



SEDBERGH INTERNATIONAL SUMMER SCHOOL

Staff Code of Conduct	
Version	2024.1
Effective from	April 2024
Extent of policy	Sedbergh International Summer School
Policy owner	Gemma Newton
Review by	March 2025
Frequency	Annual
Circulation	Staff and Pupil Induction. Parents (by request)
Publication	Website

Mission Statement ISS:

Our mission is to ensure each pupil is encouraged to realise their full potential, exploring the limits of their ability whilst learning to thrive outside their own comfort zone.

Our dedicated team are committed to providing our pupils with a rich educational experience within an environment that encourages them to flourish, developing new talents, discovering new passions and making life-long friendships in a safe, supportive environment.

The following code of conduct is designed to help staff maintain the highest professional standards while supporting children in their roles at Sedbergh International Summer School. The code is also designed to ensure that staff behaviour and actions do not place themselves at risk of harm to a pupil nor allegations of harm from a pupil. The code provides summary details of how staff should behave whilst undertaking their duties, and should be read in conjunction with other policies below, where further details can be found:

- Safeguarding
- Pupil Supervision
- Data Protection - GDPR
- School Transport

The Code of Conduct applies to all staff working in the School, whether paid or unpaid, whatever their position, role or responsibilities and staff includes employees, Governors, contractors, work

experience/placement students and volunteers. 'Staff' throughout this document refers to all adults engaged in any role within the Summer School.

Principles:

- The welfare of the child is paramount.

Essential aspects of a pupils welfare includes: Safety & Security, Physical Health, Emotional Well-being, Educational Enrichment, Social Interaction, Individualised Support, Communication with Parents/Guardian. **See Appendix 1.**

- Staff should understand their responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils.

Promoting the welfare of a child in a summer school setting involves taking **proactive** steps by all staff members, to ensure their holistic development, well-being, and safety.

- Staff 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.
- Staff should apply the same professional standards regardless of culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief, and sexual orientation.
- As a result of the authority invested in their role, all those working with children in a school are in a position of trust, power, and influence. It is vital for these adults to understand that the relationship cannot be one between equals and the responsibility they must consequently exercise.
- Staff should be aware that breaches of the law and other professional guidelines could result in disciplinary or criminal action being taken against them. This could include other proceedings such as 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).

1. Safeguarding

Staff have a duty to report, record and communicate any concerns about pupils or staff, as prescribed in the Safeguarding Policy.

2. Confidentiality

- a) Information about pupils should not be shared with members of the public, parents, or other pupils.
- b) Information about family, financial circumstances, pastoral or academic issues should be shared with relevant colleagues on a strictly need to know basis.
- c) The Senior Leadership Team should use HEI apply to record and access information about pupils – other staff should not need access.
- d) Safeguarding or sensitive information must be treated with particular care.

Safeguarding sensitive information is essential to uphold the trust and confidentiality of students and their families, maintain compliance with legal and regulatory requirements, and mitigate the risks associated with unauthorised access or disclosure of confidential data.

See **Appendix 2** for types of sensitive information.

3. Dress & appearance

- a) Teaching staff should dress in a manner appropriate to their professional role. In the classroom this should be smart business attire, whereas on the games field or on activities this should be smart, School-branded kit where possible. Summer School polos and/or hoodies should be worn on excursions by all staff members.
- b) Operational/activity staff should dress in a manner appropriate to their role, adhering to the H&S guidance or that of their line managers.
- c) Staff should wear their ID badges/lanyards at all times when on the School premises, and during excursions.

4. Expectations of staff

- a) As outlined in the job description and contracts, all staff must be prepared to be flexible and willing to cooperate throughout the summer school. Staff should bear in mind that this is a short-term, intensive job and that they may be called upon to help, unless it is their designated 24 hours off per week.
- b) Staff are expected to attend all mealtimes unless it is their day off. At lunchtimes, staff are expected to follow our formal lunch procedure, which involves staff sitting with students and waiting until they are asked to collect their food. During these lunches, staff should encourage conversation between the students at their table.

These conversations are expected to role model positivity, respect and kindness. No complaints, gossip and re-sharing of confidential information or personal judgements about other staff, staff issues or pupil behaviours. Always maintaining professionalism in front of the pupils. Tiredness from an excursion or the days activity must not influence the quality and type of engagement during mealtime conversations.

- c) Staff are expected to read all Risk Assessments that relate to their duties, for example any staff member attending a climbing activity must read the climbing Risk Assessment, regardless of whether they are leading the activity or not. They must also sign to say that they have read and understood these. This is not only a safeguarding and health and safety policy, but it empowers our staff to make on-the-day changes to an excursion or activity as needed in order to maintain safety. Any consistent failure to read and sign these may result in a disciplinary procedure.
- d) During any activity (on-site or off-site), all staff must be fully participating at all times – even when an external provider is running an activity, our staff are responsible for the pupils at all times and are not merely spectators or free to do as they wish. At no point should a staff member leave the activity they have been tasked with, as this is a breach of our supervision policy. Any such behaviour will be dealt with according to our Staff Disciplinary Procedure.
- e) During excursions, staff are always on duty. Any free time that is agreed with their Line Manager must only be during the students' shopping time and must not be spent in ways that could result in a detrimental effect on the students. **NO alcohol** is to be consumed during an excursion. Any excursions are to be treated as if on site at school in terms of policies and behaviours relating to all staff. Juniors must be always accompanied by staff members. This can be done on a rota basis and must be agreed with the Excursion Leader. There should always be a staff member at the agreed meeting point so that students can locate them easily, and this can also be done on a rota basis.

f) During the evening/at bedtime, staff who are not on duty overnight may still be required to help in the boarding house (unless it is their designated night off per week). This will be outlined at the start of the course but may change as the needs of the course develop – for example, at busy weeks with more students, more duties may be required. During these duties, staff report to the House Parent and must do what is asked of them. When not on duty, staff should not leave the school site or engage in their down time activities until their tasks have been completed, for example they must help clear away the evening activity (e.g. disco) rather than leave as soon as it has finished.

5. Relationships with pupils

a) It is a criminal offence under the sexual offences act 2003 for a member of staff to engage in sexual activity with a pupil. Any such act **WILL result** in criminal and/or disciplinary proceedings.

b) All staff need to recognise that it is not uncommon for pupils to be strongly attracted to a member of staff and or develop a crush or infatuation. They should make every effort to ensure that their own behaviour cannot be brought into question, does not appear to encourage this and be aware that such infatuations may carry a risk of their words or actions being misinterpreted.

c) Staff should always maintain their professional standards and aspire to be role models for our pupils. Inappropriate language, aggressive behaviour, or the expression of extreme opinions should not feature in front of pupils.

6. Written communication with pupils, parents and agents

a) Pupils: written communication with pupils should not be needed during the Summer School, as all communication is given face-to-face. No staff member should ask for a pupils' e-mail address or social media information. Phone numbers collected during an excursion for emergency purposes should be deleted or destroyed following the student' s return to their home country. During excursions, staff members should prioritise phoning a pupil should they need to get in contact with them, as messages can be ignored or misinterpreted.

b) Parents/agents: written communication with parents should be via School email address only and should be communicated by the Course Director or other member of the leadership team. The email should be formal, polite, and factual and relate only to the pupil(s) of that parent(s) or agent(s).

c) Staff must always be alert to the contents of long email trails and email recipients and always ensure that all the content is appropriate for all those receiving the email.

d) Staff may only use text or WhatsApp with parents or agents to share facts such as times or venues (e.g. their child has arrived or the flight has been delayed). Opinions nor any form of discussion, must not take place via these methods.

e) Staff should not have access to pupil contact details as these are stored on a secure database for use by the Course Director and senior leadership team.

f) Should written communication be required, it should always be professional and not use slang nor make any derogatory comments about pupils, parents, or staff. Staff should not get into any arguments nor confrontations with pupils, parents or agents.

g) Where disagreement or complaints arise with parents, emotional or immediate responses should be avoided. It may be wise to simply acknowledge the issue briefly and defer further correspondence until you have discussed the matter with a more senior colleague. Long email discussions should be avoided entirely.

7. Images and videos of pupils.

- a) Staff and volunteers are allowed to take digital/video images on School-owned devices to support educational aims and for marketing purposes. On joining the Summer School, parents give their consent for images of their child to be used in this regard.
- b) Staff are also allowed to take digital/video images on their own devices, but these should be taken and sent within the Teams app so that they are not stored on their own devices.
- c) Where it is not feasible to take a digital/video image within Teams (e.g. something is happening very quickly the staff member wants to capture), the photo can be taken on their own device but it should be sent on as soon as possible and then deleted from the device.
- d) Care should be taken when taking digital/video images that pupils are appropriately dressed and are not participating in activities that might bring the individuals or the School into disrepute.

8. Behaviour management

- a) Corporal punishment is unlawful in all schools.
- b) Staff should not use any form of degrading or humiliating treatment to punish a child. The use of sarcasm, demeaning or insensitive comments towards children is completely unacceptable. To be observed at all times, including conversations during formal lunches each day.
- c) Staff should follow the Behaviour, Rewards & Sanctions Policy at all times.

9. Physical contact with pupils

- a) In certain curriculum areas such as PE, activities, Drama or Music, staff may need to initiate some physical contact with children. However, any physical contact with pupils must only be in ways that are appropriate to the professional role and in relation to the pupils' individual needs or to support any agreed care plan.
- b) Hugs are considered a normal cultural part of life for some pupils. During the ISS, manage these potential situations in accordance with the induction training involving all staff before the pupils arrive.
- c) Pupils should be encouraged to act as independently as possible with regards to their own personal care. When assistance is required, this should normally be undertaken by one member of staff. However, staff should try to ensure another appropriate adult is in the vicinity who is aware of the task to be undertaken and that, wherever possible, they are visible and audible.
- d) Any incidences of searching, confiscation or restraint should comply to the Behaviour, Rewards & Sanctions Policy.
- e) All administration of first aid and medication should comply with the First Aid and Medical Policies.

10. One to one meetings with pupils

- a) Staff should be aware that one to one meetings with individual pupils may give rise to concern. Every effort should be made to make such meetings as open and transparent as possible.
- b) One to one meetings in classrooms or boarding houses, should be conducted with the door open and with other staff aware of the meeting.

c) Where this is not possible, staff should make every effort to ensure that other staff are aware of the meeting and records are made of every such meeting.

11. Transporting pupils

a) Staff should only transport pupils in their own cars when absolutely necessary, due to illness, injury or other emergency. In such circumstances, staff should include a second pupil or second adult wherever possible.

b) Where staff do transport pupils in their own cars on a one-to-one basis, staff must inform their line manager or a member of senior leadership as soon as is reasonably possible.

12. Visits, trips and off-site activities

a) School rules and the staff code of conduct, apply to all visits, trips, and off-site activities. Staff must resist any temptation to ignore these rules due to the exotic or informal nature of the trip.

b) Any breaches of Summer School rules or the Code of Conduct on such trips must be dealt with immediately in situ and reported to SMT.

13. Pupil access to staff accommodation

a) No pupils should have access to staff accommodation except in exceptional circumstances.

b) If a public or shared use space exists within boarding houses, house documentation should clearly articulate this in writing and be explicit in safely managing the use of such spaces.

14. Staff access to pupil accommodation – ‘Staff’ will be clearly defined as those given express permission from the specific House parent in the given Boarding House.

a) Staff are routinely required to enter pupil sleeping and washing accommodation to ensure the well-being of the pupils under their care. However, this should be undertaken with sensitivity.

b) Knocking on doors and verbal warnings should be the norm, but staff must not be concerned about the undertaking of their normal duty of care.

c) If issues arise, staff should record incidents in the designated Microsoft Form and immediately discuss with the Welfare Manager or other member of senior leadership team.

15. Gifts, rewards & favouritism

a) Staff may be vulnerable to the reception of gifts which have an implicit requirement to favour individual pupils. Such situations should be avoided, or more senior staff informed if unavoidable.

b) It is unacceptable to receive gifts of any significant value on a regular basis.

16. Whistleblowing

Staff are obliged to raise concerns of malpractice, outside of the normal line management structure, as described in the Whistleblowing Policy.

17. Attendance & Punctuality

a) Staff are expected to arrive on time for all assigned duties and activities.

b) Notify line managers in advance if unable to fulfil assigned responsibilities.

c) Follow the sickness and medical protocols in place to support and safeguard staff and pupils.

18. Conflict Resolution

a) Staff are expected to handle conflicts or disagreements in a constructive and respectful manner. Training during Induction will be given.

b) Staff are encouraged to see guidance from line managers or designated personnel when facing difficult situations.

19. Duty of Care

a) Staff must at all times, prioritise the safety and well-being of all participants.

b) Be vigilant and proactive in identifying and addressing any potential risks or hazards.

c) Follow appropriate protocols in case of emergencies or incidents.

20. Special Needs & Health requirements

a) Staff must be fully conversant with the needs of those pupils and colleagues with specific requirements.

b) Work diligently, professionally, compassionately and inclusively with the individualised plans to deliver an enriching experience within their scope of involvement.

21. Inter-Staff Relations and Sexual Activities.

a) This is not permitted whilst on site, on an excursion or in Sedbergh town when on duty during the Summer School Program, due to the shared accommodation arrangements with the pupils and appropriate adult behaviour expectation.

b) This does not apply when off duty if off school property.

22. Boarding House Alarm setting and access after-hours

In all boarding houses, an alarm is set each night to ensure the safety of our students and staff. The time of this varies by house and staff members will be informed of the timings during induction. If arriving back to the house after the alarm has been set, staff members must silence and then reset the alarm using the codes that will be provided. All staff must therefore ensure they know the locations of the alarm keypads and have been instructed in setting and resetting the alarm prior to the course starting.

23. Cleaning of Staff accommodation

a) As part of the provision of board and lodging for all staff, the cleaning of staff accommodation and the provision of fresh bed linen is included.

- b) Staff are required to keep their accommodation tidy, with floors clear of clothes and obstacles, so that the cleaning services can take place.
- c) Bed linen is provided each week but it is the responsibility of the staff to change their beds not the laundry service.

24. Summary

By adhering to this code of conduct, staff members contribute to creating a safe, supportive, and enriching environment for all participants of our residential summer school.

By signing your contract you agree to this Code of Conduct during your employment at Sedbergh International Summer School.

Violations of this code may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

We appreciate your commitment to upholding these standards and making our summer school a success.