



Staff code of conduct

Last reviewed on: September 2026

Next review due by: September 2027

1. Aims, scope and principles

This policy aims to set and maintain standards of conduct that we expect staff, trainee teachers, supply teachers, volunteers, students, contractors and governors to follow. By creating this policy, we aim to ensure our school and nursery is an environment where everyone is safe and treated with respect. Many of the principles in this code of conduct are based on the **Teachers' Standards**.

Staff, trainee teachers, supply teachers, volunteers, students, contractors and governors have an influential position in the school and will act as role models for children 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 staff, trainee teachers, volunteers, students, contractors and governors to also act with personal and professional integrity, respecting the safety and wellbeing of others. Failure to follow the code of conduct may result in disciplinary action being taken, as set out in our staff disciplinary procedures.

Please note that this code of conduct is not exhaustive. If situations arise that are not covered by this code, staff will use their professional judgement and act in the best interests of the school and its pupils.

2. Legislation and guidance

We are required to establish procedures for the regulation of staff conduct under regulation 7 of **The School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009**.

In line with the statutory safeguarding guidance **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), September 2026**, we should have a staff code of conduct, which should cover acceptable use of technologies (including the use of mobile devices), staff/pupil relationships and communications, including the use of social media.

3. General obligations

Staff, trainee teachers, supply teachers, volunteers, students, contractors and governors set an example to children. 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

4. Safeguarding

Staff, trainee teachers, supply teachers, volunteers, students, contractors and governors have a duty to safeguard children from harm, and to report any concerns they have. This includes physical, emotional and sexual abuse, and neglect.

During induction staff, trainee teachers, supply teachers, volunteers, students, contractors and governors are familiarised by a designated safeguarding lead with our child protection and associated safeguarding policies and procedures, and the Prevent initiative, and ensure they are aware of the processes to follow if they have concerns about a child.

Any concerns about the conduct of any adult in the school should be shared immediately with the headteacher (or in their absence the deputy head). Any concerns about the headteacher should go to

the Chair of Governors who can be contacted by obtaining their contact information from the school office.

Where it is believed there is a conflict of interest in reporting a concern or allegation about a member of staff (including a supply teacher, trainee teacher, volunteer, visitor or contractor) to the headteacher, a report should be made directly to the local authority designated officer (LADO).

4.1 Allegations that may meet the harm threshold

Allegations that may meet the harm threshold' in part 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026, applies to all cases in which it is alleged that a current member of staff, including a supply teacher, trainee teacher, volunteer, visitor 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 both inside and outside of school

If the school is in any doubt as to whether a concern meets the harm threshold, we will consult our local authority designated officer (LADO). The LADO's role is not to investigate the allegation, but to ensure that an appropriate investigation is carried out, whether that is by the police, children's social care, the school or a combination of these.

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. The case manager will be identified at the earliest opportunity. They will then follow procedures for dealing with the allegation/s.

After the investigation, an outcome will be determined and if required, specific actions taken. Further information regarding record-keeping and references can be found in the schools Child protection and safeguarding policy.

4.2: Concerns that do not meet the harm threshold

Concerns regarding staff, trainee teachers, supply teachers, volunteers, visitors and contractors that do not meet the harm threshold' in part 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education, could arise through:

- Suspicion
- Complaint
- Safeguarding concern or allegation from another member of staff
- Disclosure made by a child, parent or other adult within or outside the school
- Pre-employment vetting checks

We recognise the importance of responding to and dealing with any concerns in a timely manner to safeguard the welfare of children.

Definition of low-level concerns

The term 'low-level' concern is any concern – no matter how small – 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, and

- Does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the designated officer at the local authority

Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:

- Being overly friendly with children
- Having favourites
- Taking photographs of children on their mobile phone
- Engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door
- Humiliating pupils

Sharing low-level concerns

We recognise the importance of creating a culture of openness, trust and transparency to encourage all staff to confidentially share low-level concerns so that they can be addressed appropriately.

We will create this culture by:

- Ensuring staff are clear about what appropriate behaviour is, and are confident in distinguishing expected and appropriate behaviour from concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour, in themselves and others
- Empowering staff to share any low-level concerns
- Empowering staff to self-refer
- Addressing unprofessional behaviour and supporting the individual to correct it at an early stage
- Providing a responsive, sensitive and proportionate handling of such concerns when they are raised
- Helping to identify any weakness in the school's safeguarding system

All low-level concerns will be recorded in writing and submitted to the headteacher (or in their absence the deputy head). A low-level concern form is available in the staffroom on the 'safeguarding board' and it requires the following information:

- Name* of individual sharing their concerns
- Details of the concern
- Context in which the concern arose
- Action taken

(* if the individual wishes to remain anonymous then that should be respected as far as reasonably possible)

If the concern is raised via a third party, the headteacher will collect evidence where necessary by speaking:

- Directly to the person who raised the concern, unless it has been raised anonymously
- To the individual involved and any witnesses
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The headteacher will use the information collected to categorise the type of behaviour and determine any further action, in line with the school's staff code of conduct. The headteacher will be the ultimate decision-maker in respect of all low-level concerns, though they may wish to collaborate with the DSL.

Further information regarding record-keeping and references can be found in the schools Child protection and safeguarding policy.

5. Staff-pupil relationships

Staff, trainee teachers, supply teachers, volunteers, students, contractors and governors will observe proper boundaries with children 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, trainee teachers, supply teachers, volunteers or students and children must spend time on a one-to-one basis, they 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

While we are aware many children and their parents may wish to give gifts to staff (for example, at the end of the school year) personal gifts from staff, trainee teachers, supply teachers, volunteers, students, contractors and governors to individual children are not acceptable (this is not the same as class/individual rewards - see the school's Attitude and behaviour policy).

If a member of staff, trainee teachers, supply teachers, volunteers, students, contractors or governors is concerned at any point that an interaction between themselves and a child may be misinterpreted, or is concerned at any point about a fellow member of staff, trainee teacher, supply teacher, volunteer, student, contractor or governor and a child, this should be reported in line with the procedures set out in our child protection and safeguarding policy.

6. Communication and social media

Staff, trainee teachers, supply teachers, volunteers, students, contractors and governors should avoid personal contact with children outside of school hours if possible. Personal contact details should not be exchanged. Social media profiles should not be available to children. If staff have a personal profile on social media sites, they should not use their full name, as children may be able to find them. They should consider using a first and middle name instead and set public profiles to private.

Staff, trainee teachers, supply teachers, volunteers, students, contractors or governors should not attempt to contact children or their parents via social media, or any other means outside school, to develop any sort of relationship. They will not make any efforts to find children's or parents' social media profiles. They will ensure that they do not post any images online that identify children who are pupils at the school without their consent.

Staff, trainee teachers, supply teachers, volunteers, students, contractors or governors should be aware of the school's Online safety policy (this can be found on the school's website under statutory information and the 'Policies and procedures' section).

7. Acceptable use of technology (including mobile phones)

Staff, trainee teachers, supply teachers, volunteers, students, contractors or governors will not use technology in 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, trainee teachers, supply teachers, volunteers, students, contractors or governors will not use personal mobile phones and laptops, or school equipment for personal use, during lessons or in front of children. They will also not use personal mobile phones or cameras to take pictures of children. Smart glasses will not be worn on the premises by staff, trainee teachers, supply teachers, volunteers, students, contractors or governors.

We have the right to monitor emails and internet use on the school IT system. For further details see Acceptable use of technologies (including mobile phones) policy (this can be found on the school's website under statutory information and the 'Policies and procedures' section).

8. Confidentiality

As part of their role, staff, trainee teachers, supply teachers, volunteers, students, contractors or governors are often privy to sensitive and confidential information about the school, staff, children and their parents. This information should never be:

- Disclosed to anyone unless required by law or with consent from the relevant party or parties
- Used to humiliate, embarrass or blackmail others
- Used for a purpose other than what it was collected and intended for

This does not overrule staff, trainee teachers, supply teachers, volunteers, students, contractors or governor'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.

9. Honesty and integrity

Staff, trainee teachers, supply teachers, volunteers, students, contractors or governors should maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their role. This includes when dealing with children, handling money, claiming expenses and using school property and facilities.

Staff, trainee teachers, supply teachers, volunteers, students, contractors or governors will not accept bribes. Gifts that are received outside of Christmas and the end of academic year must be declared and recorded on the gifts and hospitality register. Staff, supply teachers, volunteers, students, contractors or governors should report this to the School Business Manager.

Staff, trainee teachers, supply teachers, volunteers, students, contractors or governors 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

Staff, trainee teachers, supply teachers, volunteers, students or governors will inform the school as such as soon as reasonably-possible, if there are any updates or changes in circumstances to the information they have provided to the school. Consideration will then be given to the nature and circumstances of the matter and whether this may have an impact on the on a member of staff or trainee teachers of supply teachers' employment. It may have an impact on the role of a volunteer, student, contractors or governor role within the school.

10. Behaviour Management

At Cedars Primary School and Nursery we strive to create a safe, secure and supportive environment for all our pupils and staff. All children have a right to be treated with respect and dignity. Staff must not use any form of degrading treatment to punish a child. The use of sarcasm, demeaning or insensitive comments towards child is not acceptable in any situation. Deliberately intimidating pupils by shouting aggressively, hectoring or overbearing physical presence is not acceptable in any situation. All staff must follow the school's Attitude and behaviour policy.

10.1 A restorative approach

As a school, we promote a restorative approach when dealing with incidents between pupils. This process is respectful, fair and non-judgemental and helps to:

- Create a happier learning environment
- Make pupils feel respected and listened to
- Address problems and put things right

- Encourage reflection by helping pupils consider how their behaviour affects others
- Promote our shared values of respect, responsibility and honesty

The types of restorative questions that can be asked are:

- What happened?
- What were you thinking when it happened?
- What do you think now?
- Who has been affected and how?
- What needs to happen to put this right?
- What would you think if this happened to you?
- How can we put this right?
- What could you do differently next time?
- What other choice could you have made?
- How can you make sure this doesn't happen again?

10.2 Restrictive interventions

The school follows advice from the [Department for Education's guidance on restrictive interventions, including the use of reasonable force, in schools 2026](#).

There are times when the use of restrictive interventions, including reasonable force and seclusion, is lawful and necessary to keep people safe. However, we understand that the use of restrictive interventions can have a significant impact on pupils, staff and parents/carers. In our school, they are only ever considered as a last resort, once all other prevention and de-escalation strategies have been exhausted.

10.3 Dec-escalation strategies

- Have a calm facial expression and warm, open body language
- Use a warm, calm tone of voice when speaking to the pupil
- Calmly remind the pupil of the consequences of their behaviour (use our agreed language)
- Focus on positive behaviour rather than what the pupil is doing wrong – e.g. “listen and look this way”, instead of “stop doing that”
- Find a quiet space to talk to the pupil away from other pupils and distractions
- Avoid having too many members of staff present when trying to de-escalate a situation
- Make sure that pupils with a behaviour plan or specific behavioural needs have a trusted adult that they can speak to
- Where possible, respect pupils' personal space by not getting unnecessarily close
- Pre-empt potential triggers for key pupils, such as those with SEND, trauma or PTSD
- Give an instruction with ‘take-up time’ so the child can follow the instruction

10.4 Types of interventions

Restrictive interventions are used to prevent, restrict or subdue movement of the body or part of the body. This policy uses ‘restrictive interventions’ as the umbrella term to describe both physical and non-physical actions aimed to restrain pupils in different ways.

Examples of restrictive interventions could include:

- Supervised seclusion of a pupil in an area away from others, where the pupil is prevented from leaving for their own safety and/or the safety of others
- Passive physical contact, such as a staff member blocking a pupil's path if they're running towards danger (like a busy road), or staff standing between pupils to prevent a fight

Reasonable force refers to the broad range of actions used by staff that involve a degree of physical contact to restrain children, using no more force than is needed for the least amount of time, the application of which will depend on the circumstances.

Examples of the use of reasonable force could include:

- A staff member guiding a pupil to safety by the arm
- Staff breaking up a fight between pupils
- A staff member restraining a pupil to prevent injury to the pupil, or others

All our school staff have a legal power to use reasonable force in certain situations. Staff can use reasonable force to prevent or stop a pupil from:

- Hurting themselves or others
- Committing a criminal offence
- Damaging property
- Causing disorder among pupils, in or out of lessons

It is illegal to use force on a pupil for the purpose of punishment. We never use force as a sanction, threat or deterrent.

Any form of force or restraint carries a risk of physical and psychological harm, so staff must always avoid using these measures where possible.

The following uses of force are **never acceptable**:

- Staff using force for the purpose of punishment
- Staff restraining a pupil in a way that affects their airway, breathing or circulation, for example by covering their nose and/or mouth or applying pressure to their neck or abdomen
- Staff using force on the ground. If a pupil is unintentionally held on the ground, staff should release their hold or move into a safer position as quickly as possible

Restraint is a form of non-disciplinary intervention which immobilises a pupil or limits their movement. This may or may not include direct physical contact.

Seclusion is a non-disciplinary intervention that keeps a pupil confined to a place away from others and prevents them from leaving, for the safety of that pupil and/or others. This could be through physical obstruction or by making the pupil believe that they will be punished if they leave. For example, putting a pupil into a 'holding' room until they calm down is a form of seclusion.

A **significant incident** is any incident where the use of force goes beyond appropriate physical contact between a member of staff and a pupil. This includes when physical force is used to implement a non-physical restrictive intervention.

Our school does not have a 'no contact' policy. We do not grant any requests by parents/carers or staff members not to use reasonable force and/or other restrictive interventions.

All members of staff are responsible for:

- Making sure they have read and understood the principles of the Use of restrictive interventions policy (including reasonable force and seclusion)
- Using de-escalation techniques and positive behaviour management strategies to try to minimise and prevent the need for restrictive interventions
- Accurately recording every seclusion incident, restraint incident and significant incident involving force that they are involved in
- Reporting these incidents to the headteacher (or in their absence the deputy head)

- Recording any injuries that occur as part of an incident involving restrictive intervention, and following our health and safety policy to ensure these are reported to the Health and Safety Executive where necessary
- Taking part in training on preventative strategies and the safe and lawful use of restrictive interventions, if relevant to their role (this may include additional training appropriate to their responsibilities)
- Engaging in follow-up conversation(s) to debrief and reflect on incidents involving restrictive intervention that they were involved in, to help us understand what happened and why

The decision on whether to use restrictive interventions is down to the professional judgment of the staff member and will always depend on the individual circumstances of each situation.

Staff should always consider whether there are other ways to manage the situation, such as the de-escalation techniques and/or seeking assistance from a colleague. However, there may be times when staff have no other choice but to use restrictive interventions, to reduce the risk of harm to the pupil and/or others.

When assessing whether a restrictive intervention is required, staff should always consider:

- **Is it necessary?**
 - Are there other more effective, less restrictive ways to manage the situation?
 - Is a restrictive intervention likely to successfully reduce the risks, or could its use escalate the situation further or cause more harm than the behaviour itself?
- **Is it proportionate?**
 - Staff should use the **least** amount of force or the **least** restrictive intervention for the **least** amount of time required to reduce the risks
 - If the intervention itself is escalating the situation, staff should reconsider their approach and attempt an alternative strategy
 - Staff should consider the individual circumstances of the pupil, such as their age, size and any medical conditions, SEND or other vulnerabilities

10.5 Recording an intervention

Our school has a clear process in place for recording restrictive interventions incidents. Staff must record incidents in writing, as soon as possible after the event, and should endeavour to do this on the same day. Staff should do this even if the use of restrictive interventions is agreed as part of a pupil's behaviour support plan. They must complete a paper version of a 'Significant incident involving force record'. This form must be submitted to the headteacher (or in their absence the deputy head), who will investigate the matter e.g. gather witness statements etc. Parents/carers will receive a phone call and a letter explain the significant incident. The form will then be recorded on our Child Protection Online Management System (CPOMs).

11. Physical Contact and Personal Privacy

There are circumstances when it is appropriate for staff to have some physical contact with pupils which does not give rise to any question over the use of reasonable force or other restrictive interventions.

Examples include:

- Providing first aid to a pupil
- Guiding or escorting a pupil through the school building or on a school trip by holding their hand

- Comforting a pupil who is upset
- Offering congratulations or praise, such as with a pat on the back or handshake
- To demonstrate how to use a musical instrument
- When demonstrating exercises or techniques during PE lessons or sports coaching

In assessing whether physical contact is appropriate in any given situation, staff should use their professional judgement, and have regard to:

- The school's child protection and safeguarding policy and staff code of conduct policy
- The specific circumstances, such as whether there are other adults present
- Factors including, but not limited to:
 - The pupil's age
 - Any known vulnerabilities, including whether the pupil has special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND)
 - Whether any alternative strategies that don't involve physical contact can be used

Physical contact should never be secretive or casual, or for the gratification of the adult, or represent a misuse of authority. Physical contact should be for the minimum time necessary to complete the activity and take place in an open environment. Staff should remain sensitive to any discomfort expressed verbally or non-verbally by the child. If a member of staff, trainee teacher, supply teacher, volunteer or student believes that an action could be misinterpreted, the incident and circumstances should be reported according to the school's Child protection and safeguarding policy.

Physical contact, which occurs regularly with a child, is likely to raise questions unless the justification for this is part of a formally agreed plan (for example in relation to pupils with SEN or physical disabilities). Where feasible, staff should seek the child's permission before initiating contact. Staff should listen, observe and take note of the child's reaction or feelings and – so far as is possible - use a level of contact which is acceptable to the child for the minimum time necessary.

There may be occasions when a distressed child needs comfort and reassurance. This may include emotionally/age-appropriate physical contact. Staff, supply teachers, volunteers or students should always remain self-aware in order that their contact is not threatening, intrusive or subject to misinterpretation.

Where a member of staff, trainee teacher, supply teacher, volunteer, student or governor has a particular concern about the need to provide this type of care and reassurance s/he should seek further advice from the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Children are entitled to respect and privacy when changing clothes. However, there needs to be an appropriate level of supervision to safeguard child, satisfy health and safety considerations and ensure that bullying or teasing does not occur. This supervision should be appropriate to the needs and age of the children concerned and sensitive to the potential for embarrassment.

Staff who work with children who require intimate care duties will have appropriate training and follow procedures as set out in the Intimate care policy.

12. Dress code

Staff will dress in a professional, appropriate manner.

Outfits will not be overly revealing, and we ask that tattoos are covered up.

Clothes will not display any offensive or political slogans.

It is expected that staff working in the school building meet the following expectations:

- smart and practical clothing
- for male staff – collared shirts, trousers, smart shorts or suitable shoes
- for female staff – suits, trousers, dresses, or skirts (minimum length at the knee or just above) and suitable shoes
- For Physical Education lessons only, staff should wear suitable PE kit
- For trips and visits – phase teams should decide on appropriate clothing and whether children should wear school uniform
- For inset days 'smart-casual' wear is permitted
- Lunchtime supervisors should meet the above expectations including wearing the Cedars' t-shirt or jacket

Some clothing is not suitable:

- denim, combat trousers or leggings
- crop tops
- visible underwear
- trainers (unless teaching PE) and flip flops

13. Educational Visits and School Clubs

Staff, trainee teachers, supply teachers, volunteers, students or governors should take particular care when supervising children in the less formal atmosphere of an educational visit, particularly in a residential setting, or after-school activity. Staff, trainee teachers, supply teachers, volunteers, students or governors remain in a position of trust and the same standards of conduct apply.

All paperwork and risk assessments must be completed by staff and signed off by the school's educational visits leaders, headteacher and governor before the trip or visit commences.

14. Transporting Children

In an emergency (where a child would place them at risk if transport was not provided), staff may provide transport. This must be agreed in advance by the headteacher (or in their absence the deputy head). The headteacher/deputy will make a record of it. Staff should ensure that their behaviour is safe (e.g. where possible at least one adult additional to the driver acting as an escort, booster seats are used, seat belts are fastened). They must ensure that the vehicle is roadworthy and appropriately insured and that the maximum capacity is not exceeded. For this purpose only, staff are insured through school insurance.

In an exceptional circumstance where a parent/carer is unable to transport their child to and from school or to provide transport for a child to an outside of school event (e.g. music festival, sports tournament), with permission from the headteacher (or in their absence the deputy head), a member of staff (with an additional adult present) may transport a child. The member of staff will require their own Business Insurance for this purpose.

15. Conduct outside of work

Staff, trainee teachers, supply teachers, volunteers, students, contractors or governors 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.

16. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually or revised as needed. It will be approved by the Full Governing Body. 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.