

STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT (STAFF BEHAVIOUR POLICY)

Written by	Assistant Head Pastoral, Headmaster
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This policy must be read in conjunction with:

- *Staff disciplinary, grievance and whistleblowing policy*
- *Whistle blowing*
- *Non Academic Job Descriptions, including staff with boarding duties*
- *Job Descriptions*
- *Intimate Care policy*
- *Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy*
- *Recruitment Policy*
- *Staff Recruitment Procedures*

Purpose

Relationships between staff and pupils at Sherborne Preparatory School, Pre-Prep and nursery are friendly and mutually respectful. This Code has been formulated in order to maintain this balance.

The purpose of the code is to:

- confirm and reinforce the professional responsibilities of staff
- clarify the legal position in relation to sensitive aspects of staff/pupil relationships;
- set out the expectations of standards to be maintained within the School.

Its purpose is to promote the highest standards of care for young people and to protect staff, without compromising bona-fide school activities.

Although this Code of Conduct gives advice and instruction on how to deal with specific situations, it should not replace professional common sense and good judgement. **In all matters relating to pupil staff relationships, teachers must bear in mind how their actions might be perceived and interpreted.**

All staff should understand the need to act as good role models for pupils. The school expects its staff to behave in a thoroughly professional manner and to set an example to pupils through high standards of behaviour, dress and timekeeping.

1. Staff/Pupil/Former Pupil Contact

As a general rule, staff should avoid unnecessary contact with pupils outside school.

- They should not give pupils their home address, mobile or home phone number, or non-school e-mail address without very good cause. If there is a requirement to do this, the member of staff must inform the DSL. Thank you letters to pupils must not contain these personal details. They should not make arrangements to meet pupils, individually or in groups, outside school other than authorised situations.
- They should avoid contacting pupils at home unless this is strictly necessary; they must keep a record on iSAMS of any such occasion.

- They must not give a pupil a lift in their own vehicle other than on school business and with permission from the Headmaster and parent.
- They are advised not to attend private pupil parties, and should be aware of their professional standing and responsibilities when attending parties arranged by parents at which pupils are also present.
- Staff should not purchase gifts or sweets for children. A small token at the end of a term is acceptable.
- Staff and children must not follow each other or be friends on social media.

Members of staff who are parents of pupils, friends with parents of pupils or who live locally will of course see pupils outside school. However, they should still use their professional judgement to respect the spirit of this code.

2. Language

Staff should not swear, blaspheme or use any sort of offensive language in front of pupils. They should not use language which is discriminatory and demeaning in relation to physical appearance, gender, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability or age. Staff should not make sexual innuendos or any comments of a sexual nature other than in the context of the curriculum as specified in planning.

3. Physical Contact

In nearly all cases physical contact between pupils and staff is inappropriate. The only possible circumstances where physical contact may occur are outlined in the school Contact Policy, Use of Reasonable Force to Control, Intervene or Restrain Policy, Intimate Care Policy and Safeguarding Policy.

4. Isolation

If a teacher is alone with a pupil he/she should ensure that any such meeting is as visible as possible. As such he/she should ensure that the door to the room has a glass panel or is left open. If this is not possible then another adult must be present.

5. Relationships

We best serve the pupils in our care by a pastoral approach that is concerned, collective and thorough, but professionally detached. We do not serve pupils or parents well by encouraging situations in which pupils develop excessive reliance on individual teachers. All teachers, tutors, peripatetic music staff, Saturday Activity staff, sports coaches etc. must be aware of policy guidance on these matters as they have a relationship of trust with all pupils by virtue of their position and the work they undertake. More detail is available in the Safeguarding Policy.

6. Confidentiality and data protection

Staff must respect the privacy of pupils, parents and colleagues and must not pass or share information unless it is a child protection issue and the child is at risk of harm. In these instances the DSL must be informed. Enquirers should put the request in writing so that it can be dealt with appropriately. See the school Data Protection Policy and Freedom of Information for more information.

7. Comments and Discussions with Pupils

Staff must avoid comments to or about pupils which could be taken to have inappropriate overtones. In order to discharge particular pastoral responsibilities, staff may from time to time need to engage in conversation with pupils which cover sensitive matters. Teachers must use their professional judgement to ensure that they are not drawn into areas inappropriate to their professionalism and use their discretion. The use of hurtful, sarcastic, demeaning or insensitive comments can also be regarded as very damaging and a form of abuse which must be avoided. In particular staff must not make any racist, sexist or homophobic comments. Specific guidance is available through the induction process to assist staff, newly qualified teachers and Gap students through discussion with the DSL, Deputy Head and in the online staff handbook. Further guidance is available in the Safeguarding and whistleblowing policies.

8. Out of School and After School Activities

Staff must take particular care when supervising pupils in the less formal atmosphere of a residential trip, Saturday morning, Boarding or After-school activity. It is important to emphasise that the standards of professional conduct and behaviour expected of staff are no different from those which apply within school.

9. Reporting Incidents

Teachers must report any concerns they may have following any incident where s/he feels that his/her actions may have been misinterpreted. This report must be made to the Deputy Head as soon as possible after the incident and should include a report on iSAMS, a copy of which must be forwarded to the Deputy Head.

10. Communication and Social Media

Staff should usually only write letters or send emails to individual pupils about academic matters. For specific guidance concerning social media, please refer to the E-Safety Policy.

11. Alcohol

On the occasion that teachers are socialising, it is important that professional standards are maintained. Teachers must maintain the highest professional standards at school social events and must not drink alcohol on school premises unless at an approved School function. Staff must be mindful of the laws of driving after drinking alcohol within 24 hours.

12. Changing Rooms

See Safeguarding and Staff induction, training and professional development programme policy for further information.

13. Boarding area access

See 'Access to the Premises by People Outside the school' Policy

14. Sherborne Prep Staff Dress Code

In order to undertake our professional duties, teachers and staff should adhere to a dress code that gives the staff credence and respect and does not distract from the person.

Pupils tend to model the behaviour and appearance they see in the classroom and about the school and it is important that we present good and tidy role models to the children. Staff must dress in such a way as to present appropriately and sensibly to parents and pupils and to ensure that we present professionally to all members of the school community.

An effective member of staff will dress appropriately as a professional to model the expectations we have of our children. Staff should strive to be a positive role model for each student. Making a good impression upon parents will help to foster a productive relationship to help the pupils to excel in the classroom. By following the dress code policy, it is expected that the staff member will provide an appropriate role model to young children.

Staff are expected to dress in smart formal wear during the *working week*:

- A suit or jacket and smart trousers and a shirt and tie for men.
- A dress or smart skirt/trousers for women that should be appropriate and comfortable. Denim is not acceptable
- Clean, smart, suitably heeled, closed footwear or smart sandals that are appropriate and safe for walking around the school site.

Or

- An agreed 'uniform' for the area of the school that they work in e.g. non-teaching staff, PE staff (especially noting the need for non-intrusive jewellery).

Saturdays:

The staff may 'dress down' although there should be no ripped denim or spaghetti strapped tops. Clothes should remain smart and appropriate.

Trips:

Staff may wear a 'dressed down' attire on trips but remain aware that they are on show as much as the children are. Clothes should be smart and appropriate.

The School would expect:

- Fashion accessories to be minimal.
- Make up to be subtle.
- Hair colour to be natural subtle shades.
- No visible tattoos.
- No facial piercings.
- Discreet earrings.