



# Staff Code of Conduct Policy

**September 2023**



## **Purpose, Scope and Principles**

The code of conduct is designed to give clear guidance on the standards of behaviour all staff are expected to observe, and the company should notify employees of this code and the expectations therein. Company employees are in a unique position of influence and must adhere to behaviour that sets a good example to all the students within the company.

The code of conduct applies to all staff that are employed by the company including the Director.

## **Setting an Example**

All employees of the company must set examples of behaviour and conduct which may be mirrored by students. All employees must, therefore, demonstrate high standards of professional conduct in order to encourage our students to do the same. Inappropriate conduct and the use of offensive language will not be tolerated in the company. All employees must also avoid putting themselves at risk of allegations of abusive or unprofessional conduct. This code helps all employees to understand what behaviour is and is not acceptable.

## **Pupil Development**

Employees must comply with company policies and procedures that support the wellbeing and development of students. Employees must cooperate and collaborate with colleagues and with external agencies where necessary to support the development of students. Employees must follow reasonable instructions that support the development of students.

## **Honesty and Integrity**

Employees must maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their work. This includes the handling and claiming of money and the use of company property and facilities.

## **Conduct Outside Work**

Employees are reminded that you are considered a representative of the company at all times and this may include periods outside of work. Employees of the company must not engage in conduct outside work which could seriously damage the good reputation of the company. Employees must not bring the company into disrepute. In particular, criminal offences that involve violence or possession or use of illegal drugs or sexual misconduct are likely to be regarded as unacceptable. Employees must exercise caution when using information technology and observe academy policy in relation to the use of ICT at all times. Employees may undertake work outside of the company, such work may be paid or voluntary, provided

that it does not conflict with the interests of the company nor be to a level that may contravene the working time regulations or affect individuals work performance.



## **Confidentiality**

Where employees have access to confidential information about student or their parents or carers, employees must not reveal such information except to those colleagues who have a professional role in relation to the student. All employees are likely at some point to witness actions which need to be confidential. For example, where a student is bullied by another student (or by a member of staff), this needs to be reported and dealt with in accordance with the appropriate company procedure. It must not be discussed outside the company, including with the student's parent or carer, nor with colleagues in the school except with a senior member of staff with the appropriate role and authority to deal with the matter.

However, employees have an obligation to share with their manager or the company's lead designated person any information which gives rise to concern about the safety or welfare of a student. Employees must **never** promise a student that they will not act on information that they are told by the student.

## **Disciplinary Action**

All employees need to recognise that failure to meet these standards of behaviour and conduct may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

## **Professional Relationship**

With students:

We act respectfully towards students at all times, for example:

- Speaking in a calm and objective way, even in the face of challenging circumstances.
- Using a range of vocal volume that is appropriate to the learning activity (we may raise our voices in a controlled way to achieve a desired impact but we never shout in anger).
- Showing good manners to students and thereby modelling what good manners are.
- Taking seriously what all students tell us.
- Giving students time to express themselves.
- Considering how we would expect to be spoken to ourselves.
- Pursuing settlements in conflicts between students in a way that is demonstrably fair and listens to all points of view before making a considered judgement.
- We judge students based on the current situation and not on past behaviour.
- Making clear to students why a course of action has been necessary.

We uphold the company's policies and procedures on achievement, behaviour and attendance and child protection in our dealings with students. We acknowledge that we are in 'loco parentis' and, as such, have a duty of care for all students in the company. We are consistent in the way that we apply rewards and sanctions to the students, so that each individual student knows that they will receive the same treatment from any member of staff. We understand that children have a right to be heard. We are friendly and supportive to all students, but maintain our professionalism at all times. We acknowledge that some interactions that seek to 'be friends' with students can create ambiguity in the relationship and are

Headquarters: Moor House Adventure Centre; Rainton Gate, West Rainton, Houghton le Spring, Tyne & Wear. DH4 6QY.



unhelpful. We protect ourselves and our students by making sure that we avoid being alone with individual students, but if it is unavoidable to do so, we ensure that we are in a place where other s can see us. We all take responsibility for our actions and are prepared to apologise when we have made mistakes and undertake to learn from those errors. We teach and respond to students as unique individuals.

**We have a professional responsibility to inform an appropriate person if we believe that a colleague is behaving in a way that compromises the safety or well being of any student or group of students.**

With parents:

- Parents have an entitlement to be informed about their sons learning and well being. We always seek to involve and engage parents in this process.
- We recognise parents' entitlement to express any concerns they may have about their son's learning, safety or well being.
- We always seek to work in partnership with parents, using their understanding of their own son to help us to provide the best learning opportunities that we can.
- We recognise that parents' worries and concerns can be extremely emotive and we acknowledge that, at times, we will need to speak to parents when they are upset.
- If we are concerned that a parent may be aggressive or otherwise inappropriate towards us, we can ask for a colleague to be present.
- In extreme circumstances, the Director may decide that it is safer for a teacher to communicate with the parent through different means.
- We are honest with parents, without undermining colleagues and respond fairly to their concerns irrespective of their race, religion, culture or social background.
- When speaking to parents, we always consider how we would expect to be spoken to ourselves.
- We acknowledge that we are human and will all make mistakes from time to time.
- We take responsibility for our actions and are willing to apologise when we have made mistakes and undertake to learn from those errors.
- We protect ourselves by ensuring that we meet with parents in areas of the school that are visible and easily accessible to other staff members, while remembering to be sensitive to the confidential nature of some discussions. We always make sure that colleagues know when and where we are meeting with parents.
- We recognise the right to confidentiality of all members of the company.

With other members of staff:

- We act in a professional manner towards colleagues, irrespective of our relative position or status within the school hierarchy, for example:
- Speaking politely to one another.
- Being flexible and understanding of necessary changes within the school day.
- Assuming that the actions of others are carried out in good faith.
- Communicating clearly and honestly with colleagues.
- Addressing concerns openly and honestly with the person to whom the concern is addressed, whenever possible, without publicly criticising anyone.
- Being publicly supportive of colleagues and dealing with concerns or disagreements privately, with support if necessary.

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- We share a responsibility to encourage and support our colleagues in their professional development.
- We consider all member of the staff team to have equal value, irrespective of their job, and we treat them accordingly.
- When speaking to colleagues we always consider how we would expect to be spoken to ourselves.
- Concerns raised with managers are dealt with confidentially. If further action is required, the manager has responsibility to inform only the appropriate senior person within the company.
- We recognise that we are all accountable for our actions and performance and that from time to time leaders and manager will need to deliver feedback that is challenging. All individual feedback is given sensitively and constructively and should only be shared with those staff members that need to know (e.g. line manager or mentor)
- By approaching issue with colleagues in a way that always seeks to solve potential problems in a positive way.
- We never act in a way that publicly undermines a colleague.
- We will take responsibility for our actions and are prepared to apologise when we have made mistakes and undertake to learn from those errors.

### Staff Dress

We wear the uniform provided at all times.

### Other Areas

Members of staff arrive at the company headquarters by 9:00am and are directed until 3:00pm and other calendar events. If for any reason we are delayed in the morning, it is our responsibility to ensure that the appropriate person in the company is informed at the earliest opportunity. We support and use the systems in place for monitoring who is on site and understand that these systems are for the health and safety of ourselves and others.

### Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or in light of any changes in legislation and/or guidance.

This policy document will be reviewed in September 2024.

Signed by:

Andrew Burlison (Managing Director)

Headquarters: Moor House Adventure Centre; Rainton Gate, West Rainton, Houghton le Spring, Tyne & Wear. DH4 6QY.

Tel: 01915841703 (Opt. 5) Mob: 07792834117 Email: [abworld365@gmail.com](mailto:abworld365@gmail.com) Web: [www.worlds.org.uk](http://www.worlds.org.uk)

COMPANY NUMBER 10385941



Headquarters: Moor House Adventure Centre; Rainton Gate, West Rainton, Houghton le Spring, Tyne & Wear. DH4 6QY.

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