



Staff Code of Conduct Policy

Phase of school this policy relates to (*please highlight*)

Early Years	Primary	Secondary	Whole School
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Policy lead staff member:	Alice O'Reilly
Policy link governor:	Sue Allingham

Aims

This policy aims to set out and maintain the standards of conduct that we expect all staff to follow as well as ensuring that there is consistency in what is expected of the employee and employer. We also have the highest expectations of any governors and volunteers to act with personal and professional integrity, respecting the safety and wellbeing of others.

It sets out guidance for employees and other adults working at Liberty Woodland School, with the intention of clarifying expectations of professional conduct and behaviour, both in and out of school in order to uphold individual professional reputation, the reputation of the school and to minimise the risk of being accused of

improper conduct, particularly towards the young people with whom they come into contact during the course of their work

This policy makes clear the conduct considered acceptable, and clearly indicates what action will be taken if school rules and/or policies are broken. This code of conduct is not an exhaustive list. 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. There may be occasions and circumstances in which staff have to make decisions in the best interests and welfare of the school and the children in their charge, which could contravene this guidance or where no guidance exists. This policy will be regularly reviewed and updated to reflect guidance on best practice and to take our context into account.

It makes clear that in such instances, the employee should ensure that senior management, preferably the Head of School, is made aware of the action taken as soon as possible and that a record is kept, so that they are seen to be acting appropriately. If an employee does not adhere to this guidance, the school may take disciplinary action against them. This may have serious consequences for staff, including the possibility of dismissal in the most serious cases.

This code of conduct is covered in schools induction arrangements for all new staff and for most, will serve only to confirm what has always been their practice. All school staff have an influential position in the school and will act as role models for pupils by consistently demonstrating high standards of behaviour. Should they have any doubts about the advice contained in this document they should consult with the Head of School or Human Resources.

By creating this policy, we aim to ensure our school is an environment where everyone is safe, happy and treated with respect. This document can be read in conjunction with the Employee Handbook.

Scope of the Policy

This code of conduct seeks to establish a set of core principles which underpin all interactions and work at Liberty Woodland School and are applicable to anybody who works with children, regardless of position, hours of work or type of contract. It also includes governors, contractors, volunteers and any other adults working with children.

There will be certain occasions where staff interact with pupils in a personal capacity. Any interaction with pupils either personal or otherwise will be subject to your professional teaching obligations and safeguarding obligations. However, in instances where a staff member is acting outside their contractual duties, the School policies do

not generally apply. All staff should be aware that the School expects staff members to ensure that there is always appropriate regard to the best interests of the child in their care (either acting personally or as part of their role). This includes but is not limited to safeguarding and professional duties.

Standards of Behaviour

This section outlines the expected standards of behaviour that must be demonstrated by all staff, and covers the following:

1. Personal Standards
2. Use of Information Technology, Mobile Phones and Social Media
3. Dress Code
4. Contact with parents and the general public
5. Respect for others
6. Honesty, integrity, impartiality and objectivity
7. Accountability
8. Stewardship
9. Personal Interests
10. Privacy
11. Duty of trust
12. Low level concerns

1. Personal Standards

Personal standards of behaviour must be high in dealing with other staff, volunteers, governors, parents and children. Public confidence in the school would be undermined if staff:

- Failed to maintain high standards in attendance and punctuality
- Take drugs or drink alcohol while at work/on duty, or drink to an extent in which their professionalism could be compromised at school social events within or outside working hours.
- Use inappropriate or offensive language, threaten, fight or assault anyone on the school premises, or persist in verbal or non-verbal behaviour, which would intimidate anyone. It should be noted that this also means any such action outside the school premises which could potentially bring the school into disrepute.
- Express personal or political beliefs in a way that exploits pupils' vulnerability. As a teacher you are in a position of power and influence therefore teachers must not discriminate against pupils or promote partisan political views.
- Steal, take without authority, or deliberately damage things that belong to the school.

- Use their position within the school inappropriately to advance the interests of any other person or organisation with which they are associated, or show favour to any friends, family or personal contacts.
- Members of staff are not permitted to transport children in private vehicles during the school day or to transport pupils to or from school. Exceptions to this rule are if the member of staff is acting in a parental capacity to their own children. In emergency situations, providing written permission is granted from a parent under circumstances approved as an emergency situation by the Head and the DSL, an exception can be granted.

2. Use of Information Technology, Mobile Phones and Social Media

The school provides staff internet and email facilities, with a protective firewall in place, for work-related activities only, and any misuse may lead to disciplinary action.

- Staff members are permitted personal use of the internet, using Guest Wifi with a protective firewall in place, when not working with children. As part of the latest updates to KCSIE, all use of the internet on the school networks is monitored, and potentially risky or harmful material is blocked. All staff should avoid accessing any websites or material which may be deemed inappropriate and thus blocked. This includes dating sites/apps, gambling or clicking any links from social media account feeds that may lead to inappropriate materials.
- Personal mobile phones are permitted in school and these should be stored upstairs in the main lodge and away from children. Staff are permitted to use their mobile phone for personal use when on breaks and out of sight of any children.
- Staff are permitted to take their mobile phone on school trips for use in an emergency only - any photos or recording must always be carried out on a school device.
- Smart watches may be used by staff, but messages should not be connected whilst teaching or present with students e.g. whats app or texts that pop up on the screen.
- The only photographs taken of children will be with the Company's equipment and with the express written consent of the child's parent or carer.
- Any filming in the school must be for educational purposes or for marketing purposes, only. Educational filming must be well-planned in advance with a clear objective such as school displays, special events, assessment and workbooks. The principles of the Data Protection Act 1998 apply to images and videos taken for educational purposes.
- Staff should not engage in inappropriate use of social media sites, either inside or outside of working hours, which may bring themselves or the school into disrepute.
- Staff should not have personal contact with any pupil, parent or carer, through social media or otherwise, (unless the pupils are family members) and should

exercise caution when posting photographs and/or comments so that professional standards are maintained and staff do not compromise themselves or the school.

- Staff will NOT post confidential or privileged information about the school on their personal social media accounts. Staff should refrain from adding comments or media from personal social media accounts to the official LWS channels and accounts. They should notify the Head immediately if they become aware of any negative or inappropriate comments by anyone on the school accounts.
- The use of social media on behalf of Liberty Woodland School should only be used with the consent of the Head. Any member of staff contacted by the published media or radio or television about a post they have made on a social networking site should inform the Head immediately.
- Remember that defamation is the act of making a statement about a person (or an institution) that is considered to harm their reputation. Where such a defamatory statement is written down (either in print or online) this is referred to as libel.
- In drafting this policy Liberty Woodland School recognises that it may be held responsible for something an employee has written or said if it is on behalf of the school. Action can also be taken against anyone repeating libellous information from another source so careful checks are needed before quoting statements from other social network sites or the internet.
- Staff should ensure that any online presence (social media use or otherwise in the online public domain) does not damage the reputation of Liberty Woodland School or themselves. Staff are personally responsible for the content they publish online and must be mindful that this information will be in the public domain. Employees must have regard to the fact that they will be responsible for any commentary which is deemed to be a breach of copyright, defamatory, libellous or obscene.
- Any member of staff contacted by the published media or radio or television about a post they have made on a social networking site should inform the Head of School immediately.
- Only software packages properly authorised and installed by the Company may be used on Company equipment, you must therefore not load any unauthorised software onto Company computers.
- Where the Company's computer systems contain an e-mail facility, you should use that e-mail system for business purposes only.
- E-mails should be written in accordance with the standards of any other form of written communication and the content and language used in the message must be consistent with best practice. Messages should be concise and directed to relevant individuals on a need to know basis.
- You should take care when opening e-mails from unknown external sources. Attachments to e-mails may be blocked if they are deemed to be potentially harmful to the Company's systems.

- E-mails can be the subject of legal action (for example, claims of defamation, breach of confidentiality or breach of contract) against both the employee who sent them or the Company. As e-mail messages may be disclosed to any person mentioned in them, you must always ensure that the content of the e-mail is appropriate.
- Abusive, obscene, discriminatory, harassing, derogatory or defamatory e-mails must never be sent to anyone. If you do so, you may be liable to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal without notice.
- Computer misuse- Any evidence of misuse (See employee handbook for examples of misuse) may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal without notice. If necessary, information gathered in connection with the investigation may be handed to the police.

Use of walkie talkies on site:

- Staff should be aware that multiple staff members, as well as children, can overhear what is said on the walkie talkies and therefore keep this in mind when delivering a message or asking a question. Staff should use walkie talkies for professional and urgent dialogue only. If using a walkie to request for support from SLT they should state 'A member of SLT to come to XXX' and not use the names of any children. In a case where a child needs support (perhaps with behaviour or regulation) staff must not use any personal information which could enable a child to be singled out and identified unnecessarily.

Working with pupils:

- Staff will maintain a robust approach to online safety with pupils, adhering to the [Online Safety Policy](#).

3. Dress Code

- It is school policy to maintain an image of professionalism. A person's dress and appearance are matters of personal choice. However, staff should ensure that they dress decently, safely and appropriately for the roles they undertake as well as being expected to engage with parents or colleagues in professional conversation. Those who dress or appear in a manner that could be considered as inappropriate could render themselves vulnerable to criticism or allegation, and may result in disciplinary action. You may wear appropriate religious and cultural dress (including clerical collars, head scarves, skullcaps and turbans) unless it creates a health and safety risk to you or any other person or otherwise breaches this policy.

4. Contact with parents and the public

- Be polite to members of the public at all times both during and outside of school hours.

- Ensure that any information provided in relation to the school is accurate. Ensure that any information provided to third parties is in line with the Data Protection Act (1998).
- Respect confidential information provided to them in the course of their work. Avoid doing anything which could make the public doubt the motives or integrity of a member of staff of the school or bring the school into disrepute.
- Ensure that any significant concerns or complaints expressed to them by parents, carers or the general public are passed on to the senior management of the school.
- Company Premises- Only colleagues, parents or planned guests are permitted onto the premises. You must not bring any unauthorised person on to the Company's sites without prior agreement from the Head, unless you are specifically authorised to do so as part of your job. In these circumstances both you and the Head or Deputy Head of School are responsible for ensuring that your visitors are appropriately monitored and supervised during their stay, and that they do not access areas of school property inappropriately.

5. Respect for others

All staff must:

- Treat others with respect, kindness and empathy.
- Not discriminate unlawfully against any person and treat others equally regardless of ability, gender, age, race, position in school or any other protected characteristic.
- Treat other members of staff and colleagues of the school professionally.
- 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.
- Staff must not single out another for treatment where they feel threatened, humiliated or patronised. This type of behaviour could be seen as harassment or, in serious cases, bullying.
- Avoid workplace gossip and negativity as it breeds resentment and becomes a barrier to effective communication and collaboration. We all have a duty, and it is a professional expectation of the school, to take active steps to divert conversations away from this as well as directing members of staff to discuss any concerns appropriately with their line manager.
- Work as part of a team, contributing as well as learning from others and helping to build up a strong workforce so that we can provide the best possible learning opportunities for the children.
- Conduct themselves in a professional and positive manner, even when experiencing personal challenges.

6. Honesty, integrity, impartiality and objectivity

- Staff are subject to terms and conditions of employment, which are tailored to their particular job. All staff will be expected to comply with written or oral instructions, about the way in which they tackle their duties and conduct themselves.
- There are occasions when children or parents wish to pass small tokens of appreciation to staff, for example, Christmas or at the end of the school year. It is unacceptable to receive gifts on a regular basis and staff must make the Head of School aware if this is raised. Any gifts received outside of Christmas and the end of term must be raised to the Head of School.

7. Accountability

- All staff are accountable to the school for their actions. They must also respect and adhere to the management structure of the school, ensuring that management roles and decisions are not ignored or undermined.
- Managers have a responsibility to hold staff accountable for agreed actions and to themselves be accountable to the staff they manage.

8. Stewardship

All staff, volunteers and governors must:

- Use any funds entrusted to or handled by them in a responsible and lawful manner.
- Not make personal use of property or facilities of the school unless authorised to do so.
- Take care of all school resources and be mindful of sustainability.

9. Personal Interests

An employee must not in their official or personal capacity allow their personal interests to conflict with the school's requirements, bring the reputation of the school into disrepute, or use their position improperly to confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person.

Conflict of Interest, Tutoring & Babysitting

You should not, directly or indirectly, engage in, or have any interest, financial or otherwise, in any other business enterprise which interferes or is likely to interfere with your independent exercise of judgement in the Company's best interest.

Generally, a conflict of interests exists when an employee is involved in an activity:

- Which provides products or services directly to, or purchase products or services from the Company;
- Which subjects the employee to unreasonable time demands that prevent the employee from devoting proper attention to his or her responsibilities to the Company;
- Which is so operated that the employee's involvement with the outside business activity will reflect adversely on the Company.

Should you be in doubt as to whether an activity involves a conflict, you should discuss the situation with the Head.

While employed with the Company you are not permitted to work, babysit or volunteer for parents whose children are attending the school. This would be treated as a conflict of interest.

10. Privacy

- Staff must maintain appropriate confidentiality and not disclose information given to them in confidence by anyone, or information acquired which they believe is of a confidential nature, without the consent of a person authorised to give it.
- Unless: They are required by law to do so and/or disclosure of the information to the appropriate person is required to adequately safeguard a child or children. Staff must not prevent another person from gaining access to information to which that person is entitled by law.
- We are required to hold data concerning the children, staff, parents and other users of the setting and take our responsibilities of the safe management of such data very seriously and in line with GDPR. Please see employee handbook for more information.

11. Duty of trust

All staff must, at all times, act in accordance with the trust that the school is entitled to place in them. Similarly, the school is expected to act in accordance with the trust that the employee is entitled to place on the school.

12. Low-level concerns

A low-level concern is any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a ‘nagging doubt’ - that an adult working in or on behalf of the School may have acted in a way that is inconsistent with the Staff Code of Conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work. The term ‘low-level’ concern does not mean that it is insignificant. Early identification and prompt management of all concerns about the behaviour of adults who work or volunteer with children is critical to effective safeguarding. KCSIE requires low-level concerns to be shared. Everyone is required to share low-level concerns:

- Any concerns about staff go directly to Leanna, any concerns about Leanna go to Sue Allingham
- To allow staff to self-refer to the school in situations where they may have found themselves compromised; this would allow staff to record this as a self-referral in the event that a complaint may come out later or a pattern start to build.
- To identify patterns of behaviour that are concerning;

- To ensure the School continues to have a culture of safeguarding in which all staff understand their responsibility to raise concerns.

Staff should therefore report any behaviour by another adult towards a pupil or another child that may have concerned them. They should also self-report in any situation where they feel their behaviour towards a pupil or another young person could be misinterpreted or misconstrued or leave them vulnerable.

A low-level concern should be reported when a member of staff is concerned about the behaviour of another adult towards a pupil or another child. This is not just where it is clear that a professional boundary has been broken, but anything which causes staff to have a 'nagging doubt' about the way in which other adults behave or interact with pupils. Such behaviour can exist on a wide spectrum, from the inadvertent or thoughtless, or behaviour that may look to be inappropriate. Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:

- being over friendly with children
- having favourites
- engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door
- using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language

Safeguarding Children

Safeguarding pupils at Liberty Woodland School is of paramount importance. All staff at all times should adhere to the Liberty Woodland School [Safeguarding Policy](#), which covers what it means to all staff in terms of their individual responsibilities to protect and promote the welfare of children. At LWS we reject the use of corporal punishment in any form; all of our school policies and practice reflect this.

Allegation against a member of staff

If an allegation is made against a member of staff, the [Allegation of Abuse Policy](#) must be followed.

Positive Handling

See the Safeguarding policy for further information on our approach to positive handling and use of reasonable force.

Where students are struggling to separate from their parent/ carer additional physical contact is sometimes needed, for example, a guiding arm or hand. If more than this is needed, a second member of staff is called to support.

Whistleblowing

Whistleblowing is the reporting by staff or ex-staff of wrongdoing such as fraud, malpractice, mismanagement, breach of health and safety law or any other illegal or unethical act either on the part of management, the Governing Body or by fellow staff. It also includes cases where there are concerns about conduct of staff or others, for example, something that makes you feel uncomfortable in terms of known standards you believe the school subscribes to.

The schools' [Whistleblowing Policy](#) allows staff to express their concerns without fear of victimisation or disadvantage. It is intended to encourage and enable staff to raise concerns within the school, rather than overlooking a problem or taking it outside of the organisation.

Conflict of Interest

A conflict of interest is a situation in which a person or organisation is involved in multiple interests, financial interest, or otherwise, one of which could possibly influence the motivation of the individual or organisation.

In essence, a conflict of interest exists in relation to LWS where:

- our interests in any activity undertaken by LWS, or on our behalf, has the potential to lead us to act contrary to our interests in the development, sustaining and future activities of LWS and the best interests of the children and wider school community
- a member of staff or governor has interests in any other activity which have the potential to lead that person to act contrary to his or her interests in the development, sustaining and future activities of LWS and the best interests of the children and wider school community.
- An informed and reasonable observer would conclude that either of these situations was the case.

In implementing our approach to identifying and managing potential/new/actual conflicts of interest, staff at LWS are required to abide by the following principles:

- must be proactive in the identification and management of conflicts of interest that may affect our effectiveness, level of regulatory compliance and/or reputation,
- must be open about the nature of any potential/new/actual conflicts of interest because managing conflicts of interest is about preventing issues from occurring or recurring that may impact on our operational effectiveness and/or regulatory compliance, and
- must strive to identify and deal with conflicts of interest at the earliest opportunity.

Examples of conflict of interest that could compromise the integrity of LWS:

- Business or commercial interests that may affect a person's professional judgement
- Personal relationships with family or friends that could affect or influence a decision
- Gifts or hospitality that could influence a decision
- Mutually beneficial arrangements that could compromise an individual's ability to make a professional judgement
- Where favourable arrangements have been negotiated, e.g. supplying discounted rates for certain families in a non-disclosed or transparent manner

Responsibility to register a conflict of interest applies to all individuals who are part of the LWS community. Where there is either a real or potential conflict of interest, this should be registered on a conflict of interest disclosure form and forwarded to the chair of the governing board.

If you are unsure of whether a conflict of interest exists please contact the chair of the governing board. It is staff and governor responsibility to:

- Avoid conflicts of interest wherever possible
- Reduce the impact of where a conflict of interest may exist if possible
- Complete a conflict of interest disclosure form and forward to the chair of the governing board, retaining a copy for your records
- Update your line manager if there is a change in circumstances

As senior leaders we will:

- Take steps to avoid conflict of interest wherever possible
- Maintain a record of real and potential conflicts of interest
- Inspect activities where a conflict of interest cannot be avoided

Dealing with conflicts of interest and/or breaches to the procedures outlined in this policy

Should there be a breach of this policy and/or unforeseen conflicts of interest emerge, employees must inform LWS SLT at the earliest opportunity and we will carry out an investigation immediately, along with a review of the associated procedures.

We will review this document annually as part of our self-evaluation arrangements. However, a review will be commissioned earlier should an issue arise in relation to an actual or potential conflict of interest and/or in response to customer, learner or regulatory feedback.