

Staff Code of Conduct

2024-2025

Approved by: ESE Committee **Date:** 30th January 2025

Ratified by: FGB **Date:** 6th February 2025

Next review due by: September 2025

***'Stay alert and hold firmly to all you believe. Be mighty and full of courage. Let love and kindness be the motivation behind all that you do.'* 1 Corinthians 16:13-14**

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1. Aims, scope and principles

This policy aims to set out 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 the code of conduct are based in the Teachers' Standards.

School staff have an influential position in 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 that all support staff, governors and volunteers to also act with personal and professional integrity, respecting the safety and wellbeing of others. Our school's Christian vision statement, along with our associated values of kindness, courage, respect, friendship and responsibility are guidelines for all staff about their conduct within school.

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 and updates in 2024'.

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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 whistleblowing, 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 abilities
- 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

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 must understand and uphold our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and procedures and the Prevent initiative and ensure they are aware of the processes to follow if they have concerns about a child. Our DSL is the Headteacher, Mrs N Brown and our deputy DSL is our HTLA, Mrs Michelle Sarson.

Our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and procedures are available on SharePoint or our school website. New staff will also be given copies on arrival.

4.a 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 indicated they may not be suitable to work with children – this includes behaviour taking place inside or outside school.

We will deal with any such allegation quickly and in a fair and consistent way that provided 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.b 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 1:1 activities where they cannot easily be seen
- Humiliating pupils

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

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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 are covered in more detail in our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. This is available on SharePoint for staff, the school website or a hard copy in the school office.

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

4.c Whistleblowing

Whistleblowing reports wrongdoing that it is "in the public interest" to report. 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.

Staff should consider the examples above when deciding whether their concern is of a whistleblowing nature. They should 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 the names of those committing the wrongdoing, dates, places and as much evidence and context as possible. Staff raising the concern should also include details of any personal interest in the matter.

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 lead anyone to reasonably assume they are 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 other 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. Staff may, however, provide sweets or small gifts for the whole class (for example, pens or pencils, bracelets) at the end of a term or year.

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 procedures set out in 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, it is advised that they do not use their full name as pupils may be able to find them. Staff should consider using a first name and a 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 at the school without their consent. Staff should be aware of the school's online safety policy.

7. 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 will not use personal mobile phones and laptops, or school equipment for personal use, 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

Members of staff are often privy to sensitive and confidential information about the school, staff, pupils, and parents.

This information should never be:

- Disclosed to anyone unless required by law or with consent from the relevant party of 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.

10. Staff entitlement

Staff whose children attend the school will be entitled to free wraparound care to support them in their role. Should those members of staff's contracts end, they will be required to pay for wraparound care for their children from the first day of their following term after their contract end date.

11. Dress code

Staff will dress in a professional and appropriate manner. On days where children are participating in sporting events, staff can wear Brimscombe hoodies and t-shirts if they wish, along with trainers or sportswear. Clothing should not be overly revealing or display any slogans of any sort.

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

13. Monitoring arrangements

This policy is reviewed annually but can be revised as needed. It will be approved by Governors. Our Chair 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.

14. Links with other policies

This policy links with our policies on:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding
- Online Safety
- Whistleblowing
- Communication

Signed: N Brown (Headteacher)

Dated: 6.2.25

Signed: Vra - (Chair of Governors)

Dated: 6.2.25