



# **Code of Conduct for School based Employees**

**Adopted By: Holmwood School**

**Approved by FGB on 26.11.18**

## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.0 This code of conduct is designed to give clear guidance on the standards of behaviour all school staff are expected to observe. Staff are role models and are in a unique position of influence and must adhere to behaviour that sets a good example to all the pupils within the school. As a member of a school community, they have an individual responsibility to maintain their reputation and the reputation of the school, whether inside or outside working hours.
- 1.2 The public are also entitled to expect the highest standards of conduct from school employees, governors and volunteers and to have trust and confidence in their integrity.
- 1.3 Employees must not put themselves in a position where duty and private interests conflict and must not make use of their employment to further private interests.
- 1.4 In addition to this Code of Conduct, all employees engaged to work under Teachers' Terms and Conditions of Employment have a statutory obligation to adhere to the Teachers' Standards issued by the Department for Education and in relation to this policy, Part 2 of the Teachers' Standards - Personal and Professional Conduct.

## **2.0 Scope**

- 2.1 This code applies to all staff within the school. Casual/supply staff, local authority employees, agency staff, self-employed workers and volunteers should also adhere to this code whilst working on the school site.

## **3.0 Aims**

- 3.1 This code sets out the standards of conduct expected of all school staff and helps to understand behaviour that is and is not acceptable, but it does not replace the general requirements of the law.
- 3.2 The code cannot cover every eventuality and if you are in any doubt, or if you require any additional guidance you should consult your Line Manager or Headteacher.

## **4.0 Setting an Example**

- 4.1 All staff in the school are in a position of trust and must set examples of behaviour and conduct which can be copied by pupils. Staff must therefore, for example, avoid using inappropriate or offensive language and behaviour at all times.
- 4.2 All staff must demonstrate high standards of conduct in order to encourage pupils to do the same (see Appendix A for examples)
- 4.3 All staff must also avoid putting themselves at risk of allegations of abusive or unprofessional conduct both within school and outside of

work. Staff, therefore need at all times, make a professional judgement about their actions and behaviour and seek to avoid conduct, which may lead any person to question their motivation or intentions.

- 4.4 All staff are expected to familiarise themselves and comply with all school policies and procedures.

## **5.0 Safeguarding Pupils**

- 5.1 Staff have a duty to safeguard pupils from physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse and neglect.
- 5.2 The duty to safeguard pupils includes the duty to report concerns about a pupil or colleague to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead for Child Protection.
- 5.3 Staff must read and be familiar with the schools Child Protection Policy and Whistleblowing Policy.
- 5.4 Staff should treat pupils with respect and dignity and must not seriously demean or undermine them, their parents or carers, or colleagues.
- 5.5 Staff are responsible for taking care of pupils under their supervision with the aim of ensuring their safety and welfare.

## **6.0 Relationships with pupils**

- 6.1 Staff must declare to the Headteacher any relationships that they may have with pupils outside of school. This may include mutual membership of social groups, tutoring, or family connections. Staff should not assume that the school are aware of any such connections.
- 6.2 Relationships with pupils must be professional at all times, physical relationships with pupils are not permitted and may lead to a criminal conviction.
- 6.3 Contact with pupils must only be made via school authorised mechanisms e.g. school email account or telephone where appropriate. At no time should personal telephone numbers, email addresses or communication routes via personal accounts on social media platforms be used to communicate with pupils. Employees must read and be familiar with the Social Networking Policy.
- 6.4 If contacted by a pupil via an inappropriate route, the member of staff should report the contact to the Headteacher immediately.

## **7.0 Infatuations**

- 7.1 In cases where a pupil develops an infatuation, there is a high risk of words or actions being misinterpreted and for allegations to be made against staff.
- 7.2 Staff should maintain professional boundaries at all times. They must report to a senior colleague any clear/apparent indications (whether they are verbal, written or physical), that suggest a pupil may be infatuated with them and respond sensitively to such situations in order to maintain the dignity of all parties.

## **8.0 Pupil Development**

- 8.1 Staff must comply with school policies and procedures that support the wellbeing and development of pupils.
- 8.2 Staff must co-operate and collaborate with colleagues and with external agencies where necessary to support the development of pupils e.g. speech and language therapists, psychologists.
- 8.3 Staff must follow reasonable instructions that support the development of pupils.

## **9.0 Honesty and Integrity**

- 9.1 Staff must maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their work. This includes the handling and claiming of money and the use of school property and facilities.
- 9.2 All staff must comply with the Bribery Act 2010. A person may be guilty of an offence of bribery under this act if they offer, promise or give financial advantage or other advantage to someone; or if they request, agree or accept, or receive a bribe from another person. If you believe that a person has failed to comply with the Bribery Act, you must report to the Headteacher or refer to the Whistleblowing Policy.
- 9.3 Gifts from suppliers or associates of the school must be declared to the Headteacher, with the exception of "one off" token gifts from pupils or parents. Personal gifts from individual members of staff to pupils are inappropriate and could be misinterpreted and may lead to disciplinary action. Employees should read and make themselves familiar with the Gifts and Hospitality Policy.

## **10.0 Equality**

- 10.1 Staff should not discriminate in recruitment and employment practices, nor in the delivery of services.
- 10.2 Staff should also ensure that in their dealings with parents and other members of the public, they ensure the provision of an efficient and impartial delivery to all individuals.

## **11.0 Conduct outside of Work**

- 11.1 Staff must not engage in conduct outside of work which could seriously damage the reputation and standing of the school or the employee's own reputation or the reputation of other members of the school community.
- 11.2 In particular, criminal offences that are inconsistent with the position held by the employee are likely to be regarded as unacceptable and potentially gross misconduct e.g. violence, possession/use of illegal drugs or sexual misconduct.
- 11.3 Staff may undertake work outside school, either paid or voluntary, provided that it does not conflict with the interests of the school nor be to a level which may contravene the working time regulations or affect an individual's work performance in the school.

## **12.0 E-Safety and Internet Use**

- 12.1 Staff must exercise caution when using information technology and be aware of the risks to themselves and others.
- 12.2 Staff must not engage in inappropriate use of social network sites which may bring themselves, the school, school community or employer into disrepute. Staff should ensure that they adopt suitably high security settings on any personal profiles they may have. Regard should be given to the schools Social Networking Policy at all times.
- 12.3 Photographs/stills or video footage of pupils should only be taken using school equipment, for purposes authorised by the school. Any such use should always be transparent and the resultant files from such recording or taking of photographs must be stored in accordance with the schools procedures on school equipment.

## **13.0 Confidentiality**

- 13.1 Employees should treat all information they receive in the course of their employment as confidential to the school. Employees must not use information in the school's possession to further their private interests or those of their relations and friends. Deliberate exploitation of confidential information for personal gain may result in disciplinary action including dismissal.
- 13.2 Where employees have access to confidential information about pupils or their parents or carers, staff must not reveal such information except to those colleagues who have a professional role in relation to the pupil. If in any doubt about sharing information seek advice from a senior member of staff, or those with designated child protection responsibilities.
- 13.3 However, staff have an obligation to share with their manager or the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead any information which gives rise to concern about the safety or welfare of a pupil. Staff must **never**

promise a pupil/student that they will not act on information that they are told by them.

#### **14.0 Recruitment**

- 14.1 Employee's involved in recruitment or decisions relating to promotion or grading must not be involved where they are related to an applicant or have close association with an applicant or employee.
- 14.2 All employees involved in recruitment and selection on behalf of the school must be familiar with, and abide by, the school's Recruitment and Selection Policy.

#### **15.0 Dress and Appearance**

- 15.1 All staff must dress in a manner that is appropriate to a professional role and promoting a professional image.
- 15.2 Staff should dress in a manner that is not offensive, revealing or sexually provocative.
- 15.3 Staff should dress in a manner that is absent from political or other contentious slogans.

#### **16.0 Performance of Duties**

- 16.1 Employees are required to observe agreed working procedures, operational regulations, health and safety rules, regulations, professional codes of practice and to carry out reasonable and proper instructions in matters relating to their duties.
- 16.2 An employee must not:
  - (a) Fail to discharge through carelessness, or neglect an obligation placed upon him/her by contract or by law;
  - (b) Fail to report any matter which he/she is required to report;
  - (c) Fail to wear safety clothing or footwear, or use safety equipment which has been issued as being necessary in the interests of health & safety or otherwise fail to have due regard to health and safety requirements.

#### **17.0 Disciplinary Action**

- 17.1 Staff should be aware that failure to comply with this Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action being taken.

#### **18.0 Equality Statement**

- 18.1 This policy must be applied fairly to all employees irrespective of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

## Appendix A - Standards of Conduct

It is necessary to maintain high standards of conduct for the school to function in a harmonious, orderly and effective manner.

### Attendance at Work

Examples of unacceptable standards:

- Deliberate provision of false or misleading information on applications for employment or promotion
- Unauthorised absence
- Poor timekeeping including late starting, early finishing, excessive break periods
- Failure to comply with sickness absence procedures
- Falsification of official accounts or documents e.g. timesheets, travel sheets, expense claims
- Incapacity at work, due to the effects of alcohol or non-prescribed drugs

### Behaviour

Examples of unacceptable standards:

- Physical violence
- Indecent behaviour, action or language that is likely to cause offence, including racial or sexual abuse
- Harassment, bullying or victimisation of others, including racial, religious or sexual intimidation or prejudice
- Disruption of others by unruly or disorderly behaviour
- Discourteous or improper treatment of members of the public, colleagues, pupils, governors or parents
- Acceptance of bribes or involvement in similar corrupt practice
- Lack of integrity that would damage public confidence in the school

### Care of Property

Examples of unacceptable standards:

- Use of the schools time or property for personal reasons without permission
- Misuse of property or equipment to which you have access through your work
- Damage to or neglect of property in the course of an employee's work
- Theft

### Neglect

Examples of unacceptable standards:

- Failure to follow operating instructions and procedures
- Failure to achieve required levels and/or quality of performance, through carelessness or lack of application
- Maladministration
- Failure to carry out a reasonable instruction