

Staff Code of Conduct Policy

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Objective

This Code of Conduct is designed to give clear guidance on the standards of behaviour all school employees are expected to observe. School employees are role models and are in a unique position of influence and must adhere to behaviour that sets a good example to all the students within the school. As a member of a school community, each employee has an individual responsibility to maintain their reputation and the reputation of the school, whether inside or outside working hours.

This Code of Conduct applies to all employees of the school and is also the standard expectations of all parents/carers, guests, visitors, volunteers and school governors.

In addition to this Code of Conduct, all employees engaged to work under Teachers' Terms and Conditions of Employment have a statutory obligation to adhere to the 'Teachers' Standards 2012' and in relation to this policy, Part 2 of the Teachers' Standards - Personal and Professional Conduct.

1. Culture and Values

1.1 The Governors of Southborough High School expect all staff to promote the culture of the school to all our stakeholders through the embodiment of our school values. These are:

- Support
- Challenge
- Respect
- Responsibility
- Relationships
- Resilience

[Our Culture and Values](#)

2. Setting an Example

2.1 All staff must set examples of professional behaviour and conduct which entirely embodies our school values, which can be copied by students. Staff must therefore avoid using inappropriate or offensive language at all times.

2.2 All staff must, therefore, demonstrate high standards of conduct, both verbally and physically, in order to encourage our pupils to do the same.

2.3 All staff must also avoid putting themselves at risk of allegations of abusive or unprofessional conduct.

2.4 This Code helps all staff to understand what behaviour is and is not acceptable, regard should also be given to the disciplinary procedures set out in the School's [Behaviour Policy](#).

2.5 All staff are expected to familiarise themselves and comply with all school policies and procedures which are outlined in section 3.4 of this policy.

3. Safeguarding

3.1 The school's DSL is Brian Burns, Deputy DSLs are Dan Edwardas, Karl Nicholas and Rebecca Linney and the Safeguarding governor is Malcolm Gregory.

3.2 The duty to safeguard pupils/students includes the duty to report concerns about a student or colleague to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for Child Protection as soon as possible following the schools referral procedures. This includes both safeguarding referrals and behaviour alerts.

3.3 Staff must comply with the school's Safeguarding Statement and Strategy (which is inclusive of our [Safeguarding Policy](#)) and have a full understanding and knowledge of our: Safeguarding policies and legislation, safeguarding training and CPD, safeguarding procedures/protocols, safeguarding provisions and interventions.

3.4 Staff are provided with the school's [Safeguarding Policy](#), [Behaviour Policy](#), [Prevent duty](#), [PDT policy](#), [Online Safety Policy](#) and this the Staff Code of Conduct Policy. All staff must confirm with the DSL that they have read and have full understanding of all these policies and documentations.

3.5 Staff have a duty to safeguard students from physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse and neglect.

3.6 Staff should treat children with respect and dignity and must not seriously demean or undermine pupils, their parents or carers, or colleagues.

3.7 Staff should not demonstrate behaviours that may be perceived as sarcasm, making jokes at the expense of students, embarrassing or humiliating students, discriminating against or favouring students.

3.8 Staff must take reasonable care of students under their supervision with the aim of ensuring their safety and welfare. This includes all duties and therefore staff must be punctual, proactive and vigilant for every duty they are allocated. If a staff member is unable to carry out a duty for any reason other than illness (i.e school trip), then it is their responsibility to arrange suitable cover.

3.9 Staff must ensure that all components of the Personal Development curriculum (PDT) are delivered effectively, providing information, support and guidance on important safeguarding issues such as Prevent, online safety, RSHE, mental health and wellbeing.

4. Sharing concerns and recording incidents

4.1 All staff should be aware of their establishment's safeguarding procedures, including the procedures for dealing with allegations against staff and volunteers.

4.2 In the event of an allegation being made, by any person, or an incident being witnessed, the relevant information should be immediately recorded and reported to the Headteacher, senior manager or Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) as appropriate.

4.3 Members of staff should feel able to discuss with their line manager any difficulties or problems that may affect their relationship with or behaviour towards pupils, so that appropriate support can be provided and/or action can be taken.

4.4 In order to safeguard and protect students and colleagues, where staff have any concerns about someone who works with children they should immediately report this to the Head teacher or DSL.

5. Relationships with students

5.1 Staff must declare any relationships that they may have with students outside of school; this may include mutual membership of social groups, tutoring, or family connections. Staff should not assume that the school is aware of any such connections.

5.2 Relationships with students must be professional at all times, physical relationships with students are not permitted and may lead to a criminal conviction.

5.3 Contact with students must be via school authorised mechanisms. At no time should personal telephone numbers, email addresses or communication routes via personal accounts on social media platforms be used to communicate with students.

5.4 If contacted by a student by an inappropriate route, staff should report the contact to the Headteacher immediately.

6. The use of control and physical intervention

6.1 No untoward physical control or violence must be used towards any student or member of staff unless in extreme circumstances.

6.2 The law and guidance for schools states that adults may reasonably intervene to prevent a child from:

- committing a criminal offence
- injuring themselves or others
- causing damage to property
- engaging in behaviour prejudicial to good order and to maintain good order and discipline.

6.3 Under no circumstances should physical force be used as a form of punishment. The use of unwarranted or disproportionate physical force is likely to constitute a criminal offence.

7. One to one situations

7.1 Staff working in one to one situations with students, including visiting staff from external organisations can be more vulnerable to allegations or complaints.

7.2 These situations need to be handled with care and only to be done in important situations such as helping to improve/develop a student's behaviour or wellbeing for example.

7.3 Arranging to meet with pupils from the school or away from the work premises should not be permitted unless the necessity for this is clear and approval is obtained from a senior member of staff, the pupil and their parents/carers.

8. Home visits

8.1 All work with pupils and parents should usually be undertaken in the school setting or other recognised workplace. There are however occasions, in response to an urgent, planned or specific situation.

8.2 A risk assessment should be undertaken prior to any planned home visit taking place. This is in line with and must follow the procedures within the schools [Home Visit Policy 2024/25](#). The assessment should include an evaluation of any known factors regarding the pupil, parents/carers and any others living in the household. Consideration should be given to any circumstances which might render the staff member becoming more vulnerable to an allegation being made e.g. hostility, child protection concerns, complaints or grievances. Specific thought should be given to visits outside of 'office hours' or in remote or secluded locations.

9. Transporting pupils

9.1 In certain situations staff or volunteers may be required or offered to transport pupils as part of their work. As for any other activity undertaken at work, the employer has a duty to carry out a risk assessment covering the health and safety of their staff and to manage any known risks.

9.2 Staff should not offer lifts to pupils unless the need for this has been agreed by a member of SLT. A designated member of staff should be appointed to plan and provide oversight of all transport arrangements and respond to any concerns that may arise.

9.3 Wherever possible and practicable it is advisable that transport is undertaken other than in private vehicles and with at least one adult additional to the driver acting as an escort. It is a legal requirement that all passengers wear seatbelts and the driver should ensure that they do so. They should also be aware of and adhere to current legislation regarding the use of car seats for younger children.

10. Educational visits

10.1 Staff responsible for organising educational visits should be familiar with the Department for Education's advice on Health and Safety available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-and-safety-advice-for-schools>

10.2 The duties in the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the supporting regulations apply to activities taking place on or off the school premises (including school visits) in Great Britain.

10.3 All school employers must have a Health and Safety policy. This should include policy and procedures for off-site visits, including residential visits and any school-led adventure activities.

11. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

11.1 Staff should not behave in a way that offends, intimidates and is hostile, degrading or humiliating to others.

11.2 Staff have a personal responsibility to demonstrate and promote our culture and values to all children and adults at all times.

11.3 Staff should treat all children and adults as individuals – respecting their identity – even when it is different from your own.

11.4 Staff should understand and act upon the fact that what may be acceptable to one person may not be to another. Everyone is an individual.

11.5 Staff should not make offensive or insulting remarks about any child or adult based on their protected characteristics of age, disability, sexual orientation, sex, race, religion and belief, gender reassignment, or sectarian/political opinion (or what you think their identity may be). This includes 'jokes', 'banter', ridicule or taunts which could breach this CoC policy as well as the Equality Act 2010 and may make a child or adult feel uncomfortable even if they don't show it.

11.6 Staff should challenge and/or report/refer to this sort of attitude and behaviour if you feel any child or adult is behaving inappropriately.

11.7 Do not avoid children or adults because you are unfamiliar with their diversity identity (or what you think their identity is). Being worried about how to behave or what to say is no excuse. This will just make them feel excluded and isolated. Be respectful and use your common sense.

11.8 If you are anxious about whether something you have said or done (or were planning to say or do) is acceptable to a colleague, it is okay to ask them, as long as you do so in a sensitive and respectful manner.

12. Student Personal Development

12.1 Staff must always prepare, and where necessary plan, for all lessons in PDT. This is to ensure that the school is delivering outstanding provision in all PDT lessons, which is not only a necessity to children but also vital in ensuring they have access to the skills and knowledge needed for positive personal development into adulthood.

12.2 Staff, who are form tutors, must at all times follow the expectations and clear protocol for AM and PM registration, which is outlined to all staff during Professional Learning Days and the relevant CPD sessions that follow.

12.3 Staff must cooperate and collaborate with colleagues and with external agencies where necessary to support the development of all students.

13. Personal Relationships Between Staff

13.1 The Academy requires all employees to disclose personal relationships, whether this is a colleague or external contractor that could potentially influence their professional judgment or behaviour. For the purposes of this code, a personal relationship includes any romantic, familial, or close friendship that could reasonably be perceived as a conflict of interest.

13.2 Employees must disclose any personal relationships to the Headteacher that could potentially affect their work performance, decision-making, or interactions with colleagues within 30 days of the relationship's inception. New hires must disclose any relevant personal relationships at the time of employment.

13.2 Staff members must avoid showing favouritism or preferential treatment to individuals based on personal relationships.

13.3 Any potential conflicts of interest arising from personal relationships should be addressed promptly and transparently.

13.4 Personal relationships should not interfere with work performance or create a hostile work environment.

13.5 Line managers must make decisions based solely on merit, qualifications, and performance, without considering personal relationships.

13.6 If a line manager's personal relationship could potentially influence a decision, they should recuse themselves from the decision-making process.

13.7 In cases where a personal relationship is believed to be having a negative impact on the workplace, the company may investigate the matter and take appropriate action, regardless of whether the relationship was disclosed.

14. Honesty and Integrity

14.1 Staff must maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in school. This includes the handling and claiming of money and the use of school property and facilities.

14.2 Gifts from suppliers or associates of the school must be declared to the Headteacher, with the exception of "one off" token gifts from students or parents. Personal gifts from individual members of staff to students are inappropriate and could be misinterpreted and may lead to disciplinary action. A record will be kept of all gifts received.

15. Conduct outside of Work

15.1 Staff must not engage in conduct outside work which could seriously damage the reputation and standing of the school or the employee's own reputation or the reputation of other members of the school community.

15.2 In particular, criminal offences that involve violence or possession or use of illegal drugs or sexual misconduct will be regarded as unacceptable.

15.3 Staff may undertake work outside school, either paid or voluntary, provided that it does not conflict with the interests of the school nor be to a level which may contravene the working time regulations or affect an individual's work performance in the school.

16. E-Safety and Internet Use

16.1 Staff must exercise caution when using information technology and be aware of the risks to themselves and others.

16.2 Staff must not engage in inappropriate use of social network sites which may bring themselves, the school, school community or employer into disrepute. Staff should ensure that they adopt suitably high security settings on any personal profiles they may have.

16.3 Staff should exercise caution in their use of all social media or any other web based presence that they may have, including written content, videos or photographs, and views expressed either directly or by 'liking' certain pages or posts established by others. This may also include the use of dating websites where staff could encounter students either with their own profile or acting covertly.

16.4 Contact with students should only be made via the use of school email accounts, telephone equipment, announcements or messaging through ClassCharts or hide their caller ID if using a personal mobile when appropriate.

16.5 Photographs/stills or video footage of students should only be used for school use and purposes authorised by the school. Any such use should always be transparent and only occur where parental consent has been given. The resultant files from such recording or taking of photographs must be stored and must be deleted immediately after use for school purposes.

17. Confidentiality

17.1 Where staff have access to confidential information about pupils/students or their parents or carers, staff must not reveal such information except to those colleagues who have a professional role in relation to the pupil/student.

17.2 All staff are likely at some point to witness actions which need to be confidential. For example, where a pupil/student is bullied by another pupil/student (or by a member of staff), this needs to be reported and dealt with in accordance with the appropriate school procedure. It must not be discussed outside the school, including with the pupil's/student's parent or carer, nor with colleagues in the school except with a senior member of staff with the appropriate authority to deal with the matter.

17.3 However, staff have an obligation to share with their line manager or the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) any information which gives rise to concern about the safety or welfare of a student. Staff must **never** promise a student that they will not act on information that they are told by the student.

18. Dress and Appearance

18.1 All staff must dress in a manner that is appropriate to a professional role and promote a professional image.

18.2 Staff should dress in a manner that is not offensive, revealing or sexually provocative.

18.3 Staff should dress in a manner that is absent from political or other contentious slogans.

19. Whistleblowing

19.1 Whistleblowing is the mechanism by which staff can voice their concerns, made in good faith, without fear of repercussion. Education settings should have a clear and accessible whistleblowing policy that meets the terms of the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.

19.2 Staff who use whistle blowing procedures should have their employment rights protected.

19.3 Staff should recognise their individual responsibilities to bring matters of concern to the attention of senior management and/or relevant external agencies and that to not do so may result in charges of serious neglect on their part where the welfare of the children may be at risk.

20. Disciplinary Action

20.1 Staff should be aware that a failure to comply with the following Code of Conduct could result in disciplinary action including but not limited to dismissal.

21. Compliance

21.1 All staff must sign an annual safeguarding and school policy declaration to confirm they have read, understood and agreed to comply with this code of conduct policy.

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