

# **Thomas Telford School**



**Thomas Telford School Code of Conduct for Staff, Governors and Volunteers.**

**Updated June 2019**

**The Governing Board will review this policy every two years.**

**Review date June 2021**

**This document sets out a code of conduct for all Thomas Telford School**

#### **Other relevant Policies**

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Complaints policy
- Disciplinary and Capability Procedure
- Disclosure and Barring Statement
- GDPR Policy
- Equal Opportunity and Diversity policy
- Medical Room Policy
- PHSE/SMCS Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Whistleblowing

#### **Safeguarding Officers**

- Phil Nicholls
- Bethan Cash

#### **Headmasters Professional Assistant**

- Saffron Baxter

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## Introduction

‘Thomas Telford School Governing Board will foster a culture of the highest professional standards.’ This Code of Conduct sets out standards expected and the duty upon staff, governors and volunteers to abide by them. All staff, governors and volunteers have a duty to keep students and themselves safe and to protect them from physical and emotional harm. This duty is, in part, exercised through the development of respectful, caring and professional relationships between adults and students and behaviour by adults which demonstrates integrity, maturity and good judgement. Following this Code of Conduct will help to safeguard staff, governors and volunteers from falsely or mistakenly being suspected or accused of professional misconduct in relation to students.

Staff, Governors and volunteers must feel able to raise issues of concern and everyone must fully recognise the duty to do so, particularly in terms of Thomas Telford School Child Protection and Safeguarding procedures.

This Code of Conduct cannot provide a complete checklist of what is, or is not, appropriate behaviour for staff. However, it does highlight behaviour that is illegal, inappropriate or inadvisable in relation to students. There will be occasions and circumstances in which staff have to make a decision or take action in the best interests of the student where no specific guidance had been given. Adults are expected to make responsible and informed judgements about their own behaviour in order to secure the best interests and provide the best welfare for students in their care.

All teaching staff must adhere to the ‘Teachers’ Standards Guidance’ which can be accessed at [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)

The document ‘Guidance for Safer Working Practice for those Working with Children and Young People in Education settings’ Oct 2015 is also incorporated into this Code of Conduct.

The Code of Conduct forms part of Thomas Telford School disciplinary rules for staff. A serious breach of the Code will be regarded as gross misconduct. A less serious breach may result in a disciplinary warning.

Where an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff, the Governing Board will follow the guidance set out in ‘Keeping Children Safe in Education’ September 2020.

The policy is about managing allegations that might indicate that a person is unsuitable to continue work with students in their present position, or in any capacity. It will be used where it is alleged that a member of staff or volunteer or governor has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- Behaviour towards a child or children in a way that indicates the member of staff is unsuitable to work with children.

## **Principles of Professional Practice.**

All staff, governors and volunteers, as appropriate to the role/job description, must;

- Place the wellbeing and learning of students at the centre of their professional practice.
- Have high expectations for all students, be committed to addressing underachievement and work to help students progress regardless of their background and personal circumstances.
- Treat students fairly and with respect, take their knowledge, views, opinions and feelings seriously and value diversity and individuality.
- Model the characteristics they are trying to inspire in students, spirit for learning, enquiry, honesty, tolerance, social responsibility, patience and genuine concern for others.
- Respond sensitively to situations and recognise the key role parents/carers play in the student's education.
- Seek to work in partnership with parents/carers, respecting views, promoting understanding and cooperation to support students learning and well-being.
- Reflect and review own practice.
- Staff should work, and be seen to work, in an open and transparent way.
- Staff should apply the same professional standards regardless of culture, disability, gender. Racial origin, religious belief and sexual orientation.
- Staff should understand Thomas Telford School Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy, managing allegations against staff, whistleblowing and Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) procedures.

## **Duty of Care**

All adults who work with, and on behalf of children are accountable for the way in which they exercise authority; manage risk; use resources; and safeguard children and young people.

- Whether working in a paid or voluntary capacity, these adults have a duty to keep children and young people safe and to protect them from sexual, physical and emotional harm. Children and young people have a right to be treated with respect and dignity. It follows that trusted adults are expected to take reasonable steps to ensure the safety and well-being of children and young people. Failure to do so may be regarded as neglect.
- The duty of care is in part, exercised through the development of respectful and caring relationships between adults and children and young people. It is also exercised through the behaviour of the adult, which at all times should demonstrate integrity, maturity and good judgement.
- High standards of behaviour is expected from adults who work with children and young people. When individuals accept such work, they need to understand and acknowledge the responsibilities and trust inherent in that role.

## **Confidentiality**

Members of staff and Governors may have access to confidential information about children and young people in order to undertake their responsibilities. In some circumstances they may have access to or be given highly sensitive or private information. These details must be kept confidential at all times and only shared when it is in interests of the child to do so. Such information must not be used to intimidate, humiliate, or embarrass the child or young person concerned.

- If an adult who works with children is in any doubt about whether to share information or keep it confidential he or she should seek guidance from a senior member of staff or nominated child protection person. Any actions should be in line with locally agreed information sharing protocols.
- The storing and processing of personal information about children and young people is governed by the Data Protection Act 2018 (GDPR). Thomas Telford School will provide clear advice to adults about their responsibilities under this legislation.
- Confidential information about students must be held securely. Confidential information about students must not be held off the school site other than on security protected Thomas Telford School equipment. If a member of staff is in any doubt about storing information they must seek guidance from SMT.

Whilst adults need to be aware of the need to listen to and support children and young people, they must also understand the importance of not promising to keep secrets. Neither should they request this of a child young person under any circumstances.

Additionally, concerns and allegations about adults should be treated as confidential and passed to a senior manager without delay.

*See Thomas Telford School GDPR Policy/20 principles of GDPR/Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.*

## **Making a Professional Judgement**

Adults should always consider whether their actions are warranted, proportionate and safe and applied equitably.

Adults should:

- Discuss the circumstances that informed their action, or their proposed action, with a senior manager.
- Report any actions which could be misinterpreted to their senior manager.
- Always discuss any misunderstanding, accidents or threats with a senior manager.

## **Honesty and Integrity**

All employees must maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their work at Thomas Telford School.

- Staff must take care they do not accept a gift that might be construed by others as a bribe or lead the giver to expect preferential treatment.
- Personal gifts must not be given to students. Any reward should be recorded by Thomas Telford School in the appropriate manner.
- The integrity of Thomas Telford School employees must be beyond suspicion. If a member of Staff has a private interest (dealing in an official capacity) however slight, it is the employees duty to disclose this to their line manager.

## **Propriety, Behaviour Reputation, Appearance and Electronic Communication.**

Staff and Governors working with children and young people have a responsibility to maintain public confidence in their ability to safeguard the welfare and best interests of children and young people. It is therefore expected that they will adopt high standards of personal conduct in order to maintain the confidence and respect of the public in general and all with whom they work. An individual's behaviour, either inside or outside of the work place, should not compromise his/her position within the work setting or bring Thomas Telford School into disrepute.

- Staff must ensure they are dressed in a safe and appropriate manner for the tasks they undertake. Those who dress or appear in a manner which could be considered as inappropriate could render themselves vulnerable to criticism or allegations of misconduct. A person's dress and appearance are matters of personal choice and self-expression. However adults 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.
- Thomas Telford School is a working environment and staff should adhere to the dress code for sixth form students to set an appropriate example.
- Under no circumstances should adults at Thomas Telford School access inappropriate images on school devices. Personal property of a sexually explicit **must not** be stored on Thomas Telford electronic devices. Breach of this will be treated as gross misconduct and may be a criminal offence. It may also result in barring from working with children and young people.

*See Thomas Telford School E safety/ Behaviour/ Child protection Policy.*

## **Social Contact and Social Networking**

Staff should not seek to establish or seek to establish social contact with students for the purpose of securing a friendship. If a student's seeks to establish social contact, or is this coincidentally, the member of staff should exercise professional judgement at all times. Social contact through social media or phone **must not** be encouraged as this may be misconstrued and put the member of staff in an extremely vulnerable position.

Staff must not give their personal details to students or parents unless this is agreed with a senior member of staff.

Social networking sites and blogging are part of modern day life.

- Staff **must not** post material which damages the reputation of Thomas Telford School of which causes concern about their suitability to work with children and young people.
- Those who post material which could be considered inappropriate could render themselves vulnerable to criticism or allegations of misconduct.

*See Thomas Telford School E safety Policy/Child Protection Policy/Acceptable Use Policy.*

### **Infatuations**

Staff may recognise that a student may be strongly attracted to a member of staff and / or develop a heterosexual or homosexual infatuation.

- The member of staff who becomes aware that a student may be infatuated must report it to a senior member of staff without delay.
- The situation will be taken seriously and appropriate action will be taken.
- Staff must be careful to ensure that no encouragement of any kind is given to the student. Careless and insensitive actions may provoke false accusations.

Examples of situations which must be reported are given below:

- Where a member of staff is concerned that he/she may be developing a relationship with a students which could have the potential to represent an abuse of trust.
- Where a member of staff is concerned that a student is becoming attracted to them or that there is a developing attachment or dependency.
- Where staff are concerned that actions or words have been misunderstood or misconstrued by a student such that abuse of trust might be wrongly suspected by others.
- Where staff are concerned about the apparent development of a relationship by another member of staff, or receives information about such a relationship.

### **One to One Situations and Meeting with, and transporting Students.**

Staff working in one-to-one situations with students are more vulnerable to allegations. Staff must recognise this possibility and plan accordingly.

- Every attempt should be made to ensure that the safety of both staff and students are met.
- Managers should undertake a risk assessment in relation to the specific nature and implications of the one-to-one work.
- Staff must avoid secluded areas of the school ensuring that the door of the room is left open and/or visual/auditory contact with others maintained.
- Offsite meetings with students when Thomas Telford School is not in session, is not permitted, unless approval has been obtained from the Headmaster or member of SMT.
- Teachers of individual lessons, ie music and individual needs (including SEND) should endeavour to ensure that their teaching takes place where visual contact with others can be maintained
- Permission for home visits both on and off site must be sought from the Headteacher or member of SMT.

- Transport arrangement must be made in advance by designated member of staff. An appropriate licence/permit should be held for the vehicle.
- Unless it is an emergency situation such as urgent transport to hospital, two members of staff (one female, if a female student) must accompany the student to their destination and handed to an appropriate adult.

*See Thomas Telford School Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy.*

### **Extremism**

All employees must encourage students to respect the:

- Fundamental British Values of Democracy.
- Rule of Law
- Individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.
- Individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance for those of gender identity and gender choice.

*See Thomas Telford School Child protection/Safeguarding/ SMSC policies.*

### **Curriculum**

Areas of the curriculum can include or raise subject matter which is sexually explicit or of a sensitive nature.

- Care should be taken that resource material cannot be misinterpreted and should be clearly related to learning.
- Responding to students questions can require careful judgement and staff must take guidance from a senior member of staff.

*See Thomas Telford School Sex & Relationship Policy/SMSC Policy.*

### **Media -Photography and Video**

A number of activities involve Thomas Telford School recording images. This may be part of the curriculum, extra school activities, for publicity or to celebrate achievement.

- Parental consent is required to be obtained by the school. A list of parents who have informed the school they do not wish their child to participate in photographs/videos is maintained by Thomas Telford School and held in the data office.
- Staff should remain sensitive to any student who appears uncomfortable. It is important to take into account the wishes of the students, remembering that some students do not wish to have their photograph taken or appear on video.
- Parents who do not wish their child to be photographed or appear in videos, Thomas Telford School will comply with their request.
- Some children, such as CIC (children in care) will not be used in video or photographs unless authorisation has been given by the Local Authority.
- Avoid naming the student, if photograph is used. If student is named, do not use the photograph.
- Ensure a member of SMT is aware that photography/imagery is being used. Images must be

securely stored and authorised by a member of SMT.

- Be clear about the purpose/activity.
- All images must be available for scrutiny in order for acceptability.
- DO NOT take images in one to one situations.
- DO NOT take display/distribute images of students unless there is consent to do so.

*See Thomas Telford School GDRP Policy/20 principles of GDRP/ Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.*

### **Sharing Concerns and Recording Incidents.**

All staff, Governors and Volunteers must be vigilant and share concerns and report incidents.

- In order to safeguard and protect students and colleagues, where staff have any concerns about someone who works with children/young people they should immediately report this to the Headmaster or member of SMT.

*See Thomas Telford School Whistle blowing/Child Protection Policy.*

### **Physical Intervention and Personal Privacy**

There may be occasions when a distressed student needs comfort and reassurance. Staff should remain self-aware at all times that their actions could not be a subject to misinterpretations.

- When a member of staff has a particular concern about the need to provide care/reassurance they must seek further advice from a member of Thomas Telford School SMT.
- If a student has a specific care plan to support their physical and intimate needs, contact should be in line with the students plan and medical policy.
- Physical Education and Music staff, will on occasions, have to initiate contact with students to demonstrate the use of a particular piece of equipment / instrument or assist them with an exercise. This must be done with the students' agreement. This should take place in an open environment with minimum contact to complete the exercise.
- Students are entitled to privacy when changing. However their needs to be an appropriate level of supervision in order to safeguard students, Health and Safety and appropriate behaviour. This supervision should be appropriate to the needs and sensitive to the potential embarrassment.

*See Thomas Telford School Medical/ behaviour/anti bullying/safeguarding policies.*

### **First Aid**

Thomas Telford School has trained first aiders. Appointed first aiders cover the medical room. Staff must have had the appropriate training before administering first aid or medication.

*See Thomas Telford School Medical Policy.*

### **Leaving Employment**

Employees of Thomas Telford School should continue to observe their duties of confidentiality after they have left the employment of the school.

## Declaration

I confirm that I have read and agree to adhere to the guidance set out in the Thomas Telford School Code of Conduct 2020/21.

Name (please print): .....

Designation: .....

Signature: .....

Date: .....

**Completed forms should be returned to the Headmasters Professional Assistant**