



Westfield Arts College

70. Staff Code of Conduct Policy 2023

Reviewed by committee	Full Governors	Policy type: Statutory
Adopted by Governing Body	25/09/2023	Review cycle: 3 years
Date for next review	Autumn 2026	Signed by Chair: 

WESTFIELD ARTS COLLEGE

Staff Code of Conduct Policy

(based on DCC Model Policy issued January 2016)

Definitions within this policy

- References made to ‘child’ and ‘children’ refer to children and young people under the age of 18 years. However, the principles of the document apply to professional behaviours towards all pupils, including those over the age of 18 years. ‘Child’ should therefore be read to mean **any pupil** at the education establishment.
- References made to adults and staff refer to all those who work with children in an educational establishment, in either a paid or unpaid capacity.
- The term ‘allegation’ means where it is alleged that a person who works with children has
 - behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
 - possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or,
 - behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children.

Introduction

- Schools have a legal duty to create and maintain a safe learning environment for children. A staff Code of Conduct is a **mandatory** requirement as described in the DfE statutory guidance: ‘Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2023’.
- The school seeks to provide a safe and supportive environment which secures the well-being and very best outcomes for children and young people in our care. The following code draws together existing laws, regulations and conditions of service designed to protect the interests of staff and volunteers and the children with whom they work and this has been agreed following consultation with recognised trade unions and is recommended for adoption.
- Staff should be aware that a failure to comply with this code could result in disciplinary action including dismissal.

Purpose and Scope

- All staff and volunteers working in a school setting have a legal and moral duty to keep children safe and protect them from harm. Staff should ensure they do not

put themselves in situations in which allegations of abuse or inappropriate behaviour could be made.

- This code applies to all adults working in schools whatever their position, role or responsibilities.
- All staff have a responsibility to be aware of systems within their school which support safeguarding, which should be explained as part of staff induction and through regular staff training.
- The code should be read in conjunction with the relevant statutory and other guidance documents issued nationally or by the DfE and Home Office as well as other related school policies (see **Appendix 1** of this policy).
- This code cannot cover every eventuality. Its purpose is to show the standard expected of staff but it does not replace the general requirements of the law.
- All staff employed under Teachers' Terms and Conditions of Employment have a statutory obligation to adhere to the 'Teachers' Standards July 2011' (last updated December 2021) and in relation to this code, Part 2 of the Teachers' Standards - Personal and Professional Conduct which this code supplements.
- It is recognised that the vast majority of adults who work with children act professionally and aim to provide a safe and supportive environment which secures the well-being and very best outcomes for children in their care. Achieving these aims is not always straightforward, as much relies on child and staff interactions where tensions and misunderstandings can occur. This code aims to reduce the risk of that.

Core Principles

- The welfare of the children is paramount.
- Staff are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should seek to avoid any conduct that would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation or intentions.
- Staff are expected to maintain a professional standard of conduct, not only in regards to interactions with children in their educational establishment, but to extend this courtesy to their colleagues, parents and visitors of the establishment.
- Staff should apply the expected professional standards of behaviour and not discriminate against anyone in relation to their age, disability, sex or gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnerships (in particular with adults in contact with the establishment), pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief or sexual orientation.
- Staff should not consume or be under the influence of alcohol or substances, including prescribed medication that may affect their ability to care for children.
- Staff should be aware that breaches of the law and other professional guidelines could result in disciplinary action being taken against them, criminal action and/or other proceedings including barring by the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) from working in regulated activity, or for acts of serious misconduct, prohibition from teaching by a Secretary of State's teacher prohibition order.

- Staff and managers should continually monitor and review practice to ensure this guidance is followed and should understand their responsibilities to safeguard and protect children.
- Staff should discuss and/or take advice promptly from their line manager or another senior member of staff over any incident which may give rise to concern.
- Records should be made of any incident and decision made or where further actions have been agreed, in accordance with school policies and confidentiality.
- All staff should know the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead and be familiar with local child protection arrangements, arrangements for managing allegations against staff, whistleblowing procedures and their Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) procedures.
- Staff should be aware of and comply with the school's financial and administrative regulations and any other procedure manuals.

Conduct and Behaviour

- All staff who work in a school setting are in a position of trust in relation to individuals in their care and so must adopt high standards of personal integrity and conduct and behave in such a way that does not compromise their position both within and outside of the workplace (including on social media) or the safety and/or welfare of children and young people.
- Staff should be aware that it is a criminal offence (Sexual Offences Act 2003: abuse of a position of trust) to engage in sexual activity with a pupil under the age of 18. Engaging in sexual activity with any pupil at the school would result in disciplinary action.
- All staff are expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct. Teachers should conduct themselves in accordance with the minimum professional Teaching Standards.
- Staff should never make (or encourage others to make) comments, either to the children colleagues, parents or visitors of the establishment, that are intended, or can be interpreted to be, unprofessional, demeaning or humiliating.
- Staff should not use physical force as a form of punishment.
- Staff should always adhere to the school's policies on Behaviour Management and Use of Reasonable Force.
- Staff 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.

Dress Code

- Staff should ensure they promote a positive and professional image and should dress appropriately at all times for the tasks they undertake.

- Staff should wear appropriate footwear with a heel strap (no mules or flip-flops). Feet must be covered when working in the food technology rooms, the workshop or science lab.
- Shorts are acceptable but they should be tailored and knee length (cycle shorts are not acceptable).
- Denim, faded or ripped jeans are not acceptable.
- Cropped or strappy tops are not acceptable.
- Leggings are acceptable with an appropriate length top. Sports type leggings should only be worn for PE.

Equality Issues

- All staff should adhere to the school's Single Equality Policy, in addition to the requirements of the law.
- All adults and children at the school have a right to be treated at all times with fairness, equality and without discrimination.

Employment Matters

- All staff involved in recruitment and selection processes should ensure that appointments are made on the basis of merit, without discrimination and in accordance with the school's recruitment and selection policy and procedure.
- Any staff involved in tendering processes should ensure that these are made on the basis of merit.
- No member of staff should be involved in any appointment or decision relating to discipline, promotion, or pay adjustments for any individual who is a relative or with whom they are in a close personal relationship.
- All relationships of a business or private nature with external contractors, or potential contractors, should be made known to the Head Teacher or the Chair of Governors (if the Head Teacher).

Public Duty and Private Interest

- Staff should not put themselves in a position where their duty to the school and their private interests conflict.

Other Employment/Private Work

- Any external work undertaken must not bring the school into disrepute or conflict with the school's interest.
- Any copyright created by a member of staff during their employment with the school becomes the property of the school.
- Any external work undertaken which relates to any pupils in the school must be declared to the Deputy Head Teacher.

Safeguarding

- Staff have a duty to safeguard pupils/students from:
 - physical abuse
 - sexual abuse
 - emotional abuse
 - neglect
 -

The duty to safeguard children and young people includes the duty to report child welfare concerns to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL),

Staff should be aware of and follow the statutory responsibilities outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education. This document is updated annually by the DfE.

This document sets out the statutory duties schools must follow and includes guidance on mandatory reporting requirements. It is advised that this is read alongside **Working Together to Safeguard Children**.

- (i) Staff should ensure they understand and are familiar with their responsibilities and where this includes mandatory reporting expectations they understand their role any locally agreed procedures for reporting, such as informing the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- (ii) Staff should be aware of the personal reporting duty with regard to known cases of female genital mutilation (FGM). Supplementary to Keeping Children Safe in Education, staff can obtain further guidance in the **'Mandatory Reporting of Female Genital Mutilation – procedural information'** document.
- (iii) Staff should refer any concerns about another member of staff to the Head Teacher, or if the concern is about the Head Teacher to the Chair of Governors or equivalent.
- (iv) Staff should raise concerns of poor or unsafe practice or potential failures in safeguarding, using the school's whistleblowing policy.

Staff should be aware of the risks to children from radicalisation and being drawn into terrorism as outlined in the Prevent Duty

- (i) Under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, staff must have 'due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism'
- (ii) Staff must refer any concerns regarding radicalisation to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead or a senior member of staff, following the school's normal safeguarding procedures.

- (iii) Relevant staff should understand when it is appropriate to make a referral to the Channel programme, a mechanism for schools to make referrals if they are concerned that an individual might be vulnerable to radicalisation.
- (iv) Staff should ensure they have undertaken some form of Prevent awareness training

Financial inducements, gifts, hospitality and sponsorship

- Staff should not seek or receive preferential rates for themselves by virtue of their dealings on behalf of the school
- Staff should ensure that gifts are declared if they are received.
- Where staff provide gifts they should ensure they are of insignificant value and given to all children equally.

Use of School Time and Facilities

- The school's property and facilities (e.g. stationary, computers, photocopiers, mobile phones) may only be used for school business unless permission for their private use has been granted.

Use of Personal Property

- Any personal digital technologies used on the school site e.g. mobile phone, watch, laptop, camera, must be used in accordance with the school Online Safety and Acceptable Use Policies.
- Accidental damage/loss to personal property is not covered by any school insurance policy. Insurance claims would only be considered under exceptional circumstances where wilful damage has occurred. Staff are advised to ensure valuable items are locked away when not being used and that where possible, valuable items are not worn whilst carrying out school duties.

Use of Social Media

- Staff are advised to have read and understood the school Online Safety Policy and Acceptable Use Policy in relation to their use of social media.

Publication of Books/Articles

- Staff must consult with the Head Teacher before publishing book, articles, letters, dissertations etc where they are described as holding an appointment at the school.

Disciplinary Action

- All staff should be aware that a failure to meet these standards of behaviour and conduct may result in disciplinary action, including dismissal.

Declaration of receipt

By signing off this document on My Concern you confirm that you have read the Staff **Code of Conduct** and **Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2023** and understand that any unlawful or unsafe behaviour could lead to appropriate legal or disciplinary action being taken.

APPENDIX 1

POLICIES AND OTHER DOCUMENTS TO BE CONSIDERED AND READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT (Listed in alphabetical order)

Policy/Procedure/Guidance
Allegations of abuse against staff and volunteers
Data Protection Policy
Disciplinary Policy and Procedure
Single Equality Policy
Online Safety/Internet Use/Social Networking/ICT Policies
Health and Safety Policy
Intimate Support Policy
Recruitment and Selection Policy
Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
Therapeutic Behaviour Policy
Whistleblowing Policy
Keeping Children Safe in Education*- DfE statutory guidance Link https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1161273/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2023_-_statutory_guidance_for_schools_and_colleges.pdf
Mandatory Reporting of Female Genital Mutilation procedural information* Link: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mandatory-reporting-of-female-genital-mutilation-procedural-information
Prevent Duty Guidance* Link: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance

*It is expected that staff will adhere to the statutory duties and/or best practice outlined within these documents as applicable to their role and responsibilities.