



## Staff Code of Conduct

*A code of conduct for teachers and other employees working with young people*

**Date of Policy: September 2022.**

**Frequency of Review: annually or as required by legislation**

**Date of Next Review: October 2023.**

## INTRODUCTION

All staff who work at Wize Up are responsible for setting examples of positive behaviour for our students. It is imperative that all staff continually demonstrate high standards of conduct in order to encourage our young people to do the same.

The staff code of conduct is intended for all employees working at Wize Up and aims to ensure that students access high quality education within a safe and secure provision. It also aims to ensure that staff work in a respectful and safe environment.

The code of conduct will be used within staff induction periods, and the performance management process. Staff are required to confirm that they have read and understood the code of conduct by signing the declaration at the end of this booklet.

Safeguarding and child protection are at the forefront and underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy development in Wize Up and as such, this policy is based upon the DfE documents 'Working Together to Safeguard Children: A Guide to Inter-Agency Working to Safeguard and Promote the Welfare of Children (March 2015) and 'Keeping Children Safe in Education: Statutory Guidance for Schools and Colleges (September 2021).

This code does not replace or take priority over Wize Up's Child Protection Procedures. All staff must be aware of the action that must be taken by employees when child abuse is suspected whether inside Wize Up, at home or elsewhere or following any disclosure of alleged abuse. NOTE: Young people may not feel ready or know how to tell someone they are being abused, this must always be in mind while looking at other factors i.e. change in behaviour, attendance and/or peer relationships; adopting a Child Centred Approach with the view of "it could happen here". A copy of the Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures is available from the Main Office, Child Protection Officer, on the school website or Staff room.

Many staff will be reassured by the advice contained in this code. In many cases, it will simply confirm good professional practice. It is always advisable that staff reflect on their teaching and pastoral approach to ensure that they are providing excellent teaching and support to young people.

In this document:

'Parent(s) includes mothers, fathers, guardians and carers with parental responsibility or guardianship for young people at Wize Up

'Child(ren)', young people and 'student(s)' includes all students attending Wize Up,

'Staff' refers to all staff including teaching staff, support staff, volunteers, agency staff and commissioned agency practitioners working at Wize Up. 'Staff' also includes temporary staff, supply staff and part-time staff.

## THE CODE

### General

Employees should ensure that their relationships with young people appropriately reflect the students age, gender and maturity. It is particularly important to ensure that all aspects of demeanour, language and attitudes are respectful and do not cause offence or give rise to misunderstandings. Ambiguous or ambivalent comments and conduct, in particular, should be avoided.

Staff must take reasonable care of young people under their supervision achieved by having regard and being familiar with school policies and procedures that support the well-being and development of young people in particular: Child and Safeguarding Protection, Health and Safety/Educational visits, Anti Bullying, Behaviour and Sanctions. Staff must follow reasonable instructions that support the development of young people.

All adults should conduct themselves in a way that reflects the values of Wize Up and meets the expected high professional standards. Staff should treat students and colleagues with respect and endeavour to apply the same professional standards, regardless of gender, ethnicity, religion, disability or sexual orientation.

### The duty

Staff have a duty to safeguard young people from:

1. physical abuse
2. sexual abuse
3. emotional abuse (including hateful speech)
4. neglect
5. domestic abuse (can be psychological, physical, sexual, financial, or emotional. Can impact on young people through seeing, hearing or experiencing the effects of domestic abuse and/or experiencing it through their own intimate relationships).

This duty includes teaching young people about safeguarding, including healthy relationships education and online safety. The duty to safeguard young people includes the duty to report concerns about a young person

to Wize Up's Child Protection Officer (CP) being Lorretta Boyd. All staff are provided with copies of the Child Protection Policy. All staff are required to be familiar with this document and always adhere to the guidance.

Staff should be aware that breaches of the law and other professional guidelines could result in criminal and/or disciplinary action being taken against them.

## **Professionalism**

All staff should clearly understand the need to maintain appropriate boundaries in their dealings with young peoples. Intimate or sexual relationships between staff and a young people using online or mobile technologies to groom a child/young person under the age of 18 years is a criminal offence and is regarded as a serious breach of trust.

All allegations of child abuse will be taken seriously, ensuring the young person knows this and can safely express their views being made aware that they will be fully investigated under the child protection and safeguarding procedures. This may lead to the involvement of external agencies such as the police and social services departments. In some cases, it may be necessary to suspend the employee concerned pending the outcome of an investigation.

**Low-Level concerns** are any concern that an adult has acted in a way that:

- is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work
- does not meet the allegations threshold or is not considered serious enough to refer to the local authority designated officer (LADO).

Examples of low-level concerns could include:

- being over friendly with children
- having favourites
- engaging with a child one-to-one in a secluded area or behind a closed door
- using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating, or offensive language.

To help prevent low-level concerns, this policy and safeguarding policies and procedures should be implemented effectively, and appropriate action should be taken to deal with any concern.

**Sharing concerns:** Low-level concerns should be reported to the DSL or a deputy. If there are concerns about a DSL, these should be reported to the headteacher or principal in a confidential manner. Staff are encouraged and should feel confident to self-refer if they have found themselves in a situation which might be misinterpreted, or they have behaved in a way that falls below professional standards. Low level concerns shared about supply staff and contractors will be notified to their employers. Wize Up will consult with LADO if unsure whether low-level concerns shared about a member of staff meet the harm threshold.

**Recording concerns:** The DSL or deputy will record all low-level concerns. Records will be reviewed so that patterns of concerning behaviour can be recognised and appropriate action can be taken.

Employees must demonstrate the highest levels of professionalism and ensure that relationships with staff and students remain on a professional footing. All employees are expected to treat other colleagues, young people and external contacts, such as parents, with dignity and respect, be a positive role model, treat young people with respect, show fairness in their treatment of young people. All staff must reassure victims of abuse that they are being taken seriously and will be supported. Young people should never be made to feel ashamed or that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual violence, or sexual harassment.

All staff are to understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviour between young people and have a zero-tolerance approach to child-on-child abuse. Member of staff must also recognise that downplaying certain behaviours as “just banter” or “boys being boys” can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviour, an unsafe environment for young people and a culture that normalises abuse. Staff should understand that even if there are no reports of child-on-child abuse in their school, this doesn’t mean it is not happening. Staff should be aware of signs and behaviours that might indicate abuse. Staff might also overhear conversations that suggest a child has been harmed or might receive a report from a friend of the child. If staff have any concerns about child-on-child abuse, they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or a deputy.

Staff should not make arrangements to contact, communicate or meet with students outside work (this includes use of email, text and other messaging systems).

All employees are required to comply with the equality policy in respect of colleagues, young people and other contacts such as parents. Specifically:

- must not unlawfully discriminate against young people because of their protected characteristics
- must consider how you supporting young people with protected characteristics
- must take positive action, where proportionate, to deal with the disadvantages these young people face. For example, by making reasonable adjustments for disabled children and supporting girls if there is evidence they are being disproportionately subjected to sexual violence or harassment.
- Being conscious that young people with protected characteristics may be more at risk of harm and integrate this into procedures within daily work practices

- providing LGBTQ+ young people with a safe space for them to speak out or share their concerns with members of staff

Unacceptable behaviour such as discrimination, bullying, harassment or intimidation will not be tolerated. This includes physical and verbal abuse and use of inappropriate language or unprofessional behaviour with colleagues, young people and parents. NOTE: Being subjected to harassment, violence and or abuse, may breach children's rights, as set out in the Human Rights Act.

Employees must not misuse or misrepresent their position, qualifications or experience or bring the reputation of Wize Up into disrepute. Such behaviour may lead to disciplinary action and where relevant, referral to the relevant governing body/agency.

### **Criminal actions**

All employees must inform the Deputy Head and/or Pastoral and Curriculum Lead immediately if they are subject to a criminal conviction, caution, ban, police enquiry, investigation or pending prosecution. This information will be discussed with the employee in the context of their role and responsibilities to primarily safeguard the young people and other employees in addition to preserving the interests of Wize Up.

The deliberate falsification of documents is not acceptable. Where an employee falsifies records or other documents, including those held electronically, this will be regarded as a serious disciplinary matter and potentially a criminal offence.

### **Children Subject to Child Protection**

All employees must inform the Pastoral and Curriculum Lead immediately if their children become or are subject to a Child Protection Plan. This information will be discussed with the employee in the context of their role and responsibilities to primarily safeguard the young people and other employees in addition to preserving the interests of Wize Up.

### **Drugs**

The taking of illegal drugs during working hours is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. All employees are expected to attend work without being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs and without their performance being adversely impacted by the consumption of alcohol or illegal drugs.

If alcohol or drug usage impacts on an employee's working life, Wize Up has the right to discuss the matter with the employee and take appropriate action, having considered factors such as the safeguarding of the young people/staff, Wize Up's reputation and public confidence.

## **Conduct**

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.

Employees should not use Wize Up contacts for acquiring materials or services at trade/discount prices for non-school activities.

Wize Up's equipment and systems (phone, email and computers) are available only for school related activities and should not be used for the fulfilment of another job or for personal use. This is unless authorised by the Pastoral and Curriculum Lead. This includes photocopy facilities, stationary and premises.

Illegal, inappropriate or unacceptable use of equipment or communication systems may result in disciplinary action and in serious cases could lead to an employee's dismissal. This list is not exhaustive and includes:

- creating, sending or forwarding messages that would reasonable be considered inappropriate or unacceptable
- committing or implying commitment to any contractual arrangements
- accessing, publication or circulation of illegal, offensive, unacceptable, inappropriate or non-work related material
- any illegal activities
- posting confidential information about Wize up and/or other employees, young people, or parents
- gambling or gaming
- unauthorised use of facilities for personal use during employee's working time

Employees receiving inappropriate communication or material or who are unsure about whether something proposed might breach this policy should seek the advice of the Pastoral and Curriculum Lead.

Wize Up has the right to monitor e-mails, phone-calls, internet activity or document production, principally in order to avoid offensive or nuisance material and to protect systems from viruses, but also to ensure proper and effective use of systems. Communication systems may be accessed when Wize Up suspects that an employee has been misusing systems or facilities, or for the investigation of suspected fraud or other irregularities.

## **Staff room**

Staff have agreed that the staffroom is to be a place where certain facilities are made available for staff in order that they may relax, discuss school matters, meet in both a formal and informal situation and be able to speak openly about a wide range of subjects whilst retaining a level of privacy and confidentiality.

Full time students on teaching practice and childcare students (NNEB/BTec/NQT) may have full access and be able to partake in usual staff routines. Authorised visitors will be noted. All other visitors should be introduced into the staffroom so that a level of security can be maintained.

Children of staff are not a regular issue regarding staffroom use and it is generally agreed that they may have occasional access. The kitchen/washing up area is a shared responsibility for all staff. Dirty cups and plates can be put in the dishwasher but glasses must be washed by hand. The staffroom should be presentable at all times.

It is agreed by staff that parent helpers and students on work experience should not have free access to the staffroom, especially during morning break and dinnertime.

Young people **do not have** access to the staffroom at any time. Young people are asked to knock and wait at the door if a teacher is required. At no time should a member of staff provide a young person with the code or key to the staff room, staff are required to be vigilant to ensure that young people are not able to see the code when being put in. If any keys have been misplaced or the code thought to have been seen by a young person, it is the responsibility of that member of staff to ensure they report this to their line manager without delay. For the reasons of security, the staff room has been fitted with CCTV cameras. As Wize Up are implementing the best to ensure the security and privacy of staff belongings, the school asks that you support this major implementation by securing all your valuables whilst here and adhering to the above to ensure security for all staff.

### **Mobile phones and other mobile devices**

Staff are **not permitted** to take, store or receive images or videos of young people on any personal devices, doing so would breach this policy and as such may be subject to disciplinary and further action from relevant governing bodies/agencies. In line with the Child protection and Safeguarding Policy, staff should not contact students via phone or social media unless permitted to do so. Under no circumstances should staff share personal contact details with students or take students' personal contact details.

Staff are reminded that personal devices while on site are not the responsibility of the school and as such not covered by Wize Up's insurance, for that reason staff are required to not have these items in classrooms or use/operate them during the working hours, except for lunch breaks.

Staff are not permitted to take still or moving (video) images on Wize Up site/s and post on social media, this includes school transport and trips without express permission to do so. **Please ensure that you plan in advance to book the school camera for this task.**



## Social networking

Employees must not access social networking websites for personal use (i.e. non-job related use) during work time.

Access to some journals, blogs and social networking sites is permitted during work time for the purposes of undertaking job related duties only. Employees must act in the best interests of Wize Up and not disclose personal data or information about any individual including colleagues or young people. This includes images. Access may be withdrawn, and disciplinary action taken if there is a breach of confidentiality or defamatory remarks are made about Wize Up, staff and/or young people.

Staff should refrain from communicating with, accepting, or following students or parents/carers via social networking sites, including chat rooms.

Wize Up respects all employee's private lives. However, confidentiality and the reputation of Wize Up must be protected. Employees using social networking websites in their private life;

- Must exercise caution when using information technology and be aware of the risks to themselves and others. Namely the use of social networking sites (snapchat, tiktok, Instagram, Twitter and Facebook), it is strictly forbidden for members of staff to befriend past or present students in this way, such actions may result in disciplinary action.
- Must refrain from identifying themselves as working for Wize Up in a way which has, or may have, the effect of bringing Wize Up into disrepute.
- Must not identify other employees without their consent.
- Must not identify young people at all.
- Must not make any defamatory remarks about Wize Up, its employees, young people, or conduct themselves in a way that is detrimental to Wize Up.
- Must not disclose personal data or information about Wize Up, employees or young people, that could breach the Data Protection Act 1998, for example, posting photographs or images of young people.
- Staff should not use chat rooms to contact young people under any circumstances

## Language and communication with others

All staff are expected to maintain a level of professionalism when conducting their daily duties, speaking to young people, colleagues, commissioners and visitors. Staff must not use any language which would be deemed abusive or demeaning to others sarcasm, making jokes at the expense of pupils, embarrassing or humiliating pupils, discriminating against or favouring pupils is **not acceptable**. Slang or colloquial language must not be used when speaking to young people. Staff are required to be sensitive to cultural differences and refrain from using language, which, although not abusive

may be considered offensive. It is appreciated that this may at times be hard to determine, however staff are nonetheless required to be sensitive to the school environment and cultural make up.

When responding to a student in distress, staff should be mindful of the language they use and should always refer to a senior colleague or the mentor who is better placed to offer appropriate advice.

The persistent and hurtful use of sarcastic, demeaning or insensitive comments towards young people, their parents or carers or colleagues may also be regarded as a form of abuse (or neglect when failing to challenge young people or peers when behaving in this manner) which is potentially very damaging and should be avoided. Any member of staff found to be acting in this manner may be subject to disciplinary action, including but not limited to dismissal.

We require all members of staff to be mindful of **Appropriate Language: child sexual and/or criminal exploitation – Guidance for Professionals** and adhere to the “suggested alternatives” (full document in appendix).

## **Smoking**

According to current law, staff are not permitted to smoke while on site (including e-cigarettes or shisha pens), any deviation from this could result in prosecution and/or a disciplinary. Staff should be aware that any smoking breaks should be taken out of sight of visitors and service users, this applies to both before and after work. Should you not be aware of where the designated smoking area is, please speak with senior management for clarification.

## **Personal letters and on-line communication**

It will rarely be appropriate for staff to write personal notes or letters, or to send e-mail, to individual young people. If a member of staff believes it to be necessary to write a personal note to a young person, they should discuss the purpose and context with the Pastoral and Curriculum Lead and Head Teacher, who will consider the Child Protection Policy.

All staff using e-mail in the context for submitting work need to be aware of the less formal style that can characterise this form of communication and should ensure that responses do not convey an inappropriate tone. In particular, a friendly and chatty style committed to e-mail can easily be misconstrued by the recipient as the 'conversation' is effectively private to just two individuals, with all that this implies. The only email address permitted to use in this instance ends '@wize-up.org.uk', no personal addresses should under any circumstances be given. When using the Wize Up email staff are advised not to delete any communication with young people at any stage as these may later be required.

All staff should keep passwords secure and ensure that no other person can gain access to their e-mail account and maliciously send messages which appear to have been written by them. Since these services can be monitored, they provide a measure of protection for both parties. Should a member of staff receive an email which they believe is inappropriate this must immediately be forwarded to the Pastoral and Curriculum Lead and marked as highly important.

### **Outside of work**

Staff must not engage in conduct outside work which could seriously damage the reputation and standing of the school or the employee's own reputation or the reputation of other members of the school community. In particular, criminal offences that involve violence, possession or misuse of drugs or sexual misconduct are likely to be regarded as unacceptable and could lead to disciplinary action being taken leading to dismissal.

### **Data Protection**

All employees should read and observe the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998. Under this act staff are required to collect, maintain and dispose of sensitive or personal data in a responsible manner (i.e. using the shredder).

Staff should not disclose sensitive information about Wize Up and/or its employees, for example to parents or colleagues. There are exceptions to this; for example, disclosure of suspected or alleged abuse of a young person to the Child Protection Officer or discussion with a person accompanying or representing an employee in a formal meeting. All communication with the media must be made through the Head Teacher or their nominee.

There are circumstances in which staff are obliged to release young peoples data, for example, parents seeking information about their progress or other colleagues at Wize Up.

### **Notification of Absence**

If you are unable to attend work for any reason whatsoever you must inform your Line Manager directly no later than 8.30am by telephone notifying of your absence and follow up the telephone call with an email to HR and the Head Teacher. This email such contain the following details:

- a) Reason for absence
- b) Expected date of return
- c) Have you sought medical advice from a doctor

Should your Line Manager not be available you will be required to follow up any voicemail with subsequent calls until you have spoken to your Line Manager Directly.

Should your absence extend further than one day you will be required to notify us on each day of your absence until a fit note is provided. You will be required to notify the company of your expected date of return.

If you are late in notifying of your absence or fail to notify the company at all you may lose all or part of your sick pay (if off for sickness and injury reasons) and in addition this may render you subject to disciplinary action. Unauthorised absence will not be paid in any circumstances.

### **Confidentiality**

Where staff have access to confidential information about young people or their parents or carers, they must not reveal such information except to those colleagues who have been given clearance to receive such information by the Pastoral and Curriculum Lead.

All staff are likely at some point to witness actions which need to be confidential. For example, where a young person is bullied by another young person (or by a member of staff), this needs to be reported and dealt with in accordance with the Anti Bullying Policy. It must not be discussed outside of Wize Up, including with the young person's parent or carer, nor with colleagues except with a senior member of staff with the appropriate role and authority to deal with the matter. Staff must NEVER promise to a young person that they will not act on information that they are told by the young person.

### **Whistleblowing**

Whistleblowing is the mechanism by which staff can voice their concerns, made in good faith, without fear of repercussion. For full details, please refer to the school's Whistle Blowing Policy. Staff should acknowledge their individual responsibilities to bring matters of concern to the attention of senior leadership and/or relevant external agencies. This is particularly important where the welfare of children/young people may be at risk.

### **Staff dress code**

A person's dress and appearance are matters of personal choice and self-expression. However, staff should recognise that they are role models to the children/young people and their choice of dress should uphold the school's expectations for the children/young people.

Staff must ensure they are dressed decently, safely and appropriately for the tasks they undertake without exposing undergarments. For the purpose of safety, staff are not permitted to wear sliders, flip flops or backless sandals;

all footwear must be secure and not open backed. Those who dress or appear in a manner which could be considered as inappropriate could render themselves vulnerable to criticism or allegations of misconduct. Staff should not dress in a manner which could be deemed offensive, revealing or sexually provocative and should absent from political or other contentious slogans. Whilst it is not possible to list every possible clothing option here, it is hoped that staff will support the staff code of conduct and will dress in a way that reflects a professional appearance.

The wearing of casual items such as jeans, sports clothing, football team clothing or items of clothing that could be deemed by others as too revealing are not permitted. Due to the impressionable nature of young children, Wize Up would appreciate that tattoos and other body art are covered up whilst in school.

Staff should wear PE clothes and trainers when teaching PE and Games lessons. To be consistent with the expectations for the young people, staff should change into these for the morning or afternoon session whenever the lesson is taught and PE clothes should not be worn throughout the day. Teaching assistants attending to support the learning of pupils in a PE or Games lesson should at a minimum have a change of appropriate shoes (sliders or flip flops are not acceptable nor safe footwear).

Jewellery should be kept to a minimum, hooped earrings must not be worn for health and safety reasons

### **Physical Contact**

Physical contact may be misconstrued by a young person, parent or observer. Touching young people, including well-intentioned informal and formal gestures such as putting a hand on the shoulder or arm, can, if repeated regularly, lead to questions being raised. Staff must not make gratuitous physical contact with young peoples and should avoid attributing 'touching' to their teaching style as a way of relating to young people.

There will be occasions when physical contact will be acceptable. In general, these will fall into one of three categories:

#### Action to prevent harm or injury to the young people or to others.

If it is necessary to prevent a young people causing injury to him/herself or to others the use of minimum force and contact necessary to prevent harm or injury is acceptable and defensible. Such incidents must always be reported (see reporting incidents below). Further advice is contained in the policy: Physical intervention policy for Employees Working with Young People

#### Comforting a young people in distress.

There is no easy definition of what is acceptable since much will depend on the circumstances, the age of the young person, the extent and cause of the distress and the alternative means of providing comfort. Employees will need

to use their professional judgement and discretion in relation to these factors. Employees should consider how others might perceive the action, even if no one else is present, and ensure that it does not develop into unnecessary contact. Particular care must be taken in instances, which involve the same young people over a period of time.

#### Unavoidable contact.

This is a particularly sensitive issue in subjects such as Physical Education and Drama and in some forms of skills coaching. All teachers/lead workers must be alert to the possibilities of misinterpreting any contact. To avoid such misunderstanding all planned contact must be demonstrably unavoidable. It may be, for example, that alternative methods involving demonstrations of particular techniques by the teacher/lead or a particularly competent young people may be more appropriate than modifying a young people's technique by physical contact. It will generally not be acceptable for physical contact to take place between adolescent young peoples and teachers/lead. In cases of doubt or uncertainty staff should seek advice from the Pastoral and Curriculum Lead.

#### Corporal Punishment

Any form of corporal punishment, or physical chastisement, is prohibited under disciplinary procedures and potentially actionable in law. This also applies to any form of physical response to misbehaviour, with the exception noted in "**Action to prevent harm or injury to the young people or to others**" above.

**An effective way in supporting the above not taking place is for staff to ensure that they model this appropriate behaviour and lead by example with each other. Additionally, members of staff must follow the stress test and ask the following questions:**

- Are they at risk of harm to self?
- Are they at risk of harm to others?
- Could their behaviour lead to them being at risk to self or others?

**If the answer to the above is no, then physical contact is not required and should not be used. For example, if a young person is refusing to follow an instruction such as going into their class, this is required to be followed up as a therapeutic, time out or disciplinary matter.**

#### **Private meetings**

Private meetings, by their very nature, provide opportunities for young people to make malicious allegations. All staff must therefore recognise this possibility and plan such meetings accordingly. It is advisable to avoid remote areas of the school and to ensure that wherever possible the door is left open or visual contact with others is maintained this could also be achieved by ensuring view of the CCTV camera are not obstructed.

Under no circumstances should meetings with individual young people be arranged off the school premises without the prior approval of the Pastoral and Curriculum Lead or any senior colleague with delegated authority to approve such meetings. This includes the transporting of individual young people in private cars. Such meetings should, in any event, be discouraged.

Steps to prevent others entering a room using 'Meeting in Progress' are especially likely to be open to misinterpretation. In many cases it will be advisable for another young person or adult to be present, or to make use of the meeting room which has high visibility to minimise risk during the interview/meeting.

### **First Aid**

The existence of any life threatening, or serious condition will determine the suitability and necessity of physical contact. In the absence of such justification employees who administer first aid should ensure that, wherever possible, other young people or adults are present.

### **Out of School and After-School Activities**

Employees should take particular care when supervising young people in the less formal atmosphere of a residential setting or after-school activity. The staff code of conduct extends to staff working in such settings and activities.

### **Teaching materials**

The use of books, videos and films of an explicit or sensitive nature, particularly in relation to language or sexual behaviour must be given careful consideration to ensure that its selection is not subsequently misinterpreted. There should always be a clear link with the targets of the teacher's programme, lesson plan or scheme of work. Such material should always be cleared by the Pastoral and Curriculum Lead before use.

### **Reporting Incidents**

Staff should report any concerns to the Headteacher and/or Pastoral and Curriculum Lead as soon as possible after the incident occurs. Staff should write a statement outlining the concerns and provide a copy the Headteacher and/or Pastoral and Curriculum Lead. The member of staff may also wish to seek advice from their professional association.

It is particularly important to ensure that a written record is made if any form of restraint has been used against a young person or whenever a young person, parent or third party has complained about an action or expressed an intention to complain.

Below are some summaries of recent teacher misconduct hearings relating to inappropriate contact with pupils, including through social media.

Teacher A (female) prohibited from teaching indefinitely for:

- Becoming friends with a pupil on Facebook contrary to the school's social media policy
- Contacting the pupil through Facebook messenger and email, contrary to the school's social media policy

Teacher B (male) prohibited from teaching for at least 3 years for:

- Sending inappropriate emails to a pupil
- Sending inappropriate messages to a pupil on social media
- Communicating with pupils via personal email

Teacher C (male) not prohibited but findings of unacceptable professional conduct and conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute through:

- Communicated with a pupil by text about personal matters
- Ending text messages to the pupil with 'x'
- Failing to observe proper boundaries appropriate to his position

Teacher D (female) prohibited for at least 5 years for:

- Inappropriate physical contact with a pupil
- Giving the pupil her personal mobile number and maintaining regular communication at weekends and during the school holidays
- Giving the pupil a lift in her car without parental permission
- Actively seeking a mentoring role with the pupil even though she had no pastoral responsibility
- Continued to engage with the pupil inappropriately despite advice and warnings

Teacher E (male) prohibited for at least 2 years for:

- Socialising with pupils outside of school hours including in the pupils' boarding house
- Initiating meetings with pupils out of school
- Took selfies with pupils
- Held a 1-2-1 meeting with a pupil in a room with the door closed, contrary to school policy

Teacher F (male) prohibited indefinitely for:

- Giving a pupil his personal email address
- Exchanging inappropriate emails and messages via social media



- Following the pupil on social media and sharing inappropriate images to social media platforms knowing the pupil had access
- Failed to pass on safeguarding information to appropriate staff after becoming aware of an issue on social media

Teacher H (female) prohibited indefinitely for actions including:

- Sending inappropriate and flirtatious text messages to a pupil
- Failed to take action when receiving sexual text messages from the pupil
- Failed to follow safeguarding training and advice relating to professional boundaries

(Source: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/teacher-misconduct>)

## **DISCIPLINARY RULES**

The following are examples of behaviour which the School finds unacceptable. The list is not exhaustive and it is acknowledged that it will be necessary to exercise judgement in all cases and to be fair and reasonable in all the circumstances.

1. Any form of physical/verbal violence towards young people.
2. Physical violence, actual or threatened towards other staff or visitors to the School.
3. Sexual offences, sexual insults or sexual discrimination against young people, other staff or visitors to the School.
4. Racial, homophobic, transphobic offences, insults or discrimination against young people, other staff or visitors to the School.
5. Theft of School monies or property and of monies or property of colleagues or visitors to the School. Removal from School premises of property which is not normally taken away without the express authority of

the Head teacher or the owner of the property may be regarded as gross misconduct.

6. Deliberate falsification of documents such as signing in sheets and expense claims for the purpose of gain.
7. Acceptance of bribes or other corrupt financial practices.
8. Wilful damage of School property or of property belonging to other staff or visitors to the School.
9. Wilful disregard of safety rules or policies affecting the safety of young people, other staff or visitors to the School (including lack of challenge of behaviour/speech which is unacceptable).
10. Any wilful act which could result in actionable negligence for compensation against the School.
11. Refusal to comply with reasonable instructions given by staff with a supervisory responsibility.
12. Gross neglect of duties and responsibilities.
13. Unauthorised absence from work.
14. Being untruthful and/or engaging in deception in matters of importance within the School community.
15. Deliberate breaches of confidentiality particularly on sensitive matters.
16. Being incapable by reason of alcohol or drugs (not prescribed for a health problem) from fulfilling duties and responsibilities of employment.
17. Conduct which substantially brings the name of the School into disrepute or which seriously undermines confidence in the employee.

The following are examples of behaviour which could lead to formal disciplinary warnings.

1. Unsatisfactory timekeeping without permission.
2. Neglect of safety (including safeguarding) rules and procedures. Some offences of wilful neglect may be regarded as gross misconduct.
3. Breaches of confidentiality. Deliberate breaches on sensitive matters maybe regarded as gross misconduct.
4. Failure to comply with reasonable work related requirements or lack of care in fulfilling the duties of the post.

5. Behaviour towards other employees, pupils, and visitors which gives justifiable offence (use of, lack of challenging hate speech or behaviours). Certain behaviour giving rise to offence may be regarded as gross misconduct.

6. Acting in a manner which could reasonably be regarded as rude, impolite, contemptuous or lacking appropriate professional demeanour. In certain circumstances such behaviour may be regarded as gross misconduct.

7. Conduct which it is considered adversely affects either the reputation of the School or affects confidence in the employee. Certain conduct may be regarded as gross misconduct.

Other policies which relate to this policy include: Anti-Bullying, Behaviour, Attendance, Recruitment and Selection, CRB, Physical Intervention, Confidentiality, Child Protection Policy and Disciplinary procedures.

### **Disciplinary action**

All staff need to recognise that the code of conduct forms part of the employment contract and failure to meet appropriate standards of behaviour and conduct may result in disciplinary action, including dismissal.

I have read and understood the staff code of conduct.

Sign:

Print:

Date:

### **Checking your knowledge**

Please complete the following question relating to your knowledge of the staff Code of Conduct and hand into the main office.

1. Is it acceptable according to good practice to allow a young person to sit on your lap?
2. Is it acceptable according to good practice to befriend young people on social media?
3. Is it acceptable according to good practice to have young peoples contact details or personal information stored on your personal devices?
4. Is it acceptable according to good practice to accept gifts from young people?
5. Is it acceptable according to good practice to give young people gifts of any type?
6. What is the definition of a low level concern?

7. Provide an example of what you would consider a low level concern which is not already listed:
8. Is it acceptable according to good practice to at any point have physical contact with young people?
9. Who is the designated safeguarding officer?
10. How do you report absence from work?
11. Who do you report concerns about a young person to?
12. What do you do if you have concerns about a member of staff?
13. How long do the items in this policy remain in place in relation to your employment?
14. What approach and attitude must be taken when dealing with disclosures or concerns of abuse?
15. What steps should you take to keep yourself and young people safe during private meetings?
16. Do staff have a duty to teach about safeguarding, including but not limited to healthy relationships?

17. What are the stress test questions that should be considered prior to physical intervention taking place?
  
18. What email address can be used if and when contacting young people or their parents?
  
19. What information, other than a direct disclosure may lead to a concern of abuse being raised?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
20. According to good practice, when communicating with young people what should you be mindful of and take into account?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
21. Whose responsibility is safeguarding?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
22. How can domestic abuse impact a young person?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
23. What items of clothing are not permitted to be worn by staff at Wize Up?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
24. What can lead to an infringement of a young persons human rights?

25. What is likely to happen if this document is not adhered to by members of staff?

Print:

Sign:

Date:

These questions were reviewed by:

on: