STAHS
PREP SENIOR SIXTH

Code of Conduct for Staff & Volunteers

Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
Related Document

September 2026

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STAHS

PREP SENIOR SIXTH

STAHS P01: SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION (Related Document)

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

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POLICY FRAMEWORK & REFERENCES

A. STAHS P01 Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy (and appropriate related documents)
B. STAHS P04 RD Use of Reasonable Force
C. STAHS P12 Health and Safety Policy (and appropriate related documents)
D. STAHS P13 Equal Opportunities Policy (and appropriate related documents)
E. STAHS P14 Data Protection Policy (and appropriate related documents)
F. STAHS P14 RD: Photography of Images of Pupils
G. STAHS P15 Electronic Information and Communications Policy (and appropriate related documents)
H. STAHS P15 RD: Acceptable Use Policy
I. STAHS P15 RD: Online Safety
J. STAHS P16 HR and Employment Policy (and appropriate related documents)
K. STAHS P16 RD: Absence Owing to Sickness or Injury
L. STAHS P16 RD: Whistleblowing
M. General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
N. Data Protection Act 2018
O. The Working Time Regulations 1998
P. Equalities Act 2010
Q. Sexual Offences Act 2003

This document must be read in conjunction with School policies enclosed in ***References A-F***.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. STAHS expects all pupils to receive high-quality teaching and learning in a positive and respectful environment.

1.2. Employees at the school should understand that their own behaviour, and the manner in which they conduct themselves with their colleagues, pupils, parents and other stakeholders, sets an example.

1.3. We recognise that the majority of staff members act appropriately and treat each other with dignity and respect; however, we consider it important to clarify the expected standards.

1.4. This policy forms part of a staff member's contract of employment and failure to comply with it, and with the associated School policies, may result in disciplinary action being taken, including legal action where this is warranted.

1.5. This document applies to all staff members who are:

- Employed by the school, including the Head and volunteers.
- This document does not apply to:
- Employees of external contractors.
- Self-employed contractors.
- These employees are governed by their employment contracts and any relevant laws pertaining to their activities within the school, for example, ***References M and N.***

2. SAFEGUARDING PUPILS

2.1. All staff members have a responsibility to safeguard pupils and protect their welfare. All staff members also have a responsibility to ensure that they provide a learning environment in which pupils feel safe, secure and respected.

2.2. To effectively safeguard pupils, staff members are required to follow the procedures outlined in this document and ***Reference A***, ensuring that they do not act in a way that may put pupils at risk of harm, or lead others to question their actions.

2.3. In accordance with ***Reference A***, staff members will be prepared to identify pupils who may be subject to, or at risk of, the following types of abuse, neglect and exploitation:

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect
- Child-on-Child abuse
- Serious violence
- FGM

2.4. If a staff member identifies a pupil who is subject to, or at risk of, the abuse and neglect mentioned above, they will follow the necessary reporting and referral procedures.

2.5. Any staff member that has concerns about a staff member's actions or intent that may lead to a pupil being put at risk of harm will report this in line with ***Reference L*** to the Head immediately so appropriate action can be taken.

2.6. If a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with the School, they will use other whistleblowing channels, including contacting the NSPCC's helpline on 0800 028 0285 (between the hours of 8:00am and 8:00pm Monday to Friday) or email help@nspcc.org.uk. Staff members can also access guidance at www.gov.uk/whistleblowing.

2.7. If the concern is regarding the Head of Senior or Head of Prep, staff will report this to the Principal of the St Albans Education Group and if the concern is regarding the Principal, staff will report this to the chair of the governing board as outlined in the Safeguarding Procedures.

2.8. All staff will partake in the appropriate safeguarding and child protection training; additionally, all staff will receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates at least annually.

2.9. Staff will be aware that confidentiality will never be promised to a pupil – staff will understand the procedure for if a pupil discloses a potential safeguarding issue, in accordance with ***Reference A***,.

2.10. Staff will be aware of the School's legal duty to refer anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm to, a child or vulnerable adult to the DBS – this includes where:

- The harm test is satisfied in respect of that individual
- The individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant offence, or if there is reason to believe that the individual has committed a listed relevant offence
- The individual has been removed from working in regulated activity or would have been removed if they had not left their post

3. APPEARANCE AND DRESS

3.1. The school expects that staff members will:

3.1.1. Ensure that their appearance is clean and neat when at work or representing the school.
3.1.2. Dress in a manner that is appropriate to their role.
3.1.3. Remember that they are role models for pupils, and that their dress and appearance should reflect this.
3.1.4. Not dress in a way that would cause embarrassment to pupils, parents, colleagues or other stakeholders.

4. ATTENDANCE

4.1. The school expects that staff members will:

- Attend work in accordance with their contract of employment and associated terms and conditions in relation to hours, days of work and holidays.
- Make routine medical and dental appointments outside of their working hours or during holidays where possible.
- Refer to ***Reference J*** if they need time off for any reason other than personal illness.
- Follow ***Reference K*** when they are absent from work due to illness or injury.

5. PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOUR AND CONDUCT

5.1. Staff members are expected to treat other colleagues, pupils, parents, and external contacts with dignity and respect.

5.2. The use of foul and abusive language will not be tolerated.

5.3. Discrimination, bullying, harassment or intimidation, including physical, sexual and verbal abuse, will not be tolerated.

5.4. Staff members will not misuse or misrepresent their position, qualifications or experience, or bring the school into disrepute.

5.5. Staff members will inform the Principal if they are subject to a criminal conviction, caution, ban, police enquiry, investigation or pending prosecution.

5.6. Staff will be aware that professional behaviour and conduct is expected to be extended to extra-curricular trips and visits too. All staff attending a trip or visits will act in accordance with this policy.

5.7. Staff will act appropriately in terms of the views they express (in particular political views) and the use of school resources at all times and will not use school resources for party political purposes.

6. CONDUCT OUTSIDE WORK

6.1. Staff may undertake work outside school, either paid or voluntary, provided that it does not conflict with the interests of the school. Teaching staff may not prepare external candidates for entry into the school. The nature of the work cannot be seen to bring the school into

disrepute, nor be at a level which may contravene the working time regulations or affect an individual's work performance.

6.2. Staff will not engage in outside work which could seriously damage the reputation and standing of the school or the employee's own reputation, or the reputation of other members of the school community. In particular, criminal offences that involve violence, possession or use of illegal drugs or sexual misconduct are unacceptable.

6.3. Staff will not engage in inappropriate use of social network sites which may bring themselves, the school, school community or employer into disrepute.

7. SMOKING, VAPING, ALCOHOL AND OTHER SUBSTANCES

7.1. Staff will not smoke/vape on, or within the immediate vicinity of, the school premises.

7.2. Staff will not smoke/vape whilst working with or supervising pupils off-site, such as when on educational visits and trips.

7.3. Cigarettes and vapes should not be brought to the school site.

7.4. The taking of illegal drugs or alcohol during working hours is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Staff members must never attend work under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.

7.5. If alcohol or drug usage impacts a staff member's performance, the school has the right to discuss the matter with the employee and take appropriate action in accordance with the school's disciplinary procedures, including referral to the police.

8. HEALTH AND SAFETY

8.1. Staff members will:

- Be familiar with and adhere to ***Reference C*** and ensure that they take every action to keep themselves and everyone in the school environment safe and well.
- Comply with health and safety regulations and use any safety equipment and protective clothing which is supplied to them.
- Comply with hygiene requirements.
- Comply with accident reporting requirements.
- Inform the Head of any paid work which is undertaken elsewhere, for compliance with ***Reference O*** (as amended).

9. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

9.1. Staff members are required to declare their interests, both personal and financial, where the group or organisation they are affiliated with would be considered to be in conflict with the ethos of the school.

9.2. For the purposes of this policy, a financial conflict of interest is one where there is, or appears to be, opportunity for personal financial gain, financial gain for close relatives or friends, or where it may be reasonable for a third party to take the view that financial benefits may affect an individual's actions.

9.3. The term 'financial interest' means anything of monetary value, including the following:

- Payments for services
- Equity interests
- Intellectual property rights
- Hospitality or gifts

9.4. Examples of financial interests that must be declared include, but are not limited to, equity interests in services considered for use by the school.

9.5. Non-financial conflicts of interest can also come into conflict, or be perceived to come into conflict, with an individual's obligations or commitments to the school. These interests may include any benefit or advantage including, but not limited to, direct or indirect enhancement of an individual's career or gain for immediate family or someone with whom the individual has a close relationship.

9.6. Examples of situations that could give rise to non-financial conflicts of interest include the following:

- Pressure or temptation to accept gifts, inducements or hospitality
- Participating in the appointment, hiring, promotion, supervision or evaluation of a person with whom the individual has a close personal relationship
- Where a member of staff has or develops a close personal relationship with a colleague Membership to a trade union or staff representative group does not need to be declared.

9.7. Staff members will also carefully consider whether they need to declare their relationship with any individual where this might cause a conflict with school activities.

9.8. Failure to make a relevant declaration of interests is a very serious breach of trust and, therefore, if employees are in doubt about a declaration, they are advised to contact the school or trade union.

9.9. All declarations, including nil returns, will be submitted in writing to the Head for inclusion on the Register of Business Interests.

10. CONDUCT TOWARDS PUPILS

10.1. The school expects that staff will:

- Treat all pupils equally and be fair and consistent in offering rewards and sanctions.
- Be mindful of the needs of individual pupils in their care, particularly relating to pastoral matters SEND accommodations.
- Not engage in 'banter' with pupils whereby the member of staff ridicules or humiliates any child, even in a 'joking' manner.
- Not be perceived to have 'favourite' pupils: e.g., staff will not use pet names or, spend more time with certain pupils or groups of pupils than others for social or casual conversations.
- Ensure that pupils are not treated differently due to their race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, or any other protected characteristic as outlined in ***Reference P.***

- Never shout at or act in a threatening or aggressive manner towards a pupil/pupils or behave in a manner that could be perceived as threatening or aggressive by a pupil.

11. RELATIONSHIPS WITH PUPILS

11.1. The school expects that staff will:

- Maintain professional boundaries and relationships with pupils at all times, and will consider whether their actions are warranted, proportionate, safe and necessary.
- Act in an open and transparent way that would not lead to others questioning their actions.
- Ensure that they do not establish social contact with pupils for the purpose of securing a friendship, or to pursue or strengthen a relationship.
- Ensure that they do not develop personal or sexual relationships with pupils: this includes sexual remarks and discussing their own sexual relationships with, or in the presence of, pupils.
- Only contact pupils via the school's established mechanisms: personal phone numbers, email addresses or social media platforms will not be used to contact pupils.
- Under ***Reference Q***, it is an offence for a person aged 18 or over to have a sexual relationship with a child under 18 where that person is in a position of trust in respect to that child, even if the relationship is consensual.

12. PHYSICAL CONTACT WITH PUPILS

12.1. The school understands that there are circumstances in which it is entirely necessary for staff to have physical contact with pupils, e.g. when applying first aid and assisting with intimate care, but staff will only do so in a professional and appropriate manner in line with relevant school policies.

12.2. When physical contact is made with pupils, it is imperative that it is conducted in a way which is responsive to the pupil's needs, is of limited duration and is appropriate to their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background.

12.3. Staff will seek the pupil's permission, where possible, before initiating contact.

12.4. Staff will always use their professional judgement when determining what physical contact is appropriate, as this may differ between pupils. As such, the pupil's feelings and wishes will always be taken into account.

12.5. Staff will never touch a pupil in a way which is indecent and will always be prepared to explain their actions.

12.6. Staff will be aware that even well-intentioned physical contact may be misconstrued by a pupil, an observer or by anyone to whom this action is described and, therefore, will be prepared to justify their actions.

12.7. Staff will not engage in rough play, tickling or play fights with pupils.

12.8. Extra caution will be taken where it is known that a pupil has previously suffered from abuse or neglect.

12.9. Physical contact will never be secretive; if a member of staff believes an action could be

misinterpreted, this will be reported to the Head of Prep or Senior and appropriate procedures will be followed.

12.10. Where it is necessary in PE classes for teachers to demonstrate use of equipment, this will be conducted with another member of staff if possible. If a pupil is required to participate, their consent will be given before doing so.

12.11. If a child is in distress and in need of comfort as reassurance, staff may use age-appropriate physical contact, such as placing their hand on the pupil's shoulder. Staff should not hug a pupil. Staff will remain self-aware of their actions at all times and ensure that their contact is not threatening, intrusive or subject to misinterpretation.

12.12. Staff may also use reasonable force as a means of physical contact with pupils for restraint purposes, such instances will always be in accordance with ***Reference B***.

13. CONDUCT TOWARDS ALUMNI

13.1. The school expects that:

- Staff will maintain the professional standards set out in this Code of Conduct when engaging with alumni, as staff are representatives of the School even in social situations.
- Staff may connect with alumni via their professional social media channels (e.g., LinkedIn) once a pupil leaves school (e.g., after 31 August of Year 13), and contact must remain professional rather than social.
- Staff should not connect with alumni via personal social media channels before three years has passed between the pupil leaving school (e.g., after August of Year 13) and making the social media connection.
- Staff should not initiate social medial contact with alumni except in a professional capacity (e.g., to ask an alumnus in a particular industry to contribute to a careers event).
- Under no circumstances should staff connect on social media with any pupil or alumnus under the age of 18.
- Staff should report to the DSL, Head or Principal any unwanted or harassing online or in-person conduct by an alumnus.
- Personal relationships, including friendships and romantic or sexual relationships between staff and recent alumni are discouraged in the strongest terms. In some cases the School may view such relationships as professional misconduct. There are examples in England of secondary school staff being prosecuted in court for conducting relationships with school leavers, even where the school leaver was aged 18.

14. SHOWERING AND CHANGING

14.1. Pupils are entitled to respect and privacy whilst they are changing before/after PE; however, a level of supervision is required to ensure that pupils are safe, and that they are not subjected to bullying.

14.2. The supervision will be appropriate to the needs and ages of the pupils, and sensitive to the potential for embarrassment.

14.3. Staff will announce their intention of entering the changing room to allow pupils to maintain their privacy. Staff will never change or shower in the same area as pupils.

15. TRANSPORTING PUPILS

15.1. Staff must not use their own vehicles except in emergency situations or when pre-approved by a member of the relevant Senior Leadership Team at Prep or Senior.

15.2. When it is necessary to transport pupils off-site, staff will ensure that the transport arrangements of the vehicle meet all legal requirements, they have an appropriate license and the vehicle is roadworthy, has a valid MOT certificate and is insured. The welfare of all pupils in the vehicle is the responsibility of the member of staff driving.

16. FINANCIAL INDUCEMENTS

16.1. Staff members will:

- Familiarise themselves and comply with the school's financial regulations.
- Declare to the Head of Prep or Senior, in writing, any gifts received, with the exception of:
  - Low cost (less than £50), functional items suitable for business rather than personal use and displaying the supplier's logo – these items may be accepted.
  - Gifts offered by parents or pupils to school staff to express their gratitude, but staff members should always refuse monetary gifts. Gift vouchers worth more than £50 should be declared to the Head of Prep or Senior.
  - Hospitality in the form of meals and drinks where it is part of a normal business meeting.
  - Authorised visits to exhibitions, demonstrations, conferences, business meals and social functions in connection with the school's business, which shall be at the school's expense.
- Not accept a personal gift, payment, or other incentive from a business contact – any such gifts should be returned.
- Declare any gift that cannot be returned to the Head, who will decide how it will be used.
- Only accept offers to specific events after authorisation from the Head.
- Where the Head is the staff member in receipt of a gift or hospitality, they will declare this to the Chair of Governors.

17. ACCEPTABLE USE OF TECHNOLOGY

17.1. Staff will adhere to the procedures outlined in ***References H and I*** at all times.

17.2. Staff are required to employ the highest security settings on any personal profiles they may have.

17.3. Staff will not engage in inappropriate use of social networking sites including contacting pupils or their family members, accepting or inviting friend requests from pupils or their family members, or following pupils or their family members on social media.

17.4. The school understands that some staff members are also parents of pupils at the school and, therefore, may wish to contact other parents. When doing so, staff will exercise their professional judgement and will not contact family members on social media if this would lead to a conflict of interest.

17.5. Staff will remain mindful of their use of social media and their web-based presence including written content, videos or photographs, and views expressed directly or indirectly which may bring themselves, the school or the school community into disrepute.

18. PREMISES, EQUIPMENT AND COMMUNICATION

18.1. School equipment and systems are available only for school-related activities and will not be used for the fulfilment of another job or for personal use, unless specifically authorised by the Head.

18.2. Illegal, inappropriate or unacceptable use of school equipment or communication systems may result in disciplinary action and, in serious cases, could lead to an employee's dismissal.

18.3. Employees receiving inappropriate communication or material, or who are unsure about whether something he/she proposes to do might breach this policy, should seek advice from the Head.

18.4. The school reserves the right to monitor emails, phone calls, internet activity or document production, principally in order to avoid offensive or nuisance material and to protect systems from viruses, but also to ensure proper and effective use of systems.

18.5. Communication systems may be accessed when the school suspects that the employee has been misusing systems or facilities, or for the investigation of suspected fraud or other irregularity. Access will be secured by the systems manager, only with the permission of the governing board.

18.6. Passwords should not be shared and access to computer systems must be kept confidential except on the express request of the Head or systems manager. Breaches of this confidentiality may be subject to disciplinary action.

18.7. School equipment that is used outside the premises, e.g. laptops, will be returned to the school when the employee leaves employment or if requested to do so by the Head.

19. PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEOS

19.1. Photographs and videos will only be taken using school equipment – using personal phones, cameras and any electronic device with imaging sharing capabilities for this purpose is prohibited, in accordance with ***References G and H***.

19.2. Consent for taking photographs will be obtained from parents, or the pupil themselves, if they are deemed old enough and able to make the decision for themselves.

19.3. The age of consent that is legislated is 13 and above; however, this is only applicable for online services provided directly to children. For everything else, an appropriate age for consent is considered on a case-by- case basis by the Date Protection Officer, the Head and a pupil's parents (where appropriate).

19.4. Pupils who have not provided consent, either personally or via their parents, to have their photograph taken or be filmed will have their wishes respected, in line with ***Reference F***.

19.5. The Head will be notified of the proposed use of the imagery or video and the equipment and ensure that the use of such is included in lesson plans where this is necessary.

19.6. All photographs and videos will be available for scrutiny, and staff will be prepared to justify the images or footage taken.

19.7. Careful consideration will always be given to the activities which are being filmed or photographed, to ensure that images or videos are not indecent and cannot be misused.

20. DATA PROTECTION AND CONFIDENTIALITY

20.1. Regarding personal and sensitive data, staff members are required, under ***References M and N***, to:

20.1.1. Consider the legal basis for collecting the data, ensuring that this is documented.

20.1.2. Ensure that the data is stored on a GDPR-compliant server, and that the data is not held for any longer than necessary.

20.1.3. Securely dispose of the data when the relevant retention period ends.

20.2. Staff members will not disclose sensitive information about the school, its employees or the LA to other parties.

20.3. The only exception whereby it is acceptable for a staff member to disclose information that would otherwise be considered confidential is when the confidential information gives rise to concerns about the safety or welfare of a pupil.

20.4. Staff members have the right to request access to data that is held about them. Such requests will be made to the Head in writing in accordance with ***Reference E***.

21. PROBITY OF RECORDS

21.1. The deliberate falsification of documents, such as references, academic qualifications or legal documents, is unacceptable. Where a staff member falsifies records or other documents, including those held electronically, this will be regarded as a serious disciplinary matter and potentially a criminal offence.

22. CONTACTS

22.1. Staff members will not use school business contacts for acquiring materials or services at trade/discount prices for non-school activities, unless participating in concessionary schemes arranged by trade unions or other such groups.