



Whole School Staff Code of Conduct V1.1	
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Introduction

The purpose of this document is to outline the expectations of staff professional conduct at The Hope English School, Sharjah. This document is to be used alongside the Staff Handbook and other associated policies. The Hope English School is fully committed to Safer Recruitment. For further guidance on this, the Safer Recruitment supplement can be referred to.

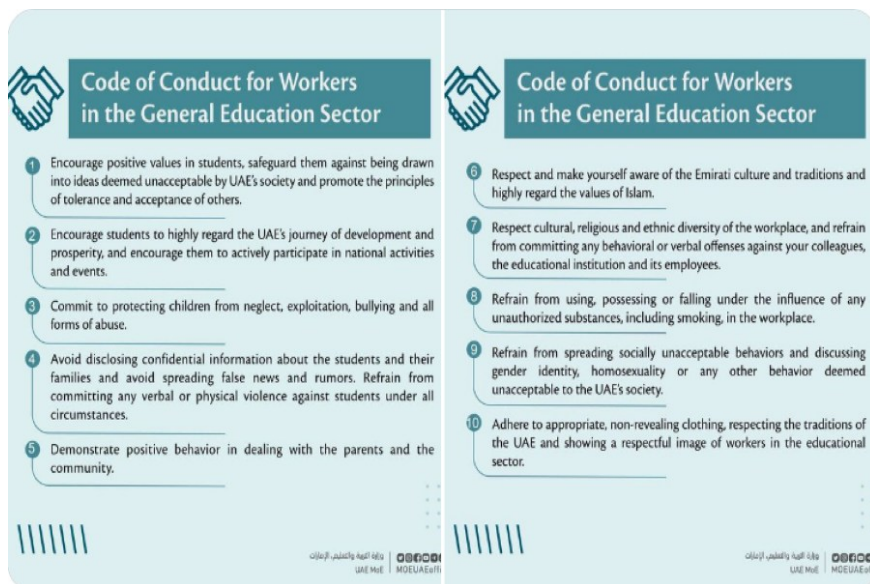
We seek for The Hope English School, Sharjah to be founded on a school culture, environment and ethos that is safe, respectful, inclusive and conducive to the continued success of both our students and staff members.

This Code of Conduct document gives clear guidance on what is expected of standards of professional behaviour that all staff are expected to observe. As educators, all staff in a school serve as role models for the conduct and behaviour of the young people we serve. This means that all staff associated with a school have a responsibility to serve as model members of both the school and local community. This also means that all staff have a role to play in reinforcing and maintaining the positive reputation and standing of the school in the community, whether during, our outside of, normal school hours.

The UAE Code of Conduct for Education Professionals

Staff are expected to adhere to, and sign the UAE Code of Conduct for Education Professionals.¹ A quick summary of this can be found in Image 1, below:

Image 1: A summary of the UAE Code of Conduct for Educational Professionals:



In-line with the above summary, all staff are expected to follow the guidance laid down regarding the moral and ethical standards of the UAE; staff are expected to adhere to communication standards of the UAE, including the non-discussion of topics and subjects that are in contradiction to the moral and ethics of the UAE. It is the individual staff members responsibility to read and follow this guidance as a resident of the UAE. Breach of this guidance may result in severe consequences.

¹ <https://www.moe.gov.ae/en/mediacenter/news/pages/professional%20and%20educational%20responsibilities.aspx>



Aim

The aims of this policy are to support the creation of a positive school environment and culture through:

- Making the expectations of professional behaviour and conduct clear.
- Decreasing the opportunities for abuse to take place.
- Safeguarding both students and staff.
- Creating confidence and trust in reporting concerns.
- Creating confidence that concerns are investigated and deal with effectively and promptly.
- Make clear and empower appropriate consequences for infraction of the standards expected.

Scope and Limitations

This policy applies to all staff employed by the school. It is not a component of the contract; it can be changed at any time. The guidelines laid down here apply to all school activities that a staff member may participate in, including extra-curricular activities.

What are the guiding principles expected of all staff members?

1. Safeguarding of students:

- a. Staff are expected to comply with the school Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- b. Staff must ensure that students are safeguarded from all forms of abuse, including sexual, physical, emotional and neglect.
- c. It is an obligation that staff report safeguarding concerns to the School Safeguarding Team, comprising Designated and Deputy Safeguarding Leads (DSL).
- d. The school's current DSL is the Principal.
- e. Staff have access to the Whistleblowing Policy and Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- f. Staff are expected to treat pupils with respect and dignity: they are not to demean or bring about situations where a student, guardian or colleague is left undermined or publicly humiliated.
- g. Staff are a '*loco parentis*' when students are at school: parents expect staff to support the care and welfare of their children while they are in the care and supervision of staff during the school day.

2. Setting an example:

- a. Staff are to act, speak and conduct themselves in a way that would serve as a positive example for students in the school.
- b. Inappropriate, vulgar or offensive language is not acceptable at all.
- c. Staff should conduct themselves in a way that would avoid putting themselves into situations that put them at risk of allegations of abuse or unprofessional behaviour.
- d. Staff are expected to familiarise themselves, agree to, and follow all school policies.

3. Displaying the character virtues of honesty and integrity:

- a. Staff are expected to display honesty and integrity at all times.
- b. Staff are expected to handle money, school property and use of school facilities with respect, and have the highest standards of honesty and integrity.
- c. Bribing, or the creation of a situation where another person receives a financial advantage over and above another, is strictly prohibited. The Whistleblowing Policy can be referred to in this case.



- d. Gifts to a staff member should be discouraged, for example, from a supplier or outside business contact. When gifts are given, they should be no more than AED 50/- in value and declared to the Principal.
- e. Personal gifts from a staff member to another should be discouraged as these can be misinterpreted. Speak to a member of the Senior Leadership Team for advice on what may be permissible in gift-giving.
- f. Staff are not to act or serve as ambassadors to the school to outside individuals or entities unless they have been asked to do so by the Principal.

4. Appropriate management of 1:1 scenarios:

- a. It is a general guiding principle that staff should avoid putting themselves into a situation where they are alone with a student.
- b. Staff should organise their time, and use of the school environment so that meetings with students are conducted in the best situations where the needs of students and other staff members are well met.
- c. Guidance includes:
 - i. Avoiding 1:1 meetings with students.
 - ii. Ensure that if a meeting is taking place, other staff are aware and are perhaps close by, and that it is done in a visible public location (for example the office door is open).
 - iii. Concerns are reported to a Senior Leadership Team member.

5. Boundaries with domicile arrangements:

- a. Students are not permitted to visit or stay at a staff member's home overnight.
- b. Friendships between a student and a child of a staff member should be disclosed to other staff members, and the friendship should be with the consent of both the parent and staff member (parent).

6. Boundaries with transport arrangements:

- a. Staff are not to transport students in their own vehicles.
- b. Transport of students should take place in school vehicles organised through the school.
- c. Students should not be transported alone: in addition to the bus driver, at least one other staff member should be present on the bus.
- d. If an exceptional circumstance occurs in which an individual student is transported alone, and this is unavoidable, then a senior member of the leadership team must be made immediately aware (for example, an emergency case of a child needing to be transported to a hospital).

7. Boundaries with relationships:

- a. Staff should declare outside relationships with parents, or students. For instance, if a staff member is involved in an outside club or hobby interest that would involve students from the same school, then this should be reported to the school.
- b. Staff should refer to the staff handbook, their contract and UAE licensing for tutoring with regards to possible objections to private tutoring of students as this may reflect a conflict of interest with the school entity.
- c. The only relationships allowed with students is professional.
- d. Physical relationships are strictly prohibited.



- e. Physically touching a child is to be avoided and should only take place when it is in the best interests of a child to avoid harm (say in splitting up a violent incident between students). When touching a child is unavoidable, it should be declared there and then with witnesses such as other staff present.
- f. Encouraging the development of a sexual relationship with a student is an act of gross misconduct that may lead to the staff member being liable for criminal conviction.
- g. If a child inappropriately physically touches a staff member, the staff member should report this incident to a Senior Leadership Team member.
- h. Out of school hours communication with students is discouraged.
- i. Only school-agreed mediums of communication should be used to contact students, for example, through school email accounts, or Microsoft Teams. It is strictly prohibited to use private emails, phone numbers and social media accounts to communicate with students.
- j. Staff have a duty to report when a child has attempted to contact a staff member through any medium outside of school-agreed mediums of communication.
- k. Staff should make known any personal relationships with other adults in the school to the Principal. The Principal will handle this with discretion and respect as long as the relationship does not negatively affect the smooth function of the school. This relationship is to be kept outside of school, and discussions of this relationship, kept away from school.
- l. If a personal relationship between staff members ends for any reason, the staff members concerned are to maintain professionalism and there should be no disturbance to the smooth function of the school or any other colleagues. If the details or the breakdown of such relationships negatively affects the school in any way, this will be identified as a violation of this code of conduct.
- m. Staff have a duty to report to the Principal, any relationship that could potentially increase the risk to children at the school, for example, a personal relationship with another adult convicted of previous serious criminal offences.

8. Supporting the development of students:

- a. Staff must comply with school policies that ensure the safety, wellbeing and development of students.
- b. Staff must follow all reasonable instructions that ensure the continued supervision and safety and development of students.
- c. Staff must cooperate with other colleagues and with outside government agencies that are mandated to support the development of pupils.

9. Safer Recruitment regarding references:

- a. The supplement on Safer Recruitment must be followed. This includes a minimum of two references from any applicant, and those references being a senior member of that outgoing School Leadership Team, such as the Principal.
- b. References should be verified for authenticity.
- c. Reference and recommendation letters are not accepted. Professional emails and contacts for the referees will be contacted.
- d. References for outgoing staff can only be given by a member of the school Senior Leadership Team or Administration who have been identified by the HR as the approved referee.



10. Conduct outside of school hours:

- a. The school does not control or invade the personal lives of staff. At the same time, staff must not behave or act in any way outside of school hours that would bring the school into disrepute or damage the reputation of the school in the local community.
- b. Sexual misconduct and use of prohibited substances such as drugs are strictly prohibited.
- c. Previous criminal offences such as violence or possession of prohibited substances will not be accepted.
- d. The formation of inappropriate relationships with children from other schools under the age of 18 is not permitted.

11. Online conduct:

- a. Staff must be cautious with online technology and online platforms. They should not use online platforms unless they fully understand the platform and possible risks involved.
- b. Staff must follow the school's e-Safety Policy.
- c. Staff are not allowed to engage with social media in such a way that would bring themselves, the school, or the community, into disrepute.
- d. Staff must be cautious with their 'online presence', including previous history, and use of online websites and platforms. 'Liking' a post, an image, a video, or a page generated by another online, may demonstrate approval of, and support for a certain communication or opinion.
- e. Staff are to be cautious with dating websites and online apps, particularly if this may expose the staff member to direct contact with students, or the covert monitoring of a student's online profile.
- f. The posting of online content is to be done only through the school's approved channels, such as the NPE marketing team. Photography is to be done only on school devices, such as a school phone. When photos are taken, this should adhere to the standards of the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy.

12. Handling confidentiality:

- a. Sanctioned confidential information about a student (say the result of a pastoral investigation) is confidential by definition to only the school teams and staff members directly involved with the situation and the student.
- b. When a staff member witnesses certain situations (for example a bullying situation) then that staff member is to seek guidance with senior leadership members of the school so as to report it but also get the appropriate guidance to protect the dignity of the concerned staff or students.
- c. When incidents or situations, or information is identified by a staff member that may be a safeguarding or child protection concern, the staff member has a duty to report this to a member of the Safeguarding Team.
- d. During safeguarding disclosure situations, a staff member cannot promise total confidentiality or that they will not act on behalf of the welfare of that student.

13. Use of phones:

- a. Staff should avoid using personal phones and taking personal calls during school hours, however, logical reasoning should be applied to identify when a situation may warrant certain exceptions, for instance, a sick family member.



- b. Staff should avoid the use and display of personal phones around the school environment, unless this has been approved by a member of the senior leadership team in advance.

14. Wearing staff ID and safeguarding lanyards:

- a. As per the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy, staff should always wear their safeguarding lanyards and IDS around the building.

15. Professional Dress:

- a. Staff are expected to dress in an appropriate smart and business-dress manner.
- b. Staff dress should be accepted with the cultural values and norms of the UAE.
- c. It is expected that male staff members wear a shirt with a collar, tie, top button done and shirt neatly tucked into the trousers.
- d. It is expected that female staff members dress in a manner fitting with the standards of the UAE. This includes the appropriate covering of the body, midribs, cleavage and appropriate covering of legs. Tight fitting garments should not be worn.
- e. Denim is not a permissible clothing material to wear.
- f. PE teachers should wear school PE kits.
- g. Fashion accessories and excessive makeup are not permitted.
- h. Hair colouring should be appropriate.
- i. Males should maintain their facial hair and ensure that it is well kept and tidy.
- j. Facial piercings and tattoos should not be visible.
- k. Flip flops, sandals and footwear that reveal toes should not be worn.
- l. Shoes should be dressy shoes.
- m. Clothing should not be revealing or made of a semi-transparent fabric such as sheer fabric.

Certain rationality and an understanding of the UAE law, customs and values should be understood and reflected. Staff should respect the need for Senior Leaders and Administrative Staff to address concerns in this area, even if it feels unfair. When such decisions are made and communicated, they typically reflect a committee decision between experienced leaders with an understanding of the standards of education, but also, working in the UAE.

16. Non-teaching days:

- a. Non-teaching days still reflect working days. For instance, a school trip, participation in an outside workshop or a Professional Development session still reflects scenarios where the school's reputation and standing in the community is open for interpretation.
- b. Staff should ensure that though sometimes dress code may be relaxed when under the instructions of the Principal, staff are still expected to dress in a manner that upholds the values and law of the UAE.

17. Smoking and use of controlled substances:

- a. The school is a non-smoking environment. Smoking or using tobacco substances in any form, whether cigarette, vape or a chewable item is strictly prohibited. This includes all areas of the school including bathrooms.

For any questions or queries related to the contents of this policy document, the school HR may be approached.