



Wetherby School  
Little Wetherby and Reception  
19 Pembridge Villas  
London  
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Wetherby School  
Years 1, 2 and 3  
11 Pembridge Square  
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# Staff Code of Conduct

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**Policy reviewed by:** Mark Snell

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**Submission:** June 2021

**Policy actioned from:** September 2021 – August 2022

**Next review date:** June 2022

**Reviewer's Signature:** 

**Head Teacher's Signature:** 

**Circulation:** This policy has been adopted by the governors, is addressed to all members of staff and volunteers, is available to parents on request. It applies wherever staff or volunteers are working with boys.

Please note: 'School' refers to Wetherby School; 'parents' refers to parents, guardians and carer



# Wetherby School

## Staff Code of Conduct

### INTRODUCTION

**Under the statutory guidance document ‘Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2021’ Wetherby School is required to set out a staff code of conduct policy for school employees.**

Wetherby School seeks to provide a safe and supportive environment consistent with the aims of the school. This document clarifies what is expected in terms of professional behaviour but must also be read in conjunction with the staff handbook, the school’s policies and the Alpha Plus Group policies, all of which are available on the policy portal.

### Core Principles

- The safety and well-being of every boy at Wetherby School are of paramount importance.
- Staff are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should avoid conduct that would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation or intentions
- Staff should work in an open and transparent way applying high standards of professional behaviour consistent with all relevant Wetherby School and Alpha Plus Group policies
- All staff should know the names of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads
- Staff should be aware that failure to follow this code of conduct and/or Wetherby School or Alpha Plus Group policies may lead to disciplinary action
- All staff should keep personal and political views to themselves

Every member of staff should read this Staff Code of Conduct Policy in conjunction with the Wetherby Safeguarding Policy.

### PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

**Setting an example:** All staff should maintain high standards of behaviour and conduct and are expected to uphold ethos of the school. Particular attention should be paid to punctuality at the start of the day and for lessons and meetings, smart professional appearance, the use of appropriate language and courteous professional behaviour towards boys, parents and colleagues.

**Confidentiality:** Staff are expected to treat information they receive about boys, parents, staff and the school in a discreet and confidential manner. If in any doubt about sharing information they hold, or which has been requested of them, staff should seek advice from a senior member of staff. Data protection legislation does not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping the boys safe. Further guidance can be found in the Alpha Plus Data Protection Policy which is available via the portal.

**Attendance and Timekeeping:** All staff should arrive at school in good time to begin work at the requisite time. Arrival at registration, lessons, meetings etc. should be punctual and set a good example to boys and colleagues. Should a member of staff need to be absent or expect to be late for any reason, he/she should ask the Headmaster or Deputy Head in advance when possible. If this is not possible, he/she is asked to send a text message or telephone the Deputy Head at the earliest opportunity, preferably before 7.30 a.m. Further details are available in the staff handbook.

**Smoking, Alcohol and Drugs:** Wetherby School is a smoke-free school and smoking is not allowed on the premises. Alcohol may not be consumed in working hours. Employees' conduct and performance must not be adversely impacted by alcohol or drugs when undertaking their duties. Full details of the school regulations may be found in the Alpha Plus Group Alcohol and Drugs Policy which is available via the portal.

**Eating and drinking:** Staff are asked to confine eating to the staff room, dining room or their classroom (when no boys are present). Please ensure that any used plates and cups are put in the dishwasher in the staff room after use. Hot drinks should not be taken to classrooms or public areas where boys may be present. Drinks carried on the stairs should be in a sealed cup. The school is a nut free zone, so staff should not bring anything that contains nuts for fear of cross contamination.

**Personal Appearance:** The school regularly receives visits from parents, potential parents and others, and naturally wishes to convey an impression of efficiency and organisation. Therefore, whilst not wishing to impose unreasonable obligations on staff they are, nonetheless, required to look smart in appearance. Please see the staff handbook for further guidance.

**Mobility and Flexibility:** Due to the demands and nature of the school, staff should be prepared to transfer upon request within departments either temporarily or permanently, to undertake work of a different nature, providing it is reasonable and safe to do so and the staff member is adequately trained.

**Honesty and integrity:** All staff must maintain a high degree of honesty and integrity in all aspects of their work. This includes the handling of money and the use of school property and facilities, as well as their dealings with boys, parents and colleagues, which should be fair, equitable and free from discrimination. All staff must comply with the Bribery Act 2010 including the declaration of gifts received from parents, suppliers etc. Anything over the value of **£100** must be declared to the Headmaster and included in the gift register. The basic information required is as follows:

- Date
- Your name
- The name of the family or individual who has given you the gift
- A brief description of the item
- Approximate estimated value of the item or items **if over £100.**

If the estimated market value of any gift or hospitality is **in excess of £500**, the approval of the Alpha Plus Group Finance Director is required.

The Alpha Plus Group Anti-Corruption and Bribery Policy is available on the portal.

Reference should also be made to the Wetherby and Alpha Plus Group Equal Opportunities policies.

**ICT Code of Conduct:** All staff must be aware of and comply with the Alpha Plus Group policy on the use of information and communication technology. The full policy document is available via the portal. All staff must ensure they are familiar with the sections covering systems integrity and support, data security, laptop users, passwords, viruses and e-mails, remote working and internet access.

## **SAFEGUARDING**

**Safeguarding and Child Protection:** Staff have a duty to safeguard boys from physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, neglect etc. See full policy for list of forms of abuse. The school's Designated Safeguarding Lead is Anna Dingle. The Deputy DSL at 19 Pembridge Villas is Jemima Jones and the Deputy DSL's at 11 Pembridge Square are Samuel Birch and Abigail Salt. All staff are trained in child protection and should be familiar with the Wetherby School Safeguarding policy which is available via the portal.

**Duty of Care:** All staff have a duty of care to our boys, therefore we are accountable for the way in which we exercise authority, manage risk, use resources and protect boys. All staff, whether paid or voluntary, have a duty to keep young people safe and to protect them from physical and emotional harm.

**Behaviour Management:** All boys and staff have a right to be treated with respect and dignity. Staff should not use any form of degrading treatment to punish a boy, the use of sarcasm, demeaning or insensitive comments towards boys or colleagues is not acceptable. Staff should ensure that they follow the school's Anti-Bullying and Behaviour and Discipline policies which are available via the portal.

**Low Level Concerns:** A low level concern is a concern (no matter how small) that an adult working in or on behalf of the school may have acted in a way that is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work and does not meet the allegation threshold or is not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO. Examples of such behaviour may include being overfriendly with children, having favourites, taking photographs on their mobile phone, engaging with children in a secluded area on a one to one basis, or using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language.

It is vital that staff report any low level concerns to the DSL and/or DDSL who will investigate the matter, address and support the individuals concerned, and record details fully. The school aims to provide a responsive, sensitive and proportionate handling of concerns when raised, whilst identifying any weaknesses in safeguarding systems and addressing unprofessional behaviour and supporting individuals in correcting it at an early stage.

**One-to-one Situations:** Staff working in one-to-one situations with children and young people are more vulnerable to allegations. Teachers and other staff should recognise this possibility and plan and conduct such meetings accordingly. This could include pastoral meetings, sports coaching, etc.

In addition, staff should:

- Avoid meeting with boys in remote, secluded areas of the school;
- Ensure there is visual access or an open door in one-to-one situations, including sports coaching;
- Inform other staff of the meeting beforehand, assessing the need to have another member of staff present;
- Avoid the use of 'Do not Disturb' signs in meetings with boys;
- Always report any situation where a child becomes distressed or angry.

**Social Media:** All staff must be familiar with and adhere to the Alpha Plus Group and the Wetherby School Social Media policies which are available via the portal. In particular, careful note should be taken of the guidelines section for staff. We are all aware of the use of media such as Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, etc. As teachers it is important that we treat these with professionalism at all times. What we post on them may be seen by parents even though we do not intend it to be. Although you are not barred from using such media you are not permitted to connect to current boys or parents and what you do post should always be respectful of the school and not bring it into disrepute.

**Communication with boys and parents:** Staff are not permitted to use their personal telephones to text or call boys or parents. Due to the age of the boys, it should not be necessary for any members of staff to contact a boy by text or phone. All correspondence should be done with the boy's parents. Staff should only use workphones to telephone parents. Staff must not give out personal contact details.

**Physical contact with boys:** There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate and proper for staff to have physical contact with boys, but it is crucial that they only do so in ways appropriate to their professional role. Staff should, therefore, use their professional judgement at all times. Staff should not have unnecessary physical contact with boys and should be alert to the fact that minor forms of friendly physical contact can be misconstrued by boys or onlookers. A member of staff can never take the place of a parent in providing physical comfort and should be cautious of any demonstration of affection. Physical contact should never be secretive, or of the gratification of the adult, or represent a misuse of authority. If a member of staff believes that an action could be misinterpreted, the incident and circumstances should be recorded as soon as possible, the DSL informed and, if appropriate, a copy placed on the boy's file. Reference should also be made to the Alpha Plus Group Physical Restraints policy in Nursery Schools and Nurseries and the Discipline Restraints policy, both of which are available via the portal.

**Sexual Conduct:** Any sexual behaviour by a member of staff with or towards a boy is both inappropriate and illegal.

**Physical Restraint:** Any physical restraint is only permissible when a child is in imminent danger of inflicting an injury on himself or on another, and then only as a last resort when all efforts to diffuse the situation have failed. Another member of staff should, if possible, be present to act as a witness. All incidents of the use of physical restraint should be recorded in writing and reported immediately to the DSL/Headmaster who will decide what to do next. Where this relates to the school's EYFS setting, parents will be informed of any physical restraint used on their child the same day or as soon as reasonably practicable.

**Transporting boys:** The school's policy is that, wherever possible and practicable, private vehicles are not used for transporting boys. If there are exceptional circumstances that make unaccompanied transportation of boys unavoidable, (for example in a medical emergency) the journey should be made known to a member of the senior management team and another adult should accompany the driver.

**Action if a boy is missing:** Please refer to the school's Missing Child policy which also includes the requirements for EYFS missing child in its content.

**Equal Treatment:** We are committed to equal treatment for all boys regardless of sex, sexuality, race, caste, disability, religion or belief. We keep a record of discriminatory incidents. We aim to create a friendly, caring and self-reflective environment in which every individual is valued. We endeavour to contribute positively towards the growing autonomy, self-esteem and

safety of each boy. Our staff undertake regular consultation activities with our boys e.g. through safety questionnaires, participation in anti-bullying week and speaking to children about their experiences at lunchtime and play-times.

**Supervision of Children:** All staff must supervise children in accordance with the school's Child Supervision Policy. At no time is it permitted for a member of staff to leave their class unattended unless it is an absolute emergency and that is the only course of action. When on duty in the playground staff must be active and vigilant.

**Security:** Staff should make themselves aware of all the school's procedures and protocols governing security. Please see the staff handbook for further guidance. Any unexpected, unannounced or unrecognised visitor entering the school or the school grounds should be 'challenged' by a member of staff who sees them by first saying to them, 'Can I help you?' If any person visits the school or is seen taking an 'interest' in a boy(s) in such things as playtime activities, it must be reported immediately by whatever means necessary but at no time leave the boys unattended.

**Bullying:** Bullying, harassment and victimisation and discrimination will not be tolerated. We treat all our boys, staff, and their parents fairly and with consideration and we expect them to reciprocate towards each other, the staff and the school. Any kind of bullying, including cyber-bullying, is unacceptable and the school keeps a record of any incidents. Please see the school Anti-Bullying policy which is available via the portal.

**Whistleblowing:** Whistle-blowing is the mechanism by which staff can voice their concerns made in good faith without fear of repercussion. Staff should report any behaviour by a colleague that causes concern to the Headmaster. Reference should also be made to the full Alpha Plus Whistleblowing policy which is available on the portal.

**Use of Mobile Phones and Cameras:** Photographs of the boys should only be taken by staff on school cameras, school phones or school iPads. Images that are taken and stored on a school camera, phone or iPad should be downloaded as soon as possible onto the staff shared area, where they will be monitored, and then deleted from the memory card. No personal camera, mobile phone or other electronic device should be used at any time by any member of staff to take photographs of boys or to transmit any recordings of boys. Only school hardware must be used for this purpose. Further guidance is given in the school's Photos and Images policy and Mobile Phones and Electronic Devices policy which are available on the portal.

**Communication with parents / carers:** All contact with parents / carers must be made through the group network: emails must be from a group account and telephone calls made on a group phone. Personal phones or other personal contact details should only be used with parents in an emergency on an educational visit and journey.

## **OTHER ITEMS**

**Health and Safety:** Staff must ensure they are familiar with and follow all school Health and Safety policies.

**Mobile Telephones:** Staff may have personal mobile phones in school, but must only use them in the staff room or in a discreet location. They must never be switched on to take a call when staff are teaching. Under no circumstances should staff take photos on their phone of boys.

**Change of Personal Details:** Members of staff must notify the school of any changes in personal details including change of name, address, bank details, telephone numbers etc. This will enable the school to maintain accurate personal details in compliance with data protection legislation and to contact staff in case of emergency.

**Conduct outside 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 or possession or use of illegal drugs or sexual misconduct are likely to be regarded as unacceptable.

**Reputation:** Staff must be careful to ensure that nothing they say or do brings the school's name into disrepute. Staff should not gossip or speak inappropriately about the school, boys, parents, staff or other Alpha Plus Group employees including discussing incidents.

**Work outside school:** Staff may undertake work outside school either paid or voluntary provided that it does not conflict with the interests of the school or affect an individual's work performance. Please note that it is a contractual obligation to gain the Headmaster's permission before accepting any such post or undertaking any additional work. This work may take place after school, over the weekend or during school holidays. All staff must ensure that any documentation required by the Headmaster is completed ahead of these sessions.

**The code of conduct will be reviewed annually**