereavement in immediate family.
- Territorial Army Training up to one week per year.
- Jury service/court appearance as a witness (basic pay less any payments made by the court).

Medical appointments must be arranged outside of School hours. When this is not possible, they should be arranged at the start or the end of the working day to minimise disruption.

Advance permission to attend medical appointments during working hours should be obtained from the Head, or Bursar, by email (as follows) and confirmation of your appointment should be supplied.

Prep Staff: [head@cumnor.co.uk](mailto:head@cumnor.co.uk) & [absenceprep@cumnor.co.uk](mailto:absenceprep@cumnor.co.uk)

Pre-Prep Staff: [sgibson@cumnor.co.uk](mailto:sgibson@cumnor.co.uk) & [absencep-p@cumnor.co.uk](mailto:absencep-p@cumnor.co.uk)

Administrative Staff: [finance@cumnor.co.uk](mailto:finance@cumnor.co.uk) & [absencesupport@cumnor.co.uk](mailto:absencesupport@cumnor.co.uk)

Grounds and Maintenance: [absencesupport@cumnor.co.uk](mailto:absencesupport@cumnor.co.uk)

Domestic Staff: [finance@cumnor.co.uk](mailto:finance@cumnor.co.uk) & [cmifsud@cumnor.co.uk](mailto:cmifsud@cumnor.co.uk)

#### **19.4 Emergency Leave – Unpaid Leave**

The School follows the statutory provisions for unpaid leave from work to cover emergencies, unforeseen situations and other domestic incidents. Further information may be obtained from the current Absence Policy or HR.

**You are entitled to unpaid leave from work to cover emergencies and unforeseen situations. The School recognises the following as constituting an emergency and/or unforeseen situation entitling you to a period of leave:**

- The sudden injury or illness of a dependant.
- The unexpected cancellation of childcare arrangements.
- The death of a dependant necessitating arrangements for and attendance at the funeral.
- The unexpected breakdown in care arrangements for a dependant.
- The birth of a child for whom you have parental responsibility.
- Any request for leave for a reason not included above will be considered by the School.

**The School would not expect the absence to last more than 1 or 2 working days. In addition, the School would not expect more than one period of such absence in any two consecutive terms.**

The School may require explanation and evidence justifying your request for leave. Unauthorised absence or abuse of this policy may constitute gross misconduct and disciplinary action may be taken against you.

To request leave of absence you should email as follows, depending on your role, as soon as reasonably practicable:

Prep Staff: [head@cumnor.co.uk](mailto:head@cumnor.co.uk) & [absenceprep@cumnor.co.uk](mailto:absenceprep@cumnor.co.uk)

Pre-Prep Staff: [sgibson@cumnor.co.uk](mailto:sgibson@cumnor.co.uk) & [absencep-p@cumnor.co.uk](mailto:absencep-p@cumnor.co.uk)

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#### **19.5 Unauthorised Absence**

Absence from work without leave or adequate explanation is a breach of discipline and may lead to disciplinary action.

#### **19.6 Monitoring and Absence Management**

Levels of absence need to be contained because not only is everybody's work important but persistent absences place an undue load on your colleagues. With this in mind, absence is monitored on a regular basis. Nevertheless, the School's approach as an employer, in cases of ill health, will always be one of sympathy, compassion and understanding.

- Any staff whose frequency or length of absence is at an unacceptable level (whether certified or not) will be required to attend an Absence Review meeting as per the Absence Policy.
- Staff will trigger an absence review meeting after 3 separate occasions of sickness within 6 months or after 4 consecutive weeks of absence due to illness.
- Such a review, where the record warrants it, may result in a further review over a given period over which a substantial improvement will be sought.
- Failure to attain and sustain the standard required, without justifiable reason, could result in disciplinary action being taken in accordance with the School's disciplinary procedure.
- Staff with persistent health problems may be referred to the School Nurse or another medical adviser who will advise on the current state of their health and make the necessary recommendations regarding it.
- The School will, if necessary and with the employee's agreement, liaise with the employee's own doctor.
- The full circumstances of the employee's situation will be considered. Those with a serious illness or disability will continue to be treated sympathetically in accordance with the School's policies.
- Where the School's doctor finds that an employee is incapable of continuing with their duties on a permanent basis, because of ill health, the School will endeavour to offer redeployment, subject to vacancies and suitability for alternative work. However, this may not always be possible and, when all possible, practical alternative options have been explored, termination of service on the grounds of ill health or incapability will be considered.

### 19.7 Annual Leave

Your individual holiday entitlement, including the calculation of any holiday pay, is set out in your contract of employment. This section of the handbook outlines the general approach taken by the School to requests for annual leave.

Due to the nature of the School's business, many roles are required throughout the school term time and employees engaged in these roles must take the whole of their holiday entitlement during school closure periods. Your contract of employment will confirm whether you are required to take your holidays during school closure periods. If you are, the rules below will not apply to your employment, and you should refer to your Contract for details as to how holiday is dealt with.

If your contract of employment **does not** require you to take holidays during school closure periods, you must arrange your holidays at the mutual convenience of both you and the School. You must give the School reasonable notice of your intention to take your holiday. The notice required is two weeks.

You are not entitled to carry forward any holidays from one holiday year to the next except in exceptional circumstances and unless you obtain the express prior written authority of a member of the SLT. No payments will be made in lieu of holiday not taken except in respect of your last year of employment.

All applications for holiday must be submitted to your Line Manager for approval. You are only allowed to take holidays if the School has approved them in advance.

You are not allowed to take more than two consecutive working weeks holiday unless you have obtained the express prior written permission of your Line Manager.

The School may object to you taking holiday on dates requested by you if it is inconvenient to it. Holiday requests will be granted on a 'first come, first served' basis.

If you start or leave your employment during the holiday year you shall be entitled to pro rata annual entitlement for each week of service in that holiday year.

Upon termination of your employment, you will be entitled to pay in lieu of any holiday accrued in your last holiday year but not taken. If you have taken holidays in excess of entitlement the School shall be entitled to deduct the excess pay from your final salary payment.

The School may require you to take (or not to take) any outstanding accrued holiday entitlement during your notice period.

Term-time only employees are generally not permitted to take holidays during term-time, and so your Contract of Employment will specify that your annual salary represents payment for working term time weeks plus paid statutory holiday entitlement. Your salary will then be adjusted so that you will be paid in 12 equal monthly instalments.

#### **19.8. Compassionate/Bereavement Leave**

In the event an employee suffers a bereavement in their family, the School will exercise its discretion to allow reasonable time off to attend a funeral. What is reasonable will be determined on a case by case basis and the type of leave, whether paid or unpaid, will depend on the circumstances and the relationship the employee had with the individual.

In addition, there may be occasions where it may be necessary for an employee to take compassionate leave. Again, this will be considered on a case by case basis and dependant on circumstances, may be paid or unpaid.

An employee will not be eligible to receive paid bereavement or compassionate time-off benefits while off, or absent from work because of holiday, sickness (paid or unpaid) or for any other reason.

#### **19.9 Parental Bereavement Leave**

Employees are entitled to statutory parental bereavement leave (SPBL) if a child for whom they have or were due to have parental responsibility has died or been stillborn after 24 weeks of pregnancy, on or after 6 April 2020.

Leave can be taken as one week, two consecutive weeks, or two separate weeks, at any time within the first 56 weeks after the child's death.

##### **– Notification**

During the first eight weeks after a child has died, you, or someone on your behalf as necessary, need only give notice to the School to take SPBL before you are due to start work on the first day of leave. If you have already started work, then officially your SPBL period will start on the following day. If you want to cancel it at any time during the first seven weeks, you can do so as long as it has not started.

After eight weeks, you need to give at least a week's notice to the School to take SPBL. You can cancel it with a week's notice, or re-book it by giving a week's notice.

When giving notice to take SPBL, you must tell the School: the date of the child's death; when you want your leave to begin; and whether you want to take 1 or 2 weeks leave). You can give notice by telephone or by email or by letter.

##### **– Parental Bereavement Pay**

To qualify for statutory parental bereavement pay (SPBP) during such leave you must have at least six months' continuous employment and normal weekly earnings of at least the lower earnings limit. It is paid at the same rate as other statutory family leave pay, which is subject to change every year. You can check the most up-to-date figure with your line manager.

To claim SPBP, you must confirm the following information in writing within 28 days of starting any period of SPBL: your name; your entitlement to SPBP; the dates of SPBL you want to claim the pay for; the date of the child's death; and your relationship to the child. You can provide this information at the same time as giving notice to take SPBL, as set out above, so long as it is in writing.

##### **– Other leave entitlements**

In addition to parental bereavement leave, if you qualified for:

- maternity or paternity leave and pay and your child has died or been stillborn, you are still entitled to such leave and pay.
- adoption leave and pay, then the adoption leave entitlement runs for another eight weeks from the end of the week in which the child died (unless it would already have ended sooner).



If your planned period of SPBL coincides with another statutory family leave right, your SPBL will end at the start of that other leave. If you wish to take SPBL at the end of the other statutory family leave period, then a fresh notice to take the leave will be required, as per the above notice requirements.

See HR for further details on these entitlements and procedures.

### **19.10 Other Absences**

#### **– Attendance at Court as a Witness**

You may be required by the Crown Prosecution Service to attend court as a witness. You should tell HR and your line manager at the earliest possible opportunity if you are. You may be able to claim an allowance for loss of earnings. When you attend court, you will be issued with the appropriate claim form. You need to pass this to HR. The School will then verify your loss of earnings so that you can submit the claim. It is your responsibility to make sure you are reimbursed correctly by the court. The School cannot correct this through your wages. Attendance as a witness is without pay, other than loss of earnings allowance you receive from the court.

#### **– Jury Service**

It is the school's policy to grant employees who are required to attend jury service time off work for so long as they are required by the relevant court. No employee will be penalised or subjected to any detriment for asking for, or taking, time off work to attend jury service.

The organisation will pay an employee his or her basic rate of pay for the absence for jury service. Whilst the employee is being paid, he or she must nevertheless make a claim to the court for loss of earnings ("Certificate of Loss of Earnings or Benefit") and notify the employer of all sums received from the court, producing the relevant documentation. Such sums will then be offset against the employee's pay.

All other terms of the employee's contract will continue as normal during periods of absence for jury service.

1. Any employee who is called up for jury service must immediately notify HR and their line manager of the summons in order to request time off work. The employee will be required to produce the court summons for inspection, who will also keep a copy of the document.
2. In the event that the employee's absence at the time in question would be likely to cause the organisation serious disruption or difficulties, the employee will be asked to submit a request to the court to be excused from jury duty.
3. Otherwise, the employee will be granted the necessary amount of time off work to attend for jury service.
4. If, on any particular day that the employee is attending the court, he or she is not required at court or is required for only part of the day, the employee must return to work for the remainder of that day.
5. Any abuse of the right to time off for jury service will be regarded as serious misconduct leading potentially to disciplinary action against the employee.

The HR department will retain a copy of the absence request form and make arrangements for pay adjustments if necessary.

#### **– Undertaking Public Duties as Members of Governing Bodies**

Employees who are members of Governing Bodies should be granted reasonable leave, without loss of pay, to undertake their official duties, subject to the prior approval of a member of the SLT and HR. Duties which are acceptable for leave purposes are attendance at meetings, committees and sub-committees or duties approved by the Governing Body for discharging its functions.

## **21. FAMILY RELATED LEAVE**

## **20.1 Maternity Leave**

All pregnant employees regardless of length of service or hours worked are entitled to take up to 52 weeks' maternity leave, of which 26 weeks is Ordinary Maternity Leave and 26 weeks is Additional Maternity Leave. Additional Maternity Leave follows Ordinary Maternity Leave and there can be no gap between the two.

All pregnant employees must take a minimum of 2 weeks' maternity leave immediately following the birth. This is compulsory maternity leave.

You may start your maternity leave any time from the 11th week before the expected week of childbirth (EWC), provided that you notify the School by the 15th week before the EWC, of:-

- the fact that you are pregnant;
- the date of the EWC;
- the intended start date of maternity leave;

and submit a Form MAT B1 which is a certificate from your GP or midwife confirming the EWC.

The School will reply to you within 28 days to inform you of the date by which you are expected to return to work if you take your full leave entitlement.

You can change the start date of your maternity leave providing you give the School 28 days' notice. If it is not reasonably practicable to give this much notice, for example if the baby is born early and leave must start early, then you do not have to give the above notice but should give the School as much notice as possible.

Maternity leave cannot start any earlier than 11 weeks before the EWC, unless the baby is born early, and maternity leave starts automatically.

A pregnancy related illness during or after the 4th week before the EWC automatically triggers maternity leave.

## **20.2 Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP)**

To qualify for SMP you must:-

- be pregnant and have reached the start of the 11th week before the EWC or have had your baby by then.
- have been continuously employed for at least 26 weeks by the end of the Qualifying Week (which is the 15th week before the EWC);
- have had normal weekly earnings at a rate not less than the lower earnings limit for National Insurance contributions for a period of 8 weeks immediately preceding the Qualifying Week.
- have stopped actually working for the School;
- give 28 days' advance notice of your absence and submit Form MATB1.

The SMP period lasts for a maximum of 39 weeks.

There is no distinction between part-time and full-time employees for SMP purposes.

If you are entitled to SMP, you will receive 9/10ths of your usual salary for the first 6 weeks and the current weekly SMP rate, from time to time in force, for the remaining period, (usually 33 weeks) subject to the usual deductions.

If you earn less than the weekly SMP rate, you will receive SMP at 9/10ths of your salary for the whole 39 week period.

If you are entitled to maternity leave, you will be able to receive SMP for the 39 weeks that you are away from work, unless you return to work earlier in which case your entitlement to SMP will stop on your return.

If you do not qualify for SMP, you may be entitled to the Maternity Allowance which is payable by the Department for Work and Pensions.

### **20.3 Return to Work**

If you wish return to work before the end of the full 52 weeks' maternity leave, you must give the School at least 8 weeks' notice of your intention to return to work early. If you decide you would like to change the date of your return to work, you can do so providing you give the School at least 8 weeks' notice.

If you do not wish to return to work following your maternity leave you should provide the School with sufficient notice, and at least the amount of notice required by your contract of employment. If you confirm that you will not return to work after having the baby, you will still be entitled to 39 weeks' SMP if you qualify.

Maternity returnees are entitled to any salary increases or enhanced benefits that are introduced in their absence.

Please also see Policy-On Supporting Breastfeeding Mother's in the Workplace

### **20.4 Keeping in Touch Days**

During the maternity leave period the School may make reasonable contact with you. The School will keep you informed of promotion opportunities or information relevant to your job.

During the maternity leave period, by agreement with the School you may do up to ten days' work. These are known as Keeping in Touch days. You will be paid for any Keeping in Touch Days (KIT) at a rate agreed with the School, in addition to your statutory maternity pay. The type of work you may carry out will be a matter to be agreed between you and the School and may include attending training or team meetings. KIT days may not take place within two weeks after the baby is born.

KIT days are not compulsory, and you will not suffer any consequence if you decline the offer of a Keeping in Touch day. Similarly, you do not have a right to KIT days and the School is under no obligation to agree to a KIT day.

### **20.5 Antenatal Appointments**

#### **– Time off for pregnant women**

All pregnant employees are entitled to paid time off to attend antenatal appointments. Please confirm your appointment times with your Line Manager and email the relevant address to notify staff of your absence. You may be asked for your appointment card.

Parent craft classes or relaxation classes should be attended out of core working hours wherever possible (unless they are on medical advice). Where this is not possible, please discuss with your Line Manager or Head of Department giving as much notice as possible.

#### **– Time off for accompanying a pregnant woman: eligibility**

You may take unpaid time off to accompany a pregnant woman to an antenatal appointment if you have a "qualifying relationship" with the woman or the child. This means that either:

- you are the baby's father;
- you are the pregnant woman's spouse, civil partner or are living with her in an enduring family relationship and she is not your sister, mother, grandmother, aunt or niece; or
- you are one of the intended parents in a surrogacy arrangement and expect to obtain a parental order in respect of the child.

Please give us as much notice of the appointment as possible. You must provide us with a signed statement providing the date and time of the appointment and confirming:

- that you meet one of the eligibility criteria set out above;
- that the purpose of the time off is to accompany the pregnant woman to an antenatal appointment; and
- that the appointment has been made on the advice of a registered medical practitioner, registered midwife, or registered nurse.

– **Leave to accompany a pregnant woman: amount of time off**

You have the right to take time off to accompany a pregnant woman to up to two antenatal appointments in relation to each pregnancy. You must not take more than 6.5 hours off for each appointment, including travel and waiting time.

Time off to attend these appointments is unpaid. Further time off for antenatal appointments is at the discretion of the Head and must be requested by email.

## **20.6 Paternity Leave and Pay**

If you are the biological father of a child, or the husband, civil partner, or partner of the mother, or in any case have parental responsibility for a child's upbringing, you may be entitled to paternity leave.

You will only be entitled to paternity leave if you have worked continuously for the School for 26 weeks leading into the 15th week before the baby is due.

– **Paternity Leave**

If you are eligible, you can take 2 weeks paternity leave. To claim entitlement to paternity leave you will need to give the School notice, in the form of a certificate which can be obtained from the Head of HR, by no later than the 15<sup>th</sup> week before the baby is due. Providing false information on a certificate in order to claim paternity leave will be a disciplinary offence.

Paternity leave must be taken within 56 days of the birth (or, if the birth is early, any time between birth and 56 days after the date the baby is due). You can take either one week or two weeks, but not odd days. If two weeks are taken, they must be consecutive. A maximum of two weeks' paternity leave is permitted per pregnancy, regardless of how many children are born.

You can change your mind about the date on which you want your paternity leave to start providing you tell the School at least 28 days in advance. If you are unable to give 28 days' notice, you should give the School as much notice as possible.

– **Paternity Pay**

If you take paternity leave in accordance with this policy, you will be eligible for Statutory Paternity Pay (SPP), provided your weekly earnings are over the lower earnings limit for National Insurance purposes.

If you are entitled to SPP, you will receive the current weekly rate from time to time in force or 90% of your average weekly earnings, whichever is the lower.

An employee who is not entitled to SPP may be entitled to Income Support from the Department of Work and Pensions.

Normal terms and conditions of employment continue during paternity leave except for terms relating to salary.

There are a number of other related areas such as shared parental leave, ordinary parental leave, time off for dependants and the right to request flexible working. Please see separate policies in this Handbook for details.

You are entitled to return to the same job following paternity leave.

## 20.7 Shared Parental Leave

This policy outlines the arrangements for shared parental leave and pay in relation to the birth of a child. This policy applies to employees. It does not apply to agency workers or self-employed contractors. It should be read in conjunction with related areas such as maternity leave, adoption leave, parental leave, time off for dependants and flexible working. Please see separate policies for details.

This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and may be amended at any time.

The following definitions apply in this policy:

**Expected week of childbirth (EWC):** the week, beginning on a Sunday, in which the doctor or midwife expects your child to be born.

**Parent:** One of two people who will share the main responsibility for the child's upbringing (and who may be either the mother, the father, or the mother's partner if not the father).

**Partner:** spouse, civil partner or someone living with another person in an enduring family relationship, but not a sibling, child, parent, grandparent, grandchild, aunt, uncle, niece or nephew.

**Qualifying Week:** the fifteenth week before the expected week of childbirth.

Shared parental leave (SPL) is a form of leave available to working parents following the birth of a child.

SPL allows parents to take up to 52 weeks' leave in total on the birth of a child. They may be able to take this leave at the same time or at different times.

### – Entitlement to SPL

You are entitled to SPL in relation to the birth of a child if:

- you are the child's mother, and share the main responsibility for the care of the child with the child's father (or your partner, if the father is not your partner);
- you are the child's father and share the main responsibility for the care of the child with the child's mother; or
- you are the mother's partner and share the main responsibility for the care of the child with the mother (where the child's father does not share the main responsibility with the mother).

The following conditions must also be fulfilled:

- you must have at least 26 weeks' continuous employment with the School by the end of the Qualifying Week, and still be employed by the School in the week before the leave is to be taken;
- the other parent must have worked (in an employed or self-employed capacity) in at least 26 of the 66 weeks before the EWC and had average weekly earnings of at least £30 during 13 of those weeks; and
- you and the other parent must give the necessary statutory notices and declarations as summarised below, including notice to end any maternity leave, statutory maternity pay (SMP) or maternity allowance (MA) periods.

The total amount of SPL available is 52 weeks, less the weeks spent by the child's mother on maternity leave (or the weeks in which the mother has been in receipt of SMP or MA if she is not entitled to maternity leave).

If you are the mother, you cannot start SPL until after the compulsory maternity leave period, which lasts until two weeks after birth.

If you are the child's father or the mother's partner, you should consider using your two weeks' paternity leave before taking SPL. Once you start SPL you will lose any untaken paternity leave entitlement. SPL entitlement is additional to your paternity leave entitlement.

– **Opting in to shared parental leave and pay**

Not less than eight weeks before the date you intend your SPL to start, you must give [insert position] a written opt-in notice giving:

- your name and the name of the other parent;
- if you are the child's mother, the start and end dates of your maternity leave;
- if you are the child's father or the mother's partner, the start and end dates of the mother's maternity leave, or if she is not entitled to maternity leave, the start and end dates of any SMP or MA period;
- the total SPL available, which is 52 weeks minus the number of weeks' maternity leave, SMP or MA period taken or to be taken;
- how much of that will be allocated to you and how much to the other parent. (You can change the allocation by giving us a further written notice, and you do not have to use your full allocation);
- if you are claiming statutory shared parental pay (ShPP), the total ShPP available, which is 39 weeks minus the number of weeks of the SMP or MA period taken or to be taken;
- how much of that will be allocated to you and how much to the other parent. (You can change the allocation by giving [insert position] a further written notice, and you do not have to use your full allocation);
- an indication of the pattern of leave you are thinking of taking, including suggested start and end dates for each period of leave. This indication will not be binding at this stage, but please give as much information as you can about your future intentions; and
- declarations by you and the other parent that you meet the statutory conditions for entitlement to SPL and ShPP.

– **Ending maternity leave**

If you are the child's mother and are still on maternity leave, you must give the Head at least eight weeks' written notice to end your maternity leave (a curtailment notice) before you can take SPL. The notice must state the date your maternity leave will end. You can give the notice before or after you give birth, but you cannot end your maternity leave until at least two weeks after birth.

You must also give the Head, at the same time as the curtailment notice, a notice to opt into the SPL scheme (see above) or a written declaration that the child's father or your partner has given his or her employer an opt-in notice and that you have given the necessary declarations in that notice.

The other parent may be eligible to take SPL from their employer before your maternity leave ends, provided you have given the curtailment notice.

The curtailment notice is usually binding and cannot be revoked. You can only revoke a curtailment notice if maternity leave has not yet ended and one of the following applies:

- if you realise that neither you nor the other parent are in fact eligible for SPL or ShPP, you can revoke the curtailment notice in writing up to eight weeks after it was given;
- if you gave the curtailment notice before giving birth, you can revoke it in writing up to eight weeks after it was given, or up to six weeks after birth, whichever is later; or
- if the other parent has died.

Once you revoke a curtailment notice you cannot submit a second curtailment notice, unless the revocation was given in the circumstances outlined in bullet point two above.

If you are the child's father or the mother's partner, you will only be able to take SPL once the mother has either:

- returned to work;
- given her employer a curtailment notice to end her maternity leave;
- given her employer a curtailment notice to end her SMP (if she is entitled to SMP but not maternity leave); or
- given a curtailment notice to the benefits office to end her MA (if she is not entitled to maternity leave or SMP).

– **Evidence of entitlement**

You must also provide on request:

- A copy of the birth certificate (or if you have not yet obtained a birth certificate, a signed declaration of the child's date and place of birth); and
- The name and address of the other parent's employer (or a declaration that they have no employer).

– **Notification of your SPL dates**

Having opted into the SPL system you will need to give a period of leave notice telling the Head the start and end dates of your leave. This can be given at the same time as your opt-in notice, or it can be given later, as long as it is given at least eight weeks before the start of your leave. You must also state in your period of leave notice the dates on which you intend to claim shared parental pay, if applicable.

– **Continuous Leave**

If your 'period of leave' notice gives dates for a single continuous block of SPL you will be entitled to take the leave set out in the notice.

You can give up to three 'period of leave' notices. This may enable you to take up to three separate blocks of shared parental leave.

– **Procedure for requesting split periods of SPL ("Discontinuous Leave")**

In general, a period of leave notice should set out a single continuous block of leave. In those circumstances you will be entitled to take the leave set out in the notice as detailed above.

You may also submit a period of leave notice where the SPL is split into shorter periods (of at least a week) with periods of work in between ("Discontinuous Leave"). We may, in some cases, be willing to consider accommodating a period of Discontinuous Leave but it is best to discuss this with your manager in advance of submitting any formal period of leave notices. This will give the School more time to consider the request and hopefully agree a pattern of leave with you from the start.

You must submit a period of leave notice for Discontinuous Leave, setting out the requested pattern of leave, at least eight weeks before the requested start date. If we are unable to agree to your request straight away, there will be a two-week discussion period. At the end of that period, we will confirm any agreed arrangements in writing. If we have not reached an agreement, you will be entitled to take the full amount of requested SPL as one continuous block, starting on the start date given in your notice (for example, if you requested three separate periods of four weeks each, you will be entitled to one 12-week period of leave). Alternatively, you may:

- choose a new start date (which must be at least eight weeks after your original period of leave notice was given), and tell [insert position] within five days of the end of the two-week discussion period; or
- withdraw your period of leave notice within two days of the end of the two-week discussion period (in which case it will not be counted and you may submit a new one if you choose).



#### – **Changing the dates or cancelling your SPL**

You can cancel a period of leave by notifying HR in writing at least eight weeks before the start date in the period of leave notice.

You can change the dates for a period of leave by giving HR at least eight weeks' notice before the original start date and the new start date.

You do not need to give eight weeks' notice if you are changing the dates of your SPL because your child has been born earlier than the EWC, where you wanted to start your SPL a certain length of time (but not more than eight weeks) after birth. In such cases please notify HR in writing of the change as soon as you can.

A notice to cancel or change a period of leave will count as one of your three period of leave notices, unless:

- the variation is a result of your child being born earlier or later than the EWC;
- the variation is at the School's request; or
- we agree otherwise.

#### – **Shared parental pay**

Shared Parental Pay (ShPP) of up to 39 weeks (less any weeks of statutory maternity pay, or adoption pay claimed by you or the other parent) may be available provided you have at least 26 weeks' continuous employment with the School at the end of the Qualifying Week and your average earnings are not less than the lower earnings limit set by the government each tax year. ShPP is paid at a rate set by the government each year.

#### – **Other terms during shared parental leave**

Your terms and conditions of employment remain in force during SPL, except for the terms relating to pay.

#### – **Keeping in touch - SPL**

We may make reasonable contact with you from time to time during your SPL although we will keep this to a minimum. This may include contacting you to discuss arrangements for your return to work.

You may ask or be asked to work (including attending training) on up to 20 "keeping-in-touch" days (KIT days) during your SPL. This is in addition to any KIT days that you may have taken during maternity leave. KIT days are not compulsory and must be discussed and agreed with your line manager.

You will be paid for any KIT day at a rate agreed with the School, in addition to any ShPP.

#### – **Returning to work**

If you want to end a period of SPL early, you must give the Head and HR eight weeks' prior notice of the return date. It is helpful if you give this notice in writing.

If you want to extend your SPL you must submit a new period of leave notice at least eight weeks before the date you were due to return to work, assuming you still have SPL entitlement remaining and have not already submitted three period of leave notices. If you are unable to request more SPL you may be able to request annual leave or ordinary parental leave, which will be subject to business need.

You are normally entitled to return to work in the position you held before starting SPL, and on the same terms of employment. However, if it is not reasonably practicable for us to allow you to return into the same position, we may give you another suitable and appropriate job on terms and conditions that are not less favourable, but only in the following circumstances:

- if your SPL and any maternity or paternity leave you have taken adds up to more than 26 weeks in total (whether or not taken consecutively); or
- if you took SPL consecutively with more than four weeks of ordinary parental leave (under our Parental Leave Policy).
- If you want to change your hours or other working arrangements on return from SPL you should make a request under our Flexible Working Policy. It is helpful if such requests are made as early as possible.
- If you decide you do not want to return to work you should give notice of resignation in accordance with your contract.

## **20.8 Parental Leave**

Staff with one year's service and a child (including adopted children) under the age of 18 are entitled to take parental leave. This should be distinguished from shared parental leave which is dealt with separately under the Shared Parental Leave Policy.

You are entitled to a total of 18 weeks' leave. If twins are born, then each parent is entitled to 18 weeks' leave for each child.

You must give at least 21 days' written notice of your intention to take parental leave.

You have the right to take the leave until the child's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.

The leave is unpaid.

Parental leave may only be taken in blocks or multiples of 1 week, up to a maximum of 4 weeks' leave in a year. Parents of disabled children can take leave in blocks or multiple blocks of 1 day.

The School may postpone leave for up to 6 months where the School considers that the employee's absence would be unduly disruptive. The School cannot postpone leave when an employee gives notice to take it immediately after the child is born or placed with the family for adoption or if a postponement of the requested leave would result in the leave being taken after the child's 18th birthday.

Employees will remain employed whilst on parental leave and will be entitled to receive all their normal benefits (other than pay).

The School may ask for evidence from an employee regarding parental leave entitlement.

## **20.9 Carer's Leave**

All employees can take time off to help a dependant who needs long-term care. The law is the Carer's Leave Act 2023, which came into effect on 6<sup>th</sup> April 2024.

**Eligibility** – the right to take carer's leave applies from the first day of work.

An employee can take carer's leave to give or arrange care for a dependant who needs long term care.

### **Who counts as a dependant:**

An employee's dependants can include:

- Their husband, wife, civil partner, partner
- Their child

- Their parent
- A person who lives in their household (not tenants, lodgers or employees)
- A person who relies on them for care, such as an elderly neighbour

#### **What counts as a long term care need:**

A dependant has a long term care need if they have any of the following:

- A disability defined under the Equality Act 2010
- An illness or injury that is likely to need care for at least 3 months
- A care need related to old age

#### **What carer's leave can be used for:**

- Taking their disabled child to a hospital appointment
- Moving their parent who has dementia into a care home
- Accompanying a housebound dependant on a day trip
- Providing meals and company for an elderly neighbour while their main carer is away with work for the day

**How much time someone can take** - Employees can take up to 1 week of carer's leave every 12 months.

They can choose to take leave as:

Half days – this is the minimum they can take, full days or a whole week

An employee is entitled to a period of leave that is equal to their usual working week. For example, if someone works 3 days a week, they can take 3 days of carer's leave.

**If an employee cares for more than one dependant** - An employee might need to care for more than one dependant. In these circumstances they can still only take one week of carer's leave. But they can use the week of leave for more than one dependant. If an employee is a parent, they can take up to 18 weeks' of ordinary parental leave to look after their child. This is instead of or in addition to carer's leave.

#### **Pay**

This leave is unpaid.

**Giving notice to take carer's leave** – employees must give their employer notice before the start of their leave.

The minimum notice they must give will depend on how many days of leave they want to take;

#### **Minimum notice requirements**

Number of days requested	Minimum notice required
Half a day to 1 day	3 days' notice
1.5 to 2 days	4 days' notice
2.5 to 3 days	6 days' notice
3.5 to 4 days	8 days' notice

Number of days requested	Minimum notice required
4.5 to 5 days	10 days' notice

If an employee cannot give the minimum notice for carer's leave, they could take 'time off for dependants' as per our Absence Policy.

The School reserves the right to ask the employee to take the leave at a different time if the absence would cause a serious disruption to the school. If the School need to delay the leave they will agree another date within 1 month of the date the employee originally requested leave for and will explain in writing why they need to delay the leave. This will be done within 7 days of the request or before the leave starts, whichever is the earlier.

Alternatives are:

- Time off for dependants
- Ordinary parental leave
- Holiday entitlement
- Compassionate or special leave

## 22. FLEXIBLE WORKING

All staff have the right to request Flexible working. The School recognises that a better work-life balance can improve employee motivation, performance, and productivity, and reduce stress. Therefore, the School wants to support its employees achieve a better balance between work and their other priorities, such as caring responsibilities, leisure activities, further learning and other interests. The School is committed to agreeing any flexible working arrangements, provided that the needs and objectives of both the organisation and the employee can be met.

It is the School's policy to encourage open discussion with employees. An employee that thinks they may benefit from flexible working is encouraged to contact their Line Manager or HR to arrange an informal discussion to talk about the options.

### 21.1. What is flexible working?

Flexible working is any type of working arrangement that gives some degree of flexibility on how long, where and when an employee works.

The following flexible working options are considered to be the typical arrangements that employees will request but the School recognises that there may be alternatives or a combination of options which are suitable to both the School and the employee for example part time working, compressed hours, job sharing, term time only working etc.

### 21.2 The needs of the School

The School is committed to providing a range of appropriate working patterns. However, employees and management need to be realistic and to recognise that not all flexible working options will be appropriate for all roles.

Where a flexible working arrangement is proposed, the School will need to consider a number of criteria including (but not limited to) the following:

- the costs associated with the proposed arrangement
- the effect of the proposed arrangement on other staff
- the need for, and effect on, supervision
- the existing structure of the department

- the availability of staff resources
- details of the tasks specific to the role
- the workload of the role
- whether it is a request for a reasonable adjustment related to a disability
- health and safety issues

### **21.3 Eligibility**

Any employee has a statutory right to request flexible working (subject to change in current legislation).

### **21.4 Submitting a flexible working request**

An eligible employee is entitled to submit two flexible working request in a 12 month period (an employee is entitled to additional requests if they relate to a statutory entitlement, for example the Equality Act 2010 right to request reasonable adjustments).

All requests must be made [by email or letter/by filling in an application form that is available from HR department. Any request made must include:

- the date of the application
- the changes that the employee is seeking to their terms and conditions
- the date from when the employee would like the proposed change to come into effect
- whether a previous application for flexible working has been made
- the dates of any previous applications

If the employee is making the request in relation to the Equality Act, e.g. as a reasonable adjustment relating to a disability, this should be made clear in the application.

### **21.5 Meetings regarding flexible working**

Upon receiving a written request for flexible working HR will usually seek to arrange a meeting with the employee to:

- discuss the request
- find out more about the proposed working arrangements

If a meeting is arranged it will be held within one month of the School receiving the request. This time limit may be extended with the agreement of both the employee and HR.

The employee will be given advance notice of the time, date, and place of the meeting. If the initial date is problematic, then one further date will be proposed. If a face-to-face meeting is difficult to arrange then, if agreed by the employee and HR, the meeting may be held over the telephone.

At the meeting the employee may, if they wish, be accompanied by a workplace colleague or a trade union representative.

If the employee fails to attend a meeting and then fails to attend a rearranged meeting without good reason, their application will be deemed to have been withdrawn.

Where a request can, without further discussion, be approved as stated in the employee's written application a meeting to discuss the request may not be necessary. The employee will be informed of the School's agreement to the request by a confirmation letter within two months of the School receiving the request. This time limit may be extended with the agreement of both the employee and HR

### **21.6 Responding to a flexible working request**

HR and the Line Manager will consider the proposed flexible working arrangements, looking at the potential benefits and adverse effects to the employee and to the organisation in implementing the proposed changes.

Each request will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Agreeing to one request will not set a precedent or create the right for another employee to be granted a similar change to their working pattern.

The employee will be informed in writing of the organisation's decision as soon as is reasonably practicable, but no later than two months from the date the request was received.

The request may be granted in full, in part or refused. The School may propose a modified version of the request, the request may be granted on a temporary basis, or the employee may be asked to try the flexible working arrangement for a trial period. If the request is agreed then the employee will be sent a confirmation letter which will include details of the new arrangements. The employee should contact HR within 14 days if they wish to discuss the new arrangements further or have any concerns.

### **21.7 Right to appeal decision**

The employee has the right to appeal the decision if their request is refused or is only agreed in part.

The employee may lodge an appeal within 14 days of being notified of a decision on their application. This should be done in writing and clearly state the grounds on which they are appealing. The appeal will be heard within 14 days. The employee will then be informed of the outcome to their appeal within 14 days of the appeal meeting. These time limits may be extended with the agreement of both the employee and HR.

### **21.8 Trialling new working arrangements**

Where there is some uncertainty about whether the flexible working arrangement is practicable for an employee and/or the School a trial period may be agreed. If a trial period is arranged the organisation will allow sufficient time for an employee and their manager to implement and become used to the new working practices before taking any decisions on the viability of a new arrangement.

### **21.9 Varying an employee's contract**

Where flexible working practices are agreed as a permanent change, a variation will need to be made to the employee's contract of employment. A new contract of employment will be sent to the employee within 28 days of the change to the employee's working pattern being agreed.

If the employee has any questions or concerns about the new contract of employment, they should contact HR to discuss the matter further.

Where a trial period has been arranged the organisation will provide the employee with a document that details their new working pattern and makes clear that it is only a temporary variation to the terms of the employee's contract. The employee will be informed in writing of the start and end dates of the trial period (although the School may reduce or lengthen the trial period where necessary with the agreement of the employee). The School will reserve the right, at the end of the agreed trial period, to require the employee to revert to their previous working arrangement.

### **21.10 Complaints and further information**

The organisation is strongly opposed to any form of victimisation of individuals who work, or request to work under flexible working arrangements.

If an employee feels that they have been treated unfairly or are dissatisfied with any stage of the flexible process, they should raise their concerns informally with HR.

Law relating to this document:

Employment Rights Act 1996

Equality Act 2010

Flexible Working Regulations 2014 (updated April 2024)

## **23. ADOPTION LEAVE AND PAY**

The school follows the statutory provisions for adoption leave and pay, including in relation to attendance at adoption appointments. Information concerning adoption leave and pay entitlements may be obtained from the Head of HR.

## **24. APPRAISAL PROCEDURE**

### **23.1 Appraisal Procedure for Teachers**

#### **– Purpose**

Appraisal in the School will be a supportive and developmental process designed to ensure that all staff have the skills and support they need to carry out their role effectively. It will help to ensure that staff continue to improve and develop in their role.

#### **– Application**

The procedure applies to all staff, except those on contracts of one term or less, those in a probationary period or undergoing induction as an Early Career Teacher. It does not form part of your contractual terms.

#### **– The Appraisal Period**

The appraisal period will normally run for 12 months from 1 September to 31 August in each year. Teachers who are employed on a fixed-term contract of less than one year will have their performance managed in accordance with the probation policy.

#### **– Appointing Appraisers**

The Head, or another member of the SLT will be the appraiser for Heads of Department and may delegate the role of appraiser to the relevant line managers or appropriate alternative for other teachers. The Bursar will be the appraiser for Support Staff and may delegate the role of Appraiser to relevant Line Managers. Where a member of staff has more than one line manager, the Head or Bursar will determine which line manager will be best placed to manage and review their performance. The Head and the Bursar will be appraised by the Governing body.

#### **– Setting Objectives**

Objectives for each member of staff will be set at the appraisal interview. There will normally be at least three objectives set. The objectives will be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound and will be appropriate to the employee's role and level of experience. Objectives will be drawn up by the appraiser normally in consultation with the member of staff. Objectives may be revised if circumstances change.

The objectives set for each employee will, if achieved, contribute to the School's plans for improving the School's educational provision and performance and improving the education of students at the School. This will be achieved by ensuring that the objectives directly relate to the School or Departmental Development Plans.

The Head may review all objectives to ensure that they have been set appropriately, that they are consistent with Department/School Development Plans and that they are written in such a way that measuring success can be done objectively. If necessary, the Head will require objectives to be re-considered.

The School will set reasonable and objective standards it expects staff to achieve in terms of both performance and behaviour.

#### **– Reviewing Performance**

The observation of classroom practice and other responsibilities is important both as a way of assessing teachers' performance in order to identify any particular strengths and areas for development they may have and of gaining useful information which can inform school improvement more generally. All observations will be carried out in a supportive fashion.



Lessons will be regularly observed but the amount and type of classroom observation for appraisal purposes will depend on the individual circumstances of the teacher (particularly if concerns have been raised about their performance) and the overall needs of the School. The total number of lessons to be observed for appraisal purposes will normally be one teaching period each year. Where evidence emerges which gives rise to concern about the teacher's performance, additional observations may be arranged. As part of an appraisal, each teacher will be expected to observe and reflect on two lessons.

In addition to formal observation, the Head, or others with responsibility for teaching standards may carry out "drop-in" observations in order to evaluate the standards of teaching and to check that high standards of professional performance are established and maintained. The notice period, length, frequency of "drop-in" observations will vary depending on specific circumstances. Feedback on observations will ideally be given as soon as possible. Arrangements for regular, mutual observation will also be put in place.

Teachers who have responsibilities outside the classroom should also expect to have their performance of those responsibilities observed and assessed.

– **Development and support**

Appraisal is a supportive process which will be used to inform continuing professional development. The School wishes to encourage a culture in which all teachers take responsibility for improving their teaching through appropriate professional development. Professional development will be linked to School Development Plan priorities and to the ongoing professional development needs and priorities of individual teachers. In the case of competing demands on the School budget, priority will be given to the training and support which will help the achieve School and Departmental Development Plan objectives.

– **Feedback**

Teachers will receive constructive feedback on their performance as soon as practicable after observation has taken place or other evidence has come to light.

Feedback will highlight areas of strength as well as any areas that need attention. Where there are concerns about any aspects of the teacher's performance the appraiser will meet the teacher to:

- give clear feedback to the teacher about the nature and seriousness of the concerns;
- give the teacher the opportunity to comment and discuss the concerns;
- agree any support that will be provided to help address those specific concerns;
- make clear how, and by when, the appraiser will review progress.
- explain the implications and process if no - or insufficient - improvement is made.

When progress is reviewed, if the appraiser is satisfied that the teacher has made, or is making, sufficient improvement, the appraisal process will continue as normal, with any remaining issues continuing to be addressed through that process.

If the appraiser is not satisfied with progress, the employee will be notified in writing that their performance will be addressed under the Capability Procedure (see Annex 3).

– **Regular Assessment**

The performance of all employees will be formally assessed at the end of the term in which appraisal has taken place.

This assessment is the end point to the regular appraisal process, but performance and development priorities may be reviewed and addressed at interim meetings throughout the year if necessary.

A meeting will be arranged with you to discuss your performance and following this you will receive a report including;

- details of the objectives for the appraisal period in question;
- an assessment of performance of your role and responsibilities against these objectives;
- an assessment of the performance of your role and responsibilities against your Job Description;
- an assessment of your professional development needs and identification of any action that should be taken to address them;
- a recommendation on pay where that is relevant.

The assessment of performance and of professional development needs will inform the planning process for the following appraisal period.

#### – **Transition to capability**

Where concerns are highlighted as a result of the appraisal process, they will usually be raised informally in the first instance and support and training offered. However, if this does not lead to the required improvement or if the concerns are sufficiently serious, they will be addressed under the Capability Procedure.

### **23.2 Appraisal Procedure for Support Staff**

Your performance will be reviewed on a regular basis throughout your employment. You will have a meeting with your line manager, followed by a briefing with the Bursar to consider your performance during the preceding year and to agree on future work objectives. This is to assist both you and the School to improve work performance and to achieve the School's objectives. The appraisal interview is an opportunity to identify any training which might assist your future development.

You will be given a copy of the Support Staff Appraisal Form prior to the meeting, and you are encouraged to discuss, in an open and honest manner, any issues which you believe need to be addressed. You and your appraiser should complete the appraisal form during the course of the meeting. After the meeting, you will be given a copy, which you should review and sign if you are satisfied it accurately reflects the discussions. You will retain a copy and the completed form will be placed on your personnel file.

### **23.3 Training and Development**

Structured training and development at all levels within the School is essential to the efficient and effective operation of the School's support services and the development of the individual.

The School aims to ensure that all employees have the knowledge, skills and experience to meet satisfactorily the required standards of job performance. In order to meet its requirements, the School will provide opportunities for personal development and advancement to those employees with the requisite ability, aspirations and characteristics. The objectives of the Training and Development Policy are as follows:

- To provide an effective induction programme for each individual ensuring an understanding of the School, department and the individual's duties and responsibilities and this will include training/instruction on health and safety and any legal requirements, such as may arise through the charitable status of the school, associated with his or her job.
- To provide introductory and 'on the job' training to enable new employees to reach the required performance standard.
- To identify the current and future training needs of the individuals and match these to cost effective training programmes.
- To provide training to ensure improvements in skills, knowledge and attitude.
- To encourage and support employees to undertake further studies in the areas which are of benefit to themselves and their role in the School.

The performance review process involves departmental heads in reviewing the attributes of their staff with a view to matching them with the School's requirements. The development of individuals is a two-way process; departmental heads will discuss the performance of the individual and provide information on

available opportunities, whilst employees will have the responsibility of informing their departmental head of their aspirations and co-operating with actions designed to maintain and improve their abilities. This process supplements the informal observation and contact between the departmental head and the employee.

Any training and development requested outside of appraisals or performance reviews should be requested via the form included in the Training Policy and sent to HR. These requests will be discussed with Head and Bursar before deciding whether it is appropriate for the school to either fund in part or in full.

## **25. DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE**

### **24.1 The Code of Conduct**

The Code of Conduct and the Disciplinary Procedure, with which all employees have a responsibility to familiarise themselves, are designed to promote fairness and consistency in the treatment of all employees and to assist the school to function effectively. This procedure will apply to any disciplinary situation which includes misconduct and also poor performance (in conjunction with the Capability Procedure). It is not contractual but applies to all employees (save for those in their first two years of service) who should familiarise themselves with its provisions.

The Disciplinary Procedure is designed to ensure that these standards are adhered to and provides a fair method of dealing with any alleged failures to observe them. The procedure does not preclude minor disciplinary situations from being dealt with informally. The disciplinary procedure must be advised and supported at all times by HR.

In cases other than gross misconduct or in the first two years of employment (as noted above), an employee whose conduct or performance does not meet the standards will normally first be counselled in an attempt to achieve the required improvement.

No disciplinary action will be taken until the case has been investigated and the employee has had the opportunity to respond to the allegations in accordance with the procedure set out below. All disciplinary situations will be dealt with without unreasonable delay.

### **24.2 Suspension**

Where an employee is accused of an act of serious or gross misconduct, or where the circumstance otherwise warrants it, after careful consideration he/she may be suspended from work on full pay pending the outcome of the disciplinary procedure. Such suspension is not a form of disciplinary action. Suspension is a last resort and can only be actioned by the Head or Bursar or by their authority the Head of HR.

Where appropriate, during any disciplinary investigation or suspension, the Head will appoint a senior member of staff, who is not involved in the disciplinary procedure, to provide guidance and support to the member of staff under investigation or suspension.

### **24.3 Formal Disciplinary Procedure**

#### **— Investigation**

When a disciplinary situation arises a senior member of staff will, as soon as reasonably practicable, carry out an investigation into the matter. The investigation will be confined to establishing the facts and gathering any relevant documentation. Where necessary, the investigating officer will obtain statements from any relevant individuals. An investigatory meeting with the employee may take place if considered appropriate by the investigating officer. Evidence may include previous acts of misconduct or behaviour.

#### **— Notification**

If, as a result of the investigation, it is decided that there is a disciplinary case to answer, the employee will be invited to attend a disciplinary meeting.

The employee will be informed in writing of the nature of the complaint and where appropriate, will be provided with copies of any written evidence gathered during the investigation.

Where either party intends to call any relevant witnesses at the disciplinary meeting, 48 hours minimum notice of their intention to do so must be given.

#### – **Disciplinary Meeting**

A disciplinary meeting will be conducted by the Head or Bursar. The employee may be accompanied by a trade union representative or a colleague, if desired. The employee and their companion should make every effort to attend the disciplinary meeting. In the event that the employee fails to attend the disciplinary meeting this will usually be rearranged once, but should they fail to attend the rearranged meeting then a decision may be reached in their absence.

The employee will be given the full opportunity at the disciplinary meeting to explain the matter and respond to the allegations.

A note-taker will usually be present but will not be involved in the decision-making process.

If following the disciplinary meeting it is decided that disciplinary action is warranted, the employee will be advised of the decision in writing and will specify the details of:

- the failure to meet the required standard
- any action required by the employee to remedy the situation
- any relevant review period /duration of warning and the consequences of continued or subsequent failure to reach and sustain the required standard of performance or conduct.
- the right of appeal

In the event that disciplinary action is warranted one of the sanctions below may be issued. A sanction may be imposed at any level including summary dismissal depending on the circumstances.

#### – **Written Warning**

In the case of a first act of misconduct or under performance, or a repetition of earlier minor offences or a failure to improve, the employee will be given a written warning, setting out the precise nature of the offence, the likely consequences of further offences and specifying, if appropriate, the improvement required and over what period.

#### – **Final Written Warning**

In the case of a sufficiently serious offence or under performance, or a repetition of earlier offences the employee will be given a final written warning, setting out the precise nature of the offence, the likely consequences of further offences and specifying, if appropriate, the improvement required and over what period. This may include a statement that any recurrence or no improvement may lead to a dismissal or to some other action short of dismissal.

#### – **Dismissal**

This stage will normally result from continued failure by the employee to act on previous warnings or an act of gross misconduct. In the case of gross misconduct, the employee will normally be dismissed without notice or payment in lieu of notice. If the decision to dismiss is made the employee will be informed in writing of the reason for dismissal, the date on which the contract between the parties will terminate and the appropriate period of notice.

#### **24.4 Misconduct**

Behaviour which is disruptive, disrespectful to colleagues, or which falls short of the requirements set out in this handbook will be treated as misconduct under the disciplinary procedure. While employees will not usually be dismissed for a first offence a failure to remedy the behaviour or to adhere to required standards may ultimately lead to dismissal once appropriate warnings have been given.

#### **24.5 Gross Misconduct**

In exceptional circumstances, employees may be dismissed without notice or payment in lieu or notice even in a case of first offence if it has been established, after investigation and after hearing the employee's explanation at a disciplinary meeting, that there has been an act which constitutes gross misconduct.

It is not possible to list every example of gross misconduct which may arise, but the following provides an illustration of the sort of conduct that will fall into this category – some of which are then explained in more detail below (but are not limited to):

- Refusal to carry out reasonable instructions
- serious breach of health and safety rules
- serious breach of the School ICT, email, and internet use policy
- theft or fraud from either the School or co-workers or deliberate damage to School property or that of co-workers
- being under the influence of drink or illegal drugs at work
- reckless behaviour posing a risk to health and safety
- contravention of the equal opportunities and discrimination policy
- negligence resulting in serious loss, damage, or injury.
- assault or attempted assault
- falsification of records
- failure to disclose
- breach of School policies or procedures
- bullying or harassment of colleagues, pupils or parents
- abuse or suspected abuse of your position of trust in relation to pupils at the School
- bringing the School into disrepute

#### **24.6 Appeals**

An employee may appeal against a disciplinary decision within five working days of receipt of the written decision. Such appeals are to be made in writing to the Head or the Bursar.

The appeal hearing will be convened as soon as is reasonably practicable. The appeal hearing will be held by the Head or The Bursar, or a Governor or panel of up to three Governors (who have had no prior involvement). The Head or The Bursar will not hear the appeal if they held the disciplinary meeting. Where new evidence arises prior to or during the appeal the employee will be given access to any relevant information or evidence and will have the opportunity to make representations. The employee will have the right to be accompanied at any appeal hearing by a colleague, trade union representative, or other adult of their choosing. The employee will be informed in writing of the decision of the appeal hearing following the conclusion of the hearing. Such decision will be final. In the event of an unsuccessful appeal against a decision to dismiss the original dismissal date shall stand.

A copy of all formal warnings will be retained on an employee's personal file but will be considered spent after a period of twelve months.

#### **24.7 Capability Procedure/Performance Review – See Appendix 2**

This procedure applies where a member of staff is failing to carry out their responsibilities or duties in a satisfactory manner, due to a lack of ability, experience, or qualifications or on health grounds.

This procedure aims to ensure fairness and consistency throughout the School and provides for warnings to be given for failure to meet our standards of job performance. The procedure is non-contractual in nature but applies to all members of staff except that this procedure will not apply during the first 2 years of employment. All members of staff should familiarise themselves with its provisions.

Most performance improvement procedures will follow the course set out in Appendix 2. However, we may vary the process to suit individual circumstances; such a variation will not amount to a breach of this procedure. The procedure will be invoked when performance issues arise or are identified either following an appraisal process or otherwise.

The School will normally address performance informally and offer appropriate training and support to an employee before progressing under this procedure.

The procedures set out in Appendix 2 aim to ensure that there is:

- Openness and awareness for staff when they are not meeting the required levels of performance.
- A means of monitoring performance and establishing performance criteria.
- A degree of consistency in how staff are given opportunities to attain satisfactory levels of performance.
- Assistance in identifying the most appropriate form(s) of support and providing that support

The School will consider what training and support it can give the employee to help them meet the performance requirements.

#### **24.8 Grievance Procedure**

Should an employee at any time have a grievance connected with his or her employment it will be the school's intention to consider and resolve it at the earliest opportunity and to the satisfaction of all concerned wherever possible. The procedure is not contractual but applies to all employees who should familiarise themselves with its provisions. All stages of this process will be dealt with without unreasonable delay.

##### **– Informal**

An employee who has a grievance with any aspect of his or her employment should raise it initially with his or her line manager and the matter will be discussed informally and resolved where possible.

##### **– Formal**

If no satisfactory resolution is possible or the employee considers they have not been fairly treated, they may raise it in writing to the Head of Department and it will be treated as a formal grievance.

When an employee raises a formal grievance, a meeting will be arranged as soon as possible. At the meeting the employee will have the opportunity to explain their grievance and how they think it may be resolved. Depending on the circumstances, the meeting may be adjourned in order for an investigation to take place. Where the matter needs to be investigated and/or the meeting adjourned, the employee will be given an indication of the likely timescale for receiving a response.

At the meeting, the employee may be accompanied by a colleague, trade union representative, or other adult of their choice.

The employee will be informed in writing of the outcome of the grievance and the reasons for the decision. If any action is to be taken as a result of the grievance, the employee will, where possible, be informed.

The decision will be issued as soon as possible following the conclusion of the meeting. Where the matter needs to be investigated and/or the meeting adjourned, the employee will be given an indication of the likely timescale for receiving a response.

##### **– Appeal**

If the employee feels that his or her grievance is not satisfactorily resolved, or feels they have been unfairly treated, he or she may, within five working days of the written decision, appeal in writing to the Head.

An appeal hearing will be convened as soon as is reasonably practicable, and will be heard by the Head, The Bursar, a Governor or a panel of up to three Governors.

At the appeal hearing, the employee may be accompanied by a colleague or a trade union representative of their choice.

Whenever possible, a decision of the appeal and the reasons for it will be given within ten working days of the hearing. This decision will be given in writing and will be final.

## **APPENDIX 1**



CUMNOR HOUSE  
SUSSEX

## **SICK PAY SCHEME**

### **QUALIFIED TEACHERS**

#### **Up to 2 years, after probation is completed:**

Full pay for 1 month (a maximum of 4 weeks in a rolling 12-month period)  
plus, after 12 months of service, half pay for 1 month (4 weeks). SSP thereafter.

#### **2- 5 years inclusive:**

Full pay for 2 months (a maximum of 8 weeks in a rolling 12-month period) and half pay for 2 months (8 weeks). SSP thereafter.

#### **Upwards of 5 years:**

Full pay for 3 months (a maximum of 13 weeks in a rolling 12-month period) and half pay for 3 months (13 weeks). SSP thereafter.

### **SUPPORT STAFF**

#### **Up to 2 years, after probation is completed:**



Full pay for 2 weeks (in a rolling 12-month period) and, after 1 year of service, half pay for 2 weeks. SSP thereafter.

**2 to 5 years inclusive:**

Full pay for 1 month (a maximum of 4 weeks in a rolling 12-month period) and half pay for 1 month (4 weeks). SSP thereafter.

**Upwards of 5 years:**

Full pay for 2 months (a maximum of 8 weeks in a rolling 12-month period) and half pay for 2 months (12 weeks). SSP thereafter.

**APPENDIX 2**



CUMNOR HOUSE  
SUSSEX

**PERFORMANCE/CAPABILITY REVIEW**

Most performance improvement procedures will follow the course set out below. However, we may vary the process to suit individual circumstances; such a variation will not amount to a breach of this procedure. The procedure will be invoked when performance issues arise or are identified either following an appraisal process or otherwise.

**Informal Procedure**

Head invites employee to an informal meeting to discuss the performance issues and agree a way forward.

Notes of discussion to include:

- Key issues of concern
- Comments received from other sources regarding work
- Teacher input and mitigation
- Expectations of the role and the standards required
- Support and training provided to help meet the standards
- Action plan with clear targets

- Agreed review date

Head invites employee to informal review meeting to assess performance against the agreed improvement plan.

- If improvement is to a satisfactory standard, no further action will be required and nothing will be placed on the employee file.
- If improvement is made in part and an extension agreed, this will be documented and a further informal review will be arranged.
- If the employee fails to meet the standard required, and the explanation for this is not reasonable and/or acceptable, the employee will be advised that the formal procedure will be invoked.

### **Formal Procedure – Stage 1**

Head invites employee to a formal meeting to discuss the performance issues and agree a way forward.

The employee will be:

- Given a minimum of 5 days' notice;
- Informed of their right to be accompanied by a work colleague or union rep.;
- Advised of the range of outcomes open to the Head.

### **1<sup>st</sup> Formal meeting**

Meeting takes place with the Head and employee to discuss the issues of concern and agree a way forward.

HR will be in attendance to take notes on:

- Issue(s) of concern regarding employee's performance which has/have still not met the required standard;
- Employee input and mitigation;
- Potential solutions;
- Where a finding is made that the employee is not performing at the required standard, a formal warning will be issued and placed on file;
- A formal improvement plan as agreed, with clear targets;
- Agreed review date (4-6 weeks) and interim weekly reviews.

If a formal warning is issued, the employee will be advised by letter of warning, and provided with a copy of the formal improvement plan and review period(s). The employee will also be informed of the right to appeal.

The Head will invite the employee to a **1st formal review meeting** to review performance against the agreed improvement plan.

- If the improvement plan has been achieved to a satisfactory standard, no further action will be required unless future performance issues arise during the warning period.

- If the improvement plan has been met in part and an extension is agreed, this will be documented and a further formal review will be arranged. A letter will be sent to the employee to confirm revised improvement plan, targets and timescales for achievement.
- Where the employee fails to meet the improvement plan, and the explanation for this is not reasonable and/or acceptable, then the employee will be advised that a **2<sup>nd</sup> formal meeting** will be arranged.

### **Formal Procedure – Stage 2**

The Head invites the employee to a **2<sup>nd</sup> formal meeting** to discuss the issues of concern. The employee will be:

- Given a minimum of 5 days' notice;
- Informed of their right to be accompanied by a work colleague or union rep.;
- Advised of the range of outcomes open to the Head.

### **2<sup>nd</sup> Formal meeting**

Meeting takes place with the Head and employee to discuss the issues of concern and agree a way forward.

HR will be in attendance to take notes on:

- Issues of concern regarding employee's performance which have still not met the required standard;
- Employee input and mitigation;
- Potential solutions;
- Where a finding is made that the employee is not performing at the required standard, a **final written warning** will be issued and placed on file;
- A **2<sup>nd</sup> improvement plan** will be agreed, with clear targets;
- Agreed review date (4-6 weeks) and interim weekly reviews.

If a **final written warning** is issued the employee will be advised by letter of warning, and provided with a copy of the **2<sup>nd</sup> improvement plan** and review period(s). The employee will also be informed of the right to appeal.

The Head will invite the employee to a **2<sup>nd</sup> formal review meeting** to review performance against the 2<sup>nd</sup> improvement plan.

- If the agreed improvement has been achieved to a satisfactory standard, no further action will be required unless future performance issues arise during the warning period.
- If improvement has been made in part and an extension is agreed, this will be documented and a further formal review will be arranged. A letter will be sent to the employee to confirm revised plan, targets and timescales for achievement.
- Where the employee fails to meet the 2<sup>nd</sup> improvement plan, and the explanation for this is not reasonable and/or acceptable, then the employee will be advised that a final formal meeting will be arranged.

### **Formal Procedure – Stage 3**

The Head invites the employee to a **3<sup>rd</sup>/ Formal Decision meeting** to discuss the issues of concern.

The employee will be:

- Given a minimum of 5 days' notice;
- Informed of their right to be accompanied by a work colleague or union rep.;
- Advised of the range of outcomes open to the Head.

### **3<sup>rd</sup>/Formal Decision Meeting**

Meeting takes place with the Head and employee to discuss the performance against the 2<sup>nd</sup> improvement plan and to look at aspects that remain below expectations.

- If an acceptable standard of performance has been achieved during the second review period, the capability procedure will end and the appraisal process will re-start.
- If performance remains unsatisfactory, a decision may be made by the Head to dismiss the employee on the grounds of capability.

HR will be in attendance to take notes on:

- Issues of concern regarding employee's performance which have still not reached the required standard;
- Employee input and mitigation;
- Where a finding is made that the employee's performance remains unsatisfactory, it may be recorded that the employee is dismissed or required to cease working at the school;
- Potential solutions which form alternatives to dismissal, which may include:
  - I. Revising current job description and grade;
  - II. Alternative employment opportunities;
- Date of termination of contract, including 1 term's notice (or payment in lieu)

### **Dismissal Letter and Appeal**

If a decision is made to dismiss the employee on the grounds of capability, the employee will be informed in writing, including date of termination of contract and confirmation of notice period or payment in lieu. The employee will also be informed of the right to appeal. An appeal should be lodged within 5 days of the Decision meeting. Any appeal should be dealt with impartially and heard by managers who have not previously been involved in the case. The employee will be informed of the results of the appeal promptly in writing.

### **Examples of performance shortfalls**

The following are non-exhaustive and non-exclusive examples of the sort of performance shortfalls or failures, which will normally lead to action being taken.

**Minor offences** (informal oral warning)

- 5 Occasional poor job performance involving sub-standard work or application.

**Serious offences** (written or final written warning)

- Consistent poor performance or application.

- Failure to improve performance following an appraisal meeting or performance review, within the timescale specified within such a meeting or review.
- Failure to perform duties or roles to an acceptable standard for reasons which it is within your power to rectify.

You should be made aware that if there is no adequate improvement following the issue of warnings, such issues may result in dismissal.

#### **Capability and consistent performance offences (dismissal with notice)**

- Incapable and/or unsuitable of performing role or main job functions/duties as set out in job description and which could not be rectified by training or coaching.
- Consistent failure or unable to improve performance to required or reasonable standards or to the level of other members of staff carrying out the same, similar or equivalent work.
- You are unable satisfactorily to do or do not have the qualifications, aptitude and/or ability for the job.

#### **Gross negligence (dismissal without notice)**

- In the most serious cases of gross negligence, normally (but not necessarily) resulting in significant financial loss or loss of reputation to the School, where our continued trust and confidence in you has been destroyed as a result, dismissal may be without notice or payment in lieu of notice.

#### **Long term sickness absence**

Where an employee's underperformance is as a result of long-term sickness absence then the School will always seek medical advice prior to deciding about an employee's ongoing employment. The School will also consider whether there are any reasonable adjustments which can be made to assist the Employee to perform their role. In cases where the School has concerns about the Employee's long-term ability to perform their job as a result of health grounds the School will normally move to dismissal stage without prior warnings.

#### **Relationship with Disciplinary Procedure**

You may be dismissed following exhaustion of the formal performance improvement procedure and have no separate right to have the disciplinary procedure followed prior to dismissal.

Live warnings issued under the disciplinary procedure may, if appropriate, be taken into consideration when considering the level of warning to be given under the performance improvement procedure, and vice versa.

