



NWSSSS
NORTH WEST SURREY
SHORT STAY SCHOOL

Staff Code of Conduct Policy

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1. Aims, scope and principles

This policy aims to set and maintain standards of conduct that we expect all staff to follow. Whilst this code predominantly refers to 'employees' or 'members of staff', the School expects all those working for and on behalf of the school, including in a voluntary capacity, to reflect the standards of conduct and behaviour contained within this document.

By creating this policy, we aim to ensure our school is an environment where everyone is safe, happy and treated with respect.

Many of the principles in this code of conduct are based on the [Teachers' Standards](#). School staff have an influential position in the school and will act as role models for pupils by consistently demonstrating high standards of behaviour.

We expect that all teachers will act in accordance with the personal and professional behaviours set out in the Teachers' Standards.

We expect all support staff, management committee members and volunteers to also act with personal and professional integrity, respecting the safety and wellbeing of others.

North West Surrey Short Stay School embodies and encourages the values of ***Integrity, Resilience and Respect*** and believe that everyone can realise their potential - ***From Possibility to Actuality***.

Failure to follow the code of conduct may result in disciplinary action being taken, as set out in our staff disciplinary procedures.

Please note that this code of conduct is not exhaustive. If situations arise that are not covered by this code, staff will use their professional judgement and act in the best interests of the school and its pupils.

2. Legislation and policy

We are required to establish procedures for the regulation of staff conduct under regulation 7 of [The School Staffing \(England\) Regulations 2009](#).

In line with the statutory safeguarding policy [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#), we should have a staff code of conduct, which should cover low-level concerns, allegations against staff and whistle-blowing, as well as acceptable use of technologies (including the use of mobile devices), staff/pupil relationships and communications, including the use of social media.

3. General obligations

Staff set an example to pupils. They 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
- Not express personal beliefs in a way that exploits pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law
- Understand the statutory frameworks they must act within
- Adhere to the [Teachers' Standards](#)

4. Safeguarding

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

Staff will familiarise themselves with our child protection and 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.

Our child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures are available, [Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy 2024](#). New staff will also be given copies on arrival.

4.1 Allegations that may meet the harm threshold

This section applies to all cases in which it is alleged that anyone working in the school, including a supply teacher, volunteer or contractor, has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child, and/or
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, and/or
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children, and/or
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children – this includes behaviour taking place inside or outside of school

We will deal with any such allegation quickly and in a fair and consistent way that provides effective child protection while also supporting the individual who is the subject of the allegation.

A 'case manager' will lead any investigation. This 'case manager' may be the headteacher, or someone appointed by the headteacher or the chair of the management committee where the headteacher is the subject of the allegation.

4.2 Low-level concerns about members of staff

A low-level concern is a behaviour towards a child by a member of staff that does not meet the harm threshold, is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, and may be as simple as causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt'. For example, this may include:

- Being over-friendly with children
- Having favourites
- Taking photographs of children on a personal device
- Engaging in 1-to-1 activities where they can't easily be seen
- Humiliating pupils

Low-level concerns can include inappropriate conduct inside and outside of work.

All staff should share any low-level concerns they have using the reporting procedures set out in our child protection and safeguarding policy. We also encourage staff to self-refer if they find themselves in a situation that could be misinterpreted. If staff are not sure whether behaviour would be deemed a low-level concern, we encourage staff to report it.

All reports will be handled in a responsive, sensitive and proportionate way.

Unprofessional behaviour will be addressed, and the staff member supported to correct it, at an early stage.

This creates and embeds a culture of openness, trust and transparency in which our values and expected behaviour are constantly lived, monitored and reinforced by all staff, while minimising the risk of abuse.

Reporting and responding to low-level concerns is covered in more detail in our child protection and safeguarding policy. This is available in the Staff Handbook or on our website.

Our procedures for dealing with allegations will be applied with common sense and judgement.

4.3 Whistle-blowing

Whistle-blowing reports wrongdoing that is “in the public interest” to report. Examples linked to safeguarding include:

- Pupils’ or staff members’ health and safety being put in danger
- Failure to comply with a legal obligation or statutory requirement
- Attempts to cover up the above, or any other wrongdoing in the public interest

Staff are encouraged to report suspected wrongdoing as soon as possible. Their concerns will be taken seriously and investigated, and their confidentiality will be respected.

Staff should consider the examples above when deciding whether their concern is of a whistle-blowing nature. Consider whether the incident(s) was illegal, breached statutory or school procedures, put people in danger or was an attempt to cover any such activity up.

Staff should report their concern to the headteacher. If the concern is about the headteacher, or it is believed they may be involved in the wrongdoing in some way, the staff member should report their concern to the chair of the management committee.

Concerns should be made in writing wherever possible. They should include names of those committing wrongdoing, dates, places and as much evidence and context as possible. Staff raising a concern should also include details of any personal interest in the matter.

For our school’s detailed whistle-blowing process, please refer to our [whistle-blowing policy](#).

5. Staff-pupil relationships

Staff will observe proper boundaries with pupils that are appropriate to their professional position. They will act in a fair and transparent way that would not lead anyone to reasonably assume they are not doing so.

If staff members and pupils must 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.

While we are aware many pupils and their parents may wish to give gifts to staff, for example, at the end of the school year, gifts from staff to pupils are not acceptable.

If a staff member is concerned at any point that an interaction between themselves and a pupil may be misinterpreted, or if a staff member is concerned at any point about a fellow staff member and a pupil, this should be reported in line with the procedures set out in our child protection and safeguarding policy.

6. Communication and social media

School staff's 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.

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.

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

Staff should be aware of the school's [online safety policy](#).

7. Acceptable use of technology

Staff will not use technology in school or belonging to the 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.

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.

We have the right to monitor emails and internet use on the school IT system. Further details can be found in the [Acceptable Use Policy](#).

8. Confidentiality

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

This information should never be:

- Disclosed to anyone unless required by law or with consent from the relevant party or parties
- 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 has been harmed or is at risk of harm, as detailed further in our child protection and safeguarding policy.

9. Honesty and integrity

Staff should maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their role. This includes when dealing with pupils, handling money, claiming expenses and using school property and facilities.

9.1 Hospitality and acceptance of gifts

Staff need 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 pupils/students or 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/students 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 your line manager.

Staff must not accept significant gifts, or hospitality from pupils, parents, carers, actual or potential contractors or outside suppliers. All such gifts/offers of hospitality should be reported to your line manager and recorded.

Personal gifts must not be given by staff to pupils/students and any reward to pupils/students should be in accordance with North West Surrey Short Stay School's behaviour policy, recorded and not based on favouritism.

9.2 Personal Information

Staff will ensure that all information given to the school is correct. This should include:

- Background information (including any past or current investigations/cautions related to conduct outside of school)
- Qualifications
- Professional experience

Where there are any updates to the information provided to the school, the member of staff will advise the school as such as soon as reasonably practicable. Consideration will then be given to the nature and circumstances of the matter and whether this may have an impact on the member of staff's employment.

10. Dress code

Staff will dress in a professional, appropriate manner.

Outfits will not be overly revealing, and we ask that tattoos are covered up.

Clothes will not display any offensive or political slogans.

Further details in [appendix 1](#)

11. Conduct outside of work

Staff will not act in a way that would bring the school, or the teaching profession, into disrepute. This covers conduct including but not limited to relevant criminal offences, such as violence or sexual misconduct, as well as negative comments about the school on social media.

Appendix 1

1. Introduction and Purpose of Staff Dress Policy

North West Surrey Short Stay School has high expectations of its pupils in terms of their educational achievements and in respect of their behaviour and personal presentation. We expect all staff to reflect these high standards by presenting a positive and professional image to pupils, parents and other stakeholders. The aim of this policy is to reflect these standards without unduly restricting individual choice. This policy is not intended to be exhaustive in defining acceptable and unacceptable standards of dress and appearance, and members of staff are expected to use their common sense in adhering to the principles underpinning the policy.

The Management Committee recognises that there may be a diversity of cultures and religions represented amongst the staff of the school and will take a sensitive approach when this affects dress requirements. Priority will, however, be given to health and safety, the education and wellbeing of students and other similar considerations.

2. Roles & Responsibilities

All members of staff are expected to abide by this dress policy, as appropriate to the role that they perform. Final decisions about the appropriateness of dress in any individual case are ultimately at the discretion of the headteacher. Any member of staff who has concerns about appropriate dress is expected to raise these initially with his/her Line Manager and vice versa.

3. Guidelines on Appropriate Dress

All Staff

The dress code for all staff is expected to be formal and professional rather than casual. Men are expected to wear a shirt, trousers and smart shoes. Women are expected to wear shirts, smart tops or knitwear or trousers or a smart dress. As a guide, skirts or dresses should be no shorter than just above the knee. Shoes or boots should be smart and not excessively high heeled.

All staff's clothing must be smart and tidy, clean and maintained appropriately with no rips, tears or excess wear. Jewellery should not present a risk to the wearer or to students.

Exceptions

There will be particular roles, and particular circumstances, where formal attire will not be appropriate, eg:PE or drama, for these lessons staff should change into the appropriate sports wear, shoes etc.

Standards for all Staff

Hair should be neat and tidy with no extreme hairstyling. Staff are asked to cover up visible tattoos whilst at work where the location of the tattoo makes it reasonably practicable to do so. Jewellery should be discreet and visible piercings not excessive. All staff are expected to be well groomed and maintain a good standard of personal hygiene. Clothing should not unduly restrict movement or prevent a task being carried out with dignity.

4. Guidelines on Inappropriate Dress

For the avoidance of doubt, inappropriate dress is deemed to include the following:

- Jeans or other denim clothing
- Revealing or excessively tight clothing, such as cropped tops and short skirts
- Clothing which exposes underwear
- Casual t-shirts or shorts (except where appropriate to task ie PE)
- Combat or cargo trousers
- Leggings, unless worn under a skirt or dress of appropriate length
- Flip flops
- Garishly coloured, patterned or sparkly attire
- Trainers (except PE staff)
- Strapless tops/dresses or tops/dresses with narrow shoulder straps or halter necks
- Clothing with large logos, political symbols or contentious slogans

This document does not seek to document all the items that could be deemed inappropriate but to provide a general indication to staff.

5. Exceptions to the Dress Policy

Staff may change into old clothing or protective clothing when participating in active, messy or dirty tasks where clothing may be damaged. Sportswear may be changed into when participating in sports. In such circumstances, it is expected that staff will normally change back into normal work attire once the activity is completed.

Staff may be required to adhere to specific dress arrangements for certain activities when health and safety is a consideration.

The dress code for school trips, events and INSET days will normally be more relaxed, unless the nature of the event itself is formal. Any specific expectations in relation to individual events will be notified to the members of staff affected. In extreme weather conditions, the headteacher may allow exceptions to the usual dress code, in which case staff will be notified accordingly.

6. Monitoring

The school expects staff to take personal responsibility for dressing appropriately and therefore anticipates that intervention will be required only rarely. Where choice of attire falls outside the dress code, the member of staff will be advised of this on an informal basis by his/her Line Manager. Where clothing is very unsuitable (particularly if excessively revealing) the member of staff may be required to return home to change. Any concerns an employee may have about the dress code should be raised, initially, with his/her Line Manager. Exceptions may be granted in certain circumstances. Repeated infringements of the dress code, despite the provision of informal management advice, will be dealt with as a disciplinary matter in accordance with the school's disciplinary procedure.

7. Review

This policy will be reviewed by the Management Committee on a regular basis and is not intended to be contractual. Members of staff are encouraged to contribute to the development of this policy by raising any issues or concerns they may have with their Line Manager.