

Executive Headteacher: Mrs J McKeown

Initial Policy date	September 2018	Next scheduled review	October 2023
Governor approved	29 March 2023	Key person/people	HT
Model Policy		Model localised	Yes
Pupil leadership team review		Y / N / N/A	

CODE OF CONDUCT - Colleagues (including volunteers and governors)

Principles:

This Code of Conduct establishes a set of principles which underpin the expected conduct of colleagues/adults at **Test Valley School** to minimise the potential occurrence of improper conduct and maintain healthy partnership.

A policy of equal opportunity applies to all employees.

The school requires that all colleagues have read and comply with the Code of Conduct. Where clarification is needed on any aspect of this document, this should be sought from the Headteacher / Head of School.

Breach or failure to observe the provisions of this document may lead to action being taken under the School Disciplinary Procedure. This policy is part of new colleague induction.

Any colleague who is subject to a formal investigation of mis-conduct is encouraged to seek support from their professional body and employees also have access to the Hampshire Employees Support Line.

The Code of Conduct is not exhaustive in defining acceptable and unacceptable standards of conduct and behaviour and in circumstances where guidance does not exist, individuals are expected to act in the best interests of the School. At Test Valley, we pride ourselves on the highest standards of collegiate support and professional generosity to which we expect every colleague to adhere.

Current legal procedures and good employment practice will operate the school in accordance with the Hampshire Manual of Personnel Practice.

The Code of Conduct applies to:

- all colleagues, including teaching and support colleagues;
- volunteers, including governors;
- casual workers;
- temporary and supply colleagues, either from agencies or engaged directly;
- student placements, including those undertaking initial teacher training, and apprentices.

References to 'colleague' throughout the Code of Conduct refer to all of the above groups, except where otherwise stated.

Any links within this document to other documents are for ease of use and do not form part of this Code of Conduct.

The Code of Conduct exists in addition to Hampshire County Council's [Local Government Code of Conduct](#).

Practice and Procedure:

Professional standards at work

Colleagues are expected to demonstrate the highest possible standards of personal and professional conduct and behaviour and consistently act with honesty and integrity. The school expects colleagues to treat each other, pupils, parents and the wider school community with dignity and respect at all times and with due regard for the School's ethos and values.

Colleagues must act in accordance with their duty of care to pupils and ensure that the safety and welfare of the children and young people at the school are accorded the highest priority.

Teachers are expected to uphold, their wider responsibilities as set out in the [Teachers' Standards](#), including an understanding of, and acting within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities.

Safeguarding

Test Valley School recognises its statutory and moral duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils and understands that colleagues play a vital role in meeting these responsibilities. Colleagues must meet their safeguarding responsibilities according to the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policies.

Colleagues are required to **wear photograph ID badges at all times** and anybody not doing so will be appropriately challenged.

Appropriate relationships

Pupils

Individuals who work or volunteer in a school environment are in a position of trust. Colleagues should be mindful of the need to maintain professional boundaries appropriate to their position and must always consider whether their actions are warranted, proportionate, safe and applied equitably.

Colleagues should act in an open and transparent way that would not lead any reasonable person to question their actions or intent. Colleagues should think carefully about their conduct so that misinterpretations are minimised.

Colleagues must avoid unnecessary physical contact with children. Where physical contact is essential, (e.g. for safety reasons) the pupil's permission must be gained for that contact wherever possible. In all cases, colleagues should act in accordance with the School's Restraint policy, a copy of which can be found on the school website (Restrictive Physical Intervention).

Any sexual behaviour by a colleague with or towards a pupil is unacceptable. Colleagues are reminded that it is a criminal offence for a person aged 18 or over to have a sexual relationship with a child under 18, where that person is in a position of trust in respect of that child, even if the relationship is consensual.

Parents

Colleagues are expected to interact with parents in a polite and respectful manner and recognise parents' entitlement to express any concerns they may have about their child's learning, safety or wellbeing. Colleagues should not discuss school matters with parents outside school if approached and should instead refer the parent to the normal school communication channels.

Use of IT including social media

Internal e-mail and internet systems must be used only in accordance with the School's Safe Use of ICT and other relevant policies.

School colleagues must take care to protect their privacy and protect themselves from risk of allegations in relation to inappropriate relationships and cyberbullying. **Colleagues must not have any unauthorised contact or accept 'friend' requests through social media with any pupil (including former pupils under the age of 18 and/or those who attend other schools) unless they are family members.** Colleagues must exercise caution when having contact online through social media (including with parents) so as not to compromise the school's reputation or sensitive information. It is imperative that pictures that include other children are not posted online as this represents a serious safeguarding risk. In order to maintain professional relationships with Parents/Carers, and work/life balance, **employees must not share their personal mobile phone numbers or contact details outside of school with anyone other than agreed partners (professional bodies).**

Confidentiality and disclosure of information

Colleagues have a legal obligation to deal with personal information correctly and securely in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation, and other related legislation, adhering to our Data Protection Policy and procedures.

Colleagues must ensure that they do not disclose confidential information to anyone who does not have the right to receive it. If there is doubt about whether or not to share information, advice must be sought from the Data Protection Officer, the Headteacher or The Head of School.

Information obtained during the course of an individual's work should never be used for personal gain or benefit, nor should it be passed onto others who might use it in such a way.

Dress and appearance

At Test Valley School we ask that all adults, regardless of their particular role, dress in a way that is befitting of the School's high standards and inspires confidence in parents, pupils and all members of our community. It is expected that we all dress in a professional manner and to that end, flip-flops, denim or similar material (of any colour) or leather garments (other than shoes) are unsuitable. We ask that all colleagues take care not to wear clothing that may cause embarrassment and as a general rule, if you can see up, over or through it, it is not appropriate. Leggings may only be worn with long tunics or dresses; "jeggings" are not acceptable. Extremes of hairstyle and unnatural colours are unsuitable as are facial piercings. Tattoos must be covered at all times. Male colleagues are encouraged to wear a tie and formal business attire except in specific cases where health and safety is compromised or it has been agreed by the Head. Colleagues on the site team, volunteers and governors may be examples of this exception.

All adults on site must wear ID badges or a visitor's lanyard.

The school recognises the diversity of cultures and religions of its staff and will take a sensitive approach when this affects dress and uniform requirements.

Equal opportunities

The Governing Body of the school is committed to equality for all and recognises that all colleagues have the right to work in a safe environment without fear of discrimination, harassment or abuse.

The school expects colleagues to uphold these principles.

Conduct outside work

Care should be taken by colleague to avoid any conflict of interest between activities undertaken outside school and responsibilities within school. Outside activities must never bring the school into disrepute.

Colleagues must disclose any misconduct or alleged misconduct made against them - including any incidents arising from alternative or additional employment outside of this school. Disclosure must be made to the Headteacher without delay.

Where colleagues are in doubt as to whether there is a conflict of interest advice must be sought from the Headteacher.

Declaration of interests (please complete online form)

Colleagues must declare to the Headteacher any relationship with an individual where this might cause a conflict with the School's activities, e.g., a relationship with a Governor, another colleague member or a contractor who provides services to the school.

Colleagues may undertake work outside school, either paid or voluntary, provided it does not conflict with the interests of the School or affect their performance at work. Teaching colleagues are not permitted to undertake paid tuition for pupils in school as this presents a potential conflict of interest.

Whistleblowing

Colleagues should acknowledge their individual responsibilities in bringing matters of concern to the attention of the Headteacher. The Governing Body of the school will treat all matters of malpractice very seriously and allegations about such matters will be dealt with quickly and with appropriate confidentiality. This is particularly important where the welfare of children may be at risk.

Health and safety

Colleagues must adhere to the school's Health and Safety policy and should ensure that they take every action to keep themselves and others in the school environment safe.

Test Valley School is a non-smoking/no vaping site. This applies to pupils, and all adults, including visitors.

Gifts and hospitality

It is not acceptable for colleagues to give gifts to pupils, any rewards given to pupils must be given in agreement with the declared reward practice of the school.

Colleagues should not solicit or accept any gift, hospitality or other reward from external parties which influences the way in which they carry out their duties or leads the giver to expect preferential treatment. Any gift received that amounts to the value of £25 or more, must be reported to the Business Manager.

Employees are not permitted to participate in additional employment by parents as this represents a conflict of interest eg tutoring.

Use of school resources and funds

The use of school resources, (property and equipment) is for school-related activities only, except where otherwise agreed, and must be used in a lawful manner.