St Hilda's School
HARPENDEN
Caring, Curious & Confident

STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT

Name of Policy	Staff Code of Conduct
Reviewed by	Dan Sayers
Review Date	October 2026
Next Review Date	October 2027
To be Read in Conjunction with	• Safeguarding Policy (Child Protection) Policy (Includes Extremism and Radicalisation). • Behaviour Management (Including Restrictive Interventions) Policy • Whistleblowing Policy • Internet and Email Acceptable Use Policy • Online Safety and Computing Acceptance Usage Policy • Risk Assessment Policy • First Aid Policy • First Aid – Administration of Medicines Policy • EYFS Policy • Intimate Care Policy
Legislation Referenced	• Current KCSIE legislation and guidance in force. • Statutory Framework for Early Years Foundation Stage, effective from 1st Sept 2026. • DfE Teachers' Standards 2011

Unless otherwise stated, all Policies of St Hilda's School apply to the school in its entirety. This comprises all staff and pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), the Junior School (Key Stage 1) and the Senior School (Key Stage 2).

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1. INTRODUCTION

The aims of this guidance are to:

- Help all staff establish safe and responsive learning environments which safeguard children.
- Reduce the risk of adults being unjustly accused of unprofessional, inappropriate or abusive conduct.
- Help staff to work safely to protect pupils and themselves.
- Ensure that all staff are aware of what is regarded as appropriate or inappropriate conduct and practice.
- Support the School managers in setting clear expectations for all staff.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- **Safeguarding Policy (Child Protection) Policy (Includes Extremism and Radicalisation),**
- **Behaviour Management (Including Restrictive Interventions) Policy**
- **Whistleblowing Policy**
- **Internet and Email Acceptable Use Policy**
- **Online Safety and Computing Acceptance Usage Policy**
- **Risk Assessment Policy**
- **First Aid Policy**
- **First Aid – Administration of Medicines Policy**
- **EYFS Policy**
- **Intimate Care Policy**

Seek Advice & Support

This guidance is not exhaustive and cannot provide specific advice for all situations. Therefore:

- If no specific advice, policies or guidelines exist for a specific situation, or if you are unsure consult a senior manager.
- If you need to take a particular course of action in an unplanned circumstance, which may vary from policies or does not allow time for advice to be sought, record these actions with a senior manager as soon as possible after the event.
- If at any time you are concerned that an action or comment by yourself may be misinterpreted or that a child behaves or makes a comment in a way that causes you concern in this respect, log your concerns immediately with the appropriate senior member of staff.

2. STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

All staff have the following responsibilities in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education to ensure the safeguarding of children;

- Work and behave safely and responsibly at all times to fulfil your duty of care and not abuse in any way your position of trust.

- Respond to any concerns about a child's wellbeing that you may have or are brought to your attention in line with the school **Safeguarding Policy** and Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP) procedures.
- Respond in the same way to concerns that involve the behaviour of other adults in the school by following the school procedures for 'Whistleblowing' as outlined in the school **Whistleblowing Policy** and Statutory Guidance.
- Review your own practice and follow school policies and procedures and seek advice when unsure.
- Understand that it is professionally, morally and in some cases legally unacceptable for staff not to carry out these responsibilities and failure to do so could result in disciplinary action.
- Be aware of current Teachers' Standards Part Two (DfE) 2011 (link provided at the end of this document).

3. SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITIES

In order for staff to carry out these responsibilities the school will ensure that, as outlined in KCSiE:

- all new and existing staff receive an adequate Safeguarding related induction and continuing training.
- all staff are made aware and regularly reminded of the school procedures for reporting child protection and other specific and wider safeguarding concerns.
- staff concerns and opinions will be sought and taken into account in the regular review of related policies and procedures.
- all staff are aware of the School 'Whistleblowing' procedures by which adults can voice their concerns, made in good faith, without fear of repercussion.
- managers strive to provide a safe working environment for staff and provide guidance about safe working practices.
- the Duty of Care to staff is fulfilled.

4. SHARING CONCERNS AND RECORDING INCIDENTS

Do

- ensure that you are aware of and have read Part 1 of KCSiE and new Annex **A** (previously Annex B).
- be alert to the indicators of abuse, neglect, exploitation, radicalisation, modern slavery, and/or risk-taking behaviour.
- be familiar with and follow the school system for recording child protection and other concerns about children and young people.
- be aware that you have a responsibility to pass on concerns that a pupil may be suffering. including: Neglect, Sexual, Physical or Emotional harm and indicators of possible Child Sexual Exploitation, Female Genital Mutilation, Radicalisation, Modern Slavery and Forced Marriage.
- be aware that abuse suffered by pupils with SEND, or who present challenging behaviour may be more difficult to identify than in the case of other pupils as their additional needs may prevent disclosure or mask indicators of abuse.
- be alert to the possibility of child-on-child abuse and harassment (including harmful sexual behaviour, sexual abuse and/or sexual violence) and do not dismiss behaviour such as sexual touching or verbal abuse or discrimination as 'part of growing up' or 'banter'.

- take responsibility for recording any disclosure by or about a pupil or concerns that you have, and passing on information, using the school procedures as soon as possible but immediately in urgent or potentially serious cases and in all cases on the same day.
- maintain discretion within the School environment.
- report appropriately and confidentially any behaviour by colleagues that raises concern in line with the school **Safeguarding Policy** and **Whistleblowing Policy** and procedures.
- be aware that if you feel that a safeguarding or child protection matter has not been dealt with effectively you should raise the matter with the appropriate senior member of staff to seek review or reconsideration.
- If you feel the after this that the concern persists you should contact the Early Help and the Local Authority Designated Officer.

5. CONFIDENTIALITY

Do

- treat information you receive about children and young people in a discreet and confidential manner and only share such information in line with the school policy and national Information Sharing guidance.
- be aware that the discussion of internal school matters, including via the internet / social networking sites, can be regarded as breaches of confidentiality or data protection and could risk bringing the school into disrepute, generate parental complaints or action under Data Protection legislation.

6. POWER AND POSITIONS OF TRUST

Do not use your position

- to intimidate, bully, humiliate, threaten, coerce or undermine children or young people.
- to form or promote relationships which are of a sexual nature, or otherwise inappropriate or which may become so.
- to promote your own religious, political or philosophical beliefs.

7. PROPRIETY AND BEHAVIOUR

Do

- be aware that certain circumstances in your private and personal life may impact upon your job and may result in consideration of your suitability to work with children and young people.
- be aware that this will include information that you may place on social networking sites (or is placed about you by others) or otherwise published.
- follow professional codes of conduct at all times.

Do not

- behave in a manner, which would lead any reasonable person to question your suitability to work with children or act as a role model.

8. DRESS AND APPEARANCE

Do not

- wear clothes, jewellery etc at school or in offsite school activities that are likely to be viewed as offensive, revealing, sexually provocative or distract or cause embarrassment.

- wear clothes, jewellery, shoes etc that could present a Health & Safety risk to yourself or others.

9. GIFTS, REWARDS AND FAVOURITISM

Do

- be aware of the school's policy on the giving and receiving ofgifts.
- ensure that gifts received or given in situations which may be misconstrued are declared or appropriately declined.

10. INFATUATIONS

Do

- report and record any incidents or indications that suggest a child or young person may have developed an infatuation with you or another adult.
- always maintain appropriate professional boundaries consistently with all pupils regardless of their age.

Do not

- discuss or disclose personal details about your relationships or family life.

11. COMMUNICATION WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE (INCLUDING THE USE OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY)

Do

- report to a senior manager any internet or other communication by a pupil to you outside of the normal school systems or content as soon as possible.
- ensure that you understand and follow the **school's Internet and E-mail Acceptable Use Policy** and **Online Safety and Computing Acceptance Usage Policy.**
- only use technology and devices (e.g. mobile phones, email) provided by the school to communicate with pupils, making sure that parents have given consent for this form of communication to be used in line with school policy.
- only make contact with pupils for professional reasons and in accordance with the above and school related policies.
- confine any such communication to school related content or discussion.

Do not

- Accept request from pupils (regardless of age) to establish Social Networking links outside of the school procedures.
- give personal contact details to pupils, including mobile telephone numbers, email addresses or website / social networking sites.
- use emails, social networking sites, mobile phones, other internet systems or written communication of any kind to send personal messages to a pupil.

12. SOCIAL CONTACT

Do

- make senior colleagues aware of any ongoing community activities or social contact with pupils' families.
- log any concerns you may have about contact with pupils or their families in the community or in your private life.

- consider the appropriateness of social contact according to your role.
- advise Senior Management of any unplanned social contact you have with a child.
- be aware that you should ensure that your behaviour in social situations where you may be in the company of pupils or their families must not compromise your position or reputation as a member of staff.

Do not

- have social contact with pupils unless this is part of a family or established parental social, sporting or other or community arrangements.

13. SEXUAL CONTACT

Do

- ensure that your relationships with children and young people clearly take place within the boundaries of a respectful professional relationship.
- be aware that sexual relationship or activity with a pupil is a criminal offence.

Do not

- have sexual relationships with any pupil or otherwise abuse your position of trust.
- have any form of communication with a pupil which could be interpreted as sexually suggestive or provocative i.e. verbal comments, letters, notes, electronic mail, phone calls, texts, physical contact.
- make sexualised remarks to, or about, a child/young person.
- discuss your own sexual relationships in the presence of children or young people.

14. PHYSICAL CONTACT

Do

- be aware there are some occasions when it is entirely appropriate for staff to have a level of physical contact with a child.
- be aware that it is crucial in all circumstances that staff only intentionally touch children in ways which are appropriate to their professional or agreed role and responsibilities or a specific circumstance or activity.
- be aware that even well-intentioned physical contact may be misconstrued by the child, an observer or by anyone to whom this action is described and should be avoided if not appropriate as above.
- always be prepared to report and explain actions and accept that all physical contact will be open to scrutiny.
- be aware that you need to take particular care in crowded or restricted areas such as corridors, changing rooms and some teaching areas in particular activities to avoid physical contact with pupils.

Do not

- indulge in 'horseplay' or other physical contact intended as a joke or in an attempt to diffuse challenging situations.
- touch a pupil in a way which may be considered indecent, inappropriate or aggressive.

Activities that require Physical Contact

Do

- explain to a child always the reason why contact is necessary and what form that contact will take.
- follow recommended professional subject guidance and school protocols.
- conduct such activities where they can be seen by others and as part of planned activities.

15. BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT AND PHYSICAL INTERVENTION

Do

- adhere to the school's **Behaviour Management (Including Restrictive Interventions) Policy** and use physical intervention as a last or emergency resort in order to prevent harm to the pupil or others.
- attempt to diffuse challenging situations wherever possible before resorting to physical intervention.
- seek the support of colleagues before intervening wherever possible.
- record and report as soon as possible after the event any incident where physical intervention has been used.
- be aware that there is no exact definition of 'Reasonable Force' and allegations of assault can be made against staff.

Do not

- act outside the school's **Behaviour Management (Including Restrictive Interventions)** Policy and procedures.
- act in temper.
- use physical intervention as a punishment.
- use more force than required for longer than required.
- compromise the safety and dignity of any adults or pupils involved.
- touch in a way that could be seen or portrayed as inappropriate.
- use sarcasm, demeaning or insensitive comments or degrading treatment.

16. CHILDREN IN DISTRESS

Do

- consider the way in which you offer comfort and reassurance to a distressed child in an age-appropriate and situation-appropriate manner.
- record and report situations which may give rise to concern from either party.

17. RESPECT AND PRIVACY

Do

- avoid any physical contact when pupils are in a state of undress.
- avoid any visually intrusive behaviour.
- follow the school supervision procedures in ensuring privacy and safety in changing areas.
- change for PE or other activities in staff designated places.

18. FIRST AID AND INTIMATE CARE

Do

- adhere to the school's **First Aid Policy, First Aid - Administration of Medicines Policy and Intimate Care Policy** for administering first aid, medication or intimate care.
- make other adults aware of such a task being undertaken.
- explain to the child what is happening.
- report and record any administration of first aid or medication.
- have regard to any individual health plan which is in place.

Do not

- administer first aid or intimate care unless you are specifically identified and trained to do so (for EYFS staff, please refer to the school's **EYFS Policy** and **Intimate Care Policy.**

19. ONE TO ONE SITUATIONS

Do

- inform other adults about meetings beforehand, assessing the need to have them present or close by.
- ensure there is an open door or visual access.
- consider the needs and circumstances of the child/children involved.
- use your professional judgement in such meetings and report any situation where a child does or says anything that gives cause for concern.

Do not

- meet or interact with pupils 1:1 in remote or secluded parts of the school.
- arrange meetings with children or young people off the school site unless in exceptional. circumstances and with the approval of a senior manager and parents.
- use 'engaged' or equivalent signs on internal doors when meeting with pupils.
- create blind or potentially vulnerable places within your teaching areas, e.g. covering internal or external windows.

20. HOME VISITS

Do

- agree the purpose for any home visit with senior management.
- adhere to agreed risk management strategies.
- always make detailed records including times of arrival and departure and work undertaken.
- ensure any behaviour or situation of concern is reported.

Do not

- enter a home if only the child or children are present unless as an emergency safety measure and in such a case alert school or the appropriate agency immediately.

21. TRANSPORTING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Do

- ensure that you do not transport children in any situation other than as part of school arranged activity unless in an emergency situation in the interests of the pupil's welfare.

- ensure that any impromptu or emergency arrangements of lifts are noted and can be justified.
- be aware that the safety and welfare of the child is your responsibility until they are safely passed over to a parent/carer or colleague.
- ensure parental consent is obtained and record details of the journey in accordance with agreed procedures.
- ensure that all arrangements take into account, vehicle, passenger and driver safety including having proper and appropriate insurance for the type of vehicle being driven.
- avoid situations where allegations against you or misunderstandings can arise.

22. TRIPS, EDUCATIONAL VISITS AND CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES (E.G. SPORTS OR MUSICAL & DRAMA EVENTS)

Do

- arrange for another adult to be present at out of school activities, unless otherwise agreed with a senior manager.
- undertake risk assessments in line with the school policy where applicable.
- ensure that these risk assessments take account of vulnerable or challenging pupils taking part in the event.
- ensure that parents are aware of the visit /activity.
- have appropriate parental consent to the activity.
- ensure that your behaviour remains professional and consistent with school practice at all times.
- maintain professionalism and do not allow pupils to use your firstname.
- ensure that any adult volunteers are appropriately vetted, supervised and briefed.

23. PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEO

Do

- be clear about the purpose of the activity and about what will happen to the images when the activity is concluded.
- be able to justify images of children in your possession.
- ensure the child/young person understands why the images are being taken.
- report any concerns about any inappropriate or intrusive photographs found.
- ensure that you are aware of any pupils whose parents/ carers have refused consent for photographs to be taken or published.
- be aware of and follow the school policy for the storage and use of personal mobile, smart phones and other forms of smart technology in school.

Do not

- use equipment not provided or authorised by the school to take, store or send images of children.
- take or display photographs without parental consent.
- place images on social networking sites other than the school official site.

24. ACCESS TO INAPPROPRIATE IMAGES AND INTERNET USAGE

Any attempt to access inappropriate material online will be reported to the school by the Internet Filtering Service and may lead to disciplinary action.

Do

- ensure that school equipment is not used to view or download adult pornography or other inappropriate material.
- ensure that pupils are not exposed to or have access to inappropriate material such as pornography, extremist material, gambling sites etc.
- ensure that school IT and internet policies are followed at all times.

Do not

- use personal IT or other photographic equipment in school without arrangement with senior staff.

25. USE OF MOBILE PHONES / SMART TECHNOLOGY BY STAFF

The use of mobile phones or other forms of smart technology by staff within the school environment, and around pupils more generally, has safeguarding implications.

Staff are not allowed to use their personal mobile phones or other personal smart technology devices during the school day when in the presence of pupils, including but not limited to in classrooms or communal areas (including outside within school grounds). Mobile phones should be switched off and left in a safe place during lesson times. As an exception to this, the school mobile phone may be used for the sole purpose of school business, for example the taking of photographs for displays or for school social media updates, or personal mobile phones may be used for short instances solely for allowing access to school online systems which require multi-factor authentication.

Any staff use of personal mobile phones during their working school day, other than for the exceptions specified above, should only be during breaks or free periods and must be discreet and appropriate, and not in the presence of pupils e.g. in the staff room or office.

Members of staff are permitted the use of mobile phones at times when no pupils are on site.

Staff should never contact pupils or parents from their personal mobile phone, or give their mobile phone number to pupils or parents, unless in an emergency or on a school trip. If a member of staff needs to make telephone contact with a pupil, a school telephone is to be used wherever possible. Staff should never send to, or accept from, colleagues or pupils, texts or images that could be viewed as inappropriate.

Failure to comply with this policy is likely to result in the enforcement of the disciplinary procedures as outlined in the Staff Code of Conduct and Employee Handbook.

26. UPDATING PERSONAL DETAILS

Staff must inform the school in writing of any changes in personal circumstances, such as change of address or marriage as soon as is practicable.

Staff must inform the Head (or other member of the Senior Leadership Team) **immediately** if there is a change in circumstances which might affect or impact on their ability to fulfil their role within the school, such as illness, medication or disqualification from teaching.

27. PRIVATE TUTORING OF PUPILS

Any private tuition that is requested by a parent, and occurs between teaching staff and St Hilda's pupils, outside of school, must first be discussed and agreed with the Headteacher in writing. Following a discussion with the Head, if the outcome is positive and appropriate for the child, the Head will confirm the agreement writing.

All tuition in this regard must be arranged via your school email address. The use of private email addresses for this purpose is a breach of personal data.

Any private tuition of a St Hilda's pupil that takes place outside of school, without the Headteacher's permission, is a breach of contract and will be liable for disciplinary action. Furthermore, Staff who initiate contact with parents to offer their tutoring services will be considered in breach of contract and liable for disciplinary action.

28. USE OF SCHOOL RESOURCES

Use of school resources for activities not related to or required by the school must have prior approval from a member of the Senior Leadership Team, for example: use of books for private tutoring, use of photocopiers or private use of school pool. All requests to use School resources need to be made in writing.

Parent contact details are considered to be a school resource, and as such the use of these details to contact a parent or child for any purpose, other than school related and agreed, will be considered as a breach of contract and liable for disciplinary action, in additional to being a reportable breach of GDPR legislation.

29. LOW LEVEL CONCERNS

St Hilda's promotes an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about adults working in the school are dealt with promptly and appropriately.

A low level concern is any concern – no matter how small – that an adult working in or on behalf of the school may have acted in a way that:

- is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work, and
- does not meet the harm threshold or is otherwise not serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO. (Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to: being over friendly with children, having favourites, taking photographs of children on their mobile phone, contrary to school policy, engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door, or humiliating children.)

All low level concerns must be shared responsibly with the DSL (or DDSL). The DSL (or DDSL) will record the concern and ensure that it is dealt with appropriately. If a pattern of behaviour moves from a low-level concern to meeting the harm threshold, the DSL or headteacher will refer this to the LADO.

30. **GENERAL GUIDANCE**

Remember:

If no advice, policies or guidelines for a specific situation exist, or if you are unsure, consult the Headmaster or Deputy Headteacher

If you need to take a particular course of action in an unplanned circumstance, which may vary from policies or which does not allow time for advice to be sought, record these actions with the Headmaster or Deputy Headteacher as soon as possible after the event.

If at any time you are concerned that an action or comment by yourself may be misinterpreted, or that a child behaves or makes a comment in a way that causes you concern, log this immediately with the Headmaster or Deputy Headteacher.

APPENDIX 1

Teachers' Standards July 2011 (last updated December 2021)

Part Two: Personal and professional conduct

A teacher is expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct.

The following statements define the behaviour and attitudes which set the required standard for conduct throughout a teacher's career:

- Teachers uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, by:
    - treating pupils with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to a teacher's professional position.
    - having regard for the need to safeguard pupils' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions.
    - showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others.
    - not undermining fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.
    - ensuring that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways which exploit pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law.
- Teachers must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they teach, and maintain high standards in their own attendance and punctuality.
- Teachers must have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities.

Please see the attached link for DfE guidance on Teachers Standards:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/61b73d6c8fa8f50384489c9a/Teachers__Standards_Dec_2021.pdf

This policy will be reviewed annually, by the Senior Management Team, in line with the school's review schedule for policies.