



Pioneer House High School: Staff Code of Conduct

Pioneer House High School is committed to achieving positive academic, social, emotional, economic and safeguarding outcomes for its students. We are equally committed to the protection and welfare of our staff. Our duty to safeguard students is paramount and is just as important as our determination to make all our teaching and learning outstanding. We need to ensure that students and staff are safe. Safeguarding involves not only health and safety issues, but establishing a culture that prevents any kind of abuse of students being perpetrated either in school or elsewhere.

The achievement of positive outcomes for our students necessitates the need to ensure that all adults working with children are competent, confident and safe to do so. As such, all staff at Pioneer House High School are expected to comply with the following Code of Conduct. Teaching staff are furthermore expected to conduct themselves within the guidance of the 'personal and professional conduct' section of the Teachers' Standards. Failure to comply with these codes of conduct and practice may lead to disciplinary action being taken where appropriate. (Teachers' Standards, GOV.UK – DfE)

The guidance aims to:

- keep children safe by clarifying which behaviours constitute safe practice and which behaviours should be avoided;
- assist adults working with children to work safely and responsibly and to monitor their own standards and practice;
- support managers and employers in setting clear expectations of behaviour and/or codes of practice relevant to the services being provided;
- support employers in giving a clear message that unlawful or unsafe behaviour is unacceptable and that, where appropriate, disciplinary or legal action will be taken;
- support safer recruitment practice;
- minimise the risk of misplaced or malicious allegations made against adults who work with students;
- reduce the incidence of positions of trust being abused or misused.

Dress and appearance – All staff at Pioneer House are expected to be role models for young people and for this reason all staff need to be consistent.

Staff should avoid the following when in front of students:

- Chewing gum
- Use of mobile phones for personal use, unless it is essential, or use phones in corridors
- Exposure tattoos or body piercings, with the exception of earrings
- Use of inappropriate language, either orally or in writing
- Eating or drinking in the classrooms or corridors

Staff should dress in ways which are appropriate to their role and this may need to be different to how they dress when not at work. Staff should ensure they are dressed appropriately for the tasks and the work. Pioneer House High School seeks to create an explicit work ethic for pupils which



Pioneer House High School: Staff Code of Conduct

recognises the importance of “looking the part”. Staff play a crucial role in demonstrating this ethic and being role models for pupils in both their conduct and appearance.

All staff should consider that their dress sets an example to pupils. If staff dress smartly, pupils are more likely to follow suit.

Staff should exercise professional judgement when deciding what to wear during the course of a normal school day and the guideline of “smart-casual” professional dress is advised. Clothing should be appropriate for the activity which staff are undertaking, however, blue jeans and hooded sweatshirts should be avoided as classroom dress.

Staff must ensure that undergarments are not visible. Hats and coats should not be worn in school. Any extremes of fashion are inappropriate in the professional environment of the school.

For particular activities, such as teaching PE, it sets a good example to pupils if staff also change into suitable clothing. For reasons of safety, staff should always change into suitable footwear for PE and should wear safe, appropriate clothing and footwear for all school activities.

Jewellery

Staff should not wear loose, obtrusive or prominent items of jewellery which may be caught during typical school activities, causing injury to either the member of staff or pupil.

Piercings should be limited to small, unobtrusive hoops or studs where possible.

Staff tattoos should be covered with clothing where possible.

Hair styles

Hairstyles should reflect the professional nature of the staff role and extremes of style or colour should be avoided.

Any staff member who chooses to dress in a manner which could be considered as inappropriate could render themselves vulnerable to criticism or allegations.

Attendance and Punctuality – Staff are expected to strive for 100% attendance and punctuality including INSET days, except for sickness, approved compassionate grounds, or where punctuality is concerned, unforeseen or circumstances outside of the individual’s control.

In order to ensure the effective running of the school and the delivery of teaching and learning to pupils is maintained, employees must inform the school’s nominated person of their inability to attend work and the reason for this on the first day of absence. Staff should contact school between 8.00am and 8.30am on the day of absence.

Employees must report the absence in person or by telephone. In most cases e-mails or text

messages are not acceptable unless previously agreed that it is not possible to communicate by telephone. Absence should not be reported by anyone other than the employee unless there are exceptional circumstances.



Pioneer House High School: Staff Code of Conduct

In order to assist school to assess the likely duration of absence and arrange the necessary cover, employees must specify the length of time they expect to be absent. If this is not possible the employee must follow the reporting procedure on **each** day of absence.

If the nominated person is not available then the employee must contact another senior person in school and leave a contact number.

If for some reason the nominated person is not available, the employee should expect a telephone call from the nominated person or other senior person at home later to establish a reason for the absence.

If the absence continues for more than seven days (including non-working days) then from the eighth day of absence a Medical Certificate (Fit Note) is required from the employee's doctor and must be sent in to school no later than four days after the expiry of the previous self-certified period, or the expiry of a previous fit note.

In cases where an employee returns to work prior to the expiry of a Medical Certificate, then the employee must provide, before returning to work, a signing off note.

Failure to follow the reporting procedure will be investigated and, where an employee has not taken reasonable steps to comply with the managing attendance procedure, this may lead to absence from work being considered as unauthorised, resulting in loss of pay and possibly disciplinary action.

School Policies and Procedures – All policies should be observed by all. It is the responsibility of staff to familiarise themselves with these. Some policies will require staff to acknowledge they have read them. Copies may be found in the office and on the school website.

Duty of Care – All staff have a duty of care to keep young people safe and to protect them from sexual, physical and emotional harm. Children have a right to be safe and to be treated with respect and dignity. Staff should understand their responsibilities and always act in the child's best interests. They should work and be seen to work in an open and transparent way. Staff are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intervention.

Equality – Professional standards should always be maintained when dealing with both staff and students regardless of culture disability, gender, language, race, religion and/or sexual identity. You must treat all children equally and with respect. (This is reinforced by our Equality Policy.)

Confidentiality – Staff are expected to treat any information they may receive about students in a discreet and confidential manner. Staff should never use confidential or personal information about a student or her/his family for their own, or others' advantage. Information must never be used to intimidate, humiliate, or embarrass the student. Individual students should never be discussed by staff in front of other students. Staff should make it clear to students that any disclosures implying threats to the welfare or safety of the student, cannot be kept confidential, and may need to be discussed with an appropriate adult.



Pioneer House High School: Staff Code of Conduct

Professional Boundaries – Staff are in a position of trust and the relationship with students is not one of equals. Professional boundaries should be maintained at all times and power and trust should not be misused. The aim is to offer friendly care and not to imply a special friendship with any student.

Gifts, Rewards and Favouritism - Staff should ensure that the motivation behind the giving of gifts/awards or rewards is clear to all students in order to avoid any misunderstandings of intent. You must not give child gifts personally; any appropriate gifts should come from the school as an organisation. The giving of gifts or rewards to students should be part of an agreed policy for supporting positive behaviour or recognising particular achievements. Staff must not accept gifts from children unless they are small token gifts appropriate to a celebration. All gifts must be reported to the Head Teacher.

Power and Positions of Trust – All staff working in school are in positions of trust in relation to the students in their care. A relationship between an adult and student is not a relationship between equals. Staff should always maintain appropriate professional boundaries and avoid behaviour which might be misinterpreted by others. They should report and record any incident with this potential.

Infatuations - Occasionally, a student may develop an infatuation with a staff member who works with them. All staff should deal with these situations sensitively and appropriately to maintain the dignity and safety of all concerned. Should any student become infatuated with a member of staff, this must be reported to the Head Teacher immediately. The maintenance of professional boundaries at all times should go some way to avoiding this situation however.

Behaviour Management - All students have a right to be treated with respect and dignity even in those circumstances where they display difficult or challenging behaviour. Staff should not use any form of degrading treatment to punish a child. The use of sarcasm, demeaning or insensitive comments towards students is not acceptable in any situation. Where students display difficult or challenging behaviour, staff must follow the Behaviour for Learning Policy.

General conduct - All staff are expected to carry out their duties within the spirit of mutual respect, co-operation and support. A teacher should not deliberately behave in such a way as to bring Pioneer House High School into disrepute.

Personal Conduct – Staff are expected to behave in a manner both within and outside of working hours which would not lead any reasonable person to question their suitability to work with children or act as a role model. All adults working with students have a responsibility to maintain public confidence in their ability to safeguard the welfare and best interests of students.

Home Visits – Staff are not permitted to visit the home of a student unless pre-arranged and the Headteacher and the designated Safeguarding Lead are informed. The appointment must be logged in the by the Designated Safeguarding Lead. No young person should ever be invited into the home of a staff member.



Pioneer House High School: Staff Code of Conduct

Social Contact with students – All social contact outside of school hours with students should be avoided. Home or mobile phone numbers, addresses or email addresses and social media contacts should not be exchanged. Staff should not establish or seek to establish social contact with students for the purpose of securing a friendship or to pursue or strengthen a relationship. There will be occasions when there are social contacts between students and staff, where for example the parent and teacher are part of the same social circle. These contacts will be easily recognised and openly acknowledged. Nevertheless, there must be awareness on the part of those working with students that some social contacts can be misconstrued as being part of a grooming process.

Sexual Contact - sexual activity between an adult and a student with whom they work (including verbal comments, letters, emails, phone contact, and physical contact) may be regarded as a criminal offence and will always be a grave breach of trust and a matter for disciplinary action. 'Working Together to Safeguard Children', defines sexual abuse as “forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware.

Physical Contact with Students – should be avoided unless within the guidance of the Positive handling, Promoting Positive Behaviour and Intimate Care policies. Possible exceptions using professional judgement might be greetings or congratulations such as handshakes; the guiding of a student to where they need to be or a hug in an appropriate situation. There should never be any physical contact when students are getting changed or showering and respect and privacy must be shown to them at this time.

First Aid – should only be administered by trained members of staff whose names are displayed in the head teacher’s office.

One to One Situations – should be conducted in an open and transparent fashion i.e. with the knowledge of, or with other staff nearby, and if necessary with an open door. Where after school detentions are one to one, these should be limited to one hour and only with the parent/carer’s consent.

Transporting Students - staff should not travel alone with students unless in an emergency or where the child is at risk. If staff are expected to use their own vehicles for transporting students they should ensure that the vehicle is roadworthy, appropriately insured and that the maximum capacity is not exceeded, seat belts are worn.

Curriculum - Many areas of the curriculum can include or raise subject matter which is sexually explicit, or of an otherwise sensitive nature. The curriculum can sometimes include or lead to unplanned discussion about subject matter of a sexually explicit or otherwise sensitive nature. Responding to students' questions can require careful judgement. Parents have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of any sex education provided (but not from the teaching of reproduction/human growth under the science curriculum).

The Use of Personal Living Space - No student should be invited into, the home of an adult who works with them, unless the reason for this has been firmly established and agreed with parents/ carers and a member of SLT or the Head teacher. Under no circumstances should students assist



Pioneer House High School: Staff Code of Conduct

with chores or tasks in the home of a member of staff who works with them. This also applies to friends or family of a staff member.

Educational Visits and After-School Activities - Organisers must conduct risk assessments and adhere to Health and Safety guidelines. Staff/child ratios should be considered and where overnight stays are involved, the gender mix should be carefully organised. No students of the opposite sex should be allowed to enter the bedroom area of another student. On residential trips staff must not smoke and no alcohol should be consumed.

Communication with Students (including the Use of Technology) - Staff must ensure that they establish safe and responsible online behaviours. Communication between students and staff, by whatever method, should take place within clear and explicit professional boundaries. Staff should not share any personal information with a child or young person. Staff should ensure that all communications are transparent and open to scrutiny.

Internet Usage - Internet Users must not display, access, use, extract, store, distribute, print, reveal or otherwise process any kind of image, document or other material which is sexually explicit or offensive in any other way, on any school system. This activity would be a violation of the school's policies, particularly those relating to conduct and discrimination. If access to this information is required for school purposes, a request must be submitted to the Head Teacher detailing a legitimate reason for the access. If you are authorised to use this sort of material, you should take great care not to offend others when the material is revealed, and not to retain such material or access to it when it is no longer needed for the specified reasons. You must not post any comments, photographs, images or conversations on social networking websites which may bring you or the school and Trust into disrepute. Security settings should be maintained at the highest level in order to prevent members of the public seeing any of your personal information.

Photography and Videos – Staff should be clear about the purpose of recording images and about what will happen to them once the activity is concluded. Informed written consent from parent/carers is sought and those students whose images cannot be used are recorded on SIMS.

Use of Images and ICT –Staff must ensure that children are not exposed to any unsuitable material and that any films, You tube clips or other materials shown to students are age appropriate. Staff must not access any inappropriate material for their own consumption. Staff are advised not to post their personal details or inappropriate materials on social networking sites. Accessing, making and storing indecent images of children is illegal and will lead to criminal investigation.

Use of Mobile phones - Mobile phones should be switched off or silent at all times. Staff should only use their mobile phones for personal calls or messages during personal time in private out of sight of the students. Staff should never store parent's or student's telephone numbers on their mobile phone. Staff will be issued with a school phone for use in case of emergency on school trips or off site activities. Staff should not use their mobile phone or other mobile device as a camera or video /audio recorder to record sound or images of students.



Pioneer House High School: Staff Code of Conduct

Contact with the Media – Only designated persons are entitled to communicate with the press, radio or television companies.

Whistle Blowing – Whistle blowing is the mechanism by which staff can voice their concerns, made in good faith, without fear of repercussion. Pioneer House has a clear and accessible whistle blowing policy that meets the terms of the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998. In accordance with the Pioneer House High School Whistle Blowing Policy, staff should report any behaviour by colleagues that raises concern to either the Head teacher or to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, as appropriate.

Sharing concerns, recording incidents – Staff should be aware of child protection procedures including procedures for dealing with allegations against adults. (See flowchart in the Head teacher’s office.) Staff who are the subject of an allegation should contact their professional association. Staff are responsible for recording any incident and passing on any information where they have concerns about any matter pertaining to the welfare of any individual or child to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

All Staff should be aware that issues relating to compliance with the Staff Code of Conduct or Professional Standards could prompt implementation of the Disciplinary and Capability policy.

I confirm that I have read and agree to abide by the Pioneer House High School Staff Code of Conduct.

Signed: Print name: Date:

A copy of this document will be kept on your staff file.

Policy Written: November 2016

Ratified by Governors: November 2016