

# **CODE OF CONDUCT**

## **Goethe Society - WA Inc.**

*Current version as of November 2019*

The Goethe Society of WA Inc. may, from time to time, review and update this Code of Conduct to take into account new laws and changes to the school's operations and practices, or to ensure that it remains relevant to the changing school environment.

### **1. BACKGROUND**

The Goethe Society of WA Inc.'s ("the Goethe Society" or "we" or "our") Code of Conduct ("the Code") is part of a framework of documents which includes, but is not limited to, the Child Safety and Risk Management Policy ("the Safety Policy") and the Enrolment Policy.

Collectively, these documents provide a broad framework to guide the ethical and accountable behaviour of all staff of the Goethe Society.

### **2. AIM OF THIS CODE**

The Code provides a set of general principles to guide the members of the Goethe Society in their conduct as representatives. These principles are designed to give guidance to the Goethe Society members in both professional and personal decision-making, where the latter may have impact on their professional standing and conduct. These principles are to be read in conjunction with other relevant policy and legal obligations.

The Goethe Society is committed to providing a child-safe environment which safeguards all students and to promoting practices which provide for the safety, wellbeing and welfare of its students. The Goethe Society expects all school community members including staff, volunteers, students, visitors and contractors to share this commitment.

The Code does not attempt to provide a rigid, exhaustive list of what to do in every aspect of the work of a member of the Goethe Society. It sets out general expectations in regard to standards of behaviour and provides some examples of behaviour that is or is not acceptable.

### **3. APPLICABILITY OF THE CODE**

The Code applies to all staff employed by the Goethe Society (teaching and non-teaching) as well as volunteers and parents (section 7c).

The requirements of the Code apply to all members of the Goethe Society in the daily performance of their work duties. However, members need to be aware that inappropriate or improper conduct outside of the work environment or normal working hours may still constitute professional misconduct and may bring their professional suitability into question.

#### **4. ENFORCEMENT OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT**

If a member of the Goethe Society engages in conduct which constitutes a breach of this Code, they may be the subject of formal disciplinary action. Members should also be aware that in certain circumstances not adhering to this Code may also constitute/represent a criminal offence.

#### **5. OUR VALUES**

The Goethe Society promotes ethical practices and appropriate standards of conduct and behaviour and is committed to maintaining a learning environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity. Therefore, the actions of all members are to be guided by the Goethe Society's values. These values reflect social responsibilities owed to students, parents, guardians and other community members, as well as to each other. These values should find practical expression in the day-to-day operations of the Goethe Society:

##### **A) Learning**

The Goethe Society has a positive approach to learning and encourages it in others; we advance student learning based on our belief that all students have the capacity to learn.

##### **B) Excellence**

The Goethe Society has high expectations of our students and ourselves. We set standards of excellence and strive to achieve them.

##### **C) Equity**

The Goethe Society recognises the differing circumstances and needs of our students and is dedicated to achieving the best possible outcomes for all. We strive to create workplaces and learning environments that are free of discrimination, abuse or exploitation.

##### **D) Care**

The Goethe Society treats all individuals with care. Our relationships are based on trust, mutual respect and the acceptance of responsibility. We recognise the value of working in partnership with parents/guardians and the community to provide a quality education.

#### **6. PRINCIPLES**

The Goethe Society expects all members to maintain high standards of behaviour in all activities and environments associated with our organisation.

Members are expected to behave in accordance with the professional expectations of the teaching profession. They must be fully aware that their actions will be subject to appropriate scrutiny by other members and the community and must be prepared to give an account of their behaviour to leadership when requested.

To assist members in meeting these expectations, the Goethe Society has developed the following principles:

## **A) Personal Behaviour**

Members of the Goethe Society are expected to behave ethically and act with integrity at all times.

In practice, this means that all members shall:

- treat others with respect, dignity, courtesy, honesty and fairness and with proper regard for their rights, safety and welfare;
- make decisions fairly, impartially and promptly, taking into account all relevant information, legislation, policies and procedures;
- contribute to a workplace that is free of harassment, bullying or discrimination against colleagues, students or members of the public;
- maintain a safe classroom environment;
- maintain professional boundaries with students with regard to communication (in person, in written form and over social networking platforms), personal disclosure, physical contact and interaction;
- model effective leadership and respect in their interactions with students;
- continually monitor and reflect on their own practice, so as to model appropriate behaviour and to follow the guidance in this Code;
- encourage positive work habits, behaviour and personal and professional workplace relationships and boundaries;
- not engage in behaviour that may bring their own reputation or that of the Goethe Society into disrepute;
- regularly review Goethe Society policies and make every effort to comply with them;
- not tolerate or participate in behaviour that is inconsistent with these principles.

## **B) Communication and Official Information**

Members of the Goethe Society only use official information for authorised purposes.

Official information is all oral, written/printed and digital information that a member may have access to through their engagement with the Goethe Society.

This includes the use of student works, photographs, video or sound recordings of the students, and any other reproductions or adaptations of their likeness, either in full or part, and the subsequent publication of the above in ways including, but not limited to, public websites, school newsletters (print and online), magazines and local newspapers.

In practice this means that all members:

- only disclose official information or documents as required by law or where proper authorisation is given; and
- do not misuse official information or documents for personal or commercial gain for themselves and/or others.

## **C) Fraudulent and Corrupt Behaviour**

Goethe Society members must act ethically and avoid engaging in any behaviour which may be considered fraudulent and/or corrupt.

In practice, this means that members:

- do not engage in dishonest conduct This includes conduct that causes actual or potential detriment to others and/or misuse of their position for personal benefit or that of a third party. Examples of dishonest conduct might include
  - taking workplace materials and/or equipment for personal use;
  - claiming a travel entitlement to attend a course and not attending the course;
  - using corporate credit cards for personal purposes;
- report any suspected fraudulent and corrupt behaviour.

#### **D) Record Keeping and Use of Information**

Goethe Society members ensure that the information of enrolled students and those in the process of enrolling, including electronic data, is properly recorded, managed and maintained. It must be noted that the Goethe Society cannot guarantee the security of data held by third parties providing internet data storage and access systems.

In practice this means that members:

- properly record actions and decisions to ensure transparency and accuracy;
- securely store records and confidential information;
- ensure that documents, whether in an electronic form or a hard copy, are secured in a manner to only allow access to authorised people;
- who are class coordinators must forward attendance lists for OMI funding;
- who are class coordinators must collect and compile lists of enrolment and forward medical information; and
- comply with the relevant Goethe Society policies and procedures.

#### **E) Conflicts of Interest**

A conflict of interest is a situation arising from a conflict between the performance of your public duty and private or personal interests.

Situations that may give rise to a conflict of interest include:

- personal relationships with people with whom the Goethe Society has professional dealings;
- the use of their position to promote personal views, religious or political beliefs;
- personal financial interests in a matter that the Goethe Society is dealing with, or being aware of friends or relatives with such an interest;
- gifts or benefits received from people or businesses seeking employment, enrolment, and/or seeking to influence a member's decision making.

If a potential conflict of interest does arise, members are to advise their immediate superior (e.g. class coordinator) immediately and seek their guidance on how to manage the situation.

## **7. RESPONSIBILITIES FOR IMPLEMENTING THE CODE OF CONDUCT**

7a. The President of the Goethe Society is responsible for:

- Maintaining the currency and relevancy of the Code;
- Implementing the standards of conduct as set out in the Code.

7b. All members of the Goethe Society are responsible for:

- Respecting the individual needs, cultural practices and beliefs of others in all interactions, both verbal and non-verbal;
- Working with colleagues and parents/guardians to provide an environment that encourages positive interactions and supports constructive feedback;
- Providing guidance to parents/guardians and volunteers through positive role modelling and, when appropriate, clear and respectful directions.

7c. Parents and guardians are responsible for supporting the efforts of the Goethe Society in maintaining a safe, orderly and respectful learning environment for all students. This necessitates abiding by the Code and ensuring that their child does likewise.

Parents/guardians fulfil this responsibility when they:

- Show an active but non-invasive interest in their child's school work and progress;
- Communicate regularly with the Goethe Society;
- Ensure that their child is appropriately prepared for classes;
- Promptly report their child's absence or late arrival to the Goethe Society;
- Work with the Goethe Society in dealing with disciplinary issues involving their child.

Members of the wider school community are expected to respect and uphold the Code in all their contacts with the Goethe Society, whether on school property, at school functions or other community events.

Any member of the Goethe Society who invites a relative, friend, supporter, carer or other person (adult or child) to be present at any school-related function or activity at any location must be responsible for that person and must ensure that they act at all times in a manner consistent with this Code of Conduct.

## **8. STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOUR**

All members of the Goethe Society should act according to these guidelines:

### **A) Communication**

- Use courteous and appropriate written and spoken language. Refrain from the use of profane, insulting, harassing, aggressive or otherwise offensive language.

- Accept that the use of swearing, derogatory terms, sexual jokes, innuendo and other inappropriate language in the learning environment of the Goethe Society or around students will not be tolerated.
- Give encouraging and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism.
- Responses to emails and telephone calls are not expected to be instantaneous or out of normal working hours, unless of an urgent nature. Normal service standards suggest an acceptable response time for emails is within 48 hours.
- The discipline of students is the responsibility of class coordinators and therefore any matters or concerns related to managing students' behaviour should be referred to class coordinators immediately.

## **B) Relationships**

- Ensure that their relationships with students are strictly professional and in accordance with the Code and that favouritism and special treatment are avoided.
- Avoid inappropriate physical contact with students at all times.
- Respect diversity in people, their ideas and opinions and treat others fairly regardless of their race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age or disability.
- Respect the legal and moral rights of others and treat them with dignity, civility and respect at all times, and especially when there is a disagreement.
- Respect the value and importance of volunteers within the School community.
- Refrain from actions and behaviour that constitutes harassment or discrimination, including inappropriate use of social media such as emails and Facebook with regard to the Goethe Society, its members, parents and students.

## **C) Ethical Conduct**

- Demonstrate honesty and integrity.
- Always act in the best interests of students, their families, and members of the Goethe Society.
- Show proper care and regard for Goethe Society property and the property of others.
- Take appropriate measures to help those in need.

## **D) Safety**

- Support the Goethe Society's Policies and acknowledge that the President is responsible for implementing the School's Policies.
- Comply with all relevant policies and procedures of the School. These are displayed on the Goethe Society website.
- Be aware of the emergency evacuation procedures.
- Respect and comply with all applicable Commonwealth and State laws.

## **E) Confidentiality**

- Class lists and personal information must not be used for personal benefit or that of a third party (specifically, must not be used for business pursuits or networking opportunities).

## **F) Conflict Management**

- Seek assistance from class coordinators, if necessary, to resolve conflict peacefully.
- Work with the School to deal promptly with areas of concern.
- Accept the decisions of class coordinators and follow their directions. Speak with the class coordinators if there is a problem in complying with any directions.

## **G) School Community members must not:**

- Verbally abuse, threaten or inflict bodily harm on another person by any physical aggression or encourage others to do so.
- Be in possession of, or under the influence of, or provide others with, alcohol or illegal drugs. The exception is when, in the normal course of events, the School provides hospitality to members or guests of the School Community in keeping with appropriate legal and hospitality regulations.

## **9. BREACHING THE CODE**

As a member of the Goethe Society, you hold a position of trust and are accountable for your actions.

All alleged breaches of the Code will be subject to scrutiny and, if substantiated, members may be warned, suspended or have their employment terminated. Any potentially illegal activity will be reported to the Police and appropriate actions will be taken by the senior management.

Members should report possible breaches by colleagues to their supervisor or the President.

If the possible breach is made by their supervisor, then it should be reported to the President.

If the possible breach is by the President, then it should be reported to the chair of the governing body.

The consequences of inappropriate behaviour and breaches of this Code will depend on the nature of the breach.

Factors the Goethe Society may consider when deciding what action to take can include:

- the seriousness of the breach;
- the likelihood of the breach occurring again;
- whether the member has committed the breach more than once;
- the risk the breach poses to others;
- whether the breach is sufficiently serious to warrant formal disciplinary action.

Actions that may be taken by the Goethe Society in respect of a breach of the Code include management or remedial action, training or disciplinary action ranging from a warning to termination of employment and reporting of the matter.

The Goethe Society reserves the right to determine in its entirety the response to any breach of this Code.