

## South West Learning – Code of Conduct for Staff

### Introduction and Purpose

South West Learning (SWL) is committed to maintaining the highest standards of professional conduct, safeguarding, and integrity across all aspects of its work.

This Code of Conduct outlines the behaviours, responsibilities, and standards expected of all SWL employees, tutors, and contractors engaged in delivering tuition, mentoring, or educational support — whether in schools, learners' homes, libraries, community spaces, or online environments.

The Code aims to:

- Safeguard the welfare and wellbeing of all learners and staff.
- Ensure compliance with statutory guidance, including Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2025, Teacher Standards (2012), and the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006.
- Promote professionalism, accountability, and mutual respect in all working relationships.

All staff are required to read, understand, and adhere to this Code of Conduct at all times. Compliance is a condition of employment or engagement with South West Learning.

### Safeguarding and Duty of Care

- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility – please see our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- Learner First: The welfare and best interests of learners must always take precedence.
- Reporting Concerns: All safeguarding concerns must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) – *Emma Radford* or Deputy DSL – *Eleanor Hoggett*.
- Immediate Action: In urgent cases, staff must act to protect the learner and inform the DSL as soon as possible.
- Mandatory Reporting: Concerns relating to abuse, neglect, exploitation, or radicalisation must never be ignored or assumed to be someone else's responsibility. Refer to the SWL Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- Physical Contact: Physical contact with learners should be avoided unless necessary to prevent harm. All such incidents must be proportionate, recorded, and reported to the DSL.
- Allegations Against Staff: Any allegation, suspicion, or complaint against staff must be reported to the DSL or Deputy DSL immediately. Staff must not investigate themselves.
- Prevent Duty: All staff must remain alert to signs of radicalisation and complete Prevent training as part of induction.

## **Professional Boundaries**

Staff must maintain clear and appropriate professional boundaries with learners at all times.

You must:

- Use only approved communication channels (e.g. SWL email, official online platforms).
- Maintain professional distance — do not share personal contact information or social media accounts.
- Avoid favouritism or behaviour that could be perceived as special treatment.
- Decline or seek management approval before giving or accepting gifts from learners or families.
- Never transport learners in personal vehicles.

Before acting, staff should consider:

- Is this in the learner's best interests?
- Could this be misinterpreted?
- Would I be comfortable if this were made public?
- Does this comply with SWL policies, professional standards, and the law?

If in doubt, seek guidance from a senior leader or the DSL.

Staff are representatives of South West Learning and are expected to act as positive role models.

- Conduct yourself with honesty, integrity, and professionalism at all times.
- Be punctual, well-prepared, and committed to high-quality teaching and learning.
- Dress appropriately for the setting — smart-casual in schools, professional attire for online delivery.
- Avoid behaviour that could bring SWL or the profession into disrepute.

## **Respect, Equality, and Diversity**

SWL values equality, inclusion, and respect for all individuals.

- Treat all learners, parents, and colleagues with dignity and respect.
- Uphold the Equality Act 2010 and the SWL Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.
- Promote an inclusive learning environment that celebrates diversity of age, race, religion, gender, disability, and background.
- Challenge and report discriminatory, offensive, or derogatory behaviour.
- Take active steps to prevent bullying, harassment, and victimisation.

## **Communication and Use of Technology**

- All communication must be professional, transparent, and appropriate.
- Use official SWL-approved communication methods and platforms only.
- Language used with learners or parents must be respectful, clear, and professional.
- Comply with the SWL Online Safety and Acceptable Use Policy for all remote tutoring.
- Recording or sharing online sessions is strictly prohibited unless explicitly authorised in writing.

## **Lone and Online Working**

### **Lone Working:**

- Ensure a colleague or manager knows your session times, location, and expected end time.

### **Home Visits:**

- Remain in the agreed teaching space; avoid unnecessary movement around the home.
- Do not remain alone with a learner unless a responsible adult (over 18) is present.

### **Libraries or Public Spaces:**

- Select safe, visible locations with appropriate risk assessments completed.

### **Online Sessions:**

- Use only SWL-approved platforms.
- Encourage parental or carer presence where possible.

## **Health and Safety**

- Adhere to the SWL Health and Safety Policy and the requirements of partner organisations (e.g., schools, libraries).
- Do not work under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or any substance that impairs judgement or performance.
- Report all accidents, incidents, and hazards immediately.
- Take action to protect yourself and learners from unsafe situations.

## **Confidentiality and Data Protection**

- Personal and confidential information about learners, families, or staff must be handled in line with the SWL Data Protection and GDPR Policy and UK GDP regulations.
- Use secure communication systems (e.g. Outlook with multi-factor authentication).
- Store records securely and restrict access to authorised personnel only.
- Do not discuss confidential information outside professional contexts.

## **Whistleblowing and Accountability**

- Staff must report any concerns about unsafe practice, misconduct, or breaches of this Code in line with the SWL Whistleblowing Policy.
- Concerns may also be reported directly to external authorities such as the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) or the police, in accordance with the SWL Safeguarding Policy.
- SWL will not tolerate retaliation against whistleblowers. All reports will be handled sensitively and investigated thoroughly.

## **Compliance and Disciplinary Action**

All staff must read and sign this Code annually, acknowledging awareness of updates to KCSIE 2025 and related statutory guidance.

Breaches of this Code will be treated as misconduct and may result in:

- Formal investigation and disciplinary action.
- Termination of employment or contract.
- Referral to external authorities, including the DBS, LADO, or police, where appropriate.

## **Communicating this Policy**

This policy will be:

- Shared with all staff, tutors, and contractors during induction.
- Available on request to clients, schools, and parents.
- Reviewed annually and updated where legislation or guidance changes.

## **Contact Details:**

- South West Learning
- Email: [info@southwestlearning.co.uk](mailto:info@southwestlearning.co.uk)
- Designated Safeguarding Lead: Emma Radford
- Deputy DSL: Eleanor Hoggett

## **Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if statutory updates require, by the Directors and DSL.

**Date Approved:** September 2025

**Date for Review:** September 2026