Tutor Code of Conduct

Steffi Hesketh Tutoring – standards for independent online tutors

Document control	**Details**
Document	Tutor Code of Conduct
Organisation	Steffi Hesketh Tutoring (sole trader), online-only tutoring agency, based in Southampton, Hampshire
Business address	32 Inver Way, Southampton, SO19 1SF
Policy owner	Steffi Hesketh-Spells, Owner and Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
Deputy DSL	Shim Amin, contactable via the business email (steffihesketthtutoring@gmail.com)
Contact	steffihesketthtutoring@gmail.com, 07802 828910
Version	1.0
Effective date	November 2026
Review date	November 2027, or sooner after a serious incident, a change in law or guidance, or a change to the Hampshire contract
Applies to	All self-employed tutors and cover tutors introduced by or working through Steffi Hesketh Tutoring, and Steffi Hesketh-Spells when she teaches
Contract	Hampshire County Council SEND Alternative Provision Register Agreement CS25116 and Tutoring Call-Off Contract CS25116A, for Council-referred pupils
Approved by	Steffi Hesketh-Spells. Signature: Steffi Hesketh-Spells, Owner and Designated

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	Safeguarding Lead. Date approved: 9 November 2026

1. Purpose and status

This Code sets out the standards of behaviour expected of every tutor who works with children and young people through Steffi Hesketh Tutoring. It protects pupils, and it also protects tutors from situations that could lead to misunderstanding or allegations.

Our tutors are independent and self-employed. This Code does not make anyone an employee. It sets the professional standards that are a condition of being introduced to families and of working with Council-referred pupils. A serious or repeated breach may lead to work being paused or the arrangement ending, and may be reported to the LADO, the police, the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) or the Teaching Regulation Agency where the law requires.

This Code reflects the principles of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026, the Department for Education's guidance for out-of-school settings, the Teachers' Standards (Part Two: personal and professional conduct), and the requirements of our Hampshire County Council contract. It must be read with:

- the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy (version 1.1);
- the Whistleblowing Policy;
- the Online Tuition, Acceptable Use and Recording Policy;
- the Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy, Attendance Policy, Health and Safety Policy (including Lone Working), Anti-Bribery, Gifts and Hospitality Policy, Accessible Communication Policy and Personal Data Breach Procedure.

Where a tutor also works for a school, college or another organisation, they must follow that organisation's code as well. If the two differ, follow the stricter standard.

2. Our core principles

Every tutor must:

- put the welfare and best interests of the child first;
- treat pupils, families and colleagues with dignity, respect and fairness;
- keep clear professional boundaries at all times, online and offline;
- be open and transparent, so that nothing about their work with a child would need to be hidden;

- act on any concern straight away, and never assume someone else will;
- uphold the reputation of the business and the trust placed in it by families and the Council.

3. Safeguarding

- Read and follow the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. Know who the DSL (Steffi Hesketh-Spells) and Deputy DSL (Shim Amin) are and how to contact them.
- Report any concern about a child to the DSL straight away, and no later than the end of the same working day. Urgent concerns must be reported by telephone. If a child is in immediate danger, call 999 first.
- Never promise a child that you will keep a secret. Never investigate, question at length or contact an alleged abuser.
- Know the local contacts for the child's area: Hampshire contacts for Hampshire pupils (including Council-referred pupils) and Southampton contacts for Southampton pupils, as set out in Appendix 2 of the Safeguarding Policy.
- Complete safeguarding training before your first pupil and refresher training at least once a year. Read KCSIE Part one (or Annex A where appropriate) each year and confirm you have done so.
- Tell Steffi straight away about anything that may affect your suitability to work with children, including an arrest, caution, conviction, police investigation, safeguarding allegation, disciplinary action, or any change to your DBS status. You must also tell Steffi if you are disqualified or barred, or are told that you may be.

4. Professional boundaries

Tutors must not:

- develop a personal or special relationship with a pupil, or show favouritism;
- use sexualised, discriminatory, humiliating or threatening language or behaviour, or make jokes or comments of this kind;
- have any sexual or romantic relationship with a pupil, or behave in a way that could be seen as grooming. This applies to any pupil under 18, and the law makes sexual activity with a 16- or 17-year-old by a person in a position of trust a criminal offence;
- meet a pupil in person, visit their home, or arrange contact outside agreed lessons, unless Steffi and the parent or carer have agreed it in writing in advance (Council work is online only unless the Council agrees otherwise);
- give personal gifts, money or favours to a pupil, or accept anything beyond what the Anti-Bribery, Gifts and Hospitality Policy allows (a small token of thanks worth no more than £15, recorded in the gifts register);
- share personal information about themselves that is not appropriate, or ask pupils for personal information not needed for learning or safety;

- smoke, vape, drink alcohol or be under the influence of alcohol or drugs while teaching or preparing to teach.

Physical contact does not arise in online tuition. If in-person work is ever agreed, it must follow a separate risk assessment and written guidance from Steffi.

5. Online lessons

Tutors must:

- use only the platforms, accounts and communication channels approved by the business, with waiting rooms, passwords and host controls turned on where available;
- never share meeting links publicly, and start and end every lesson themselves as host;
- teach from a quiet, private space, with appropriate dress and a neutral or blurred background. No personal or confidential information, other people or inappropriate items should be visible or audible;
- make sure a parent or carer is contactable during the lesson, as set out in the pupil's risk and access check;
- never pressure a pupil to turn on their camera or microphone, and never ask a pupil to show their room or anything not related to learning;
- end or pause the lesson if another person behaves inappropriately, harmful content appears, or the environment becomes unsafe, and report it to Steffi the same day;
- only record a lesson when this has been authorised and consented to in line with the Online Tuition, Acceptable Use and Recording Policy. Never take screenshots, photos or recordings of pupils on a personal device;
- follow each pupil's risk and access check, including planned breaks, medical needs and the agreed response if the pupil disconnects.

6. Communication outside lessons

- All contact must be professional, necessary and about learning or lesson arrangements.
- Messages must go to the parent or carer, or through an approved group or channel that includes the parent or carer. Do not message a child privately.
- Do not add, follow, friend or message pupils (or recent former pupils under 18) on personal social media, gaming or messaging accounts. Do not accept requests from them.
- Do not use disappearing messages, private chats or any channel that hides communication from parents or the business.
- Do not contact pupils late at night or at times not agreed with the family. Council sessions take place between 9am and 5pm unless the Council agrees otherwise.
- Keep a professional tone in all messages. If a pupil or parent contacts you in a way that crosses a boundary, do not reply in kind; tell Steffi.

7. Online and social media conduct

- Never post anything about pupils, families or lessons, including photos, work, names, schools or locations, on social media or elsewhere.
- Do not post or share content that could bring the business into disrepute, or that is discriminatory, extremist, sexual or abusive.
- Check your own privacy settings so that pupils and families cannot see personal content.
- Do not use AI tools or shared online services to process pupils' personal data or safeguarding information unless Steffi has approved it.

8. Confidentiality and data protection

Steffi Hesketh Tutoring is registered with the Information Commissioner's Office (registration number ZC116584). Tutors must:

- keep all information about pupils and families confidential, and use it only for tuition;
- store records securely, on password-protected devices with two-step verification, and only in approved locations. Do not keep safeguarding information on personal devices;
- share information only on a need-to-know basis. Safeguarding information is shared with the DSL, never with other parents or tutors;
- report any actual or suspected data breach (such as a lost device, a message sent to the wrong person or an unknown person joining a lesson) to Steffi within four hours, as set out in the Personal Data Breach Procedure;
- return or securely delete pupil information when they stop working with a pupil or with the business.

Confidentiality never stops a tutor from reporting a safeguarding concern.

9. Equality, inclusion and SEND

- Treat every pupil fairly, whatever their background, disability, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or any other characteristic.
- Make reasonable adjustments and follow each pupil's plan, including the Accessible Communication Policy.
- Never assume that distress, withdrawal or changes in behaviour are simply part of a pupil's SEND. Report concerns.
- Challenge and report discriminatory language or bullying.

10. Behaviour management

- Use calm, positive and respectful approaches, as set out in the Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy.

- Never shout at, humiliate, threaten or punish a pupil in a way that is degrading or harmful.
- Record and report serious behaviour incidents and any bullying to Steffi the same day.

11. Professional standards and reliability

- Arrive on time, prepared, and deliver the agreed lessons. Give as much notice as possible of any absence (at least 24 hours wherever you can), so cover or rearrangement can be arranged.
- Complete session records accurately and on time. For Council-referred pupils, records support invoices and must be accurate and honest.
- Never ask families to pay you directly for work introduced by the business unless that is the agreed arrangement, and never help anyone avoid agreed fees.
- Keep your qualifications, DBS, training and insurance (where you hold your own) up to date, and give Steffi evidence when asked.
- Follow the Health and Safety Policy, including the lone-working check-in arrangements.

12. Gifts, hospitality and conflicts of interest

- Follow the Anti-Bribery, Gifts and Hospitality Policy. Small tokens of thanks worth no more than £15 may be accepted and must be recorded. Never accept money, vouchers or anything that could be seen as an inducement.
- Never offer or accept a bribe, or anything that could look like one, including to or from anyone at Hampshire County Council.
- Tell Steffi about any conflict of interest, such as a personal relationship with a pupil's family, or tutoring the same pupil privately.

13. Reporting concerns about adults and whistleblowing

- If you are worried about the behaviour of another tutor, adult or Steffi herself, report it. Use the Safeguarding Policy for concerns about harm to a child, and the Whistleblowing Policy for concerns about wrongdoing or unsafe practice.
- Concerns about Steffi go to the Deputy DSL, Shim Amin, or directly to the LADO (Hampshire or Southampton, depending on the child's area), the NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line (0800 028 0285) or Ofsted (0300 123 3155).
- Report low-level concerns too, including about yourself. For example, if you think something you did could be misunderstood, tell Steffi and record it. Self-reporting is encouraged and protects you.

14. Breaches of this Code

- Concerns that a tutor has broken this Code are handled by Steffi, in line with the Safeguarding Policy and, where relevant, the LADO.

- Depending on the seriousness, outcomes may include advice, extra training, closer supervision, pausing work, or ending the arrangement.
- Where the law requires, we will refer to the DBS, the Teaching Regulation Agency or other bodies, and tell Hampshire County Council about any matter affecting Council-referred pupils.

15. Review

Steffi reviews this Code every year, and sooner after any incident or change in guidance. Tutors are told about changes and asked to confirm they have read the updated version.

Appendix A – Tutor declaration

I confirm that I have read, understood and will follow the Tutor Code of Conduct, the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy (version 1.1) and the Whistleblowing Policy. I understand that a breach may lead to my work being paused or ended, and may be reported to the appropriate authorities.

Item	**Details**
Tutor name	
Signature	
Date	
Checked by Steffi Hesketh-Spells (signature and date)	