

Version as corrected at meeting of 4th August 2011

FRAMEWORK FOR ETHICAL BEHAVIOUR AND CODE OF CONDUCT OF SCHOOL TEACHERS IN SRI LANKA

Introductory note

This framework for ethical behaviour and code of conduct of school teachers utilizes the Code of Ethics for Teachers originally drafted by Sri Lanka Association for the Advancement of Education (SLAAED) and later modified and accepted by the National Education Commission in 2007. **The document which follows is mainly a recasting of the Code of Ethics for Teachers on the basis of the format developed by the Sri Lanka Association for the Advancement of Science (SLAAS) Ethics Committee in 2010 (of which due acknowledgement is made).** The items in the Code of Conduct are generally used but separated into two sections as a Framework for Ethical Behaviour and a Code of Conduct. The aim of this separation is to provide a framework for exemplary conduct on a voluntary basis and to provide a code of conduct for the purpose of disciplinary action.. The enforcement as regards ethical behaviour needs the institution of a professional body for the regulation of standards of recruitment and behaviour which may be termed as; “ The Institution of the Teaching Profession” . This institution could have a separate Chapter for School Teachers.(The need for recognition of teachers as belonging to a profession provided the rationale for instituting SLAAED). In the absence of an Institution of the Teaching Profession, the items coming under both the framework and the code could be used as criteria in the assessment of teacher performance assessment for promotion and national recognition.

1.0 TITLE

This may be cited as the General Framework for Ethical Behaviour and Code of Conduct for School Teachers herein after referred to in combined form or separately as the “general framework” and the “code ”. The term “teachers” is meant to be **applicable to school teachers only.**

2.0 AIM AND APPLICABILITY

This Framework for Ethical Behaviour and Code of Conduct has two aims;

1. To provide a general framework of ethical standards for emulation by school teachers , as persons of high integrity, accountability, professional rectitude and of exemplary social responsibility, and
2. To provide a code with a set of rules binding upon all school teachers involving liability for disciplinary action.

3.0 GENERAL AIMS AND PRINCIPLES

The general framework and the code with its set of binding rules have the purpose of safeguarding the prestige of school teachers as members of a prestigious profession. The general framework for conduct of teachers, provides indicative standards of conduct to be set voluntarily for oneself. Although the standards are set for oneself voluntarily, these standards may be used as criteria in the assessment of teacher performance assessment for promotion and national recognition.

The binding set of rules encompasses the Code to be abided by all teachers while providing the basis for determining liability of disciplinary action against members for their willful transgression.

The standards in the framework and the rules in the code may be referred to by the numbers indicated and cited as such when required.

4.0 FRAMEWORK FOR ETHICAL BEHAVIOUR

This framework for ethical behaviour encompasses broadly, the attitudes, concerns and mores expected by teachers as persons of high integrity, accountability, professional rectitude and of exemplary social responsibility. The indicative standards to be voluntarily set for oneself are grouped for convenience of citing under the following headings, although the indicative items may not entirely be confined within a particular heading.

4.1 Teacher as a Person

In accordance with the societal expectations of a teacher as an exemplar of good deportment, conduct and behaviour a teacher shall;

- (a) observe and practice rules of good hygiene and cleanliness,
- (b) observe and practice measures to keep oneself healthy,
- (c) not promote or give the impression of promoting practices injurious to the health of oneself and others such as drinking, use of drugs and smoking,
- (d) keep oneself well groomed at all times,
- (e) be decently dressed, while being, dignified, elegant as well as simple,
- (f) not keep company with persons of dubious reputation as regards personal and social conduct,
- (g) not flaunt one's, wealth, family connections and familiarities with high authorities in ones dealings with fellow teachers etc/*teachers and others*,
- (h) not even give the impression to fellow teachers etc, that his/her wealth, family connections and familiarities with high authorities can be used to intimidate them,
- (i) not flaunt one's knowledge of a subject or English for intimidating fellow teachers etc.,
- (j) not behave in a servile manner before those with wealth, high family connections, political and other authorities as well as those who flaunt their familiarities with such persons,
- (k) behave as a well balanced person in the face of ideologies and not take extreme positions and defend extreme positions,
- (l) be prepared always defend ones fellow teachers and other, against injustice, unfair discrimination and intimidation
- (m) demonstrate ones sensitivity to acts and incidents of violence, towards humans as well as animals and help and empathize with those who have to suffer owing to natural and man made incidents as well as those owing to indifference and neglect,
- (n) in one's private life, not behave in a manner to give the impression that he/she does not care for the accepted mores of society.

4.2 Teacher as 'In Loco Parentis'

Considering that the teacher takes the role of the parents of his/her pupils in school, he/she always will

- (a) provide them with a surrogate parental love, care and protection,
- (b) not act in a way so as not to betray the trust of children and their parents,

4.3 Teacher as Imparter of Knowledge and *Developer of Skills*

Considering that imparting knowledge and *development of skills* is the primary duty he/she will take all the care necessary to

- (a) prepare himself/herself to discharge that responsibility,
- (b) ensure that the knowledge imparted, is accurate, *relevant* and suitable to the pupils,
- (c) remedy or ameliorate disabilities and problems of pupils regarding learning
- (d) customize, where required, the knowledge and skills imparted, to suit the different abilities, different paces of learning and motivations of pupils,
- (e) ensure that a holistic approach is used in the teaching of subjects
- (f) remain accessible to pupils who wish to obtain additional information and assistance to obtain information,
- (g) function as a facilitator and motivator of learning so as to provide the pupils with the means and attitudes to pursue learning on their own,
- (h) provide pupils with opportunities to develop critical thinking through encouraging questioning and discussions during lessons,

4.4 Teacher as Formative Guide and Counselor

Considering that the teacher has to play an invaluable role as guide and counselor to the children and young persons entrusted to his/her care, he/she will;

- (a) prepare himself/herself with knowledge and skills to discharge that responsibility,
- (b) be vigilant regarding disabilities and problems pupils may have and take all measures including obtaining expert advice to remedy or ameliorate them,
- (c) remain accessible to parents of pupils to discuss problems of pupils and adopt a friendly approach in dealing with them,
- (d) identify pupils' needs and take steps to fulfill such needs

4.5 Teacher as Evaluator

Considering that assessment and evaluation are important and essential aspects of teaching-learning he/she will;

- (a) prepare himself/herself with knowledge and skills to discharge that *with* responsibility,
- (b) be vigilant regarding learning disabilities and problems pupils may have and take all measures including obtaining expert advice to remedy or ameliorate them

4.6 Teacher as Professional

Considering that;

- (a) a teacher is regarded as a professional because he/she has mastered a body of theoretical knowledge and skills, it is obligatory to continue to keep his professional knowledge and skills valid and updated.-*updating of subject knowledge, professional skills and use of relevant instructional strategies.*
- (b) the claim to teaching as a profession depends on the community of teachers having such knowledge and skills, he/she will share his knowledge and skills with is/her fellows and enthusiastically support measures aimed at upgrading the knowledge and skills of all teachers.
- (c) the recruitment of persons without qualifications required for the teaching profession, degrades the profession as a whole, he/she will support and uphold all measures taken to ensure high entry qualifications for teachers.
- (d) the promotion of teachers to higher grades without good qualifications and competence is harmful to the profession, he/she not claim promotions out of turn and will support and uphold all measures taken to ensure that only those qualified and competent are promoted.

5.0 CODE OF CONDUCT - SET OF RULES

This binding set of rules, in contrast to the framework for ethical behaviour, encompasses the Code to be abided by all members while providing the basis for determining liability of disciplinary action against members for their willful transgression. The rules in the code may be referred to by the numbers indicated and cited as such.

This code of conduct, which constitutes a binding set of rules, encompasses broadly, the Attitudes, Concerns and Mores expected by teachers as persons of high integrity, accountability, professional rectitude and of exemplary social responsibility. The rules are grouped for convenience of citing under the following headings, although the indicative items may not entirely be confined within a particular heading.

5.1 Teacher as a Person

In accordance with the societal expectations of a teacher as an exemplar of good deportment, conduct and behaviour a teacher shall;

- (a) not frequent places of ill reputation such as taverns and gambling dens,
- (b) not behave in a manner which will give oneself a bad reputation as a gambler or a person addicted to drinking or smoking,
- (c) at all times be polite and use decent language,
- (d) ensure that the statements made in class are free of gender or racial and other biases,
- (e) not engage in other livelihoods such as money lending or those injurious to the health and well being of the society,
- (f) uphold principles relating to non violence in conflict resolution, human rights, the rights of children and women and not engage in or promote practices violating such rights such as the use of child domestic labour /*child abuse*,
- (g) uphold and promote principles relating to environmental conservation and protection and not engage in or promote practices which are detrimental to environmental conservation and protection,

5.2 Teacher as ‘In Loco Parentis’

Considering that the teacher takes the role of the parents of his/her pupils in school, he/she always will

- (a) not favour some pupils and while dispensing his/her care equitably, accord special regard to those needing extra attention.

5.3 Teacher as Formative Guide and Counselor

Considering that the teacher has to play an invaluable role as guide and counselor to the children and young persons entrusted to his/her care, he/she will;

- (a) not make remarks in class which will injure the dignity and self respect of pupils and which will make them acquire negative attitudes,
- (b) treat as confidential and sensitive information received or obtained in discharging the roles as guide and counselor

5.5 Teacher as Evaluator

Considering that assessment and evaluation are important and essential aspects of teaching-learning he/she will;

- (a) ensure that the assessments are fair and accurate,

5.6 Teacher as Professional

Considering that;

- (a) the prestige of the teaching profession depends on the observance of professional ethics by all teachers, he/she will not engage in activities which will harm the prestige of the profession.
- (b) the prestige of the teaching profession depends on the high standards of behaviour set for oneself and observed he/she will even when perceived as treated unfairly in matters of promotion etc., will only present ones claims for promotion etc., but not engage oneself in the demeaning activity of petition writing.