The Bourne Partnership

Hadlow Primary and

Shipbourne Primary

Staff Code of Conduct

September 2026

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Template	The Key

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 Partnership 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, and upholding our school values and golden rule at all times.

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

As a state-maintained school, 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 encompass 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. This code of conduct should be read and adhered to alongside all associated policies and procedures.

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 and/or Teaching Assistant 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. Teachers have a legal duty to report to the police where they discover an act of Female Genital Mutilation appears to have been carried out on a pupil. All staff will read and agree to the relevant parts of KCSIE at the point of induction and at the start of the academic year.

Staff will familiarise themselves with 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 child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures are available on Staff TEAMS, and will be read and agreed by all staff annually, New staff will also be given copies to read and agree at the point of induction.

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, 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 on Staff TEAMS.

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 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. 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 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.

For our school's detailed whistle-blowing process, please refer to our whistle-blowing policy.

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. 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 consider not using their full name 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.

Staff should be aware of the school's online safety expectations which are found within the Child Protection 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 school hours or 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.

The school IT system implements live filtering and monitoring and the Headteacher/DSL reserves the right to view individual's use of devices in the event of a breach or concern.

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, vital to protect the needs of a child 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. All members of staff must be aware that whilst they have duties to keep information confidential, they also have a professional responsibility to be proactive in sharing information as early as possible to help identify, assess, and respond to risks or concerns about the safety and welfare of children; this may include sharing information with the DSL and with other agencies as appropriate.

All enquiries from the media should be directed to the Headteacher. Employees should not make contact with or comment to the media about matters relating to the school without the prior approval of the Headteacher. Should an employee speak directly to the media about non-school matters, care should be taken to ensure that it is clear that any opinions expressed are personal and that the individual is not acting on behalf of/representing the school. Any contact with the media in a personal capacity should be compatible with the employee's role and their position working with children/young people or in a school setting and must not negatively impact on the reputations of the schools.

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. Gifts that are worth more than £50 must be declared and recorded on a gifts and hospitality register.

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. Use of school resources

School resources must solely be used school related purposes. Permission from the Headteacher should be sought if taking school resources home. All purchases must be made on school accounts following completion of a remittance form. Staff should avoid purchasing school resources with their own money and no monies will be reimbursed for private purchases, unless in exceptional circumstances and with prior agreement.

11. Dress code

Staff will dress in a professional, appropriate manner, ensuring health and safety is taken into consideration.

Outfits will not be overly revealing, and we ask that larger tattoos and body piercings (except ear-rings) are covered up.

Shoes should have a back and a minimal heal.

Clothes or tattoos will not display any offensive or political slogans.

12. Smoking and the use of drugs and alcohol

The school is a no-smoking environment. Smoking and the use of e-cigarettes or "vaping" is not allowed on school premises or during working time. Staff should also refrain from smoking immediately outside of the school entrances.

Employees must not consume/use alcohol, illicit drugs or other illegal substances in the workplace or be under the influence of such substances whilst at work or otherwise representing the school. Employees must ensure that any use of alcohol/other substances outside of work does not adversely affect their work performance, attendance, conduct, working relationships, health and safety of themselves and others or damage the schools' image and reputation.

13. Health and Safety

All employees must, by law, take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that of others in the workplace. Employees are required to comply with the school's Health and Safety policy and agreed procedures at all times.

This includes:

- avoiding risk of injury or danger to yourself or others
- using any protective clothing and equipment supplied
- complying with hygiene requirements
- reporting, at the earliest opportunity, any hazards, defects, accidents or incidents to the Headteacher or other designated person
- not interfering with, or misusing, anything provided for health, safety or welfare
- informing the school of any medical condition or medication which has been prescribed which may have an impact on health and safety in the workplace

Managers should also be aware of and comply with any additional health and safety obligations associated with their role.

14. 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 personal relationships with members of the school community will be disclosed to the Headteacher.

15. Secondary employment

Employees should ensure that their activities outside of work do not conflict with their duty to the school.

Employees must discuss with their Headteacher and obtain their consent before taking up additional paid/unpaid employment or engaging in any other business.

Requests will not be unreasonably refused providing that:

- It does not affect or is unlikely to affect the suitability of the employee to undertake their job role or work with children or in a school setting
- It does not conflict with the interests of the school/KCC or have the potential to bring the school/KCC into disrepute
- There is no detrimental impact on an employee's work performance or their own or others health and safety.
- Privileged or confidential information is not shared

- Work is undertaken outside of the school and of contracted hours of work
- The activity is not in direct competition with those of the school

It is an employee's responsibility to monitor the hours they work and ensure they are rested and refreshed to be able to carry out their role. An average working week of 48 hours across all employments should not normally be exceeded unless the employee has elected to opt out of the Working Time Regulations.

16. Monitoring arrangements

This policy was developed by the Headteachers and agreed by the full governing board. It will be reviewed at least annually. 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
- Staff grievance
- Child protection and safeguarding
- Mobile devices and social media
- Whistle-blowing
- Low level concerns
- Managing allegations procedures