



STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT

Reviewed by Governors: June 2026

Next review: June 2027

1. Purpose and Core Principles

This policy outlines the expectations for all staff, including governors, volunteers, trainee teachers, agency staff, and contracted staff, both onsite and off-site.

The policy aims to ensure that:

- Staff and young people are protected from any type of abuse.
- The possibility of unfounded allegations being made is reduced.
- High expectations for teaching and learning are upheld.

Little Ilford School is a place of education; therefore, teachers' personal beliefs related to age, sexuality, gender, disability, faith, or race must NOT be promoted in the classroom, in the corridors, or in the wider area of the school premises. All staff are required to challenge discrimination in line with the Single Equality Policy.

Each member of staff (teaching and support) must uphold the aims of the school and implement the core statement: **COURAGE, COMMITMENT AND COMPASSION.**

2. Professional Standards and Daily Routines

- **Accountability:** Each member of staff must take responsibility for ensuring that high-quality learning is provided for all students for whom they are accountable, and that all safeguarding guidance and policies are fully implemented and adhered to.
- **Student Achievement:** All teaching staff must focus on raising achievement for all students in the classroom and around the school. At the classroom level, this means all lessons must be carefully planned and allow for maximum progression.
- **Behaviour and Modelling:** Staff are required to set high standards and to be firm, fair, and positive. They must exercise their duty of care and responsibility for all students at all times, upholding and implementing the student code of conduct. Staff must serve as good role models in attendance, punctuality, dress, and behaviour.
- **Dress Code:** Staff must dress smartly in a manner that models a professional image and perception. Clothing reasonably deemed by the Headteacher to be casual wear, including jeans and trainers, is omitted (except for PE and dance teachers).
- **On-Site Consumption:** Food and drink must only be consumed in the dining hall, staff rooms, or office spaces. Chewing gum must not be consumed anywhere on the site. Hot food or drink must always be carried safely.
- **Duties:** All staff must carry out their duties (e.g., supervision in assemblies, break-time, lunch-time, and after-school duties) in a proactive way, actively promoting safe, sensible, and considerate behaviour. Staff members who know they will be absent on a given day are responsible for exchanging duties with another colleague.
- **Challenging Behaviour:** Staff must challenge inappropriate behaviour in all areas of the school. This must be conducted in a positive, non-confrontational way—calming the situation by remaining calm ("fighting fire with water").
- **School Development:** Staff must accept individual responsibility for implementing the School Self Evaluation Form, participating in the MER, actively pursuing their own CPD, and promoting the ethos and values of the school.
- **Policy Compliance:** All staff are expected to follow, model, and promote all procedures set out in whole-school policies, the school's core values, and the National Teacher Standards.

3. Arrival, ID Cards, and Meetings

Teachers must arrive at their classrooms promptly and on time. All staff (teaching, support, and long-term agency) are required to attend every day during term time and be on site by 8:20 am (8:15 am on Mondays) at the latest, or at the start time stated on their contract of employment.

- **Sign-In System:** Staff must sign in with their cards on the electronic system upon arrival and sign out when leaving at the end of the day.
- **Lanyards and Security:** Staff must wear their lanyards at all times and must not give their cards to anyone else (including students) under any circumstances. Lost cards must be reported to the MRO immediately so access can be cancelled.
- **Meeting Attendance:** Staff must be punctual to all meetings.
 - **Morning Briefings:** Monday briefings at 8:15 am are compulsory for all staff, regardless of standard contract start times, unless the staff member is on designated duty.
 - **Staff Meetings:** Compulsory for all staff unless prior notification of exemption has been given through the school bulletin.
 - **Year Team Meetings:** Compulsory for all form tutors and mentors (including support staff who act as mentors). Other support staff may be asked to attend on specific occasions, which will be notified via the bulletin.
 - **Twilight CPD:** Compulsory for all staff (except those on 52-week contracts) as these sessions replace disaggregated training days.
 - **CTMs:** Compulsory for all teaching staff, HLTAs, and LSAs.
 - **Parents' Evenings:** These run from 4:00 pm to 6:30 pm and must be attended by all teachers of the relevant year group, who are required to remain on site until 6:30 pm.
 - Note: Part-time staff must follow the 'Part Time Protocols' distributed annually.

4. Mobile Phone Policy

In line with KCSIE 2026 expectations, the school operates as a mobile phone-free environment by default.

- Personal devices must be kept out of sight of students at all times.
- Staff must not use mobile phones for texts or calls during lessons, in corridors, or when on duty, except in an absolute emergency.
- The only exception in corridors or on duty is to log behaviour or praise incidents using Satchel.
- Members of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) may use their phones if an active incident is taking place.

- Mobile phone use during educational visits is governed by the Staff Acceptable Use Agreement Of Students Using own mobile phone during educational visit.

5. Absence Guidelines

The following guidelines ensure that students and colleagues are not unduly disadvantaged when a member of staff is absent.

Sickness Absence

- **Notification:** Staff members who are unwell and unable to attend must telephone the school as early as possible (ext. 3557) and inform their immediate Line Manager. Email or text notifications are insufficient.
- **Deadlines:** * Staff with teaching responsibilities (including TAs responsible for students where cover is essential) must make telephone contact by 7:15 am at the latest. If someone calls on behalf of the staff member, they must still do so before this time.
 - To ensure an agency teacher can arrive in time for period one, contact must be established by 7:30 am.
 - Support staff without a teaching or essential cover load must telephone at least half an hour before their contracted start time to report sickness to the HR Officer, providing an indication of their expected return date.
- **Daily Reporting:** Staff must telephone the school absence line and inform their immediate Line Manager on each day of their absence. Class teachers are responsible for informing their CTL, line manager (if different), and PAL by 7:15 am. The only exception is when a doctor's certificate has been issued, in which case the school must be advised of the expected return date.
- **Sensitive Matters:** If the situation is of an extremely personal nature, the staff member may directly call the SLT member in charge of Cover or the Headteacher.
- **Certification:** Staff must provide a self-certification form for absences of 7 days or less, or a doctor's certificate for absences exceeding 7 days. Absence over a weekend counts as continuous absence for self-certification purposes.
- **Absence Categories:** To support staff and ensure smooth operations, the specific SIMS category for the absence must be stated (e.g., sickness, childcare, child sick, sick dependent, or traffic/other lateness). If an absence is likely to last more than one day, the school must be informed immediately.
- **Cover Work:** Teaching staff are expected to send in cover work for their classes unless they are too unwell to do so. In all cases of teacher absence, CTLs are responsible for ensuring that class registers and work are available for cover/supply staff.

- **Return to Work:** Upon returning from any sickness absence, all staff must report to their Line Manager and complete a sickness report form.

Known Absence (e.g., religious events, moving, medical appointments, compassionate leave)

- Leave of absence will only be authorised in exceptional circumstances and remains at the Headteacher's discretion.
- Staff must complete a Leave of Absence form as soon as the situation is known. The HR officer will pass all requests to the Headteacher for approval, and staff will receive written confirmation if granted.
- Religious leave requests must be made in writing at the start of the academic year and are determined by the Pilgrimage Policy.
- Medical, dental, or hospital appointments must be scheduled outside of school hours wherever possible.

6. Courses, Visits, and Leaving the Premises

- **CPD Courses:** Staff requesting a CPD course must submit a request for approval, which will be discussed in the weekly diary meeting. If approved, the Headteacher's PA will book the course, confirm details with the staff member, and advise the Cover Officer to arrange cover.
- **School Visits:** Staff must refer to the School Visit Policy for off-timetable student events.
- **Leaving Site During Session:** Staff leaving the premises for professional purposes (e.g., primary school visits, work experience visits, home visits) must ensure their SLT line manager is aware, advise the office staff, and sign out using their card. Leaving the site briefly for personal reasons (e.g., visiting local shops, smoking) does not require SLT communication, but the staff member must sign out and sign back in using their card upon return.
- **Out of Hours Activities:** For any out-of-hours activities or detentions, staff must inform the site supervisor that staff and students remain on site. A list of participating students must be given to the school office in case parents or carers contact the school. Regular club registers will be entered into SIMS by the office.

7. Safeguarding and Professional Boundaries

General Responsibilities

All staff share responsibility for the safeguarding of students and must take every measure to ensure they are safe, happy, and successful. Every member of staff must apply safeguarding policies and guidance to protect both students and staff.

Staff responsibilities include:

- Prioritising the welfare of the young people at the school.
- Providing a safe environment around the school, including using specialist equipment safely.
- Reporting all allegations or suspicions of abuse (by an adult or child) according to school procedures.

Conduct with parents must remain professional at all times. Staff must not visit the homes of parents in a professional capacity without explicit permission from their line manager. Staff must maintain their professional standing and avoid any conduct, both in and outside of school, that could be questioned or put them at risk.

Workplace Conduct

Sexual violence and sexual harassment are never acceptable in the workplace and will be handled under the disciplinary policy. Sexual harassment will not be dismissed as 'banter'; behaviours such as grabbing bottoms, breasts, and genitalia will not be tolerated.

Further guidance is available in the following school policies:

- Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Equalities Policy
- E-safety Policy
- School Visits Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy

8. Low-Level Concerns and Reporting Duties

All employees, volunteers, and contractors have a strict professional duty to maintain appropriate boundaries with students at all times, in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE). Minor boundary slips, uncharacteristic behaviours, or minor breaches must be identified and supported early.

A. Definition of a Low-Level Concern

A low-level concern is any unease, "nagging doubt," or minor behaviour that does not meet the legal threshold of harm, but suggests an adult may have acted in a manner inconsistent with this Code of Conduct (including behaviour outside of work). Examples include:

- Being overly familiar or friendly with students.
- Showing clear favouritism or giving personal gifts.
- Engaging with students on personal social media platforms or via personal mobile numbers.
- Conducting one-on-one sessions with a student without clear justification or with room vision panels obscured.

Staff must remain vigilant against modern online harms, including the creation or sharing of AI-generated content or 'deepfakes', which KCSIE classifies as child-on-child abuse. Technological interactions must prioritise whole-school online safety filtering and monitoring guidelines.

B. Duty to Report Others

Staff who observe a colleague, supply teacher, contractor, or volunteer behaving in a way that causes a "nagging doubt" or seems inconsistent with this Code of Conduct must report this concern immediately to the Headteacher. If the concern is about the Headteacher, it must be reported directly to the Chair of Governors.

Staff must never ignore, dismiss, or attempt to internally investigate a low-level concern themselves. Sharing "soft" concerns is a supportive mechanism designed to protect children and prevent colleagues from drifting into serious professional difficulty.

C. Duty to Self-Report

Staff are expected to be self-aware and self-report to the Headteacher or DSL immediately if they find themselves in a situation that could be misinterpreted or compromise their professional standing. Examples include:

- Accidentally accepting a student's friend request on social media before realising their identity.
- Finding oneself completely alone with a student in an unmonitored area due to an emergency or scheduling conflict.
- Giving a student an unavoidable lift in a personal vehicle due to an emergency, before standard permissions could be processed.

Self-reporting protects professional integrity, demonstrates transparency, and ensures an official, accurate record is established before an outside allegation can be made.

D. Accountability

A deliberate failure to report a known low-level concern regarding a colleague, or a failure to self-report an explicit boundary breach, represents a direct violation of this Staff Code of Conduct and may result in formal disciplinary action.

9. Rights, Relationships, and Communication

Student Interactions

Staff members must treat young people:

- With respect and patience.
- Fairly and without prejudice or discrimination.
- As individuals with individual needs.
- Respectfully and gently when discussing sensitive issues.

Staff must encourage young people to speak out about attitudes and behaviour that make them uncomfortable, and promote relationships based on openness, honesty, trust, and respect. Contact must remain appropriate and relevant to the staff member's role. Whenever possible, staff must ensure they are not alone with a single young person, and vision panels in rooms must never be covered. Other staff should know the location of the meeting. Personal care must only be provided in an emergency, with another adult present if possible.

Impartiality and Conflicts of Interest

Staff must ensure all members of the school community are treated fairly, consistently, and impartially. Employees must not provide preferential treatment, favourable consideration, or any form of advantage to friends, family members, relatives, or close personal associates as a result of

their position. This applies to decisions regarding behaviour management, academic matters, access to opportunities, communication, and the application of school policies. Professional boundaries must be maintained to avoid actual, perceived, or potential conflicts of interest.

Prohibited Contact and Social Media

- Staff must not enter into personal relationships with students; doing so may lead to dismissal.
- 'Social' contact with students in or outside of school is prohibited until the student is at least 18 years of age.
- Staff must not share personal mobile numbers, email addresses, or home addresses with students.
- Staff must not give or accept friendship requests on social media, text students, or contact students via personal email before their eighteenth birthday.
- Any use of social media for academic purposes must be discussed with and approved by the Headteacher.

Alumni Communication

Communication between staff and alumni students who no longer physically attend Little Ilford School is prohibited until the student turns 18. This restriction also applies to staff who leave the employment of the school while the students are still attending.

If former students wish to return to arrange work experience, assist with events, meet previous staff, or seek advice, they must email the official address: alumni@littleilford.org. The school will apply for temporary DBS certification for these individuals.

If a member of staff receives an email from a former student, they must reply using the mandatory text template below, copying in the safeguarding lead at safeguardingteam@littleilford.org:

Dear X,

Thank you for your email. As per the professional expectations of staff policy, communication between staff and alumni students is prohibited until the student is 18 years old.

For this reason please can you email your query to alumni@littleilford.org.

Take Care, [Staff Member Name]

Staff who feel a former student requires support must raise this with the Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Headteacher, and must not undertake to support the student independently. Breaches of these rules may lead to disciplinary action and/or police intervention.

10. Equipment, Tuition, and Wider Responsibilities

Personal Equipment and Liability

The school accepts no responsibility for personal equipment (e.g., phones, video cameras, laptops, extension leads) brought onto the site. Any personal equipment plugged into the mains must be PAT tested by the school.

In the event that normal Health and Safety procedures are neglected, or personal equipment is faulty, the school will NOT be liable for any resulting accidents or injuries to students or staff.

Private Tuition

Staff may provide private tuition in their own time at weekends, provided that no current students from Little Ilford School attend. Staff must not seek to recruit students for any activities in which they are involved outside of the school. This restriction prevents situations where an allegation of “Improper use of position for financial gain” could be made, which could lead to disciplinary action if substantiated.

Social Media and Professional Relationships

- Staff must exercise great care on social networking sites to protect their personal life and professional standing. Public social media accounts must be declared to the DSL via the staff Google form in September and updated as necessary.
- Public discord between staff members on social media is prohibited, as it impacts professional duties.
- Staff must develop effective professional relationships with colleagues and know when to draw on advice or specialist support.
- Interactions should be conducted face-to-face wherever possible. Staff must avoid using email to address issues that may evoke an emotive response, and should refer to the school communication protocol.

- Any staff member who feels uncomfortable or unsure about meeting a parent or young person alone MUST ensure another adult is present in the room.
- Staff must not transport students in personal vehicles unless they hold relevant insurance cover and have informed the School Business Manager, the Head's PA, the Educational Visits Coordinator, the DSL, and the Headteacher.
- Smoking is prohibited within the environs of the school in line with borough policy.

Contributions and Compliance Declarations

Staff are expected to:

- Make a positive contribution to the wider life and ethos of the school.
- Deploy staff effectively.
- Take responsibility for improving teaching through professional development, responding to feedback, and communicating effectively with parents regarding achievements and well-being.
- Complete the safeguarding declaration Google form within the set deadline. This declaration includes confirming that the staff member has read and agreed to follow all school policies, including Part 1 of the updated Keeping Children Safe in Education (following the removal of Annex A), the social media protocols, and random DBS verification checks.

This code provides general guidance on safeguarding and professional self-protection, but is not exhaustive. Inappropriate behaviour may subject staff members to formal disciplinary procedures.

ALL STAFF MUST READ THE SCHOOL POLICIES AND SIGN THE REQUIRED DECLARATION DOCUMENT AS CONFIRMATION.