



Staff Code of Conduct (Safe Working Practices) Policy

Reviewed by Resources Committee – November 2022

1. Aims

This policy aims to set and maintain standards of conduct of all staff, to ensure a safe, happy, respectful and equitable school and workplace. The school's core values are excellence, integrity and leadership. All staff are expected to model these values in their daily conduct and work ethic. Any policy on behavior cannot be exhaustive, and in the event of conduct lapses that are not explicitly listed here, these core values will guide discussions.

Associated policies:

- School Safeguarding policy and procedures;
- Staff Discipline policy;
- Whistleblowing, low-level concerns, and allegations policies;
- Acceptable use of IT policy.

2. Duty of Care

All adults in Education should always act and be seen to act in the child's best interest; any conduct which any reasonable observer may regard as questionable should be avoided.

All staff will:

- Maintain high standards in their attendance and punctuality;
- Never use inappropriate or offensive language in school;
- Treat students 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 students' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law;
- Understand the statutory frameworks they must act within;
- Adhere to the Teachers' Standards.

Staff will not act in a way that would bring the school, or the teaching profession into disrepute. This extends to staff conduct outside of work, and covers relevant criminal offences, such as violence or sexual misconduct, as well as negative comments about the school on social media or otherwise.



3. Safeguarding Awareness

Staff have a duty to safeguard students from harm, and to report any concerns they have. This includes physical, emotional and sexual abuse, and neglect.

It is the responsibility of all staff at Torquay Boys' Grammar School to read and understand the school's Safeguarding policies and procedures. They must also read and understand at least Part One and Annex A of the document **Keeping Children Safe in Education**. The latest version should be read each year.

In order to keep staff safe, all staff should read supporting information on safer working practices and the document entitled **Guidance for Safer Working practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education 2019**

If a member of staff is in any doubt about any safeguarding issue they should seek clarification with the school's Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Information for Staff can be found here **L:\Safeguarding\Information For Staff\What All Staff Should Know**.

Any concerns about a member of staff should be raised using the appropriate whistle-blowing, low-level concerns or allegations policy.

The child protection flow chart should be consulted to assist with raising concerns.

4. Staff-Student Relationships

Staff will observe boundaries with students 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.

Staff must not use their power to intimidate, threaten, coerce or undermine students or to form or promote relationships with children which are of a sexual nature, or could become so and must not use their position to gain access to any information for their own advantage and/or the child's detriment.

Personal contact details should not be exchanged between staff and students, including social media profiles.



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.

5. Confidentiality

Staff must treat information they have about children and young people in a discreet and confidential way; if in doubt about sharing information staff should seek advice from a senior member of staff.

Should a child wish to speak or make a discreet allegation, two general principles are 'believe the child' and 'do not ask any more questions than necessary to help them explain what they wish to explain'. Children should not be questioned about disclosures, nor should any student be asked anything which could be construed as in any way leading.

At an initial disclosure, only use open questions such as 'what are you actually saying happened?'. Do not use phrases such as 'this is a very serious allegation' – it may be appropriate to discuss this at a later stage, but not at the time of disclosure.

Remember –

Tell me
Explain
Describe
(TED)

If a child discloses information, the member of staff should always write it down the information as soon as possible, and date the detail.

Never promise a child confidentiality, but do tell them you will limit the people you will inform and if possible tell them who you are passing the information to.

If staff are concerned that a child is in danger of significant harm and they have reason to believe that the matter is not being promptly or properly addressed they should contact Children's Social Services directly on 01803 208100.

All concerns should be followed up in writing using either CPOMS, or the pink referrals forms.

Advice on referrals can be found in the Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy.

If a disclosure is made concerning a member of staff, no questions should be asked and no details should be elicited. Any concerns about a member of staff should be raised using the



appropriate whistle-blowing, low-level concerns or allegations policy. Do not discuss the disclosure with colleagues, but pass to the relevant member of SMT as per the above policies.

6. Propriety and Behaviour

Adults should never make sexual remarks to or about a student; they should never discuss their own sexual relationships with or in the presence of students; they should never discuss a student's sexual relationship in inappropriate setting or contexts. It is essential that a member of staff would never make unprofessional personal comments which scapegoat, demean, humiliate or may be interpreted as such.

7. Dress and Appearance

Adults should wear clothing and appearance which promotes a positive and professional image. It is inappropriate to wear revealing or sexually provocative clothing. Tattoos should be covered, and clothing should not display offensive or political slogans.

Appropriate health and safety clothing and relevant coverings must be worn in the relevant areas/roles, as per the health and safety policy.

8. Smoking

Smoking and passive smoking are a risk to health. The school has a no smoking policy which includes vaping and e-cigarettes. In line with national legislation, all buildings and school grounds are designated no smoking areas. Staff wishing to smoke should do so off the school premises, away from the sight of students and visitors. We would request that you dispose of any cigarette ends appropriately. Smokers should be conscious of their professional appearance with regards to any lingering smoke smells on their persons. Those staff involved with handling of food should not smoke during the food preparation periods. It is the responsibility of each individual employee to uphold and comply with the smoking regulations.

9. Gifts, Rewards and Selection of Students

Adults should ensure that gifts received or given in situations which might be misconstrued are declared. Gifts should only be given as part of an agreed reward system. All selection procedures must be fair and agreed by more than one member of staff where practicable. Staff receiving excessive or expensive gifts from students or parents should report these to SMT.

10. Infatuations



Adults should report any indication that suggests that a student is infatuated with a member of staff.

11. Social Contact

Adults should always approve any planned social contact with students with senior colleagues. This social contact would only be part of a planned curricular or extra-curricular activity, following the trips planning procedures. Where any social contact may be regarded as compromising, the member of staff should advise SMT.

12. Communication and social media

School staff should ensure their social media profiles are not available to students. If they have a personal profile on social media sites, they should try and avoid using their full name, consider using a first and middle name, and set public profiles to private. Staff should not attempt to contact students 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 students' social media profiles. Staff will ensure they do not post any images online that identify children who are students at the school, without their consent. School news and communication with students should be conducted through official school social media accounts only.

Adults should be clear about the purpose of taking photographs, and communicate what will happen to the photographs to the students. Avoid making images in one-to-one situations.

Meeting rooms and offices should be used to have any adult confidential conversations.

School email should be used for business purposes only.

13. Acceptable use of technology

Staff are expected to sign the Acceptable Use Policy. 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.

Where possible, staff will use school equipment to take pictures of students; however, if this is not possible (e.g. during a school trip) and staff use personal mobile phones or cameras, the photos should not be stored on the devices any longer than is necessary, and should be uploaded onto the school network. Staff should not use personal mobile phones, or devices, in front of



students, unless for school business, conscious of the expectations for students use of such devices during the school day.

Staff must not engage in inappropriate use of social network sites. Staff should remain mindful of their digital footprint and exercise caution in all their use of social media or any other web-based presence they have. This includes written content, videos or photographs and views expressed either directly or by 'liking' certain pages or posts, or by following certain individuals or groups.

All on-line activity of students and staff within school is monitored through an external partner's software and reports regularly generated.

14. Physical Contact

Adults should be aware that even well-intentioned physical contact may be misconstrued by the child, observer or any person for whom contact is described. **Never touch a child in any way which could be seen as indecent.**

Always encourage students to undertake self-care tasks independently.

Adults should consider the way in which they offer comfort to a distressed student; always tell a colleague how they offered comfort.

In situations such as PE or similar, where physical contact may become necessary, staff should consider alternatives where it is anticipated that a student might misinterpret such contact. Always explain to the student why contact is necessary and what form the contact will take.

Adults should avoid any physical contact when students are in a state of undress; where there are changing rooms, staff should announce their intention of entering and avoid remaining in the room unless the students' needs require it.

Adults should not use force as a form of punishment; staff should try to diffuse situations before they escalate, keep parents informed of sanctions and adhere to the school's policy.

15. One-to-One Situations

Unless agreed with Senior Management staff should avoid meeting with students in remote, secluded areas of the school. Staff should ensure there is visual access and/or an open door in one-to-one situations, and avoid the use of 'engaged' or equivalent signs to deter interruptions. Where possible, inform another member of staff of the meeting beforehand and assess the need to have them close by.



15.1 Home Visits

Staff should agree the purpose of the home visit with SMT beforehand and should make a risk assessment to ensure that they are not exposed to unacceptable risk. Make detailed notes of times of arrival, departure and work undertaken.

15.2 Transporting Students

Adults should plan arrangements to ensure they are alone with the child for the minimum time possible and are aware that the safety and welfare of the student is their responsibility. The nature of the journey should be reported, the route and agreed procedures known and any specific needs a student may have should be considered.

16. Honesty and integrity

Staff should maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their role. This includes when dealing with students, handling money, claiming expenses and using school property and facilities. The school is funded by the tax payer, and therefore decision making should be mindful of value for money, working within the school budgets. School resources must not be used for personal gain.

Staff must not promote biased political values.

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.

Torquay Boys' Grammar School Multi Academy Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people.

TBGS MAT's commitment to equality and diversity means that this policy has been screened in relation to the use of gender-neutral language, jargon-free plain



TORQUAY BOYS' GRAMMAR SCHOOL

English, recognition of the needs of people with disability, promotion of the positive duty in relation to race and disability and avoidance of stereotypes. This document is available in alternative formats on request.