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Woodford County High School

Staff Code of Conduct

Introduction

Woodford County High School is committed to achieving positive academic, social, emotional, economic and safeguarding outcomes for its students. We are equally committed to the protection and welfare of our staff. Our duty to safeguard pupils is paramount and is just as important as our determination to make all our teaching and learning of the highest quality. We need to ensure that pupils and staff are safe. Safeguarding involves not only health and safety issues, but establishing a culture that prevents any kind of abuse of pupils being perpetrated either in school or elsewhere.

As such, all staff at Woodford County High 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. Failure to comply with this Code of Conduct may lead to disciplinary action being taken where appropriate.

General conduct

All staff are expected to carry out their duties within the spirit of mutual respect, co-operation and support. Staff should be mindful of the standards expected of students and act accordingly.

A teacher should not deliberately behave in such a way as to bring his/her school into disrepute.

Dress and appearance

All staff are expected to dress appropriately for a working environment where they are role models for young people and where they may expect to meet parents and other visitors to the school.

Dress or footwear which is too casual / informal or which compromises health and safety is not acceptable. (To give some warm weather examples, sun tops, shorts and flip flops are not appropriate.)

For security reasons the face must be clearly visible at all times.

Attendance and Punctuality

Every member of staff should be aiming for the highest standards in attendance and punctuality. When members of staff are absent, they should set work for their classes whenever possible. Guidance regarding attendance and punctuality can be found in the Staff Handbook.

Requests for leave of absence (e.g. for hospital appointments, to attend the funeral of close relative etc.) are made by completing an absence request form, authorised by the relevant line manager and submitted to Mr Jenkins (Deputy Head).

Colleagues are directed to the Staff Leave Policy (SP02.08.001) for guidance on procedures standard to Redbridge schools. Where leave is necessitated by crisis, of course, the individual context will always influence the decisions made.

School Policies and Procedures

Policies, including Behaviour and Child Protection policies, should be observed by all. It is the responsibility of staff to familiarise themselves with these. Policies may be found on the school website and (the complete set) in the 'All Staff' folder on the Departments Drive.

Duty of Care

All staff have a duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of the young people they come into contact with. 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 intention. Staff should follow the guidance in the annual Child Protection training and be familiar with the Child Protection policy and procedures and the document 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'.

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 and colleagues should be treated equally and with respect.

All staff are responsible for:

- Promoting equality and community cohesion in their work
- Avoiding unlawful discrimination against anyone
- Fostering good relations between groups
- Dealing with prejudice related incidents
- Being able to recognise and tackle bias and stereotyping
- Educating pupils about equality
- Accessing training opportunities, as necessary

Teaching / dealing with sensitive issues

Teachers should demonstrate an awareness of matters that are culturally and emotionally sensitive without avoiding discussing or addressing these when appropriate. Careful thought must be given to the age-appropriateness of teaching resources.

Where the issues for discussion or (with older students) the sources being provided, have associated terminology that is offensive, careful guidelines on language use (student and teacher) need to be established in advance. Certain words are not

appropriate for verbal utterance and may never be uttered or written within the Woodford community. (Social media communication between students included). It is particularly to be noted that racial slurs, including the n word and the p word, must not be uttered or used in writing at any time.

Confidentiality

Staff are expected to treat **any** information they may receive about students, especially private and/or sensitive information, in a discreet and confidential manner. **This should only be discussed with other adults who have legitimate reasons to access this information.** This includes being judicious when deciding who to copy in when sending sensitive emails. If in doubt as to whether to share this information, guidance should be sought from the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or the Head Teacher. 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. Please see child protection policy also.

GDPR

Training will be provided on GDPR requirements annually and colleagues are required to exercise due care and follow guidance in the management of data. Any data breach must be reported without delay to either our GDPR Officer (School Business Manager) or our Data Protection Support – Judicium on 0203 326 9174 and dataservices@judiciam.com.

Use of Images, ICT and Mobile Phones

Staff should follow the school's ICT acceptable use policy, the data protection policy and the e-safety policy. Staff must not take photographs or videos of students on personal mobile phones. Staff should not be operating phones for personal use when supervising a class.

Cyber Security

All staff must complete mandatory Cyber Security Training annually. This training is essential in equipping us with the knowledge and skills necessary to protect our school from potential cyber security threats. It is our collective responsibility to remain vigilant at all times and be mindful that cyber threats are becoming increasingly more sophisticated and pervasive. It is crucial that we all remain alert to the ever-present risks and promptly report any suspicious activities or potential breaches.

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.

Personal / Professional life boundaries

Staff are entitled to privacy regarding their private lives and are expected to take all reasonable means to maintain this principle by following the measures outlined in ICT Acceptable Use Agreement, by being judicious in any references made to students about lives outside school and by avoiding behaviours in school likely to give rise to gossip and speculation. Concerns about any invasion of privacy should be passed on.

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.

Infatuations

Should any student become infatuated with a member of staff, this must be reported to the Head Teacher or Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately. The maintenance of professional boundaries at all times should go some way to avoiding this situation however.

Gifts/Award/Rewards

Staff should abide by the 'Gifts and Hospitality policy'.

Social Contact with students

Outside of school hours social contact should be avoided where possible. Home or mobile phone numbers; addresses or personal email addresses should not be exchanged. Should such a situation be absolutely unavoidable, the Designated Safeguarding Lead should be informed. Staff should be vigilant that their personal belongings (e.g. mobile phones etc.) do not come into the possession of students.

Private Tutoring, other commissioned work & potential conflict of interest

Staff must not engage in the private tutoring of Woodford County High School students. Approved catch-up tutoring (in line with national objectives) or enrichment activities will be brokered and reimbursed through the school. Marking for Examination Boards is applauded but must be undertaken off site (in line with examination board requirements) and in the teacher's own time. Colleagues are asked to inform the Headteacher or Deputy if such marking is being undertaken.

School time (including gained time) should be focused on school duties. No personal commissions / contracts should be engaged with in school time. Colleagues are asked to be vigilant about potential conflicts of interest and to seek the advice of the Headteacher or Deputy or School Business Manager for clarification. Colleagues may be asked to complete a Declaration of Business Interest form.

Home Visits

Staff are not permitted to visit the home of a student unless pre-arranged and the Head or Designated Safeguarding Lead is informed.

Sexual contact

Any sexual activity between an adult and a young person with whom they work (including verbal comments, letters, emails, phone contact, and physical contact) may be regarded as a criminal offence and will be a matter for disciplinary action.

Physical Contact with Students

Guidelines on Positive Handling can be found in the Child Protection and Safeguarding policy. Any colleague needing to search a student's possession must read the Protocol for Searches (an appendix to the Behaviour Policy) first and seek authorisation from a member of SLT.

One to One Situations

Where possible 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 a student unless in an emergency or where the child is at risk. In this instance the circumstances should be logged with the Designated Safeguarding Lead or the office. If staff are using their own vehicle it should be roadworthy and the appropriate licences and insurances held.

Trips and Outings

Adults remain in a position of trust and behaviour should remain professional at all times. 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.

Smoking

The smoking of cigarettes and e-cigarettes on the school site is not permitted. Staff accompanying school trips should not smoke or vape in the presence of students.

Alcohol

The consumption of alcohol during the school day is not permitted. A common sense approach must be adopted in the matter of alcohol consumption (by accompanying staff) during a residential school visit. Staff are expected to use their professional judgement and be aware that all staff are acting *in loco parentis*.

A risk assessment should be undertaken in light of any **potential** need to drive a vehicle to transport an unwell or injured student.

Prohibited substances including drugs

The discovery of prohibited substances on the school site, or of a member of staff being under the influence of such substances, would be a police matter and would result in disciplinary action.

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.

Contact with the Media

Only designated persons are entitled to communicate with the press, radio or television companies on matters pertaining to the school. Any other contact with the media where a member of staff's association with the school is likely to be cited should be discussed in advance with the headteacher.

Sharing concerns, recording incidents

Staff should be aware of child protection procedures including procedures for dealing with allegations against adults. (See Child Protection policy and 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'.) 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.

Whistle Blowing

In accordance with the Child Protection Policy, staff should report any behaviour by colleagues that raises concern to either the Head teacher or to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, as appropriate.