



# Cross Keys Learning

## Staff Code of Conduct

This is a core policy that forms part of the induction for all staff. It is a requirement that all members of staff have access to this policy and sign to say they have read and understood its contents.

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This policy will be reviewed at least annually and/or following any updates to national and local guidance and procedures

## Key Contacts

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## 1. Aims, scope, and principles

This policy aims to set and maintain standards of conduct that we expect all staff to follow.

By creating this policy, we aim to ensure our school is an environment where everyone is safe, happy, and treated with respect.

Many of the principles in this code of conduct are based on the [Teachers' Standards](#).

School staff have an influential position in the school and will act as role models for students by consistently demonstrating high standards of behaviour.

We expect that all teachers will act in accordance with the personal and professional behaviours set out in the Teachers' Standards.

We expect all support staff, proprietors, and volunteers 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 students.

## 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](#), we should have a staff code of conduct, which should cover low-level concerns, allegations against staff and whistleblowing, as well as acceptable use of technologies (including the use of mobile devices), staff/student relationships and communications, including the use of social media.

This policy also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

## 3. General obligations

Staff set an example to students. They will:

- Maintain high standards in their attendance and punctuality.
- Never use inappropriate or offensive language in school
- Treat students 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 students' 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 have a duty to safeguard students from harm, and to report any concerns they have. This includes physical, emotional, and sexual abuse, and neglect.

Staff will familiarise themselves with our child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures, and the Prevent initiative, and ensure they are aware of the processes to follow if they have concerns about a child.

Our child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures are available on SharePoint, as well as hard copies in the staff room, and in the policies section of our school website. New staff will also be emailed copies on arrival.

Staff should report and record any safeguarding concerns about students and staff (including low level concerns) immediately or before the end of the school day. KCSIE 2022 and Safeguarding policy sets out how staff should raise their concerns. Failure to do so is a breach of statutory guidance and school policies.

- **4.1 Allegations that may meet the harm threshold.**

This section is based on 'Section 1: Allegations that may meet the harm threshold' in part 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

This section applies to all cases in which it is alleged that anyone working in the school, including a supply teacher, volunteer, or contractor, has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child, and/or
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, and/or
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children, and/or
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children – this includes behaviour taking place inside or outside of school.

We will deal with any such allegation quickly and in a fair and consistent way that provides effective child protection while also supporting the individual who is the subject of the allegation.

A 'case manager' will lead any investigation. This will be the headteacher, or the chair of the governing body, where the headteacher is the subject of the allegation.

- **4.2 Low-level concerns about members of staff**

A low-level concern is a behaviour towards a child by a member of staff that does not meet the harm threshold, is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, and may be as simple as causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt'. For example, this may include:

- Being over-friendly with children
- Having favourites
- Taking photographs of children on a personal device
- Engaging in 1-to-1 activities where they can't easily be seen.
- Humiliating students
- Gift giving

This list is not exhaustive. Low-level concerns can include inappropriate conduct inside and outside of work.

All staff should share any low-level concerns they have using the reporting procedures set out in our child protection and safeguarding policy. We also encourage staff to self-refer if they find themselves in a situation that could be misinterpreted. If staff are not sure whether behaviour would be deemed a low-level concern, we encourage staff to report it.

All reports will be handled in a responsive, sensitive, and proportionate way.

Unprofessional behaviour will be addressed, and the staff member supported to correct it, at an early stage. This creates and embeds a culture of openness, trust, and transparency in which our values and expected behaviour are constantly lived, monitored, and reinforced by all staff, while minimising the risk of abuse.

Reporting and responding to low-level concerns are covered in more detail in our child protection and safeguarding policy and KCSIE 2023. This is available on SharePoint, as well as hard copies in the staff room, and in the policies section of our school website.

All procedures for dealing with allegations will be applied with common sense and judgement. Staff are required to follow these procedures whenever they have a concern.

### • **4.3 Whistleblowing**

Whistle-blowing reports wrongdoing that it is “in the public interest” to report. Examples linked to safeguarding include:

- Students’ or staff’s health and safety are being put in danger.
- Failure to comply with a legal obligation or statutory requirement.
- Attempts to cover up the above, or any other wrongdoing in the public interest.

Staff are encouraged to report suspected wrongdoing as soon as possible. Their concerns will be taken seriously and investigated, and their confidentiality will be respected.

Staff should consider the examples above when deciding whether their concern is of a whistle-blowing nature. Consider whether the incident(s) was illegal, breached statutory or school procedures, put people in danger or was an attempt to cover any such activity up.

Staff should report their concern to the headteacher/other senior member of staff. If the concern is about the headteacher/senior member of staff, or it is believed they may be involved in the wrongdoing in some way, the staff member should report their concern to the chair of the governing body.

Concerns should be made in writing wherever possible. They should include names of those committing wrongdoing, dates, places and as much evidence and context as possible. Staff raising a concern should also include details of any personal interest in the matter.

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

## **5. Staff-student relationships**

Staff will observe proper boundaries with students that are appropriate to their professional position. They will act in a fair and transparent way that would not lead anyone to reasonably assume they are not doing so.

If staff members and students must spend time on a one-to-one basis, staff will ensure that:

- This takes place in a public place that others can access.
- Others can see into the room.

- A colleague or line manager knows this is taking place.

Staff should not contact students unless agreed by a member of the senior leadership team. Where it is required that a student be contacted outside of school hours, this should be solely for the purposes of safeguarding and for educational purposes.

Personal contact details should not be exchanged between staff and students. This includes social media profiles.

While we are aware many students and their parents may wish to give gifts to staff, for example, at the end of the school year, gifts from staff to students are not acceptable.

If a staff member is concerned at any point that an interaction between themselves and a student may be misinterpreted, or if a staff member is concerned at any point about a fellow staff member and a student, this should be reported in line with the procedures set out in our child protection and safeguarding policy.

## **6. Communication and social media**

School staff's social media profiles should not be available to students. If they have a personal profile on social media sites, they should not use their full name, as students may be able to find them. Staff should consider using a first and middle name instead and set public profiles to private.

Staff should not attempt to contact students or their parents via social media, or any other means outside school, in order to develop any sort of relationship. They will not make any efforts to find students' or parents' social media profiles, or accept any requests from students, parents or carers.

Staff will ensure that they do not post any images online that identify children who are students at the school without their consent.

Staff should be aware of the school's online safety policy or other relevant policies you have.

## **7. Acceptable use of technology**

Staff 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 will not use personal mobile phones and laptops, or school equipment for personal use, in school hours or in front of students. They will also not charge or use personal mobile phones or cameras to take pictures of students.

We have the right to monitor emails and internet use on the school IT system.

Please refer to the Online Safety & Acceptable policy, this is available in the staff room and from the school office, as well as in the policies section of our school website.

The school take no responsibility for the loss or damage of staff personal mobile phones, laptops or any other personal equipment.

## **8. Confidentiality**

In the course of their role, members of staff are often privy to sensitive and confidential information about the school, staff, students, 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 the staff's duty to report child protection concerns to the appropriate channel where staff believe a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm, as detailed further in our child protection and safeguarding policy.

Staff should not be discussing students and other staff members outside of school or at events that are not school related. Discussing staff and students or the organisation's business in a public or private setting outside of school is not acceptable and is a breach of professional conduct and confidentiality.

## **9. Honesty and integrity**

Staff should maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their role. This includes when dealing with students, handling money, claiming expenses, and using school property and facilities.

Staff will not accept gifts from students, parents or carers. Staff will not accept bribes.

Staff will ensure that all information given to the school is correct. This should include:

- Background information (including any past or current investigations/cautions related to conduct outside of school)
- Qualifications
- Professional experience
- Medical issues/concerns

Where there are any updates to the information provided to the school, the member of staff will advise the school as such as soon as reasonably practicable. Consideration will then be given to the nature and circumstances of the matter and whether this may have an impact on the member of staff's employment.

## **10. Dress code**

Staff will dress in a professional, appropriate manner.

Outfits will not be revealing. Jeans, leather/imitation leather trousers are not to be worn and we ask that tattoos are covered up.

Clothes will not display any offensive or political slogans.

## **11. Conduct outside of work**

Staff will not act in a way that would bring the school, or the teaching profession, into disrepute. This covers conduct including but not limited to, relevant criminal offences such as violence or sexual misconduct, as well as negative comments about the school on social media. This also covers discussing students, staff or the company's business in a public or private place without the expressed consent of the company.

## **12. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed annually but can be revised as needed. It will be approved by the governing body and senior leadership team.

Our governing body and senior leadership team 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.

### **13. Property and premises use**

Staff are expected to treat the premises and all property pertaining to Cross Keys Learning in an appropriate and respectful manner. Staff should report any damage or breakages to the senior leadership team immediately. If damages are deemed to be deliberate, then this will treat as a conduct issue and investigated as such.

Classrooms should be always kept clean and tidy.

Food such as sandwiches, crisps and drink should not be left in classrooms, under desks or behind cupboards.

Staff should ensure classrooms are prepared for lessons daily- seating plans and resources should be prepared in advance (please refer to Teaching & Learning policy).

Classrooms need to be prepared on or before the last day of term ready for the new term. All display boards and furniture should be in place and organised.

### **14. Professional conduct**

Our aims underpin the school culture: to develop a happy, friendly, secure and well-disciplined atmosphere and to encourage a caring, respectful and trusting relationship between all children and adults. This code of conduct sets out the key principles for the creation and maintenance of a safe school culture.

All staff employed under Teachers' Terms and Conditions of Employment have a statutory obligation to adhere to the 'Teachers' Standards 2012' and in relation to this policy, Part 2 of the Teachers' Standards - Personal and Professional Conduct. Staff failure to adhere to this policy may result in disciplinary action including dismissal.

Relationships between staff should be characterised by fairness, openness and respect. This means valuing all contributions, acknowledging difference, and working together to build a climate of continuous improvement. Politeness and respect are essential ingredients: where differences occur, they should be dealt with calmly and fairly.

The following will be investigated and dealt with in accordance with school policies and the Terms and Conditions of Employment and the 'Teachers' Standards 2012' and in relation to this policy, Part 2 of the Teachers' Standards - Personal and Professional Conduct:

- 1) Disrespect. Do disagreements in the school must not result in yelling or crossing personal space boundaries.
- 2) Mistrust. Staff say one thing and purposely do another, creating contention and mistrust.
- 3) Undermine. Staff outright undercut one another's efforts with hopes of "saving the day" or taking away from the success of team members just to prove a point.
- 4) Defensiveness. Staff displaying unwarranted defensiveness or unwillingness to discuss why something should (or should not) be done for the greater good of the school.
- 5) Negativity. Staff displaying negative attitudes towards others, their performance and ability in a demeaning manner- within and outside of the school.



6) Deflecting. Staff actively seeking out others to discuss and undermine or perpetuate a “blame game” and not dealing with issues according to the school policies and procedures.

7) Gossiping. Staff gossiping and backstabbing are a widespread problem that is damaging on many levels. It deters from the school’s goals and breaks down morale quickly. Breaking this level of trust with a co-worker is also one of the hardest things to work through on a personal level.

## **15. Links with other policies**

This policy links with our policies on:

- Staff disciplinary procedures, which will be used if staff breach this code of conduct. It also sets out examples of what we will deem as misconduct and gross misconduct.
- Staff grievance procedures
- Child protection and safeguarding
- Gifts and hospitality
- Online safety
- Whistleblowing
- Teaching & Learning