STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT

Public Sector Equality Duty

We have carefully considered and analysed the impact of these policies on equality and the possible implications for those with protected characteristics, as part of our commitment to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

Approved by: Headteacher and SLT, November 2026	
Last reviewed: November 2026	**Next review due:** November 2027

CONTENTS

1. Aims, Scope and Principles	2
2. Legislation and Guidance	2
3. General Obligations	3
4. Safeguarding	3
5. Sexual Harassment	4
6. Staff-Student Relationships	4
7. Communication and Social Media	5
8. Acceptable Use of Technology	5
9. Confidentiality	5
10. Honesty and Integrity	5
11. Dress Code	5
12. Conduct Outside of Work	5
13. Conflict of Interest for Staff with Children at St Peter's	6
14. Monitoring Arrangements	6
15. Links with other Policies	6

1. AIMS, SCOPE AND PRINCIPLES

We have carefully considered and analysed the impact of this policy on equality and the possible implications for those with protected characteristics, as part of our commitment to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

This policy aims to set and maintain standards of conduct that we expect all staff to follow.

By creating this policy, we aim to ensure our school is an environment where everyone is safe, happy and treated with respect.

Many of the principles in this code of conduct are based on the Teachers' Standards.

School staff have an influential position in the school and will act as role models for students by consistently demonstrating high standards of behaviour.

We expect that all teachers will act in accordance with the personal and professional behaviours set out in the Teachers' Standards.

We expect all support staff, governors and volunteers to also act with personal and professional integrity, respecting the safety and wellbeing of others.

Our school ethos is centred around the acknowledgement that each person is made in the image of God, we are therefore committed to fostering relationships in which the inherent dignity of all persons is recognised and respected.

Failure to follow the code of conduct may result in disciplinary action being taken, as set out in our staff disciplinary procedures.

Please note that this code of conduct is not exhaustive. If situations arise that are not covered by this code, staff will use their professional judgement and act in the best interests of the school and its students.

2. LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

In line with the statutory safeguarding guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education, we should have a staff code of conduct, which should cover acceptable use of technologies (including the use of mobile devices), staff/student relationships and communications, including the use of social media.

This policy also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

3. GENERAL OBLIGATIONS

Staff set an example to students. They 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
- Staff must have a zero-tolerance approach to any form of sexism, racism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobia, sexual violence, sexual harassment, and derogatory behaviour
- Understand the statutory frameworks they must act within
- Adhere to the Teachers' Standards

4. SAFEGUARDING

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.

Staff will familiarise themselves with our child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures, and the Prevent initiative, and ensure they are aware of the processes to follow if they have concerns about a child.

All staff will read part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)

Our child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures are available here: https://tinyurl.com/eyjdnvrw New staff will also be given copies on arrival.

4.1 ALLEGATIONS THAT MAY MEET THE HARM THRESHOLD

This section applies to all cases in which it is alleged that anyone working in the school, including a supply teacher, trainee teacher, volunteer or contractor, has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child, and/or
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, and/or
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children, and/or
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children – this includes behaviour taking place inside or outside of school

We will deal with any such allegation quickly and in a fair and consistent way that provides effective child protection while also supporting the individual who is the subject of the allegation.

A 'case manager' will lead any investigation. This will be the headteacher, or the chair of governors where the headteacher is the subject of the allegation.

4.2 LOW-LEVEL CONCERNS ABOUT MEMBERS OF STAFF

A low-level concern is a behaviour towards a child by a member of staff that does not meet the harm threshold, is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, and may be as simple as causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt'. For example, this may include:

- Being over-friendly with children
- Having favourites
- Taking photographs of children on a personal device
- Engaging in 1-to-1 activities where they can't easily be seen
- Humiliating students

Low-level concerns can include inappropriate conduct inside and outside of work.

All staff should share any low-level concerns they have using the reporting procedures set out in our child protection and safeguarding policy. We also encourage staff to self-refer if they find themselves in a situation that could be misinterpreted. If staff are not sure whether behaviour would be deemed a low-level concern, we encourage staff to report it.

All reports will be handled in a responsive, sensitive and proportionate way.

Unprofessional behaviour will be addressed, and the staff member supported to correct it, at an early stage.

This creates and embeds a culture of openness, trust and transparency in which our values and expected behaviour are constantly lived, monitored and reinforced by all staff, while minimising the risk of abuse.

Reporting and responding to low-level concerns is covered in more detail in our child protection and safeguarding policy. This is available here: https://tinyurl.com/eyjdnvrw

Our procedures for dealing with allegations will be applied with common sense and judgement.

4.3 WHISTLE-BLOWING

Whistle-blowing reports wrongdoing that it is "in the public interest" to report. Examples linked to safeguarding include:

- Students' or staff's health and safety being put in danger
- Failure to comply with a legal obligation or statutory requirement
- Attempts to cover up the above, or any other wrongdoing in the public interest

Staff are encouraged to report suspected wrongdoing as soon as possible. Their concerns will be taken seriously and investigated, and their confidentiality will be respected.

Staff should consider the examples above when deciding whether their concern is of a whistle-blowing nature. Consider whether the incident(s) was illegal, breached statutory or school procedures, put people in danger or was an attempt to cover any such activity up.

Staff should report their concern to the headteacher. If the concern is about the headteacher, or it is believed they may be involved in the wrongdoing in some way, the staff member should report their concern to the vice chair of governors.

Concerns should be made in writing wherever possible. They should include names of those committing wrongdoing, dates, places and as much evidence and context as possible. Staff raising a concern should also include details of any personal interest in the matter.

For our school's detailed whistle-blowing process, please refer to our whistle-blowing policy.

Reporting and responding to low-level concerns is covered in more detail in our child protection and safeguarding policy.

5. SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment is any unwanted physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct of a sexual nature that has a purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. It also includes treating someone less favourably because they've submitted or refused to submit to unwanted conduct of a sexual nature in the past, or harassment related to sex or gender reassignment. When this behaviour is unwanted, it includes (but isn't limited to):

- Unwanted physical conduct or 'horseplay' including touching, pinching, pushing and grabbing
- Continued suggestions for sexual activity after it has been made clear that such suggestions are unwelcome
- Sending or displaying material that is pornographic, or that some people might find offensive
- Unwelcome sexual advances or suggestive behaviour (which the harasser may perceive as harmless)
- Offensive emails, text messages or social media content
- Comments and jokes of a sexual nature
- Sexually suggestive looks and staring
- Sexual propositions and advances
- Promising things in return for sexual favours
- Physical contact such as massaging, hugging or kissing
- Sexual contact on social media

Staff will help create a positive environment that works to prevent sexual harassment. This includes calling out sexual harassment that they witness. All witnesses will be provided with appropriate support and will be protected from victimisation.

If a staff member is concerned at any point about incidents of sexual harassment (either directed at them or someone else), they should report their concern to the headteacher. If the concern is about the headteacher, or it is believed they may be involved in the wrongdoing in some way, the staff member should report their concern to the chair of the governing board. The school will investigate any complaints in a timely, respectful and confidential manner.

All staff will receive training on recognising and responding to incidents of sexual harassment. The school will monitor the treatment and outcomes of any complaints of sexual harassment or victimisation received to make sure that they are properly investigated and resolved, those who report or act as witnesses are not victimised, repeat offenders are dealt with appropriately, cultural clashes are identified and resolved and workforce training is targeted where needed.

6. STAFF-STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS

Staff will observe proper 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.

If staff members and students must spend time on a one-to-one basis, staff will ensure that:

- This takes place in a public place that others can access
- Others can see into the room
- A colleague or line manager knows this is taking place

Staff should avoid contact with students outside of school hours if possible.

Personal contact details should not be exchanged between staff and students. This includes social media profiles.

While we are aware many students and their parents may wish to give gifts to staff, for example, at the end of the school year, gifts from staff to students are not acceptable.

If a staff member is concerned at any point that an interaction between themselves and a student may be misinterpreted, or if a staff member is concerned at any point about a fellow staff member and a student, this should be reported in line with the procedures set out in our child protection and safeguarding policy.

7. COMMUNICATION AND SOCIAL MEDIA

School staff's social media profiles should not be available to students. If they have a personal profile on social media sites, they should not use their full name, as students may be able to find them. Staff should consider using a first and middle name instead 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' or parents' social media profiles.

Staff will ensure that they do not post any images online that identify children who are students at the school without their consent.

8. ACCEPTABLE USE OF TECHNOLOGY

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. It is a criminal offence to take and share nude or semi-nude images, including those generated by AI, of anyone under the age of 18.

Staff will not use personal mobile phones and laptops, or school equipment for personal use in front of students. They should not use their own mobile phone even for school, apart from in exceptional circumstances.

They will also not store any pictures/videos of students on their personal mobile phone or camera.

Staff must enforce the school's policy prohibiting the use of mobile phones throughout the school day. Even Sixth Form students are only permitted to use their phones within designated spaces and at designated times.

We have the right to monitor emails and internet use on the school IT system. When sending an email concerning a student or staff member, staff should avoid using the full name of the subject – using initials or first name is recommended.

Staff should be aware of the school's ICT Acceptable use policy – appendix 1.4 of the Data Protection Policy.

9. CONFIDENTIALITY

In the course of their role, members of staff are often privy to sensitive and confidential information about the school, staff, students and their parents.

This information should never be:

- Disclosed to anyone unless required by law or with consent from the relevant party or parties
- Used to humiliate, embarrass or blackmail others
- Used for a purpose other than what it was collected and intended for

This does not overrule staff's duty to report child protection concerns to the appropriate channel where staff believe a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm, as detailed further in our child protection and safeguarding policy. All staff must ensure they are registered on MyConcern in order that they can report any safeguarding concerns (https://www.myconcern.education/).

10. 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.

Staff will not accept bribes. Gifts that are worth more than £25 must be declared and recorded on the gifts and hospitality register via the School Business Manager or Finance Manager.

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

Sharing of information with the school

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.

11. DRESS CODE

Staff will dress in a professional and appropriate manner – this includes footwear. Outfits will not be overly revealing, and we ask that tattoos that could be considered offensive are covered up. Clothes will not display any offensive or political slogans.

12. CONDUCT OUTSIDE OF WORK

Staff will not act in a way that would bring the school, or the teaching profession, into disrepute. This covers conduct including but not limited to relevant criminal offences, such as violence or sexual misconduct, as well as negative comments about the school on social media. Staff must also be mindful of any posts made on social media and similar platforms that could bring the school into disrepute by their association with the school and recommend staff keep settings private should they choose to use social media.

13. CONFLICT OF INTEREST FOR STAFF WITH CHILDREN AT ST PETER'S

The school recognises that potentially it can be difficult if a staff member has a child at the school should they wish to raise a concern. Therefore, the school recommends that if there is another person with parental responsibility that this individual should communicate with the school. If this is not possible, the staff member must ensure they do not have unfair access to staff or student records, and they should not initiate contact using their work email. This will help to keep the boundaries clear and distinct and will help the matter to be dealt with in a professional manner.

14. MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS

This policy will be reviewed annually but can be revised as needed. It will be approved by the Headteacher.

Our governing board will ensure this code of conduct is implemented effectively and will ensure appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard children and deal with any concerns.

15. LINKS WITH OTHER POLICIES

This policy links with our policies on:

- Staff disciplinary procedures, which will be used if staff breach this code of conduct. It also sets out examples of what we will deem as misconduct and gross misconduct
- Data protection policies
- Staff grievance procedures
- Child protection and safeguarding
- Gifts and hospitality
- Online safety
- Whistleblowing policy