



# Torquay Girls Grammar School Staff Code of Conduct

Policy Information	
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## 1. Introduction

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

By creating this policy, we aim to ensure Torquay Girls Grammar (TGGS) is a safe and supportive environment where everyone is treated with respect. School staff have influential positions and will act as role models for pupils by consistently demonstrating high standards of behavior.

Failure to follow the code of conduct may result in disciplinary action being taken, as set out in our School HR Disciplinary Policy.

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 TGGS and its pupils. It is expected that in these circumstances staff will always advise their senior colleagues of their justification for any such action already taken or proposed.

This policy applies equally to all School / Academy employees regardless of their age, disability, sex, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage or civil partnership. Care will be taken to ensure that no traditionally excluded groups are adversely impacted in implementing this policy. Monitoring will take place to ensure compliance and fairness.

## 2. Legal Framework

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/pupil 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 pupils. They will:

- a. Maintain high standards in their attendance and punctuality
- b. Ensure the wellbeing of children is paramount
- c. Never use inappropriate or offensive language in school
- d. Treat pupils and others with dignity and respect
- e. Show tolerance and respect for the rights of others
- f. 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
- g. Not express personal beliefs in a way that exploits pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law
- h. Understand the statutory frameworks they must act within

## 4. Safeguarding

Staff have a duty to safeguard pupils 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.

Adults should work in an open and transparent way.

All staff should know the name of their designated person for child protection in school, be familiar with child protection arrangements and understand their responsibilities to safeguard and protect children.

Our child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures are available - [School Policies | Torquay Girls' Grammar School \(tggsacademy.org\)](https://www.tggsacademy.org/SchoolPolicies)

## 5. Duty of Care

Individuals are expected to make judgements about their behaviour to secure the best interests and welfare of the children in their charge and in so doing, will be seen to be acting reasonably.

All staff should understand their responsibilities, which are part of their employment or role, and be aware that sanctions will be applied if these provisions are breached.

All staff should always act, and be seen to act, in the child's best interests.

All staff should avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions, taking responsibility for their own actions and behaviour.

Safeguarding procedures are in place and reviewed with systems in place for concerns to be raised.

## 6. Low Level Concerns about Staff Members

A low-level concern is a behaviour towards a child by a member of staff that does not meet the harms 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:

- a. Being over-friendly with children
- b. Having favourites
- c. Taking photographs of children on a personal device
- d. Engaging in one-to-one activities where they can't easily be seen
- e. Using inappropriate language
- f. Low-level concerns can include inappropriate conduct inside and outside of work.

All staff should record and report 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, School 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.

## 7. Staff & Pupil Relationships

Staff will observe proper boundaries with pupils 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. A relationship between a staff and student cannot be an equal relationship.

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

- a. This takes place in a public place that others can access
- b. Others can see into the room
- c. A colleague or line manager knows this is taking place
- d. Staff should avoid contact with pupils outside of school hours if possible.
- e. Personal contact details should not be exchanged between staff and pupils. This includes social media profiles.

Where a person aged 18 or over is in a position of trust with a child under 18, it is an offence for that person to engage in sexual activity with or in the presence of that child, or to cause or incite that child to engage in or watch sexual activity. Where a person aged 18 or over is in a position of trust with a person who has only recently left the school, any attempt to engage in sexual activity with that person will be a cause for concern and will be treated as a breach of trust established in that prior relationship.

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

Any sexual behaviour by a member of staff with or towards a pupil is both inappropriate and illegal. Pupils are protected by the same laws as adults in relation to non-consensual sexual behaviour. They are additionally protected by specific legal provisions regardless of whether the child or young person consents or not. This includes the prohibition on adults in a position of trust

## 8. Staff & Pupil Communication

Staff's social media profiles should not be available to pupils. If they have a personal profile on social media sites, they should not accept pupils and parents as 'friends'. The school will endeavour to ensure that parents and students understand their role in not contacting staff through social media as part of the school's wider acceptable use policy for ICT.

Staff should not attempt to contact pupils or their parents via social media, or any other means outside school, to develop any sort of relationship. They will not make any efforts to find pupils' or parents' social media profiles.

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

Adults should ensure that all communications are transparent and open to scrutiny.

Please be conscious of the fact that ex-pupils may be in contact with current pupils. Professional communication with ex-students from TGGS in a professional capacity is considered acceptable. However, under no circumstances should staff contact students or ex-students using personal social media accounts.

## 9. 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 school equipment for personal use. They will also not use personal mobile phones or cameras to take pictures of pupils.

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

Many school activities involve recording images. These may be undertaken as part of the curriculum, out of school activities, for publicity, or to celebrate achievement.

Staff need to be aware of the potential for these aspects of teaching to be misused for pornographic or 'grooming' purposes. Careful consideration should be given as to how these activities are organised and undertaken.

Please refer to the School IT Acceptable Use Policy, GDPR policy for further guidance

## 10. Confidentiality

During their role, members of staff are often privy to sensitive and confidential information about the school, staff, pupils, and their parents.

This information should never be:

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

## 11. Honesty and Integrity

All staff have a responsibility to maintain public confidence in their ability to safeguard the welfare and best interests of children. They should adopt high standards of personal conduct to maintain the confidence and respect of their peers, pupils and the public in general.

Staff should maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their role. This includes when dealing with pupils, handling money, claiming expenses and using school property and facilities.

Staff need to take care that they do not accept any gift that might be construed as a bribe by others or lead the giver to expect preferential treatment.

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.

## 12. Dress Code

Staff should consider the manner of dress and appearance appropriate to their professional role. We require children to be smart in their uniform. Smart and professional appearance is always expected for staff. Staff should ensure they are dressed decently, safely and appropriately for the tasks they undertake.

Those who dress or appear in a manner which could be considered as inappropriate could render themselves vulnerable to criticism or allegation e.g. offensive or political slogans.

## 13. 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.

## 14. Personal Living Space

No pupil should be in, or invited into, the home of an adult who works with them, unless the reason for this has been firmly established and agreed with parents and senior leaders or the home has been designated by the organisation or regulatory body as a workplace e.g. childminders, foster carers.

Staff that have children at TGGS are asked to let an SLT colleague know if they are inviting students over for a sleepover at their home.

## 15. Physical Contact

There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate and proper for staff to have physical contact with pupils, but it is crucial that they only do so in ways appropriate to their professional role.

A 'no touch' approach is impractical for most staff and may in some circumstances be inappropriate. When physical contact is made with pupils this should be in response to their

needs at the time, of limited duration and appropriate. Staff should always use their professional judgement about the appropriateness of any physical contact.

Physical contact should never be secretive, or for the gratification of the adult, or represent a misuse of authority. If a member of staff believes that an action could be misinterpreted, the incident and circumstances should be made clear to senior staff. Physical contact, which occurs regularly with an individual child, is likely to raise questions unless the justification for this is part of a formally agreed plan (for example in relation to children with SEN or physical disabilities).

## 16. Intimate Care

All children have a right to safety, privacy and dignity when contact of an intimate nature is required (for example assisting with toileting or removing wet/soiled clothing). A care plan should be drawn up and agreed with parents for all children who require intimate care on a regular basis.

Children should be encouraged to act as independently as possible and to undertake as much of their own personal care as is practicable. When assistance is required, staff should ensure that another appropriate adult is in the vicinity and is aware of the task to be undertaken.

## 17. Whistleblowing

Whistleblowing is the mechanism by which staff can voice their concerns, made in good faith, without fear of repercussion. Please refer to the School's Whistle Blowing Policy. Staff should follow procedures as laid out in the Whistleblowing policy. This is particularly important where the welfare of children may be at risk.

Ofsted's dedicated Whistleblowing Hotline (0300 1233155) was launched in April 2009. It is staffed from 8am to 6pm, Monday to Friday. Whistleblowing disclosures can also be submitted to Ofsted by email to The Ofsted Whistleblowing team [whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:whistleblowing@ofsted.gov.uk) or by post to: WBHL Ofsted Piccadilly Gate Store Street Manchester M1 2WD

## 18. 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.

## 19. 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

Staff grievance procedures  
Child protection and safeguarding  
IT Security and GDPR



## Appendix 1 – Version Control Amendments

Version No	Date	Summary of Changes