



# Staff Code of Conduct

## **Purpose**

At Ursuline Preparatory School we believe that all those working with children must set an appropriate example. School staff are in a unique position of influence and must adhere to behaviour that sets a good example and acts as a positive role model to all pupils within the school.

This Staff Code of Conduct applies to all staff working in the school (whether paid or unpaid, whatever their position, role or responsibilities).

This Code is applicable to all pupils, including those in the EYFS.

This Code is interlinked with other relevant school policies including the school's E-Safety and Social Network Policy, Low-Level Concerns Policy, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures (including Appendices), the IT Acceptable Use Policy and the Whistleblowing Policy and must be read in conjunction with these documents. (This is not an exhaustive list).

## **Expected Behaviour**

As a member of staff your behaviour and professional conduct must set a good example to all pupils within the Ursuline Preparatory School. Each member of staff has a responsibility to uphold our core values and reputation as an excellent educational establishment, both inside and outside of normal working hours. School staff are required to establish and maintain appropriate professional boundaries in their relationships with children and young people. Relationships between all staff, governors, pupils and their parents/carers should be mutually respectful at all times. The school aims to provide a setting based on trust, honesty and respect for all.

As a minimum staff should:

- Demonstrate high standards of conduct in order to encourage our pupils to do the same
- Avoid putting yourself at risk of allegations of abuse or unprofessional conduct
- Take reasonable care of pupils/students under your supervision with the aim of ensuring their safety and welfare at all times

### **Professional distance**

There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate for staff to have physical contact with pupils. However, it is crucial that they only do so in ways appropriate to their professional role. When physical contact is made with pupils this should be in response to their needs at the time, of limited duration and appropriate given their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background. It is not possible to be specific about the appropriateness of each physical contact, since an action that is appropriate with one pupil in one set of circumstances may be inappropriate in another, or with a different pupil.

If any form of manual/physical touching is required, it should be provided openly. Where possible, staff should avoid being alone with a pupil. Where this is impracticable e.g. a timetabled individual lesson or essential car journey, staff should be sensible e.g. keep an open door or be in a room that has a window in the door, sit the child in the back seat etc. There might be rare occasions when students visit the homes of members of staff e.g. those staff who have their own children at the school. It is common sense that these visits occur with parental permission and that staff should be mindful of the potential difficulties of such situations.

In sporting situations manual/physical touching should be provided according to guidelines provided by the appropriate National Governing Body.

When children are changing, (e.g. for PE, swimming etc.) staff should provide an appropriate level of supervision, whilst being mindful of maintaining the children's privacy.

## **Intimate Care**

There may be occasions where intimate care is necessary, for example when a child requires help with toileting (particularly children in the EYFS and Infants). When dealing with these incidents staff should inform another member of staff that they are assisting the child in this manner and should be mindful of maintaining the child's privacy as appropriate.

## **Transporting Pupils**

There may be occasions when staff are required to transport pupils, e.g. to swimming lessons and other off site activities. The Headteacher must give permission for any such occasions where pupils are transported using private vehicles. There is a separate School Minibus Policy relating to transporting pupils via the minibuses.

## **Physical intervention (control and restraint) - the use of reasonable force**

Corporal punishment (and the threat of the administration of corporal punishment) is prohibited in all independent and maintained schools. It is always unlawful to use force as a punishment.

The whole school approach to keeping pupils and staff safe is based on:

- Building relationships of trust and understanding
- Understanding triggers and finding solutions
- If incidents do occur, wherever possible diffusing the situation and/or distracting the child

If staff think it is necessary to restrain a child from doing something, they should try non-physical approaches – e.g. by talking to them, by asking them not to move if they are injured, by standing in the way.

At our school we make sure we are aware of our duties of care and follow the law. The law states that it is permissible to use reasonable force to prevent pupils committing an offence, injuring themselves or others, or damaging property, and to maintain good order and discipline in the classroom.

The use of physical intervention techniques is only one aspect of co-regulation and is usually the last resort when it is deemed absolutely necessary. It may resolve a short-term situation, but the long-term aim

must be to help the child or young person to be able to self-regulate during times of stress.

If such actions are necessary, the actions that we take aim to use the minimum amount of force necessary for the minimum amount of time necessary. Where physical intervention is needed, this is recorded and reported immediately to the head teacher.

Our school follows this Essex Guidance 'Understanding and Supporting Behaviour - Safe Practice for Schools and Educational Settings (Including the use of restrictive / non-restrictive physical intervention)'

It can be found here

Social, Emotional and Mental Health Portal for Schools, Colleges and Settings - Essex Guidance and Let's Talk Resources

Within this guidance, it is regarded as best practice to record every incident where the use of restraint has been deemed absolutely necessary and to follow the other recommendations set out in this document.

This includes reporting to ECC via MySafety.

**The MySafety system is used to record all accidents, violence, work related Ill Health and near misses.**

**[Click here to log an incident](#) (please use the Access Token: ABC123)**

Where it has been deemed necessary to use a restrictive physical intervention, the detail of this should be accurately recorded on CPOMS and the incident communicated to parents. Parents should be informed of the incident initially by phone and it should then be followed up in writing the same day or as soon as reasonably practical.

### **Staff/pupil relationships – Abuse of Trust**

Staff should be aware that they are in a position of trust. As adults, staff are in a position of power and influence over pupils and, as such, the relationship is not a relationship between equals. However, this must never be used to intimidate or humiliate pupils.

It is a breach of trust and a criminal offence for any person aged 18 over (such as staff), to have a sexual relationship with a child under the age of 18.

### **Social Contact and Social Networking**

Staff must not have any electronic communications with pupils in the context of Social Networking.

Staff must use social media and the internet responsibly and must not have students, or former pupils under the age of 18, as friends on Facebook, Instagram or followers on Twitter or any other social media.

There is a separate E-Safety and Social Networking Policy which staff should familiarise themselves with.

### **Use of Cameras/Recording Equipment**

Across the whole school staff should be aware of the appropriateness of the taking of photographs and/or videos of children. Only school equipment must be used.

In the Early Years Setting staff personal use of electronic devices with imaging and sharing capabilities are strictly forbidden. Permission must be requested from the Head of Pre-Prep for mobile phones to be used during contact time with pupils. Children must be protected from any images being used inappropriately.

### **Language and Appearance**

Staff should use appropriate language at all times whenever and wherever children are present and at no point will use language to humiliate the pupils.

At no time must staff give any personal contact details such as emails or phone numbers to pupils. Only the school email addresses and phone/mobile number must be used at all times.

Staff must not share any confidential information that you are aware of as an employee of the school.

At all times staff should wear appropriate clothing. Standards of dress should be smart and fit for purpose and reflect the standards of the school.

Whilst it is not possible to list every possible clothing option, it is hoped that staff will dress in a way that reflects a professional appearance. Some pointers include –

- Denim/jeans/jeggings are not appropriate. However, jeans may be worn for school trips.
- No leggings unless under an appropriate length skirt or dress.
- Suntops are not appropriate for school wear.
- Shorts are not allowed apart from sporting events and they should be of suitable length.
- No revealing or excessively tight clothing i.e. all clothes should be fitted appropriately, no underwear should be seen.
- Clothing should not have any logos that would cause offence.
- Clothing should not distract or cause embarrassment to pupils, staff or parents.
- Housekeeping/site staff should wear the uniform tunic/polo shirt provided.
- No inappropriate footwear e.g. flip-flops which may contravene Health & Safety guidelines.

### **Gifts**

Staff should be mindful of the appropriateness of receiving (or giving) of gifts from parents or pupils. The giving of gifts or rewards from staff to pupils must not show favouritism. If in doubt staff should seek advice from the Headteacher.

### **Tuition**

Staff may not give private tuition to Ursuline Preparatory School students unless it has been agreed in writing with the Headteacher.

In all situations, common sense is the best guide. If in doubt, staff should seek advice from Mrs Pauline Wilson, Headteacher.

Failure to adhere to this policy could result in disciplinary procedures.