



Caldew School Staff Code of Conduct

1. School Values

The school community identified seven values that should guide how everyone should behave. The Caldew way is to:

Aspire - Be ambitious and aim high to be the best you can be.

Resilient - Keep trying, enjoy a challenge and don't give up.

Respect - Respect everyone's opinions, listen to others and consider other people's feelings.

Tolerant - Be willing to accept the beliefs and ideas of others that are different to your own.

Safety - Make sure everyone is safe.

Community - Be proud to be a member of our community where individuals matter and work together as a team.

Happy – Create a positive environment where we can all enjoy school.

2. Aims, scope and principles.

This policy aims to set and maintain standards of conduct that we expect all staff, Governors, supply staff, volunteers and contractors to follow. 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](#). School staff have an influential position in the school and will act as role models for pupils by consistently demonstrating high standards of behavior. As a member of the school's community each employee has an individual responsibility to maintain the reputation of the school.

Everyone has a duty to keep students safe, promote their welfare and protect them from sexual, physical and emotional harm. This duty is, in part, exercised through the development of respectful, caring and professional relationships between adults and students and behaviour by adults that demonstrates integrity, maturity and good judgement. Following this Code will help to safeguard all from being maliciously, falsely or mistakenly suspected or accused of professional misconduct in relation to students, colleagues and the required Professionals Standards.

We expect that all teachers will act in accordance with the personal and professional behaviours set out in the Teachers' Standards. We expect all support 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 of what is, or is not, appropriate behaviour for staff. However, it does highlight behaviour that is illegal, inappropriate or inadvisable.

If situations arise that are not covered by this code, staff should use their professional judgement and act in the best interests of the school and its pupils. Where no specific guidance exists, staff and other adults should:

- discuss the circumstances, actions, or proposed action, with their line manager or, where appropriate, the DSL or member of SLT. This will help to ensure that safe practices are used and reduce the risk of actions being misinterpreted

- make responsible and informed judgements about their own behaviour to ensure the best interests and welfare of students and other members of staff

3. Legislation and guidance

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

This policy also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

4. Underpinning principles

- All staff and regular volunteers have a responsibility to be aware of systems and practices in the school
- The welfare of children is paramount
- Staff should understand their responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of students
- Invented or malicious allegations by children are rare and all concerns should be reported and recorded.
- Staff are responsible for their own actions and behaviours and should avoid conflict which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions
- Staff should apply the same professional standards regardless of culture, disability, gender, racial origin, religious belief or sexual orientation.
- Staff should be aware that breaches of the law and other professional guidelines could result in disciplinary action being taken against them, criminal action and/or other proceedings including barring by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) from working in regulated activity, or for acts of serious misconduct prohibition from teaching by the Teacher Referral Agency (TRA)
- Staff should be aware and understand the statutory frameworks in which they must act, the schools Safeguarding Policy and the Whistleblowing Policy.

5. General obligations

Staff set examples to students of behaviour and conduct. In order to do this staff will:

- Maintain high standards in their attendance and punctuality
- Never use inappropriate or offensive language in school
- Treat students 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
- Not express personal beliefs in a way that exploits students' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law
- Understand the statutory frameworks they must act within
- Adhere to Teachers' Standards

Safeguarding

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

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

Our safeguarding policy and procedures are available using the following link:

[POLICY STATEMENT ON Safeguarding \(caldew.cumbria.sch.uk\)](https://caldew.cumbria.sch.uk/POLICY%20STATEMENT%20ON%20Safeguarding)

New staff will also be given copies on arrival.

5.1 Allegations against staff that may meet the harm threshold

This section is based on 'Section 1: Allegations that may meet the harm threshold in part 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

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, Deputy Headteacher, or the Chair of Governors where the Headteacher is the subject of the allegation.

5.2 Low-level concerns about members of staff

A low-level concern does not mean that it is insignificant. It is a behaviour towards a child by an adult who works with children that does not meet the harm threshold, 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
- Taking or having photographs of children on a personal device
- Posting pictures of students on personal social media accounts
- Engaging in 1-to-1 activities where they can't easily be seen
- Humiliating students
- • using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language.

Low-level concerns can include inappropriate conduct inside and outside of work.

All staff should report any low-level concerns they have to a member of SLT or the DSL. We 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.

All low-level concerns will be recorded, including the name of the individual sharing their concerns. If they wish to remain anonymous, this will be respected as far as possible. Records will be retained at least until the individual leaves our employment.

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 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 are covered in more detail in our safeguarding policy. This is available using the following link:

[POLICY STATEMENT ON SAFEGUARDING \(caldew.cumbria.sch.uk\)](https://caldew.cumbria.sch.uk/policy-statement-on-safeguarding)

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

5.3 Whistleblowing

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

- Student or staff 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.

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 the governing board

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.

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

[Whistleblowing policy \(caldew.cumbria.sch.uk\)](https://caldew.cumbria.sch.uk/whistleblowing-policy)

6. Staff-student relationships

A relationship between an adult and young person is not a relationship between equals. There is potential for exploitation and harm of young people. Adults should maintain appropriate professional boundaries and avoid behaviour which might be misinterpreted by others.

Staff and others who work with children will speak to them respectfully and without the use of sarcasm, which could demean children and prevent them from developing high self-esteem.

Staff and others who work with children will observe proper boundaries 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 and others who work with children must spend time on a one-to-one basis, they will ensure that:

- This takes place in a public place that others can access
- Others can see into the room

Staff, Governors, supply staff, volunteers or contractors must not have sexual relationships with students, have any form of communication with a child or young person which could be interpreted as sexually suggestive or provocative, i.e. verbal comments, letters, notes, texts, electronic mail, phone calls, social networking contact or physical contact. Adults should not make sexual remarks to, or about, a child or young person or discuss their own sexual relationships with or in the presence of students. Individuals should take care that their language or conduct does not give rise to comment or speculations.

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

If a staff member is concerned at any point that an interaction between themselves and a student may be misinterpreted, or is concerned about a fellow staff member or other adult, this should be reported to the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher or Designated Safeguarding Lead.

A child or young person may develop an infatuation with an adult who works with them. A member of staff or volunteer who becomes aware that a student may be infatuated with them or a colleague must report this to the DSL, Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher so appropriate action can be taken to protect the staff member.

While we are aware many students and their parents may wish to give gifts to staff, for example, at the end of the school year and this is acceptable, gifts from staff to students are not acceptable. It is against the law for public servants to take bribes do not accept any gift that might be construed by others as a bribe or lead the giver to expect preferential treatment.

Pre-arranged meetings with students away from the school premises are not permitted unless approval is obtained from their parent/carers and the Headteacher. Staff must not arrange to attend places or non-Caldew events, unless they have reason to be there eg own child's football match, where they know students will be unless approval is obtained from their parent/carers and the Headteacher. No child or young person should be in or invited into the home of an adult who works with them, unless the reason for this has been established and agreed with parents/carers and the Headteacher and the parent/carers should be present.

We recognise that some staff have children who attend the school, and this creates the potential for contact with other students outside of school. This is acceptable if it is appropriate and could not be interpreted by another person as being inappropriate. We would advise that where staff are in these circumstances that they take sensible precautions such as getting parents' permission when they have contact with their children's friends outside of school.

7. Physical Contact with Students

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

made with students this should be in response to their needs at the time, of limited duration and appropriate to their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background. It is not possible to be specific about the appropriateness of each physical contact, since an action that is appropriate with one student in one set of circumstances may be inappropriate in another, or with a different student.

Physical contact should never be secretive or casual, or for the gratification of the adult, or represent a misuse of authority. If an individual believes that an action could be misinterpreted, the incident should be reported to the DSL who will log this in and, if appropriate, a copy placed on the child/young person's file.

Physical contact, which occurs regularly with a student or students, is likely to raise questions unless this is part of a formally agreed plan (for example in relation to students with SEND).

There may be occasions when a distressed student needs comfort and reassurance. This may include age-appropriate physical contact. Staff should always remain self-aware, so contact is not threatening, intrusive or subject to misinterpretation. Where an individual has a concern about the need to provide this type of care and reassurance, they should seek advice from the DSL or senior leaders.

Some staff, e.g. those who teach PE or who provide music tuition will occasionally have to initiate physical contact so they can perform a task safely, demonstrate the use of a piece of equipment or assist with an exercise. This should be done with the student's agreement. Contact under these circumstances should be for the minimum time necessary and take place in an open environment. Staff should be sensitive to any discomfort expressed verbally or non-verbally by the student. There needs to be an appropriate level of supervision to safeguard students when showering or changing. However, there should be consideration for their dignity.

Physical intervention is only justified in exceptional circumstances. Staff may intervene to prevent a student from committing a criminal offence, injuring themselves or others, to deliver first aid, causing damage to property, engaging in behaviour prejudicial to good order and to maintain good order and discipline. Staff should have regard to their own health and safety and others. Under no circumstances should physical force be used as punishment. Any use of physical intervention should be recorded.

8. Curriculum

Many areas of the curriculum can include or raise subject matter, which is sexually explicit, or of a sensitive nature. Care should be taken to ensure resource materials cannot be misinterpreted and clearly link to the learning outcomes identified by the lesson plan.

The curriculum can sometimes lead to unplanned discussion about subject matter of a sexually explicit or otherwise sensitive nature. Responding to students' questions can require careful judgement and staff should use their professional judgment to decide if to answer questions or close the discussion down. Any safeguarding concerns arising from the discussion should be reported to the DSL.

There are legal duties for all those who work with children on young people on political impartiality. These legal duties mean we:

- must not promote partisan political views
- ensure the balanced presentation of opposing views on political issues when they are brought to the attention of pupils

This relies on adults using their judgement and expertise effectively. A link to this guidance is below.

[Political impartiality in schools - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/political-impartiality-in-schools)

9. Adult relationships

Staff interact with a wide range of other adults including colleagues, parents and outside agencies. In all these interactions staff will treat others with respect and will not demean or undermine them. Staff will speak to other adults calmly and without the use of sarcasm to ensure they don't feel threatened or uncomfortable. Staff will ensure that their behaviour does not make other adults in school feel harassed or bullied. Bullying or harassment can occur in relation to a person:

- race, nationality, skin colour or ethnic background
- gender
- disability
- age
- class
- sexual orientation
- religious or political beliefs.
- suspected or actual medical conditions
- trade union membership
- status as an ex-offender
- willingness to challenge bullying or harassment and therefore being victimised themselves

This list not exhaustive and the forms of bullying or harassment are not mutually exclusive, for example a man or woman may be harassed on grounds of sex and race. Many on the list are also protected characteristics from the Equalities Act 2010 and are therefore also unlawful.

Staff will work as part of a team and support each other.

Staff must inform the Headteacher, or another member of SLT, of any personal relationships between staff that may affect working relationships.

10. Communication and social media

All communication between students and adults should take place within clear and professional boundaries. This includes the use of technology such as mobile phones, emails and social media. Adults should not share inappropriate personal information with a child or young person.

Staff are responsible for what they communicate on social media. Staff should not post material which damages the reputation of the school or causes concern about their suitability to work with children and young people.

School staff's social media profiles should not be available to students. If they have a personal profile on social media sites, we advise that staff should not use their full name, as students may be able to find them. Staff should consider using a first and middle name instead and set public profiles to private. Personal social media accounts should be locked down so they cannot be viewed by students or parents.

Staff must not have any students or ex-students (under the age of 18) as friends on their social networking sites. They should not have online friendships with students or their parents, unless they are family members or close family friends.

Staff should not attempt to contact students or parents via social media, or other means outside school, in order to develop any sort of relationship. They will not make any efforts to find students or parents' social media profiles.

Staff will ensure that they do not post images online of children who are students at the school on their personal social media accounts.

Staff should be aware of the school's online safety procedures in the ICT Acceptable Use Policy which can be found using the following link:

<https://www.caldew.cumbria.sch.uk/uploads/124/ICT-Acceptable-Use-Policy.pdf/>

On admission parents/carers complete a consent form for their child's photograph to be used in school and on school's social media and publicity. Staff must check that parents/carers have given permission before taking any photographs of students. This is important as there may be safeguarding reasons why a child's image or name cannot be used. Only students first names and the initial of their last name should be given when photographs are used.

All photographs or stories must be sent to the Marketing Manager (Cheryl Eastburn) before being published on the school's social media and these must never be published on staffs own social media. All social media account that have the school's names must be agreed with the headteacher. All press releases must be sent to CEE to be checked and agreed.

11. Dress Code

It is important to dress appropriately and professionally rather than casually. Our appearance influences the way students, parents and others view us and the school. All staff are models for students. It is recognised that staff within each school perform a variety of different roles, and our dress code takes this into account. Staff should follow the dress code and dress appropriately for their role. Reasonable adjustments will be made for those with medical issues.

- Clothing must be professional, not casual.
- Trousers can be full or ¾ length, but no shorter. Jeans or leggings should not be worn.
- Shirts, blouses, knitwear and other tops may be worn. Low cut, vest or strappy tops are not acceptable.
- Underwear should not be visible.
- Sportswear is not acceptable except for PE staff or those working in PE.
- Casual footwear such as trainers (except all dark, polishable ones), Crocs, flip flops and slip on-backless and toeless shoes such as sliders are not acceptable.
- Staff in some specific roles (e.g. PE staff, technicians, canteen staff, premises manager, site staff) should dress smartly and appropriately for their role considering health and safety issues and the physical nature of their job.
- Staff working in a workshops, laboratories and kitchens should wear clothing that is appropriate taking health and safety into account and wear the appropriate protective clothing and equipment when required.

12. Acceptable use of technology

Staff will not use technology in 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.

Staff will not use personal mobile phones and laptops, or school equipment for personal use, in school hours or in front of students. They will also not use personal mobile phones or cameras to take pictures of students in or outside of school.

Only AI tools agreed by the school should be used by students. Staff should follow the schools AI policy when using AI to safeguard students.

13. Confidentiality

As data controllers, we are subject to the General Data Protection Regulations (UK GDPR). Members of staff are often privy to sensitive and confidential information about the school, staff, students and their parents.

This information should never be:

- Disclosed to anyone unless required by law or with consent from the relevant party or parties
- Used to humiliate, embarrass or blackmail others
- Used for a purpose other than what it was collected and intended for

Confidential information about students must not be held off the school site other than on security protected equipment and secure websites. Information must only be stored for the length of time necessary to discharge the task for which it is required.

If a member of staff is in any doubt about the storage of information, they must seek guidance from the Schools Data Protection Officer (DPO).

Staff have an obligation to share to share with the schools Designated Safeguarding Lead any information that gives rise to concern about the safety or welfare of a student.

14. Honesty and integrity

Staff should maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their role. This includes when dealing with students, other adults in the school, sharing information with the school, handling money, claiming expenses and using school property and facilities.

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

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

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

All have a responsibility to maintain public confidence in their ability to safeguard the welfare and best interests of students. They should adopt high standards of personal conduct to maintain the

confidence and respect of their peers, students and the public in general. An individual's behaviour, either in or out of the workplace, should not compromise their position within the work setting

15. Conduct outside work

Staff will not act in a way that would bring the school, or the teaching profession, 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 school on social media.

Staff must report to the Headteacher if they are convicted of any crime or are subject to a criminal investigation.

16. Monitoring arrangements

We have the right to monitor information, including but not limited to email, voicemail, CCTV, internet and social media postings, to ensure our rules are being followed, to assist in investigations of alleged wrongful acts; or to comply with any legal obligation. If necessary, information may be handed to the police in connection with a criminal investigation.

This policy will be reviewed annually but be revised as needed. It will be approved by the full governing body. The governing body will ensure this code of conduct is implemented effectively and will ensure appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard children and deal with any concerns.

17. Links with other policies

This policy links with our policies on:

- Staff disciplinary procedures which will be used if staff breach this code of conduct. It also sets out examples of what we will deem as misconduct and gross misconduct
- Staff grievance
- Staff Bullying and Harassment Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- ICT acceptable Use Policy
- AI Policy
- GDPR Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy

From DfE Teacher Standards

Part Two: Personal and professional conduct

A teacher is expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct. The following statements define the behaviour and attitudes which set the required standard for conduct throughout a teacher's career.

- Teachers uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, by:
 - treating students with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to a teacher's professional position.
 - having regard for the need to safeguard students' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions
 - showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others
 - not undermining fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
 - ensuring that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways which exploit students' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law.
 - Teachers must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies, and practices of the school in which they teach and maintain high standards in their own attendance and punctuality.
- Teachers must understand, and always act within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities.