

# Staff behaviour policy



Approved by:

Full Governing Body

Date: 15<sup>th</sup> October 2025

Last reviewed on:

October 2025

# Staff Behaviour Policy (Code of Conduct)

The St Faith & St Martin CofE Junior School, Lincoln

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## 1. Introduction and Purpose

### 1.1 Policy Statement

This policy sets out the professional standards of behaviour expected of all adults working at The St Faith And St Martin CofE Junior School. It applies to all staff members, volunteers, contractors, and anyone working on behalf of the school.

### 1.2 Purpose

This policy aims to:

- Create and embed a culture of openness, trust and transparency
- Ensure that the school's values and expected behaviour are lived, monitored and reinforced constantly by all staff
- Enable staff to understand what appropriate behaviour is, and to distinguish expected and appropriate behaviour from inappropriate, problematic or concerning behaviour
- Protect children by ensuring all adults maintain the highest standards of professional conduct
- Support staff by providing clear guidance on professional boundaries
- Minimise the risk of abuse
- Ensure adults working in or on behalf of the school are clear about professional boundaries and act within these boundaries

### 1.3 Legal Framework

This policy has regard to:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2025
  - The Teachers' Standards 2012
  - The Equality Act 2010
  - Working Together to Safeguard Children
  - Use of Reasonable Force: Advice for Headteachers, Staff and Governing Bodies
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## **2. Professional Standards and Expected Behaviour**

### **2.1 General Principles**

All staff must:

- Put the welfare and safety of children first at all times
- Maintain public trust and confidence in the teaching profession and the school
- Treat all pupils, parents, colleagues and members of the public with dignity and respect
- Act with honesty and integrity
- Uphold the school's Christian values and ethos
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries with pupils
- Never use their position to gain advantage or for personal gain

### **2.2 Relationships with Pupils**

Staff must:

- Maintain professional boundaries at all times
- Avoid behaviour that could be misinterpreted or lead to allegations
- Not develop personal or sexual relationships with pupils
- Not communicate with pupils through personal social media, email or phone
- Be aware that even well-intentioned physical contact may be misconstrued
- Never engage in or tolerate any form of bullying, harassment or discrimination

Staff must not:

- Be over-friendly with children
- Have favourites
- Engage with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door without a clear educational reason and appropriate risk assessment
- Humiliate children
- Make sexually suggestive comments to or about a pupil
- Share personal contact details with pupils

### **2.3 Physical Contact and Use of Reasonable Force**

The school does not have a 'no contact' policy. There is a real risk that such a policy might place a member of staff in breach of their duty of care towards a pupil, or prevent them taking action needed to prevent a pupil causing harm.

Staff may use reasonable force when necessary to:

- Remove disruptive pupils from the classroom where they have refused to follow an instruction
- Prevent a pupil from behaving in a way that disrupts a school event or trip
- Prevent a pupil from leaving the classroom where allowing them to do so would risk their safety or lead to behaviour that disrupts others

- Prevent a pupil from attacking a member of staff or another pupil
- Stop a fight in the playground
- Restrain a pupil at risk of harming themselves through physical outbursts

Staff must:

- Make reasonable adjustments for disabled children and children with special educational needs (SEN)
- Never use force as a punishment - this is always unlawful
- Record and report all incidents of physical intervention to the headteacher
- Inform parents/carers when reasonable force has been used

## **2.4 Safeguarding Responsibilities**

All staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn.

Staff must:

- Be prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help
- Know what to do if a child tells them they are being abused, exploited or neglected
- Follow the processes set out in the school's child protection policy if they have any concerns about a child's welfare
- Never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse
- Reassure victims that they are being taken seriously and will be supported and kept safe
- Maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality, only involving those who need to be involved
- Record all concerns, discussions and decisions in writing
- Read and understand Part 1 of KCSIE 2025 (or Annex A for those without direct contact with children)

## **2.5 Online Safety and Digital Conduct**

Staff must:

- Follow the school's acceptable use policy for IT
- Not use personal devices to contact pupils or parents
- Report any inappropriate online behaviour by pupils or colleagues
- Model safe and responsible use of technology
- Maintain professional boundaries in all online interactions
- Not take photographs of children on personal mobile phones

## **2.6 Dress and Appearance**

Staff should dress in a professional manner appropriate to their role. Clothing should be:

- Smart and professional
- Appropriate for working with children
- Suitable for the activities being undertaken
- Respectful of our school's Christian ethos

## **2.7 Gifts and Hospitality**

Staff must:

- Not accept gifts worth more than £20 from pupils, parents or external organisations
- Declare any gifts received to the headteacher
- Not give personal gifts to individual pupils
- Use professional judgement when giving rewards or recognition to pupils

## **2.8 Confidentiality and Information Sharing**

Staff must:

- Maintain confidentiality in accordance with data protection legislation
  - Share information appropriately when safeguarding concerns arise
  - Not discuss pupils or school matters on social media
  - Follow the school's information sharing protocols
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# **3. Low-Level Concerns**

## **3.1 What is a Low-Level Concern?**

A low-level concern is any concern - no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' - that an adult working in or on behalf of the school may have acted in a way that:

- Is inconsistent with this staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work, and
- Does not meet the harm threshold or is otherwise not serious enough to consider a referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

The term 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant.

## **3.2 Examples of Low-Level Concerns**

Examples could include, but are not limited to:

- Being over-friendly with children
- Having favourites
- Taking photographs of children on a mobile phone, contrary to school policy
- Engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door without good reason
- Humiliating children
- Using inappropriate language or making inappropriate comments
- Discussing personal or sexual relationships with pupils
- Making sexual jokes or innuendos

### **3.3 Importance of Sharing Low-Level Concerns**

It is crucial that all low-level concerns are shared responsibly with the right person and recorded and dealt with appropriately. This will:

- Enable the school to identify inappropriate, problematic or concerning behaviour early
- Minimise the risk of abuse
- Protect staff from false allegations or misunderstandings
- Help identify any weaknesses in the school's safeguarding system

### **3.4 Reporting Low-Level Concerns**

All low-level concerns should be reported to the headteacher.

If the concern is about the headteacher, it should be reported to the Chair of Governors.

Staff should not investigate concerns themselves but should report them promptly.

### **3.5 Self-Reporting**

Staff are encouraged and should feel confident to self-refer where, for example, they have:

- Found themselves in a situation which could be misinterpreted
- Behaved in a way that might appear compromising to others
- On reflection, believe they have behaved in a way that falls below the expected professional standards

### **3.6 Recording Low-Level Concerns**

All low-level concerns will be recorded in writing by the headteacher. The record will include:

- Details of the concern
- The context in which the concern arose
- Action taken
- The name of the individual sharing their concerns (unless they wish to remain anonymous)

Records will be:

- Kept confidential
- Held securely in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR
- Retained until the individual leaves employment
- Reviewed regularly to identify potential patterns of behaviour

### **3.7 Responding to Low-Level Concerns**

When a low-level concern is raised, the headteacher will:

- Speak directly to the person who raised the concern (unless raised anonymously)
- Speak to the individual involved and any witnesses
- Categorise the type of behaviour
- Determine what further action may need to be taken
- Record the information and rationale for decisions

Where a pattern of low-level concerns is identified, the headteacher will decide on a course of action, which may include:

- Additional training or support
- Disciplinary procedures
- Referral to the LADO if the pattern meets the harm threshold

### **3.8 Low-Level Concerns About Supply Staff and Contractors**

Low-level concerns about supply staff and contractors will be notified to their employers so that potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

## **4. Allegations Against Staff**

### **4.1 Allegations That Meet the Harm Threshold**

If a member of staff has a safeguarding concern or an allegation is made about another member of staff (including supply staff, volunteers and contractors) that meets the harm threshold, they must:

- Report it immediately to the headteacher
- If the allegation is about the headteacher, report it to the Chair of Governors

An allegation meets the harm threshold if the person has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children

The headteacher (or Chair of Governors if the allegation is about the headteacher) will:

- Follow the procedures set out in Part 4 of KCSIE 2025
- Contact the LADO within one working day
- Not investigate the allegation themselves

### **4.2 Confidentiality**

The school will make every effort to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated.

### **4.3 Support for Staff**

The school will provide appropriate support to staff who are the subject of an allegation, including access to welfare counselling or medical advice where appropriate.

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## **5. Whistleblowing**

### **5.1 Duty to Report Concerns**

All staff and volunteers have a duty to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school's safeguarding provision.

Staff should feel confident that such concerns will be taken seriously by the senior leadership team.

### **5.2 How to Raise Concerns**

Concerns should normally be raised with:

1. The headteacher
2. The Chair of Governors (if the concern is about the headteacher or if staff feel unable to raise it with the headteacher)

### **5.3 External Whistleblowing Channels**

Where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with their employer, or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, other whistleblowing channels are available:

- General advice on whistleblowing: [www.gov.uk/whistleblowing](http://www.gov.uk/whistleblowing)
- NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line: 0800 028 0285 (available 08:00-20:00 Monday-Friday, 09:00-18:00 weekends)
- Email: [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)

### **5.4 Protection from Detriment**

The school will not tolerate harassment or victimisation of anyone raising genuine concerns. Staff who raise concerns in good faith will be protected from detriment.

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## **6. Conduct Outside of Work**

### **6.1 General Principles**

Staff must not engage in conduct outside work which could bring the school into disrepute or undermine their position of trust with pupils.

This includes:

- Criminal behaviour
- Inappropriate use of social media
- Behaviour that could be seen as grooming
- Inappropriate relationships

## **6.2 Social Media**

Staff must:

- Not accept friend requests from current pupils or recent former pupils on personal social media accounts
- Maintain professional boundaries in all online interactions
- Not post anything that could bring the school into disrepute
- Not share confidential information about the school, pupils or colleagues
- Report any concerning online behaviour by pupils or colleagues

## **6.3 Reporting Requirements**

Staff must inform the headteacher if they:

- Are arrested, charged or convicted of a criminal offence
- Receive a caution, reprimand or warning
- Are subject to any court order relating to their conduct
- Are involved in any incident outside of work that could impact their suitability to work with children

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# **7. Equality and Inclusion**

## **7.1 Commitment to Equality**

The school is committed to eliminating discrimination and promoting equality of opportunity for all staff and pupils.

Staff must:

- Treat all pupils, parents, colleagues and visitors with dignity and respect
- Not discriminate on the grounds of any protected characteristic
- Challenge discriminatory behaviour and language
- Make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils and those with SEND
- Promote an inclusive environment

## **7.2 Equality Analysis**

This policy has been carefully considered and analysed for its impact on equality and the possible implications for staff and pupils with protected characteristics, as part of our commitment to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

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## **8. Training and Induction**

### **8.1 Induction**

All new staff will receive a copy of this policy at induction and will be required to confirm they have read and understood it.

Induction will include:

- An overview of the school's safeguarding arrangements
- Information about the designated safeguarding lead and deputies
- Training on the school's behaviour policy
- Information about whistleblowing procedures

### **8.2 Ongoing Training**

All staff will receive:

- Regular safeguarding and child protection training (at least annually)
  - Updates on this policy when it is reviewed
  - Training on specific issues as required (e.g., Prevent duty, online safety)
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## **9. Monitoring and Review**

### **9.1 Monitoring**

The headteacher is responsible for monitoring the implementation of this policy and will:

- Review records of low-level concerns regularly
- Identify any patterns or trends
- Take appropriate action where necessary
- Report to governors on the implementation of this policy

### **9.2 Review**

This policy will be reviewed annually by the headteacher and governing body, or sooner if:

- There are changes to relevant legislation or guidance

- An incident occurs that suggests the policy needs to be revised
- Monitoring identifies areas for improvement

### **9.3 Consultation**

When reviewing this policy, the school will consult with:

- Staff
  - Governors
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## **10. Related Policies**

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
  - Pupil Behaviour Policy
  - Anti-Bullying Policy
  - Online Safety Policy
  - Acceptable Use Policy (IT)
  - Whistleblowing Policy
  - Equality Policy
  - Data Protection Policy
  - Complaints Policy
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