



Staff Behaviour Policy (Code of Conduct) 2025

Every member of staff should read this code of conduct in conjunction with EHS's policies on safeguarding and pupil confidentiality with respect to safeguarding. Linked policies include:

- Pastoral Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Complaints Procedure
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Behaviour Policy Prep and Senior School
- Whistle-blowing Policy
- Policy for the Use of Reasonable Force to Control or Restrain Pupils
- Recruitment, Selection and Disclosure Policy and Procedure
- Taking, Storing and Using Images of Children
- Anti Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy (Employment Handbook)
- E-safety Policy
- Use of Camera and Mobile Phones in EYFS

Rationale

This policy applies to all staff and volunteers in the school regardless of their position, role or responsibility. References to 'staff' throughout the policy relate to all of the following groups:

- All members of staff including teaching and support staff.
- Volunteers, including governors.
- Housekeeping staff.
- Kitchen Staff.
- Temporary and supply staff, either from agencies or engaged directly.
- Student placements, including those undertaking initial teacher training and apprenticeships.

The safety and wellbeing of every pupil at EHS is of paramount importance. Every pupil has a right to grow up and to live in a safe environment. All staff have a duty to protect pupils from abuse and bullying and to promote their well-being.

School staff are in a unique position of trust and influence as role models for pupils. Therefore, staff must adhere to behaviour that sets a good example to all pupils within the school.

All staff have a duty to protect pupils from abuse and bullying and to promote their wellbeing.

Staff also have an individual responsibility to maintain their reputation and the reputation of the school, both inside and outside working hours and work setting.

Objectives

This policy sets out clear guidance on the standards of behaviour expected from all staff at Edgbaston High School for girls.

The principles underlying the guidance aim to encourage staff to achieve the highest possible standards of conduct and minimise the risk of inappropriate conduct occurring.

This code of conduct is not an exhaustive list of acceptable and unacceptable standards of behaviour.

In situations where guidance does not exist in this policy staff are expected to exercise their professional judgement and act in the best interests of the pupils and the school.

Success Criteria

- Staff understand expectations relating to their conduct.
- Staff feel comfortable to report and record behaviour that is contrary to what is expected.

Methodology

1. Implementation

Professional Behaviour and Conduct

- Staff are expected to demonstrate the highest possible standards of personal and professional conduct and behaviour and consistently act with honesty and integrity. Edgbaston High School expects staff to treat each other, pupils, parents and the wider community with dignity and respect at all times.
- Our curriculum and pastoral systems, enhanced by the house system, are designed to foster the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all our pupils. All our teaching staff play a vital role in the process, helping to ensure that all our pupils relate well to one another and feel safe and comfortable within the school.
- Staff must act in accordance with their duty of care to pupils and ensure that the safety and welfare of pupils are accorded the highest priority. All the staff, including all non-teaching staff, have an important role in insisting that our pupils always adhere to the standards of behaviour set out in our Behaviour Policy and in enforcing our Anti-Bullying Policy.
- Staff should show fairness in their treatment of children and avoid behaviours such as embarrassing or humiliating pupils, making jokes at the expense of pupils, discriminating against or favouring pupils and sarcasm.
- Staff must have regard for the ethos and values of the school and must not do or say anything which may bring the school or governing body into disrepute. Care should be taken by staff to avoid any conflict of interest between activities undertaken outside school and responsibilities within school. Staff should act in accordance with the school's policies and procedures at all times.

Dress and Appearance

- Edgbaston High School recognise that dress and appearance are matters of personal choice and self-expression. However, all staff must dress in a manner that is appropriate to a professional role and that promotes a professional image.
- Staff should dress safely and appropriately for the tasks they undertake.

Smoking, alcohol and other substances

- Edgbaston High School is a non smoking and non vaping site. Staff must not smoke on school premises or outside school gates. Any member of staff wishing to smoke must leave the school grounds.
- Staff must not smoke whilst working with or supervising pupils offsite.
- Staff must not consume or be under the influence of alcohol while in a position of responsibility

Relationships with Pupils

- Staff must maintain professional boundaries with pupils appropriate to their position and must always consider whether their actions are warranted, proportionate, safe and applied equitably. Staff should act in an open and transparent way that would not lead any reasonable person to question their actions or intent. Staff should think carefully about their conduct so that misinterpretations are minimised.
- Staff must not establish or seek to establish social contact with pupils. If a young person seeks to establish social contact you should exercise your professional judgement in making a response and seek guidance from the DSL if unsure how to respond.
- Staff should be mindful of section 16 of The Sexual Offences Act 2003¹.
- Staff must not make sexual remarks to a pupil, discuss their own sexual relationships with, or in the presence of, pupils or discuss a pupil's sexual relationships in an inappropriate setting or context.
- Any physical contact should be the minimum required for care, instruction or restraint.
- In the EYFS, and Preparatory school staff will assist with pupils' personal hygiene needs to ensure they are clean and comfortable, as part of their duty of care, when necessary. Where possible two members of staff should be present. Incidents should be noted in the relevant book in the First Aid Room.
- Contact with pupils should be through Edgbaston High School's formal lines of communication. School telephones (mobiles when on trips and the internal phone network) and school email. Personal phone numbers, email addresses or communication routes via all social media platforms should not be used and staff should not share their home address with pupils. If contacted via an inappropriate route the member of staff must inform the Headteacher immediately.
- Edgbaston High School staff must not accept friend invitations or become friends with any pupil of EHS on any social media platform. Staff should also refrain from following the Twitter or other similar social media accounts of pupils or their parents. Staff must read the school's e-safety policy carefully and follow all advice and guidance contained within it.

Infatuations

- It is not unusual for pupils or, sometimes, their parents to develop infatuations with members of staff. All such situations must be responded to sensitively to maintain the dignity of those concerned.
- Staff should also be aware that such circumstances carry a high risk of words or actions being misinterpreted and for allegations to be made against staff. Any indications of an infatuation towards yourself or another member of staff must be reported to your line manager or DSL.

¹ Section 16 of The Sexual Offences Act 2003 provides that it is an offence for a person aged 18 or over (e.g. teacher, youth worker) to have a sexual relationship with a child under 18 where that person is in a position of trust in respect of that child, even if the relationship is consensual. A situation where a person is in a position of trust could arise where the child is in full-time education and the person looks after children under 18 in the same establishment as the child, even if he/she does not teach the child.

Gifts/Hospitality

- Staff need to take care that they do not accept any gift/offer of hospitality that might be construed as a bribe by others or lead the giver to expect preferential treatment. However, there may be occasions where pupils or parents wish to give a small token of appreciation to staff, for example at religious festivities or at the end of the year.
- It is unacceptable to receive gifts on a regular basis or to suggest to pupils that gifts are appropriate or desired. Money must not be accepted as a gift. If you are unsure whether to accept a gift you should consult your line manager.
- Staff must not accept significant gifts or hospitality from pupils, parents, carers, actual or potential contractors or outside suppliers. All such gifts/offers of hospitality should be reported to your line manager and recorded.
- Personal gifts must not be given by staff to pupils and any reward to pupils should be in accordance with Edgbaston High School's Behaviour Policy, recorded and not based on favouritism.

Physical Contact with Pupils

- There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate and proper for staff to have physical contact with pupils, but it is crucial that they only do so in ways appropriate to their professional role. A 'no touch' approach is impractical for most staff and may in some circumstances be inappropriate. When physical contact is made with pupils it should be in response to their needs at that time, of limited duration and appropriate to their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background.
- Where feasible, staff should seek the child's permission before initiating contact. Staff should listen, observe and take note of the child's reaction or feelings and, so far as is possible, use a level of contact which is acceptable to the child for the minimum time necessary.
- It is not possible to be specific about the appropriateness of each physical contact, since an action that is appropriate with one child in one set of circumstances may be inappropriate in another, or with a different child. Staff should therefore, use their professional judgement at all times.
- Staff should be aware that even well-intentioned physical contact may be misconstrued by the child, an observer or by anyone to whom this action is described. Always be prepared to explain actions and accept that all physical contact be open to scrutiny.
- Staff supervising PE and games or providing musical tuition should demonstrate the use of a particular piece of equipment/instrument on another member of staff if possible. However, they may be required to initiate physical contact with pupils to support a child to perform a task safely, to demonstrate the use of a particular piece of equipment/instrument or to assist them with an exercise. Contact under these circumstances should be made with the pupil's agreement, for the minimum time necessary and in an open environment. Staff should remain sensitive to any discomfort expressed verbally or non-verbally by the pupil.
- If a member of staff believes that an action could be misinterpreted, the incident and circumstances should be reported to your line manager, recorded and, if appropriate, a copy placed on the pupil's file.

Child in distress

- There may be occasions when a pupil is in distress and in need of comfort as a reassurance. This may include age appropriate physical contact. Staff should remain self-aware at all times in order that their contact is not threatening, intrusive or subject to misinterpretation.

Showers and changing

- Pupils are entitled to respect and privacy whilst they are changing or showering after PE/games or swimming. However, there needs to be an appropriate level of supervision in order to safeguard young people, meet health and safety requirements and to ensure that bullying does not take place. The supervision should be appropriate to the needs and age of the pupils and sensitive to the potential for embarrassment.
- Staff should be vigilant about their own behaviour and announce their intention of entering a changing room. Staff must not change or shower in the same place as children.

One to one situations

- Staff working individually with pupils should be aware of the potential vulnerability of pupils and staff in such situations. Staff should manage these situations with regard to the safety of the pupil and to themselves.
- Individual work with pupils should not be undertaken in isolated areas or rooms where there is no external viewing panel. Where it is necessary to close doors for reasons of confidentiality a colleague should be made aware of this and asked to remain vigilant.

Transporting pupils

- In certain circumstances it may be appropriate for staff to transport pupils offsite, for example sports fixtures, swimming lessons or other out of school activities. A designated member of staff should be appointed to plan and provide oversight of all transport arrangements and to respond to any difficulties that may arise.
- Staff should ensure that the transport arrangements and the vehicle meet all legal requirements. Staff should ensure that the driver has the appropriate license for the vehicle, that the vehicle is roadworthy, has a valid MOT certificate and is appropriately insured and that the maximum capacity is not exceeded.
- Staff should ensure that the driver is not distracted while the vehicle is in motion for any reason other than an emergency and should also ensure all passengers are wearing correctly fastened seatbelts.
- Prior to transporting pupils offsite consent must be obtained from pupils' parent/guardian and staff should be aware that the safety and welfare of the pupils is their responsibility until this is safely passed back to their parent/carer.

E-Safety

- Staff should follow Edgbaston High School's E-Safety policy and the Acceptable Use Policy at all times.
- Staff must not engage in inappropriate use of social network sites which may bring themselves, the school or the school community into disrepute. Staff should adopt the highest security settings on any personal profiles they have.
- Staff should remain mindful of their digital footprint and exercise caution in all their use of social media or any other web-based presence they have. This includes written content, videos or photographs and views expressed either directly or by 'liking' certain pages or posts or following certain individuals or groups. Staff should exercise care when using dating websites where staff could encounter pupils.
- Staff must not make contact with pupils, must not accept or initiate friend requests nor follow pupils accounts on any social media platform. Staff must not communicate with pupils via social media, websites, instant messenger accounts or text message. The only acceptable method of contact is via the use of school email accounts or telephone equipment.
- When communicating via pastoral or departmental social media accounts, posts must convey information only and not be a platform for conversation or personal comment.
- Staff should not make contact with pupils' family members, accept or initiate friend

- requests or follow pupils' family member's account on any social media platform.
- However, Edgbaston High School acknowledges that staff who are also parents may wish to make contact with other parents, who are friends, over social media. Staff must exercise caution and professional judgement in these circumstances and should not have any contact with pupils' family members via social media if that contact is likely to constitute a conflict of interest or call into question their objectivity.
- Mobile phones and personally owned mobile devices brought in to school are the responsibility of the device owner. Edgbaston High School accepts no responsibility for the loss, theft or damage of personally owned mobile phones or mobile devices.

Photography, video and images of children

- Many school activities involve recording images as part of the curriculum, extra school activities, publicity or to celebrate an achievement. In accordance with The Data Protection Act 1998 the image of a pupil is personal data. Therefore, it is a requirement under the Act for consent to be obtained from the parent/guardian of a pupil for any images made. It is also important to take into account the wishes of the pupil, remembering that some pupils do not wish to have their photograph taken or be filmed.
- Using images for publicity purposes will require the age-appropriate consent of the individual concerned and their parent/guardian. Images should not be displayed on websites, in publications or in a public place without their consent. Staff should also be clear about the purpose of the activity and what will happen to the photographs/images/video footage when the lesson or activity is concluded.
- Photographs/stills or video footage of pupils should only be taken using school equipment for purposes authorised by the school and should be stored securely and only on school equipment.
- Staff should remain aware of the potential for images of pupils to be misused to create indecent images of children and/or for grooming purposes. Therefore, careful consideration should be given to how activities which are being filmed or photographed are organised and undertaken.

Confidentiality

- Members of staff may have access to confidential information about pupils, their parents/carers or their siblings. Staff must not reveal such information except to those colleagues who have a professional role in relation to the pupil on a need to know basis.
- Staff should never use confidential or personal information about a pupil or her family for their own, or others' advantage (including that of partners, friends, relatives or other organisations). Information must never be used to intimidate, humiliate, or embarrass the pupil.
- Staff have a statutory obligation to share with Edgbaston High School's Designated Safeguarding Leads any information which gives rise to concern about the welfare or safety of a pupil or that might suggest a pupil is in need or at risk of significant harm. Staff should pass on information without delay in accordance with Edgbaston High School's safeguarding policy and procedures and this should be recorded. Staff must never promise a pupil that they will not act on or pass on any information that they are told by the pupil.
- Staff should refer to the Edgbaston High School safeguarding policy for further guidance on information sharing. If you are in any doubt about whether to share you should seek guidance from a member of the senior leadership team.
- Any media or legal enquiries should be passed to the senior leadership team and only approved staff and Governors should communicate to the media about the school.

Whistleblowing

- Whistleblowing is the mechanism by which staff can voice their concerns, without fear of repercussion.
- All school staff have a duty to report any behaviour by a colleague which raises concern. Staff should refer to Edgbaston High School's whistleblowing policy for further guidance. This is particularly important where the welfare of pupils may be at risk.

Low Level Concerns

A low-level concern is any concern - no matter how small, and even if no more than a 'nagging doubt' – that an adult may have acted in a manner which:

- is not consistent with an organisation's Code of Conduct, and/or
- relates to their conduct outside of work which, even if not linked to a particular act or omission, has caused a sense of unease about that adult's suitability to work with children.

Staff **do not** need to be able to determine in each case whether their concern is a low-level concern, or if it is in fact serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO or meets the threshold of an allegation. Once staff share what they believe to be a low-level concern, that decision should be made by the Head Teacher.

Please see Appendix 1, 2 & 3 for details on managing low level concerns

2. Monitoring

- All staff must read the Code of Conduct available on the policies tile or in "Local Policies" on My Concern. Once staff have read, understood and agree to comply with the policy they should click the "read" button.
- Staff are required to review this code of conduct annually
- Copies are sent to the Governors and The Headmistress will inform the governing body if a member of staff fails to comply

Evaluation and Review

The Deputy Head Pastoral will review the effectiveness of the policy annually and make any necessary updates or changes.

Governors will also review the policy when updates are made and the review has taken place

Signed by the Headmistress

CAMauro

Approved by the Governing Body:

Approved by
The Governing Body

Date:

1/9/25

Review date: July 2026

Appendix 1: Low level concern process

All low level concerns should ultimately be received by the Head Teacher

- Share concerns with the DSL or Deputy Head within 24 hours of becoming aware of it
- If behaviour is from the DSL or Deputy Head then share concern with the Head Teacher or Safeguarding Governor

Step 1 – Initial Concern Raised

In the first instance, staff can report verbally to the Deputy Head or to the DSL, preferably providing a written summary of concern.

If a Verbal account is given then the Deputy Head or DSL will write notes. Sound professional judgment will be used in determining what information is necessary to record for Safeguarding purposes. The Record should include brief context, concise details, and relevant incidents.

Record to be signed, dated and timed

Step 2 – Response by Deputy Head or DSL

The Deputy Head or DSL should speak to the person who is raising the concern Review the information and decide whether the behaviour is:

- Entirely consistent with the Code of Conduct
- Constitutes a low level concern
- Is serious enough to consider a referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)
- When considered with any other previous low level concerns about this individual, should be reclassified as an allegation and referred to Head, the LADO/any other statutory agencies

Where the Deputy Head or DSL is in any doubt, then they should seek advice from the Head Teacher or the LADO

Speak to the individual about whom the concern is raised (unless LADO/Police have advised otherwise.

The DH or DSL must make records of:

- All internal conversations
- All external conversations
- Their determination
- The rationale for their decision; and
- Any action taken

Step 3 – Decision Making and Next steps

Information shared meets organisations expectations and is compliant with Code of Conduct

- DH or DSL to inform the individual concerned what was shared about their behaviour and give them an opportunity to respond
- Speak to person who shared the low level concern, providing feedback about how and why the behaviour is consistent with the Code of Conduct and the law
- Consider if a review of the Code of Conduct is necessary - is the Code not clear? Has the training been unsatisfactory?
- Consider training/support of LLC policy if the same individual reports similar low level concerns and it is found to be consistent with Code again

Information shared does not meet the organisation's expectations and is in breach of the Code of Conduct – a low level concern

- A sensitive and proportionate response is essential
- Maintain confidence that concerns will be handled promptly and effectively, whilst protecting staff from potential false or malicious allegations
- Any investigation is on a 'need to know' basis
- Some concerns may not give rise to further action, others may be dealt with by management guidance and/or training
- In many cases, a positive/supportive conversation with the individual will enable them to meet expectations moving forward (see appendix 3)

Previous low level concern

If an individual has had a previous low level concern raised against them then the DSL must inform the Head Teacher. Information available will be reviewed and a decision may be made to reclassify the concern as an allegation, and the concern will be dealt with in accordance with EHS Policies and Procedures.

Recording and Retention of Information

- All records of LLC, (including behaviour deemed by the DH or DSL to be entirely consistent with the Code of Conduct) should be retained in a central low level concerns file;
- These records are confidential, with a limited number of individuals having access, for example DSL, Chair, Head Teacher and HR Officer.
- The DSL may store the LLC records with the other safeguarding and child protection records if they relate directly to a pupil/pupils.
- In the event of a decision that behaviour is a low level concern, the information should not be held on personnel files.
- If disciplinary, grievance or whistleblowing procedures are triggered, then a copy should be held on both safeguarding and personnel file.
- If the concern is deemed serious enough to consider referral to the LADO, then records should be retained on the personnel file.
- If the LLC is reclassified as an allegation, then files should be moved from Safeguarding to personnel files.

Review

- DH or DSL should review the central LLC file periodically to ensure such concerns are being dealt with appropriately, and any potential problematic behaviour patterns are identified.
- The Head Teacher will review 3 monthly all LLC data to ensure any potential problematic behaviour patterns or training needs are identified.

Timeframe

- Low level concern files should be kept unless and until further Government guidance provides otherwise.
- When a staff member leaves and/or takes up new employment, that would then create a natural point at which the content of the file may be reviewed.

Appendix 2: Meeting with a staff member who has been found to of breached the Code of Conduct (low level concern has been founded)

Holding a 'values-based conversation' is important to be effective and help maintain a positive, professional relationship with the member of staff:

"I am sure you subscribe to our [school's] values, so help me understand how you came to behave in a way which is not in keeping with those, so that we can understand what actions or support you might need so that we can both be confident that it will not happen again..."

The conversation has to be clear:

- Why their behaviour is concerning, problematic or inappropriate
- What change is required in their behaviour
- Enquire what support they might need in order to achieve and maintain that
- Being clear about the consequences should they fail to reach the required standard
- Ongoing and transparent monitoring of behaviour may be required
- An action plan or risk assessment (agreed by the individual) to be regularly reviewed, may also be appropriate.

Some low level concerns may raise performance/misconduct issues. Advice from the LADO may be necessary.

Appendix 3: Managing low level concerns raised in relation to teachers, including supply teachers, other staff, volunteers and contractors



