

Staff Code of Conduct - Whole School

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Responsible for Initiating Review of Policy	Head & SLT
Committee to Review	SLT
Last Review Date	August 2024
Review Period	Annual
Approved by (Committee and Date)	Oct 2025
Effective Date of Policy	Oct 2025
Next Review Date	Oct 2026
Related Policies and Documents	Acceptable Use Policy Use of Email and Internet at Work Policy 32e Use of Social Networking Sites Policy Staff Handbooks (Nursery, Prep & Senior School) Boarding Handbook 17a Equal Opportunities Policy 7a Safeguarding 7b Whistleblowing Policy 18m Harassment & Bullying at Work Policy 7i Confidentiality Policy 7j Restraint Policy 18e Disciplinary & Capability Policy Mobile Phone Policy Low Level Concerns Policy

1.0 Introduction

The purpose for having a Code of Conduct is to:

- Promote adherence to a set of core professional values in their everyday conduct
- Promote our school ethos as a School, applicable to all staff, volunteers and peripatetic staff,
- Meet our regulatory requirements as a School

The term Staff is used in this document to designate full and part time teachers and support staff at the School and Peripatetic Teachers. All Staff should be familiar with the Staff Handbooks, Nursery, Prep & Senior School, and should abide by the expectations (rules and policies) set out in this document as well as by the terms and conditions of their contracts.

1.1 Our Mission and Values

As an independent school for girls, we are committed to providing an all-round education to our pupils. We promote high academic standards, excellence in sport and the creative arts, and a happy, cohesive, welcoming and purposeful living and working environment – these are central to the values of the School. The very highest standards of courtesy, integrity, behaviour and endeavour are expected from pupils. Staff, in return, are committed to providing pupils with the very best care, attention and education. The rewards of working within the School's vibrant and happy educational community are considerable. Alongside this, the structure of the School places significant expectations on staff, which should be communicated clearly from the beginning these include, beyond teaching lessons; tutoring, duties, supporting boarding, co-curricular (including sport) and occasional weekend commitments. Staff and pupils are expected to work towards upholding the values that the School.

The School motto which is:

"I am, I can, I should, I will"

Our school values are:

"Spark, Strength, Spirit and Success".

You can find more information about our school values here

<https://burgesshillgirls.com/about-us/mission-and-aims/>.

All staff have a part to play in ensuring this ethos is maintained and to ensure they are familiar with and follow the employment policies and practices.

Teaching staff should adhere to the teaching standards -

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a750668ed915d3c7d529cad/Teachers_standard_information.pdf

2.0 Overall statement of expectations:

2.1 Professional conduct

All members of staff are expected to:

- conduct themselves in a professional manner towards colleagues, visitors, pupils and parents always and provide a good role model.
- value the input of colleagues.
- provide support for each other, helping colleagues where we can, even if they work in a different department.
- be aware that their acts and omissions both on and off duty and both on and off school premises may impact on their reputation and on that of the School; they must take care to act with the highest levels of awareness and integrity in all they do, always, wherever they are.
- present a positive image of the School to the wider community and be a good ambassador at all times.
- show tolerance and consideration for all without prejudice towards disability, gender, race, sexual orientation, religious or similar belief or age.
- show respect for pupils, parents, visitors and colleagues through honesty, courtesy and punctuality.
- communicate effectively and work collaboratively and supportively with colleagues as part of a team.
- respect the ICT Acceptable Use Policy and ensure that all communication is appropriate and professional and refrain from making disparaging comments about pupils or colleagues both verbally and in writing.
- adhere to the Mobile Phone Policy.
- declare any conflict of interest when appropriate.
- maintain School property as if it were their own and, where appropriate, keep School accommodation in good order.
- report to their Departmental Head/ Line Manager any concerns about the behaviour of staff that may be in breach of this Code of Conduct.

3.0 Maintain confidentiality: (all staff are required to read 7i – Confidentiality Policy)

Staff must respect confidentiality regarding information about pupils and colleagues, unless it relates to a safeguarding matter. Members of staff who have access to confidential or personal information about a pupil or their family should never use such information for their own or others' advantage or breach that confidentiality. It is not in the best interests of anybody or the School for members of the community to discuss with others, matters which have no bearing on their professional work at the School.

If any other member of staff or a pupil says that they would like to speak to you in confidence it is your duty to inform them that you will hold that confidence provided that:

- What they tell you is not endangering them or anybody else.
- What they tell you is not connected in any way to a child safeguarding issue.
- It is not seriously detrimental to anybody else's reputation.
- It does not seriously put at risk the good reputation of the School.

If you are given information which falls into any of the above four categories, you are required to inform the Head or DLS immediately. You should advise the person involved that you will be taking this action.

4.0 Safeguarding and allegations of abuse:

(All Members of staff are required to read the Safeguarding policy 7a.)

Staff are asked to read the School's Safeguarding Policy upon joining as part of their recruitment procedures and to read any updates sent by the School. They are also required to read and understand the statutory guidelines issued by the Department of Education entitled Keeping Children Safe in Education and the regular updates issued.

5.0 Dress Code:

Members of staff should be of smart appearance and dress in the manner that is appropriate to the job. For teaching and customer facing staff this includes jacket and smart attire for the working day. Jewellery, tattoos and piercings should be discreet.

6.0 Meeting Protocol:

For the protection of staff, as well as pupils, if a member of staff is alone in a room with a pupil, the guiding principle should be that the meeting can be seen by passers-by. If there is no glass panel in the door, then the door should be left open. Meeting with individual pupils should not be scheduled for times when no-one else will be around and should not continue for any longer than is necessary to achieve its purpose. Online meetings with pupils should only happen with the prior written agreement of a member of SLT.

7.0 Zero Tolerance

The School wishes to support all members of staff when you are having a challenging time and to do this, we need to work in partnership with you to create an environment of safety, mutual care, respect and understanding.

This applies to all employees of the School and in all forms of communication such as via letter, email, telephone or in person.

1. Aggressive or abusive behaviour

We understand that people can become angry when they feel that matters about which they feel strongly are not being dealt with as they wish. If that anger escalates into aggression towards other members staff, we consider that unacceptable.

Any aggression or abuse directed towards other colleagues will not be tolerated.

- Aggressive or abusive behaviour includes language (whether verbal or written) that may cause staff to feel afraid, threatened or abused and may include threats, personal verbal abuse, derogatory remarks and rudeness. The use of swear words in written or verbal communication will not be tolerated. Swearing at members of staff will not be tolerated.
- We also consider inflammatory statements, remarks of a racial or discriminatory nature and unsubstantiated allegations, to be abusive behaviour.

2. Unreasonable demands

A demand becomes unacceptable when it starts to, or when complying with the demand would, impact excessively on the work of our staff. Or when dealing with the matter takes up an excessive amount of staff time and in so doing, disadvantages other members of staff, impeding them to complete their roles effectively.

For example:

- Repeatedly demanding responses within an unreasonable timescale
- Demanding responses from several members of staff on the same subject.
- Insisting on seeing or speaking to a particular member of staff when that is not possible.
- Repeatedly changing the substance of an enquiry or complaint or raising unrelated concerns; and
- Repeatedly posing a question time and again, when a response has already been given, because the individual may not like the answer they have received.

3. Unreasonable levels of contact

Sometimes the volume and duration of contact made to our staff by another member of staff causes problems.

- This can occur over a short period, for example, when many calls or emails are received from the same person in one day.
- When we are dealing with a complaint or enquiry, this may occur when a person repeatedly makes long telephone calls to us or;
- Inundates us with emails or;
- Copies of information that have been already sent or that are irrelevant to the substance of the complaint or enquiry.

We consider that the level of contact has become unacceptable when the amount of time spent talking to an individual on the telephone, or responding to, reviewing and filing emails or written correspondence, impacts on our ability to deal with the matter, or on our responsibility for carrying out tasks relating to other constituents.

How we manage abusive or aggressive behaviour:

Any member of staff who directly experiences aggressive or abusive behaviour from an employee, has the authority to deal immediately with that behaviour in a manner they consider appropriate to the situation, and which is in line with this code of conduct.

Staff will end telephone calls if they consider the caller aggressive, abusive or offensive. Our staff have the right to make this decision, to tell the caller that their behaviour is unacceptable and to end the call if the behaviour then persists.

If behaviour persists in future correspondence, the School will inform the person in writing that we will not permit any further contact from them.

How we deal with other categories of unreasonable behaviour

Where a member of the public repeatedly phones, visits our offices, raises the same issue repeatedly, or sends us large numbers of documents about which the relevance is not clear, we may decide to:

- Limit contact to telephone calls from the person at set times on set days.
- Restrict contact to a nominated member of staff who will deal with future calls or correspondence.
- See the person by appointment only.
- Restrict contact to written correspondence only.
- Refuse to deal with further correspondence and return any documents or, in extreme cases.
- Advise the person that further irrelevant documentation will be destroyed; and/or
- Take any other action that we consider appropriate to the circumstances.

Where we consider continued correspondence on a wide range of issues to be excessive, we may tell the person that only a certain number of issues will be considered in each period and ask them to limit or focus their requests accordingly.

Where someone repeatedly demands a response on an issue on which they have already been given a clear answer, we may refuse to respond to further enquiries from the person. We will always tell the person in writing the action we are taking and the reasons why.

8.0 Mobile Phone Protocol

The School's approach to mobile phones following the government guidance Feb 2024 is that they are;

Away for the Day Never seen, never used, never heard

The School adopts the approach where pupils and staff keep possession of their mobile phones only on the condition that they are never used, seen or heard.

It is important that we as staff lead by example and the School enforces this policy vigorously, consistently and visibly, to the effect that mobile phone use is prohibited throughout the School day.

For staff we expect:

- Staff should not use phones for personal use during the school day
- Phones should be off/set to silent, and out of sight
- If staff need to use their phones to communicate around the school, they must try to do so out of sight of pupils

This includes staff, volunteers, committee members, children, young people, parents, carers, visitors and contractors. This list is not exhaustive.

This policy should also be read in relation to the Mobile Phone Policy.

- Use of phones (inc. receiving/sending texts and emails) should be limited to non-contact time when no children are present e.g. in office areas, staff room, empty classrooms.
- It is also advised that staff security protect access to functions of their phone. · Should there be exceptional circumstances (e.g. acutely sick relative, call from a doctor), then staff should make the Headteacher/member of SLT aware of this and can have their phone in case of having to receive an emergency call.
- Staff are not at any time permitted to use recording equipment on their mobile phones, for example: to take recordings of children, or sharing images. Legitimate recordings and photographs should be captured using school equipment such as cameras and ipads.
- Staff should report any usage of mobile devices that causes them concern to the Head (See Safeguarding and Low Level Concerns policies)

9.0 This policy should be read in conjunction with:

Acceptable Use Policy

- Use of Email and Internet at Work Policy
- Use of Social Networking Sites Policy
- Use of Mobile Phones by Staff Policy
- School Procedures Manual
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Harassment & Bullying at Work Policy
- Confidentiality Policy
- Disciplinary & Capability Policy
- Low Level Concerns Policy