

# **Code of Professional Ethics for Teachers**

## **Comments Invited**

In the light of the provisions under Section 24(1) of the RTE Act, 2009 regarding duties and functions of teachers and as per the directions of the Ministry of Human Resource Development, the NCTE has developed a draft document on “Code of Professional Ethics for Teachers”.

2. The comments/suggestions from educationists, educational administrators, teachers and other stakeholders are invited for finalization of the draft document. Kindly send your suggestions/comments on [ro@ncte-india.org](mailto:ro@ncte-india.org) within 15 days.

Deputy Secretary (Academic)  
27<sup>th</sup> October, 2010

# **Code of Professional Ethics for School Teachers**

**Report of the Committee appointed by the NCTE for the preparation of *Code of Professional Ethics for School Teachers* in the context of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009**

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# Chapter 1

## INTRODUCTION

Recognizing the need and importance of a Code of Professional Ethics for School Teachers, the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE) appointed a Committee (Annexure 1) to prepare the Code in consultation with the Education Secretaries of some selected States and representatives of the All India Primary Teachers Federation (AIPTF). The Committee comprised the following:

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|--|----------|
| 1. Prof. A.K. Sharma<br>Former Director, NCERT   | Chairman |
| 2. Prof. G.L. Arora<br>Former Head<br>Department of Teacher Education, NCERT                                     | Member   |
| 3. Prof. Najma Amin<br>Head<br>Department of Educational Studies<br>Faculty of Education<br>Jamia Millia Islamia | Member   |
| 4. Prof. Pranati Panda<br>Department of Comparative Education &<br>International Co-operation<br>NUEPA           | Member   |

In pursuance of the recommendations of the National Policy on Education (NPE), 1986, the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) in collaboration with the All India Primary Teachers Federation (AIPTF), All India Secondary Teachers Federation (AISTF) and All India Federation of Educational Associations (AIFEA) had developed, for the first time, a Code of Professional Ethics for Teachers, in 1997. In the context of the present exercise, the Committee constituted by the NCTE reviewed this code keeping in view the context of the relevant sections of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act 2009 which have a bearing on the duties and responsibilities of teachers. As a part of this exercise, the Codes of Professional Ethics currently in use in some other countries were also

consulted. The draft Code prepared by the NCTE Committee was shared with the Education Secretaries of a couple of States and the representatives of the AIPTF.

Ideally, the Code of Professional Ethics should be prepared by the professional organizations of teachers themselves as it is their responsibility to administer the Code in the form of an oath to its members and to ensure its observance as a self-imposed discipline on the part of the members. Unlike other professional bodies, there is a multiplicity of professional organizations in the case of teachers. The NCTE has prepared this document as a facilitative mechanism for professional bodies of teachers to use it as a template for discussion amongst them, make any amendments, if necessary, and adopt it to give dignity to their profession.

The Report of the NCTE Committee comprises four chapters. The Code of Professional Ethics is given in Chapter 2, a mechanism for its observance is suggested in Chapter 3, Explanatory Notes on the different articles of the Code are given in Chapter 4. The Explanatory Notes have been included to facilitate better understanding by the teachers of the provisions contained in the Code.

The Committee has also given thought to the issue of operationalising the proposed mechanism for the observance of the Code or any other mechanism in its place. The Committee is of the view that a suitable system of registration of teachers before their entry into the profession shall have to be evolved in order to make the 'observance' a reality.

## Chapter 2

### Code of Professional Ethics for School Teachers

#### Introduction

It is universally felt that like all other professions, the teaching profession should also have its Code of Professional Ethics which is a pre-requisite to ensure its dignity and integrity. It is also significant that the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 entails on teachers some onerous professional responsibilities to be internalized by them in the performance of their duties. Accordingly, it is considered necessary that the Code of Professional Ethics be evolved and adopted by the teaching community.

For the purpose of this Code, the term “teacher” covers all school teachers, whether in government or private schools, on full time or part time basis, at the elementary and secondary levels and the teachers holding administrative and supervisory positions

The Code of Professional Ethics for teachers provides a framework of principles to guide them in discharging their obligations towards students, parents, colleagues and community. Increased awareness of the ethical principles governing the teaching profession is essential to ensure ‘professionalism’ among teachers.

#### Preamble

- *Recognizing* that every child has a fundamental right to education of good quality;
- *Recognizing* that education should be directed to the all round development of the human personality;
- *Recognizing* the need for developing faith in the guiding principles of our polity, viz., democracy, social justice and secularism;

- *Recognizing* the need to promote through education the concept of composite culture of India and a sense of national identity;
- *Recognizing* that teachers, being an integral part of the social milieu, share the needs and aspirations of the people;
- *Recognizing* the need to enhance self-esteem of teachers;
- *Recognizing* the need to organize teaching as a profession for which expert knowledge, specialized skills and dedication are pre-requisites;
- *Recognizing* that the community respect and support for the teachers are dependent on the teachers' professionalism, and
- *Recognizing* the need for self-direction and self-discipline among members of the teaching community;

***the present Code of Professional Ethics for school teachers has been evolved to provide direction and guidance to the teachers in enhancing the dignity of their professional work.***

## **1. Obligations towards Students**

- 1.1 Treats all students with love and affection.
- 1.2 Respects the value of being just and impartial to all students irrespective of their caste, creed, religion, sex, economic status, language and place of birth.
- 1.3 Facilitates students' physical, social, intellectual, emotional, moral and spiritual development.
- 1.4 Respects basic human dignity of the child in all aspects of school life.
- 1.5 Makes planned and systematic efforts to facilitate the child to actualize his/her potential and talent.
- 1.6 Transacts the curriculum in conformity with the values enshrined in the Constitution.
- 1.7 Adapts his/her teaching to the individual needs of students.

- 1.8 Maintains the confidentiality of the information concerning students and dispenses such information only to those who are legitimately entitled to it.
- 1.9 Refrains from subjecting any child to fear, trauma, anxiety, physical punishment and mental and emotional harassment.
- 1.10 Refrains from any act involving sexual abuse of the child.

## **2. Obligations towards Parents, Community and Society**

- 2.1 Establishes cordial relations with parents/guardians.
- 2.2 Desists from doing any thing which is derogatory to the respect of the child or his/her parents/guardians.
- 2.3 Strives to develop respect for the composite culture of India among students.
- 2.4 Refrains from taking part in such activities as may spread feeling of hatred or enmity among different communities, religious or linguistic groups.

## **3. Obligation towards the Profession and Colleagues**

- 3.1 Strives for his/her continuous professional development.
- 3.2 Creates a culture that encourages purposeful collaboration and dialogue among colleagues and stakeholders.
- 3.3 Treats other members of the profession with respect and dignity.
- 3.4 Refrains from engaging himself/ herself in private tuition or private teaching activity.
- 3.5 Refrains from accepting any gift, or favour that might impair or appear to influence professional decisions or actions.
- 3.6 Refrains from making unsubstantiated allegations against colleagues or higher authorities.
- 3.7 Avoids making derogatory statements about colleagues, especially in the presence of pupils, other teachers, officials or parents.
- 3.8 Respects the professional standing and opinions of his/her colleagues.

3.9. Maintains confidentiality of information concerning colleagues and dispenses such information only when authorized to do so.

Note: The Code can be further enriched by Teacher organizations at different levels by incorporating additional articles related to ethical principles, if required.

## Chapter 3

### OBSERVANCE OF THE CODE

The difference between the Code of Conduct and the Code of Professional Ethics needs to be appreciated. As far as the provision of the Right of Children to Free and compulsory Education Act, 2009 is concerned, particularly with reference to Section 24 of the Act pertaining to duties of teachers, *enforcement of the Code of Conduct is perhaps the answer.*

Like all other professions, the teaching profession should also move towards self-regulation, which implies that every teacher should have the inner urge to adhere to the ethical principles listed in the Code of Professional Ethics for teachers. However, in spite of the expectation of the voluntary observance of the Code, some cases of violation of the Code or of partial adherence to it are likely to occur in the vast system of school education. Therefore, a suitable mechanism needs to be evolved to ensure that all members of the profession follow the ethical principles enshrined in the Code.

The violation of the Code of Conduct invites disciplinary action for which detailed rules are prescribed. However, in the case of violation of Code of Professional Ethics by teachers, the responsibility to discipline them rests with the authorized representatives of the profession. The magnitude or seriousness of the violation may not be the same in all the cases. The cases of violation or non-observance shall have to be dealt with at different levels and in different ways in accordance with the nature of the violation.

In other professions, as for instance, medicine, law, etc. after completion of the professional course, the pass-out is registered as a bonafide practitioner of the profession and is bound by a Code of Professional Ethics relevant to his/her profession. In case of any reported violation of the code, the authorized professional body initiates disciplinary action which may even lead to cancellation of the license to practice the profession. No such provision exists in the case of the teaching profession. Unless this provision is worked out, the code will remain only on paper. The Committee is of the

view that some mechanism for the Registration of persons qualified for becoming teachers should be evolved, which should be integrated with the provision of the RTE Act, 2009. In consultation with the All India Federations of Primary and Secondary school teachers, the NCTE may evolve a procedure for the Registration of persons eligible for teaching in schools. The responsibility for Registration may be shouldered by the SCERTs under the supervision and guidance of the NCTE.

At the time of initial appointment, a teacher should be provided a copy of the 'Code of Professional Ethics', for perusal and should be further required to furnish an 'oath', before joining the profession that he/she would always strive to observe the 'Code' in letter and spirit. A suggestive format of the 'Oath' is given at Annexure 2.

## **Mechanism to deal with Violations**

A possible mechanism to deal with non-observance of the Code is suggested here. A three-tier mechanism could be evolved to deal with the violations noticed or reported, as outlined below:-

### **(i) School Level/ Block Level Ethics Committee**

In the case of bigger secondary or higher secondary schools where the number of teachers is quite sizeable, an Ethics Committee at the school level comprising senior members of the staff including representatives of parents should be appointed. The Committee may deal with the complaints regarding punctuality, regularity, completion of curriculum, engagement in private tuitions, etc and, in the first instance, should try to persuade the erring teachers to mend their ways. In case the Committee fails to persuade the concerned teachers, it may recommend to the concerned authorities that disciplinary proceedings should be initiated against such teachers.

In the case of Primary/Elementary schools, keeping in view the fewer numbers of teachers, the Ethics Committee could be appointed at the Block or cluster level with members drawn from the teaching community and representatives of parents.

## **(ii) State Level Ethics Committee**

The State Government in consultation with the organization responsible for the registration of teachers may appoint an Ethics Committee comprising eminent educationists, representatives of teacher organizations and parents. The Committee should deal with complaints of serious nature such as violation of Constitutional provisions, cases of child abuse, spreading feelings of hatred or enmity among different communities, etc. The Committee may issue 'Advisories' to the erring teachers, if necessary. In case the Committee comes to the conclusion, that the case merits withdrawal of 'Eligibility', or cancellation of registration, it may refer it to the 'Ethics Committee' at the national level.

## **(iii) National Level Ethics Committee**

At the national level, NCTE and All India Federations of school teachers may jointly appoint a National Ethics Committee comprising eminent educationists, representatives of Federations of Elementary and Secondary Teacher organizations, National Commission for the Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) and parents. The cases forwarded by the State Ethics Committees should be taken up by the National Ethics Committee for appropriate decision.

The NCTE may notify regulations relating to the composition, functions, powers and responsibility of Ethics Committees at the three levels mentioned above. The National Ethics Committee should have the powers to suspend/withdraw registration of the teacher concerned, once the mechanism of registration of teachers is put in place.

## **Awareness Generation**

To begin with, the code should be translated into various Indian Languages and circulated widely amongst the teachers. The National Level and State Level Teachers' organizations and Institutions responsible for teachers' In-service education should organize orientation programmes for teachers and discuss with them the implications of

the Code. The Explanatory Notes to the Articles of the Code, provided in this report, will be helpful in such orientation programmes.

## **Chapter 4**

### **EXPLANATORY NOTES**

#### **1. Obligations Towards Students**

##### **1.1 Treats all students with love and affection**

The demonstration of genuine love and affection by teachers for their students is essential for learning to happen. Treating all children with love and affection irrespective of their school performance and achievement level is the core of the teaching learning process. Students who do not perform well in studies are generally deprived of teachers' consideration for them. In addition, the teacher should also treat all children with equal love and affection irrespective of their parental background and religious or caste affiliations. The teacher as support to the parents should deal with students with a humane touch as through this process student-teacher rapport could be established for mutually beneficial interaction between them. Teachers should create trust, confidence, interest, enthusiasm and hope and not fear, frustration and disappointment in the students. The approaches in this regard need not be defined as each teacher has the potential to design his/her behavioural styles to provide an affable support to children.

##### **1.2 Respects the value of being just and impartial to all students irrespective of their caste, creed, religion, sex, economic status, language and place of birth.**

School is a place where social justice and equity has to be practised and valued by the teachers. Teachers' own belief in democratic principles, tolerance, social justice and equity prepares a better climate for students' learning of these values. Impartial attitude, belief and non-discriminatory practices towards all students should be ingrained in the school practices. The teacher's personal belief pattern on caste, religion, sex, economic status, language and place of birth, if not in conformity with Constitutional tenets will severely affect the equity fabric of the class room.

### **1.3 Facilitates students' physical, social, intellectual, emotional, moral and spiritual development.**

Childhood is a period of growth and change requiring developing child's physical and mental capabilities to the fullest. Currently in the schooling process, much stress is given to cognitive development (the traditional 3 Rs) which needs to be broadened to other areas of child development. The teacher should act as a facilitator for the students to engage them in diverse activities for their physical, social, emotional, moral and spiritual development. The physical development of students as an important aim of education should be encouraged through physical education activities. Helping students to understand the social context, its problems, societal values and to inculcate emotional intelligence through teaching learning process, would benefit students for their all round development. Physical and emotional security is the corner stone for all learning right from the primary to the secondary school years and even afterwards.

### **1.4 Respects basic human dignity of the child in all aspects of school life**

There is a need to recognize that each individual child has its own rights and dignity as a human being and a member of a democratic society. Violation of rights of the child is observed many times in our schooling process. For example, many a time teachers prohibit students to express their feelings. Any derogatory remark by the teachers affects the self respect which, in turn, affects the leaning progress of the child. Children's voices and experiences do not find expression in the class room. The participation of all students in all activities of the school with respect and dignity need to be encouraged. Teachers will do well to study the U.N. Declaration on Child Rights to which India is also a signatory and also the Report of the National Commission for the Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) – for updating their understanding of this concern of child rights.

A school, no doubt, has the right to frame rules for maintaining discipline as without it is difficult to organize proper teaching learning in schools. But the school must

ensure that the rules framed are such as do not violate the basic human dignity of the child.

**1.5 Makes planned and systematic efforts to facilitate the child to actualize his/her potential and talent.**

Recognizing the potential and talent of each child is the prime responsibility of every teacher. The teacher should recognize the multiple talents such as sports, music, dance and other creative endeavour amongst children. Disproportionate appreciation is generally given to academic achievement of the students, neglecting their other talents and potential. The children's creativity, their child's potential and talent need to be recognized to provide enough opportunities for their nurturance. Hence teacher's role is critical not only in recognizing the potential and talents in different areas but to plan accordingly to help him/her to actualize the potential to the fullest extent. But the task is simply said than done. The teacher may have to interact with peers and experts and also with children and to observe them continuously in order to ascertain the talents of the child. He/she will have to integrate the knowledge about the child with the strategies of transacting curriculum.

**1.6 Transacts the curriculum in conformity with the values enshrined in the Constitution.**

The values enshrined in the Constitution of India are the guiding principles for the social transformation and establishment of an egalitarian social order. The Constitutional values such as democracy, secularism, equality, justice and liberty need to be mainstreamed in the diverse activities of the school through both curricular and co-curricular areas. There are many instances known where the pedagogical practices adopted by the teachers are against the Constitutional values and also the rights of children. The teachers will do well to pay attention to Article 51 A of the Constitution of India, dealing with Fundamental Duties of

Citizens and translate the provision of clauses (a) to (k) of the Article through example and precept.

### **1.7 Adapts his/her teaching to the individual needs of students**

The primacy of learner as a unique individual in the inclusive and diversified classroom is widely acknowledged. The child-centered pedagogy encourages us to think that learners are diverse with different experiences. This requires fundamental change in understanding the individual learner and the learning processes. It is a great challenge for the teacher to understand each child's needs in matters of acquiring knowledge and this is possible only when the teacher becomes conscious of such a role and strives to continuously keep abreast of the pedagogies of attending to the individual needs. Learners actively construct their own knowledge by connecting new ideas to existing ideas on the basis of different activities in which they may be involved. Therefore, teacher's role assumes more of an active facilitator in the process of knowledge construction in which children are engaged. Active engagement involves enquiry, exploration, questioning, debates, application and reflection. Allowing children to ask questions that require them to relate what they are learning in school to things happening outside.

A student may have some special needs of learning based on his/her personal background and previous knowledge. But children belonging to diverse groups such as children residing in slum areas, rural or remote areas, hilly areas may have some special needs. While planning his/her teaching, the teacher should take all these factors into consideration.

### **1.8 Maintains the confidentiality of the information concerning students and dispenses such information only to those who are legitimately entitled to it.**

A teacher not only simply teaches a child but also has knowledge about student's family, culture and community. The close interaction between the teachers and

the taught builds the trust and respect vital for the development of the personality of the child. Many a time, the teacher also serves as counsellor with whom personal and private information about the student are available. Hence it is the ethical responsibility of teachers to maintain the confidentiality of information which the student has shared or the teacher has obtained from different sources. The information could be shared very judiciously for the betterment of students. If parents need to be informed in certain cases, the information may be communicated in true spirit. Elements of personal life of the child when divulged publically can cause an irretrievable damage to his/her growth and development, as well as his/her personality.

**1.9 Refrains from subjecting any child to fear, trauma, anxiety, physical punishment and mental and emotional harassment.**

The teacher should take all appropriate measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse. Any kind of corporal punishment and emotional harassment by teachers has larger implications for child's life. There are instances of teachers who harbour violence in the school through their behaviour. There is a greater need to change our belief pattern that punishment brings better learning. The teaching community needs to refrain from such activities which violate child rights. Observance of new classroom rules in the context of the guidelines of the NCPDR in view of its status as a law enforcing body, need to be the guiding principles for teacher's behaviour. Corporal punishment now includes rapping on the knuckles, running on the school ground, kneeling or standing for long hours, beaten with a ruler, pinching, slapping, child sexual abuse, locking up children in classrooms, electric shock, that is, all acts of leading physical and mental injury, and need to be consciously avoided.

### **1.10 Refrains from any act involving sexual abuse of the child.**

Sexual abuse is more than bruises and broken bones. While physical abuse might be the most visible sign, other types of abuse, such as emotional abuse also leave deep, long-lasting scars on the minds of the children. Teacher as a moral leader must restrain from any act involving sexual abuse. Any involvement in such a behaviour demolishes the prestige of the teacher in the eyes of the children and may become a source of hatred for the teacher and, therefore, an emotional trauma for the Child. The teachers must follow the guidelines formulated by the Supreme Court of India and the NCPCR regarding sexual abuse at workplaces and in schools.

## **2. Obligations towards Parents, Community and Society**

### **2.1 Establishes cordial relations with parents/guardians**

There may be situations where parents may bring problems relating to their wards to teachers, which require equanimity on the part of the teacher to deal with both parents and the students. Parents sometimes tend to ignore the faults of their children in spite of the teacher bringing the same to their notice. There may be a positive fall out of outcomes if parents in such circumstances are responded with cordiality. Undoubtedly, the influence this may make on the students about the teacher can bring the student much closer to the teacher, as interpersonal relations are at the heart of maintaining a harmonious relationship conducive for teaching and learning. Teacher being the central figure in the educational system has a connectivity with students both in and outside the classroom, his/her colleagues, and the parents. The quality of the relationship maintained by him/her with the parents can go a long way in understanding the child, and also in laying the foundation for a better atmosphere of understanding between the student and his/her parents. In an environment of inhibition, the quality of learning can be impaired. If the child develops a barrier of inhibition between himself/herself and the teacher, it can become an impediment in drawing the best out of

the teacher. The student should develop a positive feeling so that the communication between his/her parents and the teacher in no way affects his/her self-esteem.

A majority of parents welcome being kept informed of the performance of the child in the school, both in and outside the classroom. The good work done by the student can be shared with the parents as this is likely to lead to better appreciation of the school. Students at the school stage are at an impressionable stage. They are likely, some time, to go astray and timely correction in their misdemeanour can check later agony to parents. A proper channel of communication between the teacher and the parents can be of great help to the student.

## **2.2 Desists from doing anything which is derogatory to the respect of the child or his/her parents/guardians**

Lowering the esteem of the child in front of other students can be hazardous. It is also important to treat equally children from different economic backgrounds and children belonging to different religions, regions, castes, disability categories, etc. The teachers should not make derogatory remarks against students belonging to different backgrounds. Equally dangerous is the lowering of the esteem of the parents in front of the children. The socio-economic status of students in a class is not homogenous and not all students come from the same background. Any inadvertent tilt in the behaviour of the teacher in regard to favouring one type of student background and lowering another can cause emotional conflicts which can influence badly the process of learning. It is also necessary not to compare one child's performance with another. The child has to be encouraged to improve upon his/her own performance in areas where the child has shown his/her maximum potential and should not be forced to improve where he/she may not be interested.

## **2.3 Strives to develop respect for the composite culture of India among students**

India is a land of many cultures, languages, religions, faiths and beliefs and in any class there is always a representation of children of different cultures, languages, religions. As a result of the long association and interaction among different cultural streams, a composite culture has evolved in the country, which has drawn the best from various strands. The value of composite culture requires equal tolerance and respect for all cultures of the land. This philosophy needs to be nurtured among students through all curricular areas of the school. The students must learn to appreciate that all religions and communities have contributed to the evolution of the composite culture. Teachers' personal approach in demonstrating respect for all is likely to produce the desired impact on the minds of the students.

#### **2.4 Refrains from taking part in such activities as may spread feeling of hatred or enmity among different communities, religious and linguistic groups**

The pluralistic culture of the classroom is a complex reality. There can be issues that can influence divisiveness among the student communities. The teacher has an onerous responsibility in developing in the students' tolerance and equal respect for all religions, faiths and languages. A clear focus on developing the concept of being an Indian first and affiliation to a specific group later can lay the foundation for national integration. The Indian identity has pluralistic connotations and this must be instilled among students through example. A teacher should understand the difference between education and propaganda and in no case should use the platform of the school for the propagation of his/her personal views about different religions, regions or castes, if these are not in tune with the principles of our Constitution. While discussing current social and political conflicts in the country, the teacher should refrain from taking sides and should always present a balanced and objective view of the conflict.

### **3. Obligations towards the Profession and Colleagues**

#### **3.1 Strives for his/her continuous professional development**

In a knowledge driven society, it is necessary for every person to continue learning throughout his/her life. As a teacher is expected to equip his/her students for life long learning, it is imperative for him/her also to become a life long learner.

It is incumbent on the part of a teacher to strive continuously for his professional development in order to reap the benefits of the latest advancements in different areas of knowledge and also in their pedagogy, which will equip him/her to engage the students with updated knowledge by using modified pedagogical practices. The study of newspapers, magazines, professional journals and new books in his/her field of specialization; discussion with colleagues on different themes of education; undertaking research and experimentation, participation in study circles, seminars, conferences, workshops, etc. and participation in INSET programmes through face to face or distance mode are some of the strategies which a teacher can use to grow professionally and also to move upwards in the professional hierarchy. The teacher's motivation to learn continuously not only helps him/her to grow professionally but it also helps to enrich the profession with innovative practices which may emerge as a result of research, experimentation, discussions, observations, etc.

It is the responsibility of the teacher to look for different avenues for his/her continued professional development. He/she should not expect the employers or the state to assume full responsibility for his/her professional development. However, he/she must take full advantage of the opportunities provided by the State by participating in the INSET programmes willingly and enthusiastically.

### **3.2 Creates a culture that encourages purposeful collaboration and dialogue among colleagues and stakeholders**

It is essential to create an academically stimulating ethos in the school for which all the teachers are expected to contribute. Such an ethos involves planned and focused collaboration in all academic matters among teachers working in the institution. The collaboration may be in the execution of jointly planned projects and programmes such as projects to improve students' achievements in different spheres. There should

also be an environment of free and frank dialogue and discussion among teachers to seek collective solutions to the problems of the institution and also to those of teachers and students. It should be a regular practice among teachers of an institution to sit together to reflect on the problems faced by them in curriculum transaction or in classroom management or in attending to children with learning disabilities or behaviour problems. Such discussions and interactions should become an essential component of school climate, as these have the potential to enable the teachers to construct their own knowledge about students and their learning and about desirable pedagogical practices.

Besides teachers, there are many other stakeholders in the reputation of the institution and of the teaching profession and also in the education of children, such as parents and representatives of the community. A teacher should constantly strive to seek their involvement in the affairs of the institution and discuss with them the problems, programmes and plans of the institution.

### **3.3 Treats other members of the profession with respect and dignity**

A teacher must realize that all members of the teaching profession, irrespective of their academic and professional qualifications and whether they are pre-primary, primary or secondary school teachers, deserve to be treated with respect and dignity. A senior secondary school teacher holding postgraduate degree should treat the primary school teachers with equal respect irrespective of their working at a lower stage of education and in lower pay scales. In staff meetings, all teachers should be encouraged to express their views freely without any inhibitions and the views expressed by newly recruited or junior teachers and lower stage teachers should be given due importance. Even if the ideas expressed by the junior teachers are not acceptable, the senior teachers should refrain from rejecting them with disdain pointing out their lack of experience. A teacher should never try to belittle the abilities or potential of any teacher on the basis of age, sex State or region to which he/she belongs. A teacher should do nothing to lower the reputation of other teachers due to

feelings of jealousy or due to any other reason as the reputation of the profession depends to a large extent on the reputation of its individual members.

### **3.4 Refrains from engaging himself/herself in private tuition or private teaching activity**

Teachers' engagement in private tuition has been a matter of controversy and there have been arguments both in its favour and also against it. There are persons who are not employed as full time teachers but work as full time private tutors. They are also expected to observe the professional ethics meant for teachers. But in the case of full time regular teachers, engagement in private tuition work affects the quality of their work in schools adversely. If a teacher is engaged in tuition work for three to four hours before or after school hours, it is likely to have an adverse effect on his school duties because the time he/she should have utilized for reading or for making preparations for teaching, is spent on giving tuitions. The teacher should not intentionally neglect his teaching duties hoping to attract students to seek his/her assistance after school hours. Giving private tuitions to one's own students may lead to violation of many ethical principles as the teacher is likely to develop a soft corner for such students and he/she may be tempted to favour them in many ways such as internal assessment, maintenance of school discipline, etc. and thereby may do injustice to other students who may not have sought his/her assistance through private tuition.

### **3.5 Refrains from accepting any gift or favour that might impair or appear to influence professional decision or actions**

Teachers have to be role models for the students of the impressionable age. In case some students, out of respect and affection for the teachers, sometimes offer small gifts like flowers or greeting cards, these should be accepted with a smile. However, if a student tries to give some expensive gift to a teacher on some occasion and, in return, expects favour in the form of higher marks in the internal assessment or selection for participation in some sports tournament or literary and cultural competition, then the teacher should firmly refuse it. The teacher should not accept gifts or favours

from the parents of the students, as it may influence his/her professional judgement about the students' performance in internal examinations or their candidature for participation in various events.

The teacher should also refrain from accepting gifts and favours from book publishers, sports material or science equipments suppliers as they would expect the teachers to recommend their books or help them in acquiring purchase orders for their materials. A teacher influenced by such gestures is likely to recommend at times purchase of sub-standard materials. The gifts may be in cash or kind and the favours may be in the form of transport facility, stay facility in a hotel or reimbursement of travel costs, and receiving them should be scrupulously avoided.

### **3.6 Refrains from making unsubstantiated allegations against colleagues and higher authorities**

In bigger schools, with sizeable number of teachers, there is always a possibility that a teacher will have a circle of close friends. This is quite natural but it will be undesirable if it leads to formation of groups having mutually conflicting interests. It is often observed that in some cases, some teachers, make an attempt to seek favours from the school authorities and belittle other colleagues due to professional jealousy. This sort of behaviour is certainly unbecoming of a teacher.

It is also a practice at many places that some teachers submit representations or complaints against their colleagues. It will be unethical on the part of a teacher if he/she makes an allegation without proper and adequate evidence. Sometimes, a group of teachers draft a representation against a particular teacher, or higher authorities and then approach other teachers for their signatures. A teacher violates professional ethics if she/he puts signatures on the representation simply to oblige the teacher(s) who have approached him/her. It is incumbent on the part of a teacher to verify the contents of the complaint before becoming a party to it.

If a teacher observes some of his colleagues violating the ethical principles, he/she should bring it to the notice of the senior colleagues. In case a teacher is found abusing children sexually or instigating students of one community against students of another community, remaining silent by ignoring such incidents shall be undesirable and violative of professional ethics. But the teacher should file complaints only when he/she has first hand knowledge of the said violation and in no case it should be based on mere heresay.

### **3.7 Avoids making derogatory statements about colleagues, especially in the presence of pupils, other teachers official or parents,**

A teacher having difference of opinion with colleagues on purely professional matters is perfectly in order and indeed should be welcome. But the mode of expression of the difference in opinion should be polite and dignified. A teacher shall be violating principles of professional ethics if he/she criticizes or denounces the teaching style, dress sense, behaviour, caste, rural or urban background or professional competence of a colleague in the presence of pupils, parents, other colleagues and school officials. For instance, if a teacher makes the statement about another teacher that the person does not know how to teach or does not know A B C of the subject, he/she is certainly making an attempt to belittle the teacher in the eyes of pupils, parents or school officials, his/her act of doing so may be termed as unethical. However, if in the meetings of the school staff or in the meetings of professional organizations, a teacher may raise issues regarding teaching styles and strategies suitable for specific concepts and in the process he/she may give concrete examples based on the teaching of other colleagues.

### **3.8 Respects the professional standing and opinions of his/her colleagues**

In the teaching profession, some teachers are likely to be more professionally advanced in comparison to others. This may be due to their love of the latest educational literature, inclination for observation and experimentation; habit of undertaking analysis and reflection on educational issues and concerns; and the ability

to form his/her views and communicate the same to others orally or in writing. A teacher should hold such professionally advanced fellow teachers in high esteem and resolve to emulate them. But, this does not mean that he/she should blindly accept their views without critical examination.

Every teacher is entitled to form opinions on all aspects of children's education and life in school, such as school administration, classroom management, school discipline and children's rights, prescribed curriculum, syllabi and text books, and articulate the same in different forums. Such views should be received with appreciation. The professionally advanced teachers or experienced teachers may not find enough merit in the views of younger teachers but they should refrain from rejecting their ideas in a harsh tone. Instead, assuming the role of mentors, they should politely point out the weaknesses in the views expressed by less experienced teachers.

### **3.9 Maintains confidentiality of information concerning colleagues and dispenses such information only when authorized to do so.**

A teacher may be knowing many things about the life and conduct of his/her fellow teachers. Some information may be of confidential nature while some other may be of routine type involving no component of confidentiality. If a teacher has expressed his/her services for undertaking a specific task, there is no element of confidentiality in these facts as these are already in the public domain. However, if there is an allegation that a teacher has committed some irregularities in the maintenance of accounts of an activity or if a student makes a complaint that a particular teacher misused his/her position during an educational tour, the school authorities are likely to appoint an inquiry committee to probe the matter. While investigating the matter, the members of the committee are likely to obtain information of confidential nature from the teachers, students and officials. A teacher shall be violating the Code of Professional Ethics if he/she chooses to publicize the information obtained during the course of investigation.

A young teacher facing some sort of turmoil in his/her personal, social or professional life may decide to seek the emotional support of an elderly and senior teacher and in

the process may divulge some confidential information. The teacher who has received the information shall be violating the ethical principles of teaching profession if he/she passes on the information shared in confidence to other teachers.

**F No: 78-1/2009/Acad**  
**National Council for Teacher Education**  
Hans Bhawan, Wing – II, Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg  
New Delhi- 110 002

**OFFICE ORDER**

7<sup>th</sup> June, 2010

The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act has come into force from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2010. In view of the provision 24(1) of RTE Act 2009 regarding duties and functions of teachers, the Ministry of HRD has directed NCTE to develop “Code of Professional Ethics of Teachers” in consultation with World Bank, AIPTF and some State Governments.

2. In the above context, the Council has constituted a Committee of the following experts:

- |    |  |          |
|----|--|----------|
| 1. | Prof. A.K. Sharma<br>Ex Director, NCERT<br>C-3, Sector-48,<br>Noida- 201 304<br>E-mail: aksharma.edu@gmail.com<br>Mbl. 09810195863   | Chairman |
| 2. | Prof G L Arora<br>No. 423, Sector 7<br>Urban Estate,<br>Gurgaon – 122001 (Haryana)<br>E-mail: <a href="mailto:aroraql@rediffmail.com">aroraql@rediffmail.com</a><br>9810431741                                 | Member   |
| 3. | Prof Najma Amin<br>Department of Educational Studies<br>Faculty of Education<br>Jamia Millia Islamia<br>New Delhi – 110025<br>najmamin_jmi@yahoo.co.in / <i>namin@jmi.ac.in</i><br>011-26926198, Mb 9818198991 | Member   |

4. Prof Pranati Panda Member  
Professor,  
Department of Comparative Education &  
International Co-operation  
NUEPA  
17-B, Sri Aurobindo Marg  
New Delhi – 110016  
[pranati@nuepa.org](mailto:pranati@nuepa.org)  
9811353409

- . The Committee is authorized to co-opt one more expert if so desired.
3. Terms of Reference of the Committee:
- (i) The Committee will draft “Code of Professional Ethics of Teachers” keeping in view the provisions of the RTE Act, 2009 relating to duties and functions of teachers.
  - (ii) The Committee will consult the Secretaries of Education of the States of Haryana, Karnataka, and Assam and also hold meeting with Shri Sam Carlson of World Bank and representatives of AIPTF.
  - (iii) The committee will submit its report by the end of July, 2010.
4. Terms and Conditions of the Committee will be as follows:
- (i) TA/DA and sitting fee etc. will be paid to the members of the Committee as per NCTE rules.
  - (ii) The committee will be provided secretarial assistance by NCTE.
  - (iii) Dr J P Dwivedi Research Officer NCTE would act as convener of the committee.

(Dr A B Sharma)  
Deputy Secretary  
NCTE

## Teacher's Oath

I \_\_\_\_\_ Son/Daughter of \_\_\_\_\_,  
solemnly declare that I shall always strive to raise the prestige and dignity of the  
teaching profession and shall not do anything which may affect the reputation of  
the profession adversely. I willingly bind myself to the observance of the 'Code of  
Professional Ethics for School Teachers', in letter and spirit in order to discharge a  
teacher's obligations towards students, parents, community and society as  
enunciated in the Code.

Date:

Signature

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

14<sup>th</sup> September, 2010

Dear Prof. Siddiqui

This has reference to the constitution of a Committee to develop the Code of Professional Ethics for School Teachers, vide officer order No. 78-1/2009/Acad. Dated 7<sup>th</sup> June, 2010.

The Committee has completed its work and submits its Report herewith for your consideration.

With regards.

Yours sincerely,

**(Prof. A.K. Sharma)**