

Statutory Policy:

Policy provided centrally for adoption by schools with minimal amendment to the core text. Changes are allowed to the text where indicated

Staff Code of Conduct



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I. Statement of Intent

This policy aims to set and maintain the standards of conduct that we expect all staff (and Governors) to follow. In creating this policy, we aim to ensure each ODST school is an environment where everyone is safe, happy, and treated with respect.

II. Scope

All ODST employees based in schools and the central team
Trustees and members of Local Governing Body's

III. Relevant Legislation

[Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) (2025 and as updated annually)
[The School Staffing \(England\) Regulations](#) (2009)

IV. Related Policies and Guidance

[Teachers' Standards](#) (DfE)

School Teachers Pay and Conditions Document

[Professional Standards for Teaching Assistants](#)

ODST [Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy](#)

ODST [Disciplinary Policy](#)

Procedures for [Managing allegations against staff](#)

[ODST Gifts and Hospitality Policy](#)

ODST Online Safety Policy

ODST [Whistleblowing Policy](#)

ODST [Dignity at Work](#) Procedure

Any local behaviour management and acceptable use of IT policies

V. Monitoring

The Local Governing Body 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.

VI. Date of Review

The policy will be reviewed as required by the Board of Trustees of ODST to take account of any legislative changes as well as feedback from ODST staff and schools and in any event, by 31st December 2028 at the latest.

ODST Code of Conduct

Aims, scope and principles

1/ The Code of Conduct is designed to give clear guidance on the standards of behaviour expected across ODST, to protect the rights and interests of children and young people and to protect the reputation of employees and the organisation.

2/ It is not intended to be exhaustive and does not replace the general requirements of the law, common sense, and good conduct. It also does not replace or take priority over the school's child protection procedures and all staff should be aware of the procedure to follow when child abuse or neglect is suspected, whether inside the school, at home or elsewhere, or following any disclosure of alleged abuse.

3/ School staff have an influential position in the school and will act as role models for pupils by consistently demonstrating high standards of behaviour. We expect that all teachers will act in accordance with the personal and professional behaviours set out in the Teachers' Standards and all support staff, governors, and volunteers to also act with personal and professional integrity, respecting the safety and wellbeing of others.

4/ Failure to follow the code of conduct may result in disciplinary action being taken, as set out in our staff disciplinary procedures.

5/ If situations arise that are not covered by this code, leaders and staff will use their professional judgement and act in the best interests of the school and its pupils.

Legislation and guidance

6/ 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.

7/ This policy also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

General obligations

8/ You must:

- read this code along with supporting policies and guidance,
- ensure you understand it, read, and comply,
- ask if there are any points that are unclear,
- use this code of conduct, alongside other policies mentioned above, to guide you in your role.

9/ Adults should set an example to pupils. This will include:

- maintaining high standards in their attendance and punctuality,
- never using inappropriate or offensive language in school,
- treating pupils and others with dignity and respect,
- showing tolerance and respect for the rights of others,
- not undermining fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs,
- not expressing personal beliefs in a way that exploits pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law,
- understanding the statutory frameworks they must act within,
- adhering to the Teachers' Standards.

Safeguarding

10/ 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.

11/ Staff will familiarise themselves with our child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures and ensure they are aware of the processes to follow if they have concerns about a child. These are available on the school website. New staff will also be given copies as part of their induction.

Allegations that may meet the harm threshold

12/ This section applies to all cases in which it is alleged that anyone working in the school, including a supply teacher, volunteer, or contractor, has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child, and/or
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, and/or
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children, and/or
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children – this includes behaviour taking place inside or outside of school

13/ We will deal with any such allegation quickly and in a fair and consistent way that provides effective child protection while also supporting the individual who is the subject of the allegation. A 'case manager' will lead any investigation. This will be the headteacher, or the chair of governors/ senior member of the ODST team where the headteacher is the subject of the allegation.

Low-level concerns about members of staff

14/ 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:

- Being over-friendly with children,
- Having favourites,
- Taking photographs of children on a personal device,
- Engaging in one-to-one activities where they can't easily be seen,
- Using inappropriate language.

15/ All staff should share 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.

16/ All reports will be handled in a responsive, sensitive, and proportionate way.

17/ 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, trust, and transparency in which our values and expected behaviour are constantly lived, monitored, and reinforced by all staff, while minimising the risk of abuse.

18/ Reporting and responding to low-level concerns is covered in more detail in our child protection and safeguarding policy.

Whistle Blowing

19/ Whistle-blowing reports wrongdoing that it is "in the public interest". Examples linked to safeguarding include:

- Pupils' or staff members' health and safety being put in danger
- Failure to comply with a legal obligation or statutory requirement
- Attempts to cover up the above, or any other wrongdoing in the public interest.

20/ Staff are encouraged to report suspected wrongdoing as soon as possible. Their concerns will be taken seriously and investigated, and their confidentiality will be respected. The school aims to encourage openness and will support whistleblowers who raise genuine concerns under this policy, even if they turn out to be mistaken.

21/ Staff should consider the examples above when deciding whether their concern is of a whistle-blowing nature. Consider whether the incident(s) was illegal, breached statutory or school procedures, put people in danger or was an attempt to cover any such activity up.

22/ Concerns should be made in writing wherever possible. They should include names of those committing wrongdoing, dates, places and as much evidence and context as possible. Staff raising a concern should also include details of any personal interest in the matter. The school will investigate any complaints in a timely, respectful and confidential manner.

Sexual harassment

23/ Sexual harassment is any unwanted physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct of a sexual nature that has a purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. It also includes treating someone less favourably because they've submitted or refused to submit to unwanted conduct of a sexual nature in the past, or harassment related to sex or gender reassignment. When this behaviour is unwanted, it includes (but isn't limited to):

- Unwanted physical conduct or 'horseplay' including touching, pinching, pushing and grabbing,
- Continued suggestions for sexual activity after it has been made clear that such suggestions are unwelcome,
- Sending or displaying material that is pornographic, or that some people might find offensive,
- Unwelcome sexual advances or suggestive behaviour (which the harasser may perceive as harmless),
- Offensive emails, text messages or social media content,
- Comments and jokes of a sexual nature,
- Sexually suggestive looks and staring,
- Sexual propositions and advances,
- Promising things in return for sexual favours,
- Physical contact such as massaging, hugging or kissing.
- Sexual contact on social media.

24/ Staff will help create a positive environment that works to prevent sexual harassment. This includes calling out sexual harassment that they witness. All witnesses will be provided with appropriate support and will be protected from victimisation.

25/ If a staff member is concerned at any point about incidents of sexual harassment (either directed at them or someone else), they should report their concern to their line manager. If the concern is about the headteacher, or it is believed they may be involved in the wrongdoing in some way, the staff member should report their concern to the Chair of the LGB. The school will investigate any complaints in a timely, respectful and confidential manner.

26/ All staff will receive training on recognising and responding to incidents of sexual harassment. The school will monitor the treatment and outcomes of any complaints of sexual harassment or victimisation received to make sure that they are properly investigated and resolved, those who report or act as witnesses are not victimised, repeat offenders are dealt with appropriately, cultural clashes are identified and resolved, and workforce training is targeted where needed.

Staff-pupil relationships

27/ 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.

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

- This takes place in a public place that others can access,
- Others can see into the room,
- A colleague or line manager knows this is taking place.

29/ Staff should avoid social contact with pupils outside of school hours if possible.

30/ Personal contact details should not be exchanged between staff and pupils. This includes social media profiles.

31/ If a staff member is concerned at any point that an interaction between themselves and a pupil may be misinterpreted, 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.

Communication and social media

32/ School staff's social media profiles should not be available to pupils. If they have a personal profile on social media sites, they should not use their full name, as pupils may be able to find them. Staff should consider using a different naming format, such as first and middle name instead, and set public profiles to private.

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

34/ Staff will ensure that they do not post any images online that identify children who are pupils at the school without their consent and should be aware of the school's online safety policy.

Acceptable use of technology

35/ 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.

36/ Staff will not use personal mobile phones and laptops, or school equipment for personal use, in school hours or in front of pupils. They will also not use personal mobile phones or cameras to take pictures of pupils.

37/ The school maintains the right to monitor emails and internet use on the school IT system where appropriate.

Confidentiality

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

39/ This information should never be:

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

Honesty and integrity

40/ 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.

41/ Staff will not accept bribes. Gifts that are worth more than £50 must be declared and recorded on the gifts and hospitality register.

42/ 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.

43/ 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.

Dress code

44/ Staff will dress in a professional, appropriate manner and outfits will not be overly revealing. Clothes will not display any offensive or political slogans.

Conduct outside of work

45/ 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.

This document derives from a template produced by 'The Key' (a resource for school leaders) developed in partnership with the National Association of Head Teachers.