

## STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT

In Tandragee Junior High School we want all our students and staff to feel happy, safe and secure so that they can benefit fully from their time in school and be enabled to contribute wholeheartedly to the educational experience which our school offers.

We aim, at all times, to behave appropriately and warmly towards each other and to support one another both personally and professionally. As staff members in the school, we are mindful that our behaviour towards our pupils should always be above reproach and we acknowledge the need to exercise prudence in our dealings with the students in our care.

We subscribe to the following good practice in this area:

- When the need arises to interview a student alone it is wise to let another member of staff know that the meeting is happening and where it will be taking place. The venue should, if at all possible, have a window and, if this is not so, a door should be left ajar if this is appropriate to the meeting.
- It is good practice to avoid **unnecessary** physical contact with our students. We acknowledge, however, that it is neither practical nor desirable to suggest that there should be no physical contact and we would not wish to see a distressed student deprived of a reassuring or comforting touch because of a fear of physical contact. Where a student indicates, however, that she is uncomfortable with such contact it should never take place. Additionally, it is prudent to avoid any physical contact which might be open to misinterpretation by the student or by others.

- Where physical contact is required to maintain the safety of the student or others around her that safety must take precedence over all other considerations.
- There should **never** be any physical response to misbehaviour, whatever the provocation, except where it is required to maintain the safety of the student or that of others. In this event the reasonable force policy should be fully adhered to and the incident reported immediately to the Principal/ SLT
- If it is necessary to administer first-aid this is best done with another person present. The welfare of the student is, however, paramount, and intervention should **never** be delayed because there is no other adult present.
- It is inevitable that some of our teaching will involve the use of sensitive materials and it is very difficult to anticipate when these might impact negatively on our students. If the material to be used is very contentious, and if there are concerns about any students in a class in relation to it, it is good practice to consult, in the first instance, with the Head of Department. She/he can then speak with the Head of Year or the Principal.
- It is **strongly recommended** that members of staff not allow students to have access to their personal mobile phone numbers or to their personal email addresses. If contact via mobile phone is necessary e.g. on a school trip, a mobile phone (or a SIM card) provided by the school should be used. All electronic communications with pupils should be via the official school e mailing system.
- Social Networking Sites present particular difficulties for staff in all schools. In an ideal world, for their own protection, no member of staff would have a Facebook or

other such site but, since this is an unlikely scenario, great care must be taken to ensure that appropriate boundaries are maintained between staff and students in this arena, as in all others. It is **strongly recommended** that no member of our staff communicate with pupils via social networking sites. Information directly related to the school community should never be posted on personal social networking sites. Staff should also be mindful of content attributable to them, posted on others sites (e.g. friends and family) who may not have the privacy settings recommended.

- We value greatly the easy relationships which exist between staff and students in Tandragee Junior high School and we would wish to see those maintained. It is always necessary, however, to ensure that these relationships are appropriate and professional so that the warm and caring atmosphere which is an integral part of the community of Tandragee Junior High school and which is so nourishing for everyone, is enabled to flourish.

## **Relationships and Attitudes**

Within the Pastoral Care Policies of Tandragee Junior High School and the employing authority, staff should ensure that their relationships with pupils are appropriate to the age, maturity and sex of the pupils, taking care that their conduct does not give rise to comment or speculation. Attitudes, demeanour and language all require care and thought.

## **Verbal Interaction.**

All verbal exchange in school shall be conducted in a calm and professional manner. Only in unusual circumstances, for example in emergency situations or when attracting attention in large areas,

will voices be raised. Sarcastic, threatening or demeaning verbal interaction is not acceptable. Verbally humiliating or frightening pupils as a means of punishment is not acceptable. The use of humour can be helpful in diffusing situations but the humour used must be understood and appropriate.

### *The eight principles of conduct and practice*

All members of the Tandragee Junior High School community – staff and parents:

1. Put the well-being, development and progress of children and young people first
2. Take responsibility for maintaining the quality of education in TJHS.
3. Help children and young people to become confident and successful learners
4. Demonstrate respect for diversity and promote equality
5. Strive to establish productive partnerships with parents and carers
6. Work as part of a whole-school team
7. Co-operate with other professional colleagues
8. Demonstrate honesty and integrity and uphold public trust and confidence in education.



*Put the well-being, development and progress of children and young people first.*

- Use their professional expertise and judgement to do their best for the children and young people in their care
- Take all reasonable steps to ensure the safety and well-being of children and young people under their supervision
- Follow their school's child protection policies and procedures
- Establish and maintain appropriate professional boundaries in their relationships with children and young people
- Demonstrate self-awareness and take responsibility for accessing help and support in order to ensure that their own practice does not have a negative impact on learning or progress or put children and young people at risk of harm
- Use appropriate channels to raise concerns about the practice of all professionals if this has a negative impact on learning or progress or risks harming children and young people.

# II

## *Take responsibility for maintaining the quality of their teaching practice.*

- Meet the professional standards for teaching relevant to their role and the stage they have reached in their career
- Develop their practice within the framework of their school's curriculum
- Base their practice on knowledge of their subject area(s) and specialisms, and make use of research about teaching and learning
- Make use of assessment techniques, set appropriate and clear learning objectives, plan activities and employ a range of teaching methodologies and technologies to meet individual and group learning needs
- Reflect on their practice and use feedback from colleagues to help them recognize their own development needs; actively seek out opportunities to develop their knowledge, understanding, skills and practice
- Meet the requirements laid down by their professional body, the GTC, to maintain their registration status.



*Help children and young people to become confident and successful learners.*

- Uphold children and young people's rights and help them to understand their responsibilities
- Listen to children and young people, consider their views and preferences, and involve them in decisions that affect them, including those related to their own learning
- Have high expectations of all children and young people, whatever their background or aptitudes, and find activities that will challenge and support them all
- Promote children and young people's confidence and self-awareness by clarifying how assessment will be used to support improvement, providing clear and specific feedback, and celebrating their success
- Communicate clear expectations about pupil behaviour to ensure disruption to learning is minimised and children and young people feel safe and secure
- Help children and young people prepare for the future by engaging them with the implications of changes in society and technology and offering them impartial advice and guidance about their future options.

# IV

## *Demonstrate respect for diversity and promote equality.*

- Act appropriately towards all children and young people, parents, carers and colleagues, whatever their socio-economic background, age, gender\*, sexual orientation, disability, race, religion or belief
- Take responsibility for understanding and complying with school policies relating to equality of opportunity, inclusion, access and bullying
- Address unlawful discrimination, bullying, and stereotyping no matter who is the victim or the perpetrator
- Help create a fair and inclusive school environment by taking steps to improve the well-being, development and progress of those with special needs, or whose circumstances place them at risk of exclusion or under-achievement
- Help children and young people to understand different views, perspectives, and experiences and develop positive relationships both within school and in the local community.





*Strive to establish productive partnerships with parents and carers.*

- Provide parents and carers with accessible and accurate information about their child's progress
- Involve parents and carers in important decisions about their child's education
- Consider parents' and carers' views and perspectives, including those that relate to their children's development
- Follow school policies and procedures on communication with and involvement of parents and carers, including those that relate to sensitive areas such as attendance and exclusion.

# VI

## *Work as part of a whole-school team.*

- Endeavour to develop productive and supportive relationships with all school colleagues
- Exercise any leadership and management responsibilities in a respectful, inclusive and fair way, and in accordance with contractual obligations and national standards
- Uphold school policies and procedures, and raise any concerns about the life or running of the school in a responsible and appropriate way
- Contribute to colleagues' learning and development; provide honest, accurate, and justifiable comments when giving references for, or assessing the performance of, colleagues
- Participate in whole-school development and improvement activities
- Recognise the important role of the school in the life of the local community, and take responsibility for upholding its reputation and building trust and confidence in it.

# VII

## *Co-operate with other professionals in the children's workforce.*

- Seek to understand the roles of other professional colleagues in the children's workforce
- Communicate and establish productive working relationships with other professional colleagues
- Ensure that they are clear about their own professional contribution to joint working, seeking clarification where this is needed
- Understand that in sharing responsibility for children and young people's well-being and development they should always act within their own competence and responsibilities.

# VIII

## *Demonstrate honesty and integrity and uphold public trust and confidence in the profession of education..*

- Exercise their responsibilities in relation to the examination and assessment of achievement and attainment in a fair, transparent and honest way
- Demonstrate honesty and integrity in management and administrative duties, including in the use of school property and finance
- Understand that their duty to safeguard children and young people comes first, but otherwise acknowledge the rights of children and young people, families, and colleagues to confidentiality, in line with statutory requirements and school policies
- Represent their professional status accurately and avoid taking advantage of their professional position
- Maintain reasonable standards in their own behaviour that enable them to maintain an effective learning environment and also to uphold public trust and confidence in the profession.