

Personnel

Staff/Student Non-Fraternization

All Woodstock Academy staff members shall maintain professional relationships with students that are conducive to an effective educational environment, through established professional boundaries.

The relationship between The Academy personnel and students must be one of cooperation, understanding, and mutual respect. Staff members should extend to students the same respect and courtesy that they, as staff members, have a right to demand.

That being said, all Academy personnel shall maintain a professional, ethical relationship with students and refrain from improper fraternization or undue familiarity with students. Dating and sexual conduct between staff members and students are prohibited. Any action or comment by a member of the school staff, which involves romantic or sexual involvement with a student, is considered to be highly unethical and is unacceptable to the Board of Trustees. This includes, but is not limited to, inappropriate conversation, inappropriate touching, dating, cohabitation, and engaging in immoral conduct.

The Academy employees shall neither entertain students nor socialize with students in such a manner as to reasonably create the impression to students, parents/guardians, or the public that a dating/inappropriate relationship exists. While the Board of Trustees encourages employees to be supportive of students, personnel must not allow students to regard them as peers.

It is the policy of the Board of Trustees to prohibit any sexual relationship, contact or sexually nuanced behavior or communication (verbal, non-verbal, or electronic) between a staff member and a student, while the student is enrolled in The Academy. Violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Staff members are expected to use good judgment in their relationships with students both inside and outside of the school context including, but not limited to, these guidelines:

1. Staff members shall not make derogatory comments to students regarding the school, the staff and/or other students.
2. Staff members should neither expect nor encourage purchased gifts from students.
3. Staff-sponsored parties with students in attendance, other than those parties sponsored as a parent/family member, must have prior approval by the Head of School and/or his/her designee, and be a part of the school's extracurricular program and properly supervised.
4. Staff members shall not fraternize, or communicate either in writing, or verbally, in such a manner as to reasonably create the impression to students, parents/guardians, or the public that a dating/inappropriate relationship exists.
5. Staff members shall not associate with students at any time, in any situation or activity which could be considered sexually suggestive or involve the presence or use of tobacco, alcohol, or drugs.
6. Dating and/or sexual relations between staff members and students is prohibited.
7. Staff members shall not use insults or sarcasm against students as a method of forcing compliance with requirements or expectations.
8. Staff members shall maintain a reasonable standard of care for the supervision, control, and protection of students commensurate with their assigned duties and responsibilities.
9. Staff members shall not send students on personal errands.
10. Staff members shall, pursuant to law and Board policy, immediately report any suspected signs of child abuse, neglect, or other signs where a student is perceived to be in immediate danger.
11. During the course of advising a student who is experiencing personal problems relating to sexual behavior, substance abuse, mental or physical health, and/or family relationship, staff members may also refer/confer with other support staff including the school psychologist and/or social worker(s).
12. Staff members shall not disclose information concerning a student, other than directory information, to any person not authorized to receive such information. This includes, but is not limited to, information concerning assessments, ability scores, discipline, grades, behavior, mental or physical health, and/or family background.
13. Sexual relations for all staff with students, regardless of age, gender and/or consent, are prohibited and will result in dismissal.

The Academy employees who violate this policy will face disciplinary measures, up to and including termination, consistent with state law and applicable provisions of any applicable collective bargaining unit.

Any employee, who witnesses or learns of any of the behaviors mentioned above, shall report it to the Head of School immediately.

Electronic Communication

Academy employees are encouraged to communicate with students and parents/guardians for educational purposes using a variety of effective methods, including electronic communication. As with other forms of communication, staff members must maintain professional boundaries with students while using electronic communication, regardless of whether the communication methods are provided by The Academy or the staff member uses his/her own personal electronic communication devices, accounts, or other forms of electronic communication.

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes
10-53a-71 Sexual assault in the second degree: Class C or B felony
10-151 Employment of teachers. Definitions. Notice and hearing on failure to renew to renew or termination of contract. Appeal

Policy Adopted: November 18, 2014

The Woodstock Academy
Woodstock, Connecticut