

The Learners Collective – Staff and Tutor Code of Conduct

Statement Authorised By: Managing Director	Mr Rory Gaskin
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Reviewed on:	06/09/2023
Next Review Due:	06/09/2024

Purpose:

This code outlines the conduct and behaviour that is expected from all TLC staff. It aims to maintain standards of conduct and help protect students from abuse and reduce the possibility of unfounded allegations being made against Scholars. This Staff Code of Conduct forms part of our TLC Safeguarding Policy.

We expect all staff to also act with personal and professional integrity, respecting the safety and wellbeing of others.

Failure to follow the code of conduct may result in disciplinary action being taken, as set out in our [Staff Disciplinary Procedures](#).

This code of conduct is not exhaustive. If situations arise that are not covered by this code, staff are expected to use their professional judgement and act in the best interests of TLC and its students.

Legislation and Guidance

In line with the statutory safeguarding guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023, our staff code of conduct covers the acceptable use of technologies (including the use of mobile devices), staff/student relationships and communications (including the use of social media).

General Obligations

Staff set an example to students. They will:

- Maintain high standards in their attendance and punctuality
- Treat students and others with dignity and respect
- Show tolerance and respect for the rights of others
- Use preferred names, titles and pronouns to address and refer to them
- Never use inappropriate, offensive or prejudiced language, including harmful stereotypes, in online lessons or whilst carrying out their duties

- Report all instances of harmful language and behaviour by students, parents/carers, school staff or TLC staff to TLC
- Not be affected by alcohol, drugs, or medication which will affect their ability to carry out their duties and responsibilities during working hours
- Understand the statutory frameworks they must act within

Safeguarding

Staff have a duty to safeguard students from harm, and to report any concerns they have. This includes physical, emotional and sexual abuse, and neglect.

Staff will familiarise themselves with our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and procedures, and the [Prevent](#) initiative, and ensure they are aware of the processes to follow if they have concerns about a child. Information as to how allegations against staff are reported and managed can be found in our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and procedures are available on our website. New staff are also given copies as part of the onboarding process.

Low-Level Concerns

A low-level concern is a behaviour towards a child by a member of staff that does not meet the harms threshold, is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, and may be as simple as causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt'. For example, this may include:

- Being over-friendly with children during online lessons
- Having favourites
- Taking photographs of children during lessons
- Engaging in one-to-one activities where they are not seen by others
- Using inappropriate language

Low-level concerns can include inappropriate conduct inside and outside of lesson time or work for TLC.

All staff should share any low-level concerns they have using the reporting procedures set out in our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. We also encourage staff to self-refer if they find themselves in a situation that could be misinterpreted. If staff are not sure whether behaviour would be deemed a low-level concern, we encourage staff to report it.

All reports will be handled in a responsive, sensitive and proportionate way.

Unprofessional behaviour will be addressed, and the staff member supported to correct it, at an early stage.

This creates and embeds a culture of openness, trust and transparency in which our values and expected behaviour are constantly lived, monitored and reinforced by all staff, while minimising the risk of abuse.

Reporting and responding to low-level concerns is covered in more detail in our child protection and safeguarding policy.

Staff-Student Relationships

Staff will observe proper boundaries with students that are appropriate to their professional position. They will act in a fair and transparent way that would not lead anyone to reasonably assume they are not doing so.

During online lessons, TLC records all lessons for safeguarding purposes to protect both staff and students.

Staff should not contact students beyond the scope required in their role.

Personal contact details should not be exchanged between staff and students. This includes social media profiles and email addresses.

While we are aware many students and their parents may wish to give gifts to staff, for example, at the end of a course, gifts from staff to students are not acceptable.

If a staff member is concerned at any point that an interaction between themselves and a student may be misinterpreted, regarded as inappropriate or a low-level concern, or is concerned at any point about a fellow staff member and a student, this should be reported in line with the procedures set out in our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Communications and Social Media

TLC conducts social media checks on prospective and current staff in line with the guidance from KCSIE.

Staff should be aware that their personal social media profiles may be searchable by students, parents and other staff, and should be cautious of what they make publicly available. If staff have a personal profile on social media sites, they should not do anything that would bring TLC into disrepute.

Staff should consider not using their full name in social media profiles, as students may be able to find them, and setting public profiles to private.

Staff should not attempt to contact students or their parents via social media, or any other means outside lessons, in order to develop any sort of relationship. They will not make any efforts to find students' or parents' social media profiles.

Staff will ensure that they do not post any images or information online that may identify children who are students with TLC without their and their parent/carer's consent. Staff should be aware of TLC's Online Safety Policy.

Acceptable Use of Technology, Mobile Phones and Laptops

Staff will not use mobile phones during online lessons unless in emergencies. They will also not use personal mobile phones, cameras or other devices to take pictures or videos of students, or record personal information about students.

Staff should be aware of what may be visible to students when sharing screens and close anything that may be deemed inappropriate.

When using devices, including personal devices, to conduct work for TLC, staff should follow the advice set out in TLC's Online Safety Policy.

Staff should refer to the Online Safety Policy for more information.

Confidentiality

In the course of their role, members of staff are often privy to sensitive and confidential information about staff, students, schools and parents.

This information should never be:

- Disclosed to anyone unless required by law or with consent from the relevant party or parties
- Used to humiliate, embarrass or blackmail others
- Used for a purpose other than what it was collected and intended for.

This does not overrule staff's duty to report child protection concerns to the appropriate channel where staff believe a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm, as detailed further in our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Staff should exercise caution with any materials, documents or devices containing confidential information. At the end of their employment with TLC staff must return, delete or shred any such materials, documents or records, including on devices. Staff must also transfer their TLC Outlook account and login to TLC at the end of their employment. This includes deactivating multi-factor authentication and logging out of the account on all personal devices.

During or after their employment, confidential information obtained during their time with TLC must not be disclosed.

Personal data should be handled in accordance with the Data Protection Policy and also be deleted or destroyed in accordance with the Records Management, Retention and Disposal Policy.

Honesty and Integrity

Staff should maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their role. This includes when dealing with students, claiming expenses and using TLC's technology and services.

Staff will not accept bribes.

Staff will ensure that all information given to TLC is complete and correct to the best of their knowledge. This should include:

- Background information (including any past or current investigations/cautions)
- Qualifications
- Professional experience

This list is not exhaustive.

Where there are any updates to the information provided to TLC, the member of staff will advise TLC as such as soon as reasonably practicable. Consideration will then be given to the nature and circumstances of the matter and whether this may have an impact on the member of staff's ongoing work with TLC.

Dress Code

Staff will dress in a professional, appropriate manner. Staff will not wear outfits that are overly revealing, such as low-cut tops and clothing with spaghetti straps, nor wear anything that may be considered inappropriate or distracting. We also ask that tattoos are covered up. Clothes will not display any offensive or political slogans.

This is not exhaustive, and staff should use their professional judgement when deciding what to wear to work.

Conduct outside of work

Staff will not act in a way that would bring TLC into disrepute. This covers conduct including but not limited to relevant criminal offences, such as violence or sexual misconduct, as well as negative comments about TLC on social media.

Whistleblowing

Staff who seek to report a particular issue but feel unable to express it openly to any member of staff, please refer to our Whistleblowing Policy for the relevant procedures.

Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually, but can be revised as needed. It will be approved by the Senior Leadership Team. Our Senior Leadership Team will ensure this code of conduct is implemented effectively and will ensure appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard children and deal with any concerns.

Addendum for Tutors

As a tutor when working with students, I will not undertake in any unacceptable behaviour and must not:

- Allow safeguarding concerns or allegations to go unreported, and that if I am unsure about concerns, I will report to the Designated or Deputy Safeguarding Lead.
- Arrange to meet a student online or face to face outside of scheduled sessions.
- I will not develop inappropriate relationships with students, including having 'favourites', accepting or giving gifts.
- I will not smoke or take illegal substances whilst in scheduled sessions.
- Make inappropriate promises to students, including promising confidentiality in safeguarding concerns.
- Engage in behaviour that is in any way abusive including having any form of sexual contact with a student.
- Let students have any personal contact details (e.g., phone number, home address), or have contact with them via a personal social media account.
- Act in a way that can be perceived as threatening or intrusive.
- Patronise or belittle students.
- Make sarcastic, insensitive, derogatory or sexually suggestive comments or gestures to or in front of students.

Upholding this Code:

- I will follow this code of conduct and never rely on your reputation or that of TLC to protect you.

- Prioritise the welfare and safety of students by following the TLC Safeguarding Policy and Procedures by flagging any safeguarding issues to the Designated or Deputy Safeguarding Lead.
- Understanding that all tutorials are recorded and monitored for the safety of all parties involved. Tutorial recordings are reviewed for Quality Assurance and safeguarding purposes.

If you have behaved inappropriately, you will be subject to an investigation as laid out in our Complaints and Appeals Policy. Depending on the seriousness of the situation, as explained in your TLC Representation Agreement, TLC may terminate its representation of you. We may also make a report to statutory agencies such as the police and/or the local authority child protection services. If you become aware of any breaches of this code, you must report them to the Designated or Deputy Safeguarding Officer.