

Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers

1. Introduction

- 1.1. All staff and those who work in school in a voluntary capacity have a responsibility to act only in the best interests of those in their care and to protect them from harm. They are also expected to show exemplary standards of professionalism and propriety in their work for the School and to uphold its good name and reputation.
- 1.2. For ease of expression this Code of Conduct uses the term "member of staff" to indicate all who work within the School, either on a paid or voluntary basis. The Code of Conduct should also guide the conduct of adults living as part of the family of resident members of staff and those who work at Old Swinford Hospital as contractors or as their employees.
- 1.3. Guidance can change from time to time and it will be assumed that the current version of guidance referred to in this policy, at any point in time, forms part of the policy.

2. Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults

- 2.1. Members of staff have a duty of care to all students in the School and must act at all times in a manner which safeguards and promotes their physical, emotional and moral welfare.¹
- 2.2. Members of staff must not seek physical, emotional or sexual gratification from their relationships with students, nor give the impression that they may be doing so. They must exercise care in using language or exhibiting behaviour which may be misconstrued as inappropriate and must avoid situations where their integrity may appear compromised.
- 2.3. Physical contact with students must be kept to a minimum and must only take place where it is necessary in the discharge of the duties of a member of staff. Except in cases of emergency, the reason for physical contact should be explained to students before it takes place and consent obtained.
- 2.4. Physical punishment of students is forbidden by law. Minimum necessary force² may be used in a situation to protect a student, member of staff or any other person from physical harm. Any incident where force is used to control or restrain students must immediately be reported in full, and in writing, to the Headmaster and Deputy Safeguarding Officer. A form is available from the Headmaster's PA for this purpose, but an account should be written as soon as possible after the event, to which the form can later be added.
- 2.5. Any member of staff who believes that a student may be at risk of physical or sexual abuse (whether by an adult or a child) or of neglect has a legal duty to report the matter to the School's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or in his absence the Deputy Safeguarding Officer. For this reason, members of staff should not give assurances of confidentiality when counselling students.
- 2.6. These provisions apply equally in the case of all students whether or not they are legally adults. They also apply in any situation where a member of staff may be working with vulnerable adults.
- 2.7. Under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 the School has responsibility for preventing students from being influenced or affected by extremism and radicalisation. This responsibility is integral to the whole school approach to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people.³

¹ Safeguarding Policy

² Use of reasonable force – advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies (July 2013)

³ Revised Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales (July 2015)

3. Professional Conduct

- 3.1. Members of staff must discharge their duties in the School to the best of their abilities and using their best endeavours, remembering that the interests of students are paramount. They must co-operate with colleagues and other adults as required and contribute to the creation of a pleasant and productive working environment.
- 3.2. Bullying of any kind, including sexual harassment, is entirely unacceptable.⁴
- 3.3. The Equality Act 2010 covers nine protected characteristics, which cannot be used as a reason to treat people unfairly. Every person has one or more of the protected characteristics, so the act protects everyone against unfair treatment. The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation⁵. Members of staff must not demean or undermine students, their parents, carers or colleagues, or act towards them in a manner which is discriminatory on any of these grounds nor on the grounds of ability, appearance, ethnicity, or socio-economic circumstances.
- 3.4. Members of staff are expected to display and uphold the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, mutual respect and tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs.
- 3.5. Members of staff must comply with relevant statutory provisions and other instructions which support the well-being and development of students, including where these require co-operation and collaboration with outside agencies. They must comply with the requirements of statutory bodies relating to the examination, assessment and evaluation of student achievement and attainment.
- 3.6. Members of staff are expected to participate in continuing professional development activities as appropriate to their role in the School.
- 3.7. Members of staff must adopt appropriate professional dress during the school day and set a good example to students concerning behaviour and appearance at all times.
- 3.8. Old Swinford Hospital is designated as a Smoke Free Campus. Resident employees and their guests are however permitted to smoke in their domestic accommodation other than in areas of that accommodation which may be used by students and colleagues. Staff must never smoke where they may be seen by students.
- 3.9. Where members of staff are provided with accommodation for the better performance of their duties, they must ensure that the accommodation is maintained in a clean and presentable condition and that the provisions of their Licence with the Governing Body are observed.
- 3.10. Members of staff who are teachers are also statutorily obliged to act in accordance with part 2 of the teaching standards (2012) "Personal and Professional Conduct"

4. Supervision of Visitors

- 4.1. Members of staff have a responsibility to supervise their visitors at all times whilst on the School site, to ensure that they do not have unsupervised access to students and that they do not act in a way likely to cause inconvenience, annoyance or danger to staff or students.
- 4.2. Members of staff who are resident in Boarding Houses have an additional responsibility to ensure that any visitors who stay overnight in their accommodation do not have unsupervised access to students at any time during their stay. Any guests staying overnight (by which we mean that they are

⁴ Harassment and Bullying at Work Policy

⁵ Equality and Diversity Policy

in accommodation at any time between 2am and 6am) then the member of staff must have informed the Senior Housemaster of the name of the guests in writing 24 hours before the event.⁶

- 4.3. The School reserves the right to ask members of staff not to entertain on school property any individuals who are deemed in the opinion of the SLT to be unsuitable, or whose presence might lead to reputational risk.
- 4.4. All regular visitors (more than 3 times in a 30 day period) are required to have an enhanced DBS with the School.
- 4.5. Resident members of staff on one year contracts and gap assistants who reside in the accommodation provided are not permitted to have any overnight guests when the boys are in school.

5. Information Technology

- 5.1. Members of staff have access to the School's Information Technology facilities principally for the better performance of their duties. They may also use the facilities for personal purposes provided that in doing so they do not incur any cost to the School, hamper the use of the facilities for School purposes, cause damage or jeopardise the security of the School network or interfere with the performance of their duties.
- 5.2. Members of staff must always obey the School's Email & Internet Use Policy and Password Policy and, in particular, must never use the School internet facilities to view pornography or other inappropriate material. Resident members of staff are responsible for any use of the School's Information Technology facilities by other members of their household.

6. Financial Probity

- 6.1. Members of staff must maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in management and administrative duties, including in the use of school property and finance.
- 6.2. Members of staff must not hold monies belonging to the School, to students or their parents in their own bank accounts at any time or for any reason without the express consent of the Bursar. They must not use the resources of the School for their own benefit.
- 6.3. Members of staff making decisions concerning the procurement of goods or services must declare any conflict of interest that may arise.
- 6.4. Members of staff must not derive any personal pecuniary benefit from financial transactions entered into on behalf of the School or its students, other than those permitted by the Personal Pecuniary Benefit Policy.

7. Confidentiality and the Reputation of the School

- 7.1. Members of staff must not act in a way that is likely to bring Old Swinford Hospital into disrepute. They are reminded that, as employees, they have a duty of confidentiality to the School as their employer and they must therefore not divulge information concerning the School or any student to third parties, except in relation to their professional duties.
- 7.2. Only the Headmaster, or a person acting under the authority of the Headmaster, is entitled to speak on behalf of the School to the media.
- 7.3. Members of staff must not misuse or misrepresent their professional position, qualifications or experience or their role in the School.

⁶ Keeping children safe in education September 2016

8. Health and Safety

- 8.1. It is in the best interests of everyone that the School is a safe, healthy and accident-free working environment. The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 places an obligation on all members of staff to:
- 8.1.1. Work safely and use all equipment correctly, according to operating instructions.
 - 8.1.2. Take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves, other staff, students, visitors and the general public.
 - 8.1.3. Co-operate with the School to ensure that all relevant provisions of the Act are observed.
 - 8.1.4. Ensure that they understand and carry out all emergency procedures, fire precautions and evacuations procedures laid down by the School.
 - 8.1.5. Report immediately to their line manager any potential hazard to employees, students, visitors or the general public.
- 8.2. Staff are issued with a copy of the Health & Safety Policy and are expected to comply with the arrangements therein.

9. Whistleblowing

A member of staff who believes that criminal activity or wrongdoing, including extremist activity or any incitement to extremism, of any other serious kind is taking place in the School must report the matter to their line manager, to the Headmaster, Governors, the Police or other appropriate authority. In doing so they are protected from recrimination by the Governors' "Whistleblowing" Policy.

10. Conviction of a Criminal Offence

A member of staff who is convicted of a criminal offence including extremist activity or incitement to extremism, or has accepted a caution in respect of an offence, must report the fact to the Headmaster. The Headmaster will decide whether the severity and nature of the offence is such as to compromise the role of the member of staff in the School.

11. The Teaching Agency for England and other Professional Bodies

- 11.1. The conduct of teachers is regulated by the Teaching Agency which replaces the General Teaching Council as from 1 April 2012. Details regarding teaching standards, performance and conduct can be found at www.education.gov.uk
- 11.2. Some members of the support staff will also be subject to codes of conduct relating to their membership of professional bodies.