

Applecroft School



Staff Code of Conduct Policy

Person Responsible:	Headteacher
Review Cycle:	Annual
Date of Issue:	June 2026
Review Date:	June 2027

Staff Code of Conduct Policy

1) Introduction:

School Vision:

'To create a positive and inspiring community that nurtures each individual and empowers leaders for life.'

School Mission Statement:

'Nurturing Potential, Inspiring Minds, Changing Lives'.

School Values:

- Ambition and Leadership
- Kindness and Supportiveness
- Respect and Honesty
- Determination and Resilience.

2) 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 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, trustees and volunteers to also act with personal and professional integrity, respecting the safety and wellbeing of others.

All staff members, along with pupils, parents/carers and trustees, are part of the 'Applecroft Family' and as such are expected to conduct themselves in a supportive manner that is in keeping with the school's vision, mission and values (see section 1 above).

Failure to follow the staff 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.

3) Legislation and Guidance:

In line with the statutory safeguarding guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(2025\)](#), staff should read and understand their role and responsibilities in relation to:

- This policy - the Staff Code of Conduct,
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025) - at least Part 1 (or Annex A) annually,

- Child Protection Policy,
- Managing Allegations and Low-Level Concerns Policy,
- Whistleblowing Policy,
- Acceptable Use of Technologies agreement - this is contained in our Online Safety Policy
- AI Policy.

Staff will be asked to sign to confirm that they have read and understood the policies above annually.

4) General Obligations:

Staff set an example to pupils. They will:

- Maintain high standards in their attendance and punctuality
- Act as a positive role-model to all members of the school community
- 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, might lead them to break the law or cause offence
- Understand the statutory frameworks they must act within
- Adhere to the Teachers' Standards.

5) 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 policies and procedures, including the Prevent duty, and ensure they are aware of the processes to follow if they have concerns about a child.

Our Child Protection policy is available on the policy page of the [school website](#). New staff are given a copy and required to read it as part of their induction.

If you have a safeguarding concern:

- Record the concern factually
- Report it **immediately** to a DSL
- Do not investigate or promise confidentiality
- Follow the Child Protection Policy at all times.

5.1) 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 usually be the Headteacher, or the chair of trustees where the Headteacher is the subject of the allegation.

Our procedures for dealing with allegations will be applied with common sense and judgement.

5.2) 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 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 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 Managing Allegations and Low-Level Concerns policy which is available on the policy page of the [school website](#).

All staff are expected to report low-level concerns, including their own behaviour where appropriate, to promote a culture of openness and safeguarding.

5.3) Whistleblowing:

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

- Pupils' or staff's 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 whistleblowing 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 the staff member should report their concern to the Chair of Trustees.

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 whistleblowing process, please refer to our Whistleblowing policy available on the [school website](#).

6) 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 in to the room
- A colleague or line manager knows this is taking place.

Staff should avoid contact with pupils outside of school hours if, and where, 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/carers 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 policy.

On occasion, staff members may have their own children/close relatives attending the school. Where possible, we will deploy staff in different classes/year groups from their children/relatives. However, we recognise that it will sometimes be necessary for a member of staff to be responsible for a class in which their own child/ren and/or close relatives is a pupil.

We make decisions on staffing based on the best interests of all pupils. Staff with children and/or close relatives in the school are expected to be open, mindful and professional in managing these relationships. All staff at Applecroft, undertake to conduct themselves in a supportive and professional manner that is in keeping with the school's vision, mission and values, which includes treating all pupils equally and applying the schools policies and procedures fairly and consistently.

7) Communication and Social Media:

When using personal social media accounts staff should:

- Ensure their accounts are not available to pupils,
- Make NO contact with pupils and parents via their personal accounts,
- NOT post content that could damage their professional reputation or that of the school's,
- Ensure their privacy settings are set to high,
- Assume that anything posted online could become public.

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, and follow, the school's Online Safety policy. This is available on the [school website](#).

8) 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.

We have the right to monitor emails and internet use on the school IT system. Staff should follow the expectations set out in the staff Acceptable Use Policy. Applecroft School deploys monitoring software called SENSO that monitors all key strokes inputted from both pupil and staff devices. Alerts are automatically sent to the DSL team for follow-up where necessary.

Staff will not use their 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.

9) 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/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 Child Protection policy.

10) 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 £20 must be declared and recorded on the gifts and hospitality register. Please see 'Gifts & Hospitality' 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.

11) Dress Code:

Staff will dress in a professional, appropriate manner suitable for working with children. Clothing should be safe, practical and not offensive, revealing or inappropriate. Denim jeans, low-cut tops, bikini type tops, **flip-flops** and short shorts/skirts are not appropriate clothing and should not be worn.

Staff should dress in a manner that is not offensive, revealing or sexually provocative and clothing should be absent from political or other contentious or offensive slogans.

12) Conduct Outside of Work:

Staff will not act in a way that would bring the school, themselves 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 that brings negative attention to the school, or any individual(s) associated with the school, on social media.

Staff may undertake work outside school, either paid or voluntary, provided that it does not conflict with the interests of the school, nor be to a level which may contravene the working time regulations or affect an individual's work performance in the school. It is recommended that permission is sought in advance.

Staff must disclose any work outside school or outside business interests where there is a potential conflict of interests with their employment at the school.

Staff must inform the Headteacher of any situation that may affect their suitability to work with children.

If any allegation of wrongdoing occurs in a staff member's work outside school (whether or not they deny this) which may have a bearing on their employment they must disclose this immediately to the Headteacher. Forming inappropriate relationships or friendships with children or young people who are pupils under the age of 18 at another school or college will be viewed as inappropriate and impact upon the school's ability to trust the member of staff to maintain professional boundaries with pupils at the school. A work-related social event is considered to be an extension of the workplace and as such the standards of behaviour expected at these events is in line with this policy.

13) Monitoring Arrangements:

This policy will be reviewed annually but can be revised as needed more frequently. It will be approved by Policy Review Committee.

The school's senior leadership 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.

14) 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 policy & procedures,
- Child Protection,
- Safeguarding,
- Gifts and Hospitality,
- Online Safety,
- Whistleblowing.

Applecroft School



Staff Code of Conduct Policy and relationships with pupils/colleagues outside of work declaration form

It is recognised that there may be circumstances whereby employees of the school are known to pupils outside of work. Examples include memberships of sports clubs, family connections or private tutoring.

Staff must declare any relationships outside of school that they may have with pupils.

Employee Name:	Pupil/Colleague Name:	Relationship:

I can confirm that I have read and understood the staff Code of Conduct Policy and I am fully aware of the staff code of conduct relating to contact out of school with pupils in line with this policy.

If I am tutoring a pupil who attends Applecroft School I am aware that the following must be adhered to:

- I will declare, on this form, all pupils that I tutor
- I emphasise to parents/carers that this is done completely independently of the school
- No monies come through the school at any point, informally e.g. via the child, or formally
- No private tutoring is to take place on the school premises unless a contractual agreement has been signed with the school
- I confirm that if these circumstances change at any point in time, I will complete a new copy of this form and hand it to the Headteacher.

Name:.....

Signed:..... Date:.....

Once completed, signed and dated, please return this form to the Headteacher.