

Staff Code of Conduct 2025-2026



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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.

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.

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](#), 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

Staff set an example to pupils. They 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 including meeting deadlines

4. Safeguarding Pupils

In accordance with 'Keeping children safe in education 2025' (KCSIE), staff have a responsibility to safeguard pupils by:

- Providing help and support to meet the needs of pupils as soon as problems emerge.
- Protecting pupils from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online.
- Preventing the impairment of pupils' mental and physical health or development.
- Ensuring that pupils grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- Taking action to enable all pupils to have the best outcomes.

To effectively safeguard pupils, staff are required to follow the procedures outlined in this Staff Code of Conduct, the Behaviour Policy, the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, and the Children Missing from Education Policy. Our child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures are available from the school office on request, as well as in the policies section of our school website.

All staff must ensure that they do not act in a way that may put pupils at risk of harm, or lead others to question their actions. Staff should also be aware of the role of the DSL and when to contact them

In accordance with the school's Behaviour Policy and Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, staff will be prepared to identify pupils who may be subject to, or at risk of, various types of abuse, neglect and exploitation including, but not limited to, the following:

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect
- Child-on-child abuse
- Child criminal exploitation (CCE)
- Child sexual exploitation (CSE)
- Domestic abuse
- FGM
- Serious violence

Staff will also be expected to understand that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a pupil has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Copies of policies and a copy of Part one (or, where appropriate Annex A for staff not working directly with children) of KCSIE will be provided to staff at induction. Staff will have a clear understanding of the school's policies and procedures with regards to safeguarding issues, e.g. abuse, and the important role they play in preventing harm against pupils.

In accordance with the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, staff will also be aware of the factors that could increase a pupil's risk of being subject to safeguarding issues, including but not limited to:

- Pupils who need a social worker (Child in Need and Child Protection Plans).
- Children absent from education, particularly if on repeat occasions and/or long periods of time.
- Elective Home Education (EHE).
- Pupils requiring mental health support.
- LAC, PLAC and care leavers.
- Pupils with SEND or health issues.
- Pupils who identify as or are perceived to be LBGTQ+.

If a member of staff has any concerns about a pupil's welfare, they will act on them immediately. They will follow the necessary reporting and referral procedures outlined in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and speak to the DSL. Staff will be aware of the procedures to follow if a pupil tells them they are experiencing abuse, exploitation, or neglect.

In all cases, if a member of staff feels unsure as to whether an incident or pupil would be classed as a safeguarding concern, they will speak directly to the DSL. Staff will not assume a colleague will take action and share information that might be critical in keeping children safe.

Staff will recognise, acknowledge, and understand that even if there are no reports of child-on-child abuse in the school, this does not mean it is not happening. Staff will understand the scale of harassment and abuse and challenge inappropriate behaviours between peers that are abusive in nature and report any concerns regarding any form of abuse to the DSL without undue delay.

Any member of staff member that has concerns about another staff member's actions or intent or believes these actions may lead to a pupil being put at risk of harm, will report this in line with the Whistleblowing Policy immediately so appropriate action can be taken. This includes if the staff member in question is a volunteer, supply staff or an individual using school premises to host extracurricular activities.

If the concern is regarding the headteacher, staff will report this to the chair of the governing board.

If a member of staff feels unable to raise an issue with the school, they will use other whistleblowing channels, including contacting the NSPCC's helpline on 0800 028 0285 (between the hours of 8:00am and 8:00pm Monday to Friday) or email address help@nspcc.org.uk. Staff can also access guidance at www.gov.uk/whistleblowing. Fear about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils.

Staff will undergo safeguarding and child protection training at induction. This will include training around online safety, particularly concerning the understanding of roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring, in line with the filtering and monitoring standards. This training will be updated at least annually to continue to provide staff members with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.

Staff will recognise that, when teaching pupils about safeguarding and online safety, a one-size-fits-all approach may not be appropriate for every pupil, and a more personalised or contextualised approach may be needed for pupils who are vulnerable, victims of abuse and/or have SEND.

Staff will be aware of their local early help process and understand their role in it.

Staff will be aware of the process for making referrals to children's social care service (CSCS) and for statutory assessments under the Children Act 1989, along with the role they may be expected to play in such assessments.

Staff will reassure victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe by the school. They will never give the impression that pupils are creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment, nor should a pupil ever be made to feel ashamed for reporting an incident.

Staff will know how to manage the requirement to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality, involving those who need to be involved, but will never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of any form of abuse, as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child.

Staff will be aware of the school's legal duty to make a referral to the DBS where they consider an individual has engaged in contact that has harmed, or is likely to harm, a child.

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 and Low-Level Concerns 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 Low-Level Concerns Policy.

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

For our school's detailed whistle-blowing process, please refer to our whistle-blowing policy (This is available on the school's website and in the staff shared area).

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.

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. 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 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.

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

7. Acceptable use of technology

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 will not use personal mobile phones and laptops, or school equipment for personal use, in school hours in front of pupils. They 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.

8. 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 staff'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.

9. 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.

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.

10. Dress code

Staff will dress in a professional, appropriate manner.

Outfits will not be overly revealing, and we ask that tattoos where possible are covered up.

Clothes will not display any offensive or political slogans. Ripped jeans are not permitted to be worn during working hours.

Where uniform or protective clothing is issued it must be worn as required when at work or representing the school. When wearing uniform or other items which identify you as an employee of the school you must maintain appropriate standards of conduct whether or not on duty, e.g. when travelling to and from work.

11. 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.

12. Smoke free environment

All County Council buildings, workplaces and vehicles are smoke free areas. Since July 2007, it has been against the law to smoke in workplaces; failure to comply is a criminal offence.

13. Drugs and alcohol

Employees must not take drugs, alcohol or any other substance before work, during a break or at lunch time that is capable of causing their behaviour, judgement or performance at work to be affected. This is particularly important for employees who drive, operate machinery, have responsibility for vulnerable adults or children, and who come into contact with members of the public and/or visitors.

14. Health and Safety

Unsafe working can endanger you, your colleagues, pupils and members of the public. You must familiarise yourself with the school's Health and Safety Policy and guidelines for your particular work. Please speak to your Headteacher for further information. You must follow the rules, codes and safe practices they describe including reporting any accidents, incidents or near misses you have at work.

15. Essential training

You are expected to make every effort to comply with reasonable requests to attend training which is a statutory requirement or essential for your role.

16. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually, but can be revised as needed. It will be approved by the full Governing Board.

Our Governing Board 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.

17. 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.
- Child protection and safeguarding
- Low-Level Concerns
- Online safety
- Whistle-blowing