



LISAL

LANCASTER INDEPENDENT SCHOOL
FOR ALTERNATIVE LEARNING

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR ALL ADULTS IN SCHOOLS POLICY

VERSION DATE: NOVEMBER 2023

DOCUMENT REVIEW PERIOD: SEPT – NOVEMBER 2025



CONTEXT: PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This code of conduct is intended as a guide and a help to all school staff and, when applicable, to volunteers. It sets out standards of conduct which staff are expected to follow when within, or representing the School. This code is not exhaustive but is written to assist staff and it is important that staff should take advice and guidance if necessary. If in doubt: ask.

In drafting this code of conduct, requirements of the law have been taken into account as well as School Policies and Procedures. It also attempts to define the required levels of professionalism to ensure the well-being of the School, its staff, volunteers and its community.

The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) should also ensure that all staff are aware of the Code's contents and are fully briefed on its implications. All staff are requested to read this Code carefully and consider the issues which it raises. Any issues should be reported to the SLT who will discuss it with the Chair of Trustees.

Reference to this Code will be made in all contracts of employment, and copies will be given to all staff. In addition, the induction programme for all new staff will reinforce the principles of this Code.

Investigations of alleged breaches of this Code will be covered under the School's Disciplinary procedures and related codes of practice.

This code of conduct should be read in conjunction with our school's policies on:

- Safeguarding
- Whistleblowing
- Grievances and Discipline (in Croner's Employee Handbook)
- Intimate Care
- Positive Handling
- Whole School Behaviour Policy
- Equal Opportunity Policy
- Statement of British Values
- Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development Policy
- Acceptable Use
- Online Safety
- Use of Image

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Lancaster Independent School for Alternative Learning (LISAL) can only be successful in providing children with an outstanding Waldorf education through the behaviour of its staff, volunteers and trustees, whether this behaviour is with children, colleagues or external agencies. Just as we want the students to be themselves, to follow their own path and act with integrity, we also want our colleagues to do the same. This is central to any Waldorf School. As such, the work that teachers and other employees carry out must be done out of freedom and trust. Our actions must not only be derived from obligation, but also as free acts born from personal integrity and a commitment to the children. However, no organisation or culture can function without some basic agreed principles in place. In this vein, this document aims to set out employees' legal obligations, together with some agreed minimum



standards. It is hoped that new staff will find this useful and it will also serve to remind existing staff of minimum standards.

School staff are role models and are therefore in a unique position of influence in terms of setting a good example to all pupils/students within the school. As a member of our school community, each employee has an individual responsibility to maintain their reputation and the reputation of the school. In some circumstances, this applies outside working hours and outside the school premises.

COLLEGIATE AND COOPERATIVE WORKING

LISAL prides itself on its strong Waldorf ethos. Staff strive to work out of principles of anthroposophy. Central to this ethos is collegiate working. Staff are expected to foster trust and professional working relationships by working collaboratively and collegiately with each other. This includes active attendance at and participation in meetings and, where full responsibility teachers are concerned, curriculum development and relevant mandate work. Where decisions do not fall within the remit of one person, issues will need to be debated in an appropriate forum. Staff need to and should be able to express their positive and negative views during the decision making process. However, no community can function and develop without its members making some personal sacrifices for the greater good of the school and the principle of collegiate working. In this way, once a decision is reached, all staff therefore need to remain loyal to and adhere to that decision, even if they represented the minority that opposed it.

It is important that wherever possible, we all use the right channels of communication, both to challenge each other and support each other. Policies must be agreed and decisions reached in the appropriate meetings. Staff are expected to uphold school policies and procedures and raise any concerns about the life or running of the school in a responsible and appropriate way. To challenge colleagues' decisions, the right channel to use is the forum in which the policy or decision was originally agreed or the person who made the decision / wrote the policy.

Telling parents or pupils that you do not support a school policy/decision and / or actively not adhering to agreed policies/decisions are both instances of actions which are unacceptable in that they may undermine colleagues or even bring the school into disrepute.

There may be times when other commitments prevent us from supporting each other, but by and large staff are expected to support each other wherever possible by being flexible, covering colleagues' lessons/duties when they are off sick and taking on occasional additional work. Where there are disagreements or difficult relationships between people at work, staff are expected to talk to each other informally and professionally to try to resolve the differences, using a colleague as mediator if appropriate. Whilst this is not always possible (e.g. where serious allegations are made or in instances of bullying), it is anticipated that the complaints procedure and staff grievance procedure will be used once informal steps have failed to help matters.

RELATIONSHIPS AND ATTITUDES

Staff and Pupils

All staff should understand the need to maintain appropriate boundaries in their dealings with pupils. Intimate relationships between a member of staff and a pupil are now regarded in law as a breach of trust. It is a criminal offence for a teacher or other persons who work with



children to breach this trust, punishable on conviction by a fine and/or a term of imprisonment of currently up to 5 years. This legislation includes all children under the age of 18. All staff should ensure that their relationships with pupils are appropriate to the age and gender of the pupils and take care that their language or conduct does not give rise to comment or speculation. Attitudes, demeanour, and language all require care and thought, particularly when members of staff of either sex are dealing with adolescent boys and girls. From time to time teachers may encounter pupils who display attention-seeking behaviour, or develop crushes on them. Staff should aim to deal with those situations sensitively and appropriately, but must ensure that their behaviour cannot be misinterpreted. Best practice in this situation would be to seek advice from the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) immediately

Staff to staff, volunteers and parents

All staff and volunteers are expected to behave with dignity and respect towards each other. As such, all staff and volunteer should avoid words and deeds that might bring the school into disrepute, or make a colleague feel undermined, discriminated against, harassed or bullied. This includes inappropriate use of racial slurs, and/or sexualised language.

Staff and volunteers should seek to co-operate with their colleagues, providing support, help and guidance as required by them and their line manager, and enable effective communication throughout the School, including with the Trustee body.

All school-related communications (by staff, trustees and other volunteers) must adhere to a professional code of conduct, including that disparaging remarks (in particular any that are not backed up by clear evidence) are refrained from. We also remind all adults to adopt an email policy that *inter alia* discourages copying additional parties into emails unless it is clear to all why they are being included.

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN

All staff and volunteers at LISAL should act in an open and transparent way that would not lead to any suspicion about their action or intent. Their duty to protect children and young people from harm and to maintain professional boundaries is of paramount importance. We expect all staff and volunteer to read and abide by all our safeguarding policies and procedures: Safeguarding Policy, Social Media Policy (within Employee Handbook), Online Safety Policy, Data protection Policy, Acceptable Use Policy (ICT).

LOW LEVEL CONCERNS

Any 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 school.
- does not meet the allegations threshold to consider a referral to LADO.

Low-level concerns will be dealt with appropriately to ensure that a culture of openness, trust and transparency is created in which the school's values and expected behaviour are constantly lived, monitored and reinforced by all staff.

Low-level concerns about a member of staff, supply staff, volunteer or contractor should be reported immediately to the DSL (or Deputy if the DSL is unavailable). Reports about supply



staff and contractors should be notified to their employers, so any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

LISAL is committed to creating an environment where staff are encouraged and feel confident to self-refer, where, for example, they have found themselves in a situation which could be misinterpreted, might appear compromising to others, and/or on reflection they believe they have behaved in such a way that they consider falls below the expected professional standards.

All low-level concerns will be recorded in writing by the DSL. The record should include details of the concern, the context in which the concern arose, and action taken. The name of the individual sharing their concerns should also be noted. If the individual wishes to remain anonymous that will be respected only as far as reasonably possible. Records will be kept confidential, held securely and comply with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR). Records will be reviewed so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified. Where a pattern of such behaviour is identified, the school will decide on a course of action, either through its disciplinary procedures or where a pattern of behaviour moves from a concern to meeting the harms threshold, in which case it should be referred to the LADO.

If the concern has been raised via a third party, the DSL should collect as much evidence as possible by speaking:

- directly to the person who raised the concern, unless it has been raised anonymously;
- to the individual involved and any witnesses.

Drawing on the information recorded the type of behaviour will be categorised and what further action should be taking will be decided. Records of the rationale for the decisions and well as the action taken will be made.

DISCUSSIONS WITH PUPILS, COMMENTS BY TEACHERS

As with physical contact, comments by staff to pupils, either individually or in groups, can be misconstrued. As a general principle therefore, staff must not make unnecessary comments to and/or about pupils which could be construed to have a sexual connotation. It is also unacceptable for staff to introduce or to encourage debate amongst pupils in class, or elsewhere, which could be construed as having a sexual connotation that is unnecessary given the context of the lesson, or the circumstances. At the same time it is recognised that a topic raised by a pupil is best addressed rather than ignored. Systematic use of insensitive, disparaging or sarcastic comments is also unacceptable.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Staff shall maintain the appropriate levels of confidentiality with respect to student and staff records and other sensitive matters. They should take care not to discuss issues of particularly sensitive matters within the School community which could cause distress to School staff, pupils or parents.



ATTENDANCE

At LISAL the expectation is that all staff attend work in accordance with their contract of employment and associated terms and conditions in relation to hours, days of work and holidays. All staff are expected to follow the school's absence reporting procedure when they are absent from work due to illness or injury.

All staff should seek to make medical and dental appointments outside of their working hours or during holidays, wherever possible. All staff are requested to refer to the policy on special leave if they need time off for any reason other than personal illness.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

All staff, council members and volunteers are obliged to familiarise themselves with the Health and Safety policy and adhere to it.

DIGNITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

As a Waldorf school, we strive to establish a strong community with strong moral values among our staff and pupils. Respect for people from all walks of life is therefore essential, regardless of their age, disability, race, sexuality, gender, marital status, religion, beliefs or transgender status.

We also aim to help pupils and students to understand that we live in a multi-cultural society. Staff must support and comply with policies relating to equal opportunity, Human Values Statement, and must help create a fair and inclusive school environment.

HONESTY AND INTEGRITY

As a school we aim to maintain high standards of honesty and integrity. This includes the handling and claiming of money and the use of school property and facilities. All staff must comply with the Bribery Act 2010. A person may be guilty of an offence of bribery under this act if they offer, promise or give financial advantage or other advantage to someone; or if they request, agree, accept or receive a bribe from another person. If you believe that a person has failed to comply with the Bribery Act, you should refer to the school's Whistleblowing Policy.

Gifts from suppliers or associates of the school must be declared to the SLT, with the exception of 'one off' token gifts from students or parents. Personal gifts from individual members of staff to students are likely to be seen as inappropriate and could be misinterpreted by the student or student's parents – especially where gifts are repeated or generous.

APPEARANCE AND DRESS CODE

All staff and volunteer, and any other adults working in school, must ensure that their appearance is clean and neat when at work or representing the school, and that they dress in a manner that is appropriate to their role. All adults are reminded that they are role models for pupils and that their dress and appearance should reflect this. At our school, we remind



all adults not to dress in a way that would cause embarrassment to pupils, parents, colleagues or other stakeholders, such as dressing in a provocative way. If jewellery is worn, it must not be ostentatious.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE, MEDICATION ON SITE AND PRESCRIPTIVE MEDICATION

All staff must understand that, whilst caring for the children at LISAL, they must not be under the influence of alcohol or any other substances. If staff are given prescriptive medication they must ask the GP, or person dispensing the medication, if this medication will impact on their ability to look after the children under their care. If this is the case, they must inform the school. Failure to do so is considered gross negligence and will be dealt as per our Disciplinary and Dismissal Procedure for Teachers policy.

Staff must understand that any medication brought into work must be securely locked away from the reach of children, either in the staff room or a locked cupboard. No medication must be kept in bags that could be accessed by children.

CONDUCT OUTSIDE WORK

As a school that is proud of its heritage, ethos and standing in the community, we take pride in our reputation and expect staff to avoid any actions that may damage the reputation of the school, employees' own reputations or the reputation of other members of the school community.

In particular, criminal offences that involve violence, possession or use of illegal drugs or sexual misconduct are likely to be regarded as unacceptable and acts of gross misconduct. Staff should exercise caution when using information technology and be aware of the risks to themselves and others. Inappropriate use of social network sites may bring staff, the school or the school community into disrepute.

Staff may undertake work outside school, either paid or voluntary, if it does not conflict with the interests of the school nor be to a level which may contravene the working time regulations or affect an individual's work performance.

All staff need to recognise that failure to meet the standards of behaviour and conduct within the code of conduct may result in disciplinary action, including dismissal. As with all environments where children or vulnerable adults are present, staff at LISAL are obliged to notify the school without delay if they are convicted of a criminal offence, if proceedings are brought against them or a formal accusation is made of a criminal offence. It should also be noted that employers must notify the relevant authority when teachers are dismissed or cease employment for reasons of misconduct or incompetence, or where they resign in circumstances where dismissal was a possibility. Where employers judge misconduct to involve a risk of harm to children and young people, they are required to refer cases to the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA). Under the provisions of Home Office Circular 45/86, teaching is a 'notifiable' occupation. This means that the police report any conviction or caution of a teacher to the DBS. Offences involving a risk of harm to children, or to vulnerable adults, are considered by the ISA.



EXPECTATIONS OF ALL ADULTS IN SCHOOL

Personal Responsibility and Professional Judgements

All adults are expected at all times to:

- act and be seen to act, in the best interests of pupils
- act as an appropriate role model
- ensure, as far as is reasonable, the health, safety and welfare
- take into account any specific or additional needs of the pupil
- always report any situation where a pupil becomes distressed or angry
- avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their suitability to work with children or their motivation or intentions
- understand their role in school and take full responsibility for their own actions and behaviour
- not discuss their role or issues related to school in any capacity when using social media, such as Facebook
- never post on-line any text, image, sound or video that could upset or offend any member of the whole school community or bring the school or any professional role into disrepute
- adhere to the confidentiality agreement at all times

Adults in school should always seek to:

- support all human values, without expressing any prejudicial views or attempt to influence or impose their personal values, attitudes, political views or beliefs on pupils

Safeguarding

All adults are expected at all times to:

- read and understand their role as outlined in the Safeguarding Policy
- to know who the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy is
- be familiar with the school's arrangements for reporting and recording concerns and allegations
- take responsibility for recording and passing on information when it concerns the welfare of an individual in the school setting
- report any concerns about as pupil or adult to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy

Mobile Phones and other devices

All adults must:

- leave their mobile phones in the office or staff room. Contractors who need to use their phone during the time in school can do so in the Staff Room or outside. Parents who are only picking up their children are not required to do this, but are politely requested not to use their phones while in the building.

Photography, Videos and Other Images

All adults are expected to:

- follow the school's Online Safety protocols, Use of Image Policy and agreed Acceptable Use Policy
- only take up close photographs of pupils if they are to be kept in their assessment or evidence file, not for distribution in any way

All adults must never:

- take photographs of pupils for any other purpose other than as a record of their learning and activities, or to be used as promotional material (Only with Image Consent given)
- take photographs of pupils on their own personal equipment unless they have a Bring Your Own Devices Agreement (SLT only)



Communication

All adults are expected to:

- not use inappropriate language to, or in the presence of, pupils
- not make, or encourage others to make, unprofessional personal comments which scapegoat, demean or humiliate, or which might be interpreted as such
- encourage appropriate discussions which do not offend or harm other people
- refrain from communicating, making contact with or responding to contact with pupils outside the purpose of their work
- refrain from giving out their personal details to pupils

Transporting pupils

All adults in school must:

- ensure the reasons for offering transport are justified
- plan and agree transport arrangements in advance have an appropriate licence and current documentation including appropriate insurance for the vehicle
- ensure they are fit to drive and free from any drugs, alcohol or medication which may impair their judgement or ability to drive
- report and record any impromptu or emergency arrangements for transport to the school office

ONE-to-ONE SITUATIONS

All adults in school must:

- ensure that, wherever possible, there is visual access and/or an open door in one to one situations with pupils

INFATUATIONS, PHYSICAL AND SEXUAL CONTACT

All adults in school must:

- maintain professional boundaries
- ensure that the way they offer comfort to a distressed pupil is age appropriate and always tell a member of staff when and how they offered comfort to a distressed pupil
- advise members of the SLT of any regular social contact they have with a pupil which could give rise to concern
- avoid any sexual contact with pupils
- report any indications (verbal, written or physical) that suggest a pupil may be infatuated with an adult in school

All adults in school must never:

- change or toilet in the presence or sight of pupils
- use their status and standing to form or promote relationships with pupils which are of a sexual nature, or which may become so
- touch a pupil in a way which may be considered indecent
- make, or encourage others to make sexual remarks to, or about, a pupil
- discuss their personal or sexual relationship with, or in the presence of, pupils

Local Authority Designated

Officer: Tim Booth

01772 536694

For any concerns about adults

The School Safeguarding Team

Designated Safeguarding Lead: Elspeth Mukerji

Deputy Safeguarding Lead: Katie Flasby and Ola Mustapha

Trustee with responsibility for Safeguarding: Maialen Galarraga Gallastegui

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