



**The Study Prep**  
WIMBLEDON

Name of Policy	Code of Conduct
Reviewed by	Human Resources
HMT Member	Bursar/Head
Date of review	May 2023
Date of next review	May 2024



## The Study Prep WIMBLEDON

### STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT

#### **Introduction**

This policy applies to all Staff in the School regardless of their position, role or responsibility. Staff relates to the following groups: all members of staff including teaching and support staff, peripatetic staff, volunteers, governors, casual workers, temporary and supply staff either from agencies or engaged directly and student placements, including those undertaking initial teacher training and apprentices.

The School requires that all staff have read and agreed to comply with this policy. The policy sets out clear guidance on the standards of behaviour expected from all staff. Breach or failure to observe this policy may result in action being taken under the School disciplinary procedures including, but not limited to, dismissal.

The principles underlying this guidance aim to encourage staff to achieve the highest possible standards of conduct and minimise the risk of inappropriate conduct occurring.

Staff are in a unique position of trust and influence as role models for pupils and must adhere to behaviour that sets a good example to all pupils within the School.

Staff also have an individual responsibility to maintain their reputation and the reputation of the School, both inside and outside working hours and whether they are inside or outside the work setting. This policy applies equally when staff are conducting lessons online or when it is necessary for them to work from home.

This code of conduct is not an exhaustive list of acceptable and unacceptable standards of conduct. In situations where guidance does not exist in this policy, staff are expected to exercise their professional judgement and act in the best interests of the pupils and the School.

#### **Professional Behaviour and Conduct**

Staff must have regard for the ethos and values of the School and must not do or say anything which may bring the School or governing body into disrepute. Care should be taken by staff to avoid any conflict of interest between activities undertaken outside the School and responsibilities within the School. Staff should always act in accordance with the School's policies and procedures. Staff are expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct.

#### **Compliance with School Policies relating to Safeguarding Pupils**

All staff working with pupils at the School are in a position of trust and the School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all its pupils. Staff must comply with all policies relating to the safeguarding of pupils and undertake appropriate training as required.

Staff have a statutory obligation to share with The Study's Designated Safeguarding Leads any information which gives rise to concern about the welfare or safety of a pupil or that might suggest a pupil is in need or at risk of harm. Staff should pass on information without delay in accordance with The Study's Safeguarding Policy and this should be recorded using CPOMS. Staff must never promise

a pupil that they will not act on or pass on any information that they are told by the pupil. (See the Safeguarding Policy for further details.)

### **Reporting requirements**

During their employment, all staff are required to report to the School immediately if they are charged with a criminal offence of any nature. Failure to report being charged with a criminal offence may result in disciplinary action and the termination of the employee's employment. In addition, all staff who were required to sign a 'Staff Declaration' must report any relevant change of circumstance since this form was signed.

The School may periodically carry out further DBS checks for any member of staff, as it considers appropriate.

### **Daily Conduct Requirements for staff**

#### **Attendance and Timekeeping**

Should a staff member need to be absent or expect to be late for any reason, he/she should ask their Deputy Head/Departmental head in advance when possible. If this is not possible, he/she is asked to contact the Deputy Head/Departmental Head at the earliest opportunity. For any assigned non-contact hours, teachers are expected to be on site, unless it is agreed in advance by the Deputy Head. On entering/leaving, all staff should use the signing in/signing out sheets at both Houses.

#### **Dress Code**

The School regularly receives visits from parents, prospective parents and others, and naturally wishes to convey an impression of professionalism and organisation. Therefore whilst not wishing to impose unreasonable obligations, staff are required to look professional in appearance.

When working from home or remotely (including the delivery of online lessons, or virtual meetings using a virtual meeting platform such as Zoom and/or Teams) staff must ensure they are dressed appropriately in clothing that is smart and of a similar style to what they would wear on a normal school day. See Handbook for further details.

#### **Gifts, Rewards and Favours**

Staff should take care to ensure that they do not appear to accept a gift that may be construed as a bribe or lead the giver to expect preferential treatment. Staff are required to familiarise themselves with the content of the School's Anti-Corruption and Bribery Policy.

Staff should exercise care when selecting pupils for school teams, productions, trips and/or specific work tasks in order to avoid perceptions of favouritism or injustice. Similar care should be exercised when excluding a child from an activity without prior consultation with the Head or the Deputy Head.

Staff should not give presents/rewards to an individual outside of the School reward system.

#### **Alcohol and Drugs**

Consumption of alcohol or illegal drugs is not permitted on site save where, in the case of alcohol, at a school function or otherwise agreed, when modest amounts of alcohol may be consumed. Employees' conduct and performance must not be adversely impacted by alcohol or drugs when undertaking their duties (including at a school function).

#### **Smoking**

To promote a healthy and pleasant working environment and because of the fire risk, smoking (in any form, including the use of e-cigarettes) is not allowed anywhere on the School's sites, in any of the School's vehicles, or outside school gates. Smoking is not allowed whilst working with or

supervising pupils offsite.

## **Security**

In the interests of security, employees must carry their identity card whilst in School and produce it on request.

## **Mobility and Flexibility**

Due to the demands and nature of the School, employees should be prepared to transfer upon request within departments either temporarily or permanently and/or to undertake work of a different nature, providing it is reasonable and safe to do so and the individual is adequately trained

## **Use of Mobile Phones and Cameras**

Photographs will only be taken of pupils with their parents' permission (provided via a consent form). Photographs will only be taken by a staff member/s on school equipment. Where photographs are taken by staff to give evidence of pupils' progress, photos can only be taken on school devices. They must then be downloaded onto school systems, where they will be monitored. Photos cannot be used or passed on outside the school.

Neither staff nor children may use their own mobile phones to take photographs within our EYFS setting.

## **Interaction with Pupils**

Staff need to ensure that their behaviour does not inadvertently lay them open to allegations of abuse or inappropriate conduct. Staff should understand that they are in a position of trust in relation to pupils, giving them influence and power by virtue of the knowledge they have and/or the authority invested in their role. Staff should ensure that their relationship with pupils clearly takes place within the boundaries of a respectful, professional relationship and avoid behaviour which may be misinterpreted by others.

Staff are encouraged to self-refer under the School's Low-Level Concerns Policy in the event that they have found themselves in a situation which may be misinterpreted, might appear compromising to others, and/or on reflection they believe they have behaved in a way that may be considered to fall below the expected professional standard. All concerns will be handled sensitively and will be dealt with appropriately and proportionately.

They need to treat all pupils with respect and try, as far as possible, not to be alone with a child or young person. Staff working individually with pupils should be aware of the potential vulnerability of pupils and Staff in such situations. Staff should manage these situations and take reasonable and sensible precautions to ensure the safety and security of the pupil and Staff alike. Where this is not possible, for example, in an instrumental music lesson, it is good practice to ensure that others are within earshot and that doors are open, wherever possible. Where possible, a gap or barrier should be maintained between teacher and child at all times. Any physical contact should be the minimum required for care, instruction or restraint. Staff should avoid taking a pupil on his/her own in a car.

Where it is necessary to conduct a one to one session online (using a platform such as Zoom or Teams) staff must ensure that a senior member of staff is aware of the session and, wherever possible, arrange for a parent to be in the same room or alternatively ask a colleague or member of the HMT to join the session.

### **Communication with Pupils including the use of Social Media**

Staff should carefully consider the manner in which they communicate with pupils at all times so as to avoid any possible misinterpretation of their motives or behaviours.

Staff should not give their personal mobile phone numbers or email addresses to pupils or parents nor should they communicate with them by text message, personal email or social media. If they need to speak to a pupil by telephone, they should use one of the school's telephones and email using the school system. Any communication on video call platforms, such as Microsoft Teams or Zoom must be for professional reasons only and should accord with the rules of this policy at all times. The group leader on all trips and visits involving an overnight stay should take a school mobile phone with him/her. Staff should be aware that it is not appropriate to use social media to communicate with pupils or parents.

### **Physical Contact**

When dealing with young children in a school that prides itself on its caring ethos, it would be inappropriate to advise that there should be no physical contact between staff and pupils. Staff must use their professional judgement at all times and any physical contact must be necessary and appropriate in the circumstances. Physical contact must be appropriate for the age, understanding and sex of the child and must never threaten or be sexually inappropriate. Staff must also be sensitive to an individual's cultural background and any special educational needs. Staff should not have unnecessary physical contact with pupils and should be alert to the fact that minor forms of friendly physical contact can be misconstrued by pupils or onlookers.

Staff should not do something of a personal nature for pupils that they can do for themselves. Staff on residential school trips should be particularly vigilant about how their actions could be interpreted.

A member of staff can never take the place of a parent in providing physical comfort and should be cautious of any demonstration of affection.

Physical contact should never be secretive, or for the gratification of the adult, or represent a misuse of authority. If a member of staff believes that an action could be misinterpreted, the incident and circumstances should be recorded as soon as possible and reported to the DSL and/or Head and, if appropriate, recorded on CPOMS.

### **Physical Education and other activities requiring physical contact**

Where exercises or procedures need to be demonstrated, extreme caution should be used if the demonstration involves contact with pupils and, wherever possible, contact should be avoided. It is acknowledged that some staff, for example, those who teach PE and games, or who offer music tuition, will, on occasions, have to initiate physical contact with pupils in order to support a pupil so they can perform a task safely, to demonstrate the use of a particular piece of equipment/instrument or assist them with an exercise. This should be done with the pupil's agreement.

Contact under these circumstances should be for the minimum time necessary to complete the activity and take place in an open environment. Staff should remain sensitive to any discomfort expressed verbally or non-verbally by the child.

### **Physical Restraint**

Any physical restraint is only permissible when a child is in imminent danger of inflicting an injury on herself or on another, and then only as a last resort, when all efforts to diffuse the situation have failed. Another member of staff should, if possible, be present to act as a witness. All incidents of the use of physical restraint should be recorded in writing and reported immediately to the DSL/Head who will decide what to do next. In the case of an EYFS incident, parents of the pupils involved in the incident will be informed the same day or as soon as is reasonably practical.

### **Communication with Parents**

Communication with parents should be through the School's authorised mechanisms (e.g. staff email addresses, school phones). Staff should not give parents their home email address, home telephone or mobile phone number. Peripatetic staff will use their personal email accounts to manage their work but will not use these accounts to contact pupils directly. Staff should not be 'friends' with parents on social networking sites and should ensure that their privacy settings do not allow parents to access their area. Staff must avoid mentioning/discussing any school matters on social networking sites. Where pre-existing relationships exist between staff and pupils, and/ or parents, social networking is acceptable; however, caution must be exercised so that professional standards are maintained, confidentiality regarding school matters is maintained and staff do not compromise themselves or the School (See the E-Safety Policy for further details).

### **Parents as Employees**

It is acknowledged that some staff also have children who attend the School. It is recognised that in these cases the staff fulfil a dual role of parent and employee.

Parents as employees should ensure that they uphold boundaries between the two roles and that their behaviour may not be perceived as constituting a conflict of interest and that it does not impact on the reputation of the School. For example, they must maintain the same level of confidentiality despite social expectations. Parent-staff should discuss any potential inter-role conflict or other concerns with their line manager.

The School acknowledges that staff who are also parents may wish to make contact with other parents, over social media. Staff must exercise caution and professional judgement in these circumstances and should not have any contact with pupils' family members via social media if that contact may constitute a conflict of interest or call into question their professionalism or if this may be damaging to the reputation of the School. If the member of staff is unclear on any issue, they should discuss this with their line manager.

### **E-Safety**

Staff should follow The Study's E-Safety and IT Acceptable Use Policies at all times. Staff must not engage in inappropriate use of social network sites which may bring themselves, the School, or the School community into disrepute. Staff should adopt the highest security settings on any personal profiles they have.

Staff should be mindful of their digital footprint and exercise caution in all their use of social media or any others web based presence they have. This includes written content, videos or photographs and views expressed either directly or by 'liking' certain pages or posts or following certain individuals or groups and not contact pupils, their guardians or family members, accept or initiate friend requests or follow pupils' or their guardians' accounts on any social media platform.

### **Transporting pupils**

In certain circumstances it may be appropriate for staff to transport pupils off site on approved school business, including to travel between the School's two sites. It is inadvisable for a teacher to give a lift in a car to a pupil alone. Wherever possible and practicable it is advisable that transport is undertaken other than in private vehicles, with at least one adult additional to the driver acting as an escort. If there are exceptional circumstances that make unaccompanied transportation of pupils unavoidable, the journey should be made known to a member of HMT.

Staff should ensure that the driver of the vehicle is not distracted while the vehicle is in motion for any reason other than an emergency and should also ensure all passengers are wearing correctly fastened seatbelts.

Prior to transporting pupils offsite, consent must be obtained from a pupil's parent/guardian and staff should be aware that the safety and welfare of the pupils is their responsibility until they are safely passed back to their parent/carer.

### **Contact with Pupils Out of School**

Staff should not:

- arrange meetings with pupils off the School premises (whether in person or online) without the prior approval of the Head [or other member of the HMT]
- arrange private tuition with any of the School's pupils in or outside of school whether during term time or outside of term time, without the prior written approval of the Head
- give to pupils their home address or any of their personal contact details.

### **Mobile Phones**

The Study allows staff to bring in personal mobile phones, provided that they are used only at appropriate times (e.g. during break when not on duty) and not in lessons or when carrying out a duty. Mobile phones should be on a 'silent' setting during working hours (See Digital Camera and Mobile Phone Policy for further details).

### **Photography**

Many school activities involve recording images as part of the curriculum, extra school activities, and publicity or to celebrate an achievement. In accordance with data protection legislation, the image of a pupil is personal data.

Photographs must only be taken of children with the permission of a parent or an individual with parental responsibility. Such consent must have been provided in writing via [the School's consent form]. It is also important to consider the wishes of the pupil, remembering that some pupils do not wish to have their photograph taken or be filmed.

Photographs and films may only be taken on designated school cameras and other school devices, during indoor and outdoor activities at school and trips and events out of school. Staff must not use their own personal phones, cameras or other devices (See Digital Camera and Mobile Phone Policy and Taking, Storing and Using Pupil Images Policy for further details).

### **Equal Treatment**

We are committed to equal treatment for all members of the school community regardless of their race or colour, nationality or national or ethnic origins, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, marital or civil partnership status, gender reassignment, age, and disability. We keep a record of discriminatory incidents.

We aim to create a friendly, caring and perceptive environment in which every individual is valued. We endeavour to contribute positively towards the growing autonomy, self-esteem and safety of each pupil.

### **Bullying**

Bullying, harassment and victimisation and discrimination will not be tolerated. We treat all our pupils, staff, and their parents fairly and with consideration and we expect them to reciprocate towards each other, the staff and the School. Any kind of bullying, including cyber bullying, is unacceptable and the School keeps a record of any such incidents. Please see our School policy on Anti-Bullying for further details.

### **Low Level Concerns**

A low level concern about the behaviour of a member of staff is one where such behaviour does not meet the 'harms threshold' and yet appears to be inconsistent with the staff code of conduct or professional boundaries. Should a staff member have such a concern, this should be raised with the

Head; should the concern be regarding the Head, this should be raised with the Chairman of Governors, via the Bursar.

### **Whistleblowing**

The School wishes to foster a culture of openness and safety and the School's Whistleblowing Procedure reflects this. Should any member of staff have any concerns about the behaviour of another member of staff towards a pupil or a staff member, he or she should report it at once to the Head (or to the Chairman of Governors where the concern relates to the Head or a governor). Any concern will be thoroughly investigated under the School's whistle-blowing procedures. Such reporting will be without prejudice to the member of staff's position in the School. Where there are allegations of criminal activity, the police will always be informed, and advice taken, before the School undertakes any investigation of its own. Wherever possible, and subject to the rights of the pupil, the member of staff will be informed of the outcome of the investigation. No one who reports a genuine concern in good faith needs to fear retribution. Under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 the member of staff may raise a concern directly with an external body where the circumstances justify it.

### **Confidentiality**

Members of staff may have access to confidential information about pupils, their parents/carers or their siblings. Staff must not reveal such information except to those colleagues who have a professional role in relation to the pupils. Under no circumstances should such information be revealed to parents. All staff must ensure that confidential information is locked away/stored securely and shredded when no longer needed. Staff should always check if they are unsure about the destruction of personal information.

Staff members should never give absolute guarantees of confidentiality to pupils or adults wishing to tell them about something serious. They should guarantee only that they will pass on information to the minimum number of individuals, who must be informed in order to ensure that the appropriate action is taken to deal with the issue and that they will not tell anyone who does not have a clear need to know. They will also take whatever steps they can to protect the informing pupil or adult from any retaliation or unnecessary stress that might be feared after a disclosure has been made.

### **Prevent Duty**

All Staff should understand that the School has a legal duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 to have 'due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism'. This is known as the Prevent duty. Schools are required to assess the risk of children being drawn into terrorism, including support for extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology. Consequently, Staff should be aware of:

- what extremism and radicalisation means and why people - including pupils and fellow Staff members - may be vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism as a consequence of it;
- what measures are available to prevent people from becoming drawn into terrorism and how to challenge the extremist ideology that can be associated with it; and
- how to obtain support for people who may be being exploited by radicalising influences.

### **Parental Complaints**

Staff must ensure that parental complaints are dealt with in accordance with the School's Complaints Policy.

### **Staff Complaints**



Complaints should be dealt with immediately and openly and Staff should try to resolve issues informally in the first instance. If this approach is impractical or unsuccessful, Staff may wish to raise their concerns more formally in accordance with the School's Grievance Procedure or Whistleblowing Procedure, depending upon the nature of the concern.

### **Compliance**

All staff must complete the on-line confirmation that they have read, understood and agree to comply with this policy. This confirmation should be dated and a record will be held centrally.

All staff understand that failure to comply with this policy may lead to disciplinary proceedings and the termination of their employment, without notice.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following related policies and procedures: (do we need these references?)

- Safeguarding / Child Protection Policy;
- Low-level Concerns Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy;
- Acceptable Use of IT Policy
- Social Media Policy;
- Health and Safety at Work Policy
- Anti-Bribery Policy; and
- Whistleblowing Policy.

**Policy Reviewed: May 2023**