



## Staff Code of Conduct

**UNCRC ARTICLE 3 (best interests of the child)** The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all decisions and actions that affect children.

The code of conduct applies to all staff groups, including those staff who are seconded, supply agency staff, governors, volunteers and students when working on the school premises, on trips/visits, including residential trips with students.

At Trafalgar School, we believe expectation shapes performance. As staff, our high expectations are shown in a number of ways and all members of staff share the responsibility for ensuring excellent standards are maintained at all times. Standards of behaviour, work and respect depend upon the example we set as staff, both in the classroom and around the school: students flourish in an atmosphere that is safe, supportive, calm, positive and well prepared.

Always insist on high standards of behaviour, work and respect from students, yourself and colleagues: stimulating lessons generate outstanding behaviour and earn respect from all. Please refrain from criticising another member of staff (or school policy) either when talking with students or in the staff room. Any concerns should be discussed with the appropriate line manager.

It is the expectation in your daily work you will:

- Be firm, fair and consistent
- Be positive and friendly
- Treat everyone as an individual and with dignity
- Have very high expectations of students and set high standards (students will rise or fall to your level of expectation)
- Ensure you are always out in the corridor by your classroom or work area for the start and end of lessons; it is everyone's responsibility to ensure students get into lessons on time
- Take responsibility for dealing with behaviour concerns – to ignore it is to condone it
- Keep an attractive, clean and tidy area with displays that enhance learning
- Never give up on a student
- Prioritise safeguarding students.

### Staff Dress and Appearance

As role models, it is essential all school staff convey the right messages to students, parents and colleagues. Staff must also take responsibility for their own and others' safety. Dressing appropriately is integral to this. The DfES 'Guidelines for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with children and young people in Educational Settings' states that "those who dress or appear in a manner which could be viewed as offensive or inappropriate will render themselves vulnerable to criticism or allegations". For this reason, it is important we maintain the same high standards of dress we expect from the students. Examples of acceptable clothing include a combination of: • appropriate length skirts (i.e. knee length) • blouses • smart jumpers • jackets • dresses • business suits • tailored trousers • school branded polo shirts • shirt and tie.

Inappropriate clothing for a school environment refers to anything that is likely to be viewed as offensive, revealing, or sexually provocative. Professional dress does not distract, cause embarrassment or give rise to misunderstanding. Alternations to appearance e.g. piercings, extreme hairstyles and tattoos remain at the discretion of the Headteacher. Staff should avoid wearing things containing any political or otherwise contentious slogans and must be mindful of their own health and safety when dressing for work. Examples of unacceptable clothing include: • denim • cord • miniskirts • leggings • low cut / revealing tops • trainers • flip flops • open toe shoes.

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Informal wear is acceptable on non-uniform days or training days however, staff should still ensure they are dressed appropriately for a school environment.

## **Language**

At Trafalgar, excellent relationships exist between staff and students and this must not be taken for granted. It is essential all staff seek to praise students whenever the opportunity arises; at least four times more than issuing negative comments. Students will test the boundaries of acceptable behaviour and we are most successful in these instances when we deal with problems fairly and effectively (see behaviour policy).

The language we use (verbal and non-verbal) with students in lessons and around school is crucial as it sends out such strong messages. Often what we say to a student can be interpreted differently e.g. “You may do that at home, but you will not do it in my lesson” and could unwittingly cause offence. Therefore, staff should consider carefully the language they choose to use. Think about:

- where you stand and how you command a given space
- body language: height and posture
- gestures: hands and arms
- facial expressions and eye contact
- pitch and tone of voice
- internal state of mind: breathing, pauses
- external states: what you say, how you say it, what you are doing when you speak and what you look like when you are speaking.

## **Communication Etiquette**

We encourage all staff to maintain a positive work / life balance and therefore do not expect emails to be sent or work related calls to be made outside of the hours of 7am-6pm, on weekends or during school holidays.

## **Social Media**

At Trafalgar School we appreciate staff have social media accounts but it we encourage staff to follow union guidance regarding its safe use. The DfES ‘Guidelines for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with children and young people in Educational Settings’ states that “all staff have a responsibility to maintain public confidence in their ability to safeguard the welfare and best interests of children” therefore staff need to be careful about any information shared in the public domain. Under no circumstances should staff share pictures of, or reference students on their personal social media accounts. Nothing posted or ‘liked’ in the public domain should bring your professional status into question. All privacy settings should be ‘private’ (the IT team can help with this). Profile pictures should be professional e.g. no alcohol, no nudity, no offensive language. Comments should not mention the school by name or refer to Trafalgar School or the workplace in a derogatory way.

It is an expectation no staff have ‘friends’ on social media who are ex-students, under the age of 18 (any exceptions to this e.g. family members should be brought to the attention of the Headteacher). Some staff prefer to disguise their name in order to limit the number of students able to easily find them on social media platforms.

## **Safeguarding**

Every member of staff will be issued with an ID badge on a Trafalgar School lanyard. All staff are required to wear their ID badge and lanyard at all times – this is an essential part of our safeguarding processes and enables us to identify those who are DBS checked and members of staff in the school. Anyone without an ID badge must be challenged. ID badges should not be lent to other members of staff or students. All staff are required to use their ID badge to sign in and out daily and any time they leave the school site.

DBS checks are carried out every three years and Trafalgar School subscribes to the DBS update service. Nevertheless, all staff are expected to inform the Executive Headteacher **without delay (and by whatever means of communication is fastest)** should they, or a close relative, be investigated in any other aspect of their lives or arrested.

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