CARWARDEN HOUSE COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Staff Behaviour Policy (Code of Conduct)

Reviewed bi-annually by Audit, Resource & Risk Committee

Adopted by Governing Body:	October 2026
Date for review:	September 2028

Signed: Chair of Governors

Staff Behaviour Policy (Code of Conduct)

Introduction

This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the Children Acts 1989 and 2004; the Education Act 2002 and is based on a model policy provided by Judicium, the school's HR advisers.

The policy also reflects both statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' 2026 (KCSIE), Teacher Standards 2012 and Surrey Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB) Procedures.

Policy Statement

The Code of Conduct is a statement of Carwarden House Community School's (the School) values and describes both the way it wishes to carry out its business and the standards of conduct it expects from its employees and individuals contracted as workers for the School.

School staff are in a unique position of trust and influence as role models for students. Therefore, staff must adhere to behaviour that sets a good example to all students within the school.

Staff also have an individual responsibility to maintain their reputation and the reputation of the school, both inside and outside working hours and work setting.

This policy applies to all staff and volunteers in the school regardless of their position, role or responsibility. References to 'staff' throughout the policy relate to all of the following groups:

1. All members of staff including teaching and support staff
2. Volunteers, including Trustees
3. Casual workers
4. Temporary and supply staff, either from agencies or engaged directly
5. Student placements, including those undertaking initial teacher training and apprenticeships

Carwarden House Community School requires that all staff have read and agree to comply with this policy and have signed Civica to confirm this.

Rules and Standards of Behaviour

The rules that follow set out examples of standards of behaviour expected of employees. It should be noted that **this list is not exhaustive**.

Breaches of the Employee Code of Conduct will be dealt with in accordance with the School's Disciplinary procedure.

The disciplinary action to be taken in any individual case will always depend on the particular facts. However**, breach of any rule shown in blue may lead to dismissal or summary dismissal** (dismissal without notice for gross misconduct) dependent on the seriousness of the misconduct.

Professional Behaviour and Conduct

Staff are expected to demonstrate the highest possible standards of personal and professional conduct and behaviour and consistently act with honesty and integrity. The school expects staff to treat each other, students, parents and the wider community with dignity and respect at all times, building relationships rooted in mutual respect. These behaviours are articulated in the revised Carwarden Community Charter (appendix 2).

Employees should always:

- act in accordance with their duty of care to students and ensure that the safety and welfare of students are given the highest priority.
- show fairness in their treatment of students and avoid behaviours such as embarrassing or humiliating students, making jokes at the expense of students, discriminating against or favouring students and sarcasm.
- treat everyone with respect and not undermine them, bully or harass or act towards them in a way which is discriminatory towards them, showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others
- should uphold the fundamental British values including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.
- have regard for the ethos and values of the school and not do or say anything which may bring the school or governing body into disrepute. Care should be taken by staff to avoid any conflict of interest between activities undertaken outside school and responsibilities within school.
- act in accordance with the school's policies and procedures at all times.
- be honest.
- follow all reasonable and lawful instructions.
- adhere to professional requirements to attend relevant training and submit monitoring information in relation to employees and students where relevant.
- comply with all relevant statutory guidelines.
- comply with the requirements of statutory bodies relating to the examination, assessment and evaluation of student achievement and attainment.

- comply with the Codes of Conduct of professional bodies to which they may belong.
- Not bring members of family, dependents or other visitors onto School premises whilst conducting normal working duties without prior permission

And must not:

- Post, distribute or display inappropriate literature at any of the School's premises or other premises whilst on School business.
- Behave in a violent manner or threaten violence towards any other person.
- Use social media in such a manner that may bring the reputation of the school or the employee themselves into disrepute.
- Make false allegations against another person or the school.
- Behave in an insubordinate or inappropriate manner.
- Behave in a persistent careless and/or negligent manner.

Behave in a manner that is likely to disrupt working relationships.

Health and Safety

Employees should always observe any School health and safety rules and guidance.

Employees should never:

- Breach the School health and safety policy.
- Act in a manner likely to endanger themselves, fellow workers, members of the public, the school's property or that of a third party.
- Ignore anything that has the potential to cause harm. It should be immediately brought to the attention of the line manager.
- Misuse any item provided for health and safety purposes.

Smoking, drugs, alcohol and other substance misuse

The School is a non-smoking site and staff must not smoke (or use e-cigarettes or vaping devices) on school premises (inside building or outside) nor within sight of students or visitors to the school. Staff must not smoke (or use e-cigarettes or vaping devices) whilst working with or supervising students offsite.

The School prohibits the drinking of alcohol by employees, workers, (and contractors) in the workplace or on School business other than reasonable drinking of alcohol in connection with Trustee approved social functions.

The school regards drinking to an 'unreasonable level' as any of the following situations:

- In the opinion of management, the individual's performance is impaired.
- In the opinion of management, the individual's behaviour may cause embarrassment, distress or offence to others.
- The individual continues to drink when instructed to stop by a manager.

The school will take all reasonable steps to prevent employees (and contractors) carrying out work-related activities if they are considered to be unfit/unsafe to undertake the work as a result of alcohol consumption or substance abuse.

The school expressly prohibits the use of any illegal drugs or any prescription drugs that have not been prescribed for the user. It is a criminal offence to be in possession of, use or distribute an illicit substance. If any such incidents take place on school premises, in school vehicles or at a school related function, they will be regarded as serious, will be investigated by the school, and may lead to disciplinary action and potential dismissal and possible reporting to the Police.

No employee or other person under the school's control shall, in connection with any work-related activity:

- Be under the influence of alcohol or drugs (except prescribed medication) whilst at work.
- Misuse and/or be under the adverse influence of substances whilst at work
- Attempt to sell or give drugs or alcohol to any other employee, student or other person on the school premises, or whilst conducting School business.
- Be in possession of controlled drugs contrary to the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 (as amended)
- Operate machinery under the influence of drugs or alcohol. *(There may be an exception for prescription drugs, provided they do not have an impact on performance whilst operating machinery).*
- Fail to inform line manager if taking Prescription drugs or over the counter medication which may affect the ability to perform duties normally
- Drive vehicles whilst on school business whilst under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol.
- Fail to follow instructions in relation to health and safety procedures for use and storage of solvents.

For further information, please see the school's Substance Misuse Policy.

Dress and Appearance

Carwarden School recognise that dress and appearance are matters of personal choice and self- expression. However, all staff must dress in a manner that is appropriate to their professional role.

- Staff dress and appearance must not be offensive, revealing or sexually provocative.
- Staff should wear their lanyard at all times, exceptions are made when the activity/lesson raises health and safety risks. It is important that all staff dress in a manner appropriate to their working environment and the type of work they do.
- Denim is generally considered inappropriate and, for reasons of safety, open-toed shoes, backless sandals and flip-flops are prohibited.
- Staff should dress safely and appropriately for the tasks they undertake.
- Discreet earrings/ nose piercings are acceptable but for reasons of safety all other body piercings should be removed while on school premises.

Attendance at work

Employees should attend for work at all designated / agreed times and should obtain prior authorisation for any absence.

Employees should:

- Observe any designated hours of work.
- Always observe the school's requirements on the notification of absence by reason of sickness. (Outlined in the School's Sickness Absence and Sick Pay Policy)
- Never work elsewhere when absent from the school without line manager's authorisation. Examples of absence include sickness, suspension and leave related to work and families.
- Comply with the school's leave policies (such as Special Leave, Annual Leave, Maternity Leave, Paternity Leave, Shared Parental, Parental, Time off for Dependents etc.)
- Never leave work during designated / agreed working hours without permission.

Relationships with Students

Staff must maintain professional boundaries with students that are appropriate to their position and role. Staff should act in an open and transparent way that would not lead anyone to question their actions or intent. Staff should think carefully about their conduct so that misinterpretations are minimised.

Employees must:

- Maintain professional boundaries with students appropriate to their position and must always consider whether their actions are warranted, proportionate, safe and applied equitably.
- Act in an open and transparent way that would not lead any reasonable person to question their actions or intent.
- Think carefully about their conduct so that misinterpretations are minimized.
- Be mindful of section 16 of The Sexual Offences Act 2003

Employees must not:

- Establish or seek to establish social contact with students for the purpose of securing a friendship or to pursue or strengthen a relationship. If a young person seeks to establish social contact you should exercise your professional judgement in making a response and be aware that such social contact could be misconstrued.
- Develop personal or sexual relationships with students and should not engage in any sexual activity with a student.
- Make sexual remarks to a student, discuss their own sexual relationships with, or in the presence of, students or discuss a pupil's sexual relationships in an inappropriate setting or context.

Contact with students should be through the school's authorised mechanisms. Personal phone numbers, email addresses or communication routes via all social media platforms should not be used and staff should not share their home address with students. If contacted via an inappropriate route the member of staff must inform the Headteacher immediately.

Employees must not accept friend invitations or become friends with any student of the school on any social media platform. Employees should also refrain from following the social media accounts of students or their parents.

Safeguarding Children

All employees, workers, learners and volunteers and anyone operating on behalf of the School or visiting the School have the right to feel safe at School or while carrying out activities in relation to the School. No one should be hurt or abuse anyone in anyway.

Employees must always:

- Respect other people's right to safety
- Not hurt or abuse others; and not threaten to hurt or abuse them.
- Comply with the School pre- and post-employment vetting procedures,
- Advise their manager if they are under investigation by the Police or other authority in connection with allegations of abuse
- Advise the nominated officer if you are aware or have any suspicions that anyone is abusing another person
- Comply with School procedures in relation to Child Protection & Safeguarding Children
- The duty to safeguard children and young people includes the duty to report concerns about a child/ young person to the School's Designated Safeguarding Lead. All staff must:
- Have READ and UNDERSTOOD the Trust Safeguarding Policy and Procedures and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 (Part One and Annex A).

- Declare any new or impending criminal convictions to the Head Teacher
- Declare any personal circumstances that may affect your ability to safeguard children and young people (for example if you and/or your family are currently open to Children's Services)
- All staff should also be aware of the Trust Whistleblowing procedures.
- Staff must take all reasonable steps to ensure safety and wellbeing of children and young people under their supervision and provide early help where required.
- Staff must not use personal cameras, phones or any other electronic equipment to take images of students.
- Staff must have signed the Acceptable User Agreement for IT Usage on an annual basis.
- When staff are informed of safeguarding issues regarding specific children, they are to treat this information confidentially and if heard gossiping then they will be warned and then could be dismissed.

Physical Contact with Pupils

There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate and proper for staff to have physical contact with students, but it is crucial that they only do so in ways appropriate to their professional role.

When physical contact is made with a student it should be in response to their needs at that time, of limited duration and appropriate to their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background.

Where feasible, staff should seek the student's permission before initiating contact. Staff should listen, observe and take note of the student's reaction or feelings and, so far as is possible, use a level of contact which is acceptable to the student for the minimum time necessary. Staff should use their professional judgement at all times.

There may be occasions when a student is in distress and in need of comfort as a reassurance. This may include age-appropriate physical contact. Staff should remain self-aware at all times in order that their contact is not threatening, intrusive or subject to misinterpretation. If you have a particular concern about the need to provide this type of care and reassurance, you should seek further advice from your line manager.

Staff should be aware that even well-intentioned physical contact may be misconstrued by the student, an observer or by anyone to whom this action is described. Staff should never touch a student in a way which may be considered inappropriate. Always be prepared to explain actions and accept that all physical contact is open to scrutiny.

Staff must not engage in rough play, tickling or 'fun fights' with students.

Extra caution and sensitivity should be exercised where a student is known to have suffered previous abuse or neglect. Such experiences may sometimes make an individual exceptionally needy and demanding of physical contact and staff should respond sensitively by deterring the student through helping them to understand the importance of personal boundaries.

Staff supervising PE and games should demonstrate the use of a particular piece of equipment on another member of staff if possible. However, they may be required to initiate physical contact with students to support them to perform a task safely, to demonstrate the use of a particular piece of equipment or to assist them with an exercise. Contact under these circumstances should be done with the student's agreement, for the minimum time necessary and in an open environment. Staff should remain sensitive to any discomfort expressed verbally or non-verbally by the student.

Physical contact must never be secretive, for the gratification of the adult or abuse a position of trust. If a member of staff believes that an action could be misinterpreted, the incident and circumstances should be reported to your line manager, recorded and, if appropriate, a copy placed on the student's file.

Showers and changing

Students are entitled to respect and privacy whilst they are changing or showering after PE/games or swimming. However, there needs to be an appropriate level of supervision in order to safeguard young people, meet health and safety requirements and to ensure that bullying does not take place. The supervision should be appropriate to the needs and age of the students and sensitive to the potential for embarrassment.

Staff should be vigilant about their own behaviour and announce their intention of entering a changing room. Personal and school devices with a camera or video function should not be taken into areas where students are showering or changing. Staff must not change or shower in the same place as students.

One to one situations

Staff working individually with students should be aware of the potential vulnerability of students and staff in such situations. Staff should manage these situations with regard to the safety of the student and to themselves.

Individual work with students should not be undertaken in isolated areas or rooms where there is no external viewing panel. Where it is necessary to close doors for reasons of confidentiality a colleague should be made aware of this and asked to remain vigilant.

Staff should refer to Carwarden School's Use of Force & Intimate Care Policies.

Transporting pupils

In certain circumstances it may be appropriate for staff to transport students offsite for out of school activities. A designated member of staff should be appointed to plan and provide oversight of all transport arrangements and to respond to any difficulties that may arise. This member of staff is responsible for developing and submitting a full risk assessment for approval.

Staff should ensure that the transport arrangements and the vehicle meet all legal requirements. Staff should ensure that the driver has the appropriate license for the vehicle, that the vehicle is roadworthy, has a valid MOT certificate and is appropriately insured and that the maximum capacity is not exceeded.

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. Staff should never transport students while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

Prior to transporting pupils' offsite consent must be obtained from students' parent and staff should be aware that the safety and welfare of the students is their responsibility until this is safely passed back to their parent.

School Trips & Visits

The duties in the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and in the supporting regulations apply to activities taking place on or off the school premises (including school visits) in the UK.

The school has a Health and Safety policy, which includes policy and procedures for off-site visits, including residential visits and any school-led adventure activities.

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (1999) impose a duty on employers to produce suitable and sufficient risk assessments. This would include assessment of any risks to employees, students or others during an educational visit, and the measures that should be taken to minimise these risks.

Staff lanyards must be worn and visible at all times. Staff should take particular care when supervising students in the less formal atmosphere of an educational visit where a more relaxed discipline or informal dress and language code maybe acceptable. However, staff remain in a position of trust and need to ensure that their behaviour cannot be interpreted as seeking to establish an inappropriate relationship or friendship.

Where out of school activities include overnight stays, careful consideration needs to be given to sleeping arrangements and any potential intimate care needs. Students, adults and parents should be informed of these prior to the start of the trip. In all circumstances, those organising trips and outings should pay careful attention to ensuring there is a safe staff/student ratio and suitable gender mix of staff.

Online Safety

Staff should follow the school's Online Safety policy for staff and the Acceptable Use Policy at all times and have regard for the school's Online Safety policy for pupils.

Staff must not engage in inappropriate use of social network sites which may bring themselves, the school or the school community into disrepute. Staff should adopt the highest security settings on any personal profiles they have.

Staff should exercise caution in all their use of social media or any other web-based presence they have. This includes written content, videos or photographs and views expressed either directly or by 'liking' certain pages or posts or following certain individuals or groups.

Staff should exercise care when using dating websites/apps where they could encounter students, ex-students or parents.

Staff must not make contact with pupils or ex-students, must not accept or initiate friend requests nor follow student or ex-student accounts on any social media platform. Staff must not communicate with students or ex-students via social media, websites, instant messenger accounts or text message. The only acceptable method of contact is via the use of school email accounts or using school phones. In exceptional circumstances staff may use their personal mobile phones when this is the only available means of communication.

Staff should not make contact with students' family members, accept or initiate friend requests or follow pupils' family member's account on any social media platform. However, Carwarden School acknowledges that staff who are also parents may wish to make contact with other parents, who are friends, over social media. Staff must exercise caution and professional judgement in these circumstances and should not have any contact with students' family members via social media if that contact is likely to constitute a conflict of interest or call into question their objectivity.

Mobile phones and personally owned devices such as tablets may not be used during lessons or formal school time, this includes the receiving and reading of text messages on smartwatches during lesson time. They should be switched off (or silent) at all times. The Bluetooth functionality of a mobile phone or tablet should be switched off at all times and may not be used to send images or files to other mobile phones. Mobile phones and personal devices, cameras and videoing equipment are not permitted in certain areas within the school site such as changing rooms and toilets.

The camera and filming functions of staff mobile devices should not be used in school, on school trips or on official school business unless there is a requirement to create a record of student activity. Where this is necessary all images / videos should be downloaded onto the school network ASAP and deleted from the personal devise.

Mobile phones and personally owned mobile devices brought in to school are the responsibility of the device owner. The school accepts no responsibility for the loss, theft or damage of personally owned mobile phones or mobile devices.

Photography, video and images of children

Many school activities involve recording images as part of the curriculum, extra school activities, publicity or to celebrate an achievement. In accordance with The Data Protection Act 2018 the image of a student is personal data. Therefore, it is a requirement under the Act for consent to be obtained from the parent/guardian of a student for any images made.

It is also important to take into account the wishes of the student, remembering that

some students do not wish to have their photograph taken or be filmed.

Using images for publicity purposes will require the age-appropriate consent of the individual concerned and their parent. Images should not be displayed on websites, in publications or in a public place without their consent.

Photographs or video footage of students should only be taken using school equipment for purposes authorised by the school and should be stored securely and only on school equipment. Staff should also be clear about the purpose of the activity and what will happen to the photographs/images/video footage when the lesson or activity is concluded. (See above exceptions for using personal mobile devises).

Staff should ensure that a member of the Senior Leadership Team is aware of the proposed use of photographic/video equipment and that this is recorded in lesson plans. All photographs and video footage should be available for scrutiny and staff should be able to justify all images/video footage made.

Staff should remain aware of the potential for images of students to be misused to create indecent images of children and/or for grooming purposes. Therefore, careful consideration should be given to how activities which are being filmed or photographed are organised and undertaken. Particular care should be given when filming or photographing young or vulnerable students who may be unable to question how or why the activities are taking place. Staff should also be mindful that students who have been abused through the use of video or photography may feel threatened by its use in a teaching environment.

Communication and Confidentiality

Confidentiality should be maintained in accordance with statutory and school regulations and procedures.

Employees should:

- Always comply with the school's Data Protection and Freedom of Information policies and procedures with regard to the retention, disposal security and disclosure of personal data.
- Never disclose confidential information to any other person or party without consent (unless specifically required to do so by law).
- Never search confidential files to which access has not been granted.

Regulatory issues and Use and Security of Resources

Employees are expected to act with honesty and integrity to safeguard the stewardship of resources for which the school is responsible. Employees should always comply with regulations that are applicable to the school and its business.

Employees should always:

- Ensure that they comply with the rules and principles of any regulatory bodies and/or relevant statute applicable to the duties they perform.
- Comply with the School's financial regulations.
- Comply with the School's Anti-Fraud / Corruption & Whistleblowing Policies and Guidelines].
- Ensure that they account promptly and accurately for all monies handled in the performance of their duties. If an employee discovers any discrepancy or loss, they must declare it to their line manager without delay.

  Note: Any attempt to conceal any discrepancy will only heighten the suspicion of dishonesty later. The school may report any such losses and thefts to the Police.

- Declare any conviction for a criminal offence or caution in relation to an offence *(except those which are "protected" as defined in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (Amendment) (England and Wales) Order 2026)*.
- Always use School systems (e.g. computers, internet) in accordance with the School's Information and Communications Systems and the Social Media Policy.
- Take all reasonable measures to ensure, so far as it is practical, the safety and security of School property, including premises, vehicles, equipment and cash.

Employees should never:

- wilfully damage or abuse the property of students, fellow workers or the school, or the property of outside agencies whilst conducting School business.
- access, view or distribute material of a pornographic nature
- make a financial claim in connection with work or services that have not been undertaken in connection with authorised school business
- remove any school property from the school's premises unless approved by your manager.
- remove, or be in unauthorised possession of, any property or facilities belonging to the school or to any employee, student or visitor to the school.

Equality and Diversity

The school seeks to achieve an environment in which all are included and in which discrimination is not tolerated. The school is committed to promoting equality of opportunity regardless of gender, gender reassignment, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief or age. Everyone should be treated with respect and dignity and establish a culture where diversity is valued.

Employees should always:

- Observe the school's Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy.

We are committed to providing equal opportunities in recruitment, employment and in the workplace and to avoid unlawful discrimination in all related practices.
Under the Equality Act 2010, there are certain 'protected characteristics' that qualify for protection against discrimination. These are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

Unlawful discrimination can take a number of forms: ·

- Direct discrimination occurs where a person is treated less favourably than another because of a protected characteristic they have, or are thought to have, or because they associate with someone who has a protected characteristic (also see below).
- Indirect discrimination applies to age, disability, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and marriage and civil partnership. It occurs where a rule, provision, criterion or practice is applied to everyone but has the effect of particularly disadvantaging people who share a protected characteristic. However, such indirect discrimination may be justified if it can be shown that it is 'a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim'.
- Perceptive Discrimination, applying to age, disability, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation and gender reassignment ·, is direct discrimination against an individual due to the fact that others think, or perceive, that they possess a particular protected characteristic
- Associative Discrimination applies to age, disability, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation and gender reassignment. It is direct discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who possesses a protected characteristic.
- Harassment is "unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual." Harassment applies to all protected characteristics except for pregnancy and maternity and marriage and civil partnership. Employees/workers can complain about behaviour they find offensive even if it is not directed at them, and the complainant need not possess the relevant characteristic him/herself. Employees and workers are also protected from harassment because of perception and association (see above).
- Victimisation occurs when an employee/worker is badly treated because s/he has made or supported a complaint, or raised a grievance, or is suspected of doing so. However, s/he is not protected from victimisation if the complaint has been made or supported maliciously.
- Pregnancy and maternity provisions afford protection against discrimination to women during the period of the pregnancy and any statutory maternity leave.

Everyone is required to assist in meeting the commitment to providing equal opportunities and avoiding unlawful discrimination. Employees and workers can be held personally liable as well as, or instead of, the employer for acts of unlawful discrimination. Anyone who commits a serious act of harassment may be guilty of a criminal offence.

Acts of discrimination, harassment or victimisation against anyone else are disciplinary matters and will be dealt with accordingly. Such acts may constitute gross misconduct and could lead to dismissal without notice.

Gaining Employment/Promotion/Transfer

Employees or potential employees must comply with the School's recruitment and Selection procedures

When applying for a job / transfer / promotion, employees should not:

- Make false statements to the school or withhold relevant information. Any breach could result in disciplinary action which may be taken against an employee at any time and also the removal of the offer of employment.
- Fail to comply with school's recruitment and selection policies and procedures.

Employment of family

The School does not believe it is good practice, either for the individuals or the School, for close relatives to be employed in the same Department, particularly where one reports to the other.

Relationships covered by the term 'relative' include immediate family, i.e. spouse, partner, civil partner, parents, children, siblings, in laws, uncles, aunts, nieces and nephews.

It is possible for relatives to be appointed within the same Department but this should be discussed fully with the School before action, and should only be in cases where there will be no direct working relationship between the individuals.

Employees should not:

- Be involved in the selection process where they are related in any way to an applicant or have a personal relationship outside work with them.
- Be involved in decisions relating to discipline, promotion, pay or adjustments for any employee who is a relative, partner or close friend.

Conflicts of Interest and Professional Boundaries

Staff must ensure that their professional judgement, decision-making and conduct are not improperly influenced by personal interests, relationships or external commitments. Any situation where a conflict, or perceived conflict, may arise between an employee's professional responsibilities and personal interests must be declared promptly to their line manager or the Headteacher.

A conflict of interest may occur where a member of staff:

- Has a personal, family or financial relationship that could influence, or be perceived to influence, their professional duties.
- Is involved in decisions relating to the employment, supervision, assessment or welfare of a relative, partner or close associate.
- Undertakes external employment, voluntary work or business activities that may conflict with the interests of the school or affect their ability to fulfil their role.
- Has a personal relationship with a pupil, parent, contractor or other stakeholder that could compromise professional objectivity or create a safeguarding concern.

Where a conflict exists, staff are expected to declare it immediately and cooperate with any measures put in place to manage the conflict appropriately. Failure to declare a conflict of interest may be treated as a breach of professional conduct.

For safeguarding-related conflicts

Where a member of staff has a personal connection to an individual involved in a safeguarding, disciplinary, grievance or complaint matter, they must declare this at the earliest opportunity and withdraw from any decision-making or investigatory process where impartiality could reasonably be questioned.

Parents as employees

It is acknowledged that some staff also may have children who attend the school. It is recognised that in these cases the staff fulfil a dual role of parent and employee.

Parents as employees should ensure that they uphold appropriate boundaries between the two roles and that their behaviour does not constitute a conflict of interest. For example, they must maintain the same level of confidentiality despite social expectations. Parent-staff should discuss any inter-role conflict with their line manager.

Contact with Parents / Carers

Contact with parents should be through Carwarden School's authorised mechanisms. Personal phone numbers, email addresses or communication routes via all social media platforms should not be used and staff should not share their home address with parents. If contacted via an inappropriate route the member of staff must inform the Headteacher immediately.

Where possible staff should agree with parents their preferences in relation to contact arrangements (e.g. timing of contact, method used). However, parents should be informed that in an emergency the school may be required to operate outside these preferences. Carwarden will require all parents to provide a minimum of two emergency contact telephone numbers.

Staff should never discuss students other than the parent's own.

Whilst contact via telephone or email may be convenient, staff should recognise the

increased value of ‘face to face’ conversations and wherever possible invite parents to the school to facilitate this.

Whilst it is acknowledged that staff may need to contact parents with ‘concerns’, the nature of conversations should always be positive and solution focused.

The student’s Tutor should always be the main point of contact with the parent.

Where staff other the tutor make contact with a parent this should be logged with the tutor to ensure they maintain the best possible ‘overview’.

Staff are not permitted to make comments to parents that could be construed as criticism of other students, their colleagues or the school.

Gifts, entertainment and hospitality

Employees should always act with integrity and not allow themselves to be put into a situation which does not allow them to act with honesty and integrity and/ or in the best interest of the school.

Staff should not accept any gift/offer of hospitality that might be interpreted as an inappropriate inducement by others. However, there may be occasions where students or parents wish to give a small token of appreciation to staff, for example at religious festivities or at the end of the year.

It is unacceptable to receive gifts on a regular basis or to suggest to students that gifts are appropriate or desired. Money must not be accepted as a gift. If you are unsure whether to accept a gift you should consult your line manager.

Staff must not accept significant gifts (in excess of £20) from students, parents, actual or potential contractors or suppliers. All such gifts should be reported to your line manager and recorded.

Personal gifts must not be given by staff to students and any reward to students should be in accordance with Carwarden School’s behaviour policy, recorded and not based on favouritism.

Allegations against staff

All staff should be aware of their school’s safeguarding procedures, including the procedures for dealing with allegations against staff and volunteers. 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 Headteacher or if the allegation is against the Headteacher it should be reported to the Chair of Governors.

Reporting misconduct

Employees are expected to:

- Report violations or suspected violations of law or the standards set out in this Code of Conduct. In these situations, you should contact your line manager.
- Comply with the School's Whistleblowing Policy in the event of concerns or evidence of malpractice in connection with the school.

  Note: Any information provided by employees will be kept confidential in accordance with the Whistleblowing Policy, unless otherwise required by law and may be made without concern of retribution.

- Report all/any suspicions of fraud or theft to their line manager.

Low-level concerns are behaviours, actions or omissions by a member of staff that are inconsistent with the school's staff code of conduct, professional standards, or expectations for safeguarding, but which do not meet the threshold for harm, abuse, or misconduct requiring formal disciplinary or safeguarding procedures.

Such concerns may include conduct that causes a sense of unease, appears inappropriate, unprofessional, or may make others feel uncomfortable, even if the behaviour is not intended to cause harm. Individually, these incidents may seem minor; however, recording and monitoring low-level concerns helps identify patterns of behaviour and supports a culture of openness, transparency, and safeguarding.

Examples may include:

- Failing to maintain appropriate professional boundaries.
- Using inappropriate language or humour.
- Favouring particular pupils.
- Breaches of school policies relating to communication, conduct, or professional behaviour.
- Behaviour that is inconsistent with the school's values or expected standards of professionalism.

Reporting expectation:

All staff have a responsibility to report low-level concerns about themselves or others promptly to the Headteacher (or Chair of Governors/Trustees where appropriate). Concerns will be considered in the context of safeguarding, staff welfare, and professional standards, and records will be maintained in accordance with school policy.

Further Guidance

Employees requiring further clarification on this document should contact the Headteacher or School Business Manager.

Appendix 2

Carwarden Community Charter

We are one team aligned to common goals, agreed priorities and a shared vision. To be a motivated, happy and high performing team we will:

1. behave professionally and be accountable for our actions
2. be self-reflective practitioners and not blame others when we get it wrong
3. choose to see the best in others and embrace our differences
4. be caring, respectful, tolerant and supportive of each other
5. listen to each other and ensure everyone's voice is heard
6. be honest with ourselves and others, always looking to develop trusting relationships
7. accept we are not always right and give and receive criticism positively
8. recognise change, conflict and challenges as opportunities to see things differently and be flexible and adaptable in our responses
9. strive for excellence in all that we do and challenge mediocrity
10. remain positive in our outlook, celebrate success and be solution focused, making work fun for ourselves and others.