



'Working together to safeguard children'
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Cardinal Heenan Catholic High School

Staff Code of Conduct Policy

Approved by:	Name: Governing Body	Date: 04/12/25
Last reviewed on:	Date: December 2025	
Next review due by:	Date: December 2026	

This policy/procedure will be reviewed annually



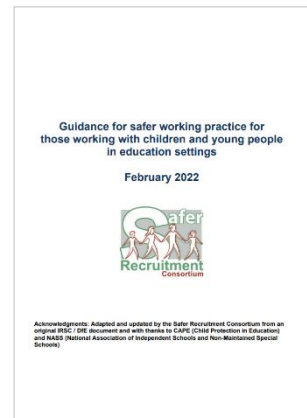
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Safer Working Practices - Code of Conduct:

Keeping Children Safe in Education (DFE 2025) sets out the requirement for all schools to have a staff code of conduct, sometimes referred to as a staff behaviour policy. This code of conduct should be followed by all staff (including visiting staff), volunteers and governors.

Our school is committed to safeguarding children and promoting children’s welfare and expects all staff, governors, volunteers, and visitors to share this commitment and maintain a vigilant and safe environment. It is our willingness to work in a safe manner and challenge inappropriate behaviour that underpins this commitment.

Everyone is expected to adhere to this ‘Code of Conduct’ and the DfE’s [Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education Settings](#) (2022)



Everyone must also read and understand Part 1 and Annex B of Keeping Children Safe in Education (DFE 2025). Our code of conduct aims to support adults so they don’t work in a manner which might lead to an allegation against them by raising awareness of illegal, unsafe, unprofessional, and unwise behaviour and by supporting staff and volunteers to understand what safe, professional conduct is. Equally it aims to reduce the opportunity for any adult intent on grooming or harming a young person. The policy aims to reduce the risk of incidents or misunderstandings occurring by developing and setting out clear guidelines and boundaries. It encourages you to work in an open and transparent way that should avoid someone questioning your motives, intentions, or suitability to work with young people.

Our school promotes an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about adults working in or on behalf of the school are dealt with promptly and appropriately. Creating this culture in which all concerns are shared responsibly, in a timely way with the right person, and are recorded and dealt with appropriately is critical to effective safeguarding practice. This culture enables the school to identify concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour at the earliest possible stage, minimises the risk of abuse and ensures that all adults working in or on behalf of the school are clear about professional boundaries and act within these, in accordance with our ethos and values. This culture also empowers individuals to share concerns with key staff about their own behaviour at the earliest possible opportunity.

As part of our safeguarding induction all new staff and volunteers will receive a copy of this code of conduct alongside a copy of the Safer Recruitment Consortium document “Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings”. These documents will be reissued and revisited as part of on-going training to support staff and volunteers with their understanding of key expectations. This will ensure that staff and volunteers are provided with opportunities to consider the implications of both documents within our school, within their own role and enable them seek clarification, should it be required.



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It is a key principle of this code of conduct that **everyone** understands their responsibility to share **without delay** any concerns they may have about a child’s welfare or an adult’s behaviour towards a young person. This includes any behaviours which may not meet the harm threshold and may be deemed to be a ‘low level concern’ as set out in our child protection policy. In addition, **everyone** has a responsibility to escalate their concerns to the Local Authority Designated Officer if they feel that safeguarding concerns they have raised about a child or adult working at the school are not being addressed by the school. Further information and guidance regarding how school will respond to concerns about an adult’s conduct towards children where the harm threshold is met are set out in our managing allegations policy.

Code of Conduct:

Our school will create a culture of openness, transparency, trust and support where all members of the school community feel empowered to share relevant information about themselves or someone else. The organisational culture of the school is such that people will share any concerns about the conduct of other staff, or share concerns about themselves if concerned that actions may have been misinterpreted.

- Staff are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should avoid any conduct, which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions.
- If you have any concerns that a child is being harmed, abused or neglected you must **share your concerns immediately**, both verbally and in writing with the school’s Designated Safeguarding Lead or if they are absent, another member of the school’s Safeguarding Team or Senior Leadership Team. Always listen carefully to the child and record what they tell you in the child’s own words. Never promise to keep a secret.
- If you receive an allegation against an adult working in the school, or observe behaviour that concerns you, you **must discuss your concerns without delay** with the Headteacher. In the absence of the Headteacher, concerns should be shared with another senior member of staff such as the Deputy Headteacher or Designated Safeguarding Lead, or the Chair of Governors. Any concerns regarding the Headteacher should be directed to the Chair of Governors or Local Authority Designated Officer. The school’s Whistleblowing Policy and the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline are available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns internally. Staff can call: 0800 028 0285 – line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday and email: help@nspcc.org.uk [Safeguarding-Mate](#) can also guide staff should they have a concern about an adult’s behaviour.
- If you are worried that the behaviour of an adult working in the school (including all third party staff, supply staff and volunteers) is giving cause for concern, no matter how small the concern is and even if it does not meet the harm threshold, you must share your concerns with the designated safeguarding lead without delay. This is in line the low level concern procedures set out within our child protection policy. Concerns regarding the designated safeguarding lead should be directed to the headteacher.
- **Anyone (in emergencies or if they are required to) can make a referral about their concerns** for child to Children’s Services (Liverpool Careline tel: 0151 233 3700 or Knowsley MASH tel: 0151 443 2600).



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You should:

- Follow the school’s child protection policy and procedures and in line with this **share safeguarding information appropriately** but also act accordingly with sensitive and confidential information.
- Read, understand and adhere to the Safer Recruitment Consortium document “[Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings](#)” alongside this policy.
- Be **alert to the indicators of harm and abuse** towards a child, including **child on child abuse**.
- **Dress appropriately** according to your role, ensuring that clothing is compliant with professional standards and is not likely to be viewed as offensive or revealing and that it is absent of any political or other contentious slogans or images. This applies to online or virtual teaching, as well as face to face.
- **Act as an appropriate role model**, treating others with respect and tolerance.
- Always maintain appropriate professional boundaries and avoid behaviour which could be misinterpreted by others. This includes within school, in your personal life and in any online activity. All staff have a responsibility to model safe practice at all times.
- **Ensure that you appropriately challenge any form of derogatory and sexualised language or behaviour to ensure that everyone is respectful at all times.**
- Ensure gifts given or received are recorded and discussed with your Line Manager.
- **Respect others’ confidentiality** unless sharing information is appropriate to ensuring their welfare.
- Ensure that when working one to one with a child, it is only undertaken when absolutely necessary (both in person and online), in line with guidance given by the school and is with the prior knowledge and approval of senior leaders and parents/carers.
- **Adhere to the school’s policies**, particularly those related to safeguarding – including child protection, data protection, GDPR, behaviour, attendance, physical intervention, anti-bullying, equal opportunities, health and safety and online safety (acceptable use policy).
- Adhere to the school’s policies, particularly those related to safeguarding - including child protection, behaviour, attendance, anti-bullying, equal opportunities, data protection, health and safety and online safety (acceptable use policy).
- Ensure that you understand your responsibilities under the General Data Protection Regulations 2017 and Data Protection Act 2018 and be clear that where personal information is recorded electronically, systems and devices are kept secure.
- Ensure you are familiar with the DfE Data Protection guidance for schools, which will help school staff, governors and trustees understand how to comply with data protection law, develop their data policies and processes, know what staff and pupil data to keep and follow good practices for preventing personal data breaches.
- **Report any behaviour or situations** which you may feel give rise to a complaint or misunderstanding **in respect of your own actions** both in and out of school.
- Share with the Headteacher (or DSL in their absence) any behaviour of another adult in the school where it gives you cause for concern or breaches this code of conduct or the school’s safeguarding policies in line with the low level concern procedures set out in our child protection policy. Examples of such behaviours include, but are not limited to, being over friendly with children, having favourites, using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language, taking



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photographs of children on their mobile phone or engaging with a child on a one to one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door. Your intervention may allow for their practice to be supported and developed and/or prevent a child from being harmed.

- Understand that it may be appropriate to discuss with the Headteacher matters outside of work, including online, which may have implications for the safeguarding of children in the workplace. This includes information about yourself or other adults working in or on behalf of the school. You must ensure that you are aware of the circumstances where this would be applicable.
- Be aware that behaviour by yourself, those with whom you have a relationship or association, or others in your personal life (in or out of school or online), may impact on your work with children.
- Staff are encouraged to declare any relationships which exist outside of the workplace with any children, families or staff. This is in line with our school culture and enables any implications for practice to be considered and staff to be provided with appropriate advice to support safer working practices.
- Understand the circumstances where it may be necessary to ‘self-report’ incidents where they could have found themselves in a situation which could be misinterpreted, or may appear compromising to others, or if they have behaved in a manner which, on reflection, they consider to fall below the standards set out within the code of conduct for staff.
- Inform the headteacher of any cautions, convictions or relevant order accrued during your employment, and/or if you are charged with a criminal offence.
- Understand that if you commit a relevant offence that would appear on your DBS certificate or you become disqualified under the Childcare Act 2006 (those staff covered by the scope of the guidance): www.gov.uk/government/publications/disqualification-under-the-childcare-act-2006 then you must inform your headteacher. (The Childcare Act 2006 does not cover all settings or even all staff within a setting.)

You should never:

- Act in a way both at work and/or in your personal life that brings yourself, school or the teaching profession into disrepute.
- Make, encourage or ignore others, making personal comments, which scapegoat, demean or humiliate any member of the school community including ignoring any form of child on child abuse.
- Use your position to intimidate, bully, humiliate, coerce or undermine any member of the school community. This includes shouting in anger and aggressively to punish them rather than raising your voice to be heard or avoid danger.
- Undermine fundamental British values including democracy, rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance for those with different faiths, beliefs or from different cultures.
- Develop ‘personal’ or sexual relationships with children and young people, including making sexual remarks or having inappropriate sexual banter. In addition, the Sexual Offences Act 2003 makes it clear that all members of staff are in a position of trust and would therefore be committing a criminal offence to have a sexual relationship with a young person in full time education/below the age of 18, even if that pupil is over the age of consent.
- Engage in inappropriate conversations with students or share inappropriate personal information about yourself or others.
- Discriminate favourably or unfavourably towards a child.



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- Give personal contact details to pupils or communicate outside of school using social networks, email, text, WhatsApp etc or meet a young person out of school unless part of a planned school activity with the knowledge of your Line Manager.
- Have conversations on social networking sites that refer to children, parents or other colleagues at the school or be derogatory about the school. Never make any statements or post images on social networking sites that might cause someone to question your suitability to act as a role model to young people or bring your own or the school’s reputation into disrepute. You should never communicate with parents through social network sites and you are strongly advised to declare any existing friendships/relationships to your Line Manager.
- Use personal equipment to photograph children (always use the school’s equipment) and ensure any photographs are only stored on the designated secure place on the school’s network and not on portable equipment.
- Post on the school’s website or social media accounts any photographs of children without their consent. (Some children may be put at risk by their whereabouts being made publicly)
- Use your personal mobile phone (or other personal IT equipment including ‘wearable’ technology) in areas used by children unless under the agreed protocol set out by the headteacher
- Undertake ‘one to one’ activities out of the sight of others unless it is a planned activity with prior the knowledge of your Line Manager. You should not cover windows or door panels but always act in an open and transparent way. Unforeseen events should be reported to your Line Manager. It is good practice to have another adult to act as an escort during the journey.
- Transport children unsafely, for example by driving whilst using your mobile phone, consuming alcohol, failing to ensure that seat belts are worn or driving without appropriate insurance. Any trips should be planned and with the prior knowledge of your Line Manager. Unforeseen events should be reported to your Line Manager. It is good practice to have another adult to act as an escort during the journey. You should also ensure that you have the appropriate ‘business’ car insurance.
- Consume or be under the influence of alcohol or any substance, including the misuse of prescribed medication, when professionally active and responsible for either pupils, parents, other colleagues and/or school property.
- Have physical contact with young people that might be misconstrued or considered indecent or harmful. Ensure you are always able to give an account of the reasons for physical contact or physical intervention. Where physical contact is required, it is good practice for it to be within the sight of others. Any physical contact with a child that was needed to control or restrain a child should be the minimum required and clearly reported using CPOMS or via Class Charts.

All school employees should have a clear understanding of their responsibilities under this code of conduct. It aims to help them avoid poor working practices that *may* lead to their behaviour being *investigated* and the *consideration* of disciplinary procedures.

WE MUST BE AWARE THAT WE SHOULD REFER ANY INFORMATION TO THE HEADTEACHER, THAT MAY FIT INTO THE CRITERIA OF A LOW-LEVEL CONCERN AS SPECIFIED IN KCSIE 22.

‘What is a low-level concern?’



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The term 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant, it means that the behaviour towards a child does not meet the threshold set out at paragraph 338. A low-level concern is any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' - that an adult working in or on behalf of the school or college may have acted in a way that:

- is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work;*
- and*
- does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO'*