



WOODLANDS
SCHOOL

Staff Code of Professional Conduct

Member of Leadership Team with Responsibility for Update of Policy	Deputy Headteacher
Headteacher	Jules Taylor
Date adopted by the Governing Body	20th November 2019
Policy Review Cycle	Every three years
Date for Policy Review	November 2022

Introduction

At Woodlands School, we believe in creating a whole school culture that is safe and inclusive. Our aims underpin the culture: principles of respect, understanding rights and responsibilities, fairness, tolerance and understanding for all. This code of conduct sets out the key principles for maintaining a safe and effective school culture and applies to all staff, governors and volunteers.

Personal and Professional Conduct

A teacher is expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct. The following statements define the behaviour and attitudes, which set the required standard for, conduct throughout a teacher's career.

Teachers uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, by:

- treating pupils with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to a teacher's professional position
- having regard for the need to safeguard students' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions
- showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others
- not undermining fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
- ensuring that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways which exploit students' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law and that the pupils are not indoctrinated or unduly influenced by the promotion of partisan political views.

Teachers must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they teach, and maintain high standards in their own attendance and punctuality.

Teachers must have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks, which set out their professional duties and responsibilities.

(Teacher's Standards, DfE)

Working Practices

(a) Management and Staff Relations

An atmosphere of mutual confidence, trust and respect between managers and staff is essential to achieving the school's aims and targets and providing a high quality of teaching and learning.

Staff are expected to:

- promote the School in a positive manner
- work reliably and in accordance with the school's policies and practices as well as any other rules and regulations that apply to their work and/or the workplace

- carry out any reasonable instructions given to them by their manager and/or Headteacher
- Recognise that they are part of a team and that everyone should be working together to achieve similar aims for the overall benefit of the students.
- Ensure PPA time is used effectively

As a manager, you should, in addition:

- support and assist staff to carry out their work properly
- in your dealings with your staff, act in accordance with their conditions of employment
- in consultation with staff, set standards of work and objectives, as appropriate to their role
- give feedback and advice on areas for further development to assist staff in meeting objectives
- aim to continually develop staff to meet current and future needs of the school
- treat all staff fairly and consistently
- provide a working environment free from discrimination and harassment
- provide a safe and healthy working environment.

School Policies and Procedures

Pupils and staff are expected to work together to build a school whose relationships are characterised by mutual and appropriate respect. Praise and building on the positive should always come first. Where firmness and sanctions are called for this should be exercised calmly, and staff should avoid shouting at pupils unless there is a Health and Safety risk. The school behaviour policy and associated documents establish expectations, rewards and approved sanctions.

All new staff should be issued with a copy of these policies and any behaviour concerns should be dealt with in line with them.

Where a member of staff is having difficulties managing pupil behaviour, they should discuss this matter with a member of the Senior Leadership Team at the earliest opportunity.

All other policies and procedures of the school collectively bring together an environment, which contributes towards the effective running of the school, and all staff are expected to abide by these.

Setting an Example

All staff have a responsibility to maintain public confidence in their ability to safeguard the welfare and best interests of pupils. They should adopt high standards of personal conduct whether this be in person, telephone, letter or email in order to maintain the confidence and respect of their peers, pupils, parents and the public in general.

An individual's behaviour, either in or out of the workplace, should not compromise her/his position within the work setting or bring the school or the Local Authority into disrepute. All staff who work in school provide a role model for behaviour and conduct which can be copied by students. All staff must, therefore, demonstrate high standards of conduct in order to encourage our pupils to do the same

All staff should always use appropriate language and never demean, distress or offend others. This may happen, for example, by making degrading, sarcastic, suggestive or insensitive comments or remarks.

Conduct Outside Work

Staff must not engage in conduct outside 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. In particular, criminal offences that involve violence or possession or use of illegal drugs or sexual misconduct are likely to be regarded as unacceptable. 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.

Staff must not organise or attend any personal events organised by students, this is part of the school's safeguarding practice.

Safeguarding

The School recognises its statutory and moral duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils and understands that staff play a vital role in meeting these responsibilities. Staff must be aware of their individual safeguarding responsibilities, including to provide a safe environment in which pupils can learn, to be aware of the signs of abuse and neglect, to identify pupils who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm and to take appropriate action in such cases to prevent concerns from escalating.

All members of staff must be aware of the school's systems for supporting child safeguarding, including the role of the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). Concerns about the welfare of a child must be raised without delay to the school's DSL in the first instance or to the Deputy DSL if the DSL cannot be located. In the event that none of the above are available, there should be no delay in reporting a concern if there is risk of immediate serious harm to a child. Staff should be familiar with the school's safeguarding policy, which is available to all staff. All staff will receive appropriate child protection training and will be provided with guidance on child safeguarding as part of their induction to the school. In accordance with the statutory guidance published by the Department for Education 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (September 2019) all staff in School are required to read Part One 'safeguarding information for all staff' and will be provided with a copy as part of their induction to the school. See the school's Safeguarding Policy for more information.

Health and Safety

The School recognises and accepts its responsibility as an employer to maintain, so far as is reasonably possible and practicable, the safety and health of its employees and of other persons who may be affected by its activities.

It is your duty, as an employee, not to put at risk either yourself or others by your acts or omissions. You should also ensure that you are familiar with the school's health and safety arrangements. Should you feel concern over any health and safety aspects of your work, this should be brought to the attention of your line manager immediately.

Appropriate Relationships

Pupils

Individuals who work or volunteer in a school environment are in a position of trust. As such, staff should be mindful of the need to maintain professional boundaries appropriate to their position and must always consider whether their actions are warranted, proportionate, safe and applied equitably. Staff should act in an open and transparent way that would not lead any reasonable person to question their actions or intent. Staff should think carefully about their conduct so that misinterpretations are minimised. Staff should avoid working one to one with a pupil alone in a room. There should be two members of staff speaking to a pupil in meetings or working with a pupil to avoid the possibility of false allegations made against members of staff. The exception is if the room has a CCTV camera.

Staff must avoid unnecessary physical contact with pupils. Where physical contact is essential, e.g. for safety reasons, the pupil's permission must be gained for that contact wherever possible. If physical contact is made to remove a pupil from a dangerous situation or an object from a pupil to prevent either harm to themselves or others, then this should be used in compliance with our Positive Handling Policy and then recorded in our 'Number and Bound book' logging system and reported to an SLT member.

Staff should only exercise physical restraint as a last resort having given due regard to the level of risk presented by the situation.

Staff are allowed to comfort a child who is hurt/distressed in a manner appropriate to the age of the child. However, adults should not initiate any physical contact unnecessarily, and there should be very clear boundaries.

Teachers must ensure that their personal views and beliefs are not expressed in ways that exploit pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law. Teachers must ensure that the pupils are not indoctrinated or unduly influenced by the promotion of partisan political views. Teachers must ensure they respect British values, and actively promote fundamental values of democracy, equality, tolerance of different faiths and beliefs, the rule of law, mutual respect and individual liberty. We encourage individual liberty and mutual respect between all staff and pupils.

Parents

Staff are expected to interact with parents in a polite and respectful manner and recognise parents' entitlement to express any concerns they may have about their child's learning, safety or wellbeing. Staff should avoid discussing school matters with parents outside school, if approached they should instead refer the parent to the normal school communication channels. If parents want a meeting regarding their child then staff must ensure that the meeting is a formal arrangement in school with minutes taken as a record. Staff should not discuss any child's behaviour in front of other children's parents.

Use of IT including social media

Please see the Acceptable Use Policy for Staff.

Internal e-mail and internet systems must only be used in accordance with the school's acceptable use of ICT policy. Social networking sites offer the opportunity for communication with pupils, young people and their parents outside normal professional boundaries. School staff must take care to protect their privacy and protect themselves from risk of allegations in relation to inappropriate relationships and cyberbullying. Staff must not develop or maintain online relationships with parents or pupils through social networking sites, instant messaging or other media, whether this is through school or personal IT facilities. Staff should not use personal phones and cameras to photograph pupils. They should not show pupils personal images from their personal mobile phones. Please refer to the school's acceptable use Policy

for further guidance on acceptable and unacceptable use of IT, social media and mobile phones.

Staff and volunteers must not give their personal details such as home/mobile phone number; home or e-mail address to pupils unless the need to do so is agreed with senior management.

Under no circumstances should adults in school access inappropriate images. Deliberately accessing pornography on school equipment will be treated as gross misconduct and may be considered a criminal offence. Accessing indecent images of pupils on the internet, and making, storing or disseminating such material, is illegal, is likely to lead to criminal prosecution and may result in barring from work with pupils and young people.

Personal property of a sexually explicit nature such as books, magazines, mobile phone images, DVDs or such material on any electronic media must not be brought onto or stored on the school premises.

Confidentiality and disclosure of information

Staff must ensure that they do not disclose confidential information to anyone who does not have the right to receive it. Where information is disclosed this should be in line with the principles of GDPR. Equally, staff should not prevent another person from gaining access to information to which that person is entitled by law. If there is doubt about whether or not to share information, advice must be sought from an appropriate senior member of staff. Information obtained during the course of an individual's work should never be used for personal gain or benefit, nor should it be passed onto others who might use it in such a way.

Equal opportunities

The Governing Body of the school is committed to equality for all in the appointment, development, training and promotion of staff and in all dealings with pupils and parents of the school. It also recognises that all members of staff have the right to work in a safe environment without fear of discrimination, harassment or abuse.

All pupils, colleagues, parents, members of the public and wider school community have the right to be treated with fairness and equality and must not be discriminated against. The school expects staff to uphold these principles. Staff cannot have any 'favourite' pupils; therefore, all pupils should be treated fairly and equitably. Please refer to the school's Equality policy for further guidance.

Whistleblowing

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 (as amended) gives protection to people who disclose reasonable concerns about serious misconduct or malpractice at work. This is sometimes known as Whistleblowing. The Governing Body of the school will treat all matters of malpractice very seriously and allegations about such matters will be dealt with quickly and with appropriate confidentiality.

Staff should acknowledge their individual responsibilities in bringing matters of concern to the attention of senior leadership in the school. This is particularly important where the welfare of pupils may be at risk.

Gifts and Hospitality

There may be occasions where pupils or parents wish to pass small tokens of appreciation to staff, for example as an end of year 'thank-you', and this is acceptable. However, it is

unacceptable to receive gifts on a regular basis or of any significant value or to suggest to pupils that gifts would be appropriate or desired. Money should never be accepted as a gift. It is not acceptable for staff to give gifts to pupils and any rewards given to pupils must be given in agreement with the declared reward practice of the school. Staff should not solicit or accept any gift, hospitality or other reward from external parties which influences the way in which they carry out their duties or leads the giver to expect preferential treatment.

Professional Relationships

With pupils:

All pupils have a right to be treated with respect and dignity. Staff and volunteers must not use any form of degrading treatment to punish or undermine a pupil. The use of sarcasm, demeaning or insensitive comments towards pupils is not acceptable in any situation. When speaking to students, we always consider how we would expect to be spoken to ourselves. Shouting aggressively is not acceptable in any situation. Under no circumstances should staff give lifts to pupils in their own vehicles. If a member of staff is working or meeting a student one to one, other staff members must be informed and wherever possible this must be avoided. Two members of staff should be with a pupil to avoid the possibility of false allegations against teachers made by pupils.

With other members of staff:

Staff are expected to act in a professional manner towards colleagues, irrespective of our relative position or status within the school hierarchy, for example:

- Speaking politely to one another;
- Being approachable, friendly and welcoming to other adults in school – both staff members and visitors;
- Being flexible and understanding of unexpected changes within the school day;
- Communicating clearly and honestly;
- Addressing concerns openly and honestly with the person to whom the concern is addressed, whenever possible, without publicly criticising anyone;
- We all take responsibility for our actions and are prepared to apologise when we have made mistakes and undertake to learn from them;
- Not deliberately discriminating or ostracising certain members of staff;
- Avoiding the establishment of 'cliques' within the staff body and ensuring we work as a team;
- Supporting all colleagues when challenging situations arise during the school day;
- Supporting the professional development of all colleagues;

Other Employment

Employees are not allowed to set up a business or accept employment with a business engaged in work which is in direct competition with the School. If employees / volunteers do have another job it must not conflict with the School's interest or bring the School into disrepute.

If employees / volunteers have another job with another organisation they must not act as a messenger, go between or arbitrator between that organisation and the School. Formal channels of communication must be maintained.

Employees' / volunteers' working commitments to another employer must not interfere with their work for the School; they must be able to work for the School at the contracted/arranged times rested and refreshed.

Staff Dress Code

To dress professionally shows pride, effort, respect for oneself and one's profession. Staff in school are role models for pupils in the school; therefore they have a responsibility to model appropriate dress and appearance. The image that we project as professionals is associated with how we present ourselves; the image of the school in the community is related to how all adults in the school dress. It is therefore important to dress appropriately when acting in a professional capacity.

Staff should be neat, clean, smart and tidy, wearing clothes, including shoes, which are commensurate with their post in the school.

All employees should wear ID badges. Staff must also adhere to the dress code.

Facilities and Publications

Employees must spend all of their contracted hours working for the school. Employees may not make personal use of the school's property or facilities (stationery, photocopiers, car parks etc.) unless authorised to do so by the Headteacher. Computers and software may only be used in line with the school computer (IT) security policy and e-mail/internet acceptable use policy.

Employees may only use the school telephones to make or receive private calls in exceptional circumstances.

Any public funds entrusted to an employee must be used in a responsible and lawful manner.

Employees who want to publish any material which they have written in connection with their duties or in which they describe themselves as holding a position within the school must first gain the consent of the Headteacher.

If, in the course of their work, an employee creates a copyright work (for example a procedures manual or a software programme); patentable invention; design capable of registration; this would become the property of the school and, if appropriate, they would be required to cooperate in the registration formalities.

Resources

All staff have a responsibility to look after the resources of the school. This includes:

- Not wasting resources unnecessarily at the end of the day the windows to be closed, cupboards locked and lights switched off.
- Following the principles of 'reduce, re-use, recycle' where appropriate;
- Signing out for items taken from the school premises.

Misconduct

All employees should conduct themselves in a professional manner at work. Serious misconduct and/or criminal offences committed during or outside of working hours which bring them or the school into disrepute may be the subject of disciplinary action, which could lead to dismissal.

It is essential that employees inform the Headteacher of any police investigation, charge, caution, reprimand, fine or conviction immediately. All such disclosures will be handled in confidence but this may result in a suspension from duties while an investigation takes place.

Working Hours

Staff should work the number of hours set out in their contract of employment and fulfil wider school responsibilities. All staff are expected to be punctual. If staff are unable to work because of sickness, they must inform the school by 07.30hrs and in line with absence notification procedures.

Media

Other than on matters of publicity, only the Headteacher is authorised to speak or send any communication on behalf of the School to members of the press or broadcast media. This decision is to avoid any embarrassment or unfair pressure on staff. This authorisation may be extended by the Chair of Governors to other staff members.

By adhering to this code of conduct, staff are assured they are playing their part in safeguarding pupils and protecting themselves.

It is our expectation that all staff should sign a revised copy of this professional code of conduct.

PROFESSIONAL CODE OF CONDUCT

1. Staff are expected to arrive and leave at the agreed times and sign in on arrival and sign out at the end of the day.
2. Attend staff meetings, briefings and training as outlined by the school calendar.
3. Teachers are to be in class promptly. A class must not be left unsupervised at any time.
4. Teachers are expected to dress according to the dress code. In case of an absence, school must be notified by 7.30am on the day.
5. All Staff are to contribute to classrooms being stimulating learning environments.
6. All Staff are to use the processes and rewards outlined in the Behaviour Policy.
7. Staff are required to share good practice with colleagues.
8. All Staff are required to use the Behaviour Management Systems, any unacceptable behaviour to be logged each day
9. All Staff must lock personal mobile phones away and not use them in the classrooms or corridors. Staff can check them during breaks in the staffroom only.
10. 'Number and Bound' restraint books, Accident books and First Aid books must be completed following the respective incidents.
11. All Staff are not to transport pupils in their own vehicle. The Mini bus can be used and two members of staff take the pupil with the authorisation of the Deputy or Headteacher.
12. All Staff should avoid working or meeting a pupil alone in a room. Please ensure that another member of staff is with you if you need to speak to a pupil on his/her own or alternatively, you meet in a room with a CCTV camera in operation.
13. Staff conduct outside of setting should not compromise child safeguarding issues or bring the school into disrepute; this includes the use of social media (see policy).

Signed Date.....

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