



Woburn Lower School Staff Code of Conduct Policy

Introduction

As an employer, the Governing Body is required to set out a Code of Conduct for all school employees.

This policy sets out clear guidance on the standards of behaviour expected from all staff at Woburn Lower School. The principles underlying the guidance aim to encourage staff to achieve the highest possible standards of conduct and minimise the risk of inappropriate conduct occurring.

All staff employed under Teachers' Terms and Conditions of Employment have a statutory obligation to adhere to the Teachers Standards 2021 and in relation to this policy, Part 2 of the Teacher's Standards – Personal and Professional Conduct.

School staff are in a unique position of trust and influence as role models for pupils. Therefore, staff must adhere to behaviour that sets a good example to all pupils within the school.

Staff also have an individual responsibility to maintain their reputation and the reputation of the school, both inside and outside working hours and work setting.

This policy applies to all staff and volunteers in the school regardless of their position, role or responsibility. References to 'staff' throughout the policy relate to all of the following groups:

- All members of staff including teaching and support staff
- Volunteers, including governors
- Casual workers
- Temporary and supply staff, either from agencies or engaged directly
- Student placements, including those undertaking initial teacher training and apprentices.

Woburn Lower School requires that all staff have read and agree to comply with this policy.

Breach or failure to observe this policy will result in action being taken under the school disciplinary procedures including, but not limited to, dismissal.

This code of conduct is not an exhaustive list of acceptable and unacceptable standards of behaviour. In situations where guidance does not exist in this policy staff are expected to exercise their professional judgement and act in the best interests of the pupils and the school.

Professional Behaviour and Conduct

Staff are expected to demonstrate the highest possible standards of personal and professional conduct and behaviour and consistently act with honesty and integrity. Woburn Lower School expects staff to treat each other, pupils, parents and the wider community with dignity and respect at all times.

Staff must act in accordance with their duty of care to pupils and ensure that the safety and welfare of pupils are accorded the highest priority.

Staff should show fairness in their treatment of children and avoid behaviours such as embarrassing or humiliating pupils, making jokes at the expense of pupils, discriminating against or favouring pupils and sarcasm.

Staff must have regard for the ethos and values of the school and must not do or say anything which may bring the school or governing body into disrepute. Care should be taken by staff to avoid any conflict of interest between activities undertaken outside school and responsibilities within school. Staff should act in accordance with the school's policies and procedures at all times.

Staff must not engage in conduct outside work which could seriously damage the reputation and standing of the school or the employee's own reputation or the reputation of other members of the school community.

Dress and Appearance

Woburn Lower School recognises that dress and appearance are matters of personal choice and self-expression. However, all staff must dress in a manner that is appropriate to a professional role and that promotes a professional image.

Staff should dress in a manner that is not offensive, revealing or sexually provocative and in a manner that is absent from political or contentious slogans.

Staff should dress safely and appropriately for the tasks they undertake.

Tattoos and body art should be covered if it may cause offense while staff are in school.

Smoking, alcohol and other substances

Woburn Lower School is a non-smoking site. Staff must not smoke on school premises or outside school gates.

Staff must not smoke whilst working with or supervising pupils offsite.

Staff must not consume or be under the influence of alcohol, illicit drugs or other illegal substances on or near school premises.

Relationships with Pupils/Students

Staff must maintain professional boundaries with pupils appropriate to their position and must always consider whether their actions are warranted, proportionate, safe and applied equitably. Staff should act in an open and transparent way that would not lead any reasonable person to question their actions or intent. Staff should think carefully about their conduct so that misinterpretations are minimised.

Staff must not establish or seek to establish social contact with pupils for the purpose of securing a friendship or to pursue or strengthen a relationship. If a young person seeks to establish social contact you should exercise your professional judgement in making a response and be aware that such social contact could be misconstrued.

Staff must not develop personal or sexual relationships with pupils and should not engage in any sexual activity with a pupil in accordance with 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2019'

Staff must not make sexual remarks to a pupil, discuss their own sexual relationships with, or in the presence of pupils.

Personal phone numbers, email addresses or communication routes via all social media platforms should not be used and staff should not share their home address with pupils. If contacted via an inappropriate route the member of staff must inform the Headteacher immediately.

It is not unusual for pupils or, sometimes, their parents to develop infatuations towards members of staff. All such situations must be responded to sensitively to maintain the dignity of those concerned.

Staff should also be aware that such circumstances carry a high risk of words or actions being misinterpreted and for allegations to be made against staff. Any indications of an infatuation towards yourself or another member of staff must be reported to the Headteacher.

Gifts/Hospitality

Staff need to comply with the Bribery Act 2010 and to take care that they do not accept any gift/offer of hospitality that might be construed as a bribe by others, or lead the giver to expect preferential treatment. However, there may be occasions where parents wish to give a small token of appreciation to staff, for example at religious festivities or at the end of the year.

It is unacceptable to receive gifts on a regular basis or to suggest to pupils that gifts are appropriate or desired. Money must not be accepted as a gift. If you are unsure whether to accept a gift you should consult the Headteacher.

Staff must not accept significant gifts or hospitality from parents, carers, actual or potential contractors or outside suppliers. All such gifts/offers of hospitality should be reported to the Headteacher.

Physical Contact with Pupils

There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate and proper for staff to have physical contact with pupils, but it is crucial that they only do so in ways appropriate to their professional role. A 'no touch' approach is impractical for most staff and may in some circumstances be inappropriate. When physical contact is made with pupils it should be in response to their needs at that time, of limited duration and appropriate to their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background.

Where feasible, staff should seek the child's permission before initiating contact. Staff should listen, observe and take note of the pupil's reaction or feelings and, so far as is possible, use a level of contact which is acceptable to the child for the minimum time necessary.

Staff should be aware that even well intentioned physical contact may be misconstrued by the child, an observer or by anyone to whom this action is described. Staff should never touch a child in a way which may be considered indecent. Always be prepared to explain actions and accept that all physical contact be open to scrutiny. Staff must not engage in rough play, tickling or fun fights with pupils.

Extra caution should be exercised where a pupil is known to have suffered previous abuse or neglect. Such experiences may sometimes make a pupil exceptionally needy and demanding of physical contact and staff should respond sensitively by deterring the pupil through helping them to understand the importance of personal boundaries.

Staff supervising PE and games or providing musical tuition should demonstrate the use of a particular piece of equipment/instrument on another member of staff if possible. However, they may be required to initiate physical contact with pupils to support a child to perform a task safely, to demonstrate the use of a particular piece of equipment/instrument or to assist them with an

exercise. Contact under these circumstances should be done with the pupil's agreement, for the minimum time necessary and in an open environment. Staff should remain sensitive to any discomfort expressed verbally or non-verbally by the pupil.

Physical contact must never be secretive, for the gratification of the adult or represent a misuse of authority.

If a member of staff believes that an action could be misinterpreted, the incident and circumstances should be reported to the Headteacher, recorded and, if appropriate, a copy placed on the pupil's file.

Showers and changing

Pupils are entitled to respect and privacy whilst they are changing or showering after PE/games or swimming. However, there needs to be an appropriate level of supervision in order to safeguard young people, meet health and safety requirements and to ensure that bullying does not take place. The supervision should be appropriate to the needs and age of the pupils and sensitive to the potential for embarrassment.

Staff should be vigilant about their own behaviour and announce their intention of entering a changing room. Staff must not change or shower in the same place as children.

One to one situations

Staff working individually with pupils should be aware of the potential vulnerability of pupils/students and staff in such situations. Staff should manage these situations with regard to the safety of the pupil and to themselves.

Individual work with pupils should not be undertaken in isolated areas or rooms where there is no external viewing panel. Where it is necessary to close doors for reasons of confidentiality a colleague should be made aware of this and asked to remain vigilant.

Transporting pupils

It is not appropriate for staff to transport pupils/students offsite, for example sports fixtures, swimming lessons or other out of school activities.

Prior to transporting pupils offsite consent must be obtained from pupil's parent/guardian and staff should be aware that the safety and welfare of the pupils is their responsibility until this is safely passed back to their parent.

Safeguarding

Staff have a duty to safeguard pupils from:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse

- Emotional abuse
- Neglect

The duty to safeguard pupils includes the duty to report concerns about a pupil to the school's designated Lead for Child Protection. This is Mrs **Paula Black**. The school's Deputy Safeguarding Lead is **Mrs Katrina Grant**. Staff are provided with copies of the school's Safeguarding and prevent policy, KCSIE and the school's whistleblowing policy and staff must be familiar with these.

E-Safeguarding

Staff should follow Woburn Lower School's E-Safeguarding Policy and Acceptable Use Policies for adults and children at all times.

Staff should remain mindful of their digital footprint and exercise caution in all their use of social media or any other web based presence they have. This includes written content, videos or photographs and views expressed either directly or by 'liking' certain pages or posts or following certain individuals or groups. Staff should exercise care when using dating websites where staff could encounter students.

Woburn Lower School acknowledges that staff who are also parents may wish to make contact with other parents, who are friends, over social media. Staff must exercise caution and professional judgement in these circumstances and should not have any contact with pupils' family members via social media if that contact is likely to constitute a conflict of interest or call into question their objectivity.

Photography, video and images of children

Many school activities involve recording images as part of the curriculum, extra school activities, publicity or to celebrate an achievement. In accordance with The Data Protection Act 1998 the image of a pupil is considered personal data. Therefore, it is a requirement under the Act for consent to be obtained from the parent/guardian of a pupil for any images made.

Using images for publicity purposes will require the age-appropriate consent of the individual concerned and their parent/guardian. Images should not be displayed on websites, in publications or in a public place without their consent. Staff should also be clear about the purpose of the activity and what will happen to the photographs/images/video footage when the lesson or activity is concluded.

Photographs/stills or video footage of pupils should only be taken using school equipment for purposes authorised by the school and should be stored securely and only on school equipment.

Staff should ensure the Headteacher is aware of the proposed use of photographic/video equipment and that this is recorded in lesson plans. All

photographs/stills and video footage should be available for scrutiny and staff should be able to justify all images/video footage made.

Staff should remain aware of the potential for images of pupils to be misused to create indecent images of children and/or for grooming purposes. Therefore, careful consideration should be given to how activities which are being filmed or photographed are organised and undertaken. Particular care should be given when filming or photographing young or vulnerable pupils who may be unable to question how or why the activities are taking place. Staff should also be mindful that pupils who have been abused through the use of video or photography may feel threatened by its use in a teaching environment.

Confidentiality

Members of staff may have access to confidential information about pupils, their parents/carers or their siblings. Staff must not reveal such information except to those colleagues who have a professional role in relation to the pupil on a need to know basis.

Staff should never use confidential or personal information about a pupil or her/his family for their own, or others' advantage (including that of partners, friends, relatives or other organisations). Information must never be used to intimidate, humiliate, or embarrass the pupil/student.

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, this needs to be reported and dealt with in accordance with the appropriate school procedure. It must not be discussed outside the school.

Staff have a statutory obligation to share with Woburn Lower School Designated Safeguarding Lead, Paula Black, any information which gives rise to concern about the welfare or safety of a pupil or that might suggest a pupil is in need or at risk of significant harm. Staff should pass on information without delay in accordance with Woburn Lower School safeguarding policy and procedures and this should be recorded.

Any media or legal enquiries should be passed to the Headteacher and only approved staff and Governors should communicate to the media about the school.

Whistleblowing

Whistleblowing is the mechanism by which staff can voice their concerns, without fear of repercussion.

All school staff have a duty to report any behaviour by a colleague which raises concern. Staff should refer to the Woburn Lower School

Whistleblowing Policy for further guidance. This is particularly important where the welfare of pupils may be at risk.

Compliance

All staff must complete the form in appendix 1 to confirm they have read, understood and agree to comply with this policy. This form should be signed and dated and a copy retained on the member of staff's file.

Related policies:

Safeguarding
E-safeguarding
AUP
Whistleblowing

Governor:

Date: September 2024

Headteacher: Paula Black

Date: September 2024

Review date: September 2025

Appendix 1

Confirmation of compliance

I hereby confirm that I have read, understood and agree to comply with Woburn Lower School Code of Conduct Policy.

Name

Position/Post Held.....

Signed

Date

Once completed, signed and dated, please return this form to the Headteacher