



# LOUGHBOROUGH High School

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Policy Title: 07e Staff Code of Conduct

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Point of Contact (Reviewer): Dr Fiona Miles - Head

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## **Introduction**

LHS staff are expected to act professionally at all times and to support the aims of the School in providing a safe supportive environment for all pupils. The Teachers' Standards state that teachers (which includes headteachers) should safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties. All staff, whether teaching or support staff, hold positions of trust and authority which they must not abuse.

The LHS designated persons with responsibility for child protection and safeguarding are Stuart Thompson (Senior Deputy Head) and Victoria Standring (Assistant Head, Pastoral). All adults, whatever their role, must take action to ensure that a child protection or safeguarding allegation or concern is investigated and reported to the appropriate investigating agencies. This is to be done by following the guidance in the LSF Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. If, however, they feel that action has not been taken they have a responsibility to whistle blow and, when appropriate, to contact the relevant investigating agencies directly.

Although the following points apply to teaching staff, all staff at LHS should be aware of and apply the code of conduct where appropriate.

### **Staff should:**

- build effective professional relationships with pupils and act in their best interests.
- exercise professional judgment and act reasonably.
- remember that they are setting an example at all times, even when off site or on a school trip. This includes chance meetings which may occur outside of school hours, where staff should not, for example, socialise in bars with LSF pupils or be seen to condone underage drinking.
- avoid behaviour which could be misinterpreted or misconstrued, such as inappropriate humour or sarcasm.
- ensure that communication with children both in the 'real' world and through web-based and telecommunication interactions should take place within explicit professional boundaries and should not be over familiar. This includes the use of computers, tablets, phones, texts, e-mails, instant messages, social media such as Facebook and Twitter, chatrooms, forums, blogs, websites, gaming sites, digital cameras, videos, web-cams and other hand-held devices.
- not accept current or past pupils as friends on personal accounts on social networking sites nor follow pupils on personal social networking sites.
- avoid discussing with pupil's personal information about themselves, another pupil or another member of staff.

- take care to avoid any blurring of the boundaries between appropriate and inappropriate behaviour which could leave the member of staff vulnerable to allegations of abuse.
- avoid transporting any pupil in their own car unless circumstances are such that to avoid doing so would put the pupil at risk of harm.
- dress in a professional and appropriate manner.
- conduct one to one meetings in a transparent way and follow the guidelines on confidentiality outlined in the child protection and safeguarding policy.
- avoid divulging their personal contact details to pupils.
- not store images of pupils or pupil personal contact details on their mobile devices or home computers.
- not allow other family members to use school-issued personal computers, iPads etc.
- not talk directly to the media or respond to requests for comments or quotes.
- Media enquiries should be directed to the Head or another member of SLT in her absence.
- should feel able to discuss with their line manager any difficulties or problems that may affect their relationship with or behaviour towards pupils, so that appropriate support can be provided and/or action can be taken
- exercise professional judgment but always act within the spirit of these guidelines. If staff are involved in a situation where no specific guidance exists, they must discuss the circumstances with the Designated Safeguarding Lead. A written record must be kept that includes justification for any action taken.

**Staff must:**

- be aware of the risks of peer-on-peer abuse and be familiar with procedures for handling allegations against other children and bullying as set out in the School's Anti-Bullying policy and the Foundation Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.
- be familiar with procedures for reporting concerns in accordance with the School's Whistleblowing Policy and be aware that if Staff raise concerns about working practices at the School to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or an appropriate senior member of Staff that they will be protected from detriment under the Whistleblowing Policy
- be familiar with the low-level concerns procedure set out in the Foundation Child Protection and Safeguarding policy. A low-level concern is any concern, no matter how small, even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt', that a person working in or on behalf of the Foundation may have acted in a way that is inconsistent with the Safer Recruitment Consortium "Guidance for safer working practice" (May 2019) [Professional and Personal Relationships \(cimpress.io\)](https://www.cimpress.io) including inappropriate conduct outside of work, and does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not

considered serious enough to make a referral to the LADO. Where a low-level concern has been identified this must be reported as soon as possible to the Head (of the school in which the member of staff works) or the Chief Operating Officer (COO). Low-level concerns about a Head or the COO will be reported to the Chair of Governors.

- be familiar with the Leicestershire safeguarding in education induction leaflet  [Safeguarding Induction Leaflet Aug 2021.pdf](#)
- be familiar with procedures for handling allegations against Staff as set out in the School's Safeguarding Policy and Procedure
- seek guidance from the Designated Safeguarding Lead if they are in any doubt about appropriate conduct
- report any actions which could be misinterpreted, any misunderstandings, accidents or threats involving them and a pupil or a group of pupils to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- report any concerns about someone who works with children to the Head, Chief Operating Officer or Chair of Governors as appropriate

## **Sexual contact**

### **Staff must not:**

- have any type of sexual relationship with a pupil
- have sexually suggestive or provocative communications with a pupil
- make sexual remarks to or about a pupil
- discuss their own sexual relationships in the presence of pupils
- conduct any form of physical or intimate relationship with a former pupil that had its grounding in a staff-pupil connection

### **Abuse of a position of trust and inappropriate relationships with School pupils:**

Sexual relationships or sexual contact with any pupils, or encouraging a relationship to develop in a way which might lead to a sexual relationship, or any relationship just considered inappropriate with any pupil at the School is a grave breach of trust that will usually lead to disciplinary action and may also lead to criminal prosecution. It is an offence for a person over the age of 18, such as a teacher, to have a sexual relationship with a child under 18 where that person is in a position of trust in respect of that child, even if, in the case of those over 16, the relationship is consensual.

It is a breach of this Code and considered to be gross misconduct for a member of staff to have a sexual relationship with any pupil of this School over the age of 18. If an intimate or sexual relationship were to develop between a member of Staff and a former pupil shortly after the pupil has left the School, this would raise concerns about possible abuse of the staff member's professional position in grooming the young person whilst at the school. Any such concern would be referred by the school to the Designated Officer at the Local Authority and

might lead to disciplinary action being taken against the member of Staff after an appropriate hearing.

**Inappropriate relationships with pupils at another school:**

Forming relationships with children or young people who are pupils or students at another school will be a criminal offence if they are under 16 but may also be a criminal offence if under the age of 18 and will be regarded as gross misconduct. Such behaviour is liable to bring the School into disrepute and gives rise to concern that the staff involved cannot be trusted to maintain professional boundaries with pupils and students at the School. Whilst not necessarily a criminal offence, the School considers it inappropriate for staff to form inappropriate relationships with a pupil of any school, irrespective of their age.

**Behaviour giving particular cause for concern:**

Staff must take particular care when dealing with a pupil who:

- appears to be emotionally distressed, or generally vulnerable and/or who is seeking expressions of affection
- appears to hold a grudge against them
- acts in a sexually provocative way, or who is inclined to make exaggerated claims about themselves and others, or to fantasise, or one whose manner with adults is over-familiar
- may have reason to make up an allegation against them
- Some of these behaviours may be indications that a child has been, or is currently being, abused and must therefore be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead under the School's Safeguarding Policy.

**Record keeping:**

Comprehensive records are essential. All concerns, discussions and decisions made and the reasons for those decisions must be recorded in writing. Any incident involving children that could give cause for concern, must always be reported promptly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead in accordance with the School's Safeguarding Policy and Procedures. If there is any doubt about recording requirements this must be discussed with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

**Covid-19 Pandemic**

Staff should make every effort to adhere to any guidance issued by the government and/or the school in relation to Covid-19 including travel to and from school; alterations to arrival and departure times; moving around the school; personal hygiene; social distancing; the wearing of face coverings; testing and reporting of Covid-19, and any other relevant matters.