



Code of Conduct for Teaching and Support Staff

Wandsworth Hospital and Home Tuition Service

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Code of Conduct for Teaching and Support Staff

1. Introduction
 2. General Obligations
 3. Personal and Professional Conduct
 4. Safeguarding
 5. Disclosure of Information
 6. Whistleblowing
 7. Political Neutrality
 8. Relationships
 9. Staff Recruitment & Other Employment Matters
 10. Communication and social media
 11. Acceptable use of technology
 12. Outside Commitments
 13. Personal Interests
 14. Equality Issues
 15. Corruption
 16. Use of Resources
 17. Hospitality
 18. Gifts
 19. Sponsorship
 20. Confidentiality
- Footnotes

1. Introduction

1.1 This Code applies to all school-based staff in Wandsworth Borough Council Schools. The same principles of good conduct as set out in this Code apply to governors and volunteers alike.

1.2 The Code makes reference to a number of other policies, procedures and guidance in relation to staff conduct. These are highlighted in the relevant sections of the Code.

1.3 To underline the importance that the Governing Board attaches to the Code, you will be required to abide by its provisions as a condition of your employment. Any alleged breach of this Code may lead to disciplinary action which could result in dismissal. Please refer to the **Disciplinary Code of Practice** for more information.

1.4 Staff must read the Code carefully and ensure they understand it, along with any other documents referred to within it which are relevant to your own work. If you have any queries, please raise them with the Headteacher in the first instance.

1.5 This Code of conduct:

- sets out minimum standards of behaviour for employees;
- provides guidelines to help maintain and improve standards;
- aims to protect the reputation of both employees and the school;
- aims to protect the rights and interests of children and young people involved with the school

1.6 This Code is not exhaustive or exclusive and does not replace the general requirements of the law, common sense and good conduct.

2. General Obligations

Governors, staff and volunteers should behave in a manner which demonstrates personal courtesy, integrity and enhances the dignity and standards of the school. In addition, they should strive constantly to develop their own skills and expertise.

Staff, governors and volunteers 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
- Express personal beliefs in a way that will not overly influence pupils, and will not exploit pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law
- Understand the statutory frameworks they must act within

3. Staff responsibilities - Personal and Professional Conduct

3.1 The public is entitled to expect the highest standards of behaviour from school employees.

Employees represent the school and are trusted to act in a manner which promotes the schools' interest and protects its reputation.

Employees are accountable for their actions and should ask the Headteacher if they require clarification or are not sure of the appropriate action to take.

All employees are expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct.

3.2 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 time observing proper boundaries appropriate to a teacher's professional position
- having regard for the need to safeguard pupil's 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 pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law.

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

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

- the terms and conditions outlined in the school teachers' pay and conditions document (STPCD).
- the Teachers' Standards as set out by the Department for Education. These cover both teaching standards and personal and professional conduct. Teachers performance will be regularly reviewed against these professional standards.

4. Safeguarding

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

4.2 Staff, governors and volunteers will familiarise themselves with our 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.

The safeguarding policy and procedures are available in S:\Springfield\Service Policy Folder\Policies 2022-23, also on our website and in the staff and SLT offices onsite. New staff will also be given copies on commencement of employment with the school.

5. Disclosure of Information

5.1 It is a disciplinary offence to speak to the press in the capacity as a spokesperson for the School or Wandsworth Borough Council without prior permission.

5.2 Staff, governors and volunteers should not use any information obtained in the course of their employment for personal gain or benefit, nor should they pass it on to others who might use it in such a way.

5.3 Intellectual property or copyright created during the course of employment shall remain the property of the School and/or Council and must not be used by employees in personal capacity without prior permission.

6. Whistleblowing

If at any time an employee has a serious concern about something which he/she believes in good faith:-

- is unlawful;

- is against the Council's Standing Orders or policies; or
- falls below established standards for practice; or
- amounts to improper conduct; or
- is a health and safety risk to the public as well as other employees; or
- involves damage to the environment; or
- involves the unauthorised use of public funds; or
- involves possible fraud and corruption; or
- involves sexual or physical abuse of clients

He/she must follow the advice given in the "Policy and Procedure on Whistleblowing." This contains full details about what should be done by the employee. A copy of the Policy and Procedure can be obtained from your headteacher or school office.

7. Political Neutrality

Staff must follow every lawfully expressed school policy and must not allow their own personal or political opinions to interfere with their work.

8. Relationships

8.1 Pupils

Staff should maintain boundaries with pupils that are appropriate to their professional position. They should be sensitive in expressing criticism of pupils and avoid hurtful comments of a personal nature. Pupil reports should be based on factual and objective information. Confidentiality should be honoured, and nothing should be done which exploits, undermines or abuses a pupil.

If it is a requirement for staff members and pupils to 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.

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, this should be reported to their line manager or the Headteacher immediately.

8.2 Colleagues

Staff, governors and volunteers should ensure discussions with colleagues concerning professional problems are kept confidential, that their professional standing is respected, particularly when making any assessment observations of their work, and that they do not denigrate any colleagues in the presence of others.

8.3 Parents

Staff, governors and volunteers should give a true representation of facts concerning any aspect of the education development of children. They should respect both the joint responsibility which must exist between the school and parents, and the parental right to enquiry, consultation and information with regard to the educational development of their child.

8.4 Governors

Headteachers, teachers and support staff should not knowingly distort or misinterpret facts concerning the school. They should be objective and respect the overall joint responsibilities which exist with the governing board for the conduct of the school.

8.5 Children's Services and other Council Staff

Staff, governors and volunteers should support the Children's Services and other Council Staff in reasonable discharge of their duties under the law. They should maintain a professional relationship with those staff. In addition, they should be cognisant of and comply with as relevant, the provisions laid down in such documents as LA manuals of guidance and administration, Standing Orders, memoranda and regulations.

8.6 Contractors

Staff and governors should make known to the Headteacher any relationship of a business or private nature with external contractors or potential contractors as these orders and contracts must be awarded on merit, by fair competition against other tenders and no special favours should be shown to businesses run by, for example, friends, partners or relatives involved in the tendering process. No part of the local community should be discriminated against. Headteachers are expected to bring such relationships to the attention of the Chair of Governors.

See: Declaration of Interests and Additional Employment Policy and Procedure

9. Staff Recruitment & Other Employment Matters

9.1 Recruitment should always be carried out in a fair and equitable manner. Staff and governors should ensure that appointments are made on the basis of merit only. Staff should not mis-represent any professional or other qualifications. Staff and governors should not seek to advertise or canvass for the purpose of promoting their own advantage. It would be unlawful for an employee to make an appointment which was based on anything other than the ability of the candidate to undertake the duties of the post. In order to avoid any possible accusation of bias, employees should not be involved in an appointment where they are related to an applicant or have a close personal relationship outside work with him or her. The same approach should be adopted in relation to decisions relating to discipline, promotion or pay adjustments.

9.2 Requirements to disclose relevant criminal convictions. Criminal convictions have an impact on certain jobs within the School. If a member of Staff is convicted of an offence at any time during their employment with the School, there is a requirement to notify the Headteacher within two weeks of the conviction. Failure to do so will constitute a major offence under the **Disciplinary Code of Practice** in addition to any disciplinary offence which the conviction, treated separately, may constitute misconduct. Headteachers should make known any such convictions to the Chair of Governors.

10. Communication and social media

10.1 Staff 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.

10.2 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.

10.3 Staff will ensure that they do not post any images online that identify children who are pupils at the school without their consent.

11. Acceptable use of technology

11.1 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.

11.2 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.

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

12. Outside Commitments

Staff should be clear about their contractual obligations and should not take outside employment which conflicts with the School or Council's interest or affects professional standing. All Support Staff above Scale 6 must obtain written consent to having, or taking up, any outside employment from the Chair of Governors.

See: Declaration of Interests and Additional Employment Policy and Procedure

13. Personal Interests

Staff must declare in writing to the Headteacher, any financial or non-financial interest including personal relationships, which may influence, or be seen by another party to influence a particular situation. It is not possible to define all possible situations but a good test is to ask the question, "If other people knew the facts, might they reasonably think I had an interest." The Headteacher must declare in writing any similar interest to the Chairman of Governors. Copies of all declarations must be sent to the Director of Children's Services.

See: Declaration of Interests and Additional Employment Policy and Procedure

14. Equality Issues

Staff should ensure that any policies relating to equality issues as agreed by the Governors are complied with in addition to the requirements of the law. All members of the local community have a right to be treated with fairness and equality.

See: Equal Opportunities Statement, Bullying and Harassment Policy, Disability Code

15. Corruption

Staff must declare in writing any financial interests in the event of there being potential conflict. Furthermore, all staff must be aware that it is a serious criminal offence for them corruptly to receive or give any gift, loan, fee, reward or advantage for doing or not doing, anything or showing favour or disfavour to any person in their official capacity. In such circumstances if any money, gift, etc., is proved to have been paid or given to or received by a member of school staff then such money, gift, etc., is deemed to have been paid or given and received corruptly unless the contrary is proved. Headteachers must declare in writing any similar interest to the Chair of Governors.

See: Declaration of Interests and Additional Employment Policy and Procedure, Disciplinary Code of Practice.

16. Use of Resources

Staff must ensure that they use public funds and any other assets entrusted to them in a responsible and lawful manner and not use them for personal ends nor mix them with personal resources. They should strive to ensure value for money to the local community and to avoid legal challenge to the School or Council.

17. Hospitality

17.1 This involves both the giving and receiving of hospitality. When deciding whether or not it is justifiable, the following points must be addressed:

17.2 Hospitality must always be:

- in connection with official duties;
- justified in the public interest e.g. providing useful working benefits to the school or representing the school in the community;
- of a modest level;
- given/received openly;
- able to meet any subsequent public scrutiny.

17.3 In addition, where hospitality involves visits to theatres, sporting events etc., these can only be accepted in exceptional circumstances, with payment of the face value of the tickets going to the school fund.

17.4 Where any Teachers or Support Staff wish to give or receive hospitality other than between-meal refreshments they must seek written approval from the Headteacher in advance except where no prior notice of an invitation is given. The Headteacher should seek written approval from the Chair of Governors in such cases. The letter should record:

- a) the date of the hospitality;
- b) who it is given by/to;
- c) the reason for the occasion;
- d) the cost.

18. Gifts

Staff should not accept gratuities, gifts or favours from suppliers etc., that might impair or appear to impair professional judgement. It is recognised that there is a difference between pupils gifts and those of suppliers

19. Sponsorship

19.1 Where an outside organisation wishes to sponsor a school actively the basic conventions concerning the acceptance of gifts or hospitality apply. Particular care must be taken when dealing with contractors or potential contractors.

19.2 Where the school sponsors an event or service neither a member of school staff nor any partner, spouse or relative must benefit from such sponsorship in a direct way without there being full disclosure to the Governing Board of any such interest.

20. Confidentiality

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

This information will never be:

- Disclosed to anyone without the relevant authority
- 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 is at risk of harm.

Footnotes

Financial interests

There can be no simple definition of what a "financial interest" is. The types of interest which would be relevant are listed below. However, the list is not intended to be exhaustive or inclusive. There may be other possible categories of interest.

Please note that:

- (a) a financial interest need not only be something to your financial advantage. It could involve losses as well as gains;
- (b) such interests should also include an interest of your spouse, partner or other members of your immediate family; and
- (c) if you are in any doubt it is wise to err on the side of caution and declare the interest.

Examples of possible financial interests:

1. A spare time employment that you have to declare for income tax purposes.
2. Any contract for goods, services or works between the Council and you (or a firm in which you are a partner, or a body corporate of which you are a director or in the securities of which you have a beneficial interest).
3. Land and buildings in which you have a substantial interest. This includes property from which you receive rent.
4. Securities where you have a substantial interest, i.e. you own shares or other securities in a company with a nominal value of more than £25,000 which is active in the Borough.

Non-financial interest

Private or personal non-financial interests are those which could reasonably be regarded as influencing an employee in a particular situation. They include the interests of family or friends and those arising from membership of, or association with, clubs, societies, trade unions, voluntary organisations etc. It is not possible to give a clear cut definition of what to include. However, a good test is to ask yourself the following question: "If other people knew the facts, might they reasonably think that I had an interest?"

WHHTS code of conduct (values based)

Our Values

We are committed to creating a collaborative, engaging, respectful, emotionally and physically safe organisation that supports pupils to make consistently strong academic and personal progress.

In order to effectively deliver this provision we actively values: Openness and collaboration, excellence and opportunity, respect and kindness.

Our Provision

We expect to be an outstanding provision with a professional reputation for representing and delivering excellence.

Our Commitment

This document describes behaviours that all our staff have agreed are right and that we should expect from ourselves and each other, and other behaviours that we have all agreed are not acceptable. We are all equally responsible for our own behavior, the reputation and the well-being of the school.

Put Pupils' Interests First

- Have high expectations of academic progress and character development
- Encourage broader life opportunities
- Celebrate achievement
- Recognise the importance of partnerships with parents and professionals
- Support each pupils' individual needs to help them to achieve their learning objectives

Making it work

We each share responsibility for making the Code of conduct work in practice. When approaching your manager or staff, approach with a solution focused mindset wherever possible. But challenging unacceptable behaviour – or changing our own behaviour – can be difficult. Here are some ways to get

help.

Dealing with professional relationships

If you think someone is behaving inappropriately in a way that causes concern please follow the neutral notifications protocol.

However, if you are struggling in a professional relationship please seek the following support.

- Consider speaking to the person directly.
- Seek guidance from the Wandsworth *Harassment and Bullying Guidance for Staff*, which is available from HR or on the Wandsworth website.
- Seek support from: your manager/Your manager's manager or another senior person in your department/ A representative from your union or professional body

It is important to deal with any issues within 3 working days, otherwise it will be deemed historic and will be much more difficult to address.

Dealing with stress

Inappropriate behaviour sometimes happens when people are under stress. If you are feeling stressed the first port of call should be your GP and/or the Wandsworth Employee Assistance Programme. Your line manager can also direct you to our supportive external organisations. **It's sometimes easy to focus on the negative, stay positive!**



Openness and collaboration

Communicate effectively with colleagues

- Good listening is as important as clear speaking
- Encourage healthy debate and listen to and act upon the views of others
- Share information freely with those who should be involved and keep clear records of discussions and decisions
- Use email carefully and don't rely on it when a telephone call or a short meeting would be more appropriate
- Be careful about making aggressive remarks when busy or under stress, as they can be very damaging to others

Demonstrate commitment to colleagues and the School

- Actively discourage rumour. Make sure of facts before presenting or acting on information
- Never engage in acrimonious discussions or slanging matches in public, and never in front of patients, families or other colleagues

Innovative

- Encourage creative thinking and new ideas
- Reflect positively on our practice
- Embrace change as we find better ways to achieve our goals

Preserve confidentiality

- Never abuse knowledge
- Discuss issues with families, children and colleagues in an appropriate private location
- Use email correspondence carefully and in accordance with GDPR regulations

Share good practice and support others

- Use opportunities to teach, present and promote your work
- Use the digital display board, display boards and exhibitions
- Share with your colleagues' tips on what has worked well for you in your job and help them see what they can achieve

Excellence and opportunity**Promote good team work**

- Respect all staff and forge positive professional relationships
- Recognise and try to meet the legitimate demands that others may place on you
- Keep your colleagues informed at all times and create a 'can do' approach to team working
- Try to see the bigger picture of how you and your colleagues contribute to the way the Service works, not just in the job you do
- Create and develop community partnerships and support local, national and global links

Take responsibility for yourself and your actions

- Commit to fulfilling statutory requirements: Keep professional knowledge and skills up to date
- Appreciate the impact that behaviour, performance and attendance have on the service we provide
- Remember that you are responsible for carrying out your own work to as high a standard as possible, so take responsibility for your mistakes and for sorting them out
- Others have a responsibility and a right to draw to your attention any shortfalls in your behaviour and performance constructively
- Ensure a professional standard of dress at all times, in line with Service expectations and Trust standards.

Act as a role model for others by setting a good example in all you say and do

- Make every effort to demonstrate a positive attitude and be motivated in your work
- Act with integrity and honesty
- Discourage negative behaviour and repeatedly returning to historical problems
- Take positive action to help others to take a constructive approach

Recognise and accept the consequences of your behaviour on others

- Do not allow personal issues to affect the way you work with others
- Never be aggressive, sarcastic or humiliate other people on purpose

Respect Service facilities and property and make best use of resources

- Take personal responsibility for your surroundings and resources by minimising the waste you generate
- Ensure all personal belongings are stored safely in designated staff lockers, including personal mobile phones and coats/hats etc.
- If you do need to charge mobile phones, please do so in the staff office, never in classrooms
- Leave tables and rooms tidy after you have used them

Attempt to correct what you see is poor practice or inappropriate behaviour

- Think carefully how you approach the person concerned
- Remember that they may need help rather than blame or reproach
- Be sensitive to how they might respond to your suggestions



Respect and kindness

Respect the skills and contribution of others

- Be clear about the roles of others and have realistic expectations of them. Remember that other colleagues have their own demands and priorities
- Recognise the skills, knowledge and commitment of colleagues from other staff groups and take an interest in what they do
- Treat others courteously
- Be punctual, letting people know if you are going to be late or cannot attend. Set realistic deadlines and let people know if you cannot meet them

Maintain good working relationships

- Be approachable and make people feel at ease
- Challenge in a positive way
- Be open to feedback from, and to, others

Respect and value differences in a diverse workforce

- Never, under any circumstances, treat staff, patients, carers or visitors with less courtesy or respect because of their ethnicity, religion, disability, beliefs, personality, sexual orientation, the type of work they do or for any other reason
- Jokes, nicknames or throw away comments made on the basis of ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation or other factors can be offensive and undermining
- Be aware of personal bias at work and strive to remain objective, fair and consistent at all times

Give praise and thanks where due

- Thank people for a job well done
- Be as quick to praise others as to criticise them
- Nominate colleagues for recognition awards

Offer support to others

- Remember that taking sides can often be counter-productive
- Encourage colleagues to use the ways open to them to resolve their problems
- Take action to prevent and challenge bullying and negative behaviour

