

Code of Conduct for all Staff

This document should be read in conjunction with the government's Teacher Standards which set a clear baseline of expectations for the professional practice and conduct of teachers.

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/301107/Teachers_Standards.pdf

Applicable to:

All adults associated with the school, including: teachers, non-teaching staff, Governors and volunteers.

Aims:

- To protect the staff, the students and the reputation and integrity of the School
- To ensure that staff are able to perform their role to the highest standard without putting themselves at risk of false allegations
- To create an environment and culture that ensures – as far as is reasonably possible – the health, safety and welfare of all students in their care at any given time, whether in school or on a trip or visit
- To foster an environment built on shared and understood values
- To ensure that all staff have an understanding of the statutory and local guidelines within which they operate
- To acquaint staff with relevant sections of the School Policies, Employment Handbook and Staff Handbook

Core Principles:

1. Staff should not engage in any form of discriminatory behaviour regarding age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. This is in line with the school policies on Equal Opportunities.
2. Staff should show tolerance of and respect for the rights of others.
3. Staff should treat students with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observe proper boundaries appropriate to their professional position.
4. Staff must have regard to the expectation they will actively promote fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.
5. Staff must have regard for the need to safeguard students' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions and the school's Safeguarding policies.

Safeguarding

6. It is a requirement for all staff to read and understand KCSiE Part 1 (including Annex A), and to make themselves available for any scheduled Safeguarding training.
7. It is essential that all staff know who is the School's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and their deputies (DDSL) and have read the latest version of the Safeguarding-Child Protection Policy.

8. Staff should be prepared to listen to students regarding matters of personal importance. Information given to a member of staff by a student must be passed to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), or in their absence to one of their deputies. If there is any issue of child protection, confidentiality must not be promised. Staff should not misrepresent any information given to them by anyone, acting in a way consistent with legal requirements. Staff should never withhold concerns about a student's well-being or safety. All information should be communicated through the school's pastoral system or in accordance with the Safeguarding Procedures. See the Safeguarding - Child Protection policy. Staff should not communicate with parents directly about safeguarding concerns. Staff should only communicate directly about safeguarding concerns if instructed to do so by the DSL/DDSL.
9. If a member of staff has a safeguarding concern about another member of staff they must report it to the Head. If the concern is about the Head they must report it to the Chair of Governors. Full details of this are in the Safeguarding-Child Protection policy.
10. If a member of staff is concerned about any aspect of their relationship with a student, please they must alert the DSL. or the Head as necessary. If a safeguarding concern relates to a member of staff this should be made to the Head (or the Chair of Governors) in line with the school Safeguarding policies.
11. To ensure misunderstandings do not occur:
 - One to one situations such as individual music lessons should only take place in rooms which are in public areas of the school; most rooms have glazed panels and these rooms should always be used in these circumstances.
 - As a rule, staff should not drive students in their own car. If there are exceptional circumstances, a member of staff may request permission to do so from the Head or Director of Students. Except in an emergency, driving students in your own car should always be with parental consent. Staff are always advised where possible to carry two or more students and to ensure that if dropping students off they are not left with one student for an extended period of time. Please notify the Director of Students should such an emergency occur.
 - Male staff are always accompanied by female staff on school visits
 - Male staff should always be accompanied by female staff on residential school visits. The female member of staff may be from another school if the visit is a joint one e.g. exchange with Abingdon School. Male staff and should not administer First Aid without a female member of staff present, other than in an emergency situation (e.g. a severe allergic reaction).
 - Physical intervention from staff in charge of children is permitted only where the student is committing a criminal offence; at risk of injuring themselves or others; causing damage to property including their own, or engaging in behaviour prejudicial to the good order and discipline of the School. Action considered reasonable will depend on the circumstances and should be proportionate to the behaviour of the student involved and the seriousness of the harm prevented. Force should be minimal to achieve the desired result and cannot be justified to prevent a trivial misdemeanour. The DSL should be informed if physical intervention is used.
 - St Helen's is not a school which bars physical contact, but it should be avoided wherever possible. There are activities which require it e.g. PE/sport coaching or music and there may be circumstances where a distressed student may need comfort. Such contact must always remain appropriate for the task; it should be explained to the student and staff should not proceed if the student appears apprehensive or reluctant.

Such contact should always be open and take place in an environment which could not be regarded as secret. Consider alternatives if it appears that the student might misinterpret the contact. Gratuitous physical contact is unacceptable and should be avoided in all circumstances.

- Staff ought to avoid excessive familiarity and should avoid complimenting a student on appearance or dress in lessons. Avoid any conduct which would lead **any reasonable person** to question the member of staff's motivation and intentions.
 - Photos of students should not be taken with personal mobile phones or with any other personal device except one approved by the School.
 - Images of students should not be stored on personal devices and should be saved to the school system as soon as possible.
 - Some staff arrange activities linked to the curriculum or valedictory activities, particularly in the Sixth Form. These should always be group activities; staff behaviour may be relaxed but should always remain professional. Staff should avoid unnecessary contact with students outside school and must not share their home address or personal details. Staff should not make arrangements to meet students outside of school business. They should not invite students to their home for a social occasion, unless it is in their capacity as a parent of a current student.
 - Staff should not give gifts to individual students without prior agreement from a member of SMT.
12. All staff are in a position of trust. Staff must be aware that it is thus an offence to engage in sexual activity with a student aged under 18; intentionally cause or incite a child to engage in sexual activity; engage in sexual activity in the presence of a child or cause a child to watch a sexual act. Allegations relating to a breach of trust must be reported immediately to the Head (and in their absence the DSL).

It is forbidden for a member of St Helen's staff to have a sexual relationship with any student in the school. While this action may fall short of a breach of trust, it would still constitute professional misconduct, which will result in disciplinary action. Ongoing regard should be paid to professional duty of care and the teaching standards with any subsequent relationship with former students. Any concerns must be discussed with the Head.

13. Staff have an obligation under the Prevent strategy to understand and engage with the Channel process, to help identify those vulnerable to radicalisation and their behaviours, and to make referrals within and if necessary outside the School.
14. Should any individual member of staff feel that the School is failing to take action on a matter regarding the welfare, health and safety of students which they have raised, they should consult the School's Whistleblowing Policy.
15. The School celebrates the fact that a significant number of colleagues choose to educate their daughters at St Helen's. This inevitably creates potential overlap between professional and personal relationships and communication. Staff are expected to apply common sense in such situations and create clear boundaries. If staff have any doubt they should seek advice from the Director of Students.

Pastoral Standards

16. Staff should have high expectations of behaviour from students at all times and in all school-related environments. They should establish clear boundaries within lessons, tutorials and other activities. For guidelines on student behaviour see the Behaviour and Sanctions policy.
17. Staff should take responsibility for promoting an environment of positive, mutual respect between themselves and the students.
 - This ought to be based on praise rather than criticism
 - At no point should staff expose a student to any form of humiliation, whether public or private.
 - Confidential conversations ought not to be held in public places
 - Corporal punishment is strictly forbidden
18. Staff must ensure that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways which exploit students' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law.
19. Staff should not articulate partisan political views to students in exercising their role as a teacher.
20. Staff should take the necessary steps to ensure the health, safety and well-being of the students by:
 - taking action to prevent bullying
 - being aware of relevant medical histories and general medical procedures
 - being aware of and implementing the Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures
 - being aware of and implementing the procedures for Health and Safety at school and on Educational Visits
 - ensuring the consumption of alcohol does not interfere with their duty of care

This is in line with the school policies on: Anti-Bullying, Curriculum, First Aid, Safeguarding and Child Protection, Trips and Visits, Health and Safety, and Fire Safety.

Professional and Academic Standards

21. Staff should remember that their behaviour has a significant impact on the students and they must therefore adopt a professional approach to all aspects of their work; this includes dress, communication and social contact. If in doubt staff should discuss any uncertainties or confusion with their line manager. Similarly, if staff feel that an incident could be misinterpreted they should document it and report immediately to a senior member of staff.
22. Staff should adhere to high professional standards both in their approach to the specialist academic subject/s they teach and to their delivery of the academic PD curriculum when required so to do.
23. As role models, the staff should:
 - dress appropriately at all times, with the Head reserving the right to determine what is appropriate (see the dress code in the Employment Handbook)
 - be punctual in the morning and for lessons, and sign in and out at Reception as required.
 - ensure that all requests for planned absence from school are made to the Headmistress/Director of Staff in good time.

- observe deadlines rigorously in order not to cause problems for colleagues
24. Staff must uphold the highest standards in the area of academic honesty – neither allowing nor colluding in plagiarism, collusion or misconduct in or outside of the examination room. This is in line with the school's Examination Policy and Policy for internal setting and marking of coursework and Non-examination Assessment Policy.
 25. The School has a culture of safety and raising concerns, as well as reflective practice and valuing staff. There are clear policies and procedures for reporting and handling concerns, including those about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in our safeguarding regime. Provision for mediation and dispute resolution are available where necessary. Training and support in all of these areas is available to staff, and there is transparency and accountability in how these concerns are raised and handled.
 26. Staff must respect the confidentiality of the Staff Room except for matters relating to Child Protection and Health and Safety. Please read the Whistle Blowing Policy and guidance on confidentiality in the Employment Handbook.
 27. Staff may have access to confidential information about children and young people in order to undertake their responsibilities. In some circumstances they may have access to or be given highly sensitive or private information. These details must be kept confidential at all times and only shared when it is in interests of the child to do so. Such information must not be used to intimidate, humiliate, or embarrass the child or young person concerned. If there is any doubt about whether to share information or keep it confidential staff should seek guidance from a senior member of staff or the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
 28. Staff are expected to follow the school's policies on IT and Communications, Social Media, Data Protection and Taking, Storing and Using Images of Students Policy, available in the Employment Handbook.
 29. Staff should not give their home or personal mobile phone number to students. Staff should not to make use of students' mobile phone numbers other than for approved School business (e.g. as part of trip contact or searching for a missing student).
 30. Staff should only communicate electronically with students from School accounts on approved School business, and should not enter into instant messaging or personal social media communication with students.
 31. Staff using social media must ensure that they are not friending or following current students and that advice is sought from Leadership regarding contact with former students. If a member of staff has friendships with other families at the school, they should use professional judgement in communication over social media and seek guidance from an appropriate member of Leadership if they are at all unsure (*in addition see point 9*). Staff should be very mindful of their professional status when using social media; they should check their privacy settings and ensure that the contents of their profile are only visible to approved contacts. They should post nothing that could call into question their professional judgement or integrity, or causes damage to the reputation of the school or their standing within it.
 32. Mobile phones should be turned off or at least on silent in all lessons and meetings. They should be used with discretion and consideration for others at all times

33. Where face-to-face communication with colleagues/parents is not possible, take time to consider the tone and content of emails before sending them and ensure letters going out to parents are checked by the appropriate member of SMT before dispatch.
34. Staff should follow good habits of data processing and security, including: keeping passwords secure; logging off when away from their desk; locking confidential information away; disposing of information appropriately when no longer needed; storing data securely on School systems; taking care when sharing data that this is appropriate and always ensuring it is shared with the intended recipient.
35. Teachers must have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities.

Governor scrutiny of implementation:

This takes place through Governor visits to departments and lessons, attendance at school events, Governor Committee, and involvement in the annual Code of Conduct review.

Policy Last Reviewed: Michaelmas 2018

Next Review due: Michaelmas 2019

Signed: John Hunt, Director of Staff & IT

Date: Michaelmas 2018