

# Stretford High School



## STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT

<b>Ratified by the Board of Governors:</b>	
<b>Updated:</b>	<b>June 2023</b>
<b>Due for review:</b>	<b>June 2024</b>

## **Aim, scope and principles**

This Code of Conduct is designed to give clear guidance on the standards of behaviour all school staff are expected to observe. The Code of Conduct applies to all staff working in the school, whether paid or unpaid, whatever their position, role or responsibilities and staff includes employees, governors, visiting staff, contractors, and volunteers.

School staff are in a unique position of influence and must demonstrate high standards of behaviour that sets a good example to all the students within the school.

By creating this policy, we aim to ensure our school is an environment where everyone is safe, happy and treated with respect.

The principles in this code of conduct are based on:

- We are required to establish procedures for the regulation of staff conduct under regulation 7 of [The School Staffing \(England\) Regulations 2009](#)
- In line with the statutory safeguarding guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#), we should have a staff code of conduct, which should cover low-level concerns, allegations against staff and whistle-blowing, as well as acceptable use of technologies (including the use of mobile devices), staff/student relationships and communications, including the use of social media
- Stretford High School safeguarding policy
- The [Teachers' Standards part 1 and 2](#)
- The Stretford High School [core CARE values](#):
  - 1. Respect: We will treat each other with dignity and respect, valuing the unique contributions and perspectives of every individual
  - 2. Empathy: We will show understanding and compassion towards one another, recognising the challenges and pressures that come with the teaching profession/working in a school
  - 3. Communication: We will maintain open and honest communication with one another, encouraging constructive feedback and collaboration
  - 4. Honesty: We will be transparent and truthful in our dealings with each other, creating an atmosphere of trust and integrity
  - 5. Kindness: We will demonstrate kindness and generosity towards one another, creating a welcoming and supportive environment for all
  - 6. Trust: We will build and maintain trust with each other, recognizing the importance of teamwork and collaboration in achieving our common goals

We expect all staff to also act with personal and professional integrity, respecting the safety and wellbeing of others.

Failure to follow the code of conduct may result in disciplinary action being taken, as set out in our staff disciplinary procedures.

Please note that this code of conduct is not exhaustive. If situations arise that are not covered by this code, staff will use their professional judgement and act in the best interests of the school and its students.

### **Principles of Professional Practice**

All staff as appropriate to their role, must:

- Place the well-being and learning of students at the centre of their professional practice
- Have high expectations for all students, be committed to addressing underachievement, and work to help students progress regardless of their background and personal circumstances
- Treat students fairly and with respect, take their knowledge, views, opinions and feelings seriously, and value diversity and individuality
- Model the characteristics they are trying to inspire in students, including enthusiasm for learning, a spirit of enquiry, honesty, tolerance, social responsibility, patience and a genuine concern for other people
- Respond sensitively to the differences in the home backgrounds and circumstances of students, recognising the key role that parents and carers play in students' education
- Seek to work in partnership with parents and carers, respecting their views and promoting understanding and co-operation to support the young person's learning and well-being in and out of school
- Reflect on their own practice, develop their skills, knowledge and expertise, and adapt appropriately to learn with, and from colleagues.

### **Setting an example**

All staff who work in the school set examples of behaviour and conduct which can be copied by students. All staff must, therefore, demonstrate high standards of conduct in order to encourage our students to do the same. All staff must avoid putting themselves at risk of allegations of abusive or unprofessional conduct.

### **Safeguarding students**

Staff have a duty to safeguard students from:

- Physical harm
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Domestic abuse

- Neglect
- Child sexual exploitation
- Female genital mutilation
- Radicalisation

The duty to safeguard students includes the duty to report concerns about a student to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Leila Murton, Deputy Headteacher.

It is the responsibility of all at Stretford High School to ensure they are up to date on all relevant policies and procedures.

### **Conduct in relation to students**

The law recognises that staff act in loco parentis in respect of students in their care and must act in the role of reasonable parent in the school context. Through their actions staff must act in accordance with this duty of care to ensure at all times that the safety and welfare of students is accorded the highest priority. In this and other ways staff should always maintain standards of conduct which sustain their professional standing and that of the school.

Interaction with students should always be appropriate. Staff should not touch students, however casually, in ways or on parts of the body that might be considered indecent, unnecessary or familiar, or use inappropriate language. Particular care may be necessary when supervising students in out of school activities.

Teaching materials should be appropriate. Particular care should be taken that sex or health education materials are appropriate and consistent with the school's policies.

When holding face to face or online meetings with students on sensitive issues, staff should exercise proper professional judgement over the arrangements for the meeting. They should safeguard their own position by, for instance, considering the need for a second adult to be present or leaving the door open. Staff do not give permission for meetings to be recorded unless previously agreed by all parties as a reasonable adjustment.

Corporal punishment, defined as any intentional application of force as punishment, is illegal and may render a member of staff liable to criminal action as well as action under the school's disciplinary procedures. Corporal punishment includes any form of physical chastisement.

Physical intervention will not constitute corporal punishment where staff trained in team teach intervene to avert an immediate danger of injury to self, others and property. In such circumstances, the element of restraint should be the minimum necessary to prevent injury to remove the risk of harm.

Where physical contact is necessary (e.g. in teaching PE) that contact should be the minimum necessary for the purpose and comply with accepted good practice. Particular care should be taken in helping students with physical or other disabilities (e.g. in lifting).

Stretford High School has sufficient members of staff appropriately trained in first

aid. School procedures require any incidents or accidents to be recorded; which is linked to the School's Health and Safety Policy.

Following any incident where a member of staff has reason to believe that their actions may be open to misinterpretation, the Head teacher should be immediately notified.

### **Whistle-blowing**

Whistle-blowing reports wrongdoing that it is "in the public interest" to report.

Examples linked to safeguarding include:

- Pupils' or staff's health and safety being put in danger
- Failure to comply with a legal obligation or statutory requirement
- Attempts to cover up the above, or any other wrongdoing in the public interest

Staff are encouraged to report suspected wrongdoing as soon as possible. Their concerns will be taken seriously and investigated, and their confidentiality will be respected.

Staff should consider the examples above when deciding whether their concern is of a whistle-blowing nature. Consider whether the incident(s) was illegal, breached statutory or school procedures, put people in danger or was an attempt to cover any such activity up.

**Staff should report their concern directly to the Headteacher. If the concern is about the Headteacher**, or it is believed they may be involved in the wrongdoing in some way, the staff member **should report their concern to the Chair of the Governing Board**.

Concerns should be made in writing wherever possible. They should include names of those committing wrongdoing, dates, places and as much evidence and context as possible. Staff raising a concern should also include details of any personal interest in the matter.

For our school's detailed whistle-blowing process, please refer to our whistle-blowing policy.

### **Conduct outside work**

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.

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

Any member of staff who is the subject of an allegation of 'gross misconduct' by any organisation, must immediately report the matter to the Headteacher.

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

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

### **Confidentiality**

Where staff have access to confidential information about 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 student.

All staff are likely at some point to witness actions which need to be confidential. All communication with the media must have the approval of the Headteacher.

### **Transporting students**

In certain situations e.g. out of school activities, staff may agree to transport students. Transport arrangements should, if possible, be made in advance by a designated member of staff. Wherever possible and practicable, transport should be provided other than in private vehicles, with at least one adult additional to the driver acting as an escort. Adults should ensure that their behaviour is safe and that the transport arrangements and the vehicle meet all legal requirements. They must ensure that the vehicle is roadworthy and appropriately insured and that the maximum capacity is not exceeded.

### **Educational visits and school clubs**

Staff should take particular care when supervising students in the less formal atmosphere of an educational visit, or after-school activity. Staff remain in a position of trust and the same standards of conduct apply.

### **Social networking**

School staff's social media profiles should not be available to students. If they have a personal profile on social media sites, they should not use their full name, as students may be able to find them. Staff should consider using a first and middle name instead, and set public profiles to private.

Staff should not attempt to contact students or their parents via social media, or any other means outside school, in order to develop any sort of relationship. They will not make any efforts to find students' or parents' social media profiles.

Staff will ensure that they do not post any images online that identify children who are students at the school without their consent. Staff should be aware of the school's online safety policy.

### **Technology**

Many school activities involve recording images. These may be undertaken as part of the curriculum, extra school activities, for publicity, or to celebrate achievement.

The Data Protection Act 2018 affects the use of photography. An image of a child is personal data and it is therefore a requirement under the Act that consent is obtained from the parent of a child of any images made, such as those used for school web sites, productions or other purposes. The staff intranet contains a list of those students whose parents/guardians/carers have not given consent.

Staff should remain sensitive to any student who appears uncomfortable and should recognise the potential for misinterpretation. It is also important to take into account the wishes of the child, remembering that some children do not wish to have their photograph taken.

Using images of students for publicity purposes will require the age-appropriate consent of the individual concerned and their legal guardians. Images must not be displayed on websites, in publications or in a public place without such consent. The definition of a public place includes where visitors to the school have access. Staff may take photographs using their phones to capture learning activities or celebrations. Staff must upload the photos to the school's central system and

remove the photographs from their phones within 48 hours of an event or trip's completion.

When using a photograph the following guidance must be followed:

- If the photograph is used, avoid naming the student
- If the student is named, avoid using the photograph
- Images must be securely stored and used only by those authorised to do so
- Be clear about the purpose of the activity and about what will happen to the photographs when the lesson/activity is concluded

### **Mobile phones**

Phones should not be visible in lessons, meetings, duties or when circulating around the school unless for safeguarding or requesting patrol (exemption for site staff). Personal hotspot should never be shared with a student under any circumstances. Staff should never share their phone with a student under any circumstances. In the event of an emergency, it is permissible to use your phone.

### **Financial Regulations**

All staff with financial responsibilities should comply with the powers delegated by the board of governors.

Materials and equipment provided by the school should not be used for purposes unconnected with employment. Staff should always use public funds to the best advantage of the school and community and adhere to high standards of probity in their use.

There is a requirement to report to the Headteacher or other relevant person any indirect or direct financial interest in any contract or other matter involving the school. This is particularly relevant in cases of tendering or in the selling of surplus equipment or property. The Headteacher should disclose any such interest to the Chair of Governors.

Staff should not accept any gift, fee, hospitality or other reward which influences the way in which they carry out their duties.

Care should be taken to avoid any conflict of interest between activities outside the school and professional responsibilities. In no case should outside activities bring the school into disrepute.

### **Behaviour, Reputation and Appearance**

Staff and governors must be careful to ensure that nothing they say, or do, brings the school's name into disrepute. Gossip in our communities can be very damaging. Staff should not gossip, or speak inappropriately about the school, students, parents, staff or governors, including discussing incidents. The reputation of our school is very precious. It takes a long time to build and can be knocked down in a moment.

All staff have a responsibility to maintain public confidence in their ability to safeguard the welfare and best interests of students. They should adopt high standards of personal conduct in order to maintain the confidence and respect of their peers, students and the public in general. An individual's behaviour, either in

or out of the workplace, should not compromise her/his position within the work setting or bring the school into disrepute.

All staff are expected to dress in the same professional way we expect our students to dress. Our students follow a strict uniform code and we believe that staff dress should support this. Your clothes should represent a positive and professional image of the school and not cause offence to others. Pay particular attention to the following:

- Jeans of any colour or type are not acceptable
- Sports shoes (unless a member of the PE staff), flip flops, sliders (unless medical exemption) are not acceptable.
- Structured sandals are acceptable.
- Skirts, dresses and shorts must be knee length
- Leggings can be worn under a dress but not as trousers
- No extremes of fashion; includes hairstyles, makeup, visible body piercings (with the exception of ear and nose piercing) as well as clothes
- Offensive tattoos should be covered
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Personal property of a sexually explicit nature such as books, magazines, DVDs or such material on any electronic media must not be brought into or stored on the school's premises.

Social networking sites and blogging are extremely popular. Staff must not post material which damages the reputation of the school or which causes concern about their suitability to work with children and young people. Those who post material which could be considered as inappropriate could render themselves vulnerable to criticism or allegations of misconduct.

The school strongly advises that the involvement of students in any form of social networking, email or texting must be approached with extreme caution. If there is any doubt about whether communication with students is appropriate, advice should be sought from a member of the senior management team.

### **Smoking**

If a member of staff would like to smoke/vape, they must leave the school premises including the car park, and remove anything that identifies them as a member of Stretford High School.

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This code of conduct will serve to confirm the current very good practice of staff working at Stretford High School.