



THE TOWERS CODE OF CONDUCT

Approved by:	Governors – 10 December 2018
Ownership:	Deputy Head
Next Review:	September 2019

Legal Status

This policy has been prepared with reference to:

- The National College of Teaching and Leadership including Teacher Standards (NCTL)
- DfE guidance *Screening, Searching and Confiscation*. (January 2018)
- School Standards and Framework Act 2010
- Education Act 2018 - Section 550A 1996
- Use of reasonable force in schools (DfE July 2013)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE September 2018)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE July 2018)
- Prevent Duty DfE 2015

Expected behaviour

The policy covers all Trustees/Governors/Staff/Visitors/Contractors/Volunteers. Your behaviour and professional conduct must set a good example to all pupils within The Towers School. Each employee has a responsibility to uphold our core values and reputation as an excellent educational establishment, both inside and outside of your normal working hours. Staff are expected to role model fundamental British values in the workplace.

As a minimum, we ask you to:

- Demonstrate high standards of conduct in order to encourage our pupils to do the same
- Follow all teacher standards as identified in the TCS booklet.
- To ensure confidentiality at all times.
- Avoid using inappropriate or offensive language at all times whilst in the presence of our pupils and your colleagues
- Follow reasonable management instructions
- Avoid putting yourself at risk of allegations of abuse or unprofessional conduct
- Not demean or undermine pupils, their parents/carers or colleagues
- To ensure there is no abuse of trust – it is a criminal offence for any person over 18 in a position of trust to engage in a sexual relationship with a pupil under 18.
- Take reasonable care of pupils under their supervision with the aim of ensuring their safety and welfare at all times.
- To avoid physical contact and maintain self-awareness of relationship dynamics

- To use your professional judgement to comfort or reassure pupils as appropriate.
- Not to use Social Media such as Facebook and Twitter for inappropriate contact with children, and liking their pages etc. is not permitted. Please keep your own Social Media identity as locked down as possible, so that children at school cannot find out inappropriate information about you and your family.
- To avoid using your own mobile phones or private e-mail addresses to contact pupils or parents. The recording and photographing of pupils is forbidden please use the schools resources.
- To follow the guidance of the e-safety policy on safe and appropriate computer and internet usage
- Be mindful of the expectations on school trips.

Practice

This policy cannot provide a complete checklist of what is, or is not, appropriate behaviour for staff in all situations. It does highlight however, behaviour that is illegal, inappropriate or inadvisable. There will be occasions and circumstances in which staff have to make decisions or take action in the best interests of the child or young person which could contravene this guidance or where no guidance exists. Individuals are expected to make judgements about their behaviour in order to secure the best interests and welfare of the children in their charge and in so doing, will be seen to be acting reasonably. Whilst setting out these expected standards, please be advised that we cannot (and do not wish to) be entirely prescriptive about expected behaviour. However, we believe that the adherence to the above general principles will ensure that our work environment remains both professional and inclusive

Physical Restraint

There may be times when adults, in the course of their school duties, have to intervene physically in order to restrain children and prevent them from coming to harm. Such intervention will always be the minimum necessary to resolve the situation. We follow the guidance given in the Use of reasonable force in schools July 2013. The Headmistress will require the adult(s) involved in any such incident to report the matter to her immediately, and to make a record of the incident. Under subsection 548(5) of the Education Act 1996, teachers may use 'physical intervention' to avert 'an immediate danger of personal injury to, or an immediate danger to the property of, a person (including the child himself)'. Teachers' powers under section 4 of the 1997 Act to restrain pupils from engaging in certain activities remain. In the event of physical restraint being used in the EYFs setting a parent/carer will always be informed on the same day or as soon as reasonably practicable. The Headmistress will require the adult(s) involved in any such incident to report the matter to her immediately, and to make a record of the incident.

Behaviour

All staff have a responsibility to maintain the confidence of the wider community in their ability to safeguard the welfare and best interests of children. They are responsible for their behaviour choices and as such should adopt high standards of personal conduct in order to maintain the confidence and respect of others. They should apply the same professional standards to all members of this community regardless of gender, marital status, religion, belief, colour, race, ethnicity, class, sexual orientation, disability or age. Staff should be aware that breaches of the law and other professional guidelines could result in criminal or disciplinary action being taken against them. Staff should always consider whether their actions are warranted, proportionate, safe and applied equitably.

Dress Code

The Trustees request that all staff report for work in clothing that reflects their professional status; no trainers, denim or leggings. Staff are expected to be well groomed. Female staff/volunteers are asked to ensure that they avoid low cut tops, bare midriff and that skirts are of a modest length.

Use of Personal Mobile Phones for Staff

The school recognises that personal mobile phones have the potential to be used inappropriately. Mobile phones should never be used to take photographs or videos of children. Personal mobile phones should not generally be needed or used by staff, except as set out in the guidelines below.

- Should Staff need to use their mobile phone, best practice is that mobile phones, wherever possible, should not be used in the presence of the children.
- Mobile phones should not be used during lesson times either to make or receive calls, unless there is an emergency.
- Staff should never give their mobile phone number to any pupils. This also includes past pupils under the age of 18 years.
- Staff should exercise caution when giving their mobile number to parents as this could be misconstrued. The school is aware that some staff members are also parents at the school.
- Games staff may use their mobile phones during games sessions and when responsible for children away from school, only to communicate arrangements to parents or colleagues or for emergency purposes.
- Trips and Visits Offsite: The staff member in charge should take one of the school mobile phones when off site. This phone should be used when communicating with parents. Other staff members on the trip or offsite should carry their mobile phones so they can communicate with colleagues when necessary or in an emergency.
- No photographs, videos or images of children should be captured using a personal mobile phone in any setting.

Unacceptable Behaviour Guidelines

- Do not address a pupil by any other name other than her/his first or preferred name.
- Do not encourage young pupils to sit on your lap.
- Try not to handle a child below the shoulder unless there is a justifiable reason for doing so.
- Do not make visits to pupils in their homes except prior to admission to EYFS where a home visit is recommended to help to see the child at ease in the home setting.
- As a general guideline, do not receive pupils at your home. There may be other exceptions to this e.g. peripatetic music teachers or staff with pupils at the school.
- Do not offer car journeys to pupils unless in an *emergency* and with parental permission. Always inform your line manager and log details and reason for the journey ASAP. Staff must ensure they have appropriate insurance before offering a pupil a lift, even in an emergency.
- Do not use sarcasm, demeaning or insensitive comment towards the pupils.
- Do not shout at pupils or colleagues.
- Male staff should avoid entering pupils' toilets, changing rooms or showers except in an absolute emergency and ideally accompanied by a female member of staff/volunteer.
- Do not enter into arguments or heated debates in front of pupils or parents.
- Do not allow any allegations made by a pupil or third party to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon.

Corporal Punishment

Under section 131 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, corporal punishment is prohibited for all pupils in the independent and maintained sector.

Guidelines for one-to-one teaching/meetings

If you are teaching one pupil, or conducting a one-to-one meeting or teaching session with a pupil, you should take particular care for example:

- use a room that has sufficient windows onto a corridor so the occupants can be seen, or keep the door open, or inform a colleague that the lesson/meeting is taking place.
- arrange the meeting during normal school hours when there are plenty of other people about.
- do not continue the meeting for any longer than is necessary to achieve its purposes;
- avoid sitting or standing unnecessarily close to a pupil.

Report any incident that causes you concern to the Designated Safeguarding Lead following the procedures set out in the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Whistleblowing procedures

The Towers endeavours to foster a culture of safety and of raising concerns. The school's core values aim to create a culture of valuing staff and of reflective practice. There are procedures for reporting and handling concerns outlined in the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Complaints and Health and Safety Policies, included concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school's safeguarding regime. The school makes provision for mediation and dispute resolution where necessary. Training and support is provided for staff. The school aims to foster a culture of transparency and accountability in relation to how concerns are received and handled.

If a member of staff has a concern about malpractice s/he should raise the matter with the Headmistress immediately. If the concern is connected to a Safeguarding and Child Protection issue the member of staff must follow the guidelines set out in The Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. However, if the member of staff feels unable to raise the concern with the Headmistress for whatever reason, or if the allegation is about the Headmistress then s/he should speak to the Chair of the Governors and Safeguarding Governor, Mrs Nikki Byfield; alternatively, staff may choose to contact the Local Authority Designated Officer, Lindsey Tunbridge-Adams, (Children's Safeguarding), Tel: 03302223339 lindsey.tunbridgeadams@westsussex.gov.uk

The Towers expects the highest standards of conduct from all employees, and will treat seriously and confidentially any concern that an employee may have about illegal or improper conduct. Employees will be expected, through agreed procedures and without fear of recrimination or victimisation to bring to the attention of the Headmistress any serious impropriety or breach of procedure.

Confidentiality

The school holds information on all pupils and staff in relation to the professional running of the school and in line with DfE guidelines. Staff are expected to ensure that confidentiality on all aspects of school life are adhered to and to follow legal and professional practice. The following list is a guidance of what we hold but is not exhaustive:-

- Personal information on the school community
- Pupil and staff information
- Medical Records, assessments and health reports
- Social Services involvement
- Assessment and exams information along with pupil progress.
- Sharing of information with other external professional bodies.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS PROCEDURE?

This procedure is designed to enable employees to notify the Headmistress of any reasonable suspicion of illegal or improper conduct. Where the concerns are about safeguarding children or young people, the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) should be notified (see 7 below).

It is a procedure in which the Headmistress will be expected to act swiftly and constructively in the investigation of any concerns in accordance with the school's disciplinary procedure.

Concern about a colleague's professional capability should not be dealt with using this procedure.

WHEN SHOULD IT BE USED?

This procedure is not designed to replace or be used as an alternative to the grievance procedure, which should be used where an employee is only aggrieved about his/her own situation. Employees who are worried about wrong doing at work do not necessarily have a personal grievance.

Employees must act in good faith and must have reasonable grounds for believing the information to be accurate.

No employee who uses this procedure in good faith will be penalised for doing so. The school will not tolerate harassment and/or victimisation of any employee raising concerns. An employee who uses this procedure for false or malicious allegations will be subject to the school's disciplinary procedure. An employee who is not sure whether the conduct he/she is concerned about does constitute illegal or improper conduct or is unsure about how to proceed can contact Lindsey Tunbridge-Adams Tel: 03302223339 lindsey.tunbridgeadams@westsussex.gov.uk for advice.

Financial regulations require any employee who suspects fraud, corruption or other financial irregularity to ensure this is reported to the Chief Internal Auditor for possible investigation. Normally you must first report any suspicion of such an irregularity to the Headmistress, who will in turn report it to the Chief Internal Auditor.

MECHANISM FOR RAISING CONCERNS

Where the issue concerns your Headmistress or, having made your report, you believe she has failed to take appropriate action, then you should bring it to the attention of the Chairman of Governors, Mrs Nikki Byfield.

Employees who feel unable to follow this route, for whatever reason, have the option of contacting Lindsey Tunbridge-Adams Tel: 03302223339 lindsey.tunbridgeadams@westsussex.gov.uk for advice. Depending on the nature of the concern the complainant will be asked to justify and support their claim. Normally the complainant will be asked to do this in writing. It will, therefore, be helpful to note down any facts and dates as they happen.

Employees who want to use the procedure but feel uneasy about it may wish to consult their trade union initially and bring a friend or trade union representative along to any discussions, so long as the third party is independent of the issue.

Where anonymity is requested efforts will be made to meet the request where appropriate but that might not always be possible. The earlier and more open the expression of concern the easier it will be to take appropriate action.

Each case will be investigated thoroughly with the aim of informing the complainant of the outcome of any investigation as quickly as possible.

WHAT SHOULD BE DONE IF AN ISSUE IS RAISED WITH A MEMBER OF STAFF?

If a member of staff (other than the Headmistress) is approached by a colleague on a matter of concern as defined in this document, he/she should be advised to take the matter to the Headmistress.

EXAMPLES OF ILLEGAL AND/OR IMPROPER CONDUCT

- fraudulent or improper use of the school's money or assets
- dangerous practices at work
- corruptly receiving any gift or advantage
- allowing private interests to override the interests of the school.

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

All employees have a duty to report concerns about the safety and welfare of pupils.

Concerns about any of the following should be reported to the school's Designated Senior Lead.

The school's DSL is Mrs Michelle Syred (the Deputy Headmistress)

The school's Deputy DSL is Mrs Clare Trelfa (the Headmistress)

The Code of Conduct should be read in conjunction with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy 2018.