



**STAFF BEHAVIOUR/  
CODE OF CONDUCT**

**KINGSMEAD SCHOOL HOYLAKES TRUST LTD**  
**Including Boarding and Early Years Foundation Stage**

**Staff Behaviour and  
Code of Conduct**

This code of conduct applies to all adults in the School, including the Early Years setting. It aims to help establish the safest possible learning and working environment, which safeguards children and reduces the risk of being falsely accused of improper or unprofessional conduct.

Staff need to ensure that their behaviour does not inadvertently lay them open to allegations of abuse. They need to treat all pupils with respect and try, as far as possible, not to be alone with a child or young person. Where this is not possible, for example, in an instrumental music lesson, or sports coaching lesson, it is good practice to ensure that others are within earshot. Where possible, a gap or barrier should be maintained between teacher and child at all times. Any physical contact should be the minimum required for care, instruction or restraint. Staff should avoid taking one pupil on his/her own in a car.

In general, pupils should be encouraged to discuss with their parents or guardians issues that are troubling them. It may be appropriate to suggest that a pupil sees the school counsellor or first aider.

**Responsibilities**

Staff are accountable for the way in which they exercise authority; manage risk; use resources; and safeguard children.

All staff have a responsibility to keep pupils safe and to protect them from abuse (sexual, physical and emotional), neglect and safeguarding concerns. Pupils have a right to be safe and to be treated with respect and dignity. It follows that trusted adults are expected to take reasonable steps to ensure their safety and well-being. Failure to do so may be regarded as professional misconduct.

**Communication with Pupils (including the use of social media)**

Staff should not give their personal mobile phone numbers or email addresses to pupils, nor should they communicate with them by text message or personal email. If they need to speak to a pupil by telephone, they should use one of the school's telephones and email using the school system. The group leader on all trips and visits involving an overnight stay should take a school mobile phone with him/her and may ask the pupils for their mobile numbers before allowing them out in small, unsupervised groups. The school mobile should be used for any contact with pupils that may be necessary. The group leader will delete any record of pupils' mobile phone numbers at the end of the trip or visit and should ensure that pupils delete any staff numbers that they may have acquired during the trip. Staff should be aware that it is not appropriate to use social media to communicate with pupils. Staff are reminded that it is a criminal offence for a person aged 18 or over to have a sexual relationship with a child under 18 where that person is in a position of trust in respect of that child, even if the relationship is consensual.

Please also refer to the Social Media Policy, (Section E, para 7 of the Staff Handbook) for staff's obligations in relation to electronic communications with pupils.

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**Behaviour Management**

Corporal punishment and smacking is unlawful in all schools and early years' settings.

Staff should not use any form of degrading or humiliating treatment to punish a child. The use of sarcasm, demeaning or insensitive comments towards children is completely unacceptable.

Where pupils display difficult or challenging behaviour, staff should follow the school's behaviour and discipline policy using strategies appropriate to the circumstance and situation.

Consideration would always be given where a pupil has specific needs in respect of particularly challenging behaviour.

**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. Staff should, therefore, use their professional judgement at all times. 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.

A member of staff can never take the place of a parent in providing physical comfort and should be cautious of any demonstration of affection.

Physical contact should never be secretive, or of the gratification of the adult, or represent a misuse of authority. If a member of staff believes that an action could be misinterpreted, the incident and circumstances should be recorded as soon as possible, the DSL informed and, if appropriate, a copy placed on the pupil's file.

**Physical Restraint**

Any physical restraint is only permissible when a child is in imminent danger of inflicting an injury on himself/herself or on another, and then only as a last resort when all efforts to diffuse the situation have failed. Another member of staff should, if possible, be present to act as a witness. All incidents of the use of physical restraint should be recorded in writing and reported immediately to the DSL and Headmaster who will decide what to do next. Where this relates to the school's nursery/EYFS setting, parents will be informed of any physical restraint used on their child the same day or as soon as reasonably practicable.

**Physical education and other activities requiring physical contact**

Where exercises or procedures need to be demonstrated, extreme caution should be used if the demonstration involves contact with pupils and, wherever possible, contact should be avoided. It is

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acknowledged that some staff, for example, those who teach PE and games, or who offer music tuition, will, on occasions, have to initiate physical contact with pupils in order to support a pupil so they can perform a task safely, to demonstrate the use of a particular piece of equipment/instrument or assist them with an exercise. This should be done with the pupil's agreement.

Contact under these circumstances should be for the minimum time necessary to complete the activity and take place in an open environment. Staff should remain sensitive to any discomfort expressed verbally or non-verbally by the child.

### **One to One Situations**

There are certain situations where one-to-one tuition is the normal practice (e.g. peripatetic music tuition and LDU tuition).

In all of these cases, it is paramount that the staff concerned:

- ensure that when lone working is an integral part of their role, full and appropriate risk assessments have been conducted and agreed.
- avoid meetings with a child in remote, secluded areas, or in classrooms where clear visual access is obscured
- always inform other colleagues and/or parents/carers about the contact(s) beforehand.
- avoid use of 'engaged' or equivalent signs wherever possible. Such signs may create an opportunity for secrecy or the interpretation of secrecy
- always report any situation where a child becomes distressed or angry to a senior colleague
- carefully consider the needs and circumstances of the child/children when in one to one situations

### **Electronic communication with pupils**

Please see the E-Safety Policy and the Social Media Policy (Section E, para 7 of the Staff Handbook) for staff's obligations in relation to electronic communications with pupils. **Staff are required to undertake regular training on internet and safety online.**

### **Transporting pupils**

It is inadvisable for a teacher to give a lift in a car to a pupil alone. Wherever possible and practicable it is advisable that transport is undertaken other than in private vehicles, with at least one adult additional to the driver acting as an escort. If there are exceptional circumstances that make unaccompanied transportation of pupils unavoidable, the journey should be made known to a senior member of staff.

### **Confidentiality**

Confidential information about pupils and their families must be kept confidential at all times and only shared when legally permissible to do so in the interest of the child. Records should only be shared with those who have a legitimate professional need to see them. Staff members should never give absolute guarantees of confidentiality to pupils or adults wishing to tell them about something serious. They should guarantee only that they will pass on information to the minimum number of people who must be told in

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order to ensure that the proper action is taken to sort out the problem and that they will not tell anyone who does not have a clear need to know. They will also take whatever steps they can to protect the informing pupil or adult from any retaliation or unnecessary stress that might be feared after a disclosure has been made.

**Action if a Pupil is Missing**

Please refer also to the school's missing child policy and procedures which also include the requirements for an EYFS missing child in its content.

During the working day:

- first check with the pupil's friends
- check the surgery
- check with reception who will check the signing out/in book and if necessary inform the senior member of staff on duty who will then follow up this information.

A record is kept by the school of any instances in which a pupil is missing from school without satisfactory permission and documentation, including the action taken and the pupil's explanation.

**Equal Treatment**

We are committed to equal treatment for all pupils regardless of sex, race, disability, religion or belief. We keep a record of discriminatory incidents.

We aim to create a friendly, caring and perceptive environment in which every individual is valued. We endeavour to contribute positively towards the growing autonomy, self-esteem and safety of each pupil. Our staff undertake regular consultation activities with our pupils e.g. through participation in anti-bullying week and speaking to children about their experiences at lunchtime and play-times.

**Bullying**

Bullying, harassment and victimisation and discrimination will not be tolerated. We treat all our pupils and their parents fairly and with consideration and we expect them to reciprocate towards each other, the staff and the school. Any kind of bullying including cyber bullying is unacceptable and the school keeps a record of any incidents. We recognise that SEND can be a motivation for bullying and prejudice. Please see our school policy on anti-bullying for further details.

**Complaints**

Copies of the school's complaints policy and procedure is on the website for parents to read. Any complaint arising from the implementation of this policy will be considered under the school's complaints procedure.

**Whistleblowing**

Kingsmead school wishes to foster a culture of openness and safety and our Whistleblowing Procedure reflects this. Should any member of staff have any concerns about the behaviour of another member of staff towards a pupil, he or she should report it at once to the Headmaster and to the DSL (or to the Chairman of

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Governors where the concern relates to the Headmaster or a Governor). Any concern will be thoroughly investigated under the school's whistle-blowing procedures. Such reporting will be without prejudice to the member of staff's position in the school. Where there are allegations of criminal activity, the LADO will always be informed, and advice taken, before the school undertakes any investigation of its own. Wherever possible, and subject to the rights of the pupil, the member of staff will be informed of the outcome of the investigation. No one who reports a genuine concern in good faith needs to fear retribution. Under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 the member of staff may be entitled to raise a concern directly with an external body where the circumstances justify it. (Please see Whistleblowing Policy, available on request from the school office).

**Sharing Concerns and Recording Incidents**

In the event of an allegation being made, by any person, or incident being witnessed, the relevant information should be immediately recorded and reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (Mrs S Hepworth) or in her absence to one of the Deputy Safeguarding Lead's (Mr M Gibbons or Mrs Liddy or Mrs A Gibbons). To safeguard and protect pupils and colleagues, where staff have any concerns they should immediately report them.

**Daily Conduct Requirements of Staff**

**Attendance and Timekeeping**

Should a staff member need to be absent or expect to be late for any reason, he/she should ask their Head of Department in advance when possible and complete the request form. If this is not possible, he/she is asked to contact the Headmasters Office at the earliest opportunity.

**Smoking**

To promote a healthy and pleasant working environment and because of the fire risk, smoking is not allowed anywhere on site.

**Alcohol and Illegal Drugs**

Consumption of alcohol or illegal drugs is not permitted on site save where at a school function or otherwise agreed when modest amounts of alcohol may be consumed. Employees conduct and performance must not be adversely impacted by alcohol or drugs when undertaking their duties.

**Security**

In the interests of security, staff must not remove any school documents from the site nor take any photographs without due permission. The school reserves the right to search the outer clothing, bags, lockers and vehicles etc. of staff members whilst on site. The staff member may have a colleague in attendance on such (rare) occasions.

**Personal Appearance**

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The school regularly receives visits from parents, potential parents and others, and naturally wishes to convey an impression of efficiency and organisation. Therefore whilst not wishing to impose unreasonable obligations of staff they are, nonetheless, required to look smart in appearance.

**Gifts, Rewards, Favouritism and Exclusion**

Staff need to take care that they do not accept any gift that might be construed as a bribe by others, or lead the giver to expect preferential treatment. It is inadvisable to give such personal gifts to pupils or their families. This could be interpreted as a gesture either to bribe or groom. It might also be perceived that a favour of some kind is expected in return.

Any reward given to a pupil should be in accordance with the school's behaviour policy.

Staff should exercise care when selecting children for specific activities, jobs or privileges in order to avoid perceptions of favouritism or injustice. Similar care should be exercised when pupils are excluded from an activity. Methods of selection and exclusion should always be subject to clear, fair, agreed criteria.

**Infatuations and 'crushes'**

All staff need to recognise that it is not uncommon for pupils to be strongly attracted to a member of staff and/or develop a 'crush' or infatuation. They should make every effort to ensure that their own behaviour cannot be brought into question, does not appear to encourage this and be aware that such infatuations may carry a risk of their words or actions being misinterpreted.

Any member of staff who receives a report, overhears something, or otherwise notices any sign, however small or seemingly insignificant, that a young person has become or may be becoming infatuated with either themselves or a colleague, should immediately report this to the Headmaster/Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). In this way appropriate early intervention can be taken which can prevent escalation and avoid hurt, embarrassment or distress for those concerned. If the Headmaster has the concern that a young person is becoming infatuated with them, they should report this to the Chair of Governors.

The Headmaster or DSL should give careful thought to those circumstances where the staff member, pupil and their parents/carers should be spoken to and should ensure a plan to manage the situation is put in place. This plan should respond sensitively to the child and staff member and maintain the dignity of all.

**Social contact outside of the workplace**

It is acknowledged that staff may have genuine friendships and social contact with parents of pupils, independent of the professional relationship. Staff should, however, also be aware that professionals

who sexually harm children often seek to establish relationships and contact outside of the workplace with both the child and their parents, in order to 'groom' the adult and the child and/or create opportunities for sexual abuse. It is also important to recognise that social contact may provide opportunities for other types of grooming such as for the purpose of sexual exploitation or radicalisation. Staff should recognise that some types of social contact with pupils or their families could be perceived as harmful or exerting inappropriate influence on children, and may bring the setting into disrepute (e.g. attending a political protest, circulating propaganda).

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If the pupil or parent seeks to establish social contact, or if this occurs coincidentally, the member of staff should exercise his/her professional judgement. This also applies to social contacts made through outside interests or the staff member's own family.

Some staff may, as part of their professional role, be required to support a parent or carer. If that person comes to depend upon the staff member or seeks support outside of their professional role this should be discussed with senior management and where necessary referrals made to the appropriate support agency.

**Mobility and Flexibility**

Due to the demands and nature of the school, staff should be prepared to transfer upon request within departments either temporarily or permanently, to undertake work of a different nature, providing it is reasonable and safe to do so and the staff member is adequately trained.

**Use of Mobile Phones and Cameras**

Photographs will only be taken of children with their parents' permission (provided in writing via consent form). Photographs will only be taken by a designated staff member/s. Where photographs are taken by staff to give evidence of children's progress, photos can only be taken on school cameras, or with written authorisation of the Headmaster. They must then be downloaded onto school computers and deleted from the original camera, where they will be monitored. Photos cannot be used or passed on outside the school.

**Neither staff nor children may use their own mobile phones to take photographs within our EYFS setting; nursery and up to Reception year in our school.**

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