

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 discharge their responsibilities honestly, courteously, effectively, and efficiently
- are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and, those taken under their direction by staff whom they manage
- should act in accordance with the principles of staff conduct set out below thereby avoiding conduct likely to bring the College into disrepute, including their conduct outside of work
- 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 must be followed
- must take responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, and vulnerable adults and act in their best interest and to report any concerns in line with policy and procedure

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

Resolution of Difficulties or Clarification

If at any time a member of staff has difficulty in complying or understanding this code, then the member of staff 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 purpose and values and with the policies and guidelines obtainable on Data.Halesowen.

The College Values

In support of the College's vision to be the first-choice College in our region, are its key values:

- ❖ Ambitious
- ❖ Caring
- ❖ Inclusive
- ❖ Respectful

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, that they 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 online and or delivering online learning. Professional clothing does not include inappropriate bare flesh, revealing underwear, clothes that display inappropriate slogans or images, are dirty, holed or fraying. Usually, the wearing of clothing which may hinder communication and the learner experience should be avoided.

For Safeguarding reasons, staff must 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 is only permitted as follows:

- Whittingham Road – the smoking shelter on Car Park A and certainly not directly by the entrances due to causing obstruction to the public pavement.
- Shenstone House - 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](#). As a general rule alcohol and recreational drugs should not be consumed while working with students/members of the public.

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. All members of the college are expected to treat one another as they would like to be treated.

All staff are expected to create a safe environment conducive to learning, where bullying, child-on-child 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 preferred first name in conversation them including digital communications. 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 not be used.

Email between staff and student should only be via College systems and not personal email accounts or any other online messaging accounts. Ideally communications should be during the range of normal working hours and staff are not expected to respond outside of these hours, except in an emergency such as an urgent safeguarding issue.

Staff should use College provided services (e.g., 3CX app, College Teams account etc). Staff should not use their personal mobile telephone to phone students.

Personal mobile numbers should never be shared with learners, nor should photographs be taken of any student.

Staff should not accept "wants to follow you" or "friend requests" from students. (See [Online and Social Media Policy](#) for more information)

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. Staff are encouraged to self-report (see [Low Level Concerns Policy](#)).

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, drama, public services and sport and, if it is matter of health and safety. However, staff should not work alone with a student where touch is required and they should 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 - LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer)

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. * This policy also includes those considered vulnerable i.e. if they are unable to look after themselves, protect themselves from harm or exploitation or are unable to report abuse.

In a culture of openness, trust and transparency staff need to be aware that their behaviour, including things which may appear very minor, could cause a sense of unease and may be reported by others. Examples may 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.
- Contacting learners out-of-hours on matters which are not college related, urgent, or important.

Low level concerns regarding yourself or other members of staff should be reported without delay to the Principal or DSL and this will be recorded, so that any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified and appropriate support or action is implemented. Where there is concern that involves the DSL the Principal should be informed, where the concern involves the Principal the Chair of Governors (Jo Chilton) should be informed.

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.

Conduct Outside of Work

Unlawful, anti-social or other conduct by you which may be deemed to be inappropriate for the member of staff member's position/post or the conduct may affect the College's reputation, then it may be necessary for it to

be dealt with through the [Disciplinary Procedure](#). During the course of employment staff are required to report any warning, caution or conviction against them for a criminal offence to the Principal.

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 Online Safety and Social Media Policy (plus appendices). 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.

Staff social media settings must be set to private, and staff are not to accept students as followers/friends. Where contact is made outside of College to a member of staff – staff need to be aware of their responsibility as a professional and refer to the Online Safety and Social Media Policy.

Data breaches should be reported using the left hand menu of MyHalesowen “Report a GDPR Breach”

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 or of personal-private-matters. 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.

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, Anti-Bribery Policy 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, teaching or working with a learner known to them outside of College.

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 or decision making of that matter.

Whistle Blowing

The College Policy (and associated procedure policy under the Public Interest Disclosure Act) is available to staff who is

unable to use the usual channels of communication or reporting processes and have genuine concerns regarding an employee, former employee, trainee or

agency worker (all referred to hereafter as “employee”) may have suspected misconduct within the College.

Further Information

Policies and procedures related to this Code of Conduct can be accessed on MyHalesowen [Policies and Documents](#). This list is not exclusive.

Acceptable Use Policy
Alcohol and Drugs Policy
Anti-Bribery Policy
Code of conduct and Student Discipline
Data Protection Policy and CCTV Policy
Disciplinary Policy
Excursions, Visits and Student Exchanges
Policy.doc
Financial Regulations
Freedom of Information Policy
Freedom of Speech - Code of Practice

Gifts Policy
Grievance Procedure
Dignity at Work (Harassment) Policy
Low Level Concerns Policy
Online and Social Media Policy
Restraint Policy
Safeguarding Policy and Procedure
Staff Disciplinary Policy
Staff References Policy
Whistle Blowing Policy

Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People: [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023](#)

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
Reviewed By	Rachael Charles	August 2023
CLT approved	CLT	31 August 2023
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