

# Testwood School

## Code of Conduct



Key Responsibility area:	Mrs J. Pitman/SP&PP/S/1
Last Review:	October 2022
Next Review:	October 2023

### Revision History

Version	Date	Amendments	Initials
3	25/11/19	Inclusion of ethical leadership principles	JP
4	09/11/20	Governors changed to Trustees, parents changed to parent/carers – other changes are in bold	JP
5	19/10/21	Designated Safeguarding Leads updated	JP
6	16/11/22	DSL team updated	JP

## 1. Purpose and principles

This Code of Conduct aims to establish a set of principles which underpin the expected conduct of staff at Testwood School with the intention of encouraging staff to achieve the highest standards of conduct at work and of minimising the risk of improper conduct occurring.

The school requires that all staff have read and comply with the Code of Conduct. Where clarification is needed on any aspect of this document, this should be sought from the Headteacher.

Breach or failure to observe the provisions of this document may lead to action being taken under the school disciplinary procedure located in the Teacher Resources File – Policies – Policies PDF.

This document is available to all staff in the staffroom as well as being provided on induction to all new members of staff.

The Code of Conduct is not exhaustive in defining acceptable and unacceptable standards of conduct and behaviour and in circumstances where guidance does not exist, individuals are expected to use their professional judgement and act in the best interests of the school and its students.

## 2. Scope

The Code of Conduct applies to:

- a) All members of staff, including teaching and support staff;

- b) Volunteers, including Trustees;
- c) Casual workers; invigilators and peripatetic teachers
- d) Temporary and supply staff, either from agencies or engaged directly;
- e) Student placements, including those undertaking initial teacher training, work experience and apprentices.

References to 'staff' throughout the Code of Conduct refer to all of the above groups.

Any links within this document to other documents are for ease of use and do not form part of this Code of Conduct.

The Code of Conduct exists in addition to Hampshire County Council's Local Government Code of Conduct.

### **3. Professional standards at work**

Staff are expected to demonstrate the highest possible standards of personal and professional conduct of behaviour and consistently act with honesty and integrity. The school expects staff to treat each other, students, parents/carers and the wider school community with dignity and respect at all times.

Furthermore, staff must have regard for the ethos and values of the school as its policies and procedures and act in accordance with these at all times, including in their dealings with those who come into contact with the school e.g. visitors.

Staff must act in accordance with their duty of care to students and ensure that the safety and welfare of the children and young people at the school are accorded the highest priority. In this and other ways staff should always maintain standards of conduct and behaviour which sustain their professional standing and that of the school.

Teachers are reminded of, and expected to uphold, their wider responsibilities as set out in the Teachers' Standards, including and understanding of, and acting within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities.

### **4. Leadership**

As role models for the young, how we behave as leaders is as important as what we do. Leaders should show leadership through the following personal characteristics or virtues:

**Trust** – *leaders are trustworthy and reliable*

We hold trust on behalf of children and should be beyond reproach. We are honest about our motivations.

**Wisdom** – *leaders use experience, knowledge and insight*

We demonstrate moderation and self-awareness. We act calmly and rationally. We serve our school with propriety and good sense.

**Kindness** – *leaders demonstrate respect, generosity of spirit, understanding and good temper*

We give difficult messages humanely where conflict is unavoidable.

**Justice** – *leaders are fair and work for the good of all children*

We seek to enable all young people to lead useful, happy and fulfilling lives.

**Service** – *leaders are conscientious and dutiful*

We demonstrate humility and self-control, supporting the structures, conventions and rules which safeguard quality. Our actions protect high-quality education.

**Courage** – *leaders work courageously in the best interests of children and young people*

We protect their safety and their right to a broad, effective and creative education. We hold one another to account courageously.

**Optimism** – *leaders are positive and encouraging*

Despite difficulties and pressure, we are developing excellent education to change the world for the better.

## **5. Safeguarding**

Testwood School recognises its statutory and moral duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of students and understands that staff play a vital role in meeting these responsibilities. Staff must be aware of their individual safeguarding responsibilities, including to provide a safe environment in which children can learn, to know and identify the signs of abuse and neglect, to identify children who are suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm and to take appropriate action in such cases to prevent concerns from escalating.

All members of staff must be aware of the school's systems for supporting child safeguarding, including the role of the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). In this school the DSL teams are: **Mr D. Murphy (DSL), Mrs J. Pitman, Mr Ward, Miss J. Marlio, Ms L. Pope, Mrs N. Eadon, Ms E. Peacock and Mrs S. Layram.**

Concerns about the welfare of a child must be raised without delay to the school's DSL in the first instance or to other members of the team if the DSL cannot be located. In the event that none of the above are available contact Mrs J. Baker (Tel: 02380 862146) and inform her that you are contacting Hampshire County Council's Safeguarding team (01962 876364). There should be no delay in reporting a concern if there is risk of immediate serious harm to a child.

Staff should be familiar with the school's child protection policy, which is issued to all staff in their child protection training session. All staff will receive appropriate child protection training annually and will be provided with guidance on child safeguarding as part of their induction to the school.

In accordance with the statutory guidance published by the Department of Education 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (**September 2022**) all staff in Testwood School are required to read Part One and Annex A safeguarding information. All staff will be provided with a copy annually and as part of their induction to the school. The full document is available via the child protection booklet.

## **6. Appropriate relationships**

### **Students**

Individuals who work or volunteer in a school environment are in a position of trust. Staff should be mindful of the need to maintain professional boundaries appropriate to their position and must always consider whether their actions are warranted, proportionate, safe and applied equitably.

Staff should act in an open and transparent way that would not lead any reasonable person to question their actions or intent. Staff should think carefully about their conduct so that misinterpretations are minimised.

Staff must avoid unnecessary physical contact with children. Where physical contact is essential, e.g. for safety reasons, the student's permission must be gained for that contact wherever possible. If physical contact is made to remove a student from a dangerous situation or an object from a student to prevent either harm to themselves or others, then this should be recorded and reported to the Headteacher. In cases where accidental physical contact was made, it should be reported to the Headteacher. In all cases, staff should act in accordance with the Safeguarding Policy under the 'Use of reasonable force advice' (on page 33) saved in Teacher Resources/Policies/Word/Safeguarding Policy.

### **Parents/Carers**

Staff are expected to interact with parents/carers in a polite and respectful manner and recognise parents/carers' entitlement to express any concerns they may have about their child's learning, safety or wellbeing. Staff should avoid discussing school matters with parents/carers outside of school if approached and should instead refer to the parent/carer to the normal school communication channels.

## **7. Use of IT including social media**

Internal e-mail and internet systems must be used only in accordance with the school's acceptable use of ICT policy located in Teacher resources – Policies – AUP (Acceptable Use Policy) Folder.

Social networking sites offer the opportunity for communications with children, young people and their parents/carers outside normal professional boundaries. School staff must take care to protect their privacy and protect themselves from risk of allegations in relation to inappropriate relationships and cyberbullying. Staff must not develop or maintain online relationships with parents/carers or students through social networking sites, instant messaging or other media, whether this is through school or personal IT facilities.

Please refer to the school's acceptable use of IT policy located in the Teacher resources – Policies – AUP Folder for further guidance on acceptable and unacceptable use of IT, social media and mobile phones.

For further information on the acceptable use of school IT Resources, staff should refer to the school's leaflet 'Use of IT Resources Do's and Don'ts: advice for school staff' in the Teacher resources – Policies – AUP folder.

## **8. Confidentiality and disclosure of information**

Staff must ensure that they do not disclose confidential information to anyone who does not have the right to receive it. Where information is disclosed this should be in line with the principles of the GDPR Act 2018 (General Data Protection Regulation). Equally staff should not prevent another person from gaining access to information to which that person is entitled by law. If there is doubt about whether or not to share information, advice must be sought from an appropriate senior member of staff i.e. the Headteacher. Subject Access requests are managed by Aaron Skeels, the Data Protection Officer (DPO).

Information obtained during the course of an individual's work should never be used for personal gain or benefit, nor should it be passed onto others who might use it in such a way.

## **9. Dress and appearance**

An individual's dress and appearance is a matter of personal choice; however, staff should ensure that they dress appropriately, decently and safely for a school environment and for the role they undertake, as well as setting a good example to both students and visitors.

Staff should have particular regard to the health and safety risks involved with certain lessons i.e. physical education/food technology and they need to dress appropriately and safely when undertaking these activities, such as wearing appropriate footwear, removing jewellery etc.

The school recognises the diversity of cultures and religions of its staff and will take a sensitive approach when this affects dress and uniform requirements. However, priority will be given to health and safety, security and other similar considerations of other staff, students and the school.

Please refer to the school dress code for further guidance on acceptable and unacceptable forms of dress located in the Safeguarding and Child Protection Briefing Pack which is issued to all staff at the start of each year. Copies are also available from Reprographics.

## **10. Equal opportunities**

The **Trustees Board** of the school is committed to equality for all in the appointment, development, training and promotion of staff, and in all dealings with students and parents/carers of the school. It also recognises that all members of staff and students have the right to work in a safe environment without fear of discrimination, harassment or abuse.

All students, colleagues, parents/carers, members of the public and wider school community have the right to be treated with fairness and equality and must not be discriminated against. The school expects staff to uphold these principles.

Please refer to the school's equality policy for further guidance located in the 'Teacher Resources Folder – Policies - Word'.

## **11. Conduct outside work**

Care should be taken by staff to avoid any conflict of interest between activities undertaken outside school and responsibilities within school. In no case should outside activities bring the school into disrepute.

Where staff are in doubt as to whether there is a conflict of interest advice must be sought from the Headteacher.

## **12. Declaration of interests**

Staff should consider carefully whether they need to declare to the school any relationship with an individual where this might cause a conflict with the school's activities, for example, a relationship with a **Trustee**, another staff member or a contractor who provides services to the school. Where such a declaration is necessary, this should be made to the Headteacher. In the event that the declaration involves the Headteacher, the Chair of Trustees should be involved.

Staff may undertake work outside school, either paid or voluntary, provided it does not conflict with the interests of the school nor be at a level which may contravene the Working Time Regulations or affect an individual's performance at work.

Please refer to your contract of employment.

### **13. Whistleblowing**

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 (as amended) gives protection to people who disclose reasonable concerns about serious misconduct or malpractice at work. This is sometimes known as Whistleblowing. **The Trustees** of the school will treat all matters of malpractice very seriously and allegations about such matters will be dealt with quickly and with appropriate confidentiality.

Staff should acknowledge their individual responsibilities in bringing matters of concern to the attention of senior leadership in the school. This is particularly important where the welfare of children may be at risk.

A clear procedure is provided for staff to raise issues with the purpose of assisting in reducing the risk of serious concerns being mishandled, whether by the individual or by the school. Please refer to the school's Procedure for Protected Disclosures ("Whistleblowing") for further information located in the Whistleblowing Policy under Teacher Resources – Policies.

### **14. Health and safety**

Staff must adhere to the school's Health and Safety policy and should ensure that they take every action to keep themselves and others in the school environment safe.

Please refer to the school's Health and Safety policy which is located in Teacher Resources – Policies, for further information.

### **15. Gifts and hospitality**

There may be occasions where children or parents/carers wish to pass small tokens of appreciation to staff, for example as an end of year 'thank you' and this is acceptable. However, it is unacceptable to receive gifts on a regular basis or of any significant value or to suggest to students that gifts would be appropriate or desired. Money should never be accepted as a gift.

It is not acceptable for staff to give gifts to students and any rewards given to children must be given in agreement with the declared reward practice of the school (Check with Headteacher). This document can be found in Teacher Resources/Pool/Declared Reward Practice.

Staff should not solicit or accept any gift, hospitality or other reward from external parties which influences the way in which they carry out their duties or leads the giver to expect preferential treatment.

### **16. Use of school resources and funds**

The use of school resources, property and equipment is for school-related activities only, except where otherwise agreed.

All members of staff must use any public or school funds entrusted or handled by them in a responsible and lawful manner.

Money should be dealt with following the School Finance Regulations booklet (staff edition, **September 2022**) located in the Teacher Resources File – Pool – School Finance Regulations Booklet.

This policy was approved by the Board of Trustees and will be reviewed annually.

Date policy agreed: November 2022

Date of review: October 2023

Signature of Chair of Trustees