

Staff Code of Conduct Policy

September 2023-24

Senior Leader Review Lead : Marlow Education Trust and Sir William Borlase's Grammar School Designated Safeguarding Lead, Karen Harper

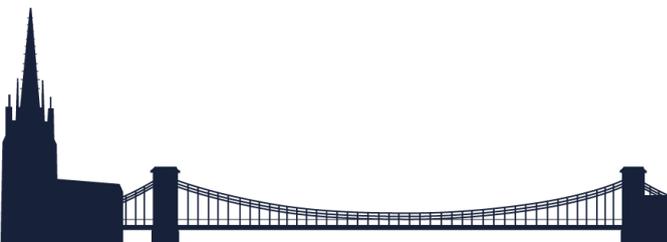
Safeguarding working Group: DSL, HR Lead, Anna Summerfield, Head Teacher at Sir William Borlase's Grammar School, Ed Goodall, Headteacher at Beechview Academy, Laura Parry-Woolner, DSL at Beechview Academy, Katie Evans, Safeguarding Governor Beechview, Bridget Day and Safeguarding Governor at SWBGS Will Evans.

Approved by: September 2022

Review date: September 2024 (or as legislation requires)

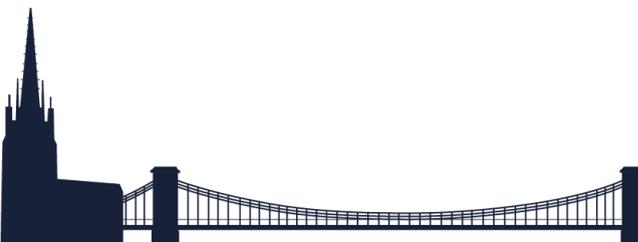
For review by:

CEO of MET:



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1. Aims, scope and principles

This policy aims to set and maintain standards of conduct that we expect all staff to follow. This should be read in conjunction with associated policies and the Teachers' Standards.

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

School staff have an influential position in the school and will act as role models for pupils by consistently demonstrating high standards of behaviour.

We expect all support staff, governors and volunteers to also act with personal and professional integrity, respecting the safety and wellbeing of others. At Sir William Borlase's Grammar School our values today are captured in the school motto *Te Digna Sequere* - Follow things Worthy. This is a principle that underpins the distinctive ethos of the school. It reminds us all that we should have a clear moral purpose behind the choices we make; that we should value all individuals within a supportive community and that we have the potential to use our different talents to make a positive difference at Borlase and beyond.

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 pupils.

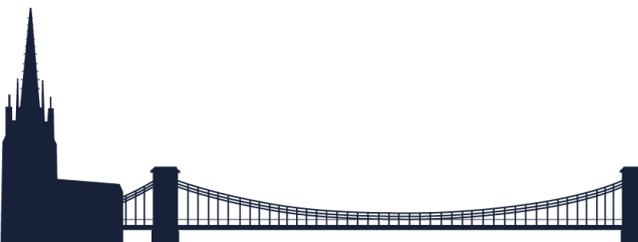
2. Legislation and guidance

In line with the statutory safeguarding guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023](#) and [The Equalities Act 2010](#), 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/pupil relationships and communications, including the use of social media.

3. General obligations

Staff set an example to pupils. They will:

- Maintain high standards in their attendance and punctuality
- Never use inappropriate or offensive language in school
- Treat pupils and others with dignity and respect
- Show tolerance and respect for the rights of others
- Not undermine fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
- Not express personal beliefs in a way that exploits pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law



- Understand the statutory frameworks they must act within

4. Safeguarding

Staff have a duty to safeguard pupils from harm, and to report any concerns they have. This includes physical, emotional and sexual abuse, and neglect.

Staff will familiarise themselves with our child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures, and the Prevent initiative, and ensure they are aware of the processes to follow if they have concerns about a child.

Our child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures are available on our website. New staff will also be given copies on arrival. All staff will be asked to read them and confirm that they have and will agree to comply with the policies.

4.1 Allegations that may meet the harm threshold

This section applies to all cases in which it is alleged that anyone working in the school, including a supply teacher, volunteer or contractor, has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child, and/or
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, and/or
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children, and/or
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children – this includes behaviour taking place inside or outside of school

We will deal with any such allegation quickly and in a fair and consistent way that provides effective child protection while also supporting the individual who is the subject of the allegation.

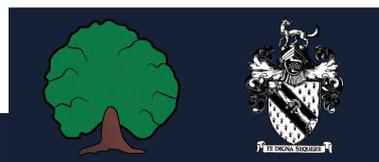
A 'case manager' will lead any investigation and details of how this will be completed are in our managing allegations procedures. This will be the headteacher, or the chair of governors where the headteacher is the subject of the allegation.

4.2 Low-level concerns about members of staff

A low-level concern is a behaviour towards a child by a member of staff that does not meet the harm threshold, is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, and may be as simple as causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt'. For example, this may include:

- Being over-friendly with children
- Having favourites
- Taking photographs of children on a personal device
- Engaging in 1-to-1 activities where they can't easily be seen
- Humiliating pupils

Low-level concerns can include inappropriate conduct inside and outside of work.



All staff should share any low-level concerns they have using the reporting procedures set out in our child protection and safeguarding policy. We also encourage staff to self-refer if they find themselves in a situation that could be misinterpreted. If staff are not sure whether behaviour would be deemed a low-level concern, we encourage staff to report it.

All reports will be handled in a responsive, sensitive and proportionate way.

Unprofessional behaviour will be addressed, and the staff member supported to correct it, at an early stage.

This creates and embeds a culture of openness, trust and transparency in which our values and expected behaviour are constantly lived, monitored and reinforced by all staff, while minimising the risk of abuse.

Reporting and responding to low-level concerns is covered in more detail in our child protection and safeguarding policy.

Our procedures for dealing with allegations will be applied with common sense and judgement.

4.3 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 to Karen Harper (Designated Safeguarding Lead), or either Kay Mountfield (Headteacher), James Simpson (Deputy Headteacher). However if it is believed that the Headteacher 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.

Change above to;

5. Staff and Pupil Relations



Professional Conduct in Public Settings

- All staff members of Sir Williams Borlase's Grammar School are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner when engaging in social activities in public settings, particularly within the local community where students and their families may be present.
- Staff members should be mindful that their behaviour, both on and off school premises, can reflect upon the reputation of the school and influence public perception.
- While it is acknowledged that staff members have personal lives and the right to socialise outside of working hours, it is important to exercise caution and maintain a high standard of conduct at all times.
- Staff members are expected to refrain from engaging in any activities that may compromise the trust and respect students and families place in the school and its staff.

Responsible Socialising

- When staff members find themselves in a social setting where students or families are present, they should be particularly mindful of their behaviour and ensure that it aligns with the values and expectations of the school community.
- Staff members should exercise discretion and avoid engaging in activities that may be deemed inappropriate, offensive, or harmful to the reputation of the school.
- It is essential for staff members to maintain appropriate boundaries and avoid situations that may compromise their professional relationships with students or families, both in and outside of school hours.

Establishment Selection

- In the event that staff members encounter students who are consuming alcohol or engaging in other inappropriate behaviours within the same establishment, it is strongly advised that they exercise good judgement and consider relocating to an alternative venue.
- By choosing to frequent an establishment where students are participating in activities that are prohibited by school policies or against the law, staff members may inadvertently undermine their authority and create potential conflicts of interest.
- It is the responsibility of staff members to uphold the highest standards of professionalism and to ensure that their personal choices do not compromise their role as positive role models within the school community.

Disciplinary Measures

- Violations of this staff and pupil relations policy may result in appropriate disciplinary measures being taken, in accordance with the school's disciplinary procedures.
- It is essential for staff members to understand that their actions and conduct, both in and outside of the school environment, have the potential to impact their professional standing and the overall reputation of the school.

Reporting Incidents



- If staff members become aware of any instances where students are engaging in inappropriate activities while they are socialising outside of school premises, it is their duty to report such incidents to the relevant school authorities, following the appropriate reporting procedures.

6. Communication and social media

School staff's social media profiles should not be available to pupils. If they have a personal profile on social media sites, they should not use their full name, as pupils 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 pupils 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 pupils' or parents' social media profiles.

Staff will ensure that they do not post any images online that identify children who are pupils at the school without their consent. (For School Communications - e.g. School Twitter, Consent is recorded on SIMS from School Essential Forms)

Staff should be aware of the school's digital devices policy.

7. Acceptable use of technology

Staff will not use technology in school to view material that is illegal, inappropriate or likely to be deemed offensive. This includes, but is not limited to, sending obscene emails, gambling and viewing pornography or other inappropriate content.

Staff will not use personal mobile phones and laptops, or school equipment for personal use, in school hours or in front of pupils. They will also not use personal mobile phones or cameras to take pictures of pupils.

Where staff use their personal camera/ mobile device to take photos or videos of student activity for school use or school PR, these images must be uploaded on to the school drive/ shared with the relevant comms staff and then deleted from the device.

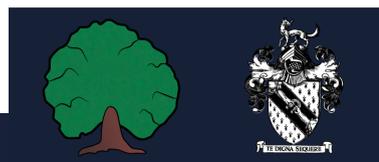
We have the right to monitor emails and internet use on the school IT system.

8. Confidentiality

In the course of their role, members of staff are often privy to sensitive and confidential information about the school, staff, pupils and their parents.

This information should never be:

- Disclosed to anyone unless required by law or with consent from the relevant party or parties
- Used to humiliate, embarrass or blackmail others
- Used for a purpose other than what it was collected and intended for



This does not overrule staff's duty to report child protection concerns to the appropriate channel where staff believe a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm, as detailed further in our child protection and safeguarding policy.

9. Honesty and integrity

Staff should maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their role. This includes when dealing with pupils, handling money, claiming expenses, receiving gifts and using school property and facilities.

Staff will not accept bribes. Gifts that are worth more than £50 must be declared and recorded on the gifts and hospitality register.

Staff will ensure that all information given to the school is correct. This should include:

- Background information (including any past or current investigations/cautions related to conduct outside of school)
- Qualifications
- Professional experience

Where there are any updates to the information provided to the school, the member of staff will advise the school as such as soon as reasonably practicable. Consideration will then be given to the nature and circumstances of the matter and whether this may have an impact on the member of staff's employment.

10. Dress code

Staff will dress in a formal, professional, appropriate manner. The staff dress code is set out in the Staff Handbook.

Clothes or tattoos will not display any offensive or political slogans.

There may be formal occasions where a specific dress code is required, and this will be communicated with staff prior to the event.

11. Conduct outside of work

Staff will not act in a way that would bring the school, or the teaching profession, into disrepute. This covers conduct including but not limited to relevant criminal offences, such as violence or sexual misconduct, as well as negative comments about the school on social media.

12. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually, but can be revised as needed such as changes to Keeping Children Safe in Education. It will be approved by the full governing board



Our governing board will ensure this code of conduct is implemented effectively, and will ensure appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard children and deal with any concerns.

13. Links with other policies

This policy links with our policies on:

- Staff disciplinary procedures, which will be used if staff breach this code of conduct. It also sets out examples of what we will deem as misconduct and gross misconduct
- Staff grievance procedures
- Child protection and safeguarding
- Gifts and hospitality
- Digital Devices Code of Conduct
- Whistle-blowing

I have read and understood the Staff Code of Conduct

Name.....

Signature.....

Date.....

