



# **Staff Code of Conduct Policy**

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# 1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy is designed to ensure that all staff (including volunteers) at Bosvigo School are treated fairly and consistently, to ensure the efficient and safe environment of work and to promote the maintenance of good relations between all employees and students.

The policy covers the main standards of behaviour and performance required by the school as set out in the Teacher's Standards in Appendix 1 of this policy. You are under a duty to comply with these standards of behaviour and to behave in a professional and reasonable manner.

Staff should familiarise themselves with and abide by the code of conduct and Disciplinary Procedure, which applies to all employees. Failure to comply with the standards of performance and behaviour outlined in this policy may result in disciplinary action in accordance with the School Disciplinary Procedure.

This policy is in conjunction with the other policies Bosvigo School has in place and should be read with them.

# 2. OBJECTIVES OF A SAFE SCHOOL CULTURE

- To safeguard our students and protect all employees;
- To create and maintain an ethos of mutual respect, openness, trust and fairness within our school;
- To make clear expectations of performance and conduct;
- To give staff the confidence to report concerns with full confidentiality;
- To exercise appropriate sanctions.

# 3. GENERAL STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOUR

## 3.1 Personal Standards

Personal standards of behaviour must be high in dealing with other staff, volunteers, governors, parents and children.

Public confidence in the school would be undermined if staff:

- Take drugs or drink alcohol while at work/on duty, or drink at social events within or outside working hours to the extent that their work could be affected;

- Threaten, fight or assault anyone on the school premises, or persist in verbal or non-verbal behaviour, which would intimidate anyone. It should be noted that this also means any such action outside the school premises which could potentially bring the school into disrepute;
- Steal, take without authority or deliberately damage things that belong to the school;
- Use their position within the school inappropriately to advance the interests of any other person or organisation with which they are associated, or show favour to any friends, family or personal contacts.

## 4. GENERAL OBLIGATIONS

Staff members are expected to behave and conduct themselves in a way which demonstrates the school's values in order to encourage students to do the same.

Staff should not:

- use inappropriate or offensive language, including sexual remarks, or encourage others to do so;
- discuss personal or sexual relationships with or in the presence of students;
- consume or be under the influence of alcohol or any substance, including prescribed medication which could affect their ability to carry out their duties and care for students;
- behave in a manner which would lead anyone to question their suitability to work with children.

While working for us you should at all times maintain professional and responsible standards of conduct. In particular you should:

- observe the terms and conditions of your contract, particularly with regard to:
  - hours of work;
  - confidentiality;
- observe all our policies, procedures, rules and regulations which are included on the school website or notified to you from time to time by means of notice boards, email or otherwise;
- take reasonable care in respect of the health and safety of colleagues and third parties and comply with our Health and Safety Policy;

- comply with all reasonable instructions given by managers; and
- act at all times in good faith and in the best interests of our school, students and staff.

Failure to maintain satisfactory standards of conduct may result in action being taken under our Disciplinary Procedure.

## **5. SAFEGUARDING**

Staff have a duty of care to protect students from harm, which includes physical, emotional or sexual abuse or neglect. Staff should be aware of the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection procedure, including the process of making referrals to children's social care. A copy of this policy and all associated policies are available from the school website.

Staff must report any concerns they have about a student or a colleague's conduct to the Designated Safeguard Lead, or in their absence the deputy.

Staff should follow and be aware of the Keeping Children Safe In Education 2022 guidance.

## **6. RELATIONSHIPS**

### **Staff - Students**

Staff members are in a position of trust and therefore must exercise the proper boundaries with students, that are professional and appropriate to their role. Staff should demonstrate in their interactions with pupils that all members of the school are valued equally and as individuals.

Staff must not contact or engage with students on social media, unless they are of the appropriate age and no longer at the school. Staff must only use their school email account or other communication systems provided by the school in order to communicate with students.

Staff use touch with pupils as part of a normal relationship, for example, comforting a child, giving reassurance and congratulating. Where touch is used, contact should be brief and gentle, on clothed or publicly visible parts of the body: hands, arms, shoulders, head, hair, shoes. Contact between staff and pupils must always be in full public view. See Safe Touch and Positive Handling Policy for further details.

If the school has been made aware of any allegations of inappropriate conduct against a staff member, the school will act in accordance with our Disciplinary Procedure and the framework set out in **Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023**.

### **Staff - Parents/Carers**

Staff are encouraged to establish a positive working relationship with parents/carers and maintain good communication where appropriate.

Communication between staff and parents/carers should be professional, clear and constructive. Staff must only communicate with parents/carers via the school systems and not via any other means.

There is a general expectation that staff will:

- Be polite to members of the public at all times;
- Give/provide their name when speaking or writing to parents/carers and other members of the public or school community when speaking or writing on behalf of the school;
- Ensure that any information provided in relation to the school is accurate;
- Ensure that any information provided to third parties is in line with the Data Protection Act (1998);
- Respect confidential information provided to them in the course of their work;
- Avoid doing anything which could make the public doubt the motives or integrity of a member of staff of the school or bring the school into disrepute;
- Ensure that any significant concerns or complaints expressed to them by parents, carers or the general public are passed on to the senior management of the school.

### **Staff who are parents of children at the school**

Many staff are in the position of being both staff members and parents of children at the school. Those staff members are likely to be in contact with their children's class teaching staff far more than parents who do not work at the school, but it is important that staff focus on their professional responsibilities whilst at work. Staff who are parents should therefore ensure that they do not seek to engage in discussions about their own children within their working day. All discussions that are of a

personal nature should be pre-arranged and held outside of regular school hours, e.g. before 8:40am or after 3:20pm.

## **7. RECEIVING GIFTS**

While the school understands that often staff members receive gifts from students and their parents, staff are reminded to take care not to accept any gifts that might be construed as a bribe or lead the giver to expect any preferential treatment.

Small gifts as a token of appreciation are usually acceptable, however, it is unacceptable to receive gifts of a significant value or to give gifts to students and their parents in return.

Gifts with a higher value than £20 must be declared to the headteacher.

## **8. BULLYING AND HARASSMENT**

Bosvigo School is committed to providing a working environment free from harassment and bullying and ensuring all staff and students are treated, and treat others, with consideration, dignity and respect.

Bullying and/ or harassment, is any unsolicited physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour which is unwanted and that has the purpose of violating a person's dignity and creating an intimidating, degrading and hostile environment for them.

Bullying and harassment at work or outside of work is not acceptable and will not be tolerated. All incidents of bullying and/or harassment will be dealt with under our Anti- Bullying and Harassment, and Disciplinary Procedures as a case of possible misconduct or gross misconduct.

Staff who make complaints or who participate in good faith in any investigation must not suffer any form of retaliation or victimisation as a result. Anyone found to have retaliated against or victimised someone in this way will be subject to disciplinary action under our Disciplinary Procedure.

## **9. CONDUCT OUTSIDE OF WORK**

Staff shall not engage in conduct which may bring the school, themselves or other members of the school community into disrepute. Any such conduct could lead to summary dismissal, in particular criminal offences that involve violence, possession or use of illegal drugs or sexual misconduct will not be tolerated.

Staff must be mindful of their use of technology and social networking websites. Staff must not post any derogatory, misleading comments about the school, its employees or students online or on social media. Staff must ensure that their personal social media profiles are not available to students.

If you see any misuse of social media, or social media content that disparages or reflects poorly on us, you should report it to the headteacher. Failure to comply with the standards outlined in this policy, may be dealt with in accordance with the Disciplinary Policy and Procedures.

## **10. DRESS CODE**

Staff are required to dress in a manner that is suitable and appropriate to their role. This means that staff should not wear clothing with slogans or images which may be considered as offensive or inappropriate or display any political slogans.

Revealing clothing should not be worn at work, i.e. no tops with spaghetti straps, no sheer material. Skirts and dresses should be of a reasonable length.

Sports clothing is strongly encouraged where the staff member is involved in the delivery of sports activities that day. Sports clothing should not be worn by staff unless it is to aid their delivery of sports activities.

Blue or faded denim is not permitted to be worn at work.

Footwear must be safe, smart and have regard to health and safety considerations. Staff should not wear flip flops or similar footwear at any time for safety reasons. Heels should only be worn if they are a sensible height and allow the wearer to be able to move safely around the school environment.

Where the school provides safety clothing and equipment, including protective footwear, it should be worn or used as appropriate and as directed.

Jewellery should be kept to a minimum. Visible piercings are allowed but should be discrete.

Tattoos are acceptable, but those of an inappropriate or potentially offensive nature should remain covered.

Hair and beards should not compromise health and safety. Long hair should be tied back where health and safety considerations deem it necessary.



## **11. CONFIDENTIALITY**

During their employment, staff will have access to sensitive and confidential information relating to the school, other members of staff, students and their parents. Staff shall not disclose such information to any person unless otherwise authorised, to report safeguarding concerns or as required by law.

## **12. I.T. AND COMMUNICATION DEVICES**

Misuse or excessive personal use of our telephone or email system or inappropriate internet use will be dealt with under our Disciplinary Procedure. Misuse of the internet can in some cases be a criminal offence. It will usually amount to gross misconduct to misuse our systems by creating, viewing, accessing, transmitting or downloading any of the following material (this list is not exhaustive):

- Sending, forwarding or reading private emails at work;
- Sending or forwarding chain emails, junk emails, cartoons, jokes or gossip;
- Pornographic material (that is, writing, pictures, films and video clips of a sexually explicit or arousing nature);
- Offensive, obscene, or criminal material or material which is liable to cause embarrassment to us or to our pupils;
- A false and defamatory statement about any person or organisation;
- Material, which is discriminatory, offensive, derogatory or may cause embarrassment to others (including material which breaches our Equal Opportunities Policy or our Anti-Bullying Policy);
- Confidential information about us, or any of our staff or pupils (except as authorised in the proper performance of your duties);
- Unauthorised software;
- Any other statement which is likely to create any criminal or civil liability (for you or us); or
- Music or video files or other material in breach of copyright.

Any such action will be treated very seriously and is likely to result in summary dismissal.

Use of mobile phones is prohibited during working hours when in the presence of children unless this is for clear work purposes. Staff should only use their mobile phones in areas where students are not present.

Staff must not use their phone or any camera to take pictures of students or post images of students online without their consent. Images of students must be saved on the school's computer systems only. If staff use a personal device to take photos of students, i.e. at a sports event, those images must be removed from their personal device within two working days. Images should only ever be shared via the school's official communication channels.

If you disclose your affiliation with us on your profile or in any social media postings, you must state that your views do not represent those of your school (unless you are authorised to speak on our behalf. You should also ensure that your profile and any content you post are consistent with the professional image you are required to represent.

You should make it clear in social media postings, or in your personal profile, that you are speaking on your own behalf. Write in the first person and use a personal email address.

Bosvigo School reserves the right to retrieve the contents of email messages or to check internet usage (including pages visited and searches made) as reasonably necessary in the interests of the school, including for the following purposes (this list is not exhaustive):

- To monitor whether use of the email system or the internet is legitimate and in accordance with this policy;
- To find lost messages or to retrieve messages lost due to computer failure;
- To assist in the investigation of alleged wrongdoing; or
- To comply with any legal obligation.

Where evidence of misuse is found, we may undertake a more detailed investigation in accordance with our Disciplinary Procedure, involving the examination and disclosure of monitoring records to those nominated to undertake the investigation and any witnesses or managers involved in the Disciplinary Procedure. If necessary, such information may be handed to the police in connection with a criminal investigation.

## **13. POLICIES TO BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY**

- Disciplinary Procedure policy;
- Safeguarding and Child Protection policy;
- Whistleblowing;
- Anti-Bullying;
- GDPR/Data Protection;
- IT/Social Media policy;
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023;
- Healthy and Safety policy;

*This policy will be reviewed annually*

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **PART TWO: PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT (FOR ALL STAFF)**

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.