

Staff Code of Conduct

Statement of intent

Epinay School expects all students to receive high-quality teaching and learning in a positive and respectful environment.

Employees at the school should understand that their own behaviour, and the manner in which they conduct themselves with their colleagues, students, parents and other stakeholders, sets an example. We recognise that the majority of staff members act appropriately and treat each other with dignity and respect; however, we consider it important to clarify the expected standards.

This document applies to all staff members who are employed by the school, including the Head Teacher, and volunteers, including governors.

This document does not apply to:

- Peripatetic staff members who are employed by the LA.
- School catering staff employed by the LA.
- Employees of external contractors.

These employees are governed by their employment contracts and any relevant laws pertaining to their activities within the school, for example, the GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.

1. Legal framework

1.1. This policy has due regard to all legislation including, but not limited to, the following:

- The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- The Data Protection Act 2018
- The Education Act 2002
- The Children Act 1989
- The Working Time Regulations 1998 (as amended)
- Sexual Offences Act 2003

1.2. This policy also has due regard to statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE (2025) 'Keeping children safe in education'
- DfE (2018) 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'
- DfE (2018) 'Staffing and employment advice for schools'

1.3. This policy operates in conjunction with other school policies.

2. Safeguarding students

2.1. In accordance with 'Keeping children safe in education' 2024⁴⁵, all staff members have a responsibility to safeguard pupils and protect their welfare.

2.2. All staff members have a responsibility to ensure that they provide a learning environment in which students feel safe, secure and respected.

- 2.3. To effectively safeguard students, staff members are required to follow the procedures outlined in this Staff Code of Conduct and the Child Protection Policy, ensuring that they do not act in a way that may put students at risk of harm, or lead others to question their actions.
- 2.4. In accordance with the school's Safeguarding Policy, staff members will be prepared to identify students who may be subject to, or at risk of, the following types of abuse and neglect:
- Physical abuse
 - Emotional abuse
 - Sexual abuse
 - Neglect
 - Peer-on-peer abuse
 - Serious violence
 - FGM
- 2.5. If a staff member identifies a student who is subject to, or at risk of, the abuse and neglect they will follow the necessary reporting and referral procedures outlined in the safeguarding policy.
- 2.6. Any staff member that has concerns about a staff member's actions or intent that may lead to a student being put at risk of harm will report this in line with the Whistleblowing Policy to the Head Teacher immediately so appropriate action can be taken.
- 2.7. Upskirting is not tolerated by the school and any incidents of upskirting must be reported to the DSL who will decide on the next steps to take, which may include involving the police.
- 2.8. If a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with the school, they will use other whistleblowing channels, including contacting the NSPCC's helpline on 0800 028 0285 (between the hours of 8:00am and 8:00pm Monday to Friday) or email help@nspcc.org.uk. Staff members can also access guidance at www.gov.uk/whistleblowing.
- 2.9. If the concern is regarding the Head Teacher, staff will report this to the Chair of Governors.
- 2.10. All staff will partake in the appropriate safeguarding and child protection training; additionally, all staff will receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates but at least annually.
- 2.11. Staff will be aware that confidentiality will never be promised to a student– staff will understand the procedure for if a student discloses a potential safeguarding issue, in accordance with the school's Safeguarding Policy.

3. Appearance and dress

- 3.1. The school expects that staff members will:
- Ensure that their appearance is professional dress when at work or on an outside visit. If it is a planned sporting or outdoor activity where professional dress is not appropriate, please follow the PE guidance below or check with a senior leader. No named football attire or slogans should be worn to avoid any potential confrontation in the wider community.
 - Phase 1 staff - professional dress or smart trousers [not leggings] or skirt with an Epinay polo shirt
 - PE and Sensory teaching staff - Epinay polo shirt, sports top not with football logos, plain tracksuit bottoms [not leggings] knee length, loose dark shorts and trainers.
 - Support staff - professional dress, smart trousers or skirt with school polo shirt, not leggings, jeans or sports attire, no off the shoulder tops or off the shoulder dresses or extremely low fronted tops/blouses and smart shoes not trainers.
 - In horticulture, art, personal development sessions e.g. bushcraft, beachcraft staff must wear trousers, knee length shorts or skirt with polo shirt., or overalls and protective appropriate footwear.
 - Catering staff and students wear catering whites / service uniforms.

- Food technology staff wear professional dress with an apron during all practical tasks.
- DT appropriate footwear for DT not open toe for health and safety, professional dress with cover coat/apron and hair tied back.
- Art, Science - professional dress with cover coat/apron
- Teachers, office staff, SLT - professional dress, no jeans, no leggings, no off the shoulder tops or off the shoulder dresses or extremely low fronted tops/blouses and smart shoes, no trainers. Staff have the option of wearing an Epinay polo top and smart trousers
- Remember that they are role models for students and that their dress and appearance should reflect this. It is important that our dress code keeps everyone safe.
- Not dress in a way that would cause embarrassment to students, parents, colleagues or other stakeholders.

Tattoos and Body Piercings

- Professional Presentation Staff members are expected to maintain a neat, clean, and professional appearance that aligns with a positive learning environment. Visible tattoos and body piercings are generally acceptable, provided they do not disrupt the educational setting or compromise student safety.

Tattoo Guidelines.

- Tattoos must not contain content that is obscene, violent, discriminatory, or otherwise inappropriate for children. Any visible body art depicting profanity, weapons, illegal substances, or hate speech must be completely covered by clothing or bandages during working hours.

Piercing Guidelines

- Facial and body piercings must be discreet and professional. For health and safety reasons, particularly during physical education or playground supervision, staff may be required to remove or cover dangling or oversized jewelry that poses a snagging hazard.

Review and Exceptions

- The school leadership team retains final discretion to determine the appropriateness of any body art or piercings. Reasonable accommodations will be made for verified religious, cultural, or spiritual practices in accordance with local employment laws.

4. Attendance

4.1. The school expects that staff members will:

- Attend work in accordance with their contract of employment and associated terms and conditions in relation to hours, days of work and holidays.
- Make routine medical and dental appointments outside of their working hours or during holidays where possible.
- Refer to the school's Staff Leave of Absence Policy if they need time off for any reason other than personal illness.
- Follow the **school's absence reporting procedure** when they are absent from work due to illness or injury.

5. Professional behaviour and conduct

5.1. Staff members are expected to treat other colleagues, students, parents, and external contacts with dignity and respect.

- 5.2. Discrimination, bullying, harassment or intimidation, including physical, sexual and verbal abuse, will not be tolerated.
- 5.3. Staff members will not misuse or misrepresent their position, qualifications or experience, or bring the school into disrepute.
- 5.4. Staff members will inform the Head Teacher if they are subject to a criminal conviction, caution, ban, police enquiry, investigation or pending prosecution.
- 5.5. Staff will be aware that professional behaviour and conduct is expected to be extended to extra-curricular trips and visits too. All staff attending a trip or visits will act in accordance with this policy. **All staff must read and follow the EVOLVE documentation and event specific notes provided by the lead before attending and supervising external visits. There should be no deviation from the EVOLVE documentation unless approved by EVC leads.**
- 5.6. Staff will act appropriately in terms of the views they express (in particular political views) and the use of school resources at all times and will not use school resources for party political purposes.

6. Conduct outside of work

- 6.1. Staff may undertake work outside school, either paid or voluntary, provided that it does not conflict with the interests of the school. The nature of the work cannot be seen to bring the school into disrepute, nor be at a level which may contravene the working time regulations or affect an individual's work performance.
- 6.2. Staff will not engage in outside work activities which could seriously damage the reputation and standing of the school or the employee's own reputation, or the reputation of other members of the school community. In particular, criminal offences that involve violence, possession or use of illegal drugs or sexual misconduct are unacceptable.
- 6.3. Staff will not engage in inappropriate use of social network sites which may bring themselves, the school, school community or employer into disrepute.

7. Smoking, alcohol and other substances

- 7.1. Staff will not smoke or vape on the school premises.
 - 7.2. Staff will not smoke or vape whilst working with or supervising students off-site, such as when on educational visits, trips or residential visits.
 - 7.3. The taking of illegal drugs or alcohol during working hours is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Staff members must never attend work under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.
 - 7.4. If alcohol or drug usage impacts on a staff member's performance, the school has the right to discuss the matter with the employee and take appropriate action in accordance with the school's disciplinary procedures, including referral to the Police.
- 8.5 Staff will not drink or take substances whilst working with or supervising students off-site, such as when on educational visits, trips or residential visits.

8. Health and safety

- 8.1. Staff members will:
 - Be familiar with and adhere to the school's Health and Safety Policy and ensure that they take every action to keep themselves and everyone in the school environment safe and well.
 - Comply with health and safety regulations and use any safety equipment and protective clothing which is supplied to them.
 - Comply with hygiene requirements.

- Comply with accident reporting requirements.

9. Relationships with students

9.1. The school expects that staff will:

- Maintain professional boundaries and relationships with students at all times, and will consider whether their actions are warranted, proportionate, safe and necessary.
- Act in an open and transparent way that would not lead to others questioning their actions.
- Ensure that they do not establish social contact with students for the purpose of securing a friendship, or to pursue or strengthen a relationship.
- Ensure that they do not develop personal or sexual relationships with students: this includes sexual remarks and discussing their own sexual relationships with, or in the presence of students
- Only contact students via the school's established mechanisms: personal phone numbers, email addresses or social media platforms will not be used to contact students.

9.2. Under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, it is an offence 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 in respect to that child, even if the relationship is consensual.

10. Physical contact with students

- 10.1. The school understands that there are circumstances in which it is entirely necessary for staff to have physical contact with students, e.g. when applying first aid and assisting with intimate care, but staff will only do so in a professional and appropriate manner. The intimate care policy has a parent consent letter for all students requiring support. These letters will be stored in the students individual file.
- 10.2. When physical contact is made with students it is imperative that it is conducted in a way which is responsive to the student's needs, is of limited duration and is appropriate to their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background.
- 10.3. Staff will seek the students permission, where possible, before initiating contact.
- 10.4. Staff will always use their professional judgement when determining what physical contact is appropriate, as this may differ between students. As such, the student's feelings and wishes will always be taken into account.
- 10.5. Staff will never touch a student in a way which is indecent and will always be prepared to explain their actions.
- 10.6. Staff will be aware that even well-intentioned physical contact may be misconstrued by a student, an observer or by anyone to whom this action is described and, therefore, will be prepared to justify their actions.
- 10.7. Staff will not engage in rough play, tickling or play fights with students.
- 10.8. Extra caution will be taken where it is known that a student has previously suffered from abuse or neglect.
- 10.9. Physical contact will never be secretive; if a member of staff believes an action could be misinterpreted, this will be reported to the Head Teacher and appropriate procedures will be followed.
- 10.10. Where it is necessary in PE classes for teachers to demonstrate use of equipment, this will be conducted with another member of staff if possible. If a student is required to participate, their consent will be given before doing so.
- 10.11. If a student is in distress and in need of comfort as reassurance, staff may use age-appropriate physical contact. Staff will remain self-aware of their actions at all times and ensure that their contact is not threatening, intrusive or subject to misinterpretation.

10.12. Staff may also use reasonable force as a means of physical contact with students for restraint purposes.

11. Toileting/showering and changing

- 11.1. Where students are still in nappies for school, parents will read and sign an intimate/personal care plan in conjunction with school staff which details how the students will be managed and cared for. A qualified member of staff will change the student, or assist them in changing themselves if they become wet, or soil themselves. Members of staff will react to accidents in a calm and sympathetic manner. Where students are still in nappies and require regular changing, accurate records of times, staff, students and details of care will be recorded in our school 'Intimate care record book' [refer to intimate care policy]
- 11.2. Students are entitled to respect and privacy whilst they are changing before/after PE/swimming; however, a level of supervision is required to ensure that students are safe, and that they are not subjected to bullying. Male and female staff will be on supervision duty within the first door of the changing rooms where they will be able to hear any inappropriate behaviour from behind the second internal door. [follow PE guidance] During swimming lessons staff will support with dressing and undressing if required. Staff will supervise the changing rooms with their backs to students where possible.
- 11.3. The supervision will be appropriate to the needs and ages of the students, and sensitive to the potential for embarrassment.
- 11.4. Staff will announce their intention of entering the changing room to allow students to maintain their privacy.
- 11.5. Staff will never change or shower in the same area as students.

12. Transporting pupils

- 12.1. When it is necessary to transport students off-site, staff will ensure that the transport arrangements of the vehicle meet all legal requirements, they have an appropriate licence and the vehicle is roadworthy, has a valid MOT certificate and is appropriately insured. Staff will actively supervise on transport and will be dispersed amongst students.

13. Acceptable use of technology

- 13.1. Staff will adhere to the procedures outlined in the school's E-safety Policy and Acceptable Use Agreement at all times. These policies will be read and signed under safeguarding.
- 13.2. Staff are required to employ the highest security settings on any personal profiles they may have.
- 13.3. Staff will not engage in inappropriate use of social networking sites including contacting students or their family members, accepting or inviting friend requests from students or their family members, or following students or their family members on social media.
- 13.4. Staff will remain mindful of their use of social media and their web-based presence including written content, videos or photographs, and views expressed directly or indirectly which may bring themselves, the school or the school community into disrepute.

14. Premises, equipment and communication

- 14.1. School equipment and systems are available only for school-related activities and will not be used for the fulfilment of another job or for personal use, unless specifically authorised by the Head Teacher.
- 14.2. Illegal, inappropriate or unacceptable use of school equipment or communication systems may result in disciplinary action and, in serious cases, could lead to an employee's dismissal.
- 14.3. Employees receiving inappropriate communication or material, or who are unsure about whether something he/she proposes to do might breach this policy, should seek advice from the Head Teacher.

- 14.4. The school reserves the right to monitor emails, phone calls, internet activity or document production, principally in order to avoid offensive or nuisance material and to protect systems from viruses, but also to ensure proper and effective use of systems.
- 14.5. Communication systems may be accessed when the school suspects that the employee has been misusing systems or facilities, or for the investigation of suspected fraud or other irregularity. Access will be secured by the systems manager, only with the permission of the Chair of Governors.
- 14.6. Passwords should not be shared and access to computer systems must be kept confidential except on the express request of the headteacher or systems manager. Breaches of this confidentiality may be subject to disciplinary action.
- 14.7. School equipment that is used outside the premises, e.g. laptops, will be returned to the school when the employee leaves employment or if requested to do so by the Head Teacher.

15. Photography and videos

- 15.1. Consent for taking photographs will be obtained from parents.
- 15.2. Parents who have not given permission for students to have their photograph taken or be filmed will have their wishes respected.
- 15.3. All photographs and videos will be available for scrutiny, and staff will be prepared to justify the images or footage taken.
- 15.4. Careful consideration will always be given to the activities which are being filmed or photographed, to ensure that images or videos are not indecent and cannot be misused.

16. Data protection and confidentiality

- 16.1. Regarding personal and sensitive data, staff members are required, under the GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018, to:
 - Consider the legal basis for collecting the data, ensuring that this is documented.
 - Ensure that the data is stored on a GDPR-compliant server, and that the data is not held for any longer than necessary.
 - Securely dispose of the data when the relevant retention period ends.
- 16.2. Staff members will not disclose sensitive information about the school, its employees or the LA to other parties.
- 16.3. The only exception whereby it is acceptable for a staff member to disclose information that would otherwise be considered confidential is when the confidential information gives rise to concerns about the safety or welfare of a student.
- 16.4. Staff members have the right to request access to data that is held about them. Such requests will be made to the Head Teacher in writing in accordance with the school's Data Protection Policy.

17. Probity of records

- 17.1. The deliberate falsification of documents, such as references, academic qualifications or legal documents, is unacceptable. Where a staff member falsifies records or other documents, including those held electronically, this will be regarded as a serious disciplinary matter and potentially a criminal offence.

Policy approved by Governors: June 2026

Date of next review by Governors: June 2027