



The Grey Coat Hospital

Staff Code of Conduct Policy

POLICY NAME: Staff Code of Conduct Policy

GOV COMMITTEE: Personnel Committee

LAST POLICY REVIEW DATE: October 2024

POLICY REVIEW SCHEDULE: 2 Years

The Grey Coat Hospital requires that all staff have read, and agree to comply with, this policy.

This policy gives guidance on the standards of behaviour expected from all those working or volunteering at The Grey Coat Hospital. It applies to all staff and volunteers in the school regardless of their position, role or responsibility. References to 'staff' relate to all of the following groups:

- All members of staff including temporary, supply and casual staff, whether from agencies or engaged directly
- Volunteers, including governors
- Student placements, including those undertaking initial teacher training and apprentices.

Breach or failure to observe this policy will result in action being taken under the school disciplinary procedures including, but not limited to, dismissal.

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

Professional Behaviour and Conduct

Staff must demonstrate the highest possible standards of personal and professional conduct and behaviour, consistently act with honesty and integrity, and treat all members of the school community with dignity and respect.

The Grey Coat Hospital is an inclusive school and all staff must have regard to individuals' protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010. These are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

Staff should not make jokes at the expense of others.

Staff must act in accordance with their duty of care to students and ensure that the safety and welfare of students are accorded the highest priority.

It is the safeguarding responsibility of all staff to aim to prevent, tackle and actively deal with any low-level poor behaviour.

Any safeguarding concerns, no matter how small, should be shared promptly with a member of the DSL team.

Staff must have regard for the ethos and values of the school and must not act in anyway 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 school and responsibilities within school.

It is important that staff do not tutor any current or past student privately or engage any student or ex-student to babysit for their children.

Dress Code

Staff must dress in a manner that is appropriate to a professional role, that promotes a professional image and that is safe for the tasks they undertake. Clothing showing political or contentious slogans is not appropriate. Tattoos and body art should be covered while staff are in school. It is preferred that staff who have visible body piercings, excluding earrings, remove them whilst engaged in school business.

Smoking including vaping, alcohol and other substances

Staff must not engage in any of the above during working hours on or near the school premises. Staff must not be under the influence of alcohol, illicit drugs or other substances in any capacity while at work and/or supervising students.

Relationships with Students

Contact to and from students and parents must be through the relevant school systems only and any contact made by a student to a member of staff via an inappropriate route must be reported to the Headteacher immediately.

In all circumstances professional boundaries must be maintained.

If a member of staff feels a student has developed an infatuation toward them, they should report this to their line manager as a matter of urgency.

Physical Contact with Students

Students may be exceptionally needy and demanding of physical contact and staff should respond sensitively by deterring the child through helping them to understand the importance of personal boundaries.

Staff supervising PE or providing musical tuition should demonstrate the use of a particular piece of equipment/instrument on another member of staff if possible

If a student is in distress, staff should remain self-aware at all times to ensure their behaviour is not deemed intrusive or subject to misinterpretation.

Where intervening to protect a student or students, physical contact may only be of limited duration and appropriate to the situation. Further details can be found:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/use-of-reasonable-force-in-schools>

One-to-one situations

Staff working individually with students should be aware of the potential vulnerability of students and staff in such situations. Individual work with students should not be undertaken in isolated areas or rooms where there is no external viewing panel. Where it is necessary to close doors for reasons of confidentiality a colleague should be made aware of this and asked to remain vigilant.

ICT protocols

Guidance regarding IT protocols and advice and warnings about the social media engagement are contained in the ICT and Confidentiality Agreement. Staff are required to sign to confirm compliance with these arrangements before access to school IT systems are made available. Staff are reminded that under no circumstances must they give their passwords to other staff, students or visitors.

Staff must not engage in social media or other online exchanges with current or former students except for work-related purposes, on the school's communication channels, including school telephone/mobile phone, school email or the school's Microsoft TEAMS platform. Staff must report any attempt by a student to contact them on their personal social media platform(s) or other personal communication channels. Staff are advised to set their social media platforms to private settings. Please also refer to the ICT and Confidentiality Agreement.

Mobile phones and personal devices

Unless part of a lesson plan, mobile phones may not be used except to alert colleagues to an emergency or a serious concern.

Personal mobile phones should not be used at work except during breaks, in an emergency or by previous agreement. Staff should not wear earphones in classrooms or offices while engaged on school business. At all times mobile phones and personally owned mobile devices brought in to school are the responsibility of the device owner and the school accepts no responsibility for the loss, theft or damage of such personally owned devices. Staff issued with school mobile phones are required to sign the phone agreement, which explains their duty as the holder.

General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)

Personal data of staff, students and parents must be collected for specific reasons, stored securely and disposed of as directed in The Grey Coat Hospital Data Protection Policy and the related Retention and Deletion Policy. Personal data may be paper based or digital and includes images and each must be accorded the same level of compliance.

Photographs or video footage of students and staff may only be taken using school equipment for purposes authorised by the school. Staff must ensure that a member of the Senior Leadership Team is aware of the proposed use of photographic/video equipment. Images of students must not be used in publications without prior consent, please see the School Photograph Policy available on the shared drive, and any plans to do so must be sanctioned in advance by the Headteacher.

Staff may not use school data for research purposes unless commissioned by the school or unless previously agreed by the Headteacher.

Confidentiality

Staff must not reveal information about students, their parents/carers or their siblings except to those colleagues who have a professional role in relation to the pupil/student on a need to know basis.

Staff have a statutory obligation to share with the School's Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead any information which gives rise to concern about the welfare or safety of a student or that might suggest a student is in need or at risk of significant harm. Staff should pass on information immediately in accordance with the school's safeguarding policy and procedures and this should be recorded. Staff must never promise a pupil/student that they will not act on or pass on any information that they are told by the pupil/student.

Staff should refer to the Department of Education's document Information sharing: advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services for further guidance on information sharing. If you are in any doubt about whether to share, you should seek guidance from a member of the Senior Leadership team.

Any media or legal enquiries must be passed to the Headteacher and under no circumstances must a member of staff talk to the press about matters relating to the school, its students and their parents or staff colleagues.

Transporting students

Where school transport is being used, a designated member of staff should be appointed to plan and provide oversight of all transport arrangements and to respond to any difficulties that may arise.

Where transport is being supplied by a company or third party, staff should visually inspect the vehicle condition and ensure seatbelts are provided. If there are any concerns about the vehicle or the driver, staff should call a member of the Senior Leadership Team, and should not board the vehicle.

Gifts/Hospitality

Staff are required to follow the Anti-Bribery and Corruption Policy contained within the school financial procedures document, a copy of which is available on the school shared drive.

Whistleblowing

All school staff have a duty to report any behaviour by a colleague which raises concern. Staff should refer to the school's whistleblowing policies for further guidance.

School credit cards

Staff issued with a school credit or purchasing card must spend only on items requested by the school budget holder and evidence for such purchases must accompany all receipts for goods/services ordered. For more information on purchasing on behalf of the school see the Financial Procedures document available on the shared drive.

Confirmation of compliance

On joining The Grey Coat Hospital, as a Governor, as a directly employed individual, as a member of agency staff working at this school, as a casual employee, a trainee on a placement or a volunteer, I will comply with the code of conduct above.