



Knowsley Central School

Staff Code of Conduct

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Michelle McFadden

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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, including trainee teachers, will act in accordance with the personal and professional behaviours set out in the Teachers' Standards.

We expect all support staff, governors, volunteers, self-employed staff working at the school and third parties including contractors 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, the school expects all staff will use their professional judgement and act in the best interests of the school and its pupils at all times.

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 Department for Education's statutory safeguarding guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(KCSIE\)](#) 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.

3. General obligations

Staff must set a positive example to all current and new 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
- Take a zero-tolerance approach to any form of sexism, racism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, transphobia, biphobia, sexual violence, sexual harassment, and derogatory behaviour
- 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

Staff have a duty in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) to safeguard pupils from harm, and to report any concerns they have. This includes:

- Physical, emotional and sexual abuse
- Bullying, cyberbullying or discriminatory bullying
- Sexual violence or sexual harassment
- Online harm
- Neglect
- Domestic abuse affecting the child
- Mental health concerns that may also be safeguarding concerns
- Female genital mutilation (FGM) concerns, and
- All forms of exploitation and modern slavery

Staff must read our child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures, and the Prevent duty, and ensure they are aware of the processes to follow if they have any concerns about a child.

Our child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures are available on our school website and One Drive along with copies physical copies that are available in the staffroom. Many policies will also be emailed to you. New staff will also be given copies on arrival.

All staff will read and sign to say they have done so part 1 of [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(KCSIE\)](#) in full and make sure they understand their roles and responsibilities as set out in the guidance. If any staff have any concerns or questions about the contents of part 1 of KCSIE, these must be raised as soon as possible to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

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, trainee teacher, volunteer, self-employed staff member working at the school and third parties including contractors, 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

All staff should report any allegations using the reporting procedures set out in our child protection and safeguarding policy. 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 a member of SLT if appropriate, 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 behaviour towards a child by a member of staff that does not meet the harm threshold or is otherwise not serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO, 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 overfriendly with children
- Having favourites
- Taking photographs of children on a personal device, contrary to school policy
- Engaging in 1-to-1 activities where they can't easily be seen
- Humiliating pupils

(Please note that the above list is non-exhaustive)

Low-level concerns can include inappropriate conduct during contracted hours and outside of contracted working hours.

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. We will refer to our disciplinary procedures where appropriate. 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.

Reporting and responding to low-level concerns are covered in more detail in our child protection and safeguarding policy.

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

4.3 Whistle-blowing

Whistle-blowing reports wrongdoing that affects others, or 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. However, anonymity is not automatically guaranteed. Knowsley Central School aims to encourage openness and will support whistle-blowers 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 or DSL. If the concern is about the Headteacher or DSL 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 the governors.

Concerns should be made in writing wherever possible. They should include names of those alleged to be 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 amongst staff

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've 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 or DSL. If the concern is about the headteacher or DSL 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 by the best of their ability the treatment and outcomes of any complaints of sexual harassment or victimisation received to make sure that they are reasonably investigated, 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.

6. Staff-pupil relationships

Staff will observe proper and professional 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 children outside of school hours if possible. If unable to do so, professional boundaries should be observed. Staff should not engage in activities outside work which could damage their own reputation, the school's reputation or the reputation of the school's pupils and/or employees.

Staff who provide Personal assistant hours to parents through direct payments or other means should inform the Headteacher for approval as this may be a conflict of interest.

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

While we are aware that many children and their parents/carers may wish to give gifts to staff (e.g., at the end of the school year – see section 10 of this policy), gifts from staff to children are not acceptable.

If a staff member is concerned at any point that an interaction between themselves and a child may be misinterpreted, or if a staff member is concerned at any point about a fellow staff member and a child, this should be reported immediately in line with the procedures set out in our child protection and safeguarding policy.

Any inappropriate relationship between staff and a child will be investigated and the staff member may be subject to the school's disciplinary policy. Their actions may be considered as gross misconduct, which could lead to summary dismissal and referral to professional regulatory bodies. In suspected cases of an abuse of position of trust, the school may report those concerned to the police.

School will inform the LADO and work closely with them to ensure that the correct procedures are followed.

7. Communication and social media

School staff's social media profiles should not be available to children who attend the school or who have previously attended the school. If staff have a personal profile on social media sites, they should not use their full name, as children may be able to find them. Staff should consider using a first and middle name instead, and set public profiles to private. Refusal to do so could result in disciplinary action being taken in line with the school's disciplinary policy.

Where possible, staff members should not list their workplace on social media platforms.

Staff should not attempt to contact children 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 children's 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 procedures which is set out in our 'Acceptable Use policy'.

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 will not use personal mobile phones and laptops, or school equipment for personal use, in school hours or in front of pupils. Any personal use must be in the employee's own time (for example, before or after working hours or during unpaid lunch breaks). All personal use must comply with the standards and restrictions set out in this code of conduct, mobile phone policy and acceptable use of IT policy.

Staff will not use their personal mobile phones or similar devices to take pictures of pupils.

It is a criminal offence to take and share nude or semi-nude images, including those generated by AI, of anyone under the age of 18.

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

There may be occasions where it is appropriate for staff to use a mobile phone or similar device for professional duties, such as:

- Setting homework
- Recording rewards and sanctions
- Using multi-factor authentication

Although many of our children will not access mobile phones it is important that staff must consistently enforce the school's policy on mobile phones being prohibited for children throughout the school day if this became apparent.

Any misuse of IT systems, either during work-related duties, working hours or outside of working hours will be a breach of the code of conduct and may result in disciplinary action being taken in line with the school disciplinary policy.

9. Confidentiality

In the course of their role, members of staff are often privy to sensitive and confidential information about the school, staff, children and their parents/carers.

This information should never be:

- Stored or handled in a way that breaches data protection laws, including the UK GDPR, the Data Protection Act 2018, and the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025
- 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 children, handling money, claiming expenses and using school property and facilities.

Staff will not accept bribes. Gifts, hospitality, awards, prizes or other benefits that are worth more than £10 must be declared to SLT and recorded on the gifts and hospitality register.

10.1 Sharing information with the school

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 of 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

All staff are expected to wear appropriate dress and footwear, suitable for the workplace and activities undertaken during the day. Therefore, smart clothing/office wear should be worn or the school's polo shirt and fleece along with appropriate sportswear can be worn.

Detailed information is listed in the school's handbook.

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 on social media. Any conduct of this nature could lead to disciplinary action.

13. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually but can be revised as needed. It will be approved by Knowsley Central Schools governing body.

Our governing body 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:

- Staff disciplinary procedures, which will be used if staff breach this code of conduct.
- Staff grievance procedures
- Child protection and safeguarding
- Behaviour policy
- Online safety
- Whistle-blowing
- Email and home/school communications
- Mobile phone policy
- Acceptable use of IT

Appendix A

Overview of expectations.

3.1 Staff Code of Conduct:

We believe that everyone should feel comfortable and valued. All staff, students and volunteers will:

- Treat all colleagues with respect and value their contribution to the life of the school;
- Respect the rights of others and the rights of the child;
- Understand and keep confidentiality;
- Offer a regular and reliable service to the school;
- Arrive on time for work and from any breaks during the school day;
- Dress appropriately for the task and situation, in line with the dress code;
- Use appropriate language that respects the rights and feelings of our students and our colleagues;
- Conduct discussions in a professional manner including listening to the views & contributions of others;
- Ensure gifts given or received are recorded and discussed with your Line Manager.
- Ensure you have familiarized yourself with school policies and procedures;
- Follow appropriate procedures when raising concerns or questions, i.e., child protection procedures; whistle blowing; complaints procedures, etc.;
- Be courteous and demonstrate polite behaviour;
- Provide access for children and young people and adults to feel comfortable enough to point out attitudes or behaviours they do not like;
- Plan activities so that they involve more than one person or at least are in sight or hearing of others;
- Act as an appropriate role model;
- Be responsive to the needs of the group or individual child/situation;
- Keep children and others safe from harm;

Report any concerns relating to the school environment to a member of the Leadership Team and record any issues that need repair, maintenance in the site managers book located in the staff room. If it is an urgent issue, please report to Line Manager ASAP.

- Undertake all expected duties commensurate to your title and role in school;
- Ensure that you understand your responsibilities under the General Data Protection Regulations 2017 and Data Protection Act 2018 (which should be read in conjunction with the new UK-GDPR instead of the EU GDPR) and be clear that where personal information is recorded electronically, systems and devices are kept secure.
- Adhere to all school policies and procedures, particularly those related to safeguarding - including child protection, behaviour, attendance, physical intervention, intimate care, anti-bullying, equal opportunities, data protection, health and safety and online safety including the acceptable user policy.

- Report any behaviour or situations which you may feel give rise to a complaint or misunderstanding in respect of your own actions. Also share situations with your Line Manager if you feel your actions might have sat outside this code of conduct.
- Share with your Line Manager or Headteacher any behaviour of another adult in the school where it gives you cause for concern or breaches this code of conduct or the school's safeguarding policies. Your intervention may allow for their practice to be supported and developed and/or prevent a child from being harmed.
- Understand that it may be appropriate to discuss with the Head teacher matters outside of work, which may have implications for the safeguarding of children in the workplace. This includes information about yourself. You must ensure that you are aware of the circumstances where this would be applicable.
- Be aware that behaviour by yourself, those with whom you have a relationship or association, or others in your personal life (in or out of school or online), may impact on your work with children.
- Inform the head teacher of any cautions, convictions or relevant order accrued during your employment, and/or if you are charged with a criminal offence.
- Understand that if you commit a relevant offence that would appear on your DBS certificate or you become disqualified under the Childcare Act 2006 (those staff covered by the scope of the guidance): www.gov.uk/government/publications/disqualification-under-the-childcare-act-2006 then you must inform your headteacher. (The Childcare Act 2006 does not cover all settings or even all staff within a setting.)

Staff should not:

- Act in a way both at work and/or in your personal life that brings yourself, school or the teaching profession into disrepute.
- Make, encourage or ignore others, making personal comments which scapegoat, demean or humiliate any member of the school community including ignoring any form of peer to peer abuse.
- Use your position to intimidate, bully, humiliate, coerce or undermine any member of the school community. This includes shouting in anger and aggressively to punish them rather than raising your voice to be heard or avoid danger.
- Undermine fundamental British values including democracy, rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance for those with different faiths, beliefs or from different cultures.
- Develop 'personal' or sexual relationships with children and young people, including making sexual remarks or having inappropriate sexual banter. In addition, the Sexual Offences Act 2003 makes it clear that all members of staff are in a position of trust and would therefore be committing a criminal offence to have a sexual relationship with a young person in full time education/below the age of 18, even if that pupil is over the age of consent.
- Engage in inappropriate conversations with students or share inappropriate personal information about yourself or others.

- Discriminate favourably or unfavourably towards a child.
- Give personal contact details to pupils or communicate outside of school using social networks, email, text, twitter, etc. or meet a young person out of school unless part of a planned school activity with the knowledge of your Line Manager.
- Have conversations on social networking sites that make reference to children, parents or other colleagues at the school or be derogatory about the school. Never make any statements or post images on social networking sites that might cause someone to question your suitability to act as a role model to young people or bring your own or the school's reputation into disrepute. You should never communicate with parents through social network sites and you are strongly advised to declare any existing friendships/relationships to your Line Manager.
- Use personal equipment to photograph children (always use the school's equipment) and ensure any photographs are only stored on the designated secure place on the school's network and not on portable equipment.
- Should not post on the school's website or social media accounts any photographs of children without their consent. (Some children may be put at risk by their whereabouts being made publicly)
- Use your personal mobile phone (or other personal IT equipment) in areas used by children unless in emergencies or under an agreed protocol set out by the Headteacher.
- Shout, use force or restrict movement as a means of reprimand or punishment;
- Permit abusive youth/peer activities (e.g., bullying, ridiculing);
- Make inappropriate comments, or have inappropriate verbal banter with young people or other adults;
- Talk about the child/young person as though they were not present;
- Make inappropriate remarks/gestures or comments that are around gender, age, religion culture or sexual preference;
- Discuss or comment about children at the school; other colleagues, visitors and/or parents/carers on social network sites, such as Facebook;
- Invite parent/carers/children or young people at the school to join as your friends; on social media or otherwise.
- Arrangement to meet or transport children attending the school, outside of school duties.
- Undertake 'one to one' activity, out of the sight or hearing of others unless it is a planned activity with the knowledge of your Line Manager and in keeping with your own responsibilities. You should not cover windows or door panels but always act in an open and transparent way.
- Transport children unsafely, for example by driving whilst using your mobile phone, consuming alcohol, failing to ensure that seat belts are worn or driving without appropriate insurance. Any trips should be planned and with the knowledge of your Line Manager. Unforeseen events should be reported to your Line Manager. There should always be another adult as PA during a journey as this is good practice and safeguards all involved.

- Have physical contact with young people that might be misconstrued or considered indecent or harmful. Ensure you are always able to give an account of the reasons for physical contact or physical intervention. Where physical contact is required, it is good practice for it to be within the sight of others. Any physical contact with a child that was needed to control or restrain a child should always be the minimum amount of force for the minimum amount of time and should be absolutely necessary and be recorded using the school's electronic system and parents/carers must be informed on the same day.

Staff should follow the Intimate Care Policy when supporting children and young people with care needs.

- Undertake activities without having made adequate risk assessments for the activity, learners, learning environment, resources used, health and behavioural requirements.