

Professional Behaviour for Teachers & Other Adults Working with Children & Young People in School

Please read this information carefully so that you understand your responsibilities regarding professional behaviour, child protection and cybersafety.



WEST ISLAND
SCHOOL

Understanding the rights of the child

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNRC) has been signed by 191 countries. The convention has 54 articles in total. The Convention operates on four guiding principles: non-discrimination; right to life, survival, and development; doing what is in the best interest of the child; and meaningfully engaging children and youth.

The work that teachers undertake at West Island School also supports the UNRC. Particularly:

Article 3: *All adults should always do what is best for you.*

Article 9: *You have the right to live with your parents, unless it is bad for you.*

Article 12: *You have the right to an opinion and for it to be listened to and taken seriously.*

Article 19: *You have the right to be protected from being hurt or badly treated.*

Article 20: *You have the right to special protection and help if you can't live with your parents.*

Article 21: *You have the right to have the best care for you if you are adopted or fostered or living in care.*

Article 23: *If you are disabled, either mentally or physically, you have the right to special care and education to help you develop and lead a full life.*

Article 33: *You have the right to be protected from dangerous drugs.*

Article 34: *You have the right to be protected from sexual abuse.*

Article 36: *You have the right to protection from of any other kind of exploitation.*

Article 37: *You have the right not to be punished in a cruel or hurtful way.*

Article 39: *You have the right to help if you have been hurt, neglected, or badly treated.*

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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 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*

The following guidelines have been adapted from the UK 2012 Teachers' Standards and refer to personal and professional conduct.

Professional Responsibilities of all Staff

All staff should:

- *Aim to be a positive role model to students and aim to motivate every student to realise his/her potential*
- *Promote appropriate professional behaviour through use of language, appearance and actions*
- *Maintain up-to-date knowledge and understanding of, and implement and comply with the requirements of the Hong Kong Safeguarding procedures as they apply in the ESF Child Protection Policy*
- *Raise any concerns about the behaviour of any colleague that falls short of safeguarding or appropriately professional standards to a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT). Should a senior member of staff be the potential transgressor, the staff member should raise the issue with the appropriate senior staff member; the Principal, Director of ESF Human Resources or the Chief Executive as appropriate. The ESF's Whistleblowing Policy is there to protect everyone. This policy can be located in the ESF Human Resources folder (policy document 1.11) and is also pinned to the staff notice board.*

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Professional Responsibilities towards Students

All staff should:

- *Treat students fairly, equally and with respect and without discrimination*
- *Treat sensitive, personal information about students with respect and confidentiality and not disclose it unless required to do so by your employer or by law*
- *Be truthful, honest and fair in relation to information you provide about students*
- *Not be influenced by views about the lifestyle, culture, disability, beliefs, colour, gender, language, sexuality or age of students, parents, carers and other adults*
- *Display a sensitive and positive attitude towards differences amongst students and identify and respond appropriately to students who have barriers to their learning, seeking advice where appropriate*
- *Identify and respond appropriately to indicators of students' well being and welfare being adversely affected including bullying, harassment and discrimination*
- *Have high expectations of students and provide realistic challenges for them*

With regard to relationships with students, staff should:

- *Appreciate that the onus is on the adult, not the student, to distance him/herself from any potentially inappropriate situation*
- *Avoid physical contact with, or remarks towards a student that could be construed as sexual in nature, regardless of the age or apparent consent of the student*
- *In the presence of students, avoid conversations with colleagues which may be construed as personal, demeaning and inappropriate*
- *Avoid physical contact with, or remarks towards a student that could be construed as enforcing unwarranted control, chastisement or bullying*
- *Be mindful that the law regarding professional trust extends to the student's school leaving date or 18 birthday; always exercise great care and professional judgement. Personal relationships between adults in a position of trust and young people are illegal*
- *Not attempt to establish any inappropriate relationships with a student which might include:*
 - *Communication of a personal nature*
 - *Engaging in inappropriate dialogue through the internet eg through the use of Social Networking sites, such as Facebook*
 - *Sending emails or texts to students of an inappropriate or personal nature. Electronic communication should be limited to a professional context and should, as far as possible, make use of school, rather than personal systems*
 - *Please alert a member of the SLT should you receive emails or texts from students which are inappropriate or of a personal nature*
- *To prevent students behaving inappropriately towards staff it is important to not give a personal phone number, address, or email*

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As an adult working with young people

- *Do not discuss your private and personal relationships with students*
- *Maintain an appropriate balance between formality and informality when dealing with students*
- *Take care to avoid becoming personally involved in students' personal affairs. As far as possible make use of the pastoral structures that exist in the school to support students*
- *Be aware of the potential dangers of being alone with a student in a private or isolated situation. Use common sense and professional judgement to avoid circumstances which could be perceived to be of an inappropriate nature. Maintain these same professional standards beyond the school setting - on educational activities and visits*
- *Not by any means make, view or access illegal or inappropriate images of children*
- *Behave appropriately with regard to professional status as one seen as a role model for the young and a figure of authority and trust. This requires staff to be honest and to act with integrity and not to engage in criminal behaviour likely to undermine the status of the profession or impeach the reputation of the school*
- *Dress appropriately for a professional working environment with young people - ie avoiding clothing that is too casual or revealing for a professional setting. Be sensitive to the various cultural backgrounds and expectation of our community. See the WIS Staff Handbook for more details*
- *Take care to keep a professional relationship with former students, particularly if they have friends or siblings still in school*

School Trips

These have an important part to play in school life and can greatly enrich the educational experience of students taking part.

When on a school trip staff should:

- *Have a full knowledge and comply with the procedures and guidelines laid down by the ESF and the requirements of Health and Safety guidelines (in the Staff Handbook)*
- *Inform the Horizon's Week Coordinator in advance if a personal mobile number is shared with the students for the duration of the trip*
- *Not consume alcohol whilst responsible for the care of students, during any on or off site trips, e.g. including a field trip, or Horizons Week trip. (Refer to: Working at ESF Schools Policy 3.2 on Gateway)*
- *Be mindful of the need to maintain a healthy and appropriate balance between formality and informality and avoid situations which are or could be reasonably perceived to be of an inappropriate nature*

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Professionalism towards colleagues and parents

- *Work in a collegiate and professional manner with colleagues and other professionals*
- *Treat all colleagues fairly and with respect, without discrimination*
- *Avoid undermining a colleague by remarks which may be perceived as malicious, unfounded or unprofessional. This is particularly important when in contact with parents or students*
- *Guard against inappropriate conversation or practical jokes which could be perceived as being of an unprofessional, salacious, discriminatory or harassing nature*
- *Discuss any issues that arise with colleagues in a considered, measured and entirely professional manner. This should be done privately*
- *Engage and work positively with parents in an open and respectful way, not prejudiced by views about their lifestyle, culture, disability, beliefs, colour, gender, language, sexuality or age*
- *In dealings with parents avoid being drawn into inappropriate discussions or divulging confidential information about other students, colleagues or the school*
- *Appreciate that a parental meeting is a two way process and as such you should listen to and take into account the views expressed*
- *Encourage the involvement of parents in their child's education and learning, welcoming them as active participants in the life of the school, working in partnership with us*

In order to avoid allegations, colleagues are advised of the following:

- *Instances of being alone with one student should be avoided. Where this is necessary, staff should avoid being out of sight of other colleagues, leave the door open where possible. Ensure that someone else knows that the conversation will be taking place etc*
- *Avoid any physical contact with students except where it may be necessary to demonstrate an exercise eg in PE. Staff should never touch a student who has indicated that contact would be unwelcome*
- *Physical intervention should be avoided. However, if physical restraint of a student is necessary - to prevent harm to another student, to the student him/herself or to property - minimal force should be used. A written report should be submitted following the incident and given to the Principal*
- *Where possible one should ensure that another adult/student is present when administering first aid (unless a medical professional)*
- *Where any physical contact could be misconstrued, a written report should always be submitted to the Principal*
- *To avoid using any language and comments that:*
 - *would be unacceptable from a student or adult*
 - *would be inappropriate in a professional setting*
 - *you would be embarrassed by should you need to justify it to a parent*
 - *reinforces stereotyping*
 - *could be interpreted as demeaning*
 - *could be interpreted as harassing or bullying*
- *Anything written down should be regarded as a potentially public document: the utmost care must be taken not to write, including in an email, anything that is derogatory of students and their parents/carers nor of any other people connected with the school*

Child Protection

A Collective Responsibility

- *Duty of care*
- *Types of abuse and neglect*
- *Indicators of abuse and neglect*
- *How to receive and record information*

Duty of Care

- *All adults who work with children and young people are accountable for the way in which they exercise authority; manage risk; use resources and safeguard young people*
- *It follows that trusted adults are expected to take reasonable steps to ensure the safety and well being of young people. Failure to do so may be regarded as neglect*
- *In our position we are able to identify concerns early, provide help and prevent escalation*

Types of Abuse and Neglect

- *Physical neglect*
- *Medical neglect*
- *Educational neglect*
- *Emotional neglect*
- *Physical abuse*
- *Sexual abuse*
- *Psychological abuse*

Child abuse is any action by another person – adult or child – that causes significant harm to a child. It can be physical, sexual or emotional, but can just as often be about a lack of love, care and attention. We know that neglect, whatever form it takes, can be just as damaging to a child as physical abuse.

Neglect is a severe or repeated pattern of lack of attention to a child's basic needs that endangers or impairs the child's health or development. Neglect may be:

- **Physical**
(e.g. failure to provide necessary food, clothing or shelter, failure to prevent physical injury or suffering, lack of appropriate supervision or left unattended)
- **Medical**
(e.g. failure to provide necessary medical or mental health treatment)
- **Educational**
(e.g. failure to provide education or ignoring educational needs arising from a child's disability)
- **Emotional**
(e.g. ignoring a child's emotional needs or failure to provide psychological care)

Physical Abuse

A physical injury or physical suffering to a child (including non-accidental use of force, deliberate poisoning, suffocation, burning, Munchausen's Syndrome by Proxy (where the injury has been inflicted non-accidentally))

Sexual Abuse

The involvement of a child in sexual activity which is unlawful, or to which a child is unable to give informed consent. This includes direct or indirect sexual exploitation and abuse of a child (e.g. production of pornographic material).

It may take place within the home or outside the home. It may be committed by parents, carers, other adults or children singly or acting in an organised way. The abuser may make use of rewards or other means to attract the child. It may be committed by individuals either known or strangers to the child.

Note: Child sexual abuse is different from casual sexual relationships that does not include any sexual exploitation, e.g. between a boy and a girl, though the boy can be liable for offences like indecent assault or unlawful sexual intercourse with an under-aged girl.

Psychological Abuse

The repeated pattern of behaviour and attitudes towards a child or extreme incident that endangers or impairs the child's emotional or intellectual development.

Examples include acts of spurning, terrorizing, isolating, exploiting, denying emotional responsiveness, conveying to a child that he/she is worthless, unwanted or unloved.

Such acts damages immediately or ultimately the behavioural, cognitive, affective, or physical functioning of the child.

Child Protection Issues

- *Domestic violence*
- *Substance abuse*
- *Sexting*
- *Grooming (including online)*
- *Fabricated illness*
- *Child sexual exploitation*

Non recent (historical) Abuse

*If the child is still at school up to the age of 18 it is still our duty of care to respond as in other cases of abuse.
(e.g. a disclosure in Year 12 but the abuse happened in primary school)*

Indicators

- *Patterns of attendance*
- *Nature and quantity of contact with parents/domestic helpers*
- *Nature and quantity of contact with school staff: Nurses, EAs, frequently seeking out attention and/or reassurance*
- *Inappropriate sexual behaviour*
- *Body language and behaviour*
- *Language: Either explicit or ambiguous*
- *Verbal/physical outbursts, challenging, disruptive behaviour*
- *Play: Acting out abuse in play situations or drama; exhibiting extreme aggression or withdrawal*
- *Content in drawing and writing (including online)*
- *Medicals and PE – Reluctant to get changed for PE/ covering up arms/legs*
- *Injuries to the child*
- *Relationships, including online*
- *Lack of hygiene, unkempt*
- *Withdrawal from peers/staff, secretive*
- *Tiredness beyond what is usual*
- *Is concerned for younger siblings without explaining why*
- *Talks of running away*
- *Fear of going home*

How to receive information

It is not a staff members job to diagnose abuse, their role is just to observe that something may be wrong, listen, be available and make time to talk.

***If you have any suspicions you must always report your concerns
Do not 'interview' a student, consult the CPO (Child Protection Officer),
or member of the Safeguarding Team.***

You Should

- *Reassure the student they were right to tell you*
- *Acknowledge their courage*
- *Create a safe environment*
- *Position the student so they are not facing the door or open corridor*
- *Be aware of your body language*
- *Adopt a calm, balanced approach*
- *Explain that this is important and that you will need to talk to someone*
- *Explain that the school will do all it can to help, we will take one step at a time*

You Should Not

- *Promise confidentiality*
- *Interrupt a silence*
- *Make judgements*
- *Jump to conclusions*
- *Ask leading questions "Did your parent..."*
- *Look shocked or upset*
- *Stop a child part way through and say, I need to tell you to tell someone else... (they chose you because they feel they can approach you)*
- *Tell the student "I believe what you are saying"*

The Record Must Only Contain Facts. *These records may be open to disclosure to parents and legal representatives and it is therefore essential that they only contain factual material. It is important not to interpret what is seen or heard, simply to record.*

Day, date, time and place should be included. This will make it possible to discern any patterns of behaviour more easily.

Background information should be included in order to put the incident in context. The events leading up to and surrounding an incident can be as important as the incident itself. Examples of such relevant information would include such things as details of the setting, triggering factors, and details of school routine that might have a bearing on the observed behaviour.

Any record of the child's words should be verbatim and not the teacher's interpretation of the child's words. This would include the child's words for the parts of the body, rather than the adult ones that the teacher would use. Where a teacher tries to clarify what a child is trying to say, the record should include details of this. It may be appropriate to have photographic evidence of some specific injuries.

Use the 'ESF Child Protection Report Form' to write your account and complete the additional information as requested on the form. You may attach a typed record to the form. The form can be downloaded from [here](#), collected from a CPO and is also available in the Staff Room under the pigeon hole labelled 'Child Protection Form;.

Note: Do NOT email your account to the Child Protection Officers due to the confidential and sensitive nature of the information.

If you submit a word processed account from the notes you made at the time the child disclosed information, you must still attach the original handwritten notes so we have evidence of the original disclosure.

FGM- Female Genital Mutilation

Female genital mutilation (FGM) is the partial or total removal of external female genitalia for non-medical reasons. It's also known as female circumcision or cutting.

Religious, social or cultural reasons are sometimes given for FGM. However, FGM is child abuse.

Female genital mutilation of any type has been recognized as a harmful practice and a violation of human rights of girls and women. ('Eliminating Female Genital Mutilation' - World Health Organisation)

There are no medical reasons to carry out FGM. It doesn't enhance fertility and it doesn't make childbirth safer. It is used to control female sexuality and can cause severe and long-lasting damage to physical and emotional health.

FGM Possible Indicators

A girl at immediate risk of FGM may not know what's going to happen. But she might talk about or you may become aware of:

- *a long holiday abroad or going 'home' to visit family*
- *relative or cutter visiting from abroad*
- *a special occasion or ceremony to 'become a woman' or get ready for marriage*
- *a female relative being cut – a sister, cousin, or an older female relative such as a mother or aunt*

Radicalisation

Possible Indicators

Radicalisation can be really difficult to spot. Signs that may indicate a child is being radicalised include:

- *isolating themselves from family and friends*
- *talking as if from a scripted speech*
- *unwillingness or inability to discuss their views*
- *a sudden disrespectful attitude towards others*
- *increased levels of anger*
- *increased secretiveness, especially around internet use*

Children who are at risk of radicalisation may have low self-esteem, or be victims of bullying or discrimination. Extremists might target them and tell them they can be part of something special, later brainwashing them into cutting themselves off from their friends and family

However, these signs don't necessarily mean a child is being radicalised - it may be normal teenage behaviour or a sign that something else is wrong. If you notice any change in a child's behaviour and you're worried, please speak to one of the Safeguarding Team.

Safeguarding Team

Child Protection Officers:



Designated CPO
Clare Haworth

clare.haworth@wis.edu.hk



Deputy CPO
Susan Carey

susan.carey@wis.edu.hk

Child Protection Support:



Pre 16

Guy Hewson

guy.hewson@wis.edu.hk



Post 16

Sam Kitson

samantha.kitson@wis.edu.hk

**Should members of the team be unavailable then
please contact**



Christopher Sammons

chris.sammons@wis.edu.hk

Vision

For every student to be the best they can be

Mission

Exceptional learning opportunities that emphasise achievement, personal fulfilment, service to others, learning skills and responsible global citizenship

Values

West Island School expects students, alumni, parents and staff to share and be guided by our core values:

Commitment:

Community: *being responsible for ourselves and others through service & action*

Compassion: *uniting people for peace, friendship and a sustainable future*

Consideration: *acting with empathy and kindness towards others*

Courage: *accepting and understanding others to avoid prejudice & intolerance
reaching beyond our comfort zone*

Aims

At West Island School, our learners are inspired and motivated to:

- *Take ownership of their own learning*
- *Collaborate in authentic, inquiry led learning experiences that are personally meaningful*
- *Master learning through a sustained process that asks us to produce, review, evaluate and refine*
- *Embrace challenge and support for all aspects of learning: physical, social, emotional and cognitive*
- *Grow determination and resilience by reflecting on individual challenges and character strengths*
- *Experience a broad and flexible curriculum that can be personalised to individual interests, talents and abilities*
- *Capitalise on the differences in our community creating strength from diversity*
- *Engage in inter-cultural learning with global partners experiencing other languages, countries and cultures*
- *Embrace a diverse range of experiences beyond the classroom*

Strength from Diversity

