



# **Code of Conduct for Employees in Schools**

# **1 INTRODUCTION**

As an employer, the governing body is required to set out a Code of Conduct for all school employees.

In accordance with the DFE 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' guidance September 2021" this code has been adopted by this school in order for all school staff to be fully aware of the standards of personal and professional conduct in relation to various aspects of their work.

This Code of Conduct needs to be read in conjunction with 'Keeping Children Safe in Education - September 2021" Part 1 guidance and 'Guidance for Safe Working Practice for Adults Who Work with Children and Young People in Educational Settings'.

This Code of Conduct should be read in conjunction with the following school policies and documents: Safeguarding, Whistle Blowing, Confidentiality, Data Protection, Behaviour, Safe Touch and Positive Handling, Equal Opportunities and Teacher Standards if working in this capacity, e-Safety and IT Acceptable Usage as well as other safeguarding procedures in school. All policies can be found on T:Drive or the school Website.0

The code gives a clear framework for staff to know their responsibilities and will be discussed during the course of their employment, for example in induction meetings and in staff meetings as queries arise - to ensure the code is mutually monitored, positively promoted in school and understood by everyone.

Every member of school staff will be asked to read this code of conduct and date and sign that they have read and understood the document as part of their induction. This code will be reviewed annually and updated by the governors and head teacher as and when necessary, and staff will be informed of any amendments. If staff have any questions about the requirements of this code then advice should be sought from their line manager or the head teacher.

In addition to this policy, all staff employed 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.

Employees should be aware that a failure to comply with the following Code of Conduct could result in disciplinary action including dismissal.

# **2 PURPOSE, SCOPE AND PRINCIPLES**

A Code of Conduct is designed to give clear guidance on the standards of behaviour all school staff are expected to observe, and the school should notify staff of this code and the expectations therein. School staff are role models and are in a unique position of influence and must adhere to behaviour that sets a good example to all the pupils/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.

### **3 SETTING AN EXAMPLE**

- 3.1 All staff who work in schools set examples of behaviour and conduct which can be copied by pupils/students. Staff must therefore avoid using inappropriate or offensive language at all times.
- 3.2 All staff must, therefore, demonstrate high standards of conduct in order to encourage our pupils/students to do the same.
- 3.3 All staff must also avoid putting themselves at risk of allegations of abusive or unprofessional conduct.
- 3.4 This Code helps all staff to understand what behaviour is and is not acceptable.

### **4 STAFF DRESS CODE**

Members of staff represent the school and through their appearance will have an impact on the image the school presents. All staff are therefore expected to be smartly and appropriately dressed at all times. However, we also recognise that our staff represents a wide range of backgrounds, cultures, ages and tastes and we want staff to exercise choice in the clothing they wear for work. The following guidelines set out our expectations for day to day wear

- Dresses and tops should not be revealing
- Vest tops and spaghetti string tops should not be worn
- Staff should not wear blue denim/ripped jeans
- Clothing with inappropriate letters, pictures or slogans must not be worn
- All clothing must be suitable to the task and not breach health and safety
- Jewellery and false fingernails to be worn at own discretion but be aware of health and safety
- Footwear must be appropriate to the activity and not in breach of health and safety
- For PE, health and safety issues are paramount. All staff must change into suitable clothing and footwear for PE in order to be able to move freely without being hampered by unsuitable clothing or footwear.
- Hair should be neat and tidy with no extreme hairstyling
- Staff are asked to cover up visible tattoos whilst at work where the location of the tattoo makes it reasonably practicable to do so
- Jewellery should be discreet and visible piercings should not be ostentatious
- All staff are expected to be well groomed and maintain a good standard of personal hygiene
- Clothing should not unduly restrict movement or prevent a task being carried out with dignity

### **5 SAFEGUARDING PUPILS/STUDENTS**

- 5.1 Staff have a duty to safeguard pupils/students from:

- physical abuse
  - sexual abuse
  - emotional abuse
  - neglect
- 5.2 The duty to safeguard pupils/students includes the duty to report concerns about a pupil/student to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for Child Protection.
  - 5.3 The school's DSL is Sara Pike (Deputy Headteacher) and the Deputy DSL is St Margaret's Academy's Headteacher
  - 5.4 Staff are provided with personal copies of the school's Child Protection Policy and Whistleblowing Procedure and staff must be familiar with these documents.
  - 5.5 Staff must not demean or undermine pupils, their parents or carers, or colleagues.
  - 5.6 Staff must take care of pupils/students under their supervision with the aim of ensuring their safety and welfare.
  - 5.7 Staff must not use their mobile phone as a camera in school. Any photograph/video must be taken using school equipment. Staff must only save images on school computers.
  - 5.8 In exceptional circumstances, staff may use their personal device with the permission of the HT / DHT. These images must be deleted as soon as possible in the presence of another adult.
  - 5.9 Staff who are in contact with pupils should not use their mobile phones in school during their directed hours / paid hours of employment. Outside of these times, mobile phones should only be used in areas of the school where pupils are not present.

## **6 PUPIL/STUDENT DEVELOPMENT**

- 6.1 Staff must comply with school policies and procedures that support the well-being and development of pupils/students.
- 6.2 Staff must co-operate and collaborate with colleagues and with external agencies where necessary to support the development of pupils/students.
- 6.3 Staff must follow reasonable instructions that support the development of pupils/students.

## **7 HONESTY AND INTEGRITY**

- 7.1 Staff must maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their work. This includes the handling and claiming of money and the use of school property and facilities.
- 7.2 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.

## 8 CONDUCT OUTSIDE WORK

- 8.1 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.
- 8.2 In particular, criminal offences that involve violence or possession or use of illegal drugs or sexual misconduct are likely to be regarded as unacceptable.
- 8.3 Staff must exercise caution when using information technology and be aware of the risks to themselves and others. Staff must not use social media with pupils e.g. Facebook.
- 8.4 Staff must not engage in inappropriate use of social network sites which may bring themselves, the school, school community or employer into disrepute
- 8.5 Staff must only use their school email account or school learning platform account when communicating electronically with pupils, parents and colleagues.
- 8.6 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.
- 8.7 All members of staff must declare any business interests outside of school that may be connected either to the supply of goods / services to the school or be rewarded through association with the school.

## 9 CONFIDENTIALITY

- 9.1 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.
- 9.2 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 role and authority to deal with the matter.
- 9.3 However, staff have an obligation to share with their manager or the school's DSL any information which gives rise to concern about the safety or welfare of a pupil/student. Staff must **never** promise a pupil/student that they will not act on information that they are told by the pupil/student.

## 10 DISCIPLINARY ACTION

- 10.1 All staff need to recognise that failure to meet these standards of behaviour and conduct may result in disciplinary action, including dismissal.

## **Appendix 1 – aide memoire for all staff**

### **When we speak to others we will:**

- use a positive statement rather than a negative one so that children can learn what we expect of them in any situation.
- use a calm tone of voice at all times, to explain something to or instruct the children, so that they can follow our words without feeling threatened or uncomfortable.
- avoid using sarcastic words or phrases as these demean children and prevent them from developing high self-esteem.
- speak respectfully to other adults at all times, even if we disagree with them.

### **As professionals we will:**

- avoid workplace gossip and negativity as it breeds resentment and becomes a roadblock to effective communication and collaboration. We all have a duty to take active steps to divert conversations away from this if we come across it.
- maintain confidentiality about anything that we see or hear in the school, so that parents and children can trust us, and as a way of showing respect to our fellow professionals.
- work as part of a team, contributing as well as learning from others and helping to build up a strong workforce so that we can provide the best possible learning opportunities for the children.
- work within the school's policies and practices, so that what we do is consistent with what has been agreed between all members of the staff and the governors.
- treat everyone with respect.
- dress appropriately, so that we set a good example for the children and to show that we are here to work.
- behave in a positive way despite any personal problems that we may have, especially in front of the children.

## Appendix 2- from Teachers' Standards Updated June 2013 (DfE)

### PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

A teacher is expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct. The following statements define the behaviour and attitudes which set the required standard for conduct throughout a teacher's career.

Teachers uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, by:

- treating pupils with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to a teacher's professional position
- having regard for the need to safeguard pupils' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions
- showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others
- not undermining fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
- ensuring that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways which exploit pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law.

Teachers must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they teach, and maintain high standards in their own attendance and punctuality.

Teachers must have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities.

I have received a copy of St. Margaret's Academy's Code of Conduct and am aware that a failure to comply with the Code of Conduct could result in disciplinary action including dismissal.

Staff Name \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Policy Adopted February 2015

Reviewed: July 2020