



**THE CAMDEN  
SCHOOL FOR GIRLS**

# Staff Code of Conduct



**Lead Staff member:**

**Approved by full governing body:**

**Review Date:**

**Review Committee:**

Michael Graham

Spring Term 2021

Spring Term 2025

Curriculum & Staffing

## **Staff Code of Conduct**

### **Policy**

#### **1 Introduction**

The code sets out the core values for acceptable standards of behaviour by staff and the consequences of any failure to meet the standards. It aims to ensure:

- Staff are clear about the school's standards and expectations of them.
- Staff conduct themselves appropriately with difficult and/ or potentially compromising situations.
- Staff recognise their individual and collective responsibility to promote and encourage high standards of conduct.
- That the school community is treated respectfully at all times.

1.1 Camden School for Girls was founded for the education of young women, our aim is to provide an environment in which our students can thrive and reach their full potential. In order to achieve this we must be responsive to students, parents and other members of the community, develop our staff and provide high quality leadership and management.

1.2 School Staff have a duty to behave in a way that reflects well on the school, working at all times within the law and according to school and LA procedures. At no time should public confidence in the School be put at risk by the actions or words of a member of school staff.

1.3 Staff should all be treated with courtesy and respect at all times. Everyone is entitled to be treated fairly. Staff should have a positive attitude, manner and appearance and work both effectively and safely within the requirements of their contract.

1.4 This Code sets out the standards of conduct expected by the Governing Body of all school staff. It is not intended to restrict employees in the general exercise of their civil rights as citizens nor in their rights to engage in legitimate trade union activities.

1.5 It is important to read and understand the school's Code of Conduct. All staff have a responsibility to ensure that they are familiar with the policy. If the behaviour of staff falls below the standards in this code the Headteacher/Chair of Governors may take formal disciplinary action, including dismissal.

1.6 The Governing Body will take into account any mitigating circumstances, which may be relevant to possible breaches of the Code.

1.7 If in doubt, about any aspect of the Code or a member of staff is unsure about how to respond to a particular situation, staff should seek advice, guidance and support from their Head of Department, Headteacher or Chair of Governors.

#### **2 Scope**

2.1 This Code of Conduct applies to all staff in the School, teaching and non-teaching. Staff employed through agencies will often have their own code of conduct however the principles of this policy should apply to them when working for and representing Camden School for Girls.

It sets out the standard of behaviours expected of all staff (including the Headteacher). It should be read in conjunction with other relevant school policies and relevant sections of the following:

- The Disciplinary Policy and Procedure
- Child Safeguarding & Protection Policy
- E Safety policy
- Social Media Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Grievance Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Equality Policy
- ICT Acceptable Use Agreement

2.2 Anyone contravening any aspect of this Code of Conduct is liable to disciplinary proceedings under the School's Disciplinary Policy.

2.3 The code does not seek to assess every possible circumstance, and simply because a particular action is not addressed within the code, this does not condone that action by omission. Staff are required to be aware of their professional obligations and act accordingly and reasonably at all times within these boundaries, exercising professional judgement.

2.4 Nothing in this Code of Conduct should be taken as overriding existing statutory or common law obligations. Teachers must have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks, which set out their professional duties and responsibilities.

### **3. Working in the Education Service**

3.1 The School's Governing Body expects that all staff will deal with students and parents with respect, integrity, courtesy and helpfulness. It will not tolerate discrimination by staff members particularly on the grounds of race, gender, class, religious belief, sexuality, marital status, HIV status, disability, age, personal circumstances or any irrelevant criminal conviction. This includes not passing on to anyone information about students and their parents unless there is a requirement for them to do so and agreed by appropriate designated person/s. Staff must adhere to the Equality policy.

3.2 Staff must maintain appropriate professional boundaries, avoid improper contact or relationships with students including former students and respect their unique position of trust as members of staff at Camden School for Girls. If staff have any concerns about a colleague's behaviour towards students, they must report those concerns to the Designated member of staff for safeguarding. Staff must expect that colleagues will report them if they have any such concerns about their behaviour in accordance with the DFE's Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance. When allegations are reported staff must expect the school to follow all recommended procedure, including external referral where necessary (Please see appendix one for guidelines on staff conduct with students).

3.3 The School's Governing Body expects that teaching staff abide at all times by the professional standards set out in the 2012 Teaching Standards or as subsequently amended.

3.4 As well as having a positive attitude and manner, appearance is also important. The Governing Body recognizes that there are many acceptable styles of dress, including clothes worn for cultural and religious reasons. However, it is important that all staff dress appropriately and give a positive image of the school.

### **4. Working with the Governing Body**

4.1 The Governing Body will on occasion make requests of members of staff, for example for information. Contact between individual Governors and staff will ordinarily be through the recognised

management arrangements in the school following agreement by the Governing Body or one of its committees. Governors are bound by their own code of conduct.

4.2 If an individual member of staff wishes to contact the Governing Body, this should be done through the Staff Governors, the Clerk to Governors and the Chair of Governors or the Headteacher.

4.3 Staff should not contact school governors over the Headteacher about personal employment issues. They should speak to their Headteacher and go through established procedures.

## **5 Working with the Community**

5.1 School staff are held in high regard in the local community. Any member of staff representing the school and having contact with the local community should be aware of this and behave appropriately.

## **6. Working with Other Staff**

6.1 Effective schools are those where staff work co-operatively together. Discrimination by any member of staff will not be tolerated, particularly on the grounds of race, gender, class, religious belief, sexuality, marital status, HIV status, disability, age, personal circumstances or any irrelevant criminal conviction. Staff are expected to work together showing respect, courtesy and helpfulness whatever the staff member's position in the school.

6.2 The school will not accept intimidation of colleagues or using offensive, threatening or insulting words or behaviour. It is not acceptable to fight with or assault any employee or stop them from working.

6.3 When staff leave a post they are expected to leave files, documents and records in good order to facilitate the work of the person taking over the position and the smooth running of the school. Any school equipment, book or keys should be handed back.

6.4 Staff have the right to use the school's grievance procedures if they feel this Code of Conduct has been broken or if they feel aggrieved in other ways.

6.5 The disciplinary procedure may be used where the behaviour of school staff falls outside the terms and standards of this Code.

## **7. Working with Senior Staff and Managers**

7.1 Staff must always be honest with their manager.

7.2 If members of staff have a complaint about another employee, they should tell their Headteacher. The school has a grievance procedure to deal with such complaints.

7.3 It is important to have a good working relationship with senior staff. In turn, senior staff should treat staff reasonably and fairly with courtesy and respect, at all times.

7.4 Senior staff should tell staff exactly what is expected of them and should support them in their work, including helping staff interactions with students, other staff, parents and the community, should it be required. They should encourage staff training and development.

7.5 Staff should carry out all reasonable and lawful requests made by senior staff to the best of their ability. Staff should never conceal any matter that should be reported.

7.6 Staff should always tell their Headteacher or other relevant colleague if they change their address or other contact details so that s/he can contact them if necessary.

7.7 Any allegations against staff should be taken up with the appropriate member of senior staff. Staff may also wish to discuss the matter with their Trade Union.

## **8. Working Safely**

8.1 The Governing Body, in conjunction with the Education Authority, will do everything it can to meet any statutory obligations and ensure that the school is a safe and healthy working environment.

8.2 In turn staff are expected to:

- Follow the school's Health and Safety Policy;
- Take reasonable and practical steps to ensure the health and safety of yourself and students and staff you work with and ensure that safety equipment is not misused or damaged;
- Wear clothes which do not put health and safety at risk and to wear any safety clothing and equipment provided;
- Report promptly any accidents or near misses, in the appropriate way;
- Attend any medical examinations required by the Governing Body or the Council;
- Comply with hygiene requirements;
- Not to smoke on the premises;
- Not take any non-medical substance such as drugs that may affect their ability to work
- Tell their Headteacher in confidence if they are taking any medication which could harm their ability to do their work and in particular, never to use machinery if they have taken any medication or drug that may affect their ability to do so safely; and
- Co-operate in all activities, including training, organized to promote safety.

## **9. Alcohol, drugs and substance abuse**

9.1 It is the school's policy that employees must not consume alcohol or take drugs (other than prescribed or over the counter drug) during working hours (including lunchtimes and other breaks) and must not work under the influence of either of these.

9.2 Employees must not present themselves at school or at work under the influence of alcohol or drugs. This includes committing a drink or drug offence which could endanger anyone's safety or diminish confidence in the employee's suitability for continued employment.

9.3 Employees must consult their GPs for advice on the effects any legal medication may have on their ability to perform or conduct themselves at work, and advise the Headteacher accordingly.

9.4 Employees who think that they may have an alcohol, drug or substance abuse problem can speak to the Headteacher and seek support through the employee assistance programme or other support programme.

9.5 Employees must inform the Headteacher if they have a genuine reason to believe that a colleague may have an alcohol, drug or substance misuse problem.

## **10. Use of personal mobile phones, laptops & tablets**

10.1 Staff should not use their own devices in the presence of the children.

10.2 If there is a requirement for staff to take photographs of children for school purposes this must be carried out using equipment provided by the school and with the agreement of the Headteacher in line with the agreed school procedures. Information and images should only be retained for as long as required in line with GDPR and the school's Data Protection Policy.

10.3 Schools should provide employees with school mobile telephones for use on school trips.

## **11. Working with Integrity**

11.1 All staff are expected to work with integrity and honesty. Occasionally, school staff are put in a position where they feel they might be being compromised, for example, over the granting of a contract for building work or the purchase of equipment or over the admission of a student to the school or examination results. If this occurs, staff should discuss the matter with their line manager, Head of Department, Headteacher or Chair of Governors.

11.2 If School staff are offered favours, substantial gifts (worth over £25) or gifts which could be thought to be compromising, they must inform the Headteacher or Chair of Governors immediately, and before accepting the gift.

11.3 If a member of staff does accept a gift, bribe or favour in relation to their work, they could be charged with gross misconduct and if found guilty dismissed from their job. If there is evidence of theft or other improper conduct involving school finance, property or equipment this must be reported to the Headteacher or Chair of Governors, and where appropriate, the police. Such activities could result in a charge of gross misconduct which may lead to dismissal.

11.4 Staff must inform the Headteacher or Chair of Governors, in writing, if they have a close friend, partner, or associate or relative who is providing goods or services to the school and who is applying for a job in the school or who is bidding for a contract in the school.

11.5 If staff have concerns about the integrity of other staff they must report their concerns to the Headteacher or Chair of Governors (please refer to the Whistleblowing policy). They may also seek advice from their trade union.

## **12. Safeguarding**

12.1 Staff must safeguard children's well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions, the local Safeguarding Children Board procedures and the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. Staff must report any safeguarding concerns immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead in

school and/ or the Headteacher. All staff have a responsibility to take appropriate action and work professionally with other services accessed by the school as required.

12.2 Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 places a statutory duty upon staff to report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18. Staff should consider and discuss any such case with the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead and involve children's social care as appropriate.

12.3 Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism. All staff must work to protect children from the risk of radicalisation and be aware that this is part of the wider safeguarding duties in the school. Staff must intervene to prevent vulnerable people being radicalised and report any such instances or concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

12.4 All staff must be fully aware of all of the school policies and procedures relating to safeguarding and how to access them. In this school the relevant documents are located or may be accessed on the Staff Information Site. Given their position of trust, all staff must ensure that they do not put themselves in any situation where their conduct or behaviour with any pupil could be misconstrued. Any allegations of inappropriate contact with pupils will be investigated according to the Allegations Against Staff section of the Child Safeguarding and Protection policy.

12.5 If a child reports any safeguarding concerns to any member of staff, this must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Headteacher. Staff must not promise confidentiality to a child and always ensure that any actions taken are in the best interests of a child.

12.5 The school should promote a culture of openness, trust and transparency. Where a member of staff has any safeguarding or other concern about the conduct or behaviour of another member of staff, the concerns must be reported immediately to the Headteacher and where appropriate to the designated Safeguarding Lead. Concerns about the Headteacher should be referred to the Chair of Governors.

12.6 All staff must be aware that it is a criminal offence under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 (as amended) for anyone to engage in a sexual relationship or grooming for such a relationship with a child aged under 18 with whom they are in a position of trust. It is therefore vital that staff work within appropriate professional boundaries at all times with children and young people with whom they are in a position of trust. If staff are unsure about what action to take or how they should respond to a particular situation they must immediately contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead /Head Teacher. Any concerns about an inappropriate relationship between a member of staff and a student/pupil (irrespective of their age) will be fully investigated under the Disciplinary Procedure for school staff as a potential issue of gross misconduct. Staff must always treat pupils with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, observing proper boundaries appropriate to their position.

12.7 Guidance on Safer Working Practice is explicit that staff should not establish or seek to establish social contact with pupils for the purpose of securing friendship or to pursue or strengthen a relationship. This is important because:

- Such contact can blur the professional boundaries between the staff member and pupil;
- Such contact can compromise confidentiality;
- Such contact can place both pupil and the staff member in a position of vulnerability or danger;

- Pupils at the school may struggle to differentiate between the role of a staff member and friend therefore have expectations which the staff member cannot fulfil in line with the school's Social Media Policy.

12.8 It is the policy of the school that there will be no personal contact other than in certain exempted circumstances between staff and current/former pupils of school age outside the normal school work environment. This includes direct contact and non-direct contact such as telephone, text messaging, email or social networking sites. Any proposed work related contact, outside of the normal working environment, must be agreed in advance by the Headteacher, be recorded and monitored. Unexpected contact with pupils should be kept to a minimum. e.g. brief greeting. Any transport of pupils must be agreed in line with the school policy and always agreed with the Headteacher.

12.9 School staff should use their professional judgement about correspondence received by a member of staff from former pupils, the public or parents or other significant contact should be discussed with their line manager/Headteacher as appropriate and filed with any response in the appropriate school records system.

12.10 Staff should be extremely cautious when using social networking sites outside of work and avoid publishing, or allowing to be published, any material, including comments or images which could damage their professional reputation, the reputation of the school, and/or bring the school into disrepute. Where staff do choose to use social networking sites it is strongly recommended that profiles should be set as 'private' and under no circumstances should staff allow access to pupils, their families and/or carers in line with Social Media Policy.

12.11 Staff should not give their personal details such as home/mobile phone number; home or email address to pupils or former pupils and should be professional at all times in accordance with the ethos of this code.

12.12 If a former pupil requires assistance or some form of help that lies outside of school, they should be signposted to the relevant services. However, if the Headteacher agrees that further contact with the staff member is relevant and appropriate, a clear plan of involvement, including outcomes and timescales must be drawn up and agreed by the Headteacher. The Headteacher must ensure adequate support/supervision is available to the staff member and all contact be recorded. Any agreed contact, assistance or help should only be conducted via school email or phone.

12.13 Where a close relationship develops between a member of school staff and an ex-pupil which may raise concerns about the member of staff's suitability to work with children, the Headteacher should immediately contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for guidance.

### **13. Applying for Posts**

13.1 When applying for a job, staff must not look for any undue favours from any Governor or anyone else involved in the selection process.

13.2 When applying for a job staff should declare any relationships with members of the selection panel.

13.3 There will be an annual declaration of interests from staff at the beginning of each academic year.

#### **14. Political Activities and Public Duties**

14.1 All staff have a duty to behave and conduct themselves in a diligent and professional fashion, they should not let political or other beliefs impinge in carrying out their role or in carrying out a reasonable school instruction. Staff should note that under the Local Governing and Housing Act 1989 there are certain local government posts that restrict political activity. This applies to posts whose salary currently is or exceeds spinal column point 44 (PO5) of the salary for the NJC Employees. Advice should be sought from the Camden Schools HR Team on this matter.

#### **15. Working for Yourself and Outside Bodies**

15.1 The Headteacher or Chair of Governors must be informed and agreement given before you agree to take on responsibilities, paid or unpaid, outside the school during their paid school time. This could include sitting on national, regional or local curriculum groups, editorial boards, or other bodies. Membership and participation in voluntary groups will not normally be of concern.

15.2 Staff must not have another job without the Headteacher's explicit written permission. Any such work must not affect the ability of staff to do their job, conflict with or detrimentally affect the School or weaken public confidence in the school.

15.3 Staff are required to pay the school any fees for work done during school time for lectures, training, articles etc. Staff may keep fees for work done in their own time.

15.4 Staff must not use their position in the school to gain additional employment and may not be engaged in such employment during school time (which includes sick leave), or use school or Council equipment such as telephones, fax machines, information technology, (including e-mail and internet) to carry the work out.

15.5 Unless staff have written permission from their Headteacher, they should not carry out private work for the Council, its clients, tenants or organizations that serve it, except as part of their job.

#### **16. Working with School Property**

16.1 Staff may not borrow school property without the written agreement of the Headteacher or Chair of Governors. Any school property borrowed must be returned to the school immediately when it is wanted by the school or if staff stop being employed at the school. It is the responsibility of staff to ensure that any equipment borrowed from the school is properly insured for use outside school, including in their home and in transit from home to school. Staff are liable for the replacement costs of any equipment borrowed and lost or stolen while outside the school unless a written waiver has been given by the Headteacher or Chair of Governors.

16.2 Staff should not copy or take school software including licensed software for their own use, nor use their own software on school equipment.

16.3 Staff should not deliberately keep money owed to the school or borough unless allowed to by law. If staff have problems with paying the money to the school or borough, they can speak to the Headteacher in confidence.

16.4 School telephones should not be used for personal calls except in exceptional circumstances. All personal calls made outside London may be charged to the member of staff concerned.

16.5 All staff must abide by the School's financial regulations and procedures.

16.6 Staff must not steal or unlawfully damage anything that belongs to the School or to the Council.

## **17. Working and the Law**

17.1 Staff must abide by the law in the course of their employment at all times.

17.2 If staff break the law outside school, in any way that damages public confidence in the school, this will result in disciplinary or other action being taken against them.

17.3 All School staff must produce evidence that you have the right to work and live in the UK, even if you are a UK citizen. The school must have proof of your right to work in the UK before you begin work and intermittent checks will be carried out during employment to ensure compliance with statutory requirements. Sections 15 to 25 of the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006 (the 2006 Act), section 24B of the Immigration Act 1971, and Schedule 6 of the Immigration Act 2016.

17.4 Unless exempt by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) (Amendment) Order 1986, any criminal convictions which occur while employed by the Council and which may affect the ability of staff to carry out their job should be disclosed to the Headteacher or Chair of Governors. The purpose of this is not to prejudice employment but to safeguard the interests of the school, the Council and the employee.

17.5 Furthermore, staff must declare to the Headteacher if they are currently charged or convicted, cautioned or bound over for any criminal offence including driving offences. The purpose of this is not to prejudice the employment of staff but to safeguard their interests and those of the school and Council. The Headteacher will consider their job and whether public confidence may be damaged or whether their job may be affected by the charge.

17.6 If staff find out or think an employee is breaking the law in their work, they must tell the Headteacher – see Section 15.

## **18. Working with the Media**

18.1 Staff should not speak, write or give interviews, which includes telephone calls, to the press about School or Council business without the prior agreement of the Headteacher or Chair of Governors. The Council has a press office which deals with the media and their advice should be sought before statements are made. The press office will deal with all media enquiries on the behalf of staff if needed.

18.2 Staff may speak on behalf of one of the Governing Body's recognised Trade Unions in pursuit of legitimate industrial relations activities without the agreement of the Headteacher or Chair of Governors.

18.3 If in doubt staff should consult their Head of Department, Headteacher or Chair of Governors.

## **19. Misconduct**

19.1. This Code of Conduct also sets out the standards of behaviour expected from all members of staff and staff should understand that disciplinary action, may be taken under the school's disciplinary policy and procedures, including where appropriate dismissal, if standards of behaviour and conduct fall below those outlined in the Code.

19.2 Guidance on misconduct can be found in the school disciplinary policy and procedures.

## **20. Whistleblowing**

20.1 If staff believe there has been any fraud, irregularity, corruption or the law has been broken please refer to the school whistleblowing policy. In addition to contacting the Headteacher or Chair of Governors through the Clerk to Governors there is a call-centre, Expolink, (0800 374199) which can be called where information can be given in confidence. This service is provided by an independent organization and staff will not have to provide their names unless they wish to.

## APPENDIX 1

Teaching staff have a professional duty to understand the impact that their actions can have on young people. As such they must:

- appreciate fully that the onus is upon them as adults to distance themselves from any potentially inappropriate situation
- avoid inappropriate remarks towards a student regardless of the age of the student or apparent consent of the student
- not attempt to establish an inappropriate relationship with the student by any means
- take care to avoid becoming personally involved in students' personal affairs
- be aware of the potential dangers of being alone with a student in a private or isolated situation, avoiding circumstances which are or could be perceived to be of an inappropriate nature.
- not have contact with current students on social networking websites and exercise caution if contacting ex-students
- ensure that students do not have access to their personal telephone numbers
- avoid inappropriate physical contact with students, unless in the context of Physical Restraint.
- only take photographs of students involved in school activities with others, and only after checking that parents/carers have given their permission for photographs to be taken of their child. When photographs are taken school equipment should be used and personal phones or cameras not used.
- report any colleague whom we believe to be involved in any form of inappropriate behaviour with students
- on school visits staff must not overstep professional boundaries which can be less formal in nature
- on school visits staff must have a full knowledge of and comply with, the procedures and guidelines laid down for these activities
- staff may only use their cars to transport students if:
  - i) they have the relevant insurance (staff should check with their company)
  - ii) they have received written permission from the student's parent/carer