



# Staff Code of Conduct 2025-2026

This Code of Conduct aims to give all members of the school community clear guidance 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.

|                            |           |
|----------------------------|-----------|
| Policy Owner               | SLT       |
| Governing Body Committee   | Resources |
| Date Approved by Governors |           |
| Next Review Date           |           |

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# Sir Francis Hill Primary School

## Staff Code of Conduct 2025-2026

### Aims, scope and principles

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 pupils 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, governors and volunteers to also act with personal and professional integrity, respecting the safety and wellbeing of others.

Sir Francis Hill Primary School is an inclusive school for all, including staff, and this policy will ensure that the highest standards of behaviour are kept at all times. 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.

### 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, an Allegations against staff and Whistle-blowing policy, 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
- 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 adhering to the Teachers' Standards

### 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 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 our central drive and on the school website. New staff will be direct to copies when starting at the school.

### 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 a member of the Senior Leadership Team, or the chair of governors where the Headteacher is the subject of the allegation.

## 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 (these can be taken and then downloaded to the school drive and deleted from phones if this is to prove part of the curriculum has been met)
- 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 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 is covered in more detail in our Child Protection and Safeguarding policy. Our procedures for dealing with allegations will be applied with common sense and judgement.

## Whistleblowing

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. Staff should report their concern to the Headteacher. If the concern is about the Headteacher 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 board, Mr Dave Reed.

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.

## 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 individual 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 child protection and safeguarding policy.

## Staff-Staff relationships

As professionals we will:

- follow our school rules of Ready, Respectful and Safe so that we set the best possible example for pupils at Sir Francis Hill Primary School.
- treat everyone with respect, speaking respectfully to all other members of staff, even if we disagree with them.
- behave in a positive way despite any personal problems that we may have, especially in front of the children.
- work within the school's policies and practices, so that what we do and the actions we take are consistent with what has been agreed between all members of the staff and the governors.
- use a calm tone of voice at all times, to explain something to or instruct the children, so that they can follow our words without feeling threatened or uncomfortable. We will use a positive statement rather than a negative one so that children can learn what we expect of them in any situation.
- maintain confidentiality about anything that we see or hear in the school, so that parents and children can trust us, and as a way of showing respect to our fellow professionals. This includes information that is given to you by other members of staff. Staff need to feel that they can 'offload' in a confidential manner and that other staff will support. The only exception to this is if a staff member feels that there is a safeguarding risk to a child or a colleague. This will need to be reported in the usual way, either through Staff Grievance, Whistleblowing or by making a referral to CSC.
- work as part of a team, contributing as well as learning from others and helping to build up a strong workforce so that we can provide the best possible learning opportunities for all children in our care at Sir Francis Hill Primary School.

## 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.

## Recording Conversations

It is unacceptable to record / make copies of conversations including telephone call, face to face meetings and virtual meetings with parents / carers, staff, or Governors without making them aware you are doing so and seeking their express permission to capture what could be their personal information and breach their human right to privacy.

## 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 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.

## 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 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 Dress Code**

There is a requirement for staff to dress professionally and smartly when in work. As detailed in our staff handbook and Dress Code Policy, jeans are not appropriate wear for school. If you are teaching or involved in the delivery of PE then an appropriate PE kit would be appropriate for the half day when those lessons are taking place. Joggers/tracksuits and t-shirts on 'non-PE' days are neither professional nor smart. Finally, please be aware of wearing anything that is 'too short, too tight or too low cut' as once again this is inappropriate for wearing in a primary school. At work staff are expected to consider the appropriateness of the audience.

## **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.

## **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
- Online Safety
- Whistleblowing
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Staff Dress Code Policy