



HEDGEWOOD SCHOOL

# Staff Code of Conduct Policy

September 2021



National  
Autistic  
Society

Accredited  
Advanced  
2021



# 1. Aims, scope and principles

This policy sets standards of conduct that we expect all staff to maintain. Technically, at this time we are all employees of Hillingdon Borough Council via Hedgewood School and we actively support council values and standards of staff conduct.

We want Hedgewood to be an environment where everyone is safe, happy and treated with respect. We are aiming for excellence, promoting sustainability and diversity, valuing our staff and professional colleagues and enhancing the local community.

Many of the principles in this code of conduct are embedded in the [Teachers' Standards](#) and we expect that all teachers will act in accordance with the detailed personal and professional expectations.

All staff are expected to carry out their contractual duties to the very best of their ability and in a professional way.

Honesty and integrity are key to what we do and we adhere to the principles of equality and diversity and the right of everyone to be treated with dignity and respect. We fully support anyone who feels bullied or harassed at work and will not tolerate violent or abusive behavior in the context of our safe working environment.

Hedgewood staff are models and powerful 'influencers', in setting the tone and maintaining a calm and productive learning environment. We want all our pupils to grow in confidence whatever their starting point. We want each individual learning journey to be spectacularly successful. All our pupils are encouraged to show respect and tolerance for others. An understanding of right and wrong actions is encouraged to fully promote fundamental British values, the rule of law and individual liberty. Very importantly staff absolutely need a deep understanding autism and the social and communication needs of our pupils.

We expect all support staff, governors and volunteers to also act with personal and professional integrity, respecting the safety and wellbeing of others.

The governors and staff of Hedgewood are acutely aware of the extra vulnerability of our pupils and that safeguarding children with additional needs and especially autism is more complex than for the mainstream population.

Our detailed staff induction process and follow up training, we aim to ensure that all staff will have the capacity use our Safeguarding protocols to keep all Hedgewood pupils safe. This includes an effective, current working understanding of Safeguarding reporting, protocols and practice. as well as our positive 'Low arousal' approaches to behavior set out in our policies and Studio 3 training.

**It is important to note that failure to follow the code of conduct may result in disciplinary action being taken, as set out in our staff disciplinary procedures.**

Please note that this code of conduct is not exhaustive. If situations arise that are not covered by this code, staff will need to use their professional judgement and act in the best interests of the school and all our pupils.

## 2. Legislation and guidance

Hedgewood is setting out a staff code of conduct as required under regulation 7 of [The School Staffing \(England\) Regulations 2009](#).

This is also aligned with the statutory safeguarding guidance in '[Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)', therefore our staff code of conduct covers acceptable use of technologies, staff/pupil relationships and communications, including the use of a range of social media.

## 3. General obligations

Hedgewood staff will:

- Maintain high standards in their attendance and punctuality. *Good attendance allows for consistency in class and punctuality assures safeguarding of pupils both in and out of class.*
- Attend work not under the influence of alcohol or drugs. *Your workplace performance must not be compromised or adversely affected by alcohol or drug. This could lead to disciplinary action.*

- Never use inappropriate or offensive language in school. *This includes teasing which can be misinterpreted by our pupils*
- Always treat pupils, colleagues and family members with dignity and respect and in a non-judgmental way.
- 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, distress colleagues and will not exploit pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law.
- Understand the statutory frameworks they that govern their actions. *These are supported by Hedgewood school policies, practice and protocols*
- Understand and adhere to the professional expectations in the Teachers' Standards
- Utilise our confidential reporting system (Whistleblowing Policy) to indicate any concerns e.g. in the areas of child protection or potential reputational damage to the school.
- Smoking is not permitted on or near the school or in our minibuses.

## 4. Safeguarding

Staff have a duty to safeguard pupils from harm, and to report any concerns as per our protocol. This includes physical, emotional, sexual abuse, or neglect.

All staff must familiarize themselves (i.e. understand), our Safeguarding, Child Protection (CP) and Whistleblowing policies and related procedures as well as the Prevent initiative. Staff have a professional duty to ensure they know the processes to follow if they have concerns about a child.

**Our Safeguarding, Child Protection and Whistleblowing policies and procedures are available in the staff room, on the website and from the school office. New staff are given copies on arrival.**

## 5. Staff/pupil relationships

Staff will observe proper boundaries with pupils that are appropriate to their professional position. They will act in a fair and transparent way that would not lead anyone to reasonably assume they are not doing so.

Staff members are often required support our pupils on a one-to-one basis, staff will ensure that:

- This takes place in a public place that others can access
- Others can see in to the room
- The class teacher, colleague or line manager knows this is taking place

Staff should avoid social contact with pupils outside of school hours in the vast majority of instances unless contact has been agreed with the Headteacher. This is to ensure that any other outside work or activity could not be reasonably construed as to be in conflict with their employment.

Personal contact details should not be exchanged between staff and pupils. **This includes all social media profiles and contacts.**

While we are aware many pupils and their parents may wish to give gifts to staff, for example, at the end of the school year, and that these gifts are not by way of currying favour or inducement this can only be to a value less than £30 otherwise these need to be declared to Customs and Excise and it is the recipient's obligation to do so.

If a staff member is concerned at any point that an interaction between themselves and a pupil may be misinterpreted, this should be reported to their line manager, DSL or the head teacher.

## 6. 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 not attempt to contact pupils or their parents via social media, or any other means outside school, in order to develop any sort of relationship. They will not make any efforts to find pupils' or parents' social media profiles.

Staff will ensure that they do not post any images online that identify children who are pupils at the school and as well as naming the school in personal posts or comments.

Staff should be aware of the school's E-safety policy, Social Media Policy and IT usage policy. All these policies are available via the school office.

## **7. Acceptable use of technology**

Staff will not use technology in school 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 are required to switch off mobile phones whilst on school premises and personal mobiles may only be used in the staff room.

Staff will not use personal mobile phones and laptops, or school equipment for personal use, in school hours or in front of pupils. 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 the school IT system.

## **8. Confidentiality**

Staff must observe the requirement of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018. The law and the smooth functioning of the school requires that certain types of information that certain types of information are available to staff. All staff must exercise caution and care in releasing information beyond the school and if in any doubt should check with SLT.

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 from SLT
- Used to humiliate, embarrass, intimidate or seek to gain from others
- Used for a purpose other than what it was collected and intended for
- Be casually communicated in a public place e.g. On the bus; at the restaurant, at home in front of the listening children or on any telephonic or social media platform.
- Bring the school and council into disrepute.

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.

## **9. 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.

We expect that all teachers will act in accordance with the personal and professional expectations set out in the Teachers' Standards.

Staff will not accept gifts that you consider are intended to influence your opinion. Gifts worth more than £30 or gifts that would be too complicated or costly to return, must be declared and recorded on our Gifts and Hospitality Register We expect that all teachers will act in accordance with the personal and professional behaviours set out in the Teachers' Standards.

Staff will ensure that all information given to the school about their qualifications and professional experience is accurate.

## **10. Dress code**

Staff will dress in a professional manner: smart casual for the office is a good guide as it is important to give a good impression of themselves and the school. Remember that we are meeting parents on a daily basis.

Outfits will not be overly revealing, and we ask that tattoos are covered up where possible.

Clothes will not display any offensive or political slogans.

Footwear must be sensible at all times, Shoes and boots should be flat or low heeled and support your feet. Flip flops, high heels and open-toed sandals are not safe and put you and potentially others at risk.

Jewellery and piercings must not pose a risk to you or others. Our pupils can be impulsive.

Hand decoration must allow you to perform all aspects of your role safely e.g. whilst mehndi would not impede, false nails could pose a risk during pupil interactions.

Your most obvious dress is what our pupils and parents see, so positive body language is key as are welcoming facial expressions that assist our pupils with their social understanding and our parents in developing confidence in the school.

## **11. Conduct outside of work**

Staff will not act in a way that would bring the school, the Council or the teaching profession into disrepute. This covers relevant criminal offences, such as violence or sexual misconduct, as well as negative comments about the school on social media. Please avoid anything that could be construed by ourselves (Governors and school) as conflicting with our and the Council's values

## **12. Health and Safety at Work**

It is the responsibility of all staff to take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and those who may be affected by anything they do at work. Employees must follow the H&S rules, codes and safe practices (e.g. direction on clothing jewellery, piercings footwear, body language tone etc.). Protective clothing must be worn by the school keeper, premises team and server team as required by the job likewise in any instance of manual handling.

## **13. Links with other policies**

This policy links with our policies on:

- Safeguarding
- Social Media Policy
- IT Usage policy
- Gifts and hospitality
- E-safety
- Behaviour and Safety Policy
- Whistleblowing
- Staff disciplinary procedures, which will be used if staff breach this code of conduct. It also sets out examples of what we will deem as misconduct and gross misconduct
- Staff grievance procedures

## **Appendix 1 - Statement of Acceptance of the Staff Code of Conduct Policy**

I agree to follow the rules/guidance set out in the staff code of conduct policy.

I agree to report any misuse or a breach of this policy to Mr Goddard (Headteacher).

I understand that any breaches of the Policy may result in disciplinary action being taken against me.

I will use all relevant social media and the school's network and ICT facilities in a responsible way so as to preserve and protect the interest of the school at all times and will observe all the restrictions explained in the Policy. If I am in any doubt I will consult Mr Goddard (Headteacher).

Name of Employee: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Employee: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_