

VES Code of Conduct

At VES Recruitment Ltd (VES) we value the commitment, hard work and dedication our Teachers, Teaching Assistants and Cover Supervisors put into every assignment. As an agency, our high standards ensure that you are re-booked by client schools and help develop a client base of your own.

To maintain our relationship with schools and generate new business, we need your help. The following list of expectations must be adhered to on every assignment, and schools are encouraged to notify us should our staff fail to meet these standards.

We expect the following from our candidates:

1. To arrive no later than the time stated on your booking confirmation. If it is a last minute booking, please advise us at the office if you are going to be late so we can check this is okay with the school. If you are held up and likely to be late, please call us to inform us by 8:15am when possible.
2. To always carry your DBS certificate with you.
3. To always wear your VES lanyard when on placement.
4. To mark work completed throughout the day (essential in primary schools, but not always required in secondary schools).
5. To dress respectfully and appropriately.
6. To familiarise themselves with the school's disciplinary policy, always following this and VES' guidelines.
7. To remain at school until the classroom has been tidied and is in a suitable state for the following day.
8. If you are going to be off sick, please notify VES by 7:30am latest. You should also contact the school if you been asked to do so.
9. Mobile phones must be switched off in lessons.

To help us secure the bookings you prefer, please keep us informed of your availability. Also, please check your mobile for messages around lunchtime, as we often need to confirm bookings with schools before the end of the school day.

Please read through this document carefully and raise any questions you may have.

Remember- our success means more work for you!

Professional Standards

Standards of Behaviour

VES staff should **NOT**:

- Behave in a manner which would lead any reasonable person to work with children or to act as an appropriate role model.
- Make, or encourage others to make sexual remarks to, or about, a pupil
- Use inappropriate language to or in the presence of pupils
- Discuss their personal or sexual relationships with or in the presence of pupils
- Make (or encourage others to make) unprofessional personal comments which scapegoat, demean, discriminate or humiliate, or might be interpreted as such.

VES staff **SHOULD**:

- Ensure all children or young adults in your supervision are always safe
- Always ask for support and help from VES if you think your own actions could put pupils at risk
- Ensure that you take appropriate action if you observe another member of staff having a negative impact on pupils
- Always follow the school's child protection policies and procedures
- Ensure that relationships with pupils always remain professional
- Be aware that even well-intentioned physical contact may be misconstrued by the pupil, an observer or any person to whom this action is described
- Be aware of cultural or religious views about touching and be sensitive to issues of gender
- Ensure that you have read part one of Keeping Children Safe in Education (this can be found on our website).

Professional Integrity

- Demonstrate honesty and integrity in all aspects of their work
- Respect the privacy of others and confidentiality of information gained in course of profession practice unless there is a legitimate concern for wellbeing of an individual.
- Represent themselves, their status and qualification honestly.

Professional Values and Relationships

- Teaching staff should always be committed to the best interests of the children in their care and be fair and objective
- Respect everyone's specific needs
- Develop positive relationships with every individual in school community
- Work towards a culture of mutual trust and respect in every assignment

Dress and Appearance

Dress and appearance are personal choices and forms of self-expression, and individuals may choose to honour their cultural customs in this regard. However, staff should adopt attire and appearance suited to their professional role, which may differ from their personal style. Staff should ensure their clothing is modest, safe, and appropriate for the duties they perform, including in online or virtual teaching environments. Dressing or presenting oneself in a way that might be perceived as offensive or inappropriate may lead to criticism or potential allegations

Social Media, Internet and Mobile Phone Policy

VES acknowledges the value of social media in both professional and personal life; however, you need to be aware that your use of social media on a personal basis may have an impact on yours and VES reputation. Posting comments relating to schools would be deemed as unprofessional conduct. As VES employees in a position of trust to work with children at risk of harm you should never interact with them or their families via social media or using any other personal account in any circumstance.

You should take steps to avoid being found by children on social media, by selecting strict privacy settings, using different display name and choosing an appropriate display picture. You must not use social media in a way that would breach other school or VES' policies.

VES workers should not request or respond to personal information from children except where it is required for their professional role. All communications should remain open and transparent, avoiding any language or behaviour that could be misinterpreted as 'grooming.'

Staff should refrain from sharing personal contact details with children, such as personal email addresses, home or mobile phone numbers, or social media profiles. If children obtain this information through other means and attempt to contact the staff member, the staff member should not respond, report the matter to their manager, and clearly and politely inform the child that this is inappropriate.

Your mobile phone should be switched off when in a school and you must only use it during break times and never in the presence of children, other than for a work-related emergency or where you have been asked to by the Head Teacher (such as for contact on school trips).

Physical Contact

VES staff should:

- Be aware that even well-intentioned physical contact may be misconstrued by the pupil, an observer or any person to whom this action is described
- Never touch a pupil in a way which may be considered indecent
- Always be prepared to explain actions and accept that all physical contact be open to scrutiny
- Never indulge in horseplay or fun fights
- Always allow/encourage pupils, where able, to undertake self-care tasks independently
- Ensure the way they offer comfort to a distressed pupil is age appropriate
- Always tell a colleague when and how they offered comfort to a distressed pupil
- Establish the preferences of pupils
- Consider alternatives, where it is anticipated that a pupil might misinterpret or be uncomfortable with physical contact
- Always explain to the pupil the reason why contact is necessary and what form that contact will take
- Report and record situations which may give rise to concern
- Be aware of cultural or religious views about touching and be sensitive to issues of gender

Intimate/ Personal Care

Schools and settings should have clear nappy or pad changing and intimate / personal care policies which ensure that the health, safety, independence and welfare of children is promoted, and their dignity and privacy are respected.

VES staff **should**:

- Adhere to their organisation's intimate and personal care and nappy changing policies
- Make other staff aware of the task being undertaken
- Always explain to the pupil what is happening before a care procedure begins
- Consult with colleagues where any variation from agreed procedure/care plan is necessary
- Record the justification for any variations to the agreed procedure/care plan and share this information with the pupil and their parents/carers
- Avoid any visually intrusive behaviour
- Where there are changing rooms announce their intention of entering
- Always consider the supervision needs of the pupils and only remain in the room where their needs require this

Pupils are always entitled to respect and privacy and especially when in a state of undress, including, for example, when changing, toileting and showering.

However, there needs to be an appropriate level of supervision to safeguard pupils, satisfy health and safety considerations and ensure that bullying or teasing does not occur. This supervision should be appropriate to the needs and age of the children concerned and sensitive to the potential for embarrassment.

Behaviour Management

Corporal punishment and smacking are prohibited in all schools and educational settings. Staff must not use force as a form of discipline and should aim to defuse situations before they escalate, such as through distraction techniques. Always keep parents informed about any sanctions or behaviour management strategies applied. Remain mindful of factors, both within and outside the school or setting, that may influence a pupil's behaviour and adhere to the establishment's behaviour policy. Shouting at children should be avoided, except as a warning in emergency or safety situations.

Be aware of legislation and potential risks related to the use of isolation and seclusion and follow all legislation and guidance concerning human rights and restrictions on liberty.

The use of control and physical intervention

Early years providers must take all reasonable steps to ensure that corporal punishment is not given by any person who cares for or is in regular contact with a child, or by any person living or working in the premises where care is provided. A person will not be taken to have used corporal punishment if the action was taken for reasons that include averting an immediate danger of personal injury to, or an immediate danger of death of, any person including the child.

The law and guidance for schools' states that adults may reasonably intervene to prevent a child from:

- Committing a criminal offence
- Injuring themselves or others
- Causing damage to property
- Engaging in behaviour prejudicial to good order and to maintain good order and discipline.

Health & Safety Awareness

VES is committed to the welfare of supply teachers and support staff. It is your responsibility, when you arrive, to obtain as much information as possible before you start the assignment and carry out your duties in accordance with the schools' policies and procedures.

It is the client's responsibility to advise you of their health and safety policy and associated procedures.

When you arrive at the school you must find out:

- The health and safety guidelines for that site, including any specific health and safety guidelines on the use and strong equipment, disruptive pupils, on or off-site supervision of pupils
- The procedure for fire, or emergency evacuation the name of the qualified First Aider
- The reporting structure for accidents, incidents or near misses.

Health and Safety is a joint responsibility, and it is your responsibility to:

- Ensure that you carry out your duties in a safe and controlled environment
- Minimise any harm that may be caused to the pupils in your care, or to yourself.
- Report any accidents, incidents or near miss.

If you have any questions about what is expected of you while in school, please do not hesitate to get in touch with us on 01685 788018.