

THE WESTGATE SCHOOL

Hampshire's First 4-16 'All Through' School

*"The Westgate School is a community of learners where partnerships inspire success for all:
learning together – achieving excellence"*

Headteacher: Mrs F A Dean, MA (Ed)

Initial Policy date	March 2018	Next scheduled review	February 2024
Governor approved	October 2022	Key person/people	HT
Model Policy	Combines MoPP & *	Model localised	Yes
Pupil leadership team review		N/A	

* 'Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings' May 2019 (shared by LADO, December, 2021)

CODE OF CONDUCT (incorporating Code of Safe Practice) (including Volunteers and Governors)

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. This policy should be read alongside the DfE statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (KCSiE) and, 'The Teachers' Standards' (2013, updated 2021).

Principles:

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

Overview and Purpose of this Policy

This document is taken from an update by the Safer Recruitment Consortium of a document previously published for schools by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES). The document seeks to ensure that the responsibilities of senior leaders of educational settings towards children and employees/volunteers are discharged by:

- raising awareness of illegal, unsafe, unprofessional and unwise behaviour;
- assisting adults to monitor their own standards and practice and reduce the risk of allegations being made against them.

It is also recognised that not all people who work with children work as paid or contracted employees. The principles and guidance outlined in this document still apply and should be followed by any person whose work brings them into contact with children. The guidance will also support employers in giving a clear message that unacceptable behaviour will not be tolerated and that, where appropriate, legal or disciplinary action is likely to follow. The school or settings may refer to the document in any disciplinary proceedings.

Whilst every attempt has been made to cover a wide range of situations, it is recognised that any guidance cannot cover all eventualities. There may be times when professional judgements are made in situations not covered by this document, or which directly contravene the guidance given by the employer. Through the School's Induction programme for new colleagues (and volunteers) as well as through regular safeguarding training, all adults in the school will be made aware of the School's expectations for the safeguarding of children and, for safe practice in school. All contractors and outside agencies will also be made aware of the School's expectations and, who to contact if they have a concern.

Principles:

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

- The welfare of the child is paramount
- Adults should understand their responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils
- Adults 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
- Adults should work, and be seen to work, in an open and transparent way
- Adults should acknowledge that deliberately invented/malicious allegations are extremely rare and that all concerns should be reported and recorded – including those defined as ‘Low Level Concerns’
- Adults should discuss and/or take advice promptly from their line manager if they have acted in a way which may give rise to concern
- Adults must have due regard for the Protected Characteristics
- Adults must not consume or be under the influence of alcohol or any substance, including prescribed medication, which may affect their ability to care for children (if an adult is taking prescription medication that may impair their ability to care for children, they must make their line manager aware immediately such that a risk assessment can take place)
- Adults 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)
- Adults should be aware of and understand their establishment’s policies in relation to safeguarding and child protection.
- A policy of equal opportunity applies to all employees.

Definitions

References made to ‘child’ and ‘children’ refer to children and young people under the age of 18 years. ‘Child’ should therefore be read to mean any pupil at the education establishment. References made to adults and staff refer to all those who work with pupils in an educational establishment, in either a paid or unpaid capacity. This would also include, for example, those who are not directly employed by the school or setting, e.g. local authority staff, sports coaches, governors, or trustees.

The term ‘allegation’ means where it is alleged that a person who works with children has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or,

behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children.

The School requires that all adults in contact/working with children in school 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.

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 and should be applied in conjunction with other school policies.

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

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](#).

Making Professional Judgements

This policy cannot provide a complete checklist of what is, or is not, appropriate behaviour for adults working with children. It does highlight however, conduct which is illegal, inappropriate or inadvisable. There will be rare occasions and circumstances in which employees have to make decisions or take action in the best interest of a pupil which could contravene this guidance or where no guidance exists. Individuals are expected to make judgements about their actions in order to secure the best interests and welfare of the pupils in their charge and, in so doing, will be seen to be acting reasonably. These judgements should always be recorded and shared with a manager. Adults should always consider whether their actions are warranted, proportionate, safe and applied equitably.

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 both inside and outside of school – including online. 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.

Positions of Power, Trust and Responsibility

As a result of their knowledge, position and/or the authority invested in their role, all those working with children in a school or education setting are in a position of trust in relation to all pupils on the roll. The relationship between a person working with a child/ren is one in which the adult has a position of power or influence. It is vital for adults to understand this power; that the relationship cannot be one between equals and the responsibility they must exercise as a consequence. The potential for exploitation and harm of vulnerable pupils means that adults have a responsibility to ensure that an unequal balance of power is not used for personal advantage or gratification. This means that adults must not:

- use their position to gain access to information for their own advantage and/or a pupil's or family's detriment
- use their power to intimidate, threaten, coerce or undermine pupils
- use their status and standing to form or promote relationships with pupils which are of a sexual nature, or which may become so.

Adults must always maintain appropriate professional boundaries, avoid behaviour which could be misinterpreted by others and report and record any such incident. Where a person aged 18 or over is in a position of trust with a child under 18, it is an offence for that person to engage in sexual activity with or in the presence of that child, or to cause or incite that child to engage in or watch sexual activity.

Concerns or allegations that do not meet the harm threshold Low Level Concerns

(See Appendix 1)

A low-level concern (whistleblowing) is any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' - that an adult working in or on behalf of the school may have acted in a way that is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work and does not meet the harm threshold or is otherwise not serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:

- being over friendly with children
- having favourites
- taking photographs of children on their mobile phone, contrary to school policy
- engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door, or
- humiliating children.

Low-level concerns may arise in several ways and from a number of sources. For example: suspicion; complaint; or disclosure made by a child, parent or other adult within or outside of the organisation; or as a result of vetting checks undertaken.

At the Westgate school we promote:

- an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about all adults working in or on behalf of the school or college (including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors) are dealt with promptly and appropriately.
- Creating a culture in which all concerns about adults are shared responsibly and with the right person, recorded and dealt with appropriately.
- Enabling colleagues to identify inappropriate, problematic or concerning behaviour early and therefore minimising the risk of abuse

- Ensuring that adults working in or on behalf of the school are clear about professional boundaries and act within these boundaries, and in accordance with the ethos and values of The Westgate School.
- Ensuring that our School Values (to be kind, respectful and responsible) are modelled by all adults in school.

It is crucial that all low-level concerns are shared responsibly with the Headteacher and recorded and dealt with appropriately. Ensuring they are dealt with effectively should also protect those working in or on behalf of schools and colleges from becoming the subject of potential false low-level concerns or misunderstandings. Owing to confidentiality, colleagues who share low level concerns will not necessarily be aware of the outcome of an investigation.

Confidentiality

The storing and processing of personal information is governed by the General Data Protection Regulations 2017 (GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018. Employees may have access to special category personal data about pupils and their families which must be kept confidential at all times and only shared when legally permissible to do so and in the interest of the child. Records should only be shared with those who have a legitimate professional need to see them. Adults should never use confidential or personal information about a pupil or her/his family for their own, or others advantage (including that of partners, friends, relatives or other organisations). Information must never be used to intimidate, humiliate, or embarrass the child. Confidential information should never be used casually in conversation or shared with any person 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. There are some circumstances in which an adult may be expected to share information about a pupil, for example when abuse is alleged or suspected. In such cases, individuals have a responsibility to pass information on without delay, but only to those with designated safeguarding responsibilities or to statutory services.

Colleagues (and adults working with children) must not discuss school matters with parents outside school if approached and should instead refer the parent to the normal school communication channels. Employees must not use their personal mobile devices to contact parents except in an emergency situation.

Conduct

All adults working with children have a responsibility to maintain public confidence in their ability to safeguard the welfare and best interests of children. They should adopt high standards of personal conduct in order to maintain confidence and respect of the general public and those with whom they work. There may be times where an individual's actions in their personal life come under scrutiny from the community, the media or public authorities, including with regard to their own children, or children or adults in the community. Adults should be aware that their behaviour, either in or out of the workplace and including online, could compromise their position within the work setting in relation to the protection of children, loss of trust and confidence, or bringing the employer into disrepute.

Safeguarding

The Westgate 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 when on the school site and anybody not doing so will be appropriately reminded.

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).

All colleagues /volunteers/Governors (and adults on site) are expected without exception to follow the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection policies and practice.

Use of IT including social media

Internal e-mail and internet systems must be used only in accordance with the School's 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. Adults must not use personal mobile devices to take pictures of children.

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). Colleagues/volunteers must not hold photographs of pupils (or adults in school) on their personal devices.

Dress and appearance

At the Westgate 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.

Adults are expected to mirror the high standards expected of pupils therefore, flip-flops, trainers, 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” or jeans are not acceptable. Employees should avoid extremes of fashion or hairstyle and consider covering tattoos when at work. Employees must be mindful of the school’s duty to remain politically impartial and to avoid anything that could compromise themselves in this respect.

Colleagues are encouraged to wear a formal business attire except in specific cases where health and safety is compromised or it has been agreed by the Headteacher. Colleagues on the site team, volunteers and governors may be examples of this exception. Employees are not required to wear a tie and tailored shorts are acceptable. In icy conditions appropriate footwear is encouraged.

All adults on site must wear ID badges or a visitor’s lanyard at all times.

The school celebrates diversity and will take a sensitive approach when this affects requirements of dress.

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 including conduct online.

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 on an annual basis)

Adults working with children need to take care that they do not accept any gift that might be construed as a bribe by others, or lead the giver to expect preferential treatment. There are occasions when pupils or parents wish to pass small tokens of appreciation to employees/volunteers e.g. at Christmas or as a thank-you and this is usually acceptable. However, it is unacceptable to receive gifts on a regular basis or of any significant value; any gifts from individuals that exceeds the value of £25 should be recorded with the Finance Manager. Similarly, it is inadvisable to give such personal gifts to pupils or their families. This could be interpreted as a gesture either to bribe or groom. It might also be perceived that a ‘favour’ of some kind is expected in return. Any reward given to a pupil should be in accordance with agreed practice, consistent with the school or setting’s behaviour policy, recorded and not based on favouritism.

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 working in

Rotherley, The Westgate's Nursery, must declare if they undertake paid work for parents of children in the nursery or school. [Business Interest Declaration \(office.com\)](https://www.office.com/business-interest-declaration)

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.

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.

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

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.

Home Visits

All work with pupils and parents should usually be undertaken in the school or setting or other recognised workplace. There are however occasions, in response to an urgent, planned or specific situation or job role, where it is necessary to make one-off or regular home visits. A risk assessment should be undertaken prior to any planned home visit taking place. The assessment should include an evaluation of any known factors regarding the pupil, parents/carers and any others living in the household. Consideration should be given to any circumstances which might render the staff member becoming more vulnerable to an allegation being made e.g. hostility, child protection concerns, complaints or grievances. Specific thought should be given to visits outside of 'office hours' or in remote or secluded locations. Following the assessment, appropriate risk management measures should be put in place, before the visit is undertaken. In the unlikely event that little or no information is available, visits should not be made alone.

Year R colleagues visiting pre-school pupils should do so in pairs and ensure school adults know their whereabouts.

Transporting Pupils

Employees/volunteers should not offer lifts to pupils unless the need for this has been agreed by a manager. A designated member of staff should be appointed to plan and provide oversight of all transport arrangements and respond to any concerns that may arise. Wherever possible and practicable it is advisable that transport is undertaken other than in private vehicles and with at least one adult additional to the driver acting as an escort. Adults must ensure that they have appropriate insurance cover for use of their vehicle at work and to and from work or offsite when attending courses/meetings.

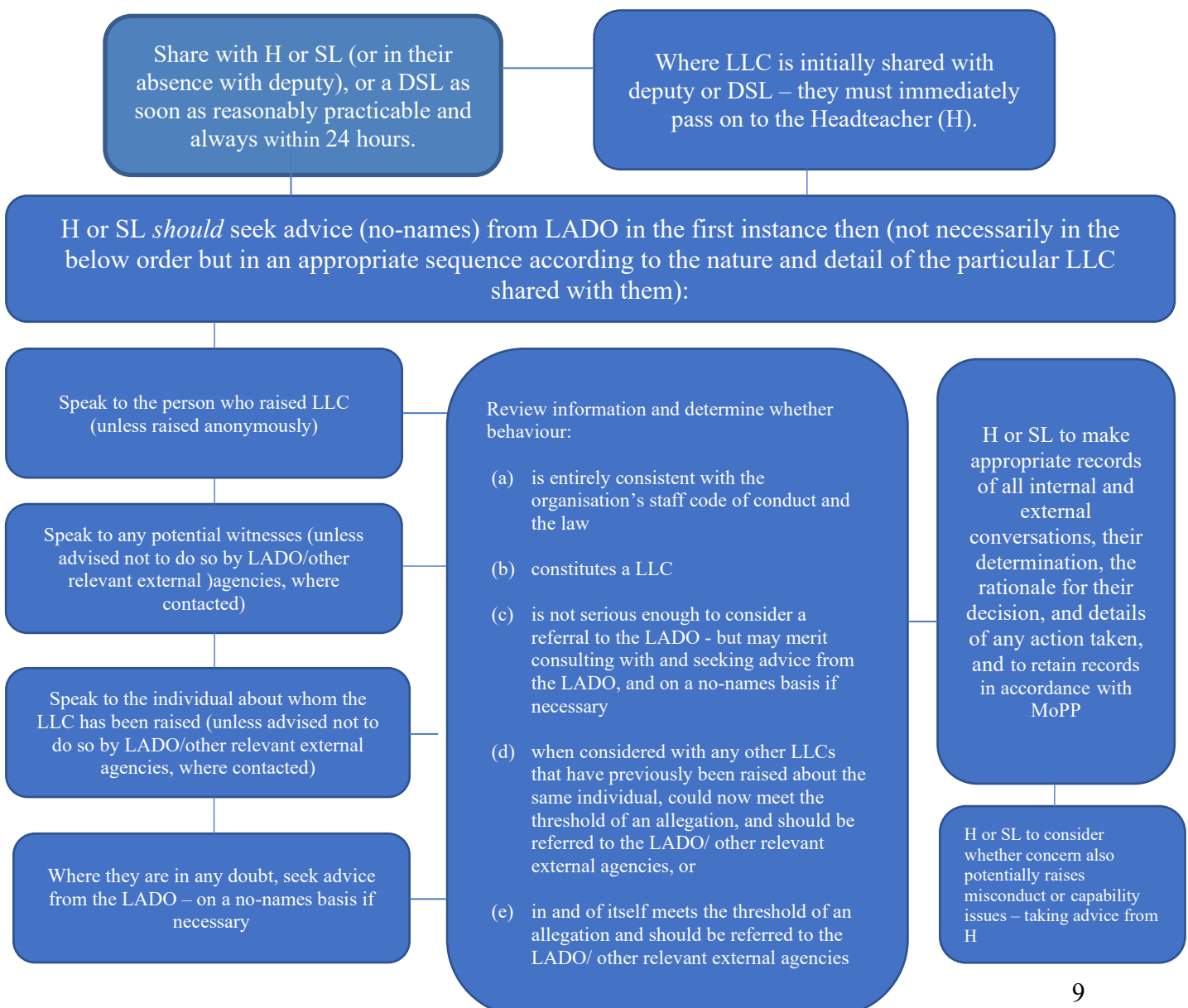
Employees/volunteers should never offer to transport pupils outside of their normal working duties, other than in an emergency or where not doing so would mean the child may be at risk. In these circumstances the matter should be recorded and reported to both their manager and the child's parent(s).

Sharing low-level concerns (LLCs) – Policy Statement and Procedure
 (taken from LADO advice Sept. 2021 & Fareer & Co., (09/2021) ‘Developing and implementing a low-level concerns policy: a Guide for organisations which work with children’).

This appendix sets out the action required by employees, Headteacher(H) or Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), or Senior Leaders (SL). If an employee (or volunteer) has an allegation that may meet the harm threshold – they should follow the procedure in the organisation’s safeguarding policy/managing allegations against staff policy. If member of staff has what they believe to be a concern that does not meet the harm threshold (i.e a Low Level Concern), they should take the below action.

KCSIE 2021 now requires low-level concerns (LLC) to be shared with the Headteacher – unless they relate to the Headteacher/Principal – as per paragraph 74 of KCSIE (set out in our main guidance) in which case, they should be referred to the Chair of Governors.

Action Required





Teachers' Standards

PREAMBLE

Teachers make the education of their pupils their first concern, and are accountable for achieving the highest possible standards in work and conduct. Teachers act with honesty and integrity; have strong subject knowledge, keep their knowledge and skills as teachers up-to-date and are self-critical; forge positive professional relationships; and work with parents in the best interests of their pupils.

PART ONE: TEACHING

A teacher must:

1 Set high expectations which inspire, motivate and challenge pupils

- establish a safe and stimulating environment for pupils, rooted in mutual respect
- set goals that stretch and challenge pupils of all backgrounds, abilities and dispositions
- demonstrate consistently the positive attitudes, values and behaviour which are expected of pupils.

2 Promote good progress and outcomes by pupils

- be accountable for pupils' attainment, progress and outcomes
- be aware of pupils' capabilities and their prior knowledge, and plan teaching to build on these
- guide pupils to reflect on the progress they have made and their emerging needs
- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how pupils learn and how this impacts on teaching
- encourage pupils to take a responsible and conscientious attitude to their own work and study.

3 Demonstrate good subject and curriculum knowledge

- have a secure knowledge of the relevant subject(s) and curriculum areas, foster and maintain pupils' interest in the subject, and address misunderstandings
- demonstrate a critical understanding of developments in the subject and curriculum areas, and promote the value of scholarship
- demonstrate an understanding of and take responsibility for promoting high standards of literacy, articulacy and the correct use of standard English, whatever the teacher's specialist subject
- if teaching early reading, demonstrate a clear understanding of systematic synthetic phonics
- if teaching early mathematics, demonstrate a clear understanding of appropriate teaching strategies.

4 Plan and teach well structured lessons

- impart knowledge and develop understanding through effective use of lesson time
- promote a love of learning and children's intellectual curiosity
- set homework and plan other out-of-class activities to consolidate and extend the knowledge and understanding pupils have acquired
- reflect systematically on the effectiveness of lessons and approaches to teaching
- contribute to the design and provision of an engaging curriculum within the relevant subject area(s).

5 Adapt teaching to respond to the strengths and needs of all pupils

- know when and how to differentiate appropriately, using approaches which enable pupils to be taught effectively
- have a secure understanding of how a range of factors can inhibit pupils' ability to learn, and how best to overcome these
- demonstrate an awareness of the physical, social and intellectual development of children, and know how to adapt teaching to support pupils' education at different stages of development
- have a clear understanding of the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs; those of high ability; those with English as an additional language; those with disabilities; and be able to use and evaluate distinctive teaching approaches to engage and support them.

6 Make accurate and productive use of assessment

- know and understand how to assess the relevant subject and curriculum areas, including statutory assessment requirements
- make use of formative and summative assessment to secure pupils' progress
- use relevant data to monitor progress, set targets, and plan subsequent lessons
- give pupils regular feedback, both orally and through accurate marking, and encourage pupils to respond to the feedback.

7 Manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe learning environment

- have clear rules and routines for behaviour in classrooms, and take responsibility for promoting good and courteous behaviour both in classrooms and around the school, in accordance with the school's behaviour policy
- have high expectations of behaviour, and establish a framework for discipline with a range of strategies, using praise, sanctions and rewards consistently and fairly
- manage classes effectively, using approaches which are appropriate to pupils' needs in order to involve and motivate them
- maintain good relationships with pupils, exercise appropriate authority, and act decisively when necessary.

8 Fulfil wider professional responsibilities

- make a positive contribution to the wider life and ethos of the school
- develop effective professional relationships with colleagues, knowing how and when to draw on advice and specialist support
- deploy support staff effectively
- take responsibility for improving teaching through appropriate professional development, responding to advice and feedback from colleagues
- communicate effectively with parents with regard to pupils' achievements and well-being.

PART TWO: PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

A teacher is expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct. The following statements define the behaviour and attitudes which set the required standard for conduct throughout a teacher's career.

- Teachers uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, by:
 - treating pupils with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to a teacher's professional position
 - having regard for the need to safeguard pupils' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions
 - showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others
 - not undermining fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
 - ensuring that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways which exploit pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law.
- Teachers must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they teach, and maintain high standards in their own attendance and punctuality.
- Teachers must have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities.

