



**BISHOP VESEY'S GRAMMAR SCHOOL**  
**Staff Code of Conduct Policy**  
**Teaching & Support Staff**

<b>Staff covered by this procedure:</b>	Teaching and support staff
<b>Prepared by:</b>	Dominic Robson, Headteacher, September 2022
<b>Next review</b>	Governing Body September 2023

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# Staff Code of Conduct Policy

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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.

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

Many of the principles in this code of conduct are based on the [Teachers' Standards](#). School staff have an influential position in the school community and will act as role models for pupils by consistently demonstrating high standards of behavior inside or outside working hours.

We expect that all teachers will act in accordance with the personal and professional behaviours set out in the Teachers' Standards. We expect all support staff, governors and volunteers to also act with personal and professional integrity, respecting the safety and wellbeing of others.

We are committed to our core values:

- Inspirational teaching and outstanding learning.
- Academic excellence, a spirit of enquiry and curiosity.
- Enrichment opportunities building leadership, independence and resilience.
- A warm, outward-looking and supportive community celebrating and promoting diversity and equality, actively anti-discrimination.

In everything we do, we seek to adhere to the three Cs of courtesy, consideration and co-operation.

Our mission is **inspiration and excellence**. We want all our learners, irrespective of background, to be **scholars, well equipped for life beyond school**, with a **deep knowledge, understanding** and **life-long enthusiasm** for the subjects they are studying. Through our curricular and extra-curricular provision, we want to develop **students of excellent character, responsible global citizens**, who will make the world a better place through their **kindness, thoughtfulness, confidence** and **resilience**.

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.

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## 2. Legislation and guidance

In line with the statutory safeguarding guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#), we have a staff code of conduct, which covers 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.

This policy also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

## 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

Adhere to the Teachers' Standards

All teachers and support staff issued with lanyards/ identity badges must wear them at all times in school.

## 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.

All staff are trained in our child protection and safeguarding policy.

### 4.1 Allegations that may meet the harm threshold

This section is based on 'Section 1: Allegations that may meet the harm threshold' in part 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education

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
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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. 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 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 governors. 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.

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## 5. Staff-pupil relationships

Staff will observe proper boundaries with pupils that are appropriate to their professional position. They will act in a fair and transparent way that would not lead anyone to reasonably assume they are not doing so.

If staff members and pupils must spend time on a one-to-one basis, staff will ensure that:

This takes place in a public place that others can access

Others can see in to the room

A colleague or line manager knows this is taking place

Staff should avoid contact with pupils outside of school hours if possible.

Personal contact details should not be exchanged between staff and pupils. This includes social media profiles.

While we are aware many pupils and their parents may wish to give gifts to staff, for example, at the end of the school year, gifts from staff to pupils are not acceptable.

If a staff member is concerned at any point that an interaction between themselves and a pupil may be misinterpreted, or if a staff member is concerned at any point about a fellow staff member and a pupil, this should be reported in line with the procedures set out in our child protection and safeguarding policy.

## 6. Staff-community

All school staff should treat each other with **respect** and **courtesy**, enabling and recognising all members of staff are busy and have responsibilities to fulfil.

Staff should, therefore, adhere to the following:

- Communicate clearly and politely with each other
- Consider how others are feeling
- Staff should not demean or undermine their colleagues
- Treat the workspaces of others with respect, leaving them tidy
- Meet deadlines- if a deadline cannot be met due to extenuating circumstances, contact your line manager as soon as possible.
- Share good practice
- Adhere to homework timetables for year groups
- Begin and end lessons on time
- Staff should not be sending or answering emails or texts in lessons, assemblies or meeting times unless there are exceptional circumstances.
- Mobile phones must not be used, or be visible, to students in the classroom, or on corridors for personal calls, texts, or any other use.

## 7. 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.

Staff need to have read and understood the school's acceptable use of technology, online safety and use of social media policy.

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## 8. 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.

We have the right to monitor emails and internet use on the school IT system. See Acceptable use of ICT policy

## 9. 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.

## 10. 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 and using school property and facilities.

Staff will not accept bribes. Please see our Gifts and Hospitality Policy

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.

## 11. Dress code

Staff will dress in a professional, appropriate manner.

Outfits will not be overly revealing.

Clothes will not display any offensive or political slogans.

See Appendix A Staff Dress Code 2022 (Code of Conduct)

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## 12. 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.

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.

Criminal offences that involve violence or possession or use of illegal drugs or sexual misconduct are regarded as unacceptable. Please refer to School's Drugs Policy.

An employee must notify the Head Teacher if charged with, or convicted of, any criminal offence, or if they accept a formal police caution. They should do so on the first working day after the charge, caution or conviction. If the Head Teacher is the subject of the charge, he or she should inform the Chair of Governors. Failure to inform may lead to disciplinary action.

The school acknowledges that a caution is not a criminal conviction, but employees must be aware that cautions have to be declared during Disclosure and Barring checks unless they meet the filtering rules of the Disclosure and Barring Service.

The school acknowledges that an employee charged with an offence is innocent until proved guilty. However, special consideration will apply if the offence is one of those which is on the list of offences relevant to safeguarding, (a full list is available on the Disclosure and Barring Service's website), or if an employee is imprisoned on remand pending trial.

Failure to notify the Head Teacher/Chair of Governors as detailed above will constitute grounds for disciplinary action.

Staff must exercise caution when using information technology and be aware of the risks to themselves and others. The E-safety policy is available on the school website and is accessible to all staff. Staff must not post any comments, photographs, images or conversations on social networking websites which may bring them, the school and/or the employer into disrepute. Staff must only utilise the school email address and telephone number when communicating with students.

Members of staff must not give their personal contact details such as home/mobile phone number; home or personal e-mail address or social networking details to students unless the need to do so is agreed in writing with senior management.

It is recommended that staff ensure that all possible privacy settings are activated to prevent students from making contact on personal profiles and to prevent students from accessing photo albums or other personal information which may appear on social networking sites.

Employees must not make comments to the press or other media, including social networking sites, on behalf of the school unless specifically authorised to do so by the Head Teacher. Where requests for comments are received they must be passed on to the Head Teacher.

Employees should not publish any material which comments on the activities, policies etc. of the school without the consent of the Head Teacher. They may comment on matters outside the school, including general educational matters, but they should have regard to the obligation not to bring the school into disrepute.

If employees wish to publish an article unconnected with the school then the article must not link them to the school.

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Staff may undertake work outside school voluntarily, or undertake paid work subject to permission from the Board of Governors, 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. Equipment provided by the school should not be used by staff for other employment. Any infringement of this policy will be investigated in accordance with the relevant policy.

## 13. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually can be revised as needed. It will be approved by the governing body.

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.

## 14. 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

Safer recruitment policy

Child protection and safeguarding policy

Gifts and hospitality policy

Online safety policy

Whistle-blowing policy

Acceptable use of IT policy

Use of social media policy

Dignity at work policy

Drugs policy

I confirm that I have read and understood this policy.

Signed by employee .....

Full name .....

Post .....

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## Appendix A Staff Dress Code 2022 (Staff Code of Conduct)

### Principles

- Staff must abide by the dress code and dress appropriately for their particular role
- Clothing should be clean and in a good state of repair
- The Head has the final say on whether clothing and appearance is appropriate
- If a staff member's clothing or appearance is not deemed appropriate, the Head or other member of SLT will speak to the staff member concerned to discuss any concerns
- For training days and non-uniform days, smart casual clothes are permissible

### Information for all staff

- Clothing must be professional attire, not casual wear
- All staff should wear their BVGS identity badge and lanyard at all times on the school premises
- Male staff must wear a shirt (formal collar), tie, trousers and smart shoes (except PE staff and designated support staff). Short sleeve shirts are permitted in warm weather, as long as they have a formal collar
- Female staff must wear smart dresses or separates. Trousers may be full or  $\frac{3}{4}$  length, but no shorter. Any cropped trousers must be formal and tailored. Skirts and dresses should not be too short (one inch above knee length at the shortest). Shirts, blouses, knitwear and other smart tops may be worn and cover the shoulders, plus smart shoes or boots
- Ties and lanyards may be removed on a temporary basis where health and safety risk assessments deem this appropriate
- Learning support staff and office staff are expected to adhere to the same dress code as teachers
- Other support staff (e.g. technicians, facilities officer, site staff) should dress smartly and appropriately for their role taking into account health and safety issues/the physical nature of their role
- Hair should be neat and tidy
- Visible tattoos are discouraged and must be discreet
- Jewellery should be discreet with visible piercing restricted to ears. Single nose studs may be worn for reasons of culture or religious observance only
- If a member of staff has a Games lesson or an after school sports training session that day then they are permitted to wear BVGS (or black) track suits all day

### Prohibited Items – for clarity

- Flip-flops or backless shoes (not including sling bag shoes)
  - Shorts (unless during a PE lesson and only when conditions demand it)
  - Clothes that show bare shoulders, or with plunging V lines, or with back cut outs
  - Denim – jeans, skirt or leggings – no matter what colour
  - Leggings, unless underneath a skirt or other covering
  - Lycra or any other tight fitting garments
  - Any garment that allows underwear to be visible
  - Heels in excess of 3 inches
  - Trainers/pumps of whatever colour (unless used for sporting activities, or for medical reasons)
-