



# Code of Conduct For All Staff

## Sherrardswood School

### 1. Introduction

The School's expectation is that all pupils receive the highest possible quality of teaching and learning within a positive and respectful environment.

It is important, therefore, that staff understand that their own behaviour and the manner in which they conduct themselves with their colleagues, pupils, parents and other stakeholders sets an example and affects The School environment.

The School recognises that the majority of staff always act in an appropriate manner and treat others with dignity and respect. However, we consider it important to make clear the standards we expect from staff so that misunderstandings and/or misinterpretation of rules are kept to a minimum.

This Code is intended to set out our expected standards of conduct, our rules and values. It applies to all staff, regardless of status. It is not an exhaustive compilation of what staff can and cannot do but it is hoped that it will ensure everyone is clear about what is acceptable and what is not.

The Code is binding on all school staff. Breaches of the Code and the standards expressed in it could result in disciplinary action, including dismissal for serious offences. We hope, of course, that such action won't be necessary and that all staff will ensure they read the Code and act in accordance with it.

### 2. General Standards and Expectations

As a member of The School's staff it is important that you:

- Provide a high standard of service in your dealings with colleagues, pupils, parents and other stakeholders whether in person, by telephone, letter or e-mail. Be polite, responsive and treat people with respect. Be as clear as possible about any decisions and actions you take and the reasons for them
- Always use appropriate language and never demean, distress or offend the decency of others. This may happen, for example, by displaying material or pictures that could be seen as offensive, or by making degrading, suggestive or insensitive comments or remarks
- Respect the rights of others and treat them with dignity. Never threaten, bully, fight with or assault anyone
- Never steal, damage or take items that belong to others (see 3 (d) below in relation to confiscation of items from pupils). Hand lost property in to the office
- Do not discriminate against, harass or victimise anyone you meet in the course of your work, on any grounds, including the protected characteristics (Equality Act 2010):
  - Age
  - Race (which includes colour and ethnic / national origin)
  - Disability
  - Religion or belief
  - Gender
  - Gender reassignment
  - Pregnancy or maternity
  - Sexual orientation
  - Marital or civil partner status

- Working on a temporary or part time basis
- Trade Union involvement

(Note that discrimination, harassment and victimisation include the use of language, making remarks, telling jokes, displaying materials or behaving in a way that may be interpreted as discriminatory, even if not directed at a particular individual[s])

- Raise any concerns about inappropriate behaviour by pupils, parents or colleagues, or about the internal workings of The School by following the appropriate procedure
- Promote The School's vision, ethos and values
- Comply with School policies and any other rules, regulations or codes that apply to your work and the workplace
- Do not make public statements about The School without first obtaining authorisation from the Head
- Avoid actions that may discredit The School or bring it into disrepute, this explicitly includes the expression or promotion of partisan views in personal conduct or delivery of the curriculum
- Ensure that you are not under the influence of alcohol during working hours. (The Head will decide if it is appropriate for alcohol to be made available at staff parties/social events)
- Do not abuse drugs
- Do not disclose or misuse confidential information
- Do not engage in, or encourage, gossip, rumour or innuendo

### **3. Working Practices**

#### **(a) Management and Staff Relations**

An atmosphere of mutual confidence, trust and respect between managers and staff is essential to achieving The School's aims and targets and providing a high quality of teaching and learning.

As a member of staff you should:

- Promote The School in a positive manner
- Work reliably and in accordance with The School's policies and practices as well as any other rules and regulations that apply to your work and/or the workplace
- Carry out any reasonable instructions given to you by your manager and/or Head
- Recognise that you are part of a team and that everyone should be
- Working together to achieve similar aims for the benefit of pupils

As a manager you should, in addition:

- Support and assist staff to carry out their work properly, including the implementation of The School's Induction Policy for all new staff
- In your dealings with your staff, act in accordance with the relevant local and national conditions of employment/service
- Give feedback and advice on areas for further development to assist staff in meeting objectives
- Aim to develop staff to meet current and future needs of The School
- Consider constructive suggestions for improvements to working practices and standards
- Treat all staff fairly, consistently and with dignity
- Provide a safe and healthy working environment free from discrimination and harassment

#### **(b) Reporting Malpractice and Improper Conduct**

Most problems and concerns within the workplace can be fairly easily resolved, often informally. Sometimes it is necessary to use a more formal route, such as The School's Grievance Procedure. Very occasionally, however, more serious issues may arise involving, for example, unlawful conduct, financial malpractice, corruption, health and safety issues or other actions, which are not in the best interests of the pupils or The School.

You may be worried about raising serious issues, perhaps concerned that you may be mistaken, that you may lose your job or otherwise suffer some form of retribution as a result. However, The School actively encourages an atmosphere to enable you to raise concerns about malpractice at an early stage, in the right way. Provided that you are acting in good faith, The School will protect you from victimisation or other detriment, even if you are mistaken about the matter. However, you must never raise unfounded allegations maliciously. This would be viewed as a disciplinary matter.

Prior to raising a concern, please note:

- If you are a member of a Professional Association or Trade Union, it may have in place a Code, or rules, which set out how members should behave in relation to raising concerns involving colleagues and/or in relation to dealings with colleagues in general. You are advised, in these circumstances, to familiarise yourself with any such Code or rules or contact your Union for further advice
- Where you have concerns relating to a child protection issue, you should take action in accordance with the Child Protection Policy

### **(c) School Policies and Procedures**

All members of staff must comply with The School's policies and procedures. Policies are available on request to the Head.

### **(d) Dealings with Pupils**

As a member of staff you are expected to:

- Work towards and encourage the highest possible level of achievement for all pupils
- Value and respect all pupils equally, treating them in a polite, positive, responsive and considerate manner
- Apply The School's Behaviour Policy as situations demand in order to encourage and develop appropriate behaviours
- Ensure that items confiscated from pupils are left in a safe place, ideally labelled and locked away. Parents/guardians should be informed about when items will be returned
- Act in accordance with The School's Safeguarding Policy
- Ensure that you do not breach professional boundaries and do not act in a way that could be misinterpreted or otherwise leave you vulnerable to allegations of inappropriate behaviour

### **(e) Health and Safety**

The School aim is to promote good health and ensure safe working practices for staff, pupils, parents, other stakeholders and visitors. Staff of The School also have a legal responsibility to contribute to a safe working environment. Failure to accept this responsibility may put themselves and/or others at risk.

You should ensure that you:

- Read and understand The School's Health and Safety Policy
- Comply with Health and Safety Regulations and use any safety equipment and protective clothing supplied to you by The School
- Comply with any hygiene requirements
- Comply with any accident reporting requirements
- Never act in a way which might cause risk or damage to any other members of The School community, or visitors

### **(f) Appearance and Dress**

It is expected that:

- When at work, or representing The School, you ensure that your appearance is neat and clean
- You always dress in a manner which is appropriate to your role and the circumstances or setting in which you work
- You remember that you are a role model for pupils and your appearance and dress should reflect this important and unique position
- You do not dress in a way that may cause embarrassment to pupils, parents, colleagues, other stakeholders or visitors. (for example: consider appropriateness of T-Shirts with slogans)

Ultimately, it will be for the Head to decide whether a member of staff's appearance and/or dress is appropriate or not.

The Head must ensure that the rights of employees to dress as they please, and in accordance with their principles and beliefs, is balanced with the need for The School to promote a suitable image to its stakeholders. At all times, care will be taken not to discriminate in relation to appearance and dress requirements.

### **(g) Hours of Work and Attendance**

It is important that all staff are in school at their agreed starting time and do not leave before their agreed finishing time. Bad timekeeping and poor attendance increases costs, causes disruption for others and has an adverse effect on pupils' education.

It is recognised that the majority of staff are punctual and do not take time off without good cause or obtaining prior permission.

Our expectations are that:

- You attend work in accordance with your contract of employment and associated terms and conditions in relation to hours, days of work and holidays
- Wherever possible, you make routine medical and dental appointments outside of your working hours or during holidays. The only exceptions to this requirement will be in the event of an emergency or particular difficulty, in relation to hospital appointments (which are rarely negotiable) or to attend for ante-natal care if you are pregnant. Pregnant employees are entitled to paid time off for ante-natal appointments. In any circumstances, however, you should agree time off with the Head at the earliest opportunity to ensure that adequate cover arrangements can be made
- Any member of staff taking leave without permission will be subject to disciplinary action

### **(h) Sickness Absence**

All staff are expected to follow The School's absence reporting procedure when they are absent from work due to illness or injury.

This procedure includes notification as early as possible on the first day of absence, keeping The School informed where absence continues, requirements for the provision of medical certificates and procedures on return to work.

### **(i) Sensitive Information and Confidentiality**

It is expected that staff will use sensitive information properly and have due respect for confidentiality.

If you have access to such information, you should ensure that you:

- Know what information The School treats as confidential (check with the Head if you are unsure)
- Know who is entitled to have access to what information (check with the Head if you are unsure)

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- Are responsible and professional in using and allowing access to personal information on pupils, parents, staff, governors and any others
- Use personal information in line with the principles of the Data Protection Acts. Such data must:
  - Be obtained lawfully and fairly
  - Be held only for specified and lawful purposes
  - Be relevant and just sufficient for those purposes
  - Be used or disclosed for no other purpose
  - Be accurate, up to date, and kept only as long as is necessary
  - Be held securely to prevent unauthorised access or tampering
  - Be available for inspection and correction by the person it is about
  - Not be transferred to countries outside the European Economic Area without adequate protection

### **(j) Use of School Resources**

**School communications systems and equipment, including electronic mail and Internet systems,** along with their associated hardware and software, are for official and authorised purposes only. The Head may authorise personal use which:

- Does not interfere with the performance of professional duties
- Is of reasonable duration and frequency
- Serves a legitimate school interest, such as enhancing professional interests or education
- Does not overburden the system or create any additional expense to The School

The Head should consider carefully discretionary use for any other purpose.

Staff are expected to conduct themselves honestly and appropriately on the **Internet**, and respect the copyrights, software licensing rules, property rights, privacy and prerogatives of others.

Internet users are prohibited from transmitting or downloading material that is obscene, pornographic, threatening, racially or sexually harassing, or in any way contravenes the Equal Opportunities Policy. Chat rooms may not be visited, nor sites known to contain offensive material.

The keeping of a personal diary on the Internet (whether at school or at home) where reference is made to The School without authorisation is not acceptable as such usage could cause harm to the reputation of The School and may undermine the confidence of parents.

Staff should not post photos of staff events on Facebook without getting consent from those featured in pictures.

### **(k) Keeping Within the Law**

Staff are expected to operate within the law. Unlawful or criminal behaviour, at work, or outside work, may lead to disciplinary action, including dismissal, being taken against you.

You must ensure that you:

- Uphold the law at work
- Never commit a crime away from work which could damage public confidence in you or The School, or which makes you unsuitable for the work you do. This includes, for example:
  - Submitting false or fraudulent claims to the Council or other public bodies (for example, income support, housing or other benefit claims)
  - Breaching copyright on computer software or published documents
  - Sexual offences which will render you unfit to work with children or vulnerable adults

- Crimes of dishonesty which render you unfit to hold a position of trust
- Write and tell the Head immediately if you are charged with, or convicted of, any crime whilst you are employed at The School. (This includes outside of your working hours). The Head and/or governors would then need to consider whether this charge or conviction damages public confidence in The School or makes you unsuitable to carry out your duties

**FURTHER ADVICE**

If there is anything in this Code that you do not understand, you should speak to the Head.

Date	Position	Name of reviewer	Date of next review
January 2019	Headmistress	Mrs A. Wright	January 2020
January 2019	Chair of Governors	Mr A. Khan	January 2020