

# TUTOR CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY

February 2025

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## 1. Introduction

- This document provides professional guidelines for tutors working with Powertutors on a self-employed basis. Adhering to these standards helps maintain best practices in safeguarding and professionalism. As independent professionals, tutors retain control over their working methods but are expected to align with these principles when working with Powertutors
- Tutors are in a unique position of trust and influence as role models for students. Therefore, tutors must adhere to behaviour that sets a good example to all students when they work with Powertutors.
- Tutors also have an individual responsibility to maintain their reputation and the reputation of Powertutors, both inside and outside working hours and the work setting.
- This policy applies to all tutors working with Powertutors, regardless of their position, role or responsibility. References to 'tutors' throughout the policy relate to all the following groups:
  1. All approved tutors registered with Powertutors
  2. Temporary and supply staff, either from agencies or engaged directly
  3. Student placements, including those undertaking an apprenticeship
  4. Subcontractors.
- Powertutors requires that all tutors have read and agree to comply with this policy.
- If concerns arise regarding professional standards, Powertutors reserves the right to reassess the tutor's suitability for ongoing work.
- This code of conduct is not an exhaustive list of acceptable and unacceptable standards of behaviour. In situations where guidance does not exist in this policy tutors are expected to exercise their professional judgement and act in the best interests of the students, the tutor and Powertutors.

**This policy should be read in conjunction with the Safeguarding, the Online Safety and Whistleblowing policies.**

## 2. Professional Behaviour and Conduct

- Tutors are expected to demonstrate the highest possible standards of personal and professional conduct and behaviour and consistently act with honesty and integrity. Powertutors expects tutors to treat other tutors, students, Powertutors office team and the wider community with dignity and respect at all times.
- Tutors must ensure that they always comply with the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion laws in relation to equality issues. The bullying or harassment of other tutors, students, Powertutors office team or other members of the community is considered to be unacceptable and could lead to a review of tutor suitability. Tutors are expected to report any concerns or suspicions they may have about the treatment of others to the Powertutors office team.
- Tutors have a duty of trust in relation to Powertutors, to students and the local community.
- Tutors must act in accordance with their duty of care to students and ensure that the safety and welfare of students are accorded the highest priority.
- Tutors should show fairness in their treatment of students and other tutors avoiding behaviours such as embarrassing or humiliating students and other tutors, making jokes at the expense of students and other tutors, discriminating against or favouring students and other tutors and sarcasm.
- Tutors must have regard for the ethos and values of Powertutors and must not do or say anything which may bring Powertutors into disrepute. Care should be taken by tutors to avoid any conflict of interest between activities undertaken outside Powertutors and their responsibilities as a tutor.
- Tutors must not conduct themselves in any way which might create doubt about their suitability to work for Powertutors.
- Tutors should ensure that their own personal or political opinions do not interfere with any policy of Powertutors or bring Powertutors into disrepute.
- Tutors have a shared duty to help prevent injuries or accidents occurring at work hours by complying with Health, Safety and Welfare legislation.

### **3. Conduct outside of work**

- Tutors must not engage in conduct which could seriously damage their reputation or that of Powertutors.

- Tutors should inform the Powertutors team if any situations have happened that could impact on the above.

#### **4. Dress and Appearance**

- Powertutors recognise that dress and appearance are matters of personal choice and self-expression. However, tutors are expected to dress in a manner suitable for an educational environment and appropriate for working with children and young people.
- Tutors should dress in a manner that is not offensive, revealing or sexually provocative and in a manner that is absent from political or contentious slogans.
- Tutors should dress safely and appropriately for the tasks they undertake.

#### **5. Smoking, alcohol and other substances**

- Tuition takes place in settings that are non-smoking sites.
- Tutors must not smoke or vape on tutoring premises or outside the premises.
- Tutors must not smoke or vape whilst working with or supervising students.
- Tutors must not consume or be under the influence of alcohol, illicit drugs or other illegal substances.

#### **6. Relationships with Students**

- Tutors must maintain professional boundaries with students appropriate to their position and must always consider whether their actions are warranted, proportionate, and safe and applied equitably. Tutors should act in an open and transparent way that would not lead any reasonable person to question their actions or intent. Tutors should think carefully about their conduct so that misinterpretations are minimised.
- Tutors must not establish or seek to establish social contact with students for the purpose of securing a friendship or to pursue or strengthen a relationship. If a young person seeks to establish social contact, you should exercise your professional judgement in making a response and be aware that such social contact could be misconstrued.

- Contact with students should be through Powertutors authorised mechanisms (via the office team). For safeguarding purposes, Powertutors strongly advises tutors to maintain professional boundaries and only use Powertutors-approved communication channels for student interactions. If contacted via an inappropriate route the tutor must inform the DSL immediately.
- Tutors must not accept friend invitations or become friends with any students on any social media platform. Tutors should also refrain from following students or their parents on any social media platforms. Tutors must read the Online Safety Policy carefully and follow all advice and guidance contained within it.

## **7. Gifts/Hospitality**

- Tutors need to take care that they do not accept any gifts/offer of hospitality that might be construed as a bribe by others or lead the giver to expect preferential treatment. However, there may be occasions where students or parents wish to give a small token of appreciation to tutors.
- Tutors should avoid accepting monetary gifts under any circumstances. Small tokens of appreciation are acceptable if they do not create a conflict of interest. If you are unsure whether to accept a gift you should consult your Relationship Case Manager.
- Tutors should avoid the giving of personal gifts and rewards to students in order to avoid conflicts of interest.

## **8. Physical Contact with Students**

- There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate and proper for tutors to have physical contact with students, but it is crucial that they only do so in ways appropriate to their professional role. A 'no touch' approach is impractical for most tutors and may in some circumstances be inappropriate. When physical contact is made with students it should be in response to their needs at that time, of limited duration and appropriate to their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background.
- Where feasible, tutors should seek the student's permission before initiating contact. Tutors should listen, observe and take note of the student's reaction or

feelings and so far, as is possible, use a level of contact which is acceptable to the student for the minimum time necessary.

- It is not possible to be specific about the appropriateness of each physical contact, since an action that is appropriate with one student in one set of circumstances may be inappropriate in another, or with a different student. Tutors should, therefore, always use their professional judgement.
- Tutors should be aware that even well-intentioned physical contact may be misconstrued by the student, an observer or by anyone to whom this action is described. Tutors should never touch a student in a way which may be considered indecent. Always be prepared to explain actions and accept that all physical contact be open to scrutiny. Tutors must not engage in rough play, tickling or fun fights with students.
- Extra caution should be exercised where a student is known to have suffered previous abuse or neglect. Such experiences may sometimes make a student exceptionally needy and demanding of physical contact and tutors should respond sensitively by deterring the student through helping them to understand the importance of personal boundaries.
- Physical contact must never be secretive, for the gratification of the adult or represent a misuse of authority.
- If a tutor believes that an action could be misinterpreted, the incident and circumstances should be reported to your Relationship Case Manager, recorded and, if appropriate, a copy placed on the student's CPOMs file.

## **9. Behaviour Management and Physical Intervention**

Tutors may legitimately intervene to prevent a pupil from committing a criminal offence, injuring themselves or others, causing damage to property, engaging in behaviour prejudicial to good order and to maintain good order and discipline. Tutors should have regard to the health and safety of themselves and others. Under no circumstances should physical force be used as a form of punishment. The use of unwarranted physical force is likely to constitute criminal offence.

## **10. Use of Reasonable Force**

Reasonable in the circumstances 'means no more than is needed.' All tutors have a legal power to use reasonable force to maintain good order and discipline and to prevent students from:

- Hurting themselves or others
- Damaging property
- Causing disorder

We acknowledge that tutors must only ever use physical intervention as a last resort, when a child is endangering him/herself or others, and that at all times it must be the minimal force necessary to prevent injury to others. Such events should be recorded and signed by a witness and parents will be informed of such incidents (this is considered good practice).

### **11. Student in distress**

- There may be occasions when a student is in distress and in need of comfort as a reassurance. This may include age-appropriate physical contact. Tutors should always remain self-aware in order that their contact is not threatening, intrusive or subject to misinterpretation.
- Such incidents should always be recorded and shared with your Relationship Case Manager. If you have a particular concern about the need to provide this type of care and reassurance you should seek further advice from your Relationship Case Manager.

### **12. One to one situation**

- Tutors working individually with students should be aware of the potential vulnerability of students and themselves in such situations. Tutors should manage these situations with regard to the safety of the student and to themselves.
- Individual work with students should not be undertaken in isolated areas or rooms where there is no external viewing panel. Where it is necessary to close doors for reasons of confidentiality a responsible adult should be made aware of this and asked to remain vigilant.
- Meetings with students away from the school premises or school site should ensure that another responsible adult is also present. If the tutor is alone with the student, then the session should not commence or should end at that point.

### **13. Transporting students**

- Powertutors tutors should not transport students in their personal vehicles. If exceptional circumstances require this, written consent must be obtained from the student's parent/guardian and Powertutors in advance. In such cases, tutors are responsible for ensuring the safety and welfare of the student throughout the journey.
- Tutors should ensure that the transport arrangements and the vehicle meet all legal requirements. Tutors should ensure that they have the appropriate license for the vehicle, that the vehicle is roadworthy, has a valid MOT certificate and is appropriately insured and that the maximum capacity is not exceeded.
- Tutors should ensure that they are not distracted while the vehicle is in motion for any reason other than an emergency and should also ensure all passengers are wearing correctly fastened seatbelts. Tutors should never transport students while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Prior to transporting students' consent must be obtained from both the client and Powertutors office team. Tutors need to be aware of not being in a one to one situation with the student and should also be accompanied by a responsible adult. Tutors should be aware that the safety and welfare of the students is their responsibility until this is safely passed back to their parent/carer.

#### **14. Online Safety**

- Tutors should follow Powertutors Online Safety and Procedure Policy at all times when working with a student.
- Tutors must not engage in inappropriate use of social network sites which may bring themselves or Powertutors into disrepute.
- Tutors should remain mindful of their digital footprint and exercise caution in all their use of social media or any other web-based presence they have. This includes written content, videos or photographs and views expressed either directly or by 'liking' certain pages or posts or following certain individuals or groups. Tutors should exercise care when using dating websites where tutors could encounter students.
- Tutors must not make contact with students, must not accept or initiate friend requests nor follow students' accounts on any social media platform. Tutors must not communicate with students via social media, websites, instant messenger accounts or text message. The only acceptable method of contact is via the Powertutors office team.



- Tutors should not make contact with students' family members, accept or initiate friend requests or follow students' family member's account on any social media platform.
- Tutors must be aware of the safeguarding issues around the use of mobile technologies and their associated risks.
- Mobile phones and personally owned devices should not be used during lessons for personal use. They should be always switched off (or silent). The Bluetooth functionality of a mobile phone should be switched off at all times and may not be used to send images or files to other mobile phones.

## **15. Photography, video and images of students**

- In accordance with The Data Protection Act 1998 the image of a student is personal data. Therefore, it is a requirement under the Act for consent to be obtained from the parent/carer of a student for any images made. Tutors should not take any photographs/images or video footage of students under any circumstances.

## **16. Confidentiality**

- Tutors should handle confidential information responsibly and follow safeguarding laws. If safeguarding concerns arise, tutors should report them to the Designated Safeguarding Lead in accordance with the Safeguarding Policy.
- Tutors have a statutory obligation to share with Powertutors Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead any information which gives rise to concern about the welfare or safety of a student or that might suggest a student is in need or at risk of significant harm. Tutors should pass on information without delay in accordance with the Safeguarding policy and procedures and this should be recorded. Tutors must never promise a student that they will not act on or pass on any information that they are told by the student.

## **17. Whistleblowing**

- Whistleblowing is the mechanism by which tutors can voice their concerns, without fear of repercussion. Powertutors is committed to achieving the

highest possible standards of honesty, openness and accountability and relies on its tutors and members of staff to help maintain these standards. In pursuit of these aims, Powertutors encourages all individuals to raise concerns which they may have about the conduct or practices of others.

- All tutors and staff have a duty to report any behaviour which raises concern. Tutors should refer to Whistleblowing policy for further guidance. This is particularly important where the welfare of students may be at risk.

## **18. Criminal Charges or Convictions**

To maintain safeguarding standards, tutors working with Powertutors are required to hold an up-to-date DBS certificate. If a tutor's DBS status changes, including any new convictions, cautions, or police investigations that may impact their ability to work with students, they must notify Powertutors promptly so that safeguarding risks can be assessed. Failure to disclose relevant changes may result in removal from Powertutors' approved tutor list.

## **19. First Aid and Administration of Medicines to Students**

Tutors are not to provide first aid and administer any medications to students.

## **20. Compliance**

All tutors are expected to read, understand, and align with this policy to maintain safeguarding and professional standards. Non-compliance may result in removal from Powertutors' approved tutor list.