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# Staff code of conduct (safeguarding)

## 2025–2026

**Lewisham**

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This *Staff Code of Conduct (Safeguarding)* compliments Lewisham Music's *Safeguarding Policy* and covers all Lewisham Music staff with direct contact with children and young people. In this document the term 'staff' refers to all employees i.e. Music Tutors and office/management staff, freelancers/consultants engaged by LM and volunteers.

Under LM's *Disciplinary Policy & Procedure*, a serious breach of this Code will be investigated and could be regarded as gross misconduct and result in dismissal without notice. A less serious breach may result in a disciplinary warning.

## Introduction

During their work for Lewisham Music, staff are expected to treat everyone with respect, uphold high professional and personal standards, and ensure that their behaviour is always appropriate.

## Professional conduct in schools

As well as being responsible for upholding Lewisham Music's policies and standards, while working in schools, staff are expected to co-operate fully and follow the rules and procedures regarding health and safety, equality and diversity, safeguarding and conduct that are held at that school.

## Duty of care

A staff member's duty of care extends to all pupils in the schools and community settings where they work, even if they do not personally teach them.

If staff become aware of any concerns relating to any pupil either directly or from a third party, or witness an incident, they have a duty to inform an appropriate person at the earliest opportunity, and before they leave that day. If the matter is of a safeguarding nature they must – as outlined in the LM *Safeguarding Policy* – also report this to the Designated Safeguarding Lead at Lewisham Music.

## Relationships

- A successful Music Tutor will build strong relationships with pupils, school staff, other Music Tutors, parents, and carers. However, these relationships must remain strictly professional, and staff should be aware of the dangers of over-familiarity.
- All members of staff have a relationship of trust with the children and young people who use our services. It is an abuse of that trust and could be a criminal offence to engage in any romantic, intimate, or sexual activity with a young person aged under 18, or a vulnerable young adult under the age of 25, irrespective of the age of consent and even if the relationship is consensual. A relationship which starts with an ex-pupil of any age soon after they leave a Lewisham Music programme could also be considered grooming and potentially a criminal offence.

# Physical contact

Music Tutors should try not to have any physical contact at all. Fingerings or posture can be modelled and mirrored without physical contact.

If physical contact is absolutely necessary, they must always ask the pupil first (e.g. “Do you mind if I move your finger to the right place on the string?”).

There may be exceptional occasions where it is necessary to restrain individual children physically to prevent them from hurting themselves or others. Only the minimum reasonable force necessary must be used. In schools all incidents of physical restraint must be recorded in the school logbook, in a *Lewisham Music Incident Form*, and reported in writing to the school’s Designated Safeguarding Lead and Lewisham Music’s Chief Executive.

In general, if staff are placed in a difficult situation or have any concerns, they must contact the Chief Executive.

# Language and communication

- Staff should never use swear words, expletives, or other profanities –however mild they may judge them to be– in front of students, staff, or parents/carers.
- Staff should never make jokes or use terminology that could be construed as inappropriate or offensive in any way.
- Similarly, staff should always insist that students use suitable language in their presence.
- If staff consider a conversation with a student to be inappropriate, they should end the conversation, and make sure that the student understands that they are not comfortable with the subject. This should then be immediately reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead at both the school and Lewisham Music.
- Students should be dressed appropriately; however, staff should avoid making comments about a student’s personal appearance.
- Staff should be careful not to overshare with pupils regarding personal information or opinions and must not share overtly political opinions whilst undertaking work for *Lewisham Music*. Staff attitude and conduct should always show positive regard to Lewisham Music’s *Equality & Diversity Policy*.

# Appearance

Although Lewisham Music does not have a specific dress code, staff should always ensure that they are dressed appropriately. For example, they should not wear something displaying a political slogan or offensive language. Schools may have specific dress codes staff will need to observe.

# Entry to schools

Staff are responsible for ensuring that they can gain entry and maintain access to their place of work following all appropriate procedures. This will include:

- Signing in on arrival and out on departure
- Informing the school office of their arrival and departure
- Wearing a Lewisham Music ID badge at all times (including during holiday and community programmes)
- Providing a photo ID.

**Please note- Lewisham Music holds staff DBS information (number and issue date) and will ensure that this information is sent to schools. However, staff should still have this information to hand.**

## Teaching spaces

Staff should exercise caution in situations where they are alone with pupils. Where 1:1 teaching is taking place, for example, they should ensure visibility is always maintained and that they and the child can be seen through the window in the door. Staff should not be teaching in locations that are 'hidden away' from other staff.

## Staff ratios

Teaching ratios are established for each group based on an activity risk assessment. The ratios are dependent on several factors including the age of the group, the location (school, youth centre, pupil referral unit), what space is available for the workshop/lesson, are there support staff within the setting, the needs of the young people (e.g. Children in Care, children with physical disabilities, informal youth group) and what is known about the session content (e.g. rock band, gospel choir, singing and songwriting, samba drumming, music production). Managers and Music Tutors should be aware of any statutory requirement for ratios relevant for the group they are working with (such as within Early Years).

Typically, within a mainstream education setting the maximum staff ratio is 1:30, providing there is an additional staff member available.

Typically, within our community (out-of-school) programmes the maximum staff ratio 1:20, this can extend to 1:30 providing there is an additional member of staff available to support.

## Teaching outside of school hours

If staff are teaching on a school premises outside of normal working hours, they should be clear who is still on the premises, how to get help if needed, and what arrangements are being made for pupils' security whilst they are waiting.

The school needs to take responsibility for the arrangements, but staff do have a duty of care to their pupils, for example not leaving them alone and unsupervised if a parent is late picking

them up. Staff should take care not to let this become a regular occurrence as they should never be alone with a young person on a site.

Staff should not start so early that their first pupil would be unsupervised between the end of their lesson and the start of the school day.

## **Lifts in a vehicle**

Staff must not give students lifts in their car.

## **Photo permissions and mobile phones**

- We encourage staff to use smartphones, tablets, and computers to enhance their teaching, for example through the use of education applications, backing tracks and recording sound.
- Staff must never take a photo or video of students without the permission of the parents/carers and the school. Any photos or videos taken in a school (for example, recording a whole class performance to watch back the following week) should be taken on a school device, and not staff's personal devices.
- Any images stored on a mobile telephone which is taken into a school or other education setting must not contain inappropriate viewing matter for children.
- Similarly, staff must never access sexual or otherwise inappropriate material whilst on school grounds or on other premises being used for Lewisham Music activities.
- Staff should never use their phones during a lesson/session unless it is for educational purposes or because of an emergency. All alerts should be switched off and the phone should be on silent during lessons.
- School policies on the use of phones will vary, so please ensure that use of your phone does not go against individual school policies.

## **Contact with Students**

- Staff must not give out their personal home or mobile telephone numbers to students.
- Telephone contact must go through schools, the Lewisham Music office, or parents/carers rather than directly with pupils. Email may be preferable for non-urgent queries. Lewisham Music can set up '@lewishammusic' emails for any Music Tutors who would like one, please contact [robbie.hurst@lewishammusic.org](mailto:robbie.hurst@lewishammusic.org).
- Lewisham Music will never give staff contact information to a school, parent, or carer without their prior approval.

# Pupil registers

- Pupil registers should be kept in schools, preferably with office staff, and not taken away from school premises. For Saturday Music Centre staff, registers should be left with the Head of Centre or Community Music Coordinator. Staff working at The Fellowship should leave pupil registers in the building.

# Data Protection

- All data relating to children and schools must be kept secure at all times in accordance with current GDPR guidance and the *Lewisham Music Data Protection Policy & Procedure*. It is not advisable to store important information on memory sticks or mobile phones.

# First Aid and medical assistance

- Except in cases of emergency, First Aid will only be administered by qualified First Aiders. If it is necessary for the child to remove clothing for first aid treatment, there will, wherever possible, be another adult present.
- Lewisham Music management, office staff and Saturday Music Centre staff are all First Aid trained.
- A child requiring regular medication or therapies for long-term medical conditions will be made the subject of a Medical Plan held by the school. Lewisham Music staff should not be expected to oversee or take responsibility for a pupil's medication or therapies, but they should make themselves aware of any serious medical conditions which their pupils might have. The Lewisham Music office/management will be aware of any medical conditions or additional needs of any pupils attending community programmes.

# Press

Staff should never engage with print or digital media/press about their work for Lewisham Music without the prior approval of the Chief Executive. Any media enquiries should immediately be referred to the Chief Executive.

# Social media

If staff have an account on any social networking sites (Facebook, Twitter/X, LinkedIn, Instagram etc.) they should consider the following points:

- Are they happy that their pupils, their pupil's parents/carers, and work colleagues may be able to see their opinions, personal details, photographs, wall posts etc., even if they are not 'friends' with them? They should consider their privacy settings very carefully.
- Staff must **never** invite pupils who are under 18 to be a 'friend' or accept a 'friend request' from them on social media. On some social media platforms (e.g., Twitter/X), people can 'follow'

you without you accepting a friend request. However, you should not interact on social media with pupils who are under-18 in any way. If, for example, a pupil sends you a direct message relating to their lessons or musical interests on Twitter/X or Instagram, you should either ignore this, or ask them to contact you via a Lewisham Music email address and then cease any further interaction. If in doubt, please report any such contact to the Chief Executive.

- This is still the case if you no longer teach a pupil, but they are still under 18. Becoming 'friends' as soon as they turn 18 or leave school is also not advised, as this behaviour could be seen as grooming.
- Lewisham Music increasingly works with 18-30 year olds, offering careers and skills programmes. In these cases, interaction through professional accounts on professionally focused-social media (e.g. LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram) is acceptable. However, it is still advised that you do not interact using personal accounts. Interaction must stay professional and not personal. Extra care must be taken when interacting with any young people with learning disabilities or other vulnerabilities. If any interaction feels inappropriate or awkward, please report any such contact to the Chief Executive.
- It is advised that staff do not become 'friends' with or interact in anyway on social media with the parents/ carers of pupils or staff from schools they work in.
- Anyone expressing extreme or hateful views or acting in a threatening or bullying way on social media (even if posts are not linked to your work with Lewisham Music) may be subjected to disciplinary procedures.
- Staff should never make negative, defamatory, or offensive comments on social media about Lewisham Music, Lewisham Music colleagues, Lewisham schools or school staff, partner or funding organisations including Arts Council England and the Department for Education. The Lewisham Music *Grievance* and *Whistleblowing* policies outline more appropriate ways in which staff can raise concerns.

## Bribes, gifts, and corruption

- It is against the law for members of staff to take bribes. Staff must take care that they do not accept any gift that might be construed by others as a bribe or that may lead the giver to expect preferential treatment. There are occasions when pupils, staff or parents/carers may wish to pass small tokens of appreciation to staff e.g., at Christmas or as a thank-you, and this is acceptable. However, it is unacceptable to receive gifts on a regular basis or of any significant value (over £30).
- Staff must not use their position to make any financial gain from the sale of instruments, sheet music or accessories by way of commission from a third party. Any advice given to parents and students must be transparent and impartial. Any relevant *Declarations of Interest* must be declared.
- Personal gifts must not be given to pupils. Any rewards given to a pupil should be consistent with the school's behaviour policy and not based on favouritism.

# Drugs and alcohol

- Staff should not be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs whilst at work. Prescription drugs must also be used carefully and in accordance with medical guidance.

# Smoking

- Staff should never smoke or vape/use e-cigarettes in front of pupils.
- Staff should never smoke or vape/use e-cigarettes within visible distance of Lewisham Music premises or Lewisham schools.
- Staff who smoke should take precautions to ensure they do not noticeably smell of cigarette smoke when working with pupils.



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