

Staff code of conduct

Approved by:	Andre Beukes	Date: 1 st July 2024
---------------------	--------------	--

Last reviewed on:	1 st July 2024
--------------------------	---------------------------

Next review due by:	1 st July 2025
----------------------------	---------------------------

Contents

1. Aims, scope, and principles.....	2
-------------------------------------	---

2. Legislation and guidance	2
3. General obligations	3
4. Safeguarding	3
5. Staff-pupil relationships.....	5
6. Communication and social media.....	6
7. Acceptable use of technology.....	6
8. Confidentiality.....	7
9. Honesty and integrity	7
10. Dress code	7
11. Conduct outside of work	8
12. Non Contractual Employment.....	8
13. Policy Links	9

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](#).

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

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 judgement 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 low-level concerns, allegations against staff and whistle-blowing, as well as 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 should set an example to pupils.

They will:

- Maintain high standards in their attendance and punctuality.
- Never use inappropriate or offensive language in school
- Treat everyone 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, 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.

[Safeguarding Policy 2024 2025.docx](#)

New staff will also be given copies on arrival.

4.1 Allegations that may meet the harm threshold.

This section is based on 'Section 1: Allegations that may meet the harm threshold' in part 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

This section applies to all cases in which it is alleged that anyone working in the school, including a supply teacher, volunteer or contractor, has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child, and/or
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, and/or
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children, and/or
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children – this includes behaviour taking place inside or outside of school.

We will deal with any such allegations quickly and in a fair and consistent way that provides effective child protection while also supporting the individual who is the subject of the allegation.

A 'case manager' will lead any investigation. This will be the Deputy Headteacher Pastoral, Headteacher or the chair of governors where the Headteacher is the subject of the allegation.

4.2 Low-level concerns about members of staff

A low-level concern is a behaviour towards a child by a member of staff that does not meet the harm 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 1-to-1 activities where they can't easily be seen.
- Humiliating pupils

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.

Reporting and responding to low-level concerns are covered in more detail in our child protection and safeguarding policy.

Our procedures for dealing with allegations will be applied with common sense and judgement.

4.3 Whistle-blowing

Whistle-blowing reports wrongdoing that it is “in the public interest” to report.

Examples linked to safeguarding include:

- Pupils’ or staff members’ health and safety being put in danger.
- Failure to comply with a legal obligation or statutory requirement.
- Attempts to cover up the above, or any other wrongdoing in the public interest.

Staff are encouraged to report suspected wrongdoing as soon as possible. Their concerns will be taken seriously and investigated, and their confidentiality will be respected.

Staff should consider the examples above when deciding whether their concern is of a whistle-blowing nature. Consider whether the incident(s) was illegal, breached statutory or school procedures, put people in danger or was an attempt to cover any such activity up.

Staff should report their concern to a Deputy Headteacher / Headteacher. If the concern is about the Headteacher or it is believed they may be involved in the wrongdoing in some way, the staff member should report their concern to the Chair of the Stowe Group Governors (chairman@stowe.co.uk)

Concerns should be made in writing wherever possible. They should include names of those committing wrongdoing, dates, places and as much evidence and context as possible. Staff raising a concern should also include details of any personal interest in the matter.

For our school’s detailed whistle-blowing process, please refer to our whistle-blowing policy.

5. 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 into the room.
- A colleague or line manager knows this is taking place.

Staff should avoid contact with pupils outside of school hours if possible. If a member of staff is also a school parent they should refer to the guidance for staff parents on these matters.

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

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.

6. Communication and social media

School staff's social media profiles should not be available to pupils and their immediate families. If they have a personal profile on social media sites, it is recommended that they do 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 add or accept ex-pupils on social media until 5 years after they have left. (At least at the age of 18 years old)

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 must not make any efforts to find pupils' or parents' social media profiles. To ensure transparency and avoid potential conflicts of interest, all staff members are required to declare any close friendships with parents of students at the school. This declaration should be made to the Head or the DSL. This will allow for clear boundaries to be maintained and promote a professional environment for everyone involved.

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

7. Acceptable use of technology

Staff will not use technology in school or belonging to the 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 front of pupils. (The only exceptions to this will be on away matches when a phone call is needed, school trips and potentially registering the children) They will also not use personal mobile phones or cameras to take pictures of pupils. Personal mobile phones, cameras, and all electronic devices with imaging and sharing capabilities belonging to specialist staff teaching EYFS children, or other staff who are in contact with them (including catering staff), must be stored out of sight and never used in their presence. This applies not only within the EYFS building but also when staff are in the presence of EYFS children in any location.

Staff are permitted to wear smartwatches, provided they do not have photo-taking capabilities. However, emerging technologies such as glasses with video recording or other

imaging capabilities are strictly prohibited from being worn or used in the presence of EYFS children.

We have the right to monitor emails and internet use on the school IT system, for both staff and pupils.

8. 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.

9. 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. Gifts that are worth more than **£50** must be declared and recorded on the gifts and hospitality register.

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.

10. Dress code

Staff will dress in a professional, appropriate manner.

Outfits will not be overly revealing, any tattoos should be appropriate for children to see.

Clothes will not display any offensive or political slogans.

No denim for normal school wear will be worn. (But acceptable on trips/boarding)

Winchester House Prep School branded Sports Kit to be worn.

11. 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.

12. Non Contractual Employment

Non-Contractual Employment

All staff are reminded of the following clauses in their contract of employment:

For teaching staff:

"You may not at any time without the Head's prior written consent (which shall not be unreasonably withheld) either receive any remuneration or reward for privately organised work with any pupil of the School, or accept any outside employment, post or appointment whether paid or unpaid."

For support staff:

"You are expected to be loyal to the stated aims and objectives of the School and may not engage in any outside activity which, in the reasonable view of the Head, might interfere with the efficient discharge of your duties or conflicts with the interests of the School. "

For all staff:

On occasion, staff may be approached to carry out additional pastoral, extra-curricular or educational support to children who may or may not be current pupils of Winchester House School. Whilst the School does not support additional tuition, we do recognise that, for some children, it can be of benefit. Staff may also be approached by other organisations regarding work at conferences, other schools and events.

Staff must ensure that additional support will not conflict or adversely affect any current or planned activities that an individual has or is likely to undertake at WHS. Individual members of staff are responsible for declaring additional earnings to HMRC.

Staff must make the parent /organisation aware that the work being undertaken is outside of the School's remit and, as such, will not be covered by the School's usual indemnity and insurance policies.

Staff are also reminded that School facilities, resources and materials should not be used for any work which falls outside of their contract – this includes, but is not limited to, classroom space, sports facilities, books, worksheets, photocopies.

If you wish to carry out any work outside of school or to share your knowledge and experience with other organisations, outside your contract with Winchester House School, you should email the Head with the following information, prior to agreeing to undertake the work.

- *Name of Pupil or Organisation (indicate "Non WHS Pupil" if applicable)*
- *Is the work paid or unpaid?*
- *Dates of coaching / tuition / care.*
- *Confirmation that the parent / organisation is aware that Winchester House School is not involved in this arrangement in any way*
- *Confirmation that any earnings will be declared, by you, to HMRC*
- *Confirmation that no School facilities will be used whilst carrying out this tuition/coaching/care*

13. Policy Links

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.
- Staff grievance procedures
- Child protection and safeguarding
- Gifts and hospitality
- Online safety
- Whistle-blowing