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**Staff Code of Conduct Policy**

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The Staff Code of Contact outlines clear expectations for interactions between adults and children. It explicitly identifies acceptable and appropriate behaviour for all adults working with children. This policy is in line with the Ministry of Education’s National Staff Safeguarding Policy (Policy ED 23).

CF School requires that all adults engage in safe, supportive and respectful interactions with children at all times. The following outlines appropriate and expected conduct for physical behaviour, verbal and digital communication and general conduct.

**Physical Behaviour**

All adults interacting with children can only do so in open, public spaces. If one on-one meetings with a child are necessary, they will be conducted in a public area with another adult present.

Appropriate physical behaviour includes contact that maintains physical boundaries at all times and only consists of public and nonsexual touches, such as pats on the upper back or shoulders.

Inappropriate physical behaviour includes contact that abuses, exploits or harasses the child, such as slapping, shaking, pinching, hitting, punching, pushing, grabbing or kicking; patting the buttocks; touching or exposing private body parts contact which intimates romantic or sexual contact; showing pornography or involving children in pornographic activities.

**Communication**

Teachers should use caution and discretion in all verbal, nonverbal and digital communication with students. All employees will be guided by principles of professionalism and integrity. Communication between adults and children should be transparent about school activities, with the exception of counselling relationships and other topics, such as the child’s well-being, hobbies, interests, out of school activities, etc.

Appropriate verbal communications include providing directions, praise, positive reinforcement with a pedagogical purpose when used consistently and equally for all children. Inappropriate verbal communication includes yelling, threatening, ridiculing, use of expletives, degrading comments, profanity, sexual innuendo and risquéé jokes.

Appropriate digital communications include emails and text messages using the school’s email addresses and platforms, while inappropriate digital communication includes private messaging from social media or other private platforms or allowing children access to electronic devices that may expose children to inappropriate content.

**General Conduct**

Clever Fish recognises that for children, high self-esteem, confidence and positive relationships with trusted adults help to prevent abuse. As such, Clever Fish will commit to:

* Provide a positive, supportive, nurturing environment to encourage self-esteem and self- motivation which ensures that children are encouraged to talk and are listened to, where children are respected, valued and cared for; and where children feel safe and secure.
* Ensure that children know that all adults employed by Clever Fish can be approached if they are worried or in difficulty.
* Provide a consistent, encouraging, firm and fair approach to behaviour to ensure each child understands what behaviour is appropriate and what is unacceptable;
* Include in the curriculum activities and opportunities to equip children with the skills needed to stay safe from abuse and harm.
* Build productive, supportive, positive relationships with our children’s parents and care-givers to provide the required support to our children and their families as needed.
* Ensure our staff are never under the influence of alcohol, tobacco or other drugs in the presence of children.
* All staff to comply with mandatory reporting requirements/procedures, cooperate fully with investigations, no bullying, and address gift giving.