



**Staff Handbook  
and  
Code of Conduct  
2025-26**

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### 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](#).

School staff have an influential position in the school and will act as role models for pupils by consistently demonstrating high standards of behaviour.

All teachers are expected to act in accordance with the personal and professional behaviours set out in the Teachers' Standards and all support staff, governors and volunteers are also expected to act with personal and professional integrity, respecting the safety and wellbeing of others at all times.

The ethos of the school strongly supports the personal development and mental wellbeing of all – pupils and adults – and everyone is expected to treat each other with respect and kindness.

Failure to follow the code of conduct may result in disciplinary action being taken, 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

We are required to establish procedures for the regulation of staff conduct under regulation 7 of [The School Staffing \(England\) Regulations 2009](#).

In line with the statutory safeguarding guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025](#), we should have a staff code of conduct, which should 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.

## 3. General Obligations

In being role models for pupils, staff will:

- Maintain high standards in their attendance and punctuality.
- Never use inappropriate or offensive language in school.
- Treat pupils and others with dignity and respect.
- 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.
- Understand the statutory frameworks they must act within
- Adhere to the Teachers' Standards

## 4. Safeguarding

All 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.

All staff will familiarise themselves with the statutory guidance: [Keeping Children Safe In Education \[part one\] 2025](#), including any updates, as well as the school's own **child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures**, and the Prevent initiative.

All staff will ensure they are aware of the processes to follow if they have concerns about a child and use MyConcern to report and record any concerns or incidents that occur.

### 4.1 Allegations that may meet the harm threshold

This section is based on 'Section 1: Allegations that may meet the harm threshold' in part 4 of KCSIE. It 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 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 where the headteacher is the subject of the allegation.

## 4.2 Low-level concerns about members of staff

A low-level concern is a behaviour towards a child by a member of staff that does not meet the harm 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 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 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.

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

Reporting and responding to low-level concerns is covered in more detail in our child protection and safeguarding policy. This is available in the staff room, from the school office, as well as in the policies section of our school website.

Our procedures for dealing with allegations will be applied with common sense and judgement.

## 4.3 Whistle-blowing

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

- Pupils' or staff's 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.

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 Sue Baldwin, the chair of the governing board and whistleblowing governor.

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.

#### 4.4 Use of Reasonable Force

Reasonable force covers a range of interventions that involve physical contact with pupils. All members of staff have a duty to use reasonable force, in the following circumstances, to prevent a pupil from:

- Causing disorder
- Hurting themselves or others
- Damaging property
- Committing an offence

Incidents of reasonable force must:

- Always be used as a last resort [**Team Teach 95% rule**] – efforts should be made to de-escalate the situation and call on a member of staff with current team teach training to support. Currently these are **all Teachers and Teaching Assistants**.
- Be applied using the minimum amount of force and for the minimum amount of time possible
- Be used in a way that maintains the safety and dignity of all concerned
- Never be used as a form of punishment
- Be recorded, and reported to the headteacher and then to parents/carers

When considering using reasonable force, staff should, in considering the risks, carefully recognise any specific vulnerabilities of the pupil, including SEND, mental health needs or medical conditions.

#### 5. 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 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.

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 may wish to give gifts to staff, for example, at the end of the school year, gifts from staff to pupils are not acceptable.

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.

## 6. Attendance/Absence

- All staff are expected to work in school during term time although teachers are permitted to work from home during PPA time.
- The school day for pupils begins at 8:40am and ends at 3:15pm.  
This means teachers are required to be on site between 8:30am and 3:25pm each working day.
- Full time teachers are directed to work 1265 hours while part time teachers are directed to work a percentage thereof, in line with their contracted hour.
- All teachers will be given a Directed Time Budget at the start of each academic year, outlining when they are expected to be in school.
- Learning Support Assistants are expected to be in class supporting pupils by their start time so if you are supporting 1-to-1 but they have not arrived you should still be in your classroom either preparing resources or supporting in class at the direction of the class teacher.
- If you are unable to attend work due to illness or emergency, please let the Headteacher know ASAP by messaging or phone. **Please let her know by 7:30 on the morning of the unplanned absence if you can.**
- Medical/Dental appointments should be made outside school hours where possible but if this is not possible, please request the time by asking the headteacher or the school secretary [who will forward your request to the headteacher] as soon as you know you are going to need to be absent.
- Requests for absences for special, one-off events, compassionate leave, regular or long-term absences will be considered but will need to be approved by the headteacher and governors on a termly basis.
- It is understood that staff may need time off to look after their children due to unforeseen circumstances. Staff may have up to 6 days per year to manage emergency or unplanned absence and after this, days will be unpaid. Staff should endeavour to secure alternative arrangements on the first day of absence and should have no more than 2 consecutive days off for childcare reasons. If the child's condition becomes long-term then please speak to the headteacher to arrange absence under special circumstances.
- If you are off work for more than 7 days including weekends and bank holidays, you will need to be 'signed off' by your doctor and provide a fit note [sick note] from them to cover your absence.
- If you are absent for more than 5 working days, then you will be expected to attend a return-to-work meeting when you are able to come back to work to assess whether further support is needed. This may result in a referral to the Occupational Health service or a support plan being put in place.
- Please see the schools staff attendance policy for further guidance.

## 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 of their surname and set public profiles to private.

- 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.
- Teachers and other key staff will have access to a laptop/ipad dedicated to them which they can use at home. Staff should use these to access and send messages through

school communication tools such as email, Dojo and the school website and facebook page rather than their personal devices.

- 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.

## 8. Acceptable use of technology

### 8.1 Use of School ICT Equipment

- 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.
- Staff should not use school equipment for personal use during school hours.
- Staff will not use personal mobile phones and laptops, or school equipment for personal use, in front of pupils. They may use their phones at break times and or if they need to make emergency or urgent calls with the agreement of the Headteacher [DSL] or DDSL. They will also not use personal mobile phones or cameras to take pictures of pupils as a rule. However, if they do need to take photos, they should inform the Headteacher [DSL] or DDSL, upload to the drive as soon as possible then delete the photos as soon as possible.
- We have the right to monitor emails and internet use on the school IT system.
- Staff should use allocated equipment to send and receive work emails and messages wherever possible. If using personal equipment such as phones, make sure passwords are in place and that caller id's are blocked before calls are made.

### 8.2 Communication using ICT

- In line with promoting a healthy work-life balance and being mindful of the mental wellbeing of staff, teachers are discouraged from reading and responding to emails before 8am or after 6pm Monday-Friday. When sending emails outside these hours they should also consider using the schedule send function.
- Teachers may wish to catch up with emails at some point during the weekends and during holidays but are encouraged to keep these to routine times and for no more than a 1-hour window each day.
- Class Dojo is used by the school as a way of celebrating our pupils' success and to keep parents updated about the learning that is happening in each class. It is not a substitution for communication with the school via letters, the newsletter or phone calls to the office.
- In line with promoting a healthy work-life balance and being mindful of the mental wellbeing of staff, teachers are discouraged from reading and responding to messages on Dojo or the school facebook page before 8am and after 6pm, Monday to Friday.
- There is no expectation for teachers to read or respond to messages on Dojo Facebook at weekends or during the holidays and they are actively discouraged from doing so.
- Staff should however respond promptly to messages and email received within working hours and during the next school day as far as possible.

## 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.

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 member of staff's duty to report child protection concerns to the appropriate person 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. Dignity at Work

- All staff have a right to be treated with dignity and respect in the workplace.
- Workplace harassment, bullying and victimisation are totally unacceptable.
- No member of the school workforce should have to tolerate harassment, bullying or victimisation from colleagues, pupils, members of the public, or other individuals they may encounter at work, or on school trips.
- The ethos of the school expects that staff refrain from having conversations with each other about other members of staff in respect of their job performance, appearance, health, attitude etc. If you are worried or have a concern about a colleague that does not meet the threshold for whistleblowing, then please discuss this with them directly if you feel you can, or with the headteacher in confidence.

## 11. 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 £20 must be declared and recorded on the gifts and hospitality register.

Small gifts of thanks from pupils, parents or carers at the end of term, Christmas or other special occasions are acceptable and do not need to be declared provided they do not exceed the £20 value.

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 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.

## 12. Dress code

- Staff will dress in a professional, appropriate manner.
- As we expect pupils to wear school uniform and dress smartly our clothing should model this.
- Teachers are not required to wear the uniform but should not wear:
  - Jeans
  - leisure wear [sports clothes may be worn for teaching PE and wellingtons/work boots and mufti for outdoor lessons such as forest school]
  - clothes that restrict movement
  - clothes that display offensive or political slogans
  - footwear that could injure pupils or impede exiting the building in an emergency [eg heavy boots, very high heels, flimsy flipflops or sliders.]

## 13. 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 violence or sexual misconduct, as well as negative comments about the school on social media.

## 14. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually, before the start of each school year but can be revised as needed. It will be approved by the full governing board.

The headteacher 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.
- Staff grievance procedures
- Child protection and safeguarding
- Low Level Allegations
- Staff Attendance Policy
- Positive Handling and Use of Restrictive Force Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Online Safety/AUP
- Behaviour and Relationships Policy
- Gifts and Hospitality

This Policy will be updated as needed throughout the year and will be reviewed by **September 2026**