

St. Gerard's
School & Support Services



Code of Conduct Policy

Policy Statement

At St Gerard's School, all staff share responsibility for creating a safe, respectful, inclusive and nurturing environment where every pupil can thrive. As a special school, we recognise the vulnerability of many of our pupils and the trust placed in us by parents, carers and the wider community. This Code of Conduct sets out the expectations, values and professional standards required of all staff working in the school.

This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, students on placement, peripatetic staff, contractors and visitors.

Core Values and Professional Responsibilities

All staff are expected to:

- Support pupils to reach their individual potential, recognising that progress may be social, emotional, communication-based or independence-focused as well as academic.
- Treat all pupils with kindness, patience, dignity and respect, taking account of individual needs, disabilities and vulnerabilities.
- Protect the rights and welfare of all children in our care, in line with safeguarding and child protection responsibilities.
- Promote equality, tolerance and respect for diversity and difference, ensuring no pupil is discriminated against.
- Model positive behaviour, language and attitudes at all times, recognising the influence staff have on pupils.
- Work in partnership with parents and carers, valuing their knowledge of their children and maintaining open, professional communication.
- Work collaboratively with colleagues to promote consistency, teamwork and shared responsibility.
- Engage positively with external agencies and professionals to ensure the best possible outcomes for pupils.
- Maintain high standards of professional conduct, both within and beyond the school day.
- Commit to ongoing professional learning and development for the benefit of pupils and the school community.
- Go the extra mile for pupils, demonstrating care, flexibility and commitment while maintaining professional boundaries.

Safeguarding and Professional Boundaries

Safeguarding is at the core of all professional practice in St Gerard's School.

Staff must:

- Always act in a manner that safeguards pupils from harm and reduces the risk of allegations or misunderstandings.
- Maintain clear professional boundaries with pupils at all times.
- Follow the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy at all times.
- Report any safeguarding concerns immediately to the Designated Teacher for Child Protection.
- Never place themselves in situations that could compromise pupil safety or professional integrity.

No adult may work unsupervised with pupils until they have been inducted into the school's safeguarding procedures and this Code of Conduct.

Staff–Pupil Relationships

All interactions with pupils must:

- Be appropriate, professional and respectful.
- Take account of pupils' communication needs, sensory sensitivities and emotional regulation difficulties.
- Avoid any behaviour that could be misinterpreted or cause distress.
- Uphold pupils' dignity during personal care or support, ensuring privacy and consent where appropriate, and following agreed care plans.

Dress Code

A professional appearance supports the ethos and reputation of the school.

- Staff are expected to maintain a smart, professional and well-groomed appearance when pupils and parents are present on site.
- Clothing should be appropriate to a special school environment, allowing staff to safely and effectively support pupils with physical, sensory or behavioural needs.
- Smart-casual dress is acceptable on staff development or training days when pupils and parents are not on site.
- Clothing or accessories that could pose a health and safety risk are not permitted.

Use of Mobile Phones and Personal Devices

For safeguarding and child protection reasons:

- Mobile phones must not be used when working directly with pupils.
- Personal devices should be stored securely and used only during breaks and away from pupils.
- Staff must never take photographs or recordings of pupils on personal devices.
- School devices may only be used in line with school procedures and parental consent.

Confidentiality and Professional Conduct

Staff must:

- Treat all information about pupils and families as confidential, sharing only on a need-to-know basis.
- Follow GDPR and data protection requirements at all times.
- Conduct themselves in a manner that upholds the reputation of the school, including on social media.
- Raise professional concerns appropriately through agreed school procedures.

Allegations and Breaches of the Code

Failure to adhere to this Code of Conduct may result in:

- Informal support or guidance
- Formal disciplinary procedures
- Referral to external agencies where appropriate

Any concerns about the conduct of a colleague should be reported immediately to the Principal or Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed regularly and updated in line with Department of Education guidance and safeguarding requirements.