ST PAUL'S
GIRLS' SCHOOL

Staff Code of Conduct

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Legal framework

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026
- Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 (DfE, February 2015)
- Working together to safeguard children 2026
- What do you do if you're worried a child is being abused (DfE, March 2015)
- Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales (March 2024)
- The Worker Protection (Amendment of Equalities Act 2010) Act 2023
- Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools guidance (DfE April 2026)

Availability of this policy

A copy of this policy may be downloaded from our website or is available on request from the school office, St Paul's Girls' School, Brook Green, London, W6 7BS (tel: 020 7603 2288). This policy can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required.

Who this policy applies to

This policy applies to all employees, temporary staff, contractors, agency workers, visiting music teachers and other peripatetic workers, volunteers, governors and all other people when working in or for the school. It applies whenever staff or volunteers are working with students, even where this is away from the school, e.g., on a school trip or other school related events.

What this policy is for

This policy sets out the standards of conduct expected and outlines the potential ramifications of failing to meet the required standards. The policy aims to:

- Describe the rationale for and parameters of professional conduct
- Set out the standards of professional and safeguarding conduct and behaviour.

Other relevant school policies

- Safeguarding (Child Protection) policy
- Reporting Low Level Concerns policy
- Staff Acceptable Use policy (AUP)
- Behaviour policy
- Health and Safety policy
- Disciplinary policy
- Whistleblowing policy
- Equal Opportunities policy
- Anti-Bullying policy
- Taking, Storing and Using Images of Students policy
- Prevention of Sexual Harassment policy
- Online Safety policy
- Searching, Screening and Confiscation policy

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Introduction

1.1 All staff have a role to play in safeguarding and ensuring that the school's students and staff study and work in a physical and online environment that respects and values difference and diversity. Discrimination, bullying and harassment are not tolerated in school and will be addressed under the appropriate policy as a serious matter. This policy outlines the required standard of conduct expected of all staff working in whatever capacity.

1.2 Teachers and school staff have daily contact with children in a variety of situations, including in a caring role. Staff should follow this Code of Conduct to mitigate the potential risk of placing students or themselves at risk of harm or of allegations of harm to a student. The Staff Code of Conduct does not contain an exhaustive list of acceptable and unacceptable standards of behaviour. In situations where guidance does not exist in the Code of Conduct, staff are expected to exercise their professional judgement and to act in the best interests of the students and the school.

1.3 This Code of Conduct forms part of the school's safeguarding documentation and is provided to all staff (including temporary staff and volunteers) at induction. It is also published on the staff portal, and staff are asked to re-read the Code of Conduct at the beginning of each academic year.

1.4 Breaches of the Code of Conduct may result in the school initiating disciplinary procedures and, if appropriate, refer to the local authority and the police.

Key principles

2.1 All staff are expected to put the well-being, development and progress of students first by:

- taking all reasonable steps to ensure the safety and wellbeing of students under their supervision
- using professional expertise and judgment for the best interests of students in their care
- demonstrating self-awareness and taking responsibility for their own actions and for providing help and support to students
- raising concerns about the practices of teachers or other professionals where these may have a negative impact on students' learning or progress, or may put students at risk in line with the school's Reporting Low Level Concerns policy
- being familiar with the school's Safeguarding (Child Protection) policy and procedures
- being aware that they are in a position of trust (i.e., the adult is in a position of power or influence over the student due to his or her work); that the relationship is not a relationship between equals and that this position must never be used to intimidate, bully, humiliate, coerce or threaten students.

2.2 All Staff should demonstrate respect for diversity and take steps to promote inclusion by:

- acting appropriately and in accordance with this Code of Conduct, towards all staff, students, parents, guardians, carers, colleagues and anyone visiting the school
- complying with the school's Anti-bullying, and Equal Opportunities policies and this Code of Conduct
- addressing issues of discrimination and bullying whenever they arise
- helping to create a fair and inclusive school environment.

2.3 All Staff should work as part of a unified staff body by:

- developing productive and supportive relationships with colleagues
- exercising any management responsibilities in a respectful, inclusive and fair manner
- complying with all school policies and procedures including the Prevention of Sexual Harassment policy

- participating in the school's development and improvement activities
- recognising the role of the school in the life of the local community
- upholding the school's reputation and standing within the local community and building trust and confidence in it
- arriving on time for staff briefings, meetings, lessons and appointments.

2.4 All Staff should maintain public trust and confidence in the school by:

- demonstrating honesty and integrity
- understanding and upholding their duty to safeguard the welfare of children and young people
- maintaining reasonable standards of behaviour whether inside or outside of normal school hours and whether on or off the school's site, including online
- maintaining an effective learning environment (teachers)
- adhering to the Staff Acceptable Use policy
- ensuring that any personal relationships with parents of students maintain clear boundaries of professionalism and confidentiality in matters relating to the school or its community
- maintaining up to date training .

2.5 All staff should understand that the school has a legal duty to have regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism, and consequently should be aware of the Prevent Duty Guidance and:

- what extremism and radicalisation mean and why people – including students and fellow staff members - may be vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism as a consequence of it
- what measures are available to prevent people becoming drawn into terrorism and how to challenge the extremist ideology that can be associated with it; and
- how to obtain support for people who may be being exploited by radicalising influences.

Additional principles for teachers

2.6 Teachers should take responsibility for maintaining the quality of their teaching practice by:

- meeting the professional standards for teaching applicable to their role and position within the school
- reflecting on their current practice and seeking out opportunities to develop knowledge, understanding and skills
- helping students to become confident and successful learners
- establishing productive relationships with parents, guardians or carers by:
    - providing accessible and accurate information about their child's progress
    - involving them in important decisions about their child's education
    - complying with this Code of Conduct.
- ensuring that risk assessments and a clear safeguarding plan are in place for any activity that takes place out-of-hours or during weekend activities e.g. weekend rehearsals. This should ensure that staff are not working one-to-one with a student in an unsupervised context, and at least two members of staff are present on site at all times.

2.7 If a teacher discovers that an act of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, or that they believe that the girl is at risk of FGM, the teacher must report it to the police as set out in the Safeguarding (Child Protection) policy. Any member of staff who has a concern about

FGM should also raise this with the Deputy Head (Safeguarding & Inclusion) who is the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

Lone working

2.8 When lone working with students the following principles apply:

- Doors should remain open during one-to-one interactions, or staff should ensure that they are in a room with a visible uncovered glass panel
- If a one-to-one meeting is required and the above conditions cannot be met, staff must inform the DSL, who will make the decision as to whether it is safe and appropriate for the meeting to take place
- Staff should carefully consider the purpose and appropriateness of meeting the student alone. For welfare-related matters, it may be more appropriate for the student to meet with a member of staff authorised to conduct one-to-one meetings (e.g. DSL, DDSL or member of the Wellbeing Team). For academic matters, staff should consider arranging a discreet presence from a departmental colleague, without compromising the student's need for confidentiality
- Where 'lone working' is a regular occurrence (e.g., school counselling or individual music tuition) the Head of Department, DSL and parents/carers should be informed. The exception to this is when a student independently arranges to see the school counsellor in confidence; in such cases the school counselling policy should be followed
- If at any point during a session a member of staff feels uncomfortable, they must report this to the DSL immediately
- Teachers should not offer additional tuition to SPGS students or prospective SPGS students whether in groups or for one-to-one tuition (at their own home, in school staff accommodation, in a private home, in a café or other public place or on Zoom or Teams – or similar video-conferencing software).

Inappropriate relationships

2.9 Under no circumstances should an adult encourage an inappropriate relationship with a student or groom a student. 'Grooming' is when someone builds an emotional connection with a child to gain their trust for purposes of sexual abuse, exploitation, or radicalisation.

2.10 Staff should not use their personal cameras or portable camera devices to take photographs of students. The use of phones for taking photos is set out in the Staff Acceptable Use policy (AUP) and the Taking, Storing and Using Images of Students policy.

2.11 Where a member of staff is concerned that a student has developed a 'crush' or attachment to them, they should report this to the Senior Deputy Head, the Deputy Head (Safeguarding & Inclusion) who is the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or the Deputy Head (Pastoral immediately and should discourage social exchanges with them which are in any way different from those with other students.

2.12 All staff should be aware that it is a criminal offence under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 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 (e.g., as a member of school staff) in respect of the child, even if that relationship is consensual.

2.13 Any sexual, physical or romantic relationship with a student at the school is unacceptable.

2.14 A sexual relationship with a student aged 18 is a disciplinary offence and would be handled in accordance with the School's Disciplinary policy. In addition, a referral would be made to Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and the Secretary of State for Education.

Physical contact with students

2.15 There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate and proper for staff to have physical contact with students, but these occasions are few, and it is crucial that any contact is appropriate to the professional requirements of the role; staff should therefore use their professional judgement at all times.

2.16 In the event that an unusual situation arises where physical contact is deemed necessary by the member of staff, or the member of staff feels uncomfortable about any physical contact with a pupil then this should be self-reported (a neutral notification) through CPOMS.

2.17 Where exercises or procedures need to be demonstrated, caution should be used if the demonstration involves contact with students, and unnecessary contact should be avoided. It is acknowledged that some staff, for example, those who teach PE and games, or who offer music tuition will, on occasions, have to initiate physical contact with students in order to support a student so they can perform a task safely, to demonstrate the use of a particular piece of equipment/instrument, or assist them with an exercise. This should be done with the student's agreement. Contact under these circumstances should be for the minimum time necessary to complete the activity and staff should remain sensitive to any discomfort expressed verbally or non-verbally by the student.

2.18 Where a student is distressed or shows a need for physical comfort, it is vital that any demonstration of professional comfort should only take place either in a classroom situation or in front of another member of staff who can act as a witness.

Physical intervention

2.19 The school's policy on the use of reasonable force by staff to control or restrain students, which is in line with DfE guidance *Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in school*, is set out in the school's Behaviour (including rewards and sanctions and restraints) policy.

2.20 The law allows teachers to use reasonable force to prevent students from committing an offence or causing personal injury to others or themselves or causing damage to the property of any person.

2.21 School staff will only use restraint as a last resort to enable a student to calm down and regain self-control so that other methods of management can be used.

2.22 Where, exceptionally, it is necessary to restrain a student, the minimum amount of force should be used, and staff will always try to act in such a way as to avoid causing harm or injury to the student.

2.23 Any such events should be recorded in writing (and where possible signed by a witness) and passed to the Senior Deputy Head, the DSL and the Deputy Head (Pastoral).

NB Corporal punishment: Under section 131 of the School Standards and Framework Act (1998), corporal punishment is prohibited for all students in independent and maintained schools.

Trips

2.24 Staff should take particular care when supervising students in the less formal atmosphere of an educational visit. Staff remain in a position of trust and need to ensure that their behaviour cannot be interpreted as seeking to establish an inappropriate relationship or friendship.

2.25 For all trips and activities, staff should consult the Assistant Head (Co-Curricular) to agree appropriate supervision arrangements.

2.26 Staff should not, under normal circumstances, travel alone in a car with a student.

2.27 If there are exceptional circumstances that require them to transport a student alone in a car, parents should also be informed. If it is an emergency and circumstances do not permit the DSL or Deputy Head (Pastoral) being informed before the journey taking place, they should be notified as soon as possible after the event.

2.28 School phones to take on trips are available from the IT department and, other than in an emergency, should be used rather than personal phones to communicate with students and parents.

2.29 Guidance for staff on the taking and use of photographs and images is set out in the Staff Acceptable Use policy and the Taking, Using and Storing Images of Students policy. Photos of students should never be used or distributed outside the school, unless for use in agreed publications. In such circumstances, permission should be sought from the Director of Marketing & Communications.

Other activities away from school

2.30 Staff should be particularly mindful of their conduct in situations where alcohol is available. Whilst on a residential school trip it is imperative that there are always two members of staff each day who do not drink alcohol so that they are able to deal with any emergencies that may arise. Other staff on the trip should limit their consumption to one glass of wine or beer once work commitments and activities for the day have finished.

2.31 Staff should not engage in any social activity, outside events organised by the school, with former students (OPs) until they have been away from the school for two academic years.

2.32 Caution should be exercised when meeting recent OPs by chance (those within two years of leaving school after taking A levels) in a social environment.

2.33 Staff should not invite current students to their house and should exercise caution before doing so with recent OPs (those within two years of leaving school after taking A levels). Staff should inform the DSL or Deputy Head (Pastoral) in the event of an invitation being extended to recent OPs.

2.34 Staff should not accept invitations to a student's house.

2.35 Staff should not accept invitations to socialise with parents of students either in their house, in a public space such as a bar or restaurant or at a private party. Similarly, staff should not initiate invitations to parents of students.

2.36 Staff should not take up any other duties (whether remunerated or not) outside their normal hours of work which might impede or interfere with the proper performance of their duties without the prior written consent of the High Mistress. The term "other duties" may be used to refer to tutoring or any other form of secondary employment.

2.37 It is important to be aware that disciplinary action will be taken if a member of staff is found to have acted inappropriately towards a student or a member of staff, or if a member of staff's actions have brought the school into disrepute.

2.38 Situations with students and recent former students where one's behaviour might be considered unprofessional should therefore be avoided.

2.39 Staff should not arrange meetings in or accompany students to cafes, restaurants or any other establishment unless as part of a school approved trip or visit.

2.40 Staff are advised that, upon leaving the school's employment, they should continue to exercise caution when engaging with former students. The school's advice is not to contact current or recent students directly. Staff are advised to report to the Deputy Head (Pastoral) any contact made by students directly to them.

General Conduct

Alcohol

3.1 It is strictly forbidden to attend work or to remain at work under the influence of alcohol. If the school considers that a member of staff is under the influence of alcohol they will be sent home immediately, and disciplinary action will be taken.

3.2 There may be alcoholic drinks at some formal pre-arranged school social functions only and the school expects a high standard of behaviour from all staff. Staff should not drink any alcohol at events if they are on

duty (e.g., as a designated fire steward or supervising students). Staff are not permitted to drink their own alcohol at school at any time.

3.3 If concerns are raised about an individual being under the influence of alcohol the High Mistress may request that the individual is tested in school. Any request for testing will be proportionate and carried out with the individual's consent. Refusal to consent may be considered as part of an investigation.

3.4 The policy on alcohol consumption on school trips is set out above.

Drugs and substances (including smoking and vaping)

3.5 For the purposes of this policy "drugs" covers controlled drugs and the paraphernalia of drugs, psychoactive substances or substances intended to resemble drugs, or "legal" drugs which can be obtained from a chemist shop, performance enhancing drugs, anabolic steroids, glue and other substances held or supplied in each case for purposes of misuse.

3.6 It is a criminal offence to use, possess or deal in any controlled substances and anyone found through the disciplinary procedure to be involved in any of these activities, whether during or outside working hours, will normally be investigated for gross misconduct, in line with the Disciplinary policy. The school will notify the police where appropriate.

3.7 The school does not permit drugs (other than prescribed drugs) to be used or stored on school premises. Under no circumstances is the sale of drugs (prescribed or not) permitted.

3.8 It is strictly forbidden to come to work or to remain at work under the influence of any drug. If staff have been prescribed drugs and the side effects could have an impact on their work or behaviour, they should report this immediately to their line manager/HR. If the school considers that they are under the influence of any drug (including prescribed drugs which have or could have affected their work or behaviour and of which they have failed to notify their line manager), disciplinary action will be taken.

3.9 St Paul's Girls' School is a no smoking/vaping site. Smoking/vaping is not permitted on or immediately outside any school premises and should not take place within sight of students during visits or expeditions.

3.10 The possession or use of illegal drugs by a member of staff, in or outside of school, is likely to be regarded as gross misconduct.

Confidentiality

4.1 Professional conversations take place daily within schools, between colleagues and with external stakeholders. All staff and members of the school community have a right to their privacy. Confidentiality is important for the smooth functioning of the school and preserving relationships of mutual trust. Conversations with parents should always be strictly professional, other students or parents should not be discussed, nor should information private to the school be disclosed. Further information regarding privacy rights can be found in the school's privacy notices and other data protection documentation.

Appearance and language

Appearance

5.1 Staff do not need to follow a distinct dress code. However, dress should be appropriate for the workplace and not be offensive, discriminatory, or political.

Language

5.2 Language should be appropriate at all times. Staff should always consider the impact, audience and manner of delivery when speaking to others to ensure it is never used to humiliate or offend. Language should be used to facilitate positive and appropriate relationships.

Safety Online

Acceptable Use

6.2 Staff must remain mindful of their raised professional responsibilities of working in a school and must use sound judgment and common sense. Staff must also be mindful that personal conduct online can have professional consequences. Activity affecting a member of staff's reputation and/or the reputation of the school must be avoided. Any conduct that does affect the reputation of the school negatively could result in disciplinary action being taken by the school. The school's full policy on staff use of personal social media accounts is set out in Appendix 1. Staff must adhere to the principles behind, as well as the specific provisions of, this and other related school policies.

6.3 If staff have a professional need to email a student who has left the school, they must send the message from their own school email account. They may email the student on either or both of the student's school email account or personal email address (if consent has been given to use in this way). School email accounts will remain open for leavers until the end of September immediately following their departure from the school.

6.4 Staff should not give out their personal contact details (including personal mobile or home telephone number, email, social media accounts, gaming tags etc.) to students and parents and should use the school's communication systems whenever communication is necessary. Staff should also ensure that their own personal social networking sites are set as private and ensure students and parents are not approved contacts.

6.6 If staff are required to communicate with students using their own portable device, communication should be via the school email system and must adhere to the Staff Acceptable Use policy (AUP).

6.7 Staff should report to the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), any new and emerging technologies, including AI, which may have a bearing on school practices and on the review of the Staff Acceptable Use policy (AUP).

6.8 Local and national guidelines on acceptable user policies should be followed. Full information is provided in the Staff Acceptable Use policy (AUP).

Reporting

Reporting data breaches

7.1 Any data breaches must be reported immediately, in line with policy, either by using the online form or by contacting IT Services directly.

Reporting an allegation about another member of staff

7.2 Staff are required to report any safeguarding concerns they are aware of. Staff should refer to the school's Safeguarding (Child Protection) policy for detailed guidance about reporting allegations or complaints about another member of staff. This information also forms part of induction training, and all staff are reminded of procedures at the start of the academic year. In summary, any allegation about a member of staff should be immediately reported to the High Mistress. If the allegation is about the High Mistress, the Chair of Governors should be contacted.

7.3 Staff are required to report low level concerns in line with the Reporting Low-Level Concerns Policy.

Reporting a concern about safeguarding practice

7.4 All staff should feel able to raise concerns about any element of the school's practice or activities that they genuinely feel may place students at risk of abuse or other serious harm. Any concerns should be reported to the High Mistress (or to a member of the SLT if the matter is urgent and she is not available).

7.5 If the member of staff feels unable to raise their concern with the High Mistress (or a member of SLT), the Chair of Governors should be contacted. There will be no retribution or disciplinary action taken against a member of staff for making such a report provided that it is done in good faith. If the member of staff remains unsatisfied or feels unable to contact the Chair of Governors, further guidance is available in the Safeguarding (Child Protection) policy and the Whistleblowing policy, both of which are available on the staff Portal.

Informing School of any issues that may impact DBS clearance

7.6 If a member of staff has received a police caution or conviction this must be reported immediately to the High Mistress or Bursar. They should also report any incident that may bring the school's reputation into disrepute.

Appendix 1 - Staff Use of Personal Social Media Accounts

For the policy relating to staff use of school social media sites, please refer to the Staff Acceptable Use Policy.

Purpose and scope

1.1 This policy is in place to minimise the risks to the school through staff use of social and public-facing media. It is designed to help staff use these platforms and services responsibly, to minimise the risks and to ensure consistent standards of use of social media. For the avoidance of doubt, the provisions of this policy apply whether or not a member of staff is posting online under their own name.

1.2 This policy applies to all members of the school community – staff, governors, volunteers, part-time and fixed-term employees, casual and agency staff, contractors (collectively referred to as "staff" in this policy). It covers personal use of social media that could affect the school in any way. The policy is not limited to activity within school hours or on school equipment; it extends to any social media use that might impact the school's reputation, staff and student welfare, or legal compliance.

1.3 A social or public-facing media site is any website or platform that enables its users to create profiles, form relationships and share information with other users. It also includes sites which have online discussion forums, chatrooms, media posting sites, blogs and any other social space online. It includes, but is not limited to, sites such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Snapchat, LinkedIn, Instagram, Discord, Slack, YouTube, TikTok, X (Twitter), gaming platforms, Wikipedia, and any emerging network or technology that enables online interaction whether on the open internet or through anonymised or hidden services. It also includes all public facing broadcasts, such as radio, television, podcasts and vlogs.

1.4 This policy should be read in conjunction with the other provisions of the Staff AUP, the Staff Code of Conduct in its entirety, the Online Safety policy, and the Reporting Low-Level Concerns policy. This policy applies at all times, whether using school computers or a member of staff's own device, and when in school, on school trips and at home. Where conduct overlaps, all relevant policies will be considered in addressing any incidents.

1.5 In line with the Disciplinary Policy, breach of this policy may result in action up to and including dismissal. Disciplinary action may be taken regardless of whether or not the breach is committed during working hours, and regardless of whether or not our equipment or facilities are used for the purpose of committing the breach. If a member of staff is suspected of committing a breach of this policy they will be required to co-operate with the school's investigation, which may involve handing over relevant passwords and login details so far as this is consistent with the right of an individual to private and family life.

1.6 Staff may be required to remove any online postings which are deemed to constitute a breach of this policy. Failure to comply with such a request may result in disciplinary action.

1.7 This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment or any term of engagement as applicable, and it may be amended at any time.

Introduction

2.1 The school recognises that the internet provides unique opportunities for sharing and communicating in both a personal and professional context. It is also recognised that staff will use social and public-facing media for personal use and that students will inevitably attempt to find staff social media accounts. However, staff should remain mindful of the raised professional responsibilities of working in a school and use sound judgment and common sense. To minimise these risks, staff must adhere to the principles behind, as well as the specific provisions of, this and other related school policies.

2.2 All staff are reminded that they must comply with the school's policies and procedures at all times, including when engaging on social media in their personal capacity. Any breach of such policy or procedure through or in connection with staff's use of social media may result in disciplinary action being taken.

2.3 All line managers have a specific responsibility for operating within the boundaries of this policy, ensuring that all staff understand the standards of behaviour expected of them and taking action when behaviour falls below its requirements.

2.4 All staff are responsible for the implementation of this policy and should ensure that they take the time to read and understand it.

General rules for the responsible use of social and public-facing media

3.1 If an internet post, comment or other online engagement, would breach any of our policies in another forum, it will also breach them in an online forum. For example, staff are prohibited from using social or public-facing media to defame or disparage the school or its affiliates, parents, staff, governors, students, business partners, suppliers, vendors or other stakeholders.

3.2 Staff must be aware that their role comes with particular responsibilities, and they must adhere to the school's strict approach to social media.

3.3 If the audience of a member of staff's social media account is likely to include young people, then they must be particularly mindful of the content and language that they use and consider closing direct messaging and comments facilities on that account.

3.4 If a member of staff's social media account is targeted at young people, they should seek guidance from the Director of Marketing & Communications. It is likely that they will be asked to disable the comments and direct messaging facilities on that account.

3.5 On personal social media accounts staff must (for specific rules relating to LinkedIn, please refer to the staff use of Linkedin section below):

- ensure that wherever possible privacy settings on social media sites are set so that students cannot access information relating to their personal life (e.g. by setting the account as "private")
- be mindful of how they present themselves on such media and online forums. The private life of staff may have professional consequences, and this must be considered at all times when sharing personal information in this format
- exercise sound judgment and discretion to avoid any communication on social media or any other public platform that could harm the reputation, confidentiality or integrity of the school.

Staff must not:

- (for specific rules relating to LinkedIn, please refer to the staff use of Linkedin section) provide references for other individuals on social or professional networking sites, as such references whether positive or negative can be attributed to the school and create legal liability for both the author of the reference and the school
- post, publish or share, or cause to be posted, any content on social media or other public platforms that directly or indirectly references the school, the governors, staff, parents or students. This includes, but is not limited to, comments, images, videos or any other material that may be interpreted as relating to the school, governors, staff, students or parents. It is recognised that this is not appropriate for staff use of LinkedIn, for which separate provisions apply (see the staff use of Linkedin section)
- publish or share through social or public-facing media any teaching materials, including but not limited to, question papers, handouts, student essays, coursework etc
- represent personal views as those of the school or governors or disclose the views of staff on any social media or other public platform. It is recognised that this is not appropriate for staff use of LinkedIn, for which separate provisions apply (see the staff use of Linkedin section)

- provide endorsements for third party products or services either directly on behalf of the school, or indirectly by their known association with the school
- use commentary deemed to be defamatory, obscene, proprietary, or libellous on any social media or other public platform. Staff must exercise caution with regards to exaggeration, colourful language, guesswork, obscenity, copyrighted materials, legal conclusions, and derogatory remarks or characterisations
- post or share any content online that could reasonably be considered harmful, offensive, discriminatory, threatening or otherwise inappropriate. This applies regardless of whether the content is shared publicly or within private groups and includes any material that could cause reputational damage or distress to others
- discuss students or staff (even if not specifically named) or criticise the school or staff on any social media or other public platform
- Post, make or share images that include students. This includes consensual and non-consensual sharing of self-generated intimate material and/or videos including those generated by AI e.g. nude/semi-nude images, deepfakes, voice cloning, synthesised audio, or fabricated text-based communications depicting a member of staff without consent. If they are to receive these, they should be reported immediately to the DSL or High Mistress without the further sharing of the images
- in their personal LinkedIn Accounts, re-post posts from SPGS LinkedIn account, including those posts that include images of students
- harass or bully other members of staff through social media or any public platform
- attempt to communicate or initiate friendships with students through social media or any public platform
- knowingly accept students as friends/followers or equivalent on any such sites; staff must decline any student-initiated friend requests. If staff unknowingly accept a student as a friend (for example if the student has not identified themself by name), staff must immediately remove that student as soon as they suspect or become aware of their identity (e.g. they are informed that a student follows them, or it otherwise becomes evident to them). Staff must also inform the DSL following the procedure as set out in the school's Reporting Low Level Concerns policy
- breach the school's obligations with respect to the rules of relevant regulatory bodies
- criticise the school or staff on any social media or other public platform
- breach our Data Protection policy (for example, never disclose personal information about any person connected with the school online)
- breach any other laws or ethical standards (for example, never use social media in a false or misleading way, such as by claiming to be someone other than themselves or by making misleading statements)
- record content for personal social media or public platforms whilst on school premises or engaged in school activities (e.g. whilst on trips or during co-curricular activities)
- freely make links with alumnae of the school (OPs). The Staff Code of Conduct advises staff not to 'connect' with recent alumnae on personal social media accounts within two years of them leaving the school and, in any event, not until they are over 18. Staff should keep in mind that an OP may also be linked or 'friends' with current students, which (depending on the member of staff's privacy settings) may expose their personal information or content. If a member of staff suspects or becomes aware that a recent alumna is following them, they must immediately remove them and inform the DSL following the school's Reporting Low-Level Concerns policy

- put the school or themselves at risk if they have a social or public-facing media platform that is set to 'open' They must exercise caution when communicating with other users, for example through comments and direct messaging. If they suspect or become aware that they are communicating with a student, or that a student is communicating with them, they must immediately cease any further communications and must inform the DSL following the school's Low-Level Concern policy
- make or be likely to make a financial gain from their social or public-facing media without following the provisions set out in their contract of employment relating to secondary employment. In addition, they must not recommend this platform to students or otherwise signpost them to it.

Staff Use of LinkedIn

4.1 It is recognised that staff on their LinkedIn account may provide details of their role at the school. To reflect this, the following specific rules apply to staff use of LinkedIn.

- In connection with the restriction in paragraph 3.5 above (staff providing references for other individuals on social or professional networking sites), on LinkedIn staff may give a short recommendation in relation to another individual
- In connection with the restriction in paragraph 3.5 above (staff providing endorsements for third party products or services either directly on behalf of the school), it is recognised that on LinkedIn staff may "like" or otherwise positively acknowledge a third-party product or service, particularly where that product or service is one connected with the school.

4.2 To reflect the possibility that a reader of a member of staff's LinkedIn account will draw an inference that the posts represent the views of the school, staff must:

- Have a clear disclaimer in their "About" section stating that the views represented in their posts are personal and do not necessarily reflect the views of SPGS
- Notwithstanding the point above above, staff must take care not to post or repost information that does not align with school policies, ethos or approach

4.3 Guidance and training on the good use of LinkedIn is available from the Director of Marketing & Communications. If a member of staff is in doubt about a posting or would like some help with best practice for creating LinkedIn posts, they should speak to the Director of Marketing & Communications.

4.4 The school reserves the right to review any staff member's LinkedIn post and request that it be amended if it believes that it does not appropriately represent the messaging and ethos of the school.

Reporting of Concerns

5.1 If staff have any concerns relating to a social media account either belonging to, purporting to belong to, or appearing to be associated with or referencing the school, they should immediately notify the Director of Marketing & Communications.

5.2 If staff have any safeguarding concerns about a social media account belonging to either themselves, another member of staff, or a student, they should immediately follow the process for reporting low level concerns as set out in the school's Reporting Low Level Concerns policy.

Monitoring

6.1 Whilst the school does not monitor staff personal social media accounts or public-facing media platforms, the school reserves the right to view these for the purposes of enforcing this policy. The school may store copies of such data or communications for a period of time if required as part of an investigation into a potential breach of this policy.

Intellectual Property and Confidential Information

Staff should not do anything to jeopardise our confidential or proprietary information and intellectual property through the use of social media.