

New Code of Professional Conduct for Teachers

A new Code of Professional Conduct for Teachers is being circulated to all registered teachers. It sets out, first and foremost, a clear description of what is expected of teachers in their professional role. The Council urges teachers as professionals to review the Code and, ideally, take time to reflect on the standards.

Please read on to find out more about the relevance of the Code and turn over to find some questions to help you reflect on the Code.

The publication of the new Code is an important and positive development for all those with an interest in the quality of teaching in our classrooms. Since the education system reaches into virtually every home in the country, and affects so many so deeply, it is crucial that the teaching profession's value system and professional standards are clear, readily understandable and easily accessible to all. The Code of Professional Conduct for Teachers will enhance and deepen the confidence and trust that society places in teachers.

The Code is designed to guide teachers' professional judgement and practice.

It sets out the standards of professional knowledge, skills, competence and conduct expected of registered teachers as professionals.

Having a code of conduct is the norm for regulated professions especially where there is a public interest at stake. A code demonstrates to the public that the profession has standards in place which allow it to be trusted.

In all, there are 33 standards which reflect the complexity and variety of teaching and cover areas such as communication and relationships, equality and inclusion, compliance with national and school policies, professional development and pupil/student welfare.

The standards are underpinned by four core values - respect, care, integrity and trust. The new Code of Professional Conduct replaces the first Code which was published in 2007. It has been developed following a process of consultation with teachers and other stakeholders in education and takes account of a number of developments in the intervening years.

The Code also takes account of the broader context in which teaching takes place and the many factors outside of a teacher's control which have a bearing on his/her work, including: the engagement of parents and the wider community; opportunities for teachers' professional development; and the accelerated degree of educational change.

The new Code is an important reference document and, as part of the registration process, each teacher is issued with a copy. It is now also being sent to all other registered teachers. While the Council is always keen to minimise its printing and distribution costs, it has decided that hard copy circulation is a necessary step in this case due to the legal standing of the Code.



Reflection on the Code of Professional Conduct for Teachers

The following questions are intended to support teachers and schools in considering and reflecting on the Code of Professional Conduct.

| Personal Reflection | School Reflection |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What are the ethical values and professional standards which underpin my work as a teacher? | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What are the ethical values and professional standards which underpin teaching in this school? |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• How are those values and standards aligned with the values and standards which are set out in the Code? | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• How are those values and standards aligned with the values and standards which are set out in the Code? |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• How can I continue to reflect the values and professional standards in the Code in my day-to-day work? | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• How can we continue to reflect the values and professional standards in the Code in our day-to-day work? |