



Kimbolton School  
Cambridgeshire

# CODE OF CONDUCT

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**Policy owner:** Human Resources/Designated Safeguarding Lead

**Governor Committee:** People & Culture

**Policy Summary Statement:**

At Kimbolton School, we are proud of our supportive and professional community. This Code of Conduct outlines the standards we expect of all those who work with us, to ensure we provide the best possible environment for our pupils to thrive.

Many of the principles in this Code of Conduct are based on the Teachers' Standards.

This is a non-contractual policy, and it may be amended by the School from time to time as it deems appropriate.

**Release Date:** Spring 2026  
**Review Date:** Spring 2029



## Code of Conduct Policy

### INTRODUCTION

This policy relates to all of the following groups and going forward, the policy will refer to 'staff':

- all members of staff including teaching and support staff;
- governors;
- volunteers;
- casual workers;
- temporary, supply staff, and staff employed by service providers either from agencies or engaged directly; and
- student placements, including those undertaking initial teacher training and apprentices.

The principles underlying the guidance aim to encourage staff to achieve the highest possible standards of professional behaviour and minimise the risk of inappropriate conduct occurring.

Staff are in a unique position of trust and influence as a role model for children and must adhere to behaviour that sets a good example to all pupils within the School.

This Code of Conduct provides an overall framework of the behaviours expected of individuals who work in the School. The Code is not intended to be exhaustive and individuals should use sound professional, ethical and moral judgement to act in the best interests of the School, its pupils and its community. This policy must be read, understood and followed by all staff. Breach of or failure to observe this policy may result in action being taken under our disciplinary procedures including, but not limited to, dismissal; volunteers may have their status revoked.

This policy should be read in conjunction with other related policies and procedures, including:

1. Alcohol Policy
2. Bullying and Harassment Policy
3. Disciplinary Policy
4. Employee Handbook and Staff Information Booklets
5. Equal Opportunities for Staff Policy
6. Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
7. Grievance Policy
8. Health and Safety Policy
9. Low-level Concerns Policy
10. Safe ICT Use Agreement and other ICT Policies
11. Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy and policies referred to within it
12. Taking Storing and Using Images of Children Policy
13. Use of Reasonable Force Policy
14. Whistleblowing Policy

These policies can be accessed on the School's [Policies SharePoint page](#), [Human Resources SharePoint Page](#) and/or [School website](#).



## Code of Conduct Policy

### PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT TOWARDS COLLEAGUES

We are committed to fostering a culture of kindness, respect, and unity, guided by our ethos of **“one school, one family.”** Every member of staff plays a vital role in modelling these values through their everyday interactions with pupils, colleagues, and the wider school community.

All staff are expected to treat one another with courtesy, respect, and kindness at all times, regardless of role. As one team, we value the contribution of every individual and aim to create an environment where all members of our community feel heard, supported, and valued. Disagreements or concerns should be raised privately and constructively, with respect and thoughtfulness. Sarcasm, passive aggression, or a dismissive tone are not in keeping with the culture we strive to uphold. Such behaviour undermines our shared values and will not be tolerated. In meetings, shared spaces, and public settings, staff should model active listening, patience, and professionalism in all interactions.

The same warmth and respect should be reflected in written communication. When composing emails or other digital messages, staff should be mindful of tone, clarity, and audience. ‘Reply All’ should be used thoughtfully, and only when relevant to the whole group. Language that could be perceived as abrupt, critical, or excluding should be avoided, ensuring that all communication contributes positively to our shared culture of respect and kindness.

### INCLUSIVE WORKING

We are committed to equal treatment for all staff and pupils regardless of their race or colour, nationality or national or ethnic origins, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, marital or civil partnership status, gender reassignment, age, and disability (together known as Protected Characteristics).

We aim to create a friendly, caring and protective environment in which every individual is valued. We endeavour to contribute positively towards the growing autonomy, self-esteem and safety of each pupil.

Bullying, harassment, victimisation and/or discrimination will not be tolerated. We treat all of the School community fairly and with consideration which we expect to be reciprocated. Staff should ensure that they are familiar with our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy; Equal Opportunities for Staff Policy; Bullying and Harassment Policy; and our pupil policies on Anti-Bullying (including Child on Child Abuse).

### PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Staff must be of smart appearance in keeping with the School’s ethos and dress in a professional manner that is appropriate to the job. Staff act as role models for our pupils and as we expect pupils to wear smart uniform, we also expect staff to reflect and uphold this expectation. In all cases dress should be such that it:

- is not likely to be viewed as offensive, revealing, or sexually provocative;
- does not distract or cause embarrassment;
- does not include political, offensive or otherwise contentious slogans; and
- is not considered to be discriminatory and/or culturally insensitive



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When working from home or remotely (including the delivery of online lessons, or virtual meetings using a virtual meeting platform such as Zoom and/or Teams) staff must dress appropriately in clothing that is smart and of a similar style to that of a normal school day.

Further details of dress requirements for different roles can be found in the Employee Handbook and Staff Information Booklets.

### SMOKING AND VAPING

In accordance with the Health Act 2006 and UK legislation prohibiting smoking in enclosed and substantially enclosed public spaces and workplaces, smoking and vaping are strictly prohibited on all school premises, including buildings, grounds, and vehicles. Breaching this policy may result in disciplinary action as it may lead to significant fines for both the School and the individual involved. Additionally, staff must not smoke or vape whilst working with or supervising pupils offsite. This applies during school trips, sporting events, educational visits, or any activity where staff are acting in a professional capacity.

### ALCOHOL AND ILLEGAL DRUGS

The consumption of alcohol on school premises is not permitted, except during official school functions or with the explicit approval of the Headmaster or Head of Prep. On such occasions, modest amounts of alcohol may be consumed in accordance with the School's Alcohol Policy. Staff who reside on site may consume moderate amounts of alcohol within their private accommodation, provided they are off duty.

The use of illegal drugs is strictly prohibited at all times.

To ensure a safe, professional, and supportive environment for the entire school community, conduct and performance must remain unimpaired by alcohol or drugs while carrying out professional responsibilities. For this reason, the following are not permitted:

- Possession of alcohol on school premises without prior consent. Exceptions may be made when alcohol is brought as a gift for a colleague or as a contribution to an approved school event (e.g., a Parents' Association raffle).
- Driving on school premises, or operating a school vehicle, while under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs, or when responsible for supervising pupils.
- Consumption of alcohol during the school day or while undertaking school duties, whether on or off site, unless prior permission has been granted for a specific school event.
- Providing or facilitating access to alcohol for pupils during the school day or when on duty, on or off the premises, unless specifically authorised by the Headmaster.
- Any behaviour related to alcohol that could bring the School into disrepute, whether undertaken in an official capacity or otherwise.

Staff are trusted and expected to exercise sound judgment, maintain professionalism, and uphold the values of the School in all matters relating to alcohol and drug use. These standards are in place to promote wellbeing, safety, and a positive environment for the whole school community.



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### CONDUCT OUT OF SCHOOL

Staff are expected to be loyal to our stated aims and objectives and may not engage in any outside activity which, in the reasonable view of the Headmaster/Head of Prep, might interfere with the efficient discharge of their duties or is in conflict with the School's interests.

Staff should at all times, both in and out of School, uphold our ethos and conduct themselves in an appropriate manner.

Staff must notify the School of any outside conduct, activity or circumstances that are likely to either bring the School into disrepute or put into question a staff member's suitability for their role at the School. This includes any other employment.

### SCHOOL EVENTS

Staff are expected to behave appropriately at school events, including school organised social occasions. A school event, which may or may not take place outside of working hours or on school premises, is sufficiently connected to the School such that the standards of behaviour expected will be in line with the requirements in this policy.

### SECURITY

In the interests of security, all staff must visibly wear either a school lanyard and/or ID badge and/or official crested clothing when working in school. We reserve the right to search outer clothing, bags, lockers and vehicles, etc., whilst staff are on site, should we have cause to be suspicious about what they may be carrying. Staff may choose to have a fellow colleague in attendance on such occasions. Staff should pay the utmost attention to the security of school buildings and the site in general and should ensure that buildings and windows are shut and/or locked as appropriate when they leave them.

### HEALTH AND SAFETY

You have a duty to ensure that a safe working environment exists for you and colleagues and pupils. Fire and evacuation procedures must be adhered to at all times and you are required to familiarise yourself with the procedures and your responsibilities set out in our Health and Safety Policy.

### GIFTS, REWARDS, HOSPITALITY AND FAVOURS

Staff should take care to ensure that they do not appear to accept a gift that may be construed as a bribe or lead the giver to expect preferential treatment. Any gift offered or received over the value of £50 (or if the total value of gifts or hospitality received from one person exceeds £50), must be recorded in the Hospitality Book held in the Senior School Reception.

Staff should exercise care when selecting pupils for school teams, productions, trips and/or specific work tasks in order to avoid perceptions of favouritism or injustice.

This is especially important where the member of staff has a child at the school as a pupil.

Similar care should be exercised when excluding a child from an activity without prior consultation with the Headmaster/Head of Prep or the Senior Deputy Head.



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Staff should not give presents/rewards to an individual outside of our reward system.

### INTERNET

Where appropriate and duly authorised, staff are encouraged to make use of the internet as part of their official professional activities. Attention must be paid to ensuring that published information has relevance to normal professional activities before material is released in Kimbolton School's name. Where personal views are expressed, a disclaimer stating that this is the case should be clearly added to all correspondence.

Intellectual property rights and copyright must not be compromised or infringed when publishing on the internet.

The availability and variety of information on the internet has meant that it can be used to obtain material reasonably considered to be offensive. The use of the internet to access and/or distribute any kind of offensive material or non-related employment issues will leave an individual liable to disciplinary action, which could lead to dismissal. Any abuse of the internet facility will be viewed with utmost severity.

### SOCIAL NETWORKING AND DIGITAL PLATFORMS

During working hours, social networking sites such as Facebook, Instagram etc. should not be accessed, unless a requirement of the role (eg. Marketing). However, during breaks, the School has no objection to the utilisation of school equipment for this purpose as long as it is in designated staff spaces, indoors, and away from pupils.

Be aware, however, that these sites are in the public domain and that any comments relating to work or to the School will be treated in the same way as intellectual property above. Any derogatory comments will, therefore, be treated as potentially damaging to the School's interests and will be the subject of disciplinary action, including possible dismissal for gross misconduct. This applies whether or not the comments were made during working hours or outside working hours from any device.

Only designated staff within the External Relations team, or those identified by this team, may post on behalf of the School using official social media accounts. Content must be professional, inclusive, and reflect the School's ethos and values. Staff must not create unofficial accounts representing the School or its activities.

### EMAIL

The email system is available for communication on matters directly concerned with the legitimate business of the School. Employees using the email system should give particular attention to the following points:

- Email messages and copies should only be sent to those for whom they are particularly relevant.
- Email should not be used as a substitute for face-to-face communication. "Flame-mails" (e-mails that are abusive) must not be sent. Hasty messages, sent without proper consideration, can upset, cause concern or misunderstandings.



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- If email is confidential, the user must ensure that the necessary steps are taken to protect confidentiality as the School will be liable for infringing copyright or any defamatory information circulated either within the School or to external users of the system.
- Offers or contracts transmitted via email are as legally binding on the School as those sent on paper.
- Any failure to observe these guidelines can result in disciplinary action.

The School will not tolerate the use of the e-mail system for unofficial or inappropriate purposes, including:

- a message that could constitute bullying, harassment or other detriment.
- online gambling.
- accessing or transmitting pornography.
- transmitting copyright information and/or any software available to the user.
- posting confidential information about other employees, the School or its customers or suppliers.

Regular monitoring of email messages will be carried out on a random basis. Hard copies of email messages will be used as evidence in disciplinary proceedings. Users are reminded that the mere deletion of a message or file may not fully eliminate it from the system. Employees who have cause for complaint as a result of email communications should raise the matter initially with their Head of Department. If appropriate, the complaint can then be raised through the School's grievance procedure.

The same guidelines must be applied when using communication platforms such as Microsoft Teams or Zoom, which must be used in a professional, respectful and appropriate manner when communicating with both staff and pupils. All messages, posts, chats and shared content should relate directly to legitimate School business and support teaching, learning or operational needs. Staff must ensure that communications are clear, polite and suitable for a school environment at all times.

### DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION

Staff shall not directly or indirectly disclose to any unauthorised person any knowledge or information of a sensitive or confidential nature relating to the school's business, or its staff, pupils, or parents/carers. Staff will not use for their own purposes or profit, or for any purposes other than those of the School, any information of a sensitive or confidential nature which they may acquire in relation to the School's business and/or its staff, pupils, or parents/carers. The rules concerning disclosure of information apply both during and after employment with the School.

### CONDUCT TOWARDS PUPILS

Every member of staff, whether in a teaching, administrative, pastoral, or operational role, contributes to the pastoral care of our pupils and should maintain high standards of conduct in all interactions with them.

- Our approach is warm but firm: consistent, calm, and kind, with clear boundaries and mutual respect, together with high expectations of pupil behaviour.
- Shouting, swearing, or losing one's temper is never acceptable, including during trips, matches, and informal settings.



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- Pupil behaviour should be addressed constructively, focusing on actions rather than personal judgment or character. For example, “I don’t like that behaviour” is appropriate; “I don’t like you” is not.
- Staff should always aim to de-escalate situations with empathy and professionalism, supporting the pupil’s growth while upholding the School’s expectations.

### STAFF/PUPIL RELATIONSHIPS

Staff must ensure that their interactions with pupils remain within the boundaries of a respectful and professional relationship, and should avoid any behaviour that could be misinterpreted by others.

Sexual relationships or sexual contact with any pupils, or encouraging a relationship to develop in a way which might lead to a sexual relationship, or any relationship considered inappropriate with any pupil at the School is a grave breach of trust that will usually lead to disciplinary action and may also lead to criminal prosecution. It is a criminal offence and an abuse of a position of trust to have any sexual relationship with any School pupil under the age of 18. Whilst not a criminal offence, it is a breach of this Code and considered to be gross misconduct to have a sexual relationship with any pupil of this School, even if over the age of 18.

Staff should recognise that a power imbalance may continue to exist even after a pupil has left the School, particularly where the young person is still developing emotionally, socially, or educationally.

If an intimate or sexual relationship were to develop between a member of staff and a former pupil shortly after the pupil has left the School, this would raise significant concerns about a possible abuse of the staff member’s position of trust or grooming behaviour while the pupil was still at the School. Any such concern will be referred to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and may lead to disciplinary action following an appropriate hearing.

If a former member of staff becomes aware of, or intends to enter into, a personal relationship with a former pupil who is under the age of 25, this must be declared without delay to the Headmaster. The School will consider whether the relationship gives rise to any safeguarding, boundary, or reputational concerns, and may seek advice from the LADO where appropriate. Where there is any indication that the relationship began, or was groomed, while the pupil was still at the School or under 18 years of age, the matter will be treated as a serious safeguarding concern and referred immediately to the LADO.

Staff are required to self-refer under our Low-Level Concerns Policy in the event that they have found themselves in a situation which may be misinterpreted, might appear compromising to others, and/or on reflection has made them believe they have behaved in a way that may be considered to fall below the expected professional standard. Staff also have a duty to report any concerns they may have about a relationship between a fellow colleague and pupil. All concerns will be handled sensitively and will be dealt with appropriately and proportionately.

### INFATUATIONS

On occasion, pupils may develop an infatuation with a member of staff. If a member of staff suspects or becomes aware of an infatuation, the advice of the DSL must be sought immediately.



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Members of staff must alert the DSL if they believe that there is a possibility of a pupil being infatuated with a colleague in order that appropriate steps can be taken to safeguard that child.

Staff should deal with these situations sensibly and appropriately to maintain the dignity and safety of all concerned.

### ONE TO ONE SITUATIONS

If working individually with pupils, staff should be aware of the potential vulnerability of pupils and themselves in such situations. Staff should manage these situations and take reasonable and sensible precautions to ensure the safety and security of the pupil and themselves alike.

Individual work with pupils should not be undertaken in secluded areas or behind a closed door. Where it is necessary to close doors for reasons of confidentiality another colleague should be made aware of this and asked to remain vigilant. Wherever possible, one-to-one work should only be undertaken with the knowledge of another member of staff to minimise risk to those involved. This includes interviews of any sort.

Where it is necessary to conduct a one-to-one session online (for example, using a platform such as Zoom or Teams) staff must ensure that another colleague is aware of the session and, wherever possible, arrange for a parent/carer to be in the same room, or record the meeting for transparency.

Where possible, a gap or barrier (e.g. a table, talking across a desk or sitting on separate chairs) should be maintained at all times. Any physical contact should be the minimum required for care, instruction or restraint.

Staff should avoid contact with pupils outside of school hours if possible. Personal contact details should not be exchanged between staff and pupils unless in an emergency situation, in which case this needs to be referred to the DSL or a member of the SLT.

### PHYSICAL CONTACT WITH PUPILS

There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate and proper for staff to have physical contact with pupils, but it is crucial that they only do so in ways appropriate to their professional role. Physical contact may be appropriate in the following circumstances:

- when a pupil needs encouragement to attempt a new challenge e.g. to climb on to a piece of apparatus; or
- when there is a need to take urgent action to avoid an incident or injury to themselves or other children or adults.
- In rare cases, when a pupil needs to get comfort or reassurance (e.g. following an accident or personal crisis), but staff should consider carefully whether this is strictly necessary and desired by the pupil.

Staff should use their professional judgement at all times. Physical contact must be appropriate for the age, understanding and gender of the child and must never threaten or be sexually inappropriate. Staff must also be sensitive to an individual's cultural background, whether they are happy to accept physical contact, and any special educational needs.



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Staff should not have unnecessary physical contact with pupils and should be alert to the fact that minor forms of friendly physical contact can be misconstrued by pupils or onlookers.

Staff are referred to our Use of Reasonable Force Policy for guidance on the use of reasonable force in relation to pupils.

### TRANSPORTING PUPILS

In certain circumstances it may be appropriate for staff to transport pupils offsite on approved school business. The Senior Deputy Head/Prep Assistant Head (Co-Curricular & Enrichment) must oversee the plan and provide oversight of all transport arrangements. Staff should not transport pupils without prior authorisation or in the case of an emergency. Separate guidelines apply for houseparent/tutors/matrons who are acting in loco parentis.

Staff should ensure that the driver is not distracted while the vehicle is in motion for any reason other than an emergency and should also ensure all passengers are wearing correctly fastened seatbelts.

Prior to transporting pupils offsite, consent must be obtained from a pupil's parent/carer and staff should be aware that the safety and welfare of the pupils is their responsibility until they are safely passed back to their parent/carer.

Staff should never be alone in a vehicle with a pupil, except in cases of an emergency or with prior approval from the DSL.

### CONTACT WITH PUPILS OUT OF SCHOOL

Staff should not:

- arrange meetings with pupils off the School premises (whether in person or online) without the prior approval of the Headmaster/Head of Prep;
- arrange private tuition of any of our pupils in school or outside of school whether in term-time or outside of term-time without the prior written approval of the Headmaster/Head of Prep; and
- give pupils their home address or any personal contact details.

Staff should exercise professional caution and discretion if they choose to socialise with parents and carers of current pupils and bear in mind their professional responsibilities to those parents' children at all times. They must maintain appropriate professional boundaries at all times and ensure that confidentiality is not breached. Any interactions that could be perceived as compromising these boundaries should be declared and managed in accordance with the Low Level Concerns policy.

### COMMUNICATION THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA

Personal social media profiles should not be available to pupils. If staff have a personal profile on social media sites, it is advisable to consider using a first and middle name instead of a full name. All social media profiles must be set to private.



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Staff should not attempt to contact pupils via social media, or any other means outside school, in order to develop any sort of relationship. Staff should not be contacting parents/carers via social media. However, if they are existing 'friends' then staff should report this as a Low-Level Concern.

Staff should not have contact through any personal social medium with any pupils, other than those mediums approved by the Senior Leadership Team, unless the staff concerned are family members. This stipulation remains extant for two years after the pupil has left Kimbolton School. For those pupils departing the School before the end of the Upper Sixth, staff should not be in direct social media contact until the ex-pupil is 21.

Staff will ensure that they do not post any images online that identify children who are pupils at the school without their parents/carers consent. In addition, staff should also consider the content of their social media and remove anything that could be considered inappropriate or that might bring the school into disrepute.

Staff should be aware of and refer to the Safe ICT Use Agreement and the School's Online Safety Policy.

### PREVENT DUTY

Staff should understand that we have a legal duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 to have 'due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism'. This is known as the Prevent duty. Further details about staff responsibilities can be found in our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

### ETHICAL BELIEFS

Staff must not allow their own personal, political, religious or other views and opinions to interfere with their work. Staff are expected to be neutral in their views in the course of their work at the school and to present a balanced view when working with pupils.

### CONCERNS OR COMPLAINTS

We aim to create an atmosphere in which a diverse range of people can work together openly in the spirit of mutual respect and trust towards a common purpose. Nevertheless, we recognise that it is possible for misunderstandings and disagreements to arise or for mistakes to occur.

#### **Staff Complaints**

Complaints should be dealt with immediately and openly and staff should try to resolve issues informally in the first instance. If this approach is impractical or unsuccessful, staff may wish to raise their concerns more formally in accordance with our Grievance Procedure or Whistleblowing Procedure, depending upon the nature of the concern.

#### **Parental Complaints**

Staff must ensure that parental complaints are dealt with in accordance with our Complaints Policy.

#### **Safeguarding**

For procedures for dealing with concerns or allegations about a child or disclosures / allegations of abuse, please refer to our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.



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### **Low-Level Concerns**

As part of our whole-school approach to safeguarding, we promote 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. This includes 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 may have acted in a way that is inconsistent with this Code of Conduct Policy and does not meet the harm threshold set out in the statutory guidance - Keeping Children Safe in Education.

It is important that Low-Level Concerns are shared, as soon as reasonably possible and further details on what low level concerns are and reporting can be found in the Low-Level Concerns Policy.