Hampton Court House

Staff Code of Conduct

Last Updated: July 2026

Next Review: July 2027

Updated by ACB / TLO

Contents

Introduction 3
Underpinning Principles 3
Principles of Professional Practice 4
Confidentiality 4
Propriety, Behaviour, Reputation and Appearance 5
Gifts 6
Infatuations and Crushes 6
Social Contact and Social Networking 6
Physical Contact and Personal Privacy 6
Behaviour Management and Physical Intervention 7
Sexual Contact with Children and Young People and Abuse of Trust 8
One-to-One Situations and Meetings with Pupils 8
Transporting Pupils 8
Educational Visits and School Clubs 9
First Aid and Medication 9
Photography, Videos and other Creative Arts 9
Internet Use and Electronic Communication 10
Curriculum 10
Sharing Low Level Concerns and Recording Incidents 10
Child Safeguarding Competencies for staff and volunteers who work with Children and Young People 11

Introduction

1. Hampton Court House fosters a culture of the highest professional standards. This Code of Conduct sets out the standards expected and the duty upon staff to abide by it. All staff have a duty to keep pupils and themselves safe and to protect them from physical and emotional harm. This duty is, in part, exercised through the development of respectful, caring and professional relationships between adults and pupils and behaviour by adults that demonstrate integrity, maturity and good judgement. Following this Code of Conduct will help to safeguard staff from being maliciously, falsely or mistakenly suspected or accused of professional misconduct in relation to members of the HCH community (pupils and staff).

2. Staff must feel able to raise issues of concern and everyone must fully recognise the duty to do so particularly in terms of safeguarding. A member of staff who, in good faith, "whistle blows" or makes a public interest disclosure will have the protection of the relevant legislation.

3. This Code of Conduct cannot provide a complete checklist of what is, or is not, appropriate behaviour for staff. However, it does highlight behaviour that is illegal, inappropriate or inadvisable in relation to pupils. There will be occasions and circumstances in which staff have to make decisions or take action in the best interests of the pupil where no specific guidance has been given. Adults are expected to make responsible and informed judgements about their own behaviour in order to secure the best interests and welfare of the pupils in their charge.

4. Qualified teachers must by law be registered with the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA).

5. References obtained will also ask about any allegations made against individuals and whether any disciplinaries are in progress.

6. This Code of Conduct forms part of the school's disciplinary rules for staff. A serious breach of the Code will be regarded as gross misconduct. A less serious breach may result in a disciplinary warning.

7. Where an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff the school will follow the procedure in the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy based on the guidance set out in Keeping children safe in education. This guidance is about managing allegations that might indicate that a person is unsuitable to continue to work with children in their present position, or in any capacity. It will be used where it is alleged that a member of staff has:
    a. behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
    b. possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or,
    c. behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children.

Underpinning Principles

8. The welfare of the child is paramount.

9. Staff should understand their responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils.

10. Staff are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions.

11. Staff should work, and be seen to work, in an open and transparent way.

12. Staff should acknowledge that deliberately invented/malicious allegations are extremely rare and that all concerns should be reported and recorded.

13. Staff should discuss and/or take advice promptly from the Principal if they have acted in a way which may give rise to concern.

14. Staff should apply the same professional standards regardless of culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and sexual orientation.

15. Staff should not consume or be under the influence of alcohol or any substance, including prescribed medication, which may affect their ability to care for children.

16. Staff should be aware that breaches of the law and other professional guidelines could result in disciplinary action being taken against them, criminal action and/or other proceedings including barring by the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) from working in regulated activity, or for acts of serious misconduct prohibition from teaching by the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA).

17. Staff must inform their line manager of any changes to personal circumstances such as mental health or medical as well as any changes that would affect their suitability to work with children under the Childcare Act 2006.

18. Staff and managers should continually monitor and review practice to ensure this guidance is followed.

19. Staff must be aware of and understand the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, including the arrangements for managing allegations against staff, this staff code of conduct, and the whistle blowing procedure.

Principles of Professional Practice

20. Teachers, and those employed in a management position with influence over teaching, must meet the DfE teacher standards and, in particular, actively promote Fundamental British Values: democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect for and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and for those without faith.

21. All staff as appropriate to the role and/or job description of the individual, must:
    a. place the well-being of pupils at the centre of their professional practice.
    b. have high expectations for all pupils, be committed to addressing underachievement, and work to help pupils progress regardless of their background and personal circumstances.
    c. treat pupils fairly and with respect, take their knowledge, views, opinions and feelings seriously, and value diversity and individuality.
    d. model the characteristics they are trying to inspire in pupils, including enthusiasm for learning, a spirit of enquiry, honesty, tolerance, social responsibility, patience, and a genuine concern for other people.
    e. respond sensitively to the differences in the home backgrounds and circumstances of pupils, recognising the key role that parents and carers play in pupils' education.
    f. seek to work in partnership with parents and carers, respecting their views and promoting understanding and cooperation to support the young person's learning and well-being in and out of school.
    g. reflect on their own practice, develop their skills, knowledge and expertise, and adapt appropriately to learn with and from colleagues.
    h. be conscious of the 'all through' nature of the school (with pupils aged 2 -18 years) and may therefore need to reassess the appropriateness of an activity more often than in another setting.

Confidentiality

22. Members of staff may have access to confidential information about pupils in order to undertake their responsibilities. In some circumstances the information may be highly

sensitive. Confidential or personal information about a pupil or her/his family must never be disclosed to anyone other than on a need-to-know basis. In circumstances where the pupil's identity does not need to be disclosed the information should be used anonymously. Information must never be used to intimidate, humiliate, or embarrass the pupil.

23. There are some circumstances in which a member of staff may be expected to share information about a pupil, for example when abuse is alleged or suspected. In such cases, individuals have a duty to pass information on without delay to the designated safeguarding lead (DSL).

24. Confidential information about pupils must be held securely. Confidential information about pupils must not be held off the school site other than on security protected school equipment. Information must only be stored for the length of time necessary to discharge the task for which it is required. Please refer to the Data Protection and Privacy Policy for further guidance.

25. If a member of staff is in any doubt about the storage of sharing of information s/he must seek guidance from a senior member of staff. Any media or legal enquiries must be passed to the Principal.

Propriety, Behaviour, Reputation and Appearance

26. All staff have a responsibility to maintain public confidence in their ability to safeguard the welfare and best interests of pupils. They should adopt high standards of personal conduct in order to maintain the confidence and respect of their peers, pupils and the public in general. An individual's behaviour, either in or out of the workplace, should not compromise her/his position within the work setting or bring the school into disrepute.

27. Staff should dress professionally, no football shirts, ripped jeans lounge wear or clothes which would expose underwear or midriffs. Remember that you are setting an example to our young people and therefore should be modelling a higher standard.

28. All staff are reminded that they must not smoke/vape on school grounds or near school grounds.

29. Personal property of a sexually explicit nature such as books, magazines, DVDs or such material on any electronic media must not be brought onto or stored on the school's premises.

30. Staff must not post material which damages the reputation of the school, or which causes concern about their suitability to work with children and young people on social media, and accounts and profiles should be set to private. Staff must not accept friend or follow requests from pupils or parents.

31. All staff should be aware of the government guidance on workplace bullying and harassment as outlined at www.gov.uk/workplace-bullying-and-harassment. This includes but is not necessarily limited to the following:
    - spreading malicious rumours
    - unfair treatment
    - picking on or regularly undermining someone
    - suggestive or otherwise sexually inappropriate comments or actions (sexual harassment)

    Bullying and harassment can be:
    - face to face
    - by letter
    - by email
    - by phone

- through social media

Gifts

32. Staff need to take care that they do not accept any gift that might be construed by others as a bribe or lead the giver to expect preferential treatment. There are occasions when pupils or parents wish to pass small tokens of appreciation to staff e.g. at Christmas or as a thank you and this is acceptable. However, it is unacceptable to receive gifts on a regular basis or of any significant value. Any gift valued above £50 must be declared to the Principal.

33. Personal gifts must not be given to pupils. This could be misinterpreted as a gesture either to bribe, or single out the young person. Any reward given to a pupil should be consistent with the school's behaviour policy, recorded, and not based on favouritism.

Infatuations and Crushes

34. Adults must recognise that a pupil may be strongly attracted to a member of staff and/or develop an infatuation. A member of staff, who becomes aware that a pupil may be infatuated with him/herself or a colleague, must report this without delay to a member of the Safeguarding team. The situation will be taken seriously, and the adult should be careful to ensure that no encouragement of any kind is given to the pupil. It should also be recognised that careless and insensitive reactions may provoke false accusations. Whilst the risk of infatuation is not limited to younger members of staff, newly qualified teachers must recognise their particular vulnerability to adolescent infatuation.

35. Staff must report immediately to the Principal or Vice Principal Pastoral circumstances where concerns arise. Examples of situations which must be reported are given below:
    a. Where a member of staff is concerned that he or she might be developing a relationship with a pupil which could have the potential to represent an abuse of trust,
    b. Where a member of staff is concerned that a pupil is becoming attracted to him or her or that there is a developing attachment or dependency.
    c. Where a member of staff is concerned that actions or words have been misunderstood or misconstrued by a pupil such that an abuse of trust might be wrongly suspected by others.
    d. Where a member of staff is concerned about the apparent development of a relationship by another member of staff or receives information about such a relationship.

Social Contact and Social Networking

36. Staff in the school should not establish or seek to establish social contact with pupils for the purpose of securing a friendship or to pursue or strengthen a relationship. This includes social networking sites such as Facebook and Instagram, even if a pupil seeks to establish social contact, or if this occurs coincidentally, the member of staff should exercise her/his professional judgement in making a response and be aware that such social contact in person, by phone or on the internet could be misconstrued and may place the member of staff in a very vulnerable position.

37. Staff must not give their personal details such as home/mobile phone number; home or e-mail address to pupils or parents unless the need to do so is agreed with the Senior Leadership Team.

Physical Contact and Personal Privacy

38. There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate and proper for staff to have physical contact with pupils, but it is crucial that they only do so in ways appropriate to their professional role. When physical contact is made with pupils this should be in response to

their needs at the time, of limited duration and appropriate given their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background. It is not possible to be specific about the appropriateness of each physical contact, since an action that is appropriate with one pupil in one set of circumstances may be inappropriate in another, or with a different pupil.

39. Physical contact should never be secretive or casual, or for 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 reported to the Principal.

40. Physical contact, which occurs regularly with a pupil or pupils, is likely to raise questions unless the justification for this is part of a formally agreed plan (for example in relation to pupils with SEND or physical disabilities). Any such contact should be the subject of an agreed and open school policy and subject to review. Where feasible, staff should seek the pupil's permission before initiating contact. Staff should listen, observe and take note of the pupil's reaction or feelings and – so far as is possible – use a level of contact which is acceptable to the pupil for the minimum time necessary.

41. There may be occasions when a distressed pupil needs comfort and reassurance. This may include age-appropriate physical contact. Staff should remain self-aware at all times in order that their contact is not threatening, intrusive or subject to misinterpretation.

42. Where a member of staff has a particular concern about the need to provide this type of care and reassurance s/he should seek further advice from a member of the senior leadership team.

43. Some staff, for example, those who teach PE and games, or who provide music tuition will on occasions have to initiate physical contact with pupils in order to support a pupil so they can perform a task safely, to demonstrate the use of a particular piece of equipment/instrument or assist them with an exercise. This should be done with the pupil's agreement. Contact under these circumstances should be for the minimum time necessary to complete the activity and take place in an open environment. Staff should remain sensitive to any discomfort expressed verbally or nonverbally by the pupil.

44. Pupils are entitled to respect and privacy when changing clothes or taking a shower. However, there needs to be an appropriate level of supervision in order to safeguard pupils, satisfy health and safety considerations and ensure that bullying or teasing does not occur. This supervision should be appropriate to the needs and age of the pupils concerned and sensitive to the potential for embarrassment.

45. Staff with a job description which includes intimate care duties will follow the written guidance in the Intimate Care and Nappy Changing Policy and have appropriate training. No other member of staff should be involved in intimate care duties except in an emergency.

Behaviour Management and Physical Intervention

46. All pupils have a right to be treated with respect and dignity. Staff must not use any form of degrading treatment to punish a pupil. The use of sarcasm, demeaning or insensitive comments towards pupils is not acceptable in any situation. Shouting aggressively or hectoring is not acceptable in any situation. Deliberately intimidating pupils by overweening physical presence is not acceptable in any situation.

47. Hampton Court House rejects the use of corporal punishment.

48. The circumstances in which staff can physically intervene with a pupil are covered by Section 93 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and supplemented by the guidance document Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools April 2026. Staff may legitimately intervene to prevent a pupil from committing a criminal offence, injuring themselves or others, causing damage to property, engaging in behaviour prejudicial to good

order and to maintain good order and discipline. Staff should have regard to the health and safety of themselves and others. Under no circumstances should physical force be used as a form of punishment. The use of unwarranted physical force is likely to constitute a criminal offence. The school has a separate policy on the use of physical intervention which forms part of this Code of Conduct. Please see the Physical Intervention Policy.

Sexual Contact with Children and Young People and Abuse of Trust

49. Any sexual behaviour by a member of staff, with or towards a child or young person, is a criminal offence. Children and young people are protected by the same laws as adults in relation to non-consensual sexual behaviour. They are additionally protected by specific legal provisions regardless of whether there is consent or not. All adults working in the school who have contact with pupils are in positions of trust. The Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act 2003 specifically established a criminal offence of the abuse of trust in relation to teachers and others who are in a relationship of trust with 16 -18 year olds.

50. Sexual behaviour includes non-contact activities, such as causing a child or young person to engage in or watch sexual activity or the production of indecent images of children. 'Working Together to Safeguard Children', defines sexual abuse as "forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening'.

51. There are occasions when adults embark on a course of behaviour known as 'grooming' where the sole purpose is to gain the trust of a child or young person and manipulate that relationship so that sexual abuse can take place. Staff should be aware that conferring special attention without good reason or favouring a pupil has the potential to be construed as being part of a 'grooming' process, which is a criminal offence.

52. A relationship between a member of staff and a pupil cannot be a relationship between equals. There is potential for exploitation and harm of pupils and all adults have a responsibility to ensure that the unequal balance of power is not used for personal advantage or gratification. It is important to recognise that women as well as men may abuse a position of trust.

One-to-One Situations and Meetings with Pupils

53. Staff working in one-to-one situations with pupils are more vulnerable to allegations. Staff must recognise this possibility and plan and conduct such meetings accordingly. Every attempt should be made to ensure that the safety and security needs of both staff and pupils are met. Where such a meeting is demonstrably unavoidable it is advisable to avoid remote or secluded areas of the school and to ensure that the door of the room is left open and/or visual/auditory contact with others is maintained. Any arrangements should be reviewed on a regular basis.

54. Pre-arranged meetings with pupils away from the school premises or on the school site when the school is not in session are not permitted unless approval is obtained from their parent / guardian and the Principal or other senior colleague with delegated authority.

Transporting Pupils

55. Transporting pupils is not advisable and permission must be sought from the Principal for emergency situations only. Private car and vehicle insurance prohibits transporting in a work capacity.

56. If in an emergency, adults should ensure that their behaviour is safe and that the transport arrangements and the vehicle meet all legal requirements. They must ensure that the vehicle is roadworthy and appropriately insured and that the maximum capacity is not exceeded.

Educational Visits and School Clubs

57. Staff should take particular care when supervising pupils in the less formal atmosphere of an educational visit, particularly in a residential setting, or after-school activity. Staff remain in a position of trust and the same standards of conduct apply. The school has a policy on educational visits which forms part of this Code of Conduct.

First Aid and Medication

58. All schools must have trained first aiders/appointed persons. Most teaching staff will receive appropriate First Aid training but, in an emergency, anyone who feels confident may administer first aid. Please refer to the First Aid Policy and Accident Procedure.

59. Medication, excluding EpiPens and similar emergency medication, must only be administered by the designated person in line with the Medication Policy.

60. Staff should not work with pupils whilst taking medication unless medical advice confirms that they are able to do so.

Photography, Videos and other Creative Arts

61. Many school activities involve recording images. These may be undertaken as part of the curriculum, extra school activities, for publicity, or to celebrate achievement. Photos and recordings should only be taken on a HCH phone, clearly displayed by the phone cover.

62. In line with guidance from the NSPCC and Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings, originally published May 2018, we require that written consent is obtained from the parent of a child for any images made such as those used for school websites, productions or other purposes.

63. Staff need to be aware of the potential for such images to be misused to create indecent images of children and/or for 'grooming' purposes. Careful consideration should be given as to how these activities are organised and undertaken. Particular regard needs to be given when they involve young or vulnerable pupils who may be unable to question why or how the activities are taking place. Pupils who have been previously abused in this way may feel threatened by the use of photography, filming etc in the teaching environment.

64. Staff should remain sensitive to any pupil who appears uncomfortable and should recognise the potential for misinterpretation. It is also important to take into account the wishes of the child, remembering that some children do not wish to have their photograph taken.

65. Using images of pupils for publicity purposes will require the age-appropriate consent of the individual concerned and their legal guardians. Images must not be displayed on websites, in publications or in a public place without such consent. The definition of a public place includes areas where visitors to the school have access.

66. When using a photograph the following guidance must be followed:
    a. if the photograph is used, and the child is named, **never** give the surname
    b. images must be securely stored and used only by those authorised to do so
    c. be clear about the purpose of the activity and about what will happen to the photographs when the lesson/activity is concluded
    d. all photographs must be sent immediately to the Marketing Department and removed from personal devices and cloud storage
    e. do not take, display or distribute images of pupils unless there is consent to do so
    f. staff should be able to justify images of pupils in their possession
    g. staff should not take images of pupils for their personal use
    h. images of children in a state of undress or semi-undress should never be taken

i. images of a child's injury, bruising or similar (e.g. following a disclosure of abuse) even if requested by children's social care must not be taken.
j. staff should not make audio recordings of a child's disclosure
k. staff should not take images of children which could be considered as incident or sexual

67. The school has additional guidance on the use of images.

68. Staff should take extreme care to ensure that children and young people are not exposed, through any medium, to inappropriate or indecent images. This means that staff should abide by the school's acceptable use and e-safety policies.

Internet Use and Electronic Communication

69. Staff should ensure that they establish safe and responsible online behaviours, working with local and national guidelines which detail how new and emerging technologies may be used. Under no circumstances should adults in the school access inappropriate images. Deliberately accessing pornography on school equipment will be treated as gross misconduct and may be a criminal offence. Accessing indecent images of children on the internet, and making, storing or disseminating such material, is illegal and is likely to lead to criminal prosecution and may result in barring from work with children and young people.

70. In the case of online learning, all teaching staff should adhere to the written guidance in the Online Teaching Code of Conduct.

Curriculum

71. Some areas of the curriculum can include or raise subject matter, which is sexually explicit, or of an otherwise sensitive nature. Care should be taken to ensure that resource materials cannot be misinterpreted and clearly relate to the learning outcomes identified by the lesson plan. This plan should highlight particular areas of risk and sensitivity.

72. The curriculum can sometimes include or lead to unplanned discussion about subject matter of a sexually explicit or otherwise sensitive nature. Responding to pupils' questions can require careful judgement and staff must take guidance in these circumstances from a senior member of staff.

73. The school is required to have a policy on relationships and sex education, and it forms part of this Code of Conduct.

74. In accordance with the (Independent School Standards) Regulations Guidance 2026 staff should ensure that curriculum delivered upholds the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

75. All staff should refer to the Hampton Court House Prevent Risk Assessment when inviting speakers into school to ensure that they have assessed and sufficiently minimised risks regarding radicalisation. Further information about Prevent can be found at www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance.

Sharing Low Level Concerns and Recording Incidents

76. All staff must be vigilant, share concerns and report incidents. Whistle blowing is the mechanism by which staff can voice their concerns, made in good faith, without fear of repercussion. The following examples give indications of the kinds of situations which should be shared with the Principal immediately.
a. Allows a pupil/young person to be treated badly; pretends not to know it is happening
b. Gossips/shares information inappropriately

c. Demonstrates inappropriate discriminatory behaviour and/or uses inappropriate language
d. Dresses in a way which is inappropriate for the job role
e. Does not treat pupils fairly - demonstrates favouritism
f. Demonstrates a lack of understanding about personal and professional boundaries
g. Uses his/her position of trust to intimidate, threaten, coerce or undermine
h. Appears to have an inappropriate social relationship with a pupil or pupils
i. Appears to have special or different relationships with a pupil or pupils
j. Seems to seek out unnecessary opportunities to be alone with a pupil

75. All staff should familiarise themselves with the low-level concerns section of the school's safeguarding policy.

Child Safeguarding Competencies for staff and volunteers who work with Children and Young People

76. The following competences are necessary:

k. Emotional Awareness
   i. Aware of the range of emotions in self and others
   ii. Demonstrates empathy for the concerns of others
   iii. Listens to and understands directly and indirectly expressed feelings
   iv. Encourages others to express themselves openly
   v. Manages strong emotions and responds constructively to the source of problems
   vi. Listens to personal comments without becoming defensive
   vii. In highly stressful situations, keeps own feelings in check, takes constructive action and calms others down
   viii. Has a range of mechanisms for dealing with stress, can recognise when to use them and does so
   ix. Shows respect for others' feelings, views and circumstances

l. Working within Professional Boundaries
   i. Demonstrates professional curiosity
   ii. Accepts responsibility and accountability for own work and can define the responsibilities of others
   iii. Recognises the limits of own authority within the role
   iv. Seeks and uses professional support appropriately
   v. Understands the principle of confidentiality

m. Self-awareness
   i. Has a balanced understanding of self and others
   ii. Has a realistic knowledge of personal strengths and weaknesses
   iii. Can demonstrate flexibility of approach
   iv. Shows a realistic appreciation of the challenges of working with this client group

n. Ability to Safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people
   i. Appreciates the significance of safeguarding and interprets this accurately for all individual children and young people whatever their life circumstances
   ii. Has a good understanding of the safeguarding agenda
   iii. Has read 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' Statutory Guidance for Schools and Colleges, Part 1: Safeguarding information for all staff.
   iv. Can demonstrate an ability to contribute towards a safe environment
   v. Is up to date with legislation and current events
   vi. Can demonstrate how s/he has promoted 'best practice'
   vii. Shows a personal commitment to safeguarding children