

Kings Langley School



Code of Conduct for Employees

REVIEW DATE: November 2017
Revised October 2016 by LWS

Policy Title: Code of Conduct for Employees

1 RATIONALE

This policy exists to provide a framework for supporting our stated aim of “ensuring the happiness of every individual in our community” and to promote a climate which enables all teaching and support staff and students to flourish, regardless of ability or particular needs, and supports the desired outcomes of developing "strong character".

Much of this code of conduct is based upon the Hertfordshire County Council policy which had been the subject of extensive negotiations with trade unions.

In addition to this policy, all staff employed under Teachers’ Terms and Conditions of Employment have a statutory obligation to adhere to the ‘Teachers’ Standards 2012’ and in relation to this policy, Part 2 of the Teachers’ Standards - Personal and Professional Conduct.

Failure to comply with the following Code of Conduct could result in disciplinary action including dismissal.

This Code of Conduct applies to:

- all staff who are employed by Kings Langley school, including the Headteacher;
- all staff in units or bases that are attached to the school.

The Code of Conduct does not apply to:

- peripatetic staff who are employed by other bodies
- schools meals staff employed by an external contractor for example, Edwards & Blake
- employees of external contractors and providers of services (*e.g.* contract cleaners).

(Such staff are covered by the relevant Code of Conduct of their employing body)

Character Development: Commitment to Equality and Diversity

This school is founded on a set of fundamental values designed to enable all students and adults connected with our community to flourish and succeed, regardless of background or circumstances. We are determined to be open to people, places, methods and ideas—and as such, equality and diversity are at the heart of everything we do. Our continued dedication to social justice and equality of opportunity is embodied in everything we do.

We are creating an **inclusive** school community where:

- People are treated with dignity and respect.
- Inequalities are challenged.
- We anticipate, and respond positively to, different needs and circumstances so that everyone can achieve their potential.
- We value diversity and we recognise that different people bring different perspectives, ideas, knowledge and culture, and that this difference brings great strength.

- We believe that discrimination or exclusion based on individual characteristics and circumstances, such as age; disability; caring or dependency responsibilities; gender or gender identity; marriage and civil partnership status; political opinion; pregnancy and maternity; race, colour, caste, nationality, ethnic or national origin; religion or belief; sexual orientation; socio-economic background; trade union membership status or other distinctions, represents a waste of talent and a denial of opportunity for self-fulfilment.
- We recognise that patterns of under achievement at any level and differences in outcomes can be challenged through positive intervention activities designed to bridge gaps.
- We respect the rights of individuals, including the right to hold different views and beliefs. We will not allow these differences to be manifested in a way that is hostile or degrading to others.
- We expect commitment and involvement from all our staff, students, partners and providers of goods and services in working towards the achievement of our vision.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure:

1 HIGH STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOUR

- 1.1 As a member of staff at Kings Langley School you are a role model and are in a unique position of influence and must adhere to behaviour that sets a good example to all the students within the school. You have an individual responsibility to maintain your reputation and the reputation of the school, whether inside or outside working hours.
- 1.2 You should also be aware that since 2012, the published national standards for teachers are explicit in including clear descriptors for professional conduct, including the requirement to ensure high levels of attendance.
- 1.3 All school staff are in a unique position of influence and must adhere to behaviour that sets a good example to all students
- 1.4 All staff must, therefore, demonstrate high standards of behaviour and conduct which can be copied by students and support the stated aims and ethos of our school
- 1.5 All staff must demonstrate high standards of behaviour, personal demeanour and presentation in order to encourage our students to do the same
- 1.6 All staff must also avoid putting themselves at risk of allegations of abusive or unprofessional conduct. This will include avoiding involvement in over familiar relationships with students, engaging in conversations not appropriate to the student-staff professional relationship and engagement in inappropriate humour or "banter".
- 1.7 This Code helps all staff to understand what is and what is not acceptable
- 1.8 All staff must maintain high standards of professional appearance, personal hygiene and grooming
- 1.9 All staff must speak to all members of the school community in a respectful and usually calm manner. Body language should be open and not threatening (e.g. avoid excessive pointing, invasion of personal body space and unnecessary physical contact)

Unacceptable Behaviour:

- 1.10 Visible arguments or disagreements with colleagues and other employees in front of students, parents, other members of staff or visitors. Language used should always be respectful and it will nearly always be unacceptable to shout at or use threatening gestures towards another colleague.
- 1.11 Swearing or the use of other inappropriate language at or in the presence of students
- 1.12 Discussions or use of language that might otherwise be deemed offensive (for example, use of sexualised language or discussion of topics on an inappropriate adult theme)
- 1.13 Making racist or other discriminatory comments (based on sexual stereotyping, sexual orientation, ageism or cultural origin)
- 1.14 Use of language or gestures designed to intimidate or undermine colleagues (for example, mocking comments based on personal appearance or sarcastic humour, pedantic and unhelpful behaviour during meetings)
- 1.15 Making detrimental comments or allegations about other colleagues or their competence if front of parents, students and/or staff

2 SAFEGUARDING STUDENTS

- 2.1 Staff have a duty to use their professional experience, knowledge and personal attributes to safeguard students from:
 - physical abuse
 - sexual abuse
 - emotional abuse
 - neglect
- 2.2 The duty to safeguard pupils/students includes a duty to report concerns about a student to the school's Designated Senior Person (DSP) for Child Protection. The school's DSP is detailed in the Child Protection Policy
- 2.3 Staff have a duty to familiarise themselves with all related policies – Child Protection, Whistle Blowing, Equality and Discriminations, Health and Safety and Attendance Management.
- 2.4 Staff must follow the well published Health and Safety procedures and guidelines to ensure the reasonable safety and welfare of students in their care
- 2.5 Staff must not seriously demean or undermine students, their parents or carers, or colleagues. This will include: enforcing punishments that have the effect of acutely embarrassing or exposing students to unreasonable levels of ridicule; using demeaning language, heavily criticising a student's personality – although it is a duty to challenge concrete examples of poor behaviour; questioning global parenting skills – although it is entirely proper to challenge indifferent parental actions or behaviour (via concrete examples) that work against the school's published home school partnership agreement

3 STUDENT DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1 Staff must comply with school policies and procedures that support the wellbeing and development of students (particularly Home School Agreement and Behaviour Policies).
- 3.2 Staff must co-operate and collaborate with colleagues and with external agencies where necessary to support the development of students (e.g. social services, local health services, welfare visitors etc.)
- 3.3 Staff must follow and act upon reasonable instructions that support the development of students.
- 3.4 It is clear that students can be vulnerable to the influence of staff who command a position of authority. Teachers/staff need to be constantly aware of the impact of any statements that may make or any personal, religious or political views expressed which may be considered to be placing undue influence on a child. Although it is accepted that healthy debate which enables sensitive issues to be discussed openly and from an informed, objective position is desirable, the exposition of personal views on widely accepted controversial topics or issues is NOT ACCEPTABLE. Teachers/staff should always avoid taking an entrenched position on any controversial topic and should seek to provide a balanced and even handed perspective when dealing with such sensitive matters. Any evidence that a teacher or any member of staff is attempting to radicalise students will almost always lead to immediate dismissal without notice and the matter will be referred to the relevant security or police authorities.

4 HONESTY AND INTEGRITY

- 4.1 Staff must maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their work. This includes the handling and claiming of money and the use of school property and facilities.
- 4.2 All staff must comply with the Bribery Act 2010. A person may be guilty of an offence of bribery under this act if they offer, promise or give financial advantage or other advantage to someone; or if they request, agree or accept , or receive a bribe from another person. If you believe that a person has failed to comply with the Bribery Act, you should refer to the Whistleblowing procedure for Kings Langley School.
- 4.3 Gifts from suppliers or associates of the school must be declared to the Headteacher, with the exception of "one off" token gifts from students or parents. Personal gifts from individual members of staff to students are inappropriate and could be misinterpreted.
- 4.4 Colleagues should understand that if they are aware of or have knowledge of mal practice or inappropriate conduct, they are obliged to inform the appropriate authority, normally the Headteacher. Failure to report such conduct could expose the individual concerned to disciplinary procedures.

- 4.5 The School considers "integrity" a key personal and professional attribute. Consequently, staff are expected to "blow the whistle" on other colleagues where dishonest practice is observed

5 CONDUCT OUTSIDE WORK

- 5.1 Staff must not engage in conduct outside work which could seriously damage the reputation and standing of the school and the standing of the employee or to her employees of the school.
- 5.2 Staff must not be involved in any criminal offences particularly those relating to violence or possession or use of illegal drugs
- 5.3 Staff must not be involved in sexual misconduct that comes to the notice of the school, local or national press or representatives of the parent body
- 5.4 Staff must not make derogatory or other unacceptable comments in any public media forum (for example, face book, the local press or media interview – the test of 'unacceptable comment' will be based on the degree of embarrassment or damage to the school's good reputation caused)
- 5.5 Staff need to be cautious that examples of personal behaviour are not published on the internet or other social networking sites that could cause damage to the school's reputation.
- 5.6 Using social media always has the potential for any message, interaction, post, photo or video to be made public to the widest audience. When using "social media sites", staff should consider the following questions: -
- Would you be happy for this to be pinned on the notice board by the school gates?
 - Would you be happy for it to appear in the local newspaper?
 - Would you be happy for "Facebook" movies or photos to appear as a trailer prior to films being screened at the local multiplex cinema?
 - Would you feel comfortable for your comments to be displayed in a whole school assembly or the next Parent Teachers Meeting?

If the answer to all of the above is "yes" then it is likely that your use of social networking is transparent and appropriate.

- 5.7 Personal Details. Staff should be careful with regard to publishing private and personal information, such as email addresses, home and mobile phone numbers and home addresses, if there is any concern that such information might be misused or abused should it fall into the public domain and be seen by students or parents.
- 5.8 Staff should ensure information about them is accurate. For example, any information regarding employment and qualifications will need to match that provided by the employer - discrepancies might result in misconduct proceedings. Photographs and profile images should be appropriate and not contentious- these images are the most likely to end up being copied by search engines such as Google and appear in the public domain.

- 5.9 In nearly all circumstances, teachers and staff should avoid "friending" (initiating contact with) students or parents on their social networking sites. Teachers will always want to carefully check their "privacy settings" in order to ensure maximum security and to guard against third party access. These settings should be checked after any provider upgrade as they can be reset to lower security levels. It would always be advised to disable the "tagging" function (the labelling or identifying of individuals in photos) on social network sites.

Acceptable Conduct:

- 5.10 Organisation of social or cultural trips which will assist students in developing social and personal skills – all trips should be organised through the school's Health and Safety procedures (e.g. theatre trips, sports events and other cultural visits to museums, art galleries or other exhibitions)
- 5.11 Use of the school's Virtual Learning Environment or SIMS Gateway system to contact students or parents about professional matters. (e.g. depositing and marking of assignments, "hot seating" to provide online support for students studying for examinations or sharing of resources or other non copyright links)
- 5.12 Use of a 'corporate' face book account that has no link to any other personal accounts and which has received prior approval from the school's senior leadership team

Unacceptable Conduct:

- 5.13 Staff must not use social networking sites on the internet that are not securely protected to prevent them being accessible to students or parents
- 5.14 Do not use social networking sites to engage in private or professional conversation related to any student or colleague associated with the school or its extended community (e.g. LA advisers or students in a partnership school)
- 5.15 Do not contact students using personal communication systems
- 5.16 Do not take students on social trips to restaurants, theme parks, public houses or any other social venue unless it has been officially sanctioned and cleared by the school (for example, a celebration dinner for a successful sports team)

Gross Misconduct:

- 5.17 Do not enter into an intimate relationship, physical or otherwise, with a student at the school, a student who has left the school for less than one year and/or a former student less than 19 years of age

6 CONFIDENTIALITY

- 6.1 Where staff have access to confidential information about students or their parents or carers, staff must not reveal such information except to those colleagues who have a professional role in relation to the student
- 6.2 All staff are likely to witness actions which need to be kept confidential in order to preserve the good reputation of the school. For example, where a student is bullied by a member of staff; such knowledge must be kept confidential although colleagues are reminded of the necessity to adhere to the school's Whistle Blowing Policy
- 6.3 Staff must never enter into a conversation or dialogue with a student where they have promised complete confidentiality. Staff must never promise a student they will act on information that they are told by the student (or parent)

7 DISCIPLINARY ACTION

- 7.1 All staff need to recognise that failure to meet appropriate standards of behaviour and conduct may result in disciplinary action, including dismissal
- 7.2 Separate documentation outlines the school's disciplinary procedures that are closely aligned to both Hertfordshire and National procedures
- 7.3 In cases of relatively minor infringements of the code of conduct, the Headteacher will consult with the Chair of Governors on an appropriate and proportionate response. This may include a requirement to address the behaviour observed via the monitored Performance Appraisal Management (PAM) procedures or alternatively may include a verbal or written note that is below such formal warnings issued under published disciplinary procedures.
- 7.4 All staff have the right of appeal against any disciplinary outcomes and these are detailed in the school's published procedures
- 7.5 There are likely to be occasions when the 'relative severity' of any breaches of the code of misconduct is difficult to determine. Under these circumstances 3 members of the governor's disciplinary committee will meet to determine the level of misconduct and at this stage, the identity of any member of staff involved will not be revealed

8 OUT OF SCHOOL

- 8.1 Staff are entitled to privacy in their personal life and the school will never question any life style choices based on personal interpretation. However, the school accepts responsibility in informing an individual if they become aware of any behaviour or

lifestyle choice that has the possibility of causing the school harm at some point in the future

- 8.2 Staff may undertake work outside of school, either paid or voluntary provided that it does not conflict with the interests of the school nor be at a level which may contravene the working time regulations or affect an individual's performance
- 8.3 Staff are not allowed to accept pay to tutor a student who attends Kings Langley School

Dress Code:

It is expected that staff will always dress in a professional manner that expresses both personal dignity and appropriate modesty. All staff must appreciate that they hold a unique position in acting as a key role model for all young people in our care. In addition, they have a defined responsibility in ensuring the good reputation of the school in all situations where they might be representing the school. The school is striving towards excellence in everything it does and a level of professional dress that gains the confidence and good will of parents and other stakeholders is vital in maintaining our high standards.

Within this context, staff should therefore not expect to wear the following:

- Denim or jean styled trousers/ skirts or indeed any other items of clothing made of this material. This includes garments made of denim like material (cotton twill) or corduroy.
- Excessively transparent items that lack modesty.
- Casually cut trousers (e.g. cargo trousers, thin linen "beach-style" trousers, low hipsters)
- Shorts
- Capri pants (¾ length trousers) or culottes
- Leggings (footless tights) - although high denier or opaque tights worn under skirts or similar are perfectly acceptable.
- Skirts (or dresses) that are too short. Colleagues should ensure that they are able to maintain adequate modesty when sitting or arising from a seated position or when navigating stairs.
- Flip flops, mules, or shoes without backs or back straps (including gladiator style sandals)
- "Ugg" style boots
- Soft, slipper-style shoes (although ballerina style pumps made of non textile material are appropriate)
- Low cut tops
- Strappy (spaghetti strapped) tops
- Casual t-shirts or t-shirts with slogans.
- Vest tops
- Halter neck tops (or dresses) or other sundresses.

Staff identity badges MUST be worn at all times in line with our safeguarding policy.

Jewellery should be appropriate for the area that the member of staff works in and in line with health and safety guidance.

Piercing, tattoos and other body art should be inconspicuous and in line with our expectations and guidance for students.

It is fully appreciated that different religions have specific guidance on what is appropriate dress in public and Kings Langley School will always seek to accommodate fully such requirements. However, under these circumstances some guidance boundaries will be applied and colleagues are respectfully asked to discuss any specific religious needs with the Headteacher.

Appendix Kings Langley School Anti Bribery Policy

Introduction

The Bribery Act became law on 1 July 2011. It replaces what are collectively known as the Prevention of Corruption Acts 1889 to 1916. It is designed to address bribery and corruption in the public and private sectors and will mean that any incorporated organisation, potentially including schools, could be liable to severe penalties if they fail to implement adequate procedures to prevent bribes being paid or received on their behalf.

There are four key offences under the Act

- Section 1 Bribing another person
- Section 2 Taking a bribe
- Section 6 Bribing a foreign public official
- Section 7 Failing to prevent bribery.

The Bribery Act applies to all staff at Kings Langley School. An organisation may be guilty of bribery even if only the individual offender knew of the bribery.

The Bribery Act introduces serious penalties such as unlimited fines for organisations and up to a maximum jail term of 10 years for the individuals involved.

Organisations will have a defence against prosecution if they can demonstrate that they had “adequate procedures in place to prevent bribery”.

Bribery is a serious criminal offence and Kings Langley School does not and will not, pay bribes or offer improper inducement to anyone for any purpose. Equally the School does not and will not accept any bribes or improper inducements.

Definition of Bribery

Bribery is an inducement or reward offered, promised or provided to gain personal, commercial, regulatory or contractual advantage.

Objective of the Anti Bribery Policy

The objective of the policy is to provide a coherent and consistent approach to ensuring compliance with the Bribery Act. It will enable all employees and any person who performs services for and on behalf of Kings Langley School (this could include contractors and subcontractors) to understand their responsibilities and allow them to take the necessary action, for example reporting any potential breaches of the policy.

Kings Langley School is committed to countering bribery and corruption in all forms and will not tolerate it in any of its activities.

Kings Langley School requires that all staff and all working or performing any service on or on behalf of the School neither accept nor give bribes. Staff must:

- Act honestly with integrity at all times to safeguard the School’s resources for which they are responsible
- Comply with the law (both in spirit and in the letter)

- Abide by this policy.

Scope of the Policy

The policy applies to all of Kings Langley School's activities including its work with strategic partners, third parties, suppliers, and others.

Ownership of the Policy

The policy has the approval of the Governing Body. The policy applies equally to all staff, regardless of grade whether permanently employed, temporary agency staff, contractors, agents, all elected and non-elected Governors, volunteers and consultants.

The Headteacher and the Governing Body will own the policy, thereby ensuring that there is commitment at the highest level.

Anti Bribery Policy

It is unacceptable to:

- Give, promise to give, or offer payment, gifts or hospitality with the expectation or hope that a favourable advantage will be received, or to reward a favourable advantage already given
- Give, promise to give, or offer payment, gifts or hospitality to a government official, agent or representative to "facilitate" or expedite a routine procedure
- Accept payment from a third party that is offered with the expectation that it will obtain a favourable advantage for them, whether known or suspected
- Accept a gift or hospitality from a third party if it is offered or provided with an expectation that a favourable advantage will be provided by the School in return, whether known or suspected
- Retaliate against or threaten a person who has refused to commit a bribery offence or who has raised concerns under this policy
- Engage in activity in breach of this policy.

Related Policies

The anti bribery policy must be considered alongside the following policies which collectively set out Kings Langley Schools approach to reducing bribery risks:

- Confidential Reporting (Whistleblowing Policy)
- Code of Conduct for staff
- Recruitment and Disciplinary Procedures

Staff Responsibilities and all those working or performing any service on or behalf of Kings Langley School:

Prevention, detection and reporting of bribery and other forms of corruption are the responsibility of all those working for the School or under its control. All staff including third parties working or performing any service on or behalf of the School are to avoid activity that breaches this policy, and must:

- Ensure that they read, understand and comply with the policy

- Raise concerns as soon as possible if they suspect that this policy has been breached.

Adequate Procedures

The procedures need to be applied proportionately based on the level of risk of bribery to the School.

Adequate procedures cover:

1. **Risk Assessment**
That the School assesses the nature and extent of its exposure to potential bribery from inside and outside. The School should know who it is doing business with and whether this has risk implications.
2. **Top Level Commitment**
That the Governing body is committed to preventing bribery. That there is a clear statement that bribery is not acceptable. That the anti bribery policy is clearly communicated to all staff and partners of the School.
3. **Due Diligence**
That the School has policies in place and is aware of who it does business with. The School is confident that its business relationships are transparent and ethical.
4. **Clear, practical and accessible policies and procedures**
That the School's policies and procedures to prevent bribery being committed on its behalf are clear, practical, accessible and enforceable.
5. **Effective Implementation**
The anti-bribery policy and procedures are embedded throughout the School. This means that the anti-bribery statements are embedded in the recruitment, retention, and operational policies and in training programmes.
6. **Monitoring and Review**
That the School monitors and reviews its policies and procedures on a regular basis to ensure that there is compliance.

Ultimately, whether procedures are adequate is for the courts to decide on a case by case basis.

Monitoring and Review of the Implementation of the Anti Bribery Policy

In the first instance a team comprising of representatives from the Board of Governors will meet to review the implementation of the policy and then will review compliance with the policy.

Reporting to the Police; Sanctions and Redress

Staff who breach this policy face the possibility of civil and criminal prosecution. They also face disciplinary action, which could result in dismissal for gross misconduct.

The Headteacher and Governors, in consultation with the Section 151 Officer, and, if an employee is involved, Governors, will decide whether any matter is referred to the police for further investigation and follow the reporting processes set out in the School's Employee Code of Conduct.