



# The Children's House

## Staff Code of Conduct Policy

This policy should be reviewed annually and as required by legislation.		
Action	Reviewer	Date
Review	EG	Sep 2025
Approved by COM	EK	Sept 2025
Date for next internal review		Sept 2026

## CODE OF CONDUCT

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, as role models for pupils, are expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of behaviour. As a member of a school community each employee has an individual responsibility to maintain their reputation and the reputation of the school, whether inside or outside working hours.

At The Children's House every interaction should reflect and model the School's key aims: to inspire a love of learning, motivate children to always do their best and to instill them with genuine respect and value for others, for their environment and for the school community.

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

Failure to follow the code of conduct may result in disciplinary action being taken, as set out in our Staff Disciplinary and Grievance Procedure Policy and could result in legal or disciplinary action including dismissal.

Please note that this code of conduct is not exhaustive.

This policy should also be read in conjunction with the Employee Handbook and employee contract. 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 & Guidance



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The School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, and this Code of Conduct complies with Part 3, Paragraphs 7a and 7b of The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and all other relevant and current regulations or guidance relating to the Safeguarding of Children.

This includes:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education Statutory Guidance for Schools and Colleges (KCSIE) (DfE, 2025) and Working Together to Safeguard Children (WT) (HM Government, 2023).
- The Children Act 1989 and 2004 along with Section 157/175, Education Act (2002)
- Teachers' Standards 2011 (latest terminology update December 2021) (Guidance for school leaders, school staff and governing bodies)
- Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Those Working with Children and Young People in Education Settings (Feb 2022)

## General Obligations

Staff should be aware at all times that they are setting an example to students and must avoid putting themselves at risk of allegations of unprofessional conduct.

They are expected to:

- Maintain high standards in attendance and punctuality
- Never use inappropriate or offensive language in school
- Treat pupils and all members of the School community 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

## 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.

- The duty to safeguard children includes the duty to report concerns about a child to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead for Child Protection:  
Ellie Grunewald – Headteacher and DSL  
Taiba Hussain – Deputy Head, DDSL  
Mihaela Zama – Assistant Head of Nursery and DSL with Coordinating Responsibilities  
Kim Crawford – DDSL  
Laura Mills - DDSL
- Staff should discuss and/or take advice promptly from their line manager or another senior member of staff, over any incident or allegation which may give rise to concern.



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- Records should be made of any such incident and of decisions made/further actions agreed, in accordance with school policy for keeping and maintaining records.
- It is a contractual obligation of the employee to report any convictions, cautions or bind overs incurred during the course of their employment.
- Failure to comply with the school's recognised policies and procedures could result in disciplinary action.

Staff are expected to familiarise themselves with the Safeguarding & Child protection Policy and Procedures, Whistleblowing Policy, and the Prevent initiative, and ensure they are aware of the processes to follow if they have concerns about a child. These policies are available in the Policy folder on SharePoint, and on the School website.

New staff will be directed to these policies, and all staff will be expected to confirm with a signature that they have read the updated Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy at the start of every school year.

## **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

Staff have a duty to report these allegations quickly. They will be dealt with 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, where the Headteacher is the subject of the allegation, the Chair of Governors.

## **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.



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All staff should share any low-level concerns they have using the reporting procedures set out in our Child Protection and Safeguarding policy and the Low-Level Concern 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, they are encouraged 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.

At The Children's House, staff collaborate to embed a culture of openness, trust and transparency in which our values and expected behaviour are constantly lived, monitored and reinforced, while minimising the risk of abuse.

Reporting and responding to low-level concerns is covered in more detail in our Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy.

## **Use of Mobile Phones (including Early Years Foundation Stage)**

- Staff must not use their mobile phone as a camera in school. Any photograph/video must be taken using school equipment and images saved on the School computer.
- During school hours, staff who are in contact with pupils should only use their mobile phones to make calls or take photos in a private space that is not accessible at that time to children, such as the staff room. Unless there is an emergency or the senior leadership team has been notified, this must be carried out in the staff members' time. Staff should promote this policy in school with other staff members, parents/carers, carers and school visitors.
- Mobile phones may be used with discretion to play music in assemblies or other sessions that require the use of a portable speaker.
- The only exception to this is on school trips, where staff mobile devices will be used to keep in touch with the school and to contact parents/carers or other services in case of emergency.

## **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. Concerns will be taken seriously and investigated, and 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.



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Staff should report their concern to the Headteacher or other member of the Senior Leadership Team. 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 Council of Management.

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 should observe proper boundaries with pupils that are appropriate to their professional position. They are expected to always act in a fair and transparent way.

If staff members and pupils must spend time on a one-to-one basis, Ideally this should:

- Take place in a public place that others can access
- Be visible through the door or windows of the room (or with the door open).
- Be known to another colleague or line manager

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.

## **Gifts / Hospitality**

Pupils and their parents/carers may wish to give gifts or tokens of appreciation to staff, for example, at Christmas at the end of the school year. Staff should be careful not to accept any gift/offer of hospitality that might be construed as a bribe by others or lead the giver to expect preferential treatment.

- It is unacceptable to receive gifts on a regular basis or to suggest to pupils that gifts are appropriate or desired.
- Cash must not be accepted as a gift, but vouchers from parents/carers at the end of term may be accepted. If in doubt as to whether to accept an expensive gift, do reach out to the Headteacher.
- Personal gifts must not be given by staff to individual pupils. Small items given to the whole class are acceptable.
- Business and Related Interests: To avoid any misunderstandings that might arise, all staff are required to declare any financial or related interests they have in companies or individuals from whom The Children's House may purchase goods or services. The disclosure should also include business interests of relatives, such as a parent or spouse where influence could be exerted over a member of staff by that person. All such declarations should be reported to the Headteacher.



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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 the Safeguarding and Child Protection and Whistleblowing Policies.

## **Acceptable use of technology**

Staff must exercise caution when using IT and be aware of the risks posed to themselves and others.

At the start of every academic year, every member of staff, including governors and volunteers will be asked to sign an Acceptable Use Policy, outlining expectations relating to use of the School's technology and the internet, and making recommendations for use of Social Media.

This agreement includes the following key principles:

- Staff should 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 should exercise caution when using personal mobile phones and laptops in school hours or in front of pupils. Pictures of pupils should only be taken on School devices, never on personal mobile phones or cameras.
- Staff must only use their school email account when communicating electronically with pupils, parents/carers and colleagues.

The School has the right to monitor emails and internet use on the school IT system.

Staff should also be aware of the School's Online Safety Policy.

## **Use of Social Media and Email**

- Staff social media profiles should not be available to pupils. Personal profiles should always be set to private, and staff should consider using an alternative name, so that profiles can not easily be found and identified.
- Staff must not use social media to connect with current or former pupils nor with current parents/carers.
- Staff must not engage in inappropriate use of social network sites which may bring themselves, the school, school community or employer into disrepute.
- When posting on the School's Social Media sites, staff must ensure that they do not post images that identify children without parental consent.

## **Honesty and Integrity**

Staff must maintain the highest standards of honesty and integrity in their work.

This includes:



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- Ensuring all information provided to the school, relating to professional experience, qualifications and any past or current investigation/caution, is accurate.
- Honesty and integrity in relation to the handling and claiming of money and the use of school property and facilities.

All staff must comply with the Bribery Act 2010. A person may be guilty of an offence of bribery under this Act if they offer, promise or give financial advantage or other advantage to someone; or if they request, agree, accept or receive a bribe from another person. If a member of staff believes that a person has failed to comply with the Bribery Act, they should refer to the school's Whistleblowing procedure. (Further information can be found in the school's Anti Bribery Policy).

## **Conduct Outside Work**

- Staff must not engage in conduct outside work which could damage the reputation and standing of the school, the employee's own reputation, the reputation of other members of the school community or the teaching profession. For example, criminal offences that involve violence, possession of illegal drugs or sexual misconduct. This includes negative comments about the School on social media. Engaging in such conduct may result in disciplinary action or dismissal.

## **Confidentiality**

Members of staff are often privy to sensitive and confidential information about the School, staff, pupils and their parents/carers.

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.

Any personal information about children must be stored and processed in observance with school procedures contained in the Child Protection Policy and in compliance with the UK GDPR

Staff should also be familiar with the school's Confidentiality Policy.

## **Propriety and Behaviour**

### **Dress and Appearance**



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A person's dress and appearance are matters of personal choice and self-expression. Staff are however expected to wear clothing which promotes a positive and professional image and are therefore asked not to wear blue jeans to work. Staff should also wear clothing that is not likely to be viewed as offensive, revealing or sexually provocative; does not cause embarrassment or give rise to misunderstanding; is absent of political or otherwise contentious slogans.

The school requests that during school hours staff wear clothing which discretely covers tattoos, unless the tattoo is very small, subtle or is connected to the staff member's religious faith or belief.

## **Physical Contact**

There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate and proper for staff to have physical contact with pupils, but it is crucial that this is always appropriate to their professional role. Staff should never touch a child in a way which may be considered indecent. This includes:

- Horseplay, tickling or fun fights.
- Picking up children as part of play

Staff should always be prepared to explain actions and accept that all physical contact be open to scrutiny.

If a member of staff believes that an action could be misinterpreted, the incident and circumstances should be recorded on the school's Incident form. Please seek advice from the Headteacher or other member of SLT.

The use of unwarranted physical force is unlawful. It is recognised however that sometimes it may be necessary for a member of staff to employ reasonable use of force or restraint in order to protect a child, others or the environment, or to maintain good order and discipline. Staff should always seek to defuse a situation before physical intervention. However, where physical intervention is necessary, always use minimum force for the shortest period necessary. All such incidents must be recorded on Wellbeing Manager or on a dedicated Incident book held in the school office, then reported to a senior member of staff. Please refer to the school's Behaviour Management Policy for guidance on use of positive handling to manage challenging behaviour.

Physical contact which occurs regularly with an individual child is likely to raise questions unless the justification for this is part of a formally agreed plan eg pupils with SEN or physical disabilities.

If physical contact is necessary to support a child's learning eg in PE or Music, always explain to the child the reason why contact is necessary and what form it will take.

## **Personal Hygiene and Changing**

Children must have respect and privacy when using the toilet or changing clothes. They also however may require help and supervision. This support and supervision must be appropriate to the needs and age of the child and sensitive to the potential for embarrassment. Staff should follow agreed guidelines in the school's Intimate Care Policy.



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Staff should consult with colleagues where any variation from agreed procedure/care plan is necessary e.g. when caring for children with SEND. Any individual arrangements for a child must be agreed upon and recorded with the child's parents/carers first. The child's own views and emotional responses must be actively sought and an age appropriate explanation offered to the child.

## **Behaviour Management**

All pupils have a right to be treated with respect and dignity. Corporal punishment is unlawful, and the Children's House School rejects the use of corporal punishment. Staff should not use any form of degrading treatment to punish a pupil, including sarcasm or demeaning comments. Please see the Behaviour Management and the Behaviour Policies.

## **Transporting Children**

Staff must never transport children in private vehicles.

## **Educational Visits and After-School Clubs**

This Code of Conduct applies to all situations in which members of Staff remain in a position of trust and professional behaviour must be demonstrated at all times. This includes educational visits, off site lessons and all extra curricular activities.

## **First Aid and Administration of Medication**

Teachers may volunteer to undertake this task, but it is not a contractual requirement and usually medications will be administered by the administrators in the School and Nursery office. Staff administering first aid or medication must receive appropriate training and follow the procedures described in the school's First Aid Policy.

If a pupil requires medication during school hours, teachers must follow the school's Administration of Prescribed Medication Policy and Procedures. In circumstances where a child requires medication regularly, a Health Care Plan will be drawn up to ensure the safety and protection of pupils and staff. Any concerns relating to the administration of medication being given to a pupil must be discussed immediately with the appropriate senior colleague.

## **Curriculum**

Where resources and materials are being used in lessons that may be deemed controversial to parents/carers or individuals within the school or class, staff should seek advice from a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

## **Sharing Concerns and Recording Incidents**

In the event of an incident occurring which may result in an action being misinterpreted and/or an allegation being made against a member of staff, the relevant information should be clearly



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and promptly recorded and reported to the Senior Leadership Team. See the Low-Level Concern Policy.

## **Contact with children and Parents/carers**

Staff should ensure they are using language appropriate to their professional relationship with pupils and parents/carers in all written and verbal communication.

Emails should always be sent from their School address.

Members of staff on sick leave should not contact parents/carers or children in their class, either by school email or in writing, without the knowledge and expressed agreement of the Headteacher.

It is the School's policy that staff are not allowed to provide tutoring or child-care for children in the school except in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of the Headteacher.

## **Staff Relationships**

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 around the stated educational aims and mission statement of the school and in support of the School Improvement Plan. Politeness and respect are essential.

Where differences occur, these should be dealt with calmly and fairly.

Gossip and malicious comments are deemed unacceptable. Staff should always consider whether their words, body language and conduct could give offence.

If an employee knowingly makes malicious and false allegations, as part of the school's Whistleblowing Policy, disciplinary action may be taken against the employee.

## **Sexual harassment**

Sexual harassment is any unwanted physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct of a sexual nature that has a purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. It also includes treating someone less favourably because they've submitted or refused to submit to unwanted conduct of a sexual nature in the past, or harassment related to sex or gender reassignment. When this behaviour is unwanted, it includes (but isn't limited to):

- Unwanted physical conduct or 'horseplay' including touching, pinching, pushing and grabbing
- Continued suggestions for sexual activity after it has been made clear that such suggestions are unwelcome
- Sending or displaying material that is pornographic, or that some people might find offensive



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- Unwelcome sexual advances or suggestive behaviour (which the harasser may perceive as harmless)
- Offensive emails, text messages or social media content
- Comments and jokes of a sexual nature
- Sexually suggestive looks and staring
- Sexual propositions and advances
- Promising things in return for sexual favours
- Physical contact such as massaging, hugging or kissing
- Sexual contact on social media

Staff will help create a positive environment that works to prevent sexual harassment. This includes calling out sexual harassment that they witness. All witnesses will be provided with appropriate support and will be protected from victimisation.

If a staff member is concerned at any point about incidents of sexual harassment (either directed at them or someone else), they should report their concern to the headteacher or other member of the Senior Leadership Team. If the concern is about the [headteacher or other member of the Senior Leadership Team, 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 Council of Management. The school will investigate any complaints in a timely, respectful and confidential manner.

All staff will receive training on recognising and responding to incidents of sexual harassment. The school will monitor the treatment and outcomes of any complaints of sexual harassment or victimisation received to make sure that they are properly investigated and resolved, those who report or act as witnesses are not victimised, repeat offenders are dealt with appropriately, cultural clashes are identified and resolved and workforce training is targeted where needed.

## **Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed annually but can be revised as needed. It will be approved by the Chair of the Council of Management.

Our Council of Management 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.

## **Links with other documentation**

This policy links with the following document and policies:

- Staff handbook
  - Staff disciplinary procedures,
  - Staff grievance procedures
  - Safeguarding & Child protection
  - Online safety



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- Whistle-blowing
- Behaviour Management
- Behaviour

This Policy was reviewed, amended and agreed by the Council of Management in September 2025. It will be reviewed again in one year's time.

Agreed by ----- of the Council of Management, on -----.



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**Appendix 1 – from *Teachers' Standards 2012 (DfE)***

## **PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT**

A teacher is expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct. The following statements define the behaviour and attitudes which set the required standard for conduct throughout a teacher's career.

Teachers uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, by:

- Treating pupils with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to a teacher's professional position.
- Having regard for the need to safeguard pupils' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions.
- Showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others.
- Not undermining fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.
- Ensuring that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways which exploit pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law.
- Teachers having proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school and maintaining high standards in their own attendance and punctuality.
- Teachers having an understanding of, and always acting within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities.



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**I have read and understood The Children's House Code of Conduct and agree to follow its guidelines at all times. Please return this signed agreement form to the site administrator.**

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signed** \_\_\_\_\_