Leigh Primary School

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'Caring, Sharing and Learning Together'

Staff Code of Conduct

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Part A: Policy

1 Policy Statement

The School expects the highest standards of personal and professional conduct from all Employees.

As such the School requires all Employees to act in a manner which reflects the value and ethos of the School.

Employees must ensure that their behaviour and actions are consistent with their position as a role model to pupils / students and are compatible with working with young people and in a School setting.

Employees must act with integrity, honesty and demonstrate ethical and respectful working practices towards pupils / students, colleagues, parents/ carers and other members of the School community.

All Employees have a responsibility to observe appropriate professional boundaries and act at all times in a manner which safeguards and promotes the welfare of pupils / students.

Employees must disclose any relevant information which may impact on their job role or suitability to work with young people or in a School setting.

The School requires Employees to adhere to all School policies and observe the highest standards of business / financial practice.

Each Employee has an individual responsibility to act in a manner which upholds the School's in providing effective and professional education to pupils and protects its reputation to do the same with confidence in the local community.

Employees are accountable for their actions and conduct and should seek advice from their Line Manager / Headteacher if they are not sure of the appropriate action to take.

Employees should be aware that a failure to comply with the following Code of Conduct could result in disciplinary action being considered. A serious breach could potentially result in dismissal.

This policy explains the School's expectations with regards to the conduct of Employees in the following areas:

- Professional conduct
- Safeguarding Pupils / Students
- Use of ICT & Social Media
- Business conduct

2 Scope

This Policy applies to all current Employees of Leigh Primary School.

This Policy should also be adhered to by all other adults working in and on behalf of the school including volunteers / supply and agency workers engaged by the School. It does not include Governors for whom separate arrangements apply.

Reference to the management role of the headteacher in this policy, this may include their identified nominee. In the case of the headteacher this management function is undertaken by the Chair of Governors.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the School's Discipline and Conduct Policy which provides examples of acts which are likely to be regarded as misconduct.

3 Adoption Arrangements and Date

This policy was adopted by the Governing Body of Leigh Primary School on 1st September 2026 and supersedes any previous Code of Conduct

This policy will be reviewed by the Governing Body each year or earlier if there is a need. This will involve consultation with the recognised unions.

4 Responsibilities of the School

- Explain the provisions of the Code of Conduct to Employees and signpost Employees to other relevant policies, document and guidelines
- Provide additional advice and guidance to Employees in relation to queries they may have regarding the application of the Code of Conduct
- Coach, support and provide feedback to Employees on their performance in relation to the required standards of conduct
- Take appropriate action at the earliest opportunity to address breaches of the expected standards of conduct

5 Responsibilities of the Employee

- To read, understand and comply with the Code of Conduct at all times
- To use this code, alongside other relevant School policies and professional codes, to guide them in their role
- To seek guidance from the Headteacher / Line Manager (or Chair of Governors in the case of the Headteacher) if they are unclear about the conduct or actions expected of them
- To alert the Headteacher (or Chair of Governors in the case of the Headteacher) at the earliest opportunity where an Employee believes they may have acted in a manner which is inconsistent with the Code of Conduct and other relevant School Policies and professional codes.
- To alert the Headteacher (or Chair of Governors in the case of the Headteacher) / Designated Safeguarding Lead where they believe they or another employee or adult working in or on behalf of the school has acted in a manner which has the potential to constitute any safeguarding concern, including those that may be regarded as 'low level concerns'.

6 Reference to Other Sources of Information

This Code of Conduct is not exhaustive and does not replace the general requirements of the law, common sense and good conduct.

The Code of Conduct should be read in conjunction with a number of associated policies relating to conduct which are set out in Appendix 2 of this document.

In addition to this policy, all staff employed under Teachers' Terms and Conditions of Employment have a statutory obligation to adhere to the provisions of the STPCD, the latest 'Teachers' Standards 2012' and in relation to this policy, Part 2 of the Teachers' Standards - Personal and Professional Conduct.

Part 2 of the Teachers' Standards is available at Appendix 3 and can also be access online via:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/665522/Teachers_standard_information.pdf

All Employees must ensure they have read, understood and comply with the following sections of the current edition of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)

- Part 1 - Safeguarding Information for all staff
- Part 4 Section 2 Concerns that do not meet the harm threshold

In line with the 2025 updates to Keeping Children Safe in Education, staff should also be aware of new risks relating to online safety. This includes harmful content such as misinformation, disinformation and conspiracy theories. Staff should use new technologies, including generative AI tools, responsibly and in accordance with DfE guidance. The DfE's Plan As part of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025, staff must also be aware of updated online safety risks. This includes harmful content such as misinformation, disinformation and conspiracy theories. Staff should also be mindful of the safe and responsible use of new technologies, including generative AI tools in line with DfE guidance. Useful resources include:

- DfE – Plan technology for your school
- Dfe – Generative AI: Product Safety Expectations

Further guidance regarding Safeguarding is in Part C of this document.

Staff must also have due regard to other professional codes, policies and guidance which may be relevant to their specific role.

Part B: Professional Conduct

7 General

Employees are expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct.

Employees are required to work in a diligent and conscientious manner.

Employees are expected to work to the requirements of their job and are required to respect managerial authority and follow reasonable instructions.

Employees must conduct themselves in a manner which reflects the ethos and values (Christian values if a church school) of the School and adhere to School policies and procedures at all times.

Employees should ensure they work their contracted hours and are expected to maintain a high level of attendance and punctuality.

8 Honesty and Integrity

Employees must maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their work.

Employees should not behave in a manner which would lead a reasonable person to call into question their motivation or intentions.

During the course of their work Employees should ensure they do not:

- Willfully provide false / misleading information
- Destroy or alter information / records without proper authorisation
- Willfully withhold information or conceal matters which they could reasonably be expected to have disclosed
- Misrepresent the School or their position
- Accept or offer any form of bribe / inducement or engage in any other corrupt working practice

Should an Employee become aware of any conduct on the part of a colleague which raises concerns regarding health and safety, safeguarding or criminal activity – they have a duty to disclose this. Allegations concerning fraudulent, dishonest or corrupt practices or the falsification or withholding of information will be investigated under the School's Disciplinary Policy and formal disciplinary action taken where appropriate.

9 Setting an Example

School Employees are role models and must strive to adhere to behaviour that sets a good example to all the pupils/students within the School and is appropriate in a School setting.

This includes:

- Refraining from abusive or potentially offensive / discriminatory language or actions. (The use of profanity, vulgar expressions, personal insults, violence, harassment for example, will be considered unacceptable)
- Being mindful and sensitive to the customs, practices, culture and personal belief of others.
- Positively contributing to the creation of a fair and inclusive work environment where everyone can thrive and do their best work.
- Demonstrating tolerance and respects towards others by being mindful and sensitive to the customs, practices, culture and personal belief of others.
- Contributing to the creation of a fair and inclusive School environment where everyone can thrive and do their best work.
- Observing boundaries appropriate to their role and a School setting
- Ensuring any topics of conversation with pupils/students are suitable to the School setting / curriculum
- Not undermining fundamental British values*
- Ensuring personal / political opinions or beliefs do not impact on the discharge of duties and/or are not expressed in a way which exploits pupils' / students' vulnerability or seeks to unduly influence.
- Maintaining high standards of personal presentation, attendance and punctuality

Should Employees be in doubt about the appropriateness of their behaviour they should seek guidance from the Headteacher (or Chair of Governors in the case of the Headteacher). Breaches of expected behaviour may be considered under the disciplinary procedure and may result in formal disciplinary action including dismissal.

**as defined in KCSIE and the Government's Prevent Strategy as democracy, rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect*

10 Confidentiality

Employees may have access to confidential or sensitive information about pupils /students, colleagues or the business and operation of the School as part of their job role.

Such information must not be disclosed to any person who is not entitled to have access to this or legitimately needs it for work purposes.

Specifically, all Employees must:

- Work in accordance with the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation (2018) and associated legislation
- Observe the School's procedures for the release of information to other agencies and members of the public
- Not use or share confidential information inappropriately or for personal gain
- Not speak inappropriately about the school community, pupils, parents, staff or governors including discussing incidents, operational or employment matters with parents / members of the public
- Ensure all confidential data is kept secure and password protected

Should Employees be in doubt about the appropriateness of sharing information they should seek guidance from the Headteacher.

11 Working Relationships & Relationships with other Stakeholders / Community

The School expects Employees to maintain positive and professional working relationships. Colleagues, pupils, parents and other stakeholders* should be treated with dignity and respect.

Employees should be polite and courteous in their interactions with parents / pupils and other stakeholders / members of the School community.

Behaviour which constitutes bullying and harassment, intimidation, victimisation, discrimination or abuse of authority will not be tolerated and may be addressed via the School's bullying and harassment and / or disciplinary policy. This includes physical and verbal abuse and use of inappropriate language (for example the use of profanities or vulgar expressions) or unprofessional behaviour (for example being rude or hostile) with colleagues, pupils and parents.

Employees should treat all stakeholders in a fair and equitable way and not behave in a manner which may demean, distress, offend or discriminate against others.

Employees should ensure that policies relating to equality issues are complied with.

Employees should be aware of the School's Complaint Procedure and address any concerns from parents / pupils and other stakeholders in accordance with this document.

* *Other stakeholders may include, but are not limited to, members of the governing body, representatives of the diocese (where relevant), local authority members and officers, visitors to the school site, contractors, suppliers, service providers and other members of the wider community with an involvement in or connection to the operation of the School.*

12 Conduct Outside of the Workplace

The School recognises that Employees are entitled to their private lives. In general, the choices and actions of employees outside of their job role are not the School's concern. However, in order to protect all parties, there are exceptions to this.

All Employees working in the School Community must be mindful that they have a responsibility to maintain public confidence in their own and the School's ability to safeguard the welfare and best interests of children and young people. It is therefore, expected that they will adopt high standards of personal conduct in order to maintain the confidence and respect of the public in general and all those with whom they work.

In this regard Employees must not engage in conduct outside of work which has the potential to:

- Affect or is likely to affect the suitability of the Employee to undertake their job role or work with children/young people or in a School setting
- Impact on the operation or reputation or standing of the School
- Impact on the operation or reputation of the School's relationship with its staff, parents, pupils, or other stakeholders
- Seriously undermine the trust and confidence that the School has in the Employee to undertake their job role or work with children/young people or in a School setting

In particular, criminal offences that involve violence, hate crime or possession or use of illegal drugs or sexual misconduct will be regarded as unacceptable.

Concerns related to an Employees actions or inactions outside of work will be reasonably considered in light of the Employees job role, and the potential impact of the Employee's suitability to do their job within the context of the School Community. If relevant, formal action may be considered following the implementation of the School's disciplinary procedure. Depending on the seriousness of any established concerns dismissal may be a potential outcome.

13 Duty to Disclose

All Employees have a duty to immediately disclose to the headteacher (or Chair of Governors in the case of a Headteacher) prior to the start of their employment, at the start of their employment or during the course of their employment, any change in their circumstances or any information which may affect or is likely to affect the suitability of the Employee to undertake their job role or work with children/ young people or in a School setting.

This includes, but is not restricted to:

- the Employee being subject to any police investigation / enquiry, arrest, ban, charge, caution, reprimand, warning, fine or pending prosecution or criminal conviction. This includes any actions committed overseas which would be subject to a police investigation or formal action if such actions had been committed in any part of the United Kingdom
- the Employee being subject to any referral, made to, or any investigation, proceedings, or prohibition order being undertaken by the Teaching Regulation Agency, General Teaching Council for Scotland, or the Education Workforce Council in Wales
- the Employee being subject to the inclusion on the DBS Children's Barred List and any change in DBS status during employment, or any referral, made to, or any, investigation or proceedings being undertaken by the DBS
- the Employee being subject to any referral, made to, or any investigation, proceedings, or prohibition order being undertaken by any other regulatory or professional authorities or actions of other agencies relating to child protection and/or safeguarding concerns
- the Employee being subject to any orders made in relation to the care of children, the refusal or cancellation of registration relating to childcare, or children's homes, or being prohibited from private fostering
- the Employee being subject to any 'live' disciplinary process, formal sanction or any other relevant information arising from a previous or current secondary employment / voluntary work which may impact on the Employee's suitability to undertake their role or work with children/young people or in a School setting. This includes substantiated safeguarding allegations
- the Employee's close personal relationships outside of the workplace presenting a 'risk by association' to the safeguarding of children / young people.

This list is not exhaustive. Should an employee be unclear about whether it is appropriate to disclose a matter they are encouraged to seek guidance from the Headteacher (or Chair of Governors in the case of a Headteacher) at the earliest opportunity.

The school acknowledges the obligation to disclose protected convictions and cautions is governed by the requirements of the Rehabilitation of Offences Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (as amended in 2013).

Prospective Employees should be aware that when applying for particular jobs and activities, certain convictions and cautions are considered 'protected'. This means that they do not need to be disclosed to employers, and if they are disclosed, employers cannot take them into account.

Employees are advised that Guidance about whether a conviction or caution should be disclosed can be found here: Check if you need to tell someone about your criminal record: What information you need to give - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Employees must also report any current or historical information in the public domain or which is likely to come into the public domain which may be of relevance to their job role or their suitability to work with children/young people or in a School setting or matters which may be subject to adverse media attention or have a detrimental impact on the reputation of the School.

Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009

In addition, in the case of individuals who work with, or manage the education of, early years pupils (under the age of five) during school hours, and children up to the age of eight in relation to activities outside of the school day (for example breakfast or after school club employees), the following legislative provisions also apply.

In accordance with the Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009 (Section 75 of the Childcare Act 2006) an Employee should immediately disclose to the Headteacher (or Chair of Governors in the case of the Headteacher) if, at any point during their employment, they:

- Are disqualified from providing childcare provision or being involved in the management of such provision, including where any application for an Ofsted waiver from disqualification has been made, regardless of whether such an application was successful

Such employees also have a duty to ensure that they are fully aware of their obligations and will be asked by the school to confirm that they understand and comply with these provisions.

Further guidance relating to Employee's obligations under the Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009 including details of the relevant offences which must be disclosed to the school is available at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/disqualification-under-the-childcare-act-2006

Employees should seek clarification from the Headteacher (or Chair of Governors in the case of the Headteacher) if they are unclear whether they are required to disclose certain information under this provision.

How the school will respond to Employee disclosures

Disclosures will be handled sensitively and discretely, and with regard to data protection considerations.

The Headteacher will carefully consider any disclosure which is made and the appropriate response.

This may result in a suspension from duties with normal pay while an investigation / risk assessment takes place or Ofsted waiver application made (where applicable). Suspension is not a sanction in itself and does not represent any prejudgement of the outcome of the response to the disclosure.

In instances where the information disclosed constitutes a risk to the safeguarding of children / young people or is incompatible with an Employee's job role or their suitability to work with children/young people in a School setting, termination of employment may be considered, following due process
Any failure to disclose any information required in the course of employment or any other information that may have a bearing on an individual's suitability to carry out their job role or work with children/young people or in a School setting may be the subject of disciplinary action which could lead to dismissal.

14 Secondary Employment

Employees should ensure that any external paid or unpaid work does not conflict with their duty to the School or pose a potential to damage the Employee's own or the educational settings reputation with the context of their job role and seniority.

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/young people or in a School setting
- 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.

15 Dress and Presentation

An individual's dress and appearance is a matter of personal choice. However, all Employees must ensure their dress, personal appearance and standard of personal hygiene is appropriate to the nature of their role in the School, suitable for a School setting and promotes a professional image. Employees should be mindful of setting a good example to both pupils and visitors. With regard to the expectation of looking smart, staff should not wear denim.

Dress should be appropriate to the activities an Employee is engaged in and any related health and safety requirements.

Suitable protective equipment must be worn where provided and appropriate. Uniforms should be worn where provided.

Employees should wear their identity badges at all times whilst in the workplace.

Clothes should not expose too much skin and are expected to cover areas of the body such as the midriff, shoulders, chest or upper leg. Footwear must be appropriate for health and safety and school activities. It is expected that footwear is enclosed and the heel/ankle supported e.g. flip flops, sliders and crocs are not appropriate wear for school.

Employees should dress in a manner that is absent from political slogans, offensive language or other contentious symbols, wording or imagery.

Employees will be advised by the Headteacher of any flexibilities which may be appropriate in dress code for specific activities or events, for example for school trips and inset days or in the case of unusually hot/cold weather.

Wherever possible, tattoos should not be exposed. An Employee may be asked to cover a visible tattoo where it is deemed inappropriate / offensive for a school setting. For example, if the subject is discriminatory, violent or contentious.

Body piercings should not be exposed with the exception of earrings and also nose piercings where these are worn for religious reasons.

The School recognises the diversity of cultures and religions of its Employees and will take a sensitive approach where this affects dress and uniform requirements.

Employees are encouraged to make the Headteacher aware at the earliest opportunity of any circumstances which may have the potential to cause difficulties in following the dress code (for example, religious, medical / disability related reasons or should they be transitioning) – to enable appropriate flexibilities to be discussed and agreed.

16 Smoking and the use of drugs and alcohol

The School is a non- 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 alcohol or use illegal drugs in the workplace or be under the influence of such substances whilst at work. This includes the use of 'legal highs' or psychoactive substances.

Employees must ensure that any use of alcohol / illegal drugs outside of work does not adversely affect their work performance, attendance, conduct, working relationships, health and safety of themselves and others or damage the School's image and reputation. Employees are expected to behave in a manner which would not lead any reasonable person to question their suitability to work with children or act as a role model. For example, presenting for work with clothing or breath smelling of alcohol or drugs is likely to raise reputational concerns.

If an Employee has a drug or alcohol dependency which is impacting on their work or has the potential to impact on their work, they should discuss this with the Headteacher. Where an Employee engages with the school regarding addressing their dependency, consideration will be given on how to best to support the Employee. External advice may be sought prior to or during the implementation of the Schools disciplinary procedure where conduct issues arise due to alcohol or drug use.

17 Health and Safety at Work

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

Employees with specific additional responsibilities and those in managerial roles should also be aware of and comply with any additional health and safety obligations associated with their role.

Employees should inform their manager if they have a medical condition or are taking prescription medication which may impair their work performance or affect their health and safety or that of others.

18 Contact with the Media

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.

Employees should speak to the Headteacher in the first instance about any concerns they have regarding their own employment or operation of the school and / or may refer to the School's Whistleblowing or Grievance policies if they wish to raise a formal complaint.

Should an Employee speak directly to the media about non-school matters care should be taken to ensure 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 reputation of the school.

19 Whistleblowing

Employees may raise concerns about any aspect of the operation of the School which is not directly related to their own employment through the Whistleblowing Policy.

Employees raising a concern with reasonable grounds for doing so will not be subject to discrimination, harassment or victimisation.

20 Misconduct

Failure to follow the Code of Conduct may result in further action being taken, as set out in the Schools Discipline and Conduct Policy and Procedure.

Employees should ensure they are familiar with type of conduct which may be regarded as a breach of School rules.

Examples of behaviours which are likely to be regarded to constitute gross misconduct and misconduct are set out in the Appendix to the School's Discipline and Conduct Policy and Procedure. Allegations of misconduct will be managed in accordance with the School's Discipline and Conduct Policy.

Part C: Safeguarding Pupils / Students

21 General Obligations

It is essential that everybody working in a School understands their safeguarding responsibilities.

All Employees have a responsibility to:

- Safeguard pupils / students from physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse and neglect
- Promote the welfare of pupils / students and provide a safe environment in which children can learn
- Identify children who may be in need of extra help or who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm
- Report as soon as possible and without delay any concerns regarding child protection / safeguarding to the Headteacher / Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Chair of Governors where concerns relate to the Headteacher)

From September 2025, attendance is a statutory safeguarding duty. Staff must follow the school's daily attendance recording procedures and ensure accurate reporting procedures and ensure accurate reporting of absences. These includes compliance with the DfE's guidance Working Together to Improve School Attendance.

All Employees must ensure they have read, understood and comply with the current edition of the following documents:

- Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in (KCSIE)
- KCSIE Section Two - Concerns which do not meet the harm threshold
- KCSIE is attached at Appendix 4 or via https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2
- DfE guidance Working Together to Improve School Attendance
- Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour policy
- Additionally, Employees with managerial responsibilities must ensure they comply with the School's procedure for Managing Allegations Against Staff and Parts 2-4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education and Safeguarding Procedures for Managing Allegations Against Staff
- *All policies are found - Leigh Primary School - Policies*

Employees should also be aware that Virtual School Heads (VSHs) now have a statutory role in promoting the educational outcomes of all children with a social worker, not just children in care. Employees must work with the Designated Safeguarding Lead to help ensure this group of pupil are supported effectively within school.

Employees must attend and comply with any training as required by the School associated with the safeguarding of pupils / students.

22 Appropriate relationships with students

Employees must maintain appropriate professional boundaries with pupils / students.

Employees are expected to act in an open and transparent way that would not lead any reasonable person to suspect their actions or intent. In order to protect both children and themselves, Employees should also avoid behaviour that might be misinterpreted by others.

- Where a child seeks a cuddle or hug, staff should consider whether this is appropriate and, where possible, use other forms of reassurance such as kind words, sitting nearby or offering a hand to hold.

- Any physical contact should be brief, appropriate and child-led wherever possible, and should never be secretive or take place in a situation where the child or adult could be vulnerable.
- Staff must never initiate or engage in physical contact that could be interpreted as inappropriate, intimate or overly familiar.
- Physical contact must never be used to meet an adult's emotional needs or to create a special relationship with an individual child.
- Staff should be particularly mindful of children who may be vulnerable, have additional needs, have experienced trauma, or have difficulty communicating their wishes.
- Where a child is distressed and physical reassurance appears necessary, staff should use their professional judgement and ensure that the response is proportionate and in the child's best interests.

Where concerns are raised appropriate fact finding will be undertaken before considering whether further formal action is warranted under the Schools disciplinary procedure.

23 Allegations Against Members of Staff and Volunteers

All Employees have a duty to report to the Headteacher / DSL at the earliest opportunity the conduct of a colleague who may have breached the 'harm threshold' as defined in KCSIE in that they have:

- 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 the individual 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.

Employees are advised to self report where they themselves believe they may have acted in a manner which breaches these harm thresholds.

Failure to report such concerns may be regarded as a disciplinary matter. Where the concerns relate to the Headteacher these should be reported to the Chair of Governors.
Please refer to Appendix 6 for the School's policy on the management of low level safeguarding concerns.

24 Guidance for Safer Working Practice

Employees are required to read, understand and comply with the Guidance for Safer Working Practice for those working with Children and Young People in Education Settings.

This guidance is attached at Appendix 5 or can be accessed online via: Managing staff allegations - KELSI

This document explains the School's specific expectations with regard to safeguarding pupils / students and contains practical guidance on behaviours which constitute safe working practice.

Employees should seek immediate guidance from their Headteacher / Line Manager if they are unclear about the conduct or actions expected of them.

25 Other Safeguarding Considerations

All staff should have an awareness of safeguarding issues that can put children at risk of harm and how to deal with these accordingly. These include:

- Child on Child abuse – including bullying (cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- Sexual Violence & Harassment - abuse of intimate relationships, physical abuse, sexual abuse & harassment, non-consensual sexual activity/sharing of images, upskirting and

initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.
- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)
- Domestic Abuse – including psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional abuse.
- Mental Health – including the impact of suffering abuse or neglect
- Radicalisation – including the Prevent agenda
- Serious Violence – including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), honour-based abuse and forced marriage.
- Online Safety – including harmful content, contact, conduct and commerce (e.g. misinformation, disinformation, conspiracy theories.)

In line with KCSIE 2025, where pupils are placed in Alternative Provision (AP), the school must obtain written confirmation that the provider has completed safeguarding checks on all staff equivalent to those required in schools. Providers must also notify the school of any staffing changes that may affect safeguarding

Employees are guided to refer to the current edition of Keeping Children Safe in Education for further information.

Part D: ICT and Social Media

26 General Obligations

Employees should ensure that they have read, understand and comply with the School's ICT Acceptable Use Policy at all times (Attached at Appendix 7).

Whilst at work or using a work device all Employees must:

- Ensure all electronic communication with pupils / students, parents / carers, colleagues and other stakeholders is compatible with their professional role, appropriate boundaries and in line with School policies.
- Not to use work IT equipment to browse, create, transmit, display, publish or forward any material / images which is illegal, sexually explicit, obscene or could offend, harass or upset others or anything which could bring an Employee's professional role or the School / Local Authority into disrepute.
- Not to use personal IT equipment to browse, create, transmit, display, publish or forward any materials / images which are illegal or could offend or harass others or anything which could bring an Employee's professional role or the School / local authority into disrepute.
- Ensure that ICT system security is respected and password protocols are observed – including the use of strong passwords and encryption.
- Not install personal software on School equipment or make unauthorised copies of School registered software.

Use of school internet, email and ICT equipment for personal purposes is not permitted.

Employees should seek guidance from their Headteacher / Line Manager if they are unclear about the conduct or actions expected of them.

Breaches of expected use of ICT may be considered under the disciplinary procedure which may result in formal disciplinary sanctions, including dismissal.

27 Use of Social Media

Employees must ensure that their online presence / profile is compatible with their professional role.

Employees are entitled to their private life but should be mindful that their online presence can be subject to public scrutiny. It is important that the wider community are confident that pupils

are being educated by individuals who act in a professional and responsible manner online.

All Employees should:

- Ensure appropriate privacy settings are applied when using social media sites
- Refrain from sharing confidential / privileged information, discussing incidents, operational or employment matters or making critical / negative comments about the School / pupils / parents or colleagues on such forums
- Not browse, create, transmit, display, publish, comment on or forward any material / images which is illegal, could offend or harass or anything which could bring an Employee's professional role or the School / Local Authority into disrepute. For example, 'hate speech' - expressing unacceptable views related to protected characteristics such, as race, sex, disability, age or gender reassignment would be unacceptable.
- Never share / post images of pupils
- Not post images of work colleagues without permission.
- Not access or update social media sites using school devices / during working time.

Employees should not make contact with student / pupils or parents via social media accounts or have these individuals as social media 'friends' / 'contacts'. It is also recommended that Employees do not have ex- pupils or their families as social media 'friends'/'contacts'.

Employees at schools can often have more complex relationships than just being a member of staff. As examples, staff can also be parents (of pupils at the school), in relationships or have friendships with other staff or parents, or also governors. Staff are advised to report any pre-existing social media relationships to the Headteacher for their own protection.

Employees should seek guidance from their Headteacher / Line Manager if they are unclear about the conduct or actions expected of them.

28 Use of Personal Mobile Phones / Devices

Employees are not permitted to make / receive personal calls / texts, send / receive emails or access internet / social media during work time where children are present.

Employees should ensure that mobile devices are silent at all times whilst in the classroom or where children are present. Mobile devices should not be left on display. In the classroom, all phones should be put away either in the staff member's bag or teaching desk.

Employees should not use their personal equipment (mobile phones / cameras / tablets) to take photos or make recordings of pupils / students *unless given explicit instruction to do so by the headteacher or chair of governors in respect of the headteacher*.

Employees *should not show photographs or any other personal information stored* on *their mobile phones to pupils/students such as emails, texts, videos or social media profiles.*

29 Monitoring of Usage

Emails, documents or browsing history on School systems should not be considered to be private and may be monitored and recorded to ensure the safety of pupils / students and ensure compliance with this policy. This monitoring will be proportionate and will take place in accordance with data protection / privacy legislation.

The School may address concerns regarding unauthorised, unacceptable or inappropriate use of ICT systems / devices or social media as a disciplinary matter.

Part E: Business Conduct

30 Use of Financial Resources

The School requires Employees to observe the highest standards of business / financial practice.

Employees should ensure that School / public funds with which they are entrusted are used in a responsible and lawful manner.

Employees must comply with the School's stipulated financial regulations and any other relevant policies / audit requirements.

Appropriate authorisation should be sought for any expenditure and audit trail / suitable records kept.

School monies, credit / debit cards and accounts should not be used for personal purposes.

The use of personal credit cards / accounts to purchase goods and services on behalf of the School should be avoided unless prior agreement from the Headteacher is obtained (or from the Chair of Governors in the case of the Headteacher).

All expense claims for travel and subsistence should be appropriately authorised and accompanied by receipts / proof of purchase.

Personal loyalty cards should not be used when making purchases on behalf of the School.

31 Personal Use of Equipment and Resources

Employees may not make personal use of the School's property, materials or facilities unless authorised to do so by the Headteacher.

32 Declaration of Interests

The School recognises that Employees may wish to take an active role in the local community and undertake additional personal / business activities outside of work.

In the majority of instances such activities will have no impact on their role in School. However, on occasion there may be a potential conflict of interest.

Employees should therefore declare annually to the Headteacher any financial or non financial interests which may conflict with those of the School. Employees should also declare membership of any professional bodies / organisations which may conflict with their School role.

Should Employees be in doubt about whether a conflict of interest may exist they should seek guidance from the Headteacher (or Chair of Governors in the case of the Headteacher).

33 Contracting out of Services

Employees should follow agreed School protocols for the award of contracts to external providers.

Employees should adhere to School rules regarding the separation of roles in procurement / tendering process.

In particular care should be taken to ensure competition between prospective contractors is fair and open and that all competing parties are treated equally.

Employees should ensure that preferential treatment is not shown to current / former Employees or partners, close relatives or friends / associates in the award of contracts.

Employees must not accept any form of financial or other inducement which may be offered by a potential contractor. All such approaches should be reported to the Headteacher (or chair of governors in the case of the Headteacher).

Confidential information relating to the tendering process, must not be disclosed to any unauthorised party or organisation.

34 Gifts and Hospitality

Employees should not accept significant gifts from parents / carers, pupils / students, actual or potential contractors or outside suppliers which could compromise the individual or the School.

Employees should notify the Headteacher should they receive any unsolicited gifts and return the item with a polite refusal letter to the sender. A record should be kept of all gifts which are received.

Small tokens of appreciation which have no substantial financial value such as presents from pupils / students at the end of term may be accepted and do not have to be declared.

Employees may only accept an offer of hospitality if there is a genuine need to do so in order to represent the School in the community. Employees should discuss any invitations with the Headteacher (or Chair of Governors in the case of the Headteacher).

Where the School receives sponsorship of a School activity / event, care should be taken to ensure that this does not infer that the sponsor will receive preferential treatment in any future contracting / tendering process. An Employee or their partner, family member or friend may not benefit from the sponsorship.

35 Personal Relationships at Work

Employees must not allow a personal relationship with a colleague, parent, pupil Governor or member of the wider school community to influence their conduct at work or have a detrimental impact on the operation of the school.

A personal relationship may be defined as:

- A family relationship
- A romantic / sexual relationship
- A close personal friendship outside of work
- A business, commercial or financial relationship

Employees who are in a personal relationship should behave in an appropriate and professional manner. A personal relationship must not:

- advantage or disadvantage the parties in the relationship
- give rise to an actual or perceived conflict of interest
- impact adversely on other members of the school community
- lead to a breach in confidentiality
- breach standards of professional behaviour or conduct in the workplace

Personal relationships should be declared to the Headteacher*

The Headteacher may consider proportionate action to manage any detrimental consequences and / or conflict of interests arising from workplace relationships -this may include a change in duties

or line management arrangements. Any such action will be taken through discussion and, wherever possible, with the agreement of the parties involved.

Relationships with pupils / parents

Employees are expected to disclose to the Headteacher* where a personal relationship exists or develops with a parent of a pupil or where there is a pre-existing family connection or friendship with a pupil and / or their family. There will be no requirement to give a detail account of the involvement.

Where an individual is employed in a school in which their child / family member is a pupil, they should ensure that appropriate professional boundaries are maintained. In these circumstances Employees should follow the same rules expected of other parents including raising any concerns using the appropriate parental procedures. Employees who are parents should also exercise appropriate professionalism with regards to access to confidential pupil / student information.

Relationships between colleagues
Employees are expected to disclose to the Headteacher* any close personal relationship with a colleague. There will not be a requirement to give a detailed account of the involvement.

Where a personal relationship exists or develops between members of staff where one party is in a supervisory relationship they must not be involved in the recruitment, appraisal, promotion, pay determination, authorisation of expenses / overtime, provision of an employment reference on behalf of the School or any other management decision involving the other party.

Failure to disclose a personal relationship or a breach in the expected standards of conduct arising from a personal relationship may be addressed as a disciplinary matter.

*In the case of the Headteacher any disclosures should be made to the Chair of Governors.

36 Political Activity

Employees must not allow their own personal, political, religious or other views and opinions to interfere with their work. They are expected to be neutral in their views in the course of their work at the school and to present a balanced view when working with pupils.

Employees may engage in political activity outside of work – however they should not allow personal / political views to interfere with their duties. Any activity should be compatible with the Employee's responsibility as a role model to pupils / students.

Where an Employee is involved in political activity outside of work – care must 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.

37 Intellectual Property

Any intellectual property created by an Employee during the course of their employment and for the purposes of their employment will be considered the property of the school unless specific permission is granted to the Employee to have ownership of such materials.

Appendix 2: List of Relevant Policies

- Bullying and Harassment Policy
- Capability Policy
- Discipline and Conduct Policy
- Grievance Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Acceptable Use Policy and Online Safety

Appendix 3: Teachers' Standards – Part 2

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teachers-standards;

Appendix 4: Keeping Children Safe in Education – Part 1

Keeping children safe in education 2025: part one information for all school and college staff

Appendix 5: Guidance for Safer Working Practice

KELSI Guidance for Safer Working Practices

Appendix 6: Policy for the Management of Low Level Safeguarding Concerns

Part A: Policy

1 Policy Statement

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is the responsibility of all Employees.

The School Code of Conduct sets out the expected standards of behaviour and conduct of all Employees and adults working in and on behalf of the School, including expectations with regards to the safeguarding of children.

The School recognises the importance of reporting, addressing and recording, where appropriate, all safeguarding concerns, regardless of their apparent level of severity.

The School seeks to create an open and transparent working environment in which individuals are able to share any safeguarding concerns about their own behaviour or the behaviour of another member of the School Community – no matter how small they may appear to be. In doing so the School endeavours to embed a culture where the school's values and expected standards of conduct are reinforced by the entire school community.

This policy also provides a framework through which sensitive, timely and appropriate action can be taken to identify and address any potential inappropriate behaviour or patterns of behaviour and individuals can be supported to correct their conduct at an early stage.

This policy and procedure covers the management of 'low level concerns' and explains:

- What constitutes a 'low level' concern
- How staff should report a concern
- How the school will manage and respond to concerns
- How concerns will be reported and recorded.

2 Scope

This policy and procedure applies to all employees and all adults working in and on behalf of the school (including supply and agency staff, volunteers, Governors and contractors)

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- the School Code of Conduct, Guidance for Safer Working Practice (for Schools outside of Kent please refer to the relevant LA guidance as appropriate)
- the Procedure for Managing Safeguarding Allegations against Children,
- Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) – Safeguarding Information for all Staff
- Part 4 Section 2 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCISE) – Concerns that do not meet the harm threshold.
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023

3 Definition

The term 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant. A low-level concern is defined in KCSIE as 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 the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work which has the potential to impact on their suitability to work with children considering their job role and
- does not meet the harm threshold as defined in KCSIE or is otherwise not serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

KCSIE 2025 highlights the importance of recording all low-level concerns, even where they seem minor or are quickly resolved, to ensure transparency and to help identify any emerging patterns of behaviour.

Low level concerns should be distinguished from concerns or allegations which may meet the harm threshold as defined in KCSIE, where an individual may have:

- 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 the individual 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

Examples of behaviour which may give rise to a low level concern may includes, but is not limited to:

- being over friendly with pupils / students
- having favourites
- taking photographs of pupil / students contrary to school policy
- not observing appropriate boundaries with regards to physical contact with pupils / students
- not observing appropriate professional boundaries with regards to sharing personal information with pupils / students
- engaging with a pupil / student on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door
- humiliating or belittling children
- using inappropriate language towards pupils / students or in their presence.

It is important to note that not all instances of behaviour of this kind will automatically constitute a 'low level concern' and there may be occasions where conduct does meet the 'harm threshold'. Its is for the Headteacher to determine the appropriate action with regards to the context in which the conduct occurred and the severity of the concern.

A low level concern may also relate to an individual's conduct or behaviour outside of the workplace or relationship with others where this gives rise to concerns about their suitability to work with children or in a school setting.

Such behaviour may exist on a wide spectrum from the inadvertent or thoughtless actions to intentional or deliberate acts where the Employee is knowingly in breach of expected standards of behaviour or school policies.

Concerns may arise through direct observation of behaviour by the person reporting it or by complaint or disclosure made by a parent, child, or other adult within or outside of the School. Concerns may also be raised by other agencies or professionals external to the School.

It is important to note that it is not for the individual raising the concern to identify whether the behaviour is 'low level' – however they do have a responsibility to share concerns as part of a School culture which promotes the safeguarding of children.

4 Roles and Responsibilities

Reference to the role of the Headteacher in this policy may include his / her nominee –including the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

However, it should be noted that the Headteacher retains overall responsibility for the appropriate identification and management of low level concerns.

Where a concern is raised regarding the conduct of the Headteacher, the Chair of Governors has responsibility for ensuring any appropriate actions are taken.

Part B: Procedure

5 Reporting a concern

Reports of concerning behaviour should be made as soon as it arises in writing using the form in this Appendix . It should be submitted to the co-headteachers. If the concern is about one of the headteachers, it should be submitted to the Chair of Governors.

Concerns should be reported as soon as they arise

The DSL should inform the Headteacher in a timely fashion.

Concerns relating to the Headteacher, should be reported to the Chair of Governors

An Employee is advised to self report where, for example, they may have found themselves in a compromising situation which has the potential to be misinterpreted or appear compromising to others and / or where they themselves believe they have acted in a manner which falls below the expected standards of conduct

The name of the person raising the concern should be provided. Where an individual wishes to remain anonymous this will be respected as far as is reasonably practical.

Should a concern relate to an agency worker / contractor the Headteacher will report this to their employer who will be responsible for identifying any inappropriate patterns of behaviour and taking any necessary action.

6 Evaluating a concern

Employees are advised that the details of "low level concerns" may be shared with the LADO enquiry service to support the School in its decision making regarding any actions which may be appropriate. This permits concerns to be evaluated objectively and to ascertain whether concerns of a similar nature may have already been reported to other Schools or the Local Authority.

Guidance may also be sought from the Designated Safeguarding Lead – however it is important to note that the Headteacher is ultimately responsible for decisions and actions relating to the management of low-level concerns.

The Headteacher will gather as much information as possible relating to the concern by:

- speaking directly to the person who raised the concern
- speaking to any potential witnesses
- speaking to the individual about whom the low-level concern has been raised.

As far as possible, enquiries will be made discreetly and sensitively – with consideration being given to the support required by all parties involved. The individual about whom the concern has been raised will have full opportunity to explain their actions and any mitigation.

The information gathered will be objectively assessed by the Headteacher in order to establish whether:

- The behaviour is appropriate and consistent with the Staff Code of Conduct and any professional / legal requirements
- The behaviour constitutes a low-level concern as described in this policy
- The behaviour in and of itself may meet the harm threshold and should be referred to the LADO and / or other agencies
- When considered with any previous low-level concerns relating to the same individual, a pattern of behaviour is identified which may meet the harm threshold and should be referred to the LADO and / or other agencies.

7 Acting on a concern

The actions taken will be determined by the assessment which has been made of the concern.

Where behaviour is determined not to constitute a breach in the Staff Code of Conduct, expected standards of behaviour and any professional / legal requirements the Headteacher will:

- Provide feedback to the individual about whom the concern has been raised as to the outcome of their enquiries – this may include providing the individual with guidance to prevent a repetition of concerns or perceived concerns
- Consider any training which may be relevant to individuals / whole staff group or any review of policies / practices which may be appropriate

Where behaviour is determined to constitute a 'low level concern' the Headteacher will:

- Provide feedback to the individual about whom the concern has been raised and the outcome of their enquiries – explaining why their behaviour has been identified as a low-level concern and the future standards of behaviour required
- Discuss what support, training, guidance the individual may require to achieve and maintain the expected standards
- Explain any monitoring or review arrangements which may be relevant – including an action plan or risk assessment where appropriate
- Explain the potential consequences should there be future repetition of the behaviour or similar behaviours or a similar pattern of behaviour
- Consider any training which may be relevant to individuals / whole staff group or any review of policies / practices which may be appropriate

Some low-level concerns may raise issues of potential performance capability or disciplinary misconduct. Should this be the case the Headteacher will consider whether it is appropriate for these to be managed via the performance capability or discipline and conduct policies and procedures. Guidance may be sought from the School's HR Consultant as appropriate.

- Where a concern is assessed that it may meet the 'harm threshold'

The School will seek guidance from the LADO and follow their policy for Managing Safeguarding Allegations against staff.

8 Record keeping

The Headteacher will keep appropriate written records of all concerns including:

- The details of the concern, including the context in which it arose
- All internal enquiries relating to the concern raised
- All external exchanges with the LADO and other agencies regarding the concern
- Their assessment as to how the concern should be categorised – including the rationale for their decision
- Any follow up action taken and / or guidance issued to the employee

Where multiple low-level concerns are raised about the same individual over a period of time – these will be recorded chronologically in order to capture the pattern of behaviour.

Records must be objective, proportionate and regularly reviewed by the Headteacher to ensure any recurring themes or cultural issues are identified in line with KCSIE 2025

These records will be held confidentially and securely in central low level concerns management file which is separate to other staffing records.

Only the Headteacher and other designated senior staff (school may choose to specify the postholders) may have access to these records.

Records of low-level concerns that have been raised will be retained on file until the Employee leaves employment and for 6 years after this date.

9 Employment References

The School will include details of substantiated safeguarding concerns which meet the harm threshold within any employment reference.

Low level concerns will not be included within an employment reference unless they relate to issues which would normally be included within a reference such as misconduct or poor performance

However patterns of inappropriate behaviour which may initially be managed as a low-level concern but which, due to their repeated occurrence, are subsequently deemed to meet the harm threshold and are found to be substantiated may be included in an employment reference.

10 Monitoring

The Headteacher will review the central low level concerns file to consider whether there are patterns of concerns being raised which might indicate a wider cultural issue with the safeguarding of children in the School – this may help to inform the revision of School policies / procedures or any whole school staff training which may be needed.

Anonymised data may also be shared with the Governing Body for the purpose of ensuring School has appropriate and effective measures in place to manage low level concerns.

11 Confidentiality and Data Protection

All parties are required to respect the confidentiality of all information relating to 'low level concerns'.

The School recognises its obligations under the General Data Protection Regulation and associated legislation and the rights of Employees with regards to the personal data held on them.

All records relating to the management of low level concerns will be gathered, processed, held and shared in accordance with the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulations and Data Protection Act.

All records and information are a matter of confidence between the School, the Employee and relevant advisors including the LADO service and HR provider.

Low Level Concern Form

This form can be used to share any concern with the Headteacher or Chair of Governor if the concern is regarding the Headteacher, no matter how small or seemingly insignificant, even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' – that an adult may have acted in a way that is inconsistent with the Schools' Code of Conduct [including inappropriate conduct outside of work] and/or in a way that on first glance does not appear to meet the allegation, 'harm' threshold.

A concise record is required, including brief context in which the low level concern arose, plus details which are chronological, precise and as accurate as possible, of any such concern and /or relevant incident[s]. [Continue on separate sheets as necessary]. The form should be signed, times and dated.

Details of CONCERN :

Name of Staff member :	**Department and Role :**
Signed :	**Time and Date :**
Received by :	
At [time] :	**Date :**

WAS THE STAFF MEMBER SPOKEN TO? [Good practice will require a response].
NO ☐ - Give a brief but valid reason/explanation for not;
YES ☐ - Please complete detail below - STAFF MEMBER'S RESPONSE TO CONCERN :

ACTION TAKEN :

Was advice/guidance sought from the LADO and or Human Resources? Yes : ☐ No : ☐

Signed	**Dated :**

This record form will be held securely, either digitally or in paper form, in one central file in accordance with the School's Code of Conduct and any associated guidance regarding the management of concerns and or allegations and in accordance with School's Data Management practices/policies.

Low Level Concern reporting will be treated as confidential as far as possible, however in certain circumstances it may be necessary to share and or disclose the information with third parties for relevant and necessary reasons. This includes where a reporter has indicated they wish to remain anonymous.