



## STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT

### 1. Aims, scope and principles

This policy aims to set and maintain standards of conduct that we expect all staff to follow.

By creating this policy, we aim to ensure our school is an environment where everyone is safe, happy and treated with respect.

Many of the principles in this code of conduct are based on the [Teachers' Standards](#) and it is expected that teacher conduct should always be compliant with the Teachers' Standards, part 1 and 2.

All members of staff working with pupils are in a position of trust. A relationship between a member of staff and a student can never be one of equals. It is an offence under Section 16 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 to abuse a position of trust by having an intimate relationship with a pupil under any circumstances.

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.

We expect all support staff, governors and volunteers to also act with personal and professional integrity, respecting the safety and wellbeing of others and representing the school to the highest standards.

Failure to follow the code of conduct may result in disciplinary action being taken, including, but not limited to dismissal, as set out in our staff disciplinary procedures.

Please note that this code of conduct is not exhaustive. If situations arise that are not covered by this code, staff will use their professional judgement and act in the best interests of the school and its pupils.

### 2. Legislation and guidance

In line with the statutory safeguarding guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#), we should have a staff code of conduct, which should (among other things) cover low-level concerns, allegations against staff and whistle-blowing, as well as acceptable use of technologies (including the use of mobile devices), staff/pupil relationships and communications, including the use of social media.

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

### 3. General obligations

Staff set an example to pupils. They will:

- Maintain high standards in their attendance and punctuality
- Always act in the best interests of pupils, making professional judgements and conducting themselves towards pupils in a way which is warranted, proportionate, safe and equitable
- Take reasonable care of pupils under their supervision with the aim of ensuring their safety and welfare
- Never use inappropriate or offensive language in school
- Treat pupils and others with dignity and respect and without discrimination; they will not demean or undermine pupils, parents/carers or colleagues

- Show tolerance and respect for the rights of others
- Not undermine fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
- Not express personal beliefs in a way that exploits pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law
- Maintain professional boundaries and avoid putting themselves at risk of allegations of abusive or unprofessional conduct
- Understand the statutory frameworks they must act within
- Adhere to the [Teachers' Standards](#) (teaching staff)
- Familiarise themselves and comply with all school policies and procedures. For the purposes of staff conduct, particular attention is drawn to the following policies: Behaviour Policy, Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy, Allegations Against Staff Policy, Staff Disciplinary Policy, Staff ICT Acceptable Use Agreement and ICT Acceptable Use Policy, Whistleblowing Policy, Dignity At Work Policy, GDPR legislation and school's Data Privacy and Protection policy, Anti-Corruption and Bribery policy, Staff Attendance policies, Educational Visits policy.

## 4. Safeguarding

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.

Staff will familiarise themselves with our child protection, our safeguarding policy and procedures, our 'Allegations Against Staff' policy and the Prevent duty, and ensure they are aware of the processes to follow if they have concerns about a child.

Our child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures are available on the school's shared drive. New staff will also be signposted to these on arrival.

### 4.1 Allegations that may meet the harm threshold

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

We will deal with any such allegation quickly and in a fair and consistent way, in accordance with our policies to provide effective child protection while also supporting the individual who is the subject of the allegation. Any internal investigation will follow the terms of the staff disciplinary procedure, subject to advice taken from the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) where a referral has been made. Where a referral has been made, the LADO may determine that investigation by external agencies is necessary. All staff should share any allegations they have using the reporting procedures set out in our Child Protection and Allegations against Staff policies.

## 4.2 Low-level concerns about members of staff

A low-level concern is behaviour towards a child by a member of staff that does not meet the harm threshold, but 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
- Engaging in 1-to-1 activities where they can't easily be seen
- Humiliating pupils

Low-level concerns can include inappropriate conduct inside and outside of work.

All staff should share any low-level concerns they have using the reporting procedures set out in our Child Protection and Allegations against Staff policies. 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.

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

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 school values and expected behaviour are constantly lived, monitored and reinforced by all staff, while minimising the risk of abuse.

Our procedures for dealing with allegations will be applied with common sense and judgement. The Headteacher will log low level concerns and may liaise with or make a referral to the LADO.

## 4.3 Whistle-blowing

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

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.

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.

Staff should report their concern to the headteacher. 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 governors.

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.

For our school's detailed whistle-blowing process, please refer to our whistle-blowing policy.

## 5. Sexual harassment

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 have 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

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.

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 the headteacher. 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 governors. The school will investigate any complaints in a timely, respectful and confidential manner.

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.

Where an allegation of sexual harassment, or other types of harassment or bullying are reported between staff, the school's Dignity at Work policy will be applied.

## 6. Staff-pupil relationships

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.

If staff members and pupils must spend time on a 1-to-1 basis, staff will make sure 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

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

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

While we are aware many pupils and their parents/carers may wish to give gifts to staff, e.g. at the end of the school year, gifts from staff to pupils are not acceptable. All gifts should be received in line with the school's Anti-Corruption and Bribery policy.

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.

## 7. Communication and social media

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 first and middle name instead, and set public profiles to private.

Staff should not attempt to contact pupils or their parents/carers 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/carers' social media profiles.

Staff will ensure that they do not post any images online that identify children who are pupils at the school without their consent.

Staff should be aware of the school's online safety policy and the ICT Acceptable Use Agreement which they have signed.

## 8. Acceptable use of technology

Staff will not use technology in school or belonging to the 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.

Staff should not use school equipment for personal use unless it is considered to be an emergency. Any use of personal mobile phones, laptops or other devices should be restricted to times and places where students are not present. All personal use must comply with the standards and restrictions set out in this Code. Staff will also not use personal mobile phones or cameras to take pictures of pupils.

We have the right to monitor emails and internet use on the school IT system.

Staff should be aware of the school's ICT and internet acceptable use policies.

Staff should feel able to explore the use of AI tools, including chatbots, in order to facilitate teaching and learning innovations and workload reduction. However, no school information, including information about students, or individual students' work should be entered into AI tools, unless with the written approval of the School Business Manager and School Network Manager. Teachers are advised to exercise caution in regard to the reliability, impartiality, accuracy and integrity of any AI-constructed resources; teachers are responsible for ensuring all teaching and learning materials are of the highest standard and ethically and legally compliant. Staff should refer to our ICT Acceptable Use Agreements and our Data Protection & Privacy policies.

## 9. Confidentiality

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/carers.

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 a staff member'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.

## 10. Honesty and integrity

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.

Staff will not accept bribes. Gifts that are worth more than £100 must be declared to the School Business Manager and recorded on the gifts and hospitality register.

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

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.

## 11. Dress code

Staff will dress in a manner appropriate to a professional working environment which incorporates both children and adults, promoting a professional image. Clothes will not display any offensive or political slogans.

## 12. Conduct outside of work

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 drugs offences, violence or sexual misconduct, as well as negative comments about the school on social media. Any conduct of this nature could lead to disciplinary action.

Staff may undertake work outside school, either paid or voluntary, provided that it does not conflict with the interests of the school nor be to a level which may contravene the working time regulations or affect an individual's work performance in the school.

## 13. Specific issues/scenarios

Listed below is guidance of school expectations of conduct in some specific scenarios not already mentioned in this code of conduct:

**Personal Living Space:** No child or young person should be in or invited into, the home of a member of staff who works with them, unless the reason for this has been firmly established and agreed with parents or carers and a senior member of staff or the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

**Gifts, Rewards and Favoritism:** Staff should not give students personal gifts; this could lead to accusations of bias, favoritism or inappropriate behaviour. If a member of staff felt there were an extraordinary reason for this to happen, they must first discuss with a member of the Senior Team and/or the parent/carer the reason for this. The gift would then be recorded, alongside the methods and criteria for selection, which would always



need to be transparent and subject to scrutiny. There are occasions when students or their parents wish to pass small tokens of appreciation to members of staff e.g. on special occasions or as a thank-you and this is acceptable. However, it is unacceptable to receive gifts on a regular basis or of any significant value, (gifts received worth more than £100 must be declared by telling the School Business Manager, as in the school's Anti-corruption & Bribery Policy).

**Infatuations:** Occasionally, a student may develop an infatuation with a member of staff who works with them. Any member of staff, who becomes aware that a student is developing an infatuation, should discuss this at the earliest opportunity with a senior member of staff or the DSL and parent or carer so appropriate action can be taken to avoid any hurt, distress or embarrassment.

**Communication with Children and Young People (*including social media and the use of technology*)**

Communication between students and members of staff, by whatever method, must take place within clear and explicit professional boundaries. This includes the wider use of technology such as mobile phones, text or other messaging, e-mails, digital cameras, videos, web-cams, websites and blogs. Members of staff must not share any personal information with any students. They must not request, or respond to, any personal information from the student, other than that which might be appropriate as part of their professional role. Members of staff must ensure that all communications are transparent and open to scrutiny. Members of staff must not give their personal contact details to students including e-mail, home or mobile telephone numbers, unless there are exceptional circumstances in which the need to do so is agreed with a senior member of staff or the DSL. E-mail or text communications between members of staff and students outside agreed protocols may lead to disciplinary and/or criminal investigations. This also includes communications through internet-based web sites. Internal e-mail systems must be used only in accordance with the School's policies.

**Social Contact:** Members of staff should not seek to have social contact with students or their families, unless the reason for this contact has been firmly established and agreed with a senior member of staff or the DSL and the parent or carers.

**Physical Contact:** It is crucial that in all circumstances, members of staff only touch students in ways which are appropriate to their professional or agreed role and responsibilities. When physical contact is made with a student this should be in response to their needs at the time, of limited duration and appropriate to their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background. If a member of staff believes that their action could be misinterpreted, or if an action is observed by another as being inappropriate or possibly abusive, the incident and circumstances must be reported to the DSL. Members of staff who work in certain settings, for example sports, drama or outdoor activities will have to initiate some physical contact with students, for example to demonstrate technique in the use of a particular piece of equipment, adjust posture, or perhaps to support a student so they can perform an activity safely or prevent injury. Physical contact must only take place in a safe and open environment i.e. one easily observed by others and last for the minimum time necessary. Any incidents of physical contact that cause concern or fall outside of these protocols and guidance must be reported to the DSL and parent or carer.

**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. The use of sarcasm, demeaning or insensitive comments towards students is not acceptable in any situation. Any sanctions or rewards used must be part of the School's Behaviour and Suspension and Exclusions Policy.

**Use of Control and Physical Intervention:** The use of physical intervention must, wherever possible, be avoided and only used to prevent personal injury to themselves, another student or member of staff or to prevent serious damage to property. In all cases where physical intervention is employed the incident and subsequent actions must be documented and reported. This must include written and signed accounts of all those involved, including the student. The parents or carers of the student will be informed on the same day.

**Intimate Care:** All students have a right to safety, privacy and dignity when contact of a physical or intimate nature is required and depending on their abilities, age and maturity will be encouraged to act as independently as possible.

**Personal Care:** Students are entitled to respect and privacy at all times and especially when in a state of undress, changing clothes, bathing or undertaking any form of personal care. There are occasions where there will be a need for an appropriate level of supervision in order to safeguard students and/or satisfy health and safety considerations. This supervision will be appropriate to the needs and age of the students concerned and sensitive to the potential for embarrassment. Members of staff need to be vigilant about their own behaviour, ensure they follow agreed guidelines and be mindful of the students with whom they work.

#### **First Aid and Administration of Medication**

It is expected that members of staff working with the students will be aware of basic first aid techniques. It is not, however, a contractual requirement and whilst members of staff may volunteer to undertake such tasks, they must be suitably trained and qualified before administering first aid and/or any agreed medication. When administering first aid, wherever possible, members of staff will ensure that another adult is aware of the action being taken. Parents must always be informed when first aid has been administered for a head injury or where follow up action is required.

In circumstances where students need medication regularly a health care plan will be established. The School follows the statutory guidance in the DfE December 2015 guidance, "Supporting Pupils in School with Medical Conditions". The key points are:

- Pupils at school with medical conditions should be properly supported so that they have full access to education, including school trips and physical education.
- Governing bodies must ensure that arrangements are in place in schools to support pupils at school with medical conditions.
- Governing bodies should ensure that school leaders consult health and social care professionals, pupils and parents to ensure that the needs of children with medical conditions are effectively supported.

**One to One Situations:** One to one situations have the potential to make a student more vulnerable to harm by those who seek to exploit their position of trust. Members of staff working in one to one settings with students may also be more vulnerable to unjust or unfounded allegations being made against them. Both possibilities should be recognised so that when one to one situations are unavoidable, reasonable and sensible precautions are taken. Meetings with students outside agreed working arrangements must not take place without the prior agreement with a senior member of staff or the DSL and parents or carers; this will usually mean they cannot take place without at least one day's notice.

**Home Visits:** Under no circumstances will a member of staff visit a child in their home outside agreed work arrangements or invite a student to their own home or that of a family member, colleague or friend. If in an emergency, such a one-off arrangement is required, the member of staff must have a prior discussion with a senior member of staff or the DSL and the parents or carers and a clear justification for such arrangement is agreed and recorded.

**Transporting Children and Young People:** In certain situations, staff or volunteers may be required or offer to transport pupils as part of their work. As for any other activity undertaken at work, the employer has a duty to carry out a risk assessment covering the health and safety of their staff and to manage any known risks. Consideration must be given to the potential distraction of the driver and the supervision of the passengers. A judgement should be made about the likely behaviour and individual needs of the students. If any of them may require close supervision, then another adult should travel in the vehicle so that the driver is not distracted or compromised. Staff should not offer lifts to students unless the need for this has been agreed by a member of the Senior Team. Wherever possible and practicable it is advisable that transport is undertaken other than in private vehicles and with at least one adult additional to the driver acting as an escort.



It is a legal requirement that all passengers wear seatbelts and the driver should ensure that they do so. Staff should ensure that their behaviour is safe and that the transport arrangements and the vehicle meet all legal requirements. They should ensure that the vehicle is roadworthy and appropriately insured and that the maximum carrying capacity is not exceeded. Staff should never offer to transport pupils outside of their normal working duties, other than in an emergency or where not doing so would mean the child may be at risk. In these circumstances, the matter should be recorded and reported to both the Senior Team and the student's parent(s) before the journey takes place if at all possible.

**Trips and Outings:** Members of staff must take particular care when supervising students on trips and outings, where the setting is less formal than the usual workplace. Members of staff remain in a position of trust and need to ensure that their behaviour remains professional at all times and stays within clearly defined professional boundaries. Members of staff must ensure that all students in their care are handed over to parents/carers at the end of the trip or outing unless agreed in writing in advance. In all circumstances, those organising trips and outings must pay careful attention to ensuring safe staff/student ratios and to the gender mix of staff especially on overnight stays.

**Access to Inappropriate Images and Internet Usage:** There are no circumstances that will justify members of staff possessing indecent images of children. Members of staff must ensure that students are not exposed to any inappropriate images or web links. Members of staff need to ensure that internet equipment used by the students have the appropriate controls with regards to access e.g. personal passwords must be kept confidential. Where indecent images of children or other unsuitable material are found, the police and Local Authority Designated Officer will be immediately informed. Members of staff must not attempt to investigate the matter or evaluate the material themselves, as this may lead to evidence being contaminated, which in itself can lead to a criminal prosecution.

**Female Genital Mutilation (FGM):** Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a statutory duty upon teachers, along with social workers and healthcare professionals, to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or through evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. Staff must activate local safeguarding procedures, using existing national and local protocols for multi-agency liaison with police and children's social care. For more information, see the School's Safeguarding Policy.

**Preventing Radicalisation:** The Counter-Terrorism & Security Act 2015 (including the Prevent Duty Guidance 2015) places a duty on education and other childcare providers to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. See the School's Safeguarding Policy and Extremism & Radicalisation Policy. This duty applies to both children and adults.

## 14. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Full Governing Board, but can be revised as and when needed.

Our Full Board of Governors 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.

## 15. Links with other policies

This policy links with our policies on:

- Staff disciplinary procedures, which will be used if staff breach this code of conduct. It also sets out examples of what we will deem as misconduct and gross misconduct
- Dignity at work policy, which will be applied in cases of allegations of harassment or bullying between staff
- Anti-corruption and bribery policy

- Staff grievance procedures
- Staff attendance policies
- Child protection and safeguarding policies including allegations against staff
- Behaviour policy
- Gifts and hospitality
- Online safety
- Complaints policy
- Whistle-blowing
- Email and home/school communications
- Data privacy

### **Review and Updating**

This Policy was updated in July 2025 and is reviewed annually.