

PROTOCOL FOR TEACHING STAFF ATTENDING SCHOOL EVENTS

1. PROFESSIONAL AND EMPLOYMENT CODES OF CONDUCT

- 1.1 Teaching staff are reminded of the standards of professional conduct expected of them during school events as promoted within the General Teaching Council for Scotland's (GTCS) Code of Professionalism and Conduct. Those standards are further reinforced through the council's Code of Conduct for Employees and Disciplinary Code.
- 1.2 It is also important to note that both the GTCS Code of Professionalism and Conduct and the council's policies are sufficiently wide in scope and application to extend beyond the immediate workplace to situations that may occur out with the professional context.
- 1.3 The boundaries governing professional behaviour continue to apply beyond school leaving age and out with the school setting and as such teachers are expected to exercise great care and professional judgement when in contact with pupils/former pupils at social events particularly where alcohol is being consumed.

2. CONSUMPTION OF ALCOHOL DURING SCHOOL EVENTS

- 2.1 The GTCS Code of Professionalism and Conduct states that teachers should 'be mindful of the negative impact of being under the influence of alcohol in the professional setting'.

Consumption of Alcohol on School Premises

- 2.2 Section 9 of the council's Policy on the Misuse of Alcohol, Drugs and Other Substances states that;

'the consumption of alcohol or drugs as defined in this policy is prohibited on council premises during working hours. This excludes prescribed and/or over-the-counter medication taken for a genuine medical reason and in accordance with directions for use subject to the need to observe health and safety rules.'

- 2.3 *In terms of the consumption of alcohol on council premises during working hours, an exception may be made where specific events are formally approved by the council, Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executive, or Head of Service at which the consumption of alcohol is expressly permitted in the particular circumstances. In these circumstances, employees are required to adhere to the standards of behaviour as set out in this policy, in the council's Health and Safety Policy and as contained in any other relevant workplace rules.*
- 2.4 *Employees have a responsibility to ensure that any consumption of alcohol before starting work or during lunch-breaks does not:*
 - *breach any specific requirement or controls regarding alcohol or drugs as determined as a result of workplace risk assessments;*
 - *impair their ability to work safely and effectively or to deal with customers or clients to the required standards.*

- 2.5 *The council reserves the right to impose a ban on the consumption of alcohol during the working day for certain categories of employee on safety, legal and/or operational grounds’.*

Consumption of Alcohol out with School Premises

- 2.6 While school events such as ‘Leavers Proms’ may be held in licensed premises, out with the school establishment and out with normal working hours, teachers attending such events are doing so in a professional setting.
- 2.7 Although attendance at such events may be voluntary, teachers remain in a position of trust and standards of professionalism and conduct should be maintained. This is particularly so in relation to the consumption of alcohol which could adversely impact on an individual’s judgement and ability to maintain professional boundaries.
- 2.8 For the protection of both young people and teachers as individuals, teachers must refrain from the consumption of alcohol at school/student events held out with school establishments.**

3. FAILURE TO MAINTAIN PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

- 3.1 Failure to maintain professional standards of conduct at school events whether or not the consumption of alcohol is involved may have serious implications on a teacher’s employment.
- 3.2 Any failure to maintain professional standards of conduct will be investigated under the councils Disciplinary Procedure.
- 3.3 In addition, the council has an obligation to report any serious professional misconduct to the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS). Where the GTCS considers that a teacher has breached the Code of Conduct, it is empowered to remove that individual’s registration to work as a teacher.

Human Resources
September 2019