

HUNGERFORD NURSERY SCHOOL



Code of Conduct for Staff, Governors and Volunteers

To be reviewed: Annually

Policy Agreed: 14/07/2025

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Headteacher	Sign:	
	Date:	14/07/2025
Chair of Governors	Sign:	
	Date:	14/07/2025

Date	Description of any changes
29.05.25	Rewritten policy using The Key Model policy as a basis.

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1. Aims, Scope and Principles

This policy aims to set and maintain standards of conduct that we expect all staff, governors and volunteers to follow. **The term 'staff' will be used as a blanket term which includes staff, governors and volunteers.**

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](#).

Nursery school staff have an influential position in the nursery school and will act as role models for children and families 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 nursery 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 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 nursery school and its children and families.

2. Legislation and Guidance

We are required to establish procedures for the regulation of staff conduct under regulation 7 of [The School Staffing \(England\) Regulations 2009](#).

In line with the statutory safeguarding guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#), we have a staff code of conduct, which covers (among other things): low-level concerns, allegations against staff and whistle-blowing, as well as acceptable use of technologies (including the use of mobile devices), staff/pupil relationships and communications, including the use of social media.

3. General Obligations

Staff set an example to children and families.

They will:

- Maintain high standards in their attendance and punctuality
- Never use inappropriate or offensive language in the nursery school
- Treat children 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
- Express personal beliefs in a way that will not overly influence children and families, and will not exploit children's vulnerability and might lead them to break the law
- Understand the statutory frameworks they must act within

In addition to the above, teachers must:

- Adhere to the Teachers' Standards

4. Safeguarding

Staff have a duty to safeguard children from harm, and to report any concerns they have. This includes physical, emotional and sexual abuse, or neglect.

Staff will familiarise themselves with our child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures and the Prevent duty, and ensure they are aware of the processes to follow if they have concerns about a child.

Our child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures are available online on the 'All staff drive'. All staff will also be expected to read Part 1 of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' and Appendix A and sign to say that they have read this. There is also an expectation that all staff and volunteers will have ongoing, regular updates of safeguarding training as provided by the nursery school.

4.1 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 be the headteacher, or the chair of Governors where the headteacher is the subject of the allegation.

4.2 Low-level concerns about members of staff

A low-level concern is behaviour towards a child by a member of staff that does not meet the harm threshold, but 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 and safeguarding policy. We also encourage staff to self-refer if they find themselves in a situation that could be misinterpreted. If staff are not sure whether behaviour would be deemed a low-level concern, we encourage staff to report it.

All reports will be handled in a responsive, sensitive and proportionate way.

Unprofessional behaviour will be addressed, and the staff member supported to correct it, at an early stage.

This creates and embeds a culture of openness, trust and transparency in which our school values and expected behaviour are constantly lived, monitored and reinforced by all staff, while minimising the risk of abuse.

Reporting and responding to low-level concerns is covered in more detail in our child protection and safeguarding policy. This is available online on the 'All staff drive'.

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

4.3 Whistle-blowing

Whistle-blowing reports wrongdoing that it is “in the public interest”. Examples linked to safeguarding include:

- Pupils’ or staff members’ health and safety being put in danger
- Failure to comply with a legal obligation or statutory requirement
- Attempts to cover up the above, or any other wrongdoing in the public interest

Staff are encouraged to report suspected wrongdoing as soon as possible. Their concerns will be taken seriously and investigated, and their confidentiality will be respected. The school aims to encourage openness and will support whistleblowers who raise genuine concerns under this policy, even if they turn out to be mistaken.

Staff should consider the examples above when deciding whether their concern is of a whistle-blowing nature. Consider whether the incident(s) was illegal, breached statutory or school procedures, put people in danger or was an attempt to cover any such activity up.

Staff should report their concern to the headteacher. If the concern is about the headteacher, or it is believed they may be involved in the wrongdoing in some way, the staff member should report their concern to the Chair of Governors.

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. The school will investigate any complaints in a timely, respectful and confidential manner.

For our school’s detailed whistle-blowing process, please refer to our whistle-blowing policy.

5. 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
- 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. 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 Governors. The school will investigate any complaints in a timely, respectful and confidential manner.

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.

6. Staff/Children/Families Relationships

Staff will observe proper boundaries with children and families 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 children must spend time on a one-to-one basis, staff will ensure that:

- This takes place in a public place that others can access
- Others can see into the room
- A colleague or line manager knows this is taking place
- All intimate care will follow 'Procedures for changing a child' (Safer Working practices)

Staff should avoid contact with children outside of school hours if possible.

Personal contact details should not be exchanged between staff and families. This includes social media profiles.

While we are aware many children and their parents may wish to give gifts to staff, for example, at the end of the school year, gifts from staff to children are not acceptable.

Staff are not to provide any statement or report which has been requested for the purposes of court proceedings. Staff should report such requests to the Headteacher who will liaise with the family. The nursery school will only provide such reports on production of a court order.

If a staff member is concerned at any point that an interaction between themselves and a pupil may be misinterpreted, or if a staff member is concerned at any point about a fellow staff member and a pupil, this should be reported in line with the procedures set out in our child protection and safeguarding policy.

7. Communication and Social Media

"In general terms, the nursery school expects that the conduct of its employees and volunteers is such that no justifiable complaint can be made by parents, pupils, colleagues, Governors, other bodies or agencies or members of the community in relation to conduct and behaviour of school staff." This principle applies to the use of social media.

The way in which staff present and conduct themselves on social media can have an impact on the public perception of the nursery school and influence the way in which those staff members are perceived by children and families of the nursery school. In their use of social media, staff should be aware that their online behaviour could affect their professional standing, dignity and perception of their integrity.

It is recommended that staff take adequate precautions when using social media, both in vetting material that could be connected to them (through their own profile and information added about them) and through the use of appropriate security settings. They should also think about photographs that are shared.

It is recommended that staff do not identify their nursery school on social media as this could directly link their behaviour outside of work with the reputation of the nursery school, possibly damaging the nursery school's reputation and leading to disciplinary action.

Staff should not attempt to contact children or their families 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 children's or parents' social media profiles. Staff and volunteers should not accept new friend requests from parents and families.

Staff will ensure that they do not post any images online of children and families who are pupils at the nursery school.

8. Acceptable use of Technology

Staff will not use technology in the nursery 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 nursery school IT system.

8.1 Mobile phones

Staff are asked to follow the following guidance around personal mobile phone storage and usage during the school day:

- Mobile phones must be stored safely and away from sight of children and visitors-in bags, cupboards, drawers or mobile phone boxes at all times. They must not be kept in pockets or on desks during the school day.
- Mobile phones must be on silent during the school day.
- If staff need to use their mobile phone during the school day they must do so in a designated place within the nursery school. Designated places are the staffroom or offices away from children.
- Staff will not use personal mobile phones or cameras to take pictures of children or families.
- Mobile phones may be taken on trips and visits as a safety measure but will only be used for making and receiving calls in emergency situations.

9. Confidentiality

In the course of their role, members of staff are often privy to sensitive and confidential information about the nursery school, staff, pupils and their parents/carers.

This information will never be:

- Disclosed to anyone without the relevant authority including parents, friends and family.
- Used to humiliate, embarrass or blackmail others
- Used for a purpose other than what it was collected and intended for

This does not overrule a staff member's duty to report child protection concerns to the appropriate channel where staff believe a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm, as detailed further in our child protection and safeguarding policy.

9.1 Data security and storage of records

We will protect personal data and keep it safe from unauthorised or unlawful access, alteration, processing or disclosure, and against accidental or unlawful loss, destruction or damage.

In particular:

- Paper-based records and portable electronic devices, such as laptops and hard drives that contain personal data are kept under lock and key when not in use
- Papers containing confidential personal data must not be left on office and classroom desks, on staffroom tables, pinned to notice/display boards, or left anywhere else where there is general access
- Where personal information needs to be taken off site, staff must sign it in and out from the school office
- Passwords that are at least 8 characters long containing letters and numbers are used to access school computers, laptops and other electronic devices. Staff and pupils are reminded to change their passwords at regular intervals
- Encryption software is used to protect all portable devices and removable media, such as laptops and USB devices
- Staff, pupils or governors who store personal information on their personal devices are expected to follow the same security procedures as for school-owned equipment (see our ICT, E-Safety and Laptop Policy)
- Where we need to share personal data with a third party, we carry out due diligence and take reasonable steps to ensure it is stored securely and adequately protected (see section 8)

9.2 Disposal of records

Personal data that is no longer needed will be disposed of securely. Personal data that has become inaccurate or out of date will also be disposed of securely, where we cannot or do not need to rectify or update it.

For example, we will shred or incinerate paper-based records and overwrite or delete electronic files.

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.

Staff will ensure that all information given to the nursery school is correct. This should include:

- Background information (including any past or current investigations/cautions related to conduct outside of nursery school)
- Qualifications
- Professional experience

Where there are any updates to the information provided to the nursery school, the member of staff will advise the nursery 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.

Outfits will not be overly revealing and should be at least knee length.

Clothes will not display any offensive or political slogans.

Footwear should be safe and appropriate.

12. Conduct Outside of Work

Staff will not act in a way that would bring the nursery school into disrepute. This covers conduct including but not limited to relevant criminal offences, such as violence or sexual misconduct, as well as negative comments about the nursery school on social media, any conduct of this nature could lead to disciplinary action.

13. Monitoring Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed every two years but can be revised as needed. It will be ratified by the full governing board.

14. Links with other Policies, Guidance and Procedures

This policy links with our policies and guidance on:

- Disciplinary Policy
- Grievance Guidance
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- IT and Digital Guidance
- Data Protection Policy
- Equality Policy
- Leave of Absence Guidance
- Lone Working Guidance
- Managing Staff Sickness Policy
- Redundancy Policy
- Guidance for Safe Working Practice