

Staff Code of Conduct

The following sets out a code of conduct for College staff. All staff employed by Halesowen College are required to comply with this code and to indicate that they have read and understood its contents.

Principles and General Conduct

Staff have a duty to work towards the aims of the College, to reflect its values and to implement decisions promptly and efficiently.

Staff:

- should strive at all times to discharge their responsibilities honestly, courteously, effectively and efficiently
- are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and actions taken under their direction by staff whom they manage
- should endeavour at all times to act in accordance with the principles of staff conduct set out below thereby avoiding conduct likely to bring the College into disrepute
- are responsible for compliance with the College's financial regulations and for the efficient use of any resources over which they have influence or control; and to manage any staff under their control to ensure that such regulations and procedures are followed
- are responsible for ensuring that the College management has available to it the information which it needs to take sound decisions in areas within that person's responsibilities as set out in their job description
- should ensure that in describing the College's actions, correct and full information should be provided in order not to mislead those with an interest in the College's services.
- Health and Safety procedures and processes should be followed including any COVID-19 Addendum and Policies

Likewise, College Senior Managers should make available to Governors information which they need to take sound decisions.

Gifts and Hospitality

Staff have a responsibility to ensure that they comply at all times with the requirement set out in the College's Financial Regulations and the Gifts and Hospitality Policy (01-0089)

Private Interests

Most staff are required as a condition of employment by the College not to hold any remunerated post, office, profession or employment without written permission from the Principal.

Staff who undertake activities outside of College in a professional capacity and their employment with the College is known by those interacting with their outside activities, then the staff member is reminded to uphold the College's values and own integrity, and not to bring the College into disrepute.

Staff should declare any private interest including those involving their spouse, partner or close family relative which may conflict with their duties. Examples are procurement of goods or services, recruitment and selection of staff.

When such interests are material, staff should not take part in decisions or discussions relating to that business, either informally or formally. Staff will be required to withdraw from the discussion of a relevant topic at any meeting and not to take part in any discussion of that matter.

Resolution of Difficulties or Clarification

If at any time a member of staff has difficulty in complying or understanding this code, he or she should discuss the matter with their Line Manager or a member of the College Leadership Team. Any decision in relation to such a matter will be recorded and a copy provided to the Principal.

Principles of Staff Conduct

General Introduction

All members of staff are expected to set an example to students and to present an image to the public that is conducive to the good reputation of the College. These considerations apply both to the discharge of professional responsibilities and to manners and appearance. Staff are expected to act at all times in accordance with the College mission and values and with the policies and guidelines obtainable on Data.Halesowen.

The College Values

At the centre of the College's mission of LEARN, SUCCEED, FLOURISH, are its key values: inclusivity, equality and diversity; commitment; high aspirations; integrity and honesty; respect; responsibility; support, safety and care. The College values incorporate Citizenship and British Values.

Appearance

As a general guide staff should ensure that they dress decently, safely and appropriately for the tasks they undertake also to have good personal hygiene and their dress and appearance is sufficiently formal to indicate to students, parents and guardians and the public that their role is both professional and important. This also applies when delivering online learning. Usually, the wearing of clothing which may hinder communication and the learner experience should be avoided. However, there may be a public health necessity to wear a face covering should Covid cases rise. Staff would be advised should DfE guidelines on the use of face covering be revised (If this policy causes a serious issue the member of staff should put their case in writing to the HR Business Partner asking for a reasonable adjustment).

As part of 'Ready Respect Safe', staff should wear their College ID card at all times.

Punctuality

Staff are expected to be punctual. Teaching staff are expected to ensure that classes start at the times specified and that they are on time for any meetings with students, colleagues, parents or guardians and with members of the public.

Smoking

Staff are reminded that smoking:

- Whittingham Road – outside College premises (roadside) but not directly by the entrances.
- Shenstone House - is only permitted in the “smoking shelter” situated on the car park.
- Coombs Wood - outside College premises (roadside) but not directly by the entrance.

Alcohol and Drugs

Staff are expected to behave in accordance with the Alcohol and Drugs Policy.

Staff/Manager Relations

College Managers are expected to take responsibility for the staff they manage. In order to do this it will be necessary for managers to take note of how staff are carrying out their duties, prepare feedback and to work with staff to identify appropriate support, including training and development. Similarly, staff should work with their managers and support them in achieving the College's aims.

Staff/Student Relations

Relationships among learners and staff must reflect a positive and respectful culture. To treat one another as they would like to be treated.

All staff are expected to create an environment where bullying, peer-on-peer abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment or discrimination are not tolerated. If they do occur that these are dealt with.

In general staff should use the student's first name in conversation with them. Inappropriate modes of address can cause accidental offence and staff should avoid seeming patronising or discriminating, by tone of voice, or by words used. Terms of endearment are inappropriate in a working environment and should be avoided.

Email between staff and student should only be via College systems and not personal email accounts. Staff should not use their personal mobile telephone to phone students.

The welfare of the student is paramount.

Adults who work with young people are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions.

Staff should be seen to work in an open and transparent way and should continually monitor and review their practice and ensure that they follow policies, procedures and guidelines.

Declarations: Staff employed at the College and are related to or are well known to a student (potential student) should declare the relationship and register with the Personnel Team and inform their line manager. For example, cousin, nephew/niece, best friend's child who you are close to; an Apprentice, who is an employee, who is already in a relationship with a student. The declaration should include, name, age, the duration of study, course and any conflict of interest. If necessary the line manager will make sure that there is no conflict of interest by making the

necessary arrangements and will for recording purposes inform the member of staff and the Personnel Team.

This information will be retained for the period that the student attends College.

Bounds of familiarity

Staff must ensure that in their own interests and the interests of the College they conduct themselves at all times in a professional manner towards students. The professional relationship between a student and member of staff is a central part of the student's educational development. It is vital that trust and confidence exist between staff and students to ensure students maximise their learning experience.

Staff should take care not to compromise their position of trust and all interactions with students should be professional. Staff should work on the principle of "not touching" students so that any action cannot be misconstrued. We work in a non-touch environment with the exception of professional activities such as hair and beauty, dance and sport however staff should not work alone with a student if this is the case and ensure that consent has been given prior to any activity taking place.

(The use of reasonable force is allowed in Colleges refer to Restraint Policy)

Staff have a professional duty to develop students' abilities and a responsibility to safeguard students' welfare. Given the imbalance of power between staff and students any abuse by staff of this relationship will be viewed as very serious and may be considered as gross misconduct and result in referral to Dudley Safeguarding People Partnership.

Staff should not normally give lifts to students.

Abuse of Trust

All staff need to know that inappropriate behaviour with or towards children* is unacceptable. In particular, under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 it is an offence for a person over 18 (eg teacher, youth worker) to have a sexual relationship with a child under 18 where that person is in a position of trust in respect of that child, even if the relationship is consensual. This applies where the child is in full time education and the person works in the same establishment as the child, even if she/he does not teach the child.

* Generally, those under 18 but it is recognised that some adults would also be vulnerable and be included in Child Protection arrangements.

In a culture of openness, trust and transparency staff need to be aware that their behaviour could cause a sense of unease and may be reported by others, no matter how small. Examples include:

- being over friendly with learners;
- having favourites;
- taking photographs of learners on their mobile phone;
- engaging with a learner on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door;
- or,
- using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language.

Low level concerns regarding members of staff should be reported to the DSL (or deputy) and this in turn will be reported to the Principal and recorded, so that any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

Allegations that may meet the harm threshold

Staff need to be aware of what is considered in law of allegations that might indicate a person will pose a risk of harm if they continue to work in a college.

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child and/or;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child and/or;
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children; and/or
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children (either inside or outside of the workplace).

Incidents/allegations are reported to the LADO, but before that occurs the College will conduct basic enquiries to establish the facts which will then determine where there is any foundation to the allegation(s). Where the matter needs further investigation, the case will be referred to the staff Disciplinary Procedure and the individual will be informed.

If there is no case to answer the case manager and the LADO will record the decision and justification and agree on what information should be put in writing to the individual concerned.

Acceptable Use of Computers and the Intranet

Staff are required to behave in accordance with the terms of the Acceptable Use Policy and any supplementary policies such as the Social Media Policy. In particular, staff should not disclose personal information to students, including their personal telephone numbers or social networking profile details. Staff should work within the scope of the Homeworking Policy and the online teaching guidance, in the Digital Learning Policy, when planning and delivering on-line lessons.

In the case of ex-students staff should apply common sense as to the age and vulnerability of the ex-student because the College would take disciplinary action over any inappropriate behaviour by a member of staff in their professional capacity as actions can be misinterpreted.

Data breaches should be reported using the green flag on the Staff Hub menu.

Discrimination

Any form of discrimination on grounds of age, disability, race, sex, marriage and Civil Partnership, sexual orientation, religion and belief, gender reassignment/gender identity, pregnancy and spent criminal convictions unrelated to their employment will be contrary to the Code and will be dealt with under the College disciplinary procedure.

Professionalism and Confidentiality

Staff are required to use their professional judgment and not disclose information to students that is a staff matter. Staff must be aware of the General Data Protection Regulation and adhere to these principles and the College policies regarding Data Protection and Freedom of Information.

Staff should not lobby students without agreement from their manager.

There is guidance for teaching staff (Freedom of Speech) on the teaching and discussing of political or sensitive matters with students. This includes responsibilities under the PREVENT strategy.

Whistle Blowing

The College Policy (and associated procedure policy under the Public Interest Disclosure Act) can be found on the Staff Hub.

Further Information

Policies and procedures related to this Code of Conduct can be accessed by clicking on the name of the policy. This list is not exclusive.

Acceptable Use Policy
Alcohol and Drugs Policy
Code of conduct and Student Discipline
Data Protection Policy and CCTV Policy Disciplinary Procedures
Excursions, Visits and Student Exchanges Policy.doc
Financial Regulations
Freedom of Information Policy
Freedom of Speech - Code of Practice
Gifts Policy
Grievance Procedures
Harassment Policy and Procedures
Restraint Policy
Safeguarding Policy and Procedure
Social Media Policy
Whistle Blowing Policy

Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People: [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021](#)

All staff should read this document which is available on the Safeguard system called [MyConcern](#) and when you have logged-on there is a dropdown menu on the left hand side called Resources – go to 'local policies' and download to read and confirm "read".

Report safeguarding concerns at [MyConcern](#)

Reviewed/Approved	By	Date	Review Date
Updated by	Rachael Charles, Lynn Pass	July 2021	July 2022
Reviewed by	CLT	23 August 2021	