



Staff Code of Conduct

Date: November 2017

Review Date: November 2018

White Spire School is committed to achieving positive academic, social, emotional and safeguarding outcomes for its students. We are equally committed to the protection and welfare of our staff. Our duty to safeguard students is paramount. We need to ensure that students and staff are safe. Safeguarding involves not only health and safety issues, but establishing a culture that prevents any kind of abuse of students being perpetrated either in school or elsewhere.

The achievement of positive outcomes for our students necessitates the need to ensure that all adults working with children are competent, confident and safe to do so. As such, all staff at White Spire School are expected to comply with the following Code of Conduct. Teaching staff are furthermore expected to conduct themselves within the guidance of the 'personal and professional conduct' section of the Teachers' Standards. Deviation from the aforementioned codes of conduct and practice may lead to disciplinary action being taken where appropriate. (Teachers' standards, GOV.UK - DfE, see pages 5 and 14)

The guidance aims to:

- keep children safe by clarifying which behaviours constitute safe practice and which behaviours should be avoided;
- assist adults working with children to work safely and responsibly and to monitor their own standards and practice;
- support managers and employers in setting clear expectations of behaviour and/or codes of practice relevant to the services being provided;
- support employers in giving a clear message that unlawful or unsafe behaviour is unacceptable and that, where appropriate, disciplinary or legal action will be taken;
- support safer recruitment practice;
- minimise the risk of misplaced or malicious allegations made against adults who work with students;
- reduce the incidence of positions of trust being abused or misused.

Dress and appearance - staff should dress in ways which are appropriate to their role and this may need to be different to how they dress when not at work. Staff should ensure they are dressed appropriately for the tasks and the work.

Attendance and Punctuality - Staff are expected to strive for 100% attendance and punctuality including INSET days, except for sickness, approved compassionate grounds, or where punctuality is concerned, unforeseen or circumstances outside of the individual's control. Staff absence is to be notified by 8a.m.

School Policies and Procedures - All policies should be observed by all. It is the responsibility of staff to familiarise themselves with these. Some policies will require staff to acknowledge they have read them. Copies may be found on the school system.

Duty of Care - All staff have a duty of care to keep young people safe and to protect them from sexual, physical and emotional harm. Children have a right to be safe and to be treated with respect and dignity. Staff should understand their responsibilities and always act in the child's best interests. They should work and be seen to work in an open and transparent way. Staff are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intervention.

Equality - Professional standards should always be maintained when dealing with both staff and students regardless of culture disability, gender, language, race, religion and/or sexual identity. All children must be treated equally and with respect. (This is reinforced by our Equality Policy.)

Confidentiality - Staff are expected to treat any information they may receive about students in a discreet and confidential manner. Staff should never use confidential or personal information about a student or her/his family for their own, or others' advantage. Information must never be used to intimidate, humiliate, or embarrass the student. Individual students should never be discussed by staff in front of other students. Staff should make it clear to students that any disclosures implying threats to the welfare or safety of the student, cannot be kept confidential, and may need to be discussed with an appropriate adult.

Professional Boundaries - Staff are in a position of trust and the relationship with students is not one of equals. Professional boundaries should be maintained at all times and power and trust should not be misused. The aim is to offer friendly care and not to imply a special friendship with any student.

Criminal Charges and Convictions - As part of the Safer recruitment processes all staff must disclose any criminal convictions whether committed in the UK or elsewhere prior to employment. Whilst employed if any member of staff is charged with or convicted of a criminal offence, which includes cautions, they must inform the Head teacher immediately in writing.

Other Employment - It is important that any additional employment does not conflict with the interests of the school or affect a member of staff's ability and credibility to do their job.

Fitness for work - No member of staff must consume or be under the influence of alcohol, use illicit drugs or other illegal substances whilst at work. Staff must also ensure that use of them out of work does not adversely affect their performance and safety of themselves and others and does not bring the school into disrepute. Any member of staff who is taking prescribed medication should seek the advice of their doctor that the medication will not impede their ability to undertake their school duties. If this is the case it is the responsibility of the member of staff to inform the Head teacher.

Gifts, Rewards and Favouritism - Staff should ensure that the motivation behind the giving of gifts/awards or rewards is clear to all students in order to avoid any misunderstandings of intent. You must not give students gifts personally, any appropriate gifts should come from the school as an organisation. The giving of gifts or rewards to students should be part of an agreed policy for supporting positive behaviour or recognising particular achievements. Staff must not accept gifts from students unless they are small token gifts appropriate to a celebration. All gifts must be reported to the Head Teacher.

Power and Positions of Trust - All staff working in school are in positions of trust in relation to the students in their care. Relationships between adult and student is not a relationship between equals. Staff should always maintain appropriate professional boundaries and avoid behaviour which might be misinterpreted by others. They should report and record any incident with this potential.

Infatuations - Occasionally, a student may develop an infatuation with a staff member who works with them. All staff should deal with these situations sensitively and appropriately to maintain the dignity and safety of all concerned. Should any student become infatuated with a member of staff, this must be reported to the Head Teacher immediately. The maintenance of professional boundaries at all times should go some way to avoiding this situation however.

Behaviour Management - All students have a right to be treated with respect and dignity even in those circumstances where they display difficult or challenging behaviour. Staff should not use any form of degrading treatment to punish a child. The use of sarcasm, demeaning or insensitive comments towards students is not acceptable in any situation. Where students display difficult or challenging behaviour, staff must follow the Behaviour for Learning Policy.

General conduct - All staff are expected to carry out their duties within the spirit of mutual respect, co-operation and support. A teacher should not deliberately behave in such a way as to bring White Spire School into disrepute.

Personal Conduct - Staff are expected to behave in a manner both within and outside of working hours which would not lead any reasonable person to question their suitability to work with children or act as a role model. All adults working with students have a responsibility to maintain public confidence in their ability to safeguard the welfare and best interests of students.

Home Visits - Staff are not permitted to visit the home of a student unless pre-arranged and the Head teacher and the designated Safeguarding Lead are informed and a record is kept. No young person should ever be invited into the home of a staff member.

Social Contact with students - All social contact outside of school hours with students should be avoided. Home or mobile phone numbers; addresses or email addresses should not be exchanged. Staff should not establish or seek to establish social contact with students for the purpose of securing a friendship or to pursue or strengthen a relationship. There will be occasions when there are social contacts between students and staff, where for example the parent and teacher are part of the same social circle. These contacts will be easily recognised and openly acknowledged. Nevertheless, there must be awareness on the part of those working with students that some social contacts can be misconstrued as being part of a grooming process.

Sexual Contact - sexual activity between an adult and a student with whom they work (including verbal comments, letters, emails, phone contact, and physical contact) may be regarded as a criminal offence and will always be a grave breach of trust and a matter for disciplinary action. 'Working Together to Safeguard Children', defines sexual abuse as "forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware.

Physical Contact with Students - should be avoided unless within the guidance of the Use of Reasonable Force Policy and Behaviour for Learning policies. Possible exceptions using professional judgement might be greetings or congratulations such as handshakes; the guiding of a student to where they need to be or a hug in an appropriate situation. There should never be any physical contact when students are getting changed or showering and respect and privacy must be shown to them at this time.

First Aid - should only be administered by trained members of staff.

One to One Situations - should be conducted in an open and transparent fashion i.e. with the knowledge of, or with other staff nearby, and if necessary with an open door. Where after school detentions are one to one, these should be limited to one hour and only with the parent/carer's consent.

Transporting Students - staff should not travel alone with students unless in an emergency or where the child is at risk. If staff are expected to use their own vehicles for transporting students they should ensure that the vehicle is roadworthy, appropriately insured and that the maximum capacity is not exceeded, seat belts are worn.

Curriculum - Many areas of the curriculum can include or raise subject matter which is sexually explicit, or of an otherwise sensitive nature. The curriculum can sometimes include or lead to unplanned discussion about subject matter of a sexually explicit or otherwise sensitive nature. Responding to students' questions can require careful judgement. Parents have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of any sex education provided (but not from the teaching of reproduction/human growth under the science curriculum).

The Use of Personal Living Space - No student should be invited into the home of an adult who works with them, unless the reason for this has been firmly established and agreed with parents/ carers and a member of SLT or the Head teacher. Under no circumstances should students assist with chores or tasks in the home of a member of staff who works with them. This also applies to friends or family of a staff member.

Educational Visits and After-School Activities - Organisers must conduct risk assessments and adhere to Health and Safety guidelines. Staff/child ratios should be considered and where overnight stays are involved, the gender mix should be carefully organised. No students of the opposite sex should be allowed to enter the bedroom area of another student. On residential trips staff must not smoke and no alcohol should be consumed.

Communication with Students (including the Use of Technology) - Staff must ensure that they establish safe and responsible online behaviours. All staff should read the E-Safety policy. Communication between students and staff, by whatever method, should take place within clear and explicit professional boundaries. Staff should not share any personal information with a child or young person. Staff should ensure that all communications are transparent and open to scrutiny.

Photography and Videos - Staff should be clear about the purpose of recording images and about what will happen to them once the activity is concluded. Informed written consent from parent/carers is sought and those students whose images cannot be used are recorded on SIMS.

See the guidance on the use of "Photographic Images of Children"

Use of Images and ICT - Staff must ensure that children are not exposed to any unsuitable material and that any films, You tube clips or other materials shown to students are age appropriate. Staff must not access any inappropriate material for their own consumption. Staff are advised not to post their personal details or inappropriate materials on social networking sites. Accessing, making and storing indecent images of children is illegal and will lead to criminal investigation.

Use of Mobile phones - Mobile phones should be switched off or silent at all times. Staff should only use their mobile phones for personal calls or messages during personal time in private away from the eyes of the students. Staff should never store parent's or student's telephone numbers on their mobile phone. Staff will be issued with a school phone for use in case of emergency on school trips or off site activities. Staff should not use their mobile phone or other mobile device as a camera or video /audio recorder to record sound or images of students.

Contact with the Media - Only designated persons are entitled to communicate with the press, radio or television companies.

Whistle Blowing - Whistle blowing is the mechanism by which staff can voice their concerns, made in good faith, without fear of repercussion. See the Whistleblowing policy which states that staff should report any behaviour by colleagues that raises concern to either the Head teacher or to the LADDO, as appropriate.

Sharing concerns, recording incidents - Staff should be aware of child protection procedures including procedures for dealing with allegations against adults. Staff who are the subject of an allegation should contact their professional association. Staff are responsible for recording any incident and passing on any information where they have concerns about any matter pertaining to the welfare of any individual or child to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.