

# Templefield Lower School

## Staff Code of Conduct



Templefield Lower School

### Aims of this code of conduct

We expect all pupils to receive high-quality teaching and learning in a positive and respectful environment. Staff should ensure that their own behaviour, and the manner in which they conduct themselves with colleagues, pupils, parents/carers and other stakeholders, sets a positive and professional example for pupils. We recognise that the majority of staff act appropriately and treat each other with dignity and respect; however, we consider it important to clarify the expected standards.

This document aims to set out the standard of conduct we expect all staff to follow. Teachers are expected to act in accordance with the personal and professional behaviours set out in the [Teachers' Standards](#). Support staff, governors and volunteers are also expected to act with personal and professional integrity, respecting the safety and wellbeing of others.

This code of conduct is not exhaustive and if situations arise that are not covered by this document, staff will use their professional judgement and act in the best interests of the school and its pupils. Staff should be aware that failure to follow the code of conduct may result in disciplinary action being taken, as set out in our disciplinary procedures.

### 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 (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.

### Professional behaviour and conduct

Staff are expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct such that public confidence in their integrity is sustained.

Staff will:

- Have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school.
- Maintain high standards in their attendance and punctuality.
- Take care of themselves and others affected by their activity at school.
- Cooperate with school leaders in meeting their duties under the relevant regulations.
- Treat pupils, parents/carers, colleagues and external contacts with dignity and respect.
- Observe proper boundaries appropriate to their professional position, showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others.
- Inform the headteacher if they are subject to a criminal conviction, caution, ban, police enquiry, investigation or pending prosecution.
- Be aware that professional behaviour and conduct is expected to be extended to extra-curricular trips and visits.
- Act appropriately in terms of the views they express (in particular, political views), and the use of school resources at all times.

Staff will not:

- Use inappropriate or offensive language in school.
- Perpetrate discrimination, bullying, harassment, or intimidation, including physical, sexual and verbal abuse.
- Misuse or misrepresent their position, qualifications or experience.
- Seek to bring the school into disrepute.
- Use school resources for political purposes.
- Undermine fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

## **Safeguarding pupils**

In accordance with [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#), 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 this is within or outside the home, including online.
- 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 and the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. 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 designated safeguarding lead (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
- Female genital mutilation (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 Keeping Children Safe in Education 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, for example, 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, previously LAC 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.

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 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 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.

### **Allegations that may meet the harm threshold**

Any member of staff 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 Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy or Whistleblowing Policy immediately so appropriate action can be taken. This includes anyone working in school as a volunteer, supply teacher, contractor or an individual using the school premises to host extra-curricular activities. If the concern is regarding the headteacher, staff will report this to the chair of the governors.

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 using the email address [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk). Staff can also access guidance at [www.gov.uk/whistleblowing](http://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.

### **Low-level concerns**

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'. This may include:

- Being overly friendly with children
- Having favourites
- Taking photographs of children on a personal device
- Engaging in one-to-one 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 member of staff 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.

Reporting and responding to low-level concerns is covered in more detail in our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

## **Whistleblowing**

Whistle-blowing reports wrongdoing that 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.

Staff should consider the examples above when deciding whether their concern is of a whistle-blowing 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, staff 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 a concern should also include details of any personal interest in the matter.

The school's whistle-blowing process is covered in more detail in our Whistleblowing Policy.

## **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'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.

If a member of staff 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 member of staff should report their concern to the chair of the governors.

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.

### **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 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/carers 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 member of staff is concerned at any point that an interaction between themselves and a pupil may be misinterpreted, or if a member of staff is concerned at any point about a colleague and a pupil, this should be reported in line with the procedures set out in our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

### **Social media**

Staff will be aware that their conduct on social media can have an impact on their role and reputation within the school.

Staff will remain mindful of their use of social media and their web-based presence, including written content, videos or photographs, and views expressed directly or indirectly which may bring themselves, the school or the school community into disrepute.

Staff are required to employ the highest security settings on any personal profiles they may have.

Staff will not engage in inappropriate use of social networking sites including contacting pupils or their family members, accepting or inviting friend requests from pupils or their family members, or following pupils or their family members on social media.

The school understands that some staff are also parents/carers of pupils at the school and, therefore, may wish to contact other parents/carers. When doing so, staff will exercise their professional judgement and will not contact family members on social media if this would lead to a conflict of interest.

### **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.

The school has the right to monitor emails and internet use on the school IT system.

Personal devices, such as mobile phones, should not be used in areas of the school where children are or may be present. Staff can use personal devices in the staffroom during designated break times. Staff are not permitted to use their personal devices during lesson time other than in an emergency. Staff are not permitted to use their personal devices to take photos or videos of pupils.

### **Confidentiality**

In the course of their role, 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 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.

## **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.

## **Appearance and dress**

The school expects staff to:

- Ensure that their appearance is clean and neat when at work or representing the school.
- Dress in a manner that is appropriate to their role – the school will make reasonable adjustments to suit disabilities, medical conditions, and religious and cultural beliefs.
- Not wear clothing that could have implications for the health and safety of themselves or others in their care.
- Remember that they are role models for pupils, and that their dress and appearance should reflect this.
- Not dress in a way that would cause embarrassment to pupils, parents/carers, colleagues or other stakeholders.
- Ensure that, if visible, tattoos do not cause offence to others; if tattoos are likely to cause offence, they must be covered up whilst in work.
- Ensure that jewellery and piercings are minimal and, in the health and safety interests of both staff and children, avoid anything that could catch or be caught by pupils.
- Ensure that clothes do not display any offensive or political slogans.

## **Attendance**

The school expects staff to:

- Attend work in accordance with their contract of employment and associated terms and conditions in relation to hours, days of work and holidays.
- Comply with the school's notification of sickness absence procedures.
- Make routine medical and dental appointments outside of their working hours or during holidays where possible.
- Refer to the school's Leave of Absence Policy if they need time off for any reason other than personal illness.
- Follow the school's absence reporting procedure when they are absent from work due to illness or injury.

## **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.

Staff may undertake work outside school, either paid or voluntary, provided that it does not conflict with the interests of the school. This must be outside their school working hours and must not negatively impact their work for the school.

Staff will not engage in outside work which could seriously damage the reputation and standing of the school, the employee's own reputation, or the reputation of other members of the school community. Staff will also not engage in outside work at a level which may contravene The Working Time Regulations 1998 or affect an individual's work performance.

### **Smoking, e-cigarettes, alcohol and other substances**

Staff will not smoke or vape on the school premises, outside the school gates or within sight of pupils, parents/carers or visitors. Any member of staff wishing to smoke or vape must leave the school grounds. Staff will not smoke or vape whilst working with or supervising pupils off-site, such as when on educational visits and trips.

Staff will report for work and remain in a condition to perform their duties free from the effects of drugs, alcohol or any other substances that may hinder judgement and cause changes in behaviour; this does not include over-the-counter painkillers such as paracetamol.

### **Health and safety**

Staff will:

- Be familiar with, and adhere to, the school's Health and Safety Policy and ensure that they take every action to keep themselves and everyone in the school environment safe and well.
- Comply with health and safety regulations, adhering to any rules, routines and procedures in place, and cooperate with school leaders and colleagues on matters relating to health and safety.
- Use the correct equipment and tools for the job and any protective clothing supplied.
- Inform the headteacher of any paid work which is undertaken elsewhere, for compliance with The Working Time Regulations 1998 (as amended).
- Adhere to their common law duty to act as a prudent parent would when in charge of pupils.

### **Premises, equipment and communication**

Staff are responsible for:

- Securing windows and doors when rooms are not in use.
- Ensuring that visitors sign in and out at the school office.
- Challenging any unidentified individuals and notifying the headteacher of any unauthorised person.
- Securing valuable equipment after use.
- Ensuring the security of school equipment when taken off the school premises, such as laptops.
- Wearing their school lanyard at all times.
- Being responsible for the security of any of their own property that they bring to the school site.

The school reserves the right to monitor emails, phone calls, internet activity or document production on school-owned equipment. School equipment that is used outside the premises, such as laptops, will be returned to the school when the employee leaves employment or if requested to do so by the headteacher.

### **Monitoring and review**

This document will be reviewed annually and any changes made will be communicated to all members of staff. All members of staff are required to familiarise themselves with this document as part of their induction.

### **Links with other policies**

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies and documents:

- Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- ICT and Internet Acceptable Use Policy
- Leave of Absence Policy
- Low-Level Concerns Policy
- Mobile Phone Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy

**Approved by governors:** February 2026

**Last reviewed:** January 2026

**Next review:** January 2027

# Appendix 1

## Advice and guidance for staff

When we speak to others we will:

- Use a positive statement rather than a negative one so that children can learn what we expect of them in any situation.
- Use a calm tone of voice at all times, to explain something to or instruct the children, so that they can follow our words without feeling threatened or uncomfortable.
- Avoid using sarcastic words or phrases as these demean children and prevent them from developing high self-esteem.
- Speak respectfully to other adults at all times, even if we disagree with them.

As professionals we will:

- Avoid workplace gossip and negativity as it breeds resentment and becomes a roadblock to effective communication and collaboration. We all have a duty to take active steps to divert conversations away from this if we come across it.
- Maintain confidentiality about anything that we see or hear in school, so that colleagues, parents/carers, children and outside agencies can trust us, and as a way of showing respect to our fellow professionals.
- Work as part of a team, contributing as well as learning from others and helping to build up a strong workforce so that we can provide the best possible learning opportunities for the children.
- Work within the school's policies and practices, so that what we do is consistent with what has been agreed between all members of staff and the governors.
- Treat everyone with respect.
- Dress appropriately, so that we set a good example for the children and to show that we are here to work.
- Behave in a positive way despite any challenging circumstances we may be facing both inside and outside of school, especially in front of the children.

When using any form of ICT, including the internet, in school and outside school, for your own protection we advise that you:

- Ensure all electronic communication with pupils, parents/carers, staff and others is compatible with your professional role and in line with school policies.
- Do not talk about your professional role in any capacity when using social media, such as Facebook and YouTube.
- Do not put online any text, image, sound or video that could upset or offend any member of the school community or be incompatible with your professional role.
- Use school ICT systems and resources for all school business. This includes your school email address, the school mobile phone and school camera.
- Do not disclose any passwords and ensure that personal data (such as data held on MIS software) is kept secure and used appropriately.
- Only take images of pupils and/or staff for professional purposes, in accordance with school policy and with the knowledge of school leaders.
- Do not browse, download, upload or distribute any material that could be considered offensive, illegal or discriminatory.
- Ensure that your online activity, both in school and outside school, will not bring the school or your professional role into disrepute.
- Ensure emails are checked daily on working days.
- Report any online safety incident which may impact on you, your professionalism or the school.

## Appendix 2

### Confirmation of compliance

I hereby confirm that I have read, understood and agree to comply with the Staff Code of Conduct.

**Print name:** ..... **Position:** .....

**Signed:** ..... **Date:** .....

**Please return this completed form to the school office.**