

WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM TEACHERS AND LEARNING SUPPORT STAFF

A GUIDE FOR PARENTS

Contents

Introduction	2
About us	3
What is registration?	4
What is the Code?	5
Raising concerns with the EWC	6
Our powers and sanctions	7
Contact us	8

Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn y Gymraeg hefyd
This document is also available in Welsh

Introduction

As a parent, when you send your children to school, you put your trust in the teachers and support staff who work there every day.

In Wales, anybody working as a teacher or in a learning support role in a maintained school must be registered with the Education Workforce Council (EWC). This also applies to staff in other educational settings such as further education colleges and youth work.

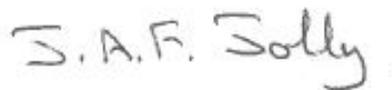


Hayden Llewellyn
Chief Executive, Education Workforce Council

All of these 80,000 staff must also follow the EWC Code of Professional Conduct and Practice.

These arrangements are intended to help protect your children and you.

The purpose of this guidance document is to tell you about these matters and explain what your rights are as a parent if a teacher or learning support worker (registered with the EWC) breaches the Code.



John Jolly
Chief Executive, Parentkind

About the EWC

The Education (Wales) Act 2014 states that the EWC will:

- Contribute to improving the standards of teaching and the quality of learning in Wales
- Maintain and improve standards of professional conduct amongst teachers and others who support teaching and learning in Wales
- Safeguard the interests of learners, parents and the public and maintain public trust and confidence in the education workforce.

We are the independent regulator in Wales for teachers and learning support staff in maintained schools and further education colleges, as well as youth and youth support workers and people involved in work-based learning. This means that anybody working in these roles in Wales must be registered with us.

For further information, please visit www.ewc.wales.



About Parentkind

At Parentkind, our goal is to encourage, inspire and enable parents to play an active role in their child's education so every child can thrive.

As a charity, we tirelessly support and champion all the ways parents can participate in education and have their voices heard. We want more parents to get involved and engaged in their child's education, and in more ways – both at home and at school. We do this by providing resources and training to support parent participation in education at school and at home as well as being the leading membership organisation for parent teacher associations (PTAs) in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

For further information, please visit www.parentkind.org.uk

Parentkind

What is registration?

In order to register, a person must meet our requirements in respect of:

- Having the right qualifications; and
- Previous standards of conduct and practice.

If a teacher or learning support worker does not meet our requirements, we will not register them. This means they cannot work in a maintained school.

You can check that the staff in your local school are registered with the EWC. You can also see who we have imposed a disciplinary order on. Try it at www.ewc.wales.

You can do the same for other professionals such as doctors, nurses, dentists, physiotherapists, opticians, solicitors, social workers and many others on their websites.



What is the Code of Professional Conduct and Practice

Once registered with the EWC, our registrants must follow our Code of Professional Conduct and Practice. The Code sets out the standards expected of them, both inside and outside of school.

However, the Code is also for pupils, parents, carers and the public so that you know what behaviours you can expect from a person who must register with us because of the job that they do.

Codes of conduct and practice are also common in other professions. If you have never looked at them, you really should. Go on the web and have a read. It may make you think next time you go to see your GP because you feel unwell, visit the dentist because your tooth has fallen out or use a solicitor to help you sell your house or make a will.

In following the EWC Code, registrants commit to upholding five key principles:

- Personal and Professional Responsibility
- Professional Integrity
- Collaborative Working
- Professional Knowledge and Understanding
- Professional Learning

Each principle then goes into more detail. For example:

The **Personal and Professional Responsibility** section says that our registrants:

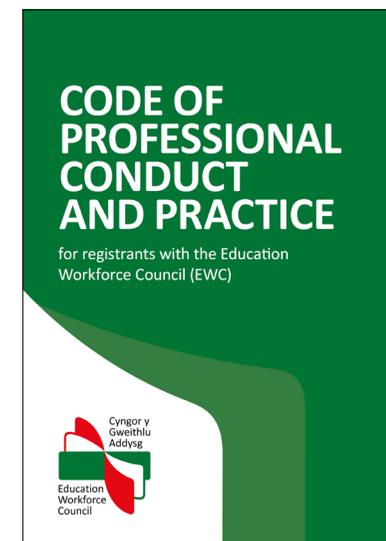
“Have a duty of care for learners’ safety, physical, social, moral and educational well-being.”

While the **Professional Integrity** section says that our registrants:

“Behave honestly, and with integrity, with regard to matters like examinations and school finances.”

We have lots of support materials which help people to use and understand the Code. For example, we give hints and tips on matters such as using social media safely. We also run regular training and awareness sessions. If you are interested in arranging a session for your school or group, let us know.

You can read the Code at www.ewc.wales/whatisftp.



Raising concerns with the EWC

Only a very small number of our registrants breach the Code, but if they do, we can investigate what they have done to decide whether we need to take action. We do this to protect pupils, parents, carers and the public.

Employers' responsibilities

If a maintained school dismisses one of our registrants or they leave but may have been dismissed if they had stayed, it has a legal duty to tell the EWC. The local authority will usually do this for them. Also, if one of our registrants commits a criminal offence, the police will inform us if they think it is relevant to their role in education. Others, such as the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) also refer matters to us on occasion.

Your right to raise a complaint with us

As a parent, you can also raise a concern with the EWC about one of our registrants if you think they have breached the Code. However, if you do decide to do this, there is a checklist you should follow.

1

If you decide you need to raise a concern with the EWC, you must use the following form and guidance on our website: www.ewc.wales/whatisFTP

If you do not use this form and submit your complaint in line the guidance, we will return it to you.

2

A complaint must be about the alleged **unacceptable professional conduct** or **serious professional incompetence** of a registrant. Definitions of these terms are in the guidance referred to under 1 above.

Please note, the threshold for a finding of **unacceptable professional conduct** or **serious professional incompetence** by the EWC is high. For example, if a registrant is dismissed because of their behaviour either inside or outside of a school, it is more likely we will find this to be unacceptable. Behaviour which is unlikely to lead to dismissal by a school is less likely to be found unacceptable by us.

3

We will only accept a complaint from you if you have made **exactly the same complaint** to the school or local authority and have received a response. If you have not done this, you will need to do this first. We will need written evidence of this, as well as the outcome of the school or school authority investigation.

4

We will not accept a complaint which is about:

- A person who is not registered with the EWC;
- A registrant's health; or
- Any issues you have with a school, local authority, governing body or any other organisation that have not been resolved to your satisfaction.

5

Where we accept a complaint from you, we will send your complaint to the registrant and their school or local authority for comment and further information.

Our powers and sanctions

When we investigate a case that has been referred to us from an employer, the police or a third party such as a parent, we must decide whether the person is guilty of unacceptable professional conduct or serious professional incompetence. If so, we then consider whether we should impose any restrictions on their future practice as a teacher or support worker.

The most serious cases that we deal with will involve a hearing that is held in public.

We can decide to:

- Take no action; or
- Decide that the registrant has a case to answer.

If we find the allegations proven and meet the threshold of unacceptable professional conduct or serious professional incompetence, we can impose one of the following disciplinary orders:

- **A reprimand.** This means the person can continue to practice but the reprimand will stay on their record for 2 years;
- Place **conditions on their future employment**, such as further training; or
- **Stop the person from practising** in a maintained school, either for a certain period of time or permanently.



Contact us

The Code, along with Good Practice Guides to support it, are available at www.ewc.wales. If you need help, please contact us at:

Address: Fitness to Practise, 9th Floor, Eastgate House, 35-43
Newport Road, Cardiff, CF24 0AB

Telephone: 029 2046 0099

E-mail: fitnesstopractise@ewc.wales