

# Behaviour in the Workplace (Staff Code of Conduct)

Approved by [Committee] on

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Signed by [Chair of  
Governors/Chair of Committee]:

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## 1. Aims, scope and principles

This policy aims to set and maintain standards of conduct that we expect all staff to follow.

By creating this policy, we aim to ensure our school is an environment where everyone is safe, happy and treated with respect.

Many of the principles in this code of conduct are based on the [Teachers' Standards](#) and those of the [Working Together To Safeguard children](#) document.

School staff have an influential position in the school and will act as role models for pupils by consistently demonstrating high standards of behaviour.

We expect that all teachers will act in accordance with the personal and professional behaviours set out in the Teachers' Standards.

We expect all support staff, governors and volunteers to also act with personal and professional integrity, respecting the safety and wellbeing of others.

Failure to follow the code of conduct may result in disciplinary action being taken, as set out in our staff disciplinary procedures.

Please note that this code of conduct is not exhaustive. If situations arise that are not covered by this code, staff will use their professional judgment and act in the best interests of the school and its pupils.

## 2. Legislation and guidance

We are required to establish procedures for the regulation of staff conduct under regulation 7 of The School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009.

In line with the statutory safeguarding guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education, we should have a staff code of conduct, which should cover acceptable use of technologies (including the use of mobile devices), staff/pupil relationships and communications, including the use of social media.

## 3. General obligations

Staff set an example to pupils. They will:

- Maintain high standards in their attendance and punctuality
  - Never use inappropriate or offensive language in school
  - Treat pupils and others with dignity and respect
  - Show tolerance and respect for the rights of others
  - Not undermine fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
  - Not express personal beliefs in a way that exploits pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law •
- Understand the statutory frameworks they must act within

- Adhere to the Teachers' Standards

## 4. Safeguarding

Staff have a duty to safeguard pupils from harm, and to report any concerns they have. This includes physical, emotional and sexual abuse, and neglect.

Staff will familiarise themselves with our child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures, and the Prevent initiative, and ensure they are aware of the processes to follow if they have concerns about a child.

Our child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures are available on our [school website](#). The safeguarding policy is also available in a hard copy format in the staff room.

All staff are expected to have read and understood the [Keeping Children Safe In Education part one](#) document. Throughout the year there will be regular updates relating to safeguarding which all teaching and staff that have regular contact with children are expected to attend.

## 5. Allegations against staff

Our school will follow the guidance as set out in Part 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023. We will follow that guidance where it is alleged that anyone working in the school or a college that provides education for children under 18 years of age, including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors has:

- Behaved in a way that has, or may have harmed a child;
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against/related to a child;
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way which indicates s/he would pose a risk of harm if they work regularly or closely with children;
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

We recognise that point iv above includes behaviour that may have happened outside of school or college, that might make an individual unsuitable to work with children.

As a school we will appoint a case manager to lead any investigation. If the allegation relates to a member of staff the headteacher / principal will be the case manager. If the allegation is regarding the headteacher or principal, then the Chair of Governors, Chair of the Management Committee, or Proprietor of an independent school, will be the case manager, as appropriate.

Full details on our response to allegations is contained in section 13 of our school safeguarding and child protection policy.

### 5.1 Low Level concerns

A low-level concern is a behaviour towards a child by a member of staff that does not meet the harms threshold, is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, and may be as simple as causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt'. For example, this may include:

- Being over-friendly with children
- Having favourites
- Taking photographs of children on a personal device
- Engaging in one-to-one activities where they can't easily be seen
- Using inappropriate language
- Low-level concerns can include inappropriate conduct inside and outside of work.

All staff should share any low-level concerns they have using the reporting procedures set out in our child

protection and safeguarding policy. We also encourage staff to self-refer if they find themselves in a situation that could be misinterpreted. If staff are not sure whether behaviour would be deemed a low-level concern, we encourage staff to report it.

All reports will be handled in a responsive, sensitive and proportionate way.

Unprofessional behaviour will be addressed, and the staff member supported to correct it, at an early stage.

This creates and embeds a culture of openness, trust and transparency in which our values and expected behaviour are constantly lived, monitored and reinforced by all staff, while minimising the risk of abuse.

All concerns should be reported in the first instance to the Headteacher. If the nature of the concern is regarding the Headteacher, then a concern should be raised with the chair of governors.

Full details on how the school responds to low-level concerns is covered in our low-level concerns policy.

## **5.2 Malicious Allegations**

The Weald believes that all members of the school community are entitled to protection from bullying and unfounded allegations. Inappropriate behaviour between students and staff will not be tolerated and any concerns or allegations of inappropriate behaviour by staff will be dealt with quickly, fairly and sensitively through the appropriate policies.

Any staff disclosing information regarding inappropriate behaviour by colleagues will be required to follow the appropriate policy, including the Confidential Reporting (whistleblowing) procedures.

If malicious allegations are made against members of staff, those making the allegation will be subject to an investigation to understand the motivations for the allegation and subject to our disciplinary procedures. A malicious allegation is a false accusation made against someone with the intention of causing harm or damage, and without any evidence to support it.

## **6. Staff-pupil relationships**

Staff will observe proper boundaries with pupils that are appropriate to their professional position. They will act in a fair and transparent way that would not lead anyone to reasonably assume they are not doing so.

If staff members and pupils must spend time on a one-to-one basis, staff will ensure

that:

- This takes place in a public place that others can access

- Others can see in to the room

- A colleague or line manager knows this is taking place

Staff should avoid contact with pupils outside of school hours if possible.

Personal contact details should not be exchanged between staff and pupils. This includes social media profiles.

While we are aware many pupils and their parents may wish to give gifts to staff, for example, at the end of the school year, gifts from staff to pupils are not acceptable.

If a staff member is concerned at any point that an interaction between themselves and a pupil may be misinterpreted, or if a staff member is concerned at any point about a fellow staff member and a pupil, this should be reported in line with the procedures set out in our child protection and safeguarding policy.

## **7. Communication and social media**

School staff's social media profiles should not be available to pupils. If they have a personal profile on social media sites, they should not use their full name, as pupils may be able to find them. Staff should consider using a first and middle name instead, and set public profiles to private.

Staff should not attempt to contact pupils or their parents via social media, or any other means outside school, in order to develop any sort of relationship. They will not make any efforts to find pupils' or parents' social media profiles.

Staff will ensure that they do not post any images online that identify children who are pupils at the school without their consent. Under no circumstances should staff use their own devices or online social media to post any images

online that identify children even with consent.

Staff should not make any post on social media that can bring the school into disrepute.

Staff should take whatever measures necessary to ensure students do not have the opportunity to capture images or recordings of themselves and subsequently post them to their social media.

Only once a child has reached the age of 18 AND is no longer on roll at the school can a member of staff interact with them on social media.

Staff should be aware of the school's online safety policy.

## 8. Acceptable use of technology

Staff will not use technology in school to view material that is illegal, inappropriate or likely to be deemed offensive. This includes, but is not limited to, sending obscene emails, gambling and viewing pornography or other inappropriate content.

Staff will not use personal mobile phones and laptops, or school equipment for personal use, in school hours or in front of pupils. They will also not use personal mobile phones or cameras to take pictures of pupils.

We have the right to monitor emails and internet use on the school IT system.

## 9. Confidentiality

In the course of their role, members of staff are often privy to sensitive and confidential information about the school, staff, pupils and their parents.

This information should never be:

- Disclosed to anyone unless required by law or with consent from the relevant party or parties •
- Used to humiliate, embarrass or blackmail others
- Used for a purpose other than what it was collected and intended for

This does not overrule staff's duty to report child protection concerns to the appropriate channel where staff believe a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm, as detailed further in our child protection and safeguarding policy.

## 10. Honesty and integrity

Staff should maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their role. This includes when dealing with pupils, handling money, claiming expenses and using school property and facilities.

Staff will not accept bribes. Staff may receive gifts from students or parents from time to time. Any gifts that are received which could be misconstrued must be declared to a senior member of staff.

Staff will ensure that all information given to the school is correct. This should include:

- Background information (including any past or current investigations/cautions related to conduct outside of school)
- Qualifications
- Professional experience

Where there are any updates to the information provided to the school, the member of staff will advise the school as such as soon as reasonably practicable. Consideration will then be given to the nature and circumstances of the

matter and whether this may have an impact on the member of staff's employment.

## **11. Dress code**

Staff will dress in a professional, appropriate manner. Outfits will not be overly revealing. Clothes will not display any offensive or political slogans.

## **12. Conduct outside of work**

Staff will not act in a way that would bring the school, or the teaching profession, into disrepute. This covers conduct including but not limited to relevant criminal offences, such as violence or sexual misconduct, as well as negative comments about the school on social media.

## **13. Transporting students**

If a situation arises where staff have to transport a child in their own car, drivers should make sure they are not alone with one student, written parental consent should be obtained and a central dropping off point should be arranged, rather than going to a student's house.

Staff who do this must be aware that they must have the correct form of car insurance to cover these journeys.

## **14. Physical contact with students**

Physical contact with students must be avoided. Staff must avoid threatening words, raised voices and any aggressive contact such as holding, pushing, pulling or hitting, which could amount to or which could be interpreted as a criminal assault. Members of staff do have the right to use reasonable physical force to restrain students in order to prevent them from committing a criminal offence, injuring others or themselves, damaging property or behaving in such a way as to compromise good order and discipline.

Students must be treated with safety, privacy and dignity where intimate care is required.

## **15. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed every three years, but can be revised as needed. It will be approved by the governing body. Our governing board will ensure this code of conduct is implemented effectively, and will ensure appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard children and deal with any concerns.

## 16. Links with other policies

This policy links with our policies on:

- [Staff disciplinary procedures](#), which will be used if staff breach this code of conduct. It also sets out examples of what we will deem as misconduct and gross misconduct. This is available to view in the staff shared drive
- [Child protection and safeguarding policy](#)
- Online safety
- [Anti-bullying policy](#) page 8 in regard to the school response to a member of staff who is suspected to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol on school premises
- [Low level concerns policy](#)