



**Staff Code of Conduct Policy**

Date Reviewed:	September 2025
Next Review Date:	September 2026
Policy Owner:	Mrs Gemma Mitchell
Ratified @ FGB/Committee Name & Date:	October 2025 – Due to be reviewed at Full Governing Board

**Mission Statement**

We are committed to providing a supportive, enjoyable and family style environment in which every child is nurtured and encouraged to achieve their potential through a broad-based curriculum and opportunities for developing sporting, dramatic, artistic and musical talents.

**Statement of Aims & Objectives**

- To enable each child to fulfil their own academic and personal potential.
- To instil in every child the importance of developing personal initiative and to foster in them a belief that they can fulfil their potential in any area of school life.
- To provide a broad based academic and extra-curricular education that is delivered in such a way as to satisfy the learning needs of each and every pupil.
- To help each pupil to develop both a set of Christian values and an understanding and appreciation of other religious beliefs.
- To learn the difference between right and wrong and to appreciate that rights and responsibilities are equally balanced.
- To develop and promote a sense of caring and community between the pupils within the school and the wider community as a whole.
- To instil in each pupil a high degree of self-respect and respect for their fellow pupils, teachers and other adults.
- To prepare each child for the transition to the next stage of their education and to be able to take advantage of any opportunities as they present themselves.



# Oakhurst Grange School

## Safeguarding

Oakhurst Grange School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. At this school we respect and value all children and are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for our pupils so that they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. We believe that every pupil should be able to participate in all school activities in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from harm. This is the responsibility of every adult employed by, or invited to deliver services at Oakhurst Grange School. We recognise our responsibility to safeguard all who access school and promote the welfare of all of our pupils by protecting them from physical, sexual and emotional abuse, neglect and bullying. This should be read in conjunction with the Safeguarding Policy.

All staff will be asked to complete training annually following KCSIE updates. Further safeguard training will take place throughout the year. All staff must wear their lanyards at all times.

The Safeguarding governor is: Pauline Clark [Pauline.clark@oakhurstgrangeschool.co.uk](mailto:Pauline.clark@oakhurstgrangeschool.co.uk)

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# Oakhyrst Grange School

## Introduction

Oakhyrst Grange School actively promotes democracy, the rule of the law, individual liberty and mutual respect for those with different faiths and beliefs. These are fundamental British Values which underpin all that we offer.

## 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.

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

We expect all teachers, support staff, governors and volunteers to 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 Policy.

Please note that this Staff 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.

## Legislation and guidance

In line with the statutory safeguarding guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE 2025), we should have a Staff Code of Conduct, which should cover low-level concerns, sexual harassment, allegations against staff and whistle-blowing, as well as acceptable use of technologies (including the use of mobile devices), staff/pupil relationships and communications, including the use of social media.

## General obligations

Staff set an example to pupils. They will:

- Maintain high standards in their attendance and punctuality
- Never use inappropriate or offensive language in school
- Treat pupils and others with dignity and respect
- Show tolerance and respect for the rights of others
- Not undermine fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
- Not express personal beliefs in a way that exploits pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law
- Understand the statutory frameworks they must act within including the duties under the Online Safety Act 2023 and the DfE's expectations around online filtering and monitoring (KCSiE 2025).

## Safeguarding

Staff have a duty to safeguard pupils from harm, and to report any concerns they have. This includes physical, emotional and sexual abuse, and neglect.

Staff will familiarise themselves with our Safeguarding Child Protection Policy, and the Prevent initiative, and ensure they are aware of the processes to follow if they have concerns about a child.



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Our Safeguarding Child Protection Policy are available on the X drive and in the staff room. New staff will also be given copies on arrival. Staff training is provided on a termly basis at each of the School's INSET Days. In line with KCSiE 2025, all staff, including temporary and supply staff, receive safeguarding and child protection training at induction, and regular updates (including on online safety, filtering/monitoring systems, and cyber-security) at least annually

### **Allegations that may meet the harm threshold**

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

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

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

A 'case manager' will lead any investigation. This will be the Headteacher, or the Chair of Governors where the Headteacher is the subject of the allegation.

Where allegations involve online behaviour, the school will also consider the implications of the Online Safety Act 2023 and any relevant cyber-security breaches.

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

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

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

Low-level concerns can include inappropriate conduct inside and outside of work.

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

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

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

Reporting and responding to low-level concerns is covered in more detail in our Low Level Concerns Policy.

Low-level concerns may also include online or digital behaviour that falls short of expected standards, including inappropriate use of generative AI, social media, or electronic communication.



## **Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment is any unwanted physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct of a sexual nature that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. A single incident can amount to sexual harassment.

It also includes treating someone less favourably because they have submitted or refused to submit to unwanted conduct of a sexual nature, or that is related to gender reassignment or sex, in the past.

Third-party sexual harassment occurs where a person is sexually harassed by someone who does not work for, and who is not an agent of, the same employer, but with whom they have come into contact during the course of their employment. Third-party sexual harassment could include, for example, unwelcome sexual advances from a supplier visiting the school's premises.

If you are being sexually harassed, consider whether you feel able to raise the problem informally with the person responsible. If you feel comfortable doing so, you should explain clearly to them that their behaviour is not welcome or makes you uncomfortable. We recognise, however, that this may be difficult or inappropriate depending on the circumstances. If this is the case, or raising the problem with the person responsible has not resolved the issue, you may speak to your line manager, who can provide confidential advice and assistance in resolving the issue formally or informally.

If you feel unable to speak to your line manager because the complaint concerns them, you may speak informally to a more senior colleague.

If you are not certain whether an incident or series of incidents amounts to sexual harassment, you should initially contact your line manager informally for confidential advice.

### **Raising a formal complaint**

If informal steps are not appropriate, or have not been successful, you should raise the matter formally under our Staff Grievance Procedure. The matter will then be dealt with as a formal grievance in line with our Staff Grievance Procedure.

Sexual harassment also includes online harassment such as the non-consensual sharing of intimate images, cyberflashing, and other technology-facilitated behaviours as defined under the Online Safety Act 2023.

## **Whistle-blowing**

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

- Pupils' or staff members' health and safety being put in danger
- Failure to comply with a legal obligation or statutory requirement
- Attempts to cover up the above, or any other wrongdoing in the public interest

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

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

For our School's detailed whistle-blowing process, please refer to our Whistle-blowing Policy.



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Nothing in this policy or in any confidentiality agreement prevents staff from making a protected disclosure under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998. In line with proposed Employment Rights Bill reforms, non-disclosure agreements (NDAs) cannot be used to prevent staff from reporting safeguarding concerns, harassment, discrimination, or other wrongdoing in the public interest.

### **Staff-pupil relationships**

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

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

- This takes place in a public place that others can access
- Others can see into the room
- A colleague or line manager knows this is taking place

Staff should avoid contact with pupils outside of school hours if possible.

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

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

If a staff member is concerned at any point that an interaction between themselves and a pupil may be misinterpreted, or if a staff member is concerned at any point about a fellow staff member and a pupil, this should be reported in line with the procedures set out in our Safeguarding Child Protection Policy.

In line with KCSiE 2025, staff must not communicate with pupils via personal devices, apps, or accounts, and must not use encrypted or unmonitored channels to contact pupils or parents.

### **Communication and social media**

School staff's social media profiles should not be available to pupils. If they have a personal profile on social media sites, they should not use their full name, as pupils 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 pupils or their parents via social media, or any other means outside school, in order to develop any sort of relationship. They will not make any efforts to find pupils' or parents' social media profiles.

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

Staff should be aware of the School's Online safety policy.

Staff should not use generative AI or other digital tools to create or share images, text, or messages involving pupils unless explicitly authorised for educational purposes, in line with school policy.

### **Acceptable use of technology**

Staff will not use technology in school or belonging to the school to view material that is illegal, inappropriate or likely to be deemed offensive. This includes, but is not limited to, sending obscene emails, gambling and viewing pornography or other inappropriate content.

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



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

Please refer to our Online safety policy and Acceptable Use Agreements.

Staff must comply with school filtering and monitoring arrangements, including cyber-security requirements introduced in KCSiE 2025.

### **Confidentiality**

In the course of their role, members of staff are often privy to sensitive and confidential information about the school, staff, pupils and their parents.

This information should never be:

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

This does not overrule staff's duty to report child protection concerns to the appropriate channel where staff believe a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm, as detailed further in our Safeguarding Child Protection Policy.

Confidentiality must never prevent the reporting of safeguarding concerns, sexual harassment, discrimination, or other protected disclosures under whistle-blowing legislation.

### **Honesty and integrity**

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

Staff will not accept bribes. Gifts that are worth more than £100 should be declared to the Bursar. Please refer to the School's Anti-Bribery Policy.

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

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

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

Staff must declare any cautions, charges, convictions, or investigations that arise during employment, including online offences (e.g. image-based offences under the Online Safety Act 2023).

### **Dress code**

Staff are expected to dress in a professional and appropriate manner for the job. Jeans or jean style trousers are not acceptable; neither are tracksuit bottoms (unless being worn to teach PE/Sport), strappy tops, shorts or short skirts / dresses. Clothes should not display any offensive or political slogans.

The School recommends all staff to wear appropriate footwear to school. Beach style flip-flops, backless shoes and stilettos are discouraged for Health and Safety reasons.



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### **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 or in public.

Conduct outside work includes online activity. Posting harmful, discriminatory, or inappropriate material on social media, or misuse of technology (including AI tools), will be considered a breach of this policy if it brings the school or profession into disrepute.

### **Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed annually, but can be revised as needed. It will be approved by the Board of Governors.

This policy will be reviewed annually, and more frequently where changes in legislation or statutory guidance require.

This policy is subject to regular review.