



Staff Code of Conduct 2023-2024

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**MORE
HOUSE
SCHOOL**

KNIGHTSBRIDGE

Contents

1. Aims, scope and principles	2
2. Legislation and guidance	3
3. General obligations	3
4. Safeguarding	3
5. Health & Safety	5
6. Staff/pupil relationships	6
7. Communication and social media	6
8. Social Contact	7
9. Acceptable use of technology	7
10. Remote teaching	7
11. Confidentiality	8
12. Honesty and integrity	8
13. Dress code	8
14. Conduct and Standards	8
15. Expectations for all staff	9
16. Monitoring arrangements	10
17. Links with other policies	10

1. Aims, scope and principles

This policy aims to set and maintain standards of conduct that More House School expects all staff to follow.

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, governors and volunteers to also act with personal and professional integrity, respecting the safety and wellbeing of others.

Our ethos is made explicit in the aims of the School and our mission statement (Staff Handbook, Section A). We expect all School staff to act in accordance with those stated aims and our mission statement.

Failure to follow the code of conduct may result in disciplinary action being taken, as set out in our staff disciplinary procedures (see Staff Handbook Section E; Employee Handbook).

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 guidance

In line with the statutory safeguarding guidance '[Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)', we have a staff code of conduct, which should cover acceptable use of technologies, 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
- Express personal beliefs in a way that will not overly influence pupils, and will not exploit 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.

It is a requirement for employment that 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 in the Staff Handbook. New staff will also be given copies on arrival as part of their safeguarding induction.

Trips

When leading or taking part in School trips and visits (both residential and non-residential), staff must follow the guidelines set out in the Health and Safety Manual - School Visits and Outings (see Staff Handbook, Section D).

Physical Contact

There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate and proper for staff to have physical contact with students, but it is crucial that they only do so in ways appropriate to their professional role. A 'no touch' approach is impractical for most staff and may in some circumstances be inappropriate. When physical contact is made with students this should be in response to their needs at the time, of limited duration and appropriate. Staff should use their professional judgement at all times about the appropriateness of any physical contact.

Physical contact should never be secretive, or for the gratification of the adult, or represent a misuse of authority. If a member of staff believes that an action could be misinterpreted, the incident and circumstances should be reported to the DSL (or if by the DSL, to the Head) on the same day. In order that patterns of behaviour can be recognised and monitored, this information will be recorded by the DSL or Head. It will only be shared beyond those persons if further action is required and only on a need to know basis.

Physical contact, which occurs regularly with an individual student, is likely to raise questions unless the justification for this is part of a formally agreed plan (for example in relation to students with SpLD or physical disabilities). Any such contact should be the subject of an agreed and open School policy and subject to review.

All staff must have regard for the guidance on physical contact as set out in the policy on Restraint and Corporal Punishment (see Staff Handbook).

Allegations that may meet the harm threshold

This section is based on ‘Section 1: Allegations that may meet the harm threshold’ in part 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education. It 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 will be the Head, or the Chair of the Board of Governors where the Head is the subject of the allegation.

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, or
- 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, Section A or on the School website.

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

Whistle-blowing

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

- Pupils’ or staff’s health and safety being put in danger;
- Failure to comply with a legal obligation or statutory requirement, or
- 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 Head. If the concern is about the Head, 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 Board of Governors.

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 (Staff Handbook, Section E).

5. Health & Safety

All School’s Staff have a duty to:

- Read the School’s Health and Safety Policy (see Staff Handbook, Section D);
- Comply with the School’s health and safety arrangements;
- Take reasonable care of their own and other people’s health and safety;
- Leave the classrooms and other areas of the School in a reasonably tidy and safe condition;
- Follow safety instructions when using equipment;
- Supervise pupils and advise them on how to use equipment safely;
- Report practices, equipment or physical conditions that may be hazardous to their line manager and/or the appropriate member of staff;
- Follow the accident reporting procedure (which is detailed in the First Aid Policy), and
- Contribute to and highlight any gaps in the School’s risk assessments

6. Staff/pupil relationships

Staff must observe proper boundaries with pupils that are appropriate to their professional position. They must 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, and
- A DSL, 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.

Guidance on the receipt of gifts from pupils and parents can be found in the Staff Handbook, Section E, Employee Handbook.

If a staff member is concerned at any point that an interaction between themselves and a pupil may be misinterpreted, this should be reported in line with Section 4 above.

7. 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 be aware that they leave themselves open to a charge of professional misconduct if images of a member of staff in a compromising situation are made available on a public profile by anyone.

Staff should not attempt to contact pupils or their parents via social media, or any other means outside of School, in order to develop any sort of relationship. They must not make any efforts to find pupils' or parents' social media profiles

If a student does gain access to the profile of a member of staff by fraudulent means (impersonation or hacking) senior leadership should be informed immediately.

Staff must deny current or recent students access to their profile so they do not put themselves in a vulnerable position.

Staff must 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 e-safety policy and section on Computers and Electronic Communications in the Employee Handbook (see Staff Handbook, Section E).

This guidance applies equally to use of School owned and personal devices.

8. Social Contact

Staff should not establish or seek to establish social contact with students, or their families, for the purpose of securing a friendship or to pursue or strengthen a relationship. Even if a young person seeks to establish social contact, or if this occurs coincidentally, the member of staff should exercise her/his professional judgement in making a response but should always discuss this with a senior leader. Staff must be aware that social contact, in certain situations, could be misconstrued as grooming.

Staff should not give their personal details such as their home or e-mail address; social network sites, or web pages to students unless the need to do so is agreed with senior leadership. In summary, staff should:

- have no secret social contact with students;
- consider the appropriateness of the social contact according to their role and nature of their work;
- always approve any planned social contact with senior colleagues, for example when it is part of a reward scheme or pastoral care programme;
- advise senior leadership of any regular social contact they have with a student or parent which may give rise to concern, and
- report and record any situation, which they feel, might compromise the School or their own professional standing.

The School recognises that there may be pupils whose parents teach in the School. In this instance, a meeting between the parent and DSL will be held to agree appropriate boundaries and control measures that meet current guidance. The meeting will be recorded and its contents shared with the Head and, as appropriate, other staff.

9. Acceptable use of technology

All staff will have regard for the School's E-safety Policy and Employee Handbook (Staff Handbook).

Staff will not use technology in School (whether personal or School owned) 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 restrict use of personal mobile phones during School hours to designated areas (those being the staff room and staff offices). They will not use School equipment for personal use.

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 all devices connected to the School's wifi and on all school-provided devices at all times.

10. Remote teaching

Staff will have regard for the School's E-Safety Policy (see Staff Handbook, Section C1) and Remote Learning Policy (see Staff handbook, Section C3).

Staff are required to sign the More House School Staff Online Home Learning Responsible User Agreement which outlines expectations of staff for teaching online, whether from

home or School, including during partial or full School closure and whilst individual pupils are learning online.

11. 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 will never be:

- Disclosed to anyone without the relevant authority;
- Used to humiliate, embarrass or blackmail others, or
- 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 is at risk of harm.

Further guidance on confidentiality can be found in the Staff Handbook, Section E, Conduct and standards and in the Communications and Confidentiality policy.

12. 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.

Staff will not accept bribes. The giving or receipt of gifts is not prohibited but must be in line with the Anti Bribery and Corruption section of the Employee Handbook (Staff Handbook, Section E).

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 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.

13. Dress code

Staff will dress in a professional, smart and appropriate manner. This means abiding by the dress code and dressing appropriately for their particular role as set out in the Employee Handbook (Staff Handbook, Section E, Dress Code).

14. Conduct and Standards

You are under a duty to comply with the standards of behaviour required by the School and to behave in a reasonable manner at all times, not act in a way that would bring the

School, or the teaching profession, into disrepute and in line with guidance set out in the Employee Handbook. 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.

15. Expectations for all staff

- Share a firm belief that we can change students' lives;
- Model politeness, courtesy and respect for all;
- Challenge stigmatisation of students;
- Promote an aspirational culture: - no ceiling to achievement;
- Ensure all interactions with students and other staff are positive;
- Address students at all times in an emotionally intelligent way; de-escalate in all situations;
- Adhere to all policies;
- Ensure all emails are written in a professional manner and are suitable for any audience;
- To be respectful of staff welfare, unless urgent, only send emails to those that 'need to know' and only between 7am and 8pm on working days;
- Check staffroom lockers daily for letters or other communication;
- Check and correct uniform;
- Attend all briefings/meetings punctually;
- Read emails daily on working days;
- In addition to the above, teachers must:
 - Adhere to the standards as set out in the DfE document 'Teachers' Standards'. These cover both teaching standards and personal and professional conduct. Teachers' performance will be reviewed against these professional standards.
 - Not leave a classroom whilst teaching unless under exceptional circumstances;
 - Take the register within the first 15 minutes of a lesson;
 - Not let students out during lessons unless under exceptional circumstances;
 - Ensure planned absence cover lessons are set, appropriately resourced and organised in advance, in liaison with the Head of Operations;
 - Adhere to all deadlines and
 - Adhere to duty and detention rotas.

16. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually, but can be revised as needed. It will be ratified by the Board of Governors. Our Board of Governors will ensure this code of conduct is implemented effectively, and will ensure appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard children and deal with any concerns.

17. Links with other policies

This policy links with the following School policies, found in the Staff Handbook:

- Section A Aims of the School
- Section C Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Section C E-Safety Policy
- Section C Remote Learning Policy
- Section C Policy on Behaviour and Discipline

- Section C Staff Induction Procedure
- Section D Health and Safety Manual
- Section E Employee Handbook