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# **SPORTING STARS ACADEMY STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT**

**Current Version Valid from January 2024**

**To be Reviewed in September 2025**

**Reviewed by The Directors**

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### 1. Aims, Scope and Principles

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, which secures the well-being and very best outcomes for students.

We expect that all teachers will act in accordance with the personal and professional behaviours set out in 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, integrity and respecting the safety and well-being of others.

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

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 2023](#), we should have a staff code of conduct, covering low-level concerns; allegations against staff and whistle-blowing;

as well as acceptable use of technologies (including the use of mobile devices); staff/student relationships and communications, including the use of social media.

### **3. General Obligations**

All staff must:

- Place the well-being, safety and learning of students at the centre of their professional practice
- Treat all staff and students fairly and with respect, and take their knowledge, views, opinions and feelings seriously
- Seek to work in partnership with parents and carers, respecting their views and promoting understanding and co-operation to support the young person's learning and well-being in and out of school
- Take responsibility for their own actions and behaviour and avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions
- Act in a way which supports and upholds the reputation and values of the school
- Demonstrate high standards of conduct towards all members of the school community
- Communicate in a professional, courteous, and respectful manner, whether on site, in the immediate vicinity of school premises or when representing the school. Inappropriate or offensive language must not be used at any time
- Exhibit and role model professional and personal integrity and honesty at all times
- Work and be seen to work in a professional, open and transparent way
- Discuss and/or take advice promptly from their line manager or another senior member of staff over any incident that may give rise to concern
- Maintain high standards in their attendance and punctuality
- Show tolerance and respect for the rights of others
- 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.

Our child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures are available on the information section of our website. 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, 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/executive headteacher, or the proprietor 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 on our school website and also upon request.

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

#### *4.3 Low-level concerns about members of staff*

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 proprietor.

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.

### **5. 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 in to the room
- A colleague or line manager knows this is taking place

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

Social media details should not be exchanged between staff and students.

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.

### **6. Communication and Social Media**

Communication between students and adults, by whatever method, should take place within clear and explicit professional boundaries.

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,

Staff must:

- Never give their personal contact details to students, including their mobile telephone number.

- Only make contact with students for professional reasons through official school email addresses and telephones, not via personal media.
- Not use internet or web-based communication channels to send personal messages to a student.
- Not have images of students stored on personal cameras, devices or home computers.
- Not make images of students available without permission from parents and senior teachers.
- Consider the appropriateness of their social contact according to their role and nature of their work.
- Report and record any situation, which they feel, might compromise the school or their own professional standing

Staff should be aware of the school's online safety policy.

### **7. 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.

Staff will not use personal mobile phones and laptops, or school equipment for personal use, in school hours or in front of students. They will also not use personal mobile phones or cameras to take pictures of students.

We have the right to monitor emails and internet use on the school IT system.

### **8. 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.

### **9. 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.

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.

#### **10. Dress Code**

Staff must have a smart, professional and clean appearance at all times. In addition, staff should ensure they are dressed decently, safely and appropriately for the tasks they undertake.

Appropriate personal presentation will be business/ professional attire unless specialist roles or activities or the environment dictate otherwise.

Footwear must be smart, formal and safe.

Staff must ensure their appearance and clothing are not likely to be viewed as discriminatory, offensive or revealing.

#### **11. 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 are required to notify the Headteacher (or the most senior member of staff in their absence) immediately of any allegation/s of misconduct that are of a safeguarding nature made against them (or implicating them), by a child or adult in relation to any outside work or interest (whether paid or unpaid) and, of any arrest or criminal charge whether child related or not.

**Criminal Charges and Convictions:** In accordance with the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 staff must notify HR/ headteacher of all convictions and cautions that have not been filtered as protected. The nature of the conviction or caution will be considered with reference to the risks in the role and the reputation of the academy.

Staff must notify HR/the Headteacher immediately if charged with any criminal offence or if convicted of any criminal offence; this includes cautions. Failure to notify HR/the Headteacher will constitute grounds for disciplinary action.

#### **12. Review**

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

Our Headteacher 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.

#### **13. Links with Other Policies**

This policy links with our policies on:

- Staff disciplinary procedures, found in our staff handbook, 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
- Staff grievance procedures as outlined in our staff handbook

- [Safeguarding Policy](#)
- [Social Media & E-Safety Policy](#)
- [Whistleblowing Policy](#)