



# HR Services

## THE BUSINESS OF EDUCATION

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### Code of Conduct Policy

Date of Issue: Autumn 2022

*The Professional Associations/Trade Unions have been consulted on this document, and HfL recommends it for adoption.*

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*Policy amendments may occur at any time and you should consult the Policies page on the website for the latest update.*

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## **1. Objective, Scope and Principles**

This Code of Conduct is designed to give clear guidance on the standards of behaviour all school employees are expected to observe. School employees 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, each employee has an individual responsibility to maintain their reputation and the reputation of the school, whether inside or outside working hours.

This Code of Conduct applies to all employees of the school. This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and it may be amended at any time.

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 2012' and in relation to this policy, Part 2 of the Teachers' Standards - Personal and Professional Conduct.

This Code helps all staff to understand what behaviour is and is not acceptable, regard should also be given to the disciplinary rules set out in the Schools' Disciplinary Policy and Procedure. Staff should be aware that a failure to comply with the school's Code of Conduct could result in disciplinary action including but not limited to dismissal.

## **2. Setting an Example**

All staff who work in schools set examples of behaviour and conduct which can be copied by pupils. Staff must therefore for example avoid using inappropriate or offensive language at all times.

All staff must, therefore, demonstrate high standards of conduct in order to encourage our pupils to do the same.

All staff must also avoid putting themselves at risk of allegations of abusive or unprofessional conduct.

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

## **3. Safeguarding Pupils**

Staff have a duty to have regard to Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022 throughout their employment and abide by the duties placed upon them within this.

This Code of Conduct signifies the importance we place in ensuring safeguarding is at the heart of what we do and every effort must be made to keep our children safe from any form of abuse.

Staff have a duty to safeguard pupils from physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse and neglect

The duty to safeguard pupils includes the duty to report concerns about a pupil or colleague to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

The school's DSL is Fiona Hayes. The Deputy DSL's are Alex Armitage and Jenni Simsek.

Staff have access to the school's Child Protection Policy and Whistleblowing Procedure and staff must be familiar with these documents.

Staff should treat pupils with respect and dignity and must not seriously demean or undermine pupils, their parents or carers, or colleagues.

Staff should not demonstrate behaviours that may be perceived as sarcasm, making jokes at the expense of pupils, embarrassing or humiliating pupils, discriminating against or favouring pupils.

Staff must take reasonable care of pupils under their supervision with the aim of ensuring their safety and welfare.

#### **4. Relationships**

Staff must declare 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. A declaration form may be found in appendix 1 of this document.

Relationships with pupils must be professional at all times. Physical relationships with pupils are not permitted and may lead to a criminal conviction.

Encouraging a relationship to develop in a way which may lead to a sexual relationship or any other inappropriate relationship will be viewed as a grave breach of trust.

Contact with pupils must be via school-authorized mechanisms and solely for educational purposes. At no time should personal telephone numbers, text, email addresses or communication routes via personal accounts on social media platforms be used to communicate with pupils.

If contacted by a pupil by an inappropriate route, staff should report the contact to their Line Manager immediately.

Behaviour giving rise to concern should also be reported which includes pupils seeking affection, being sexually provocative or exhibiting overly familiar behaviour.

Existing or new personal relationships at work should be declared to the head teacher or Chair of Governors.

Staff should inform their Line Manager of any relationships which may create an enhanced risk to children so that necessary steps can be taken by the school e.g. cohabitation with a person convicted of a serious offence.

#### **5. Pupil Development**

Staff must comply with school policies and procedures that support the wellbeing and development of pupils.

Staff must co-operate and collaborate with colleagues and with external agencies where necessary to support the development of pupils.

Staff must follow reasonable instructions that support the development of pupils.

## **6. Honesty and Integrity**

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.

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 should refer to the school's Whistleblowing procedure. For Hertfordshire schools, for further information see the HCC Anti Bribery Policy for Schools available on The Grid.

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. A record will be kept of all gifts received.

Staff must not act on behalf of the school unless they have the authority to do so.

Professional references from the school will be provided by the Headteacher. References given by other members of staff must be clear that they are provided in a personal capacity.

## **7. Conduct outside of Work**

Staff must not engage in conduct outside work which could seriously damage the reputation 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 in the school. It is recommended that permission is sought in advance.

- Staff must disclose any work outside school or outside business interests where there is a potential conflict of interests with their employment at the school.
- If any allegation of wrongdoing occurs in a staff member's work outside school (whether or not they deny this) which may have a bearing on their employment they must disclose this immediately to the Headteacher or their Line Manager.

Forming inappropriate relationships or friendships with children or young people who are pupils under the age of 18 at another school/college will be viewed as inappropriate and impact upon the school's ability to trust the member of staff to maintain professional boundaries with pupils at the school.

A work related social event is considered to be an extension of the workplace and as such the standards of behaviour expected at these events is in line with this policy.

## **8. E-Safety and Internet Use**

Staff must exercise caution when using information technology and be aware of the risks to themselves and others. Regard should be given to the school's Online Safety Policy and Acceptable User Agreements at all times both inside and outside of work.

Staff must not engage in inappropriate use of social media 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.

Staff should exercise caution in their use of all social media or any other web based presence that they may have, including written content, videos or photographs, and views expressed either directly or by 'liking' certain pages or posts established by others. This may also include the use of dating websites where staff could encounter pupils either with their own profile or acting covertly.

Contact with pupils should only be made via the use of school email accounts or telephone equipment when appropriate and strictly for educational reasons.

Photographs 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 only occur where parental consent has been given. The resultant files from such recording or taking of photographs must be stored in accordance with the school's procedures on school equipment.

## **9. Confidentiality**

Where staff 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.

All staff are likely at some point to witness actions which need to be confidential. For example, where a pupil is bullied by another pupil (or by a member of staff), this needs to be reported and dealt with in accordance with the appropriate school procedure. It must not be discussed outside the school, including with the pupils parent or carer, nor with colleagues in the school except with a senior member of staff with the appropriate authority to deal with the matter.

However, staff have an obligation to share with their manager or the school's Designated Senior Person any information which gives rise to concern about the safety or welfare of a pupil. Staff must not promise a pupil that they will not act on information that they are told by the pupil.

Staff are not allowed to make any comment to the media about the school, its performance, governance, pupils or parents without written approval. Any media queries should be directed to the Headteacher.

## **10. Dress and Appearance**

All staff must dress in a manner that is appropriate to their role and promote a professional image.

Staff should dress in a manner that is not offensive, revealing or sexually provocative.

Staff should dress in a manner that is absent from political or other contentious slogans.

## **11. Compliance**

All staff must complete the form in appendix 2 to confirm they have read, understood and agreed to comply with the code of conduct. This form should then be signed and dated.

## **Professional responsibilities when using any form of ICT, including the Internet, in school and outside school**

Employees of the school have a duty to report an e-Safety incident which may impact on you, your professionalism or the school.

For your own protection we advise that you:

- Ensure all electronic communication with pupils, parents, carers, staff and others is compatible with your professional role and in line with school policies;
- Do not talk about your professional role in any capacity when using social media;
- Do not put online any text, image, sound or video that could upset or offend any member of the whole school community or be incompatible with your professional role;
- Use school ICT systems and resources for all school business. This includes your school email address, school mobile phone and school camera;
- Do not disclose any passwords and ensure that personal data (such as data held on MIS software) is kept secure and used appropriately;
- Only take images of pupils and/or staff for professional purposes, in accordance with school policy and with the knowledge of the school's Leadership Team;
- Do not browse, download, upload or distribute any material that could be considered offensive, illegal or discriminatory;
- Ensure that your online activity, both in school and outside school, will not bring the school or professional role into disrepute;
- Check emails daily as a minimum (on working days) or every other day if one day is particularly busy.

**Appendix 1**

**Confirmation of compliance**

I hereby confirm that I have read, understood and agree to comply with the school's code of conduct.

Name .....

Position/Post Held.....

Signed .....

Date .....

**Once completed, signed and dated, please return this form to your Line Manager**



## Appendix 2

### **Relationships with pupils outside of work declaration**

It is recognised that there may be circumstances whereby employees of the school are known to pupils outside of work. Examples include membership of sports clubs, family connections, or private tutoring.

Staff must declare any relationship outside of school that they may have with pupils.

<b>Employee Name</b>	<b>Pupil Name</b>	<b>Relationship</b>

I can confirm that I am fully aware of the code of conduct relating to contact out of school with pupils in line with this policy.

If I am tutoring a pupil outside of school I am aware that the following must be adhered to:

- I do not, at any point, teach the child in question as part of my daily timetable - this is a stipulation of such tutoring
- I emphasise to parents that this is done completely independently of the school
- No monies come through the school at any point, informally (e.g. via the pupil) or formally
- No private tutoring is to take place on the school premises

I confirm that if these circumstances change at any time I will complete a new form to ensure the school are aware of any relationships.

Signed .....

Date .....

**Once completed, signed and dated, please return this form to your Line Manager**