



Chigwell School

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Staff champion	DAPK
Last Reviewed by Governors	January 2026
Next Review by Governors	January 2027
Committee	Risk, Wellbeing and Compliance

Staff Code of Conduct

This policy applies to Chigwell School and the trading subsidiary, Chigwell Mitre Enterprises (CME). Where reference is made to the School, this applies to both Chigwell School and CME.

Purpose

Relationships between staff and pupils at Chigwell School should invariably be warm, professional and mutually respectful. This Code has been formulated in order to maintain this balance and its purpose is to:

- Confirm and reinforce the professional responsibilities of staff;
- Clarify the legal position in relation to sensitive aspects of staff/pupil relationships;
- Set out the expectations of standards to be maintained within the School.

It is hoped that staff will be reassured by this code. It will, in the vast majority of cases, simply confirm good professional practice but it should also promote the highest standards of care for young people. In addition, we aim to protect teachers and others from the potentially devastating consequences of false allegations. It is important that all staff feel able to raise concerns and the School is keen to have a reflective approach to ensure best practice, ultimately to protect children. Please refer to the Whistle Blowing Policy.

Although this Code of Conduct advises on how to deal with specific situations, it should not replace professional common sense and good judgement. In all matters relating to pupil/staff relationships, teachers must bear in mind how an action might reasonably be regarded by a third party. In the most extreme case, conduct and behaviour which does not meet the required/expected standards could give rise to disciplinary proceedings under the individual's contract of employment. It is therefore important that all colleagues familiarise themselves with this code.

All staff should understand the need to act as good role models for pupils. The School expects its staff to behave in a thoroughly professional manner and to set an example to pupils through high standards of behaviour. In addition, all staff have a responsibility to maintain public confidence in their ability to safeguard the welfare of pupils. They should adopt high standards of personal conduct in order to maintain general confidence and respect of their peers, pupils and the public in general. An individual's behaviour either in or out of the workplace should not compromise his or her position at school.

The following link outlines factors relating to decisions which may lead to the prohibition of teachers from the profession. It is given [here](#).

In addition, staff should be familiar with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and KCSIE.

We all need to lead by example: R. Kipling wrote: *'No printed word nor spoken plea can teach young minds what they should be. Not all the books on all the shelves, but what the teachers are themselves.'*

1. Duty of Care

All staff have a duty to keep pupils safe and to protect them from sexual, physical and emotional harm. Children have a right to be safe when under the care of the School and to be treated with respect and dignity. It follows that trusted adults are expected to take reasonable steps to ensure the safety and well-being of pupils. Our duty of care is, in part, carried out through the development of respectful, caring and professional relationships between staff and pupils, and behaviour by staff that demonstrates integrity, maturity and sound judgement.

2. Staff/Pupil Contact

As a general rule, staff should avoid unnecessary contact with pupils outside school.

- They should not give pupils their home address, home telephone number, or non-school e-mail address unless the need to do so is agreed with senior management.
- They should not make arrangements to meet pupils, individually or in groups, outside school other than on school trips authorised by the School.
- They should avoid contacting pupils at home unless this is strictly necessary; they should keep a record of any such occasion.
- They must not give a pupil a lift in their own vehicle other than on school business and with permission from the School.
- They should not attend private pupil parties, and should be aware of their professional standing and responsibilities when attending events arranged by parents at which pupils are also present.
- Occasionally, Pre Prep staff have to remove wet or soiled clothing for which there is an agreed procedure.
- The very young children in the Pre Prep may be naturally affectionate. However, staff should not respond in a way that encourages them.

Members of staff who are parents of pupils, friends with parents of pupils or who, for example, are voluntary workers in youth organisations attended by pupils, will of course have contact with pupils outside school. However, they should still use their professional judgement to respect the spirit of this code. The School will support staff who have acted reasonably in this way.

3. Language

Staff must not swear, blaspheme or use any sort of offensive language in front of pupils. They must not use language which is discriminatory and demeaning in relation to gender, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability or age. Staff should not make sexual innuendos or any comments of a sexual nature (other than in the context of the curriculum as specified in schemes of work). They should avoid the use of sarcasm or derogatory words when disciplining pupils and unprofessional comments. Anti-discriminatory legislation applies to all of us.

4. Physical Contact

In nearly all cases, physical contact between pupils and staff is inappropriate and prohibited, and the use of corporal punishment is forbidden. The only possible circumstances where physical contact may occur are outlined below but it is anticipated that such cases will be extremely rare. If a member of staff sustains any injury when restraining a pupil, then they should report it to the School as soon as possible.

a) Restraint

All members of staff are aware of the regulations regarding the use of force by teachers, as set out in DfEE Circular 10/98, relating to section 550A of the Education Act 1996: The Use of Force to Control or Restrain Pupils, and in addition the most recent DfE advice on the Use of Reasonable Force July 2013. Corporal punishment is not used or threatened at this school. Teachers in our school do not hit, push or slap children. Staff only intervene physically to restrain children or to prevent injury to a child, or if a child is in danger of hurting themselves. The actions that we take are in line with government guidelines on the restraint of children. The Head of Pre Prep, Head of Prep School or Deputy Head (Pastoral) Senior School should be informed of any incident as soon as possible and will take responsibility for making arrangements for debriefing once the situation has stabilised. A member of the teaching staff should always be involved in debriefing the pupil involved and any victims of the incident should be offered support. All incidents should be recorded immediately. The report should include details of when and where the incident took place, circumstances and significant factors which led to the incident, the duration and nature of any physical restraint used, the names of all involved, pupils and staff, a description of any injuries sustained by pupils or staff and subsequent medical attention. A copy of the

report should be filed in the child's file and in the record of restraint. Parents will be informed on the same day or as soon as reasonably practicable, of the actions that were taken and why, and to provide them with an opportunity to discuss it.

b) Action taken in self-defence or in an emergency

The law allows anyone to defend themselves against an attack provided they do not use more force than is necessary and indeed it should be the minimum needed to achieve the desired result. Similarly, where a pupil is at risk of immediate injury or on the point of inflicting injury on someone else, any member of staff would be entitled to intervene.

c) Contact in other situations

There are a few situations where physical contact may be proper or necessary. Some physical contact may, for example, be necessary to demonstrate exercises or techniques during P.E., drama, music or sports coaching.

All staff must be alert to the possibilities of any contact being misinterpreted. To avoid such misunderstanding, all planned contact must be demonstrably unavoidable. It might be that it is better for a teacher to demonstrate a technique themselves in any of the circumstances mentioned above or indeed to use a capable pupil for the demonstration to avoid physical contact.

If staff still feel it proper or necessary for physical contact to occur, then the following guidelines must be observed.

- (i) Explain the intended action to the pupil;
- (ii) Do not proceed with the action if the pupil appears to be apprehensive or reluctant, or if you have other concerns about the pupil's likely reaction;
- (iii) Ensure that other pupils or colleagues are present during the demonstration.

If you are at all concerned about anything which has occurred during the demonstration, inform the School without delay, and make a written record.

Touching may also be appropriate where a pupil is in distress and needs comforting or if a member of staff has to give first aid. Staff should use their own professional judgement when they feel a pupil needs this kind of support and should be aware of any special circumstances relating to the pupil. Particular care must be taken in instances which involve the same pupil over a period of time.

5. One to One Working

If a teacher is alone with a pupil they should ensure that any such meeting is as visible as possible. As such they should ensure that the door to the room has a glass panel or is left open. If this is not possible, then another adult must be close by.

6. Relationships

We best serve the pupils in our care by a pastoral approach that is concerned, collective and thorough, but professionally detached. We do not serve pupils or parents well by encouraging situations in which pupils develop excessive reliance on individual teachers and a relationship between a member of staff and pupil cannot be a relationship between equals.

By virtue of their position, and the work they undertake, teachers should be trusted by pupils. As such, this position must not be distorted by fear or favour and teachers need to exercise responsibility over those they teach and care for. Staff must not allow a relationship between teacher and pupil to develop in a way that could lead to a sexual relationship.

It is unacceptable and prohibited for a member of staff to have any kind of sexual or intimate relationship/contact with a pupil of any age or to encourage such relationships/contact. Such relationships/contact are a breach of trust and professional standards even where the pupil is over 18. It is a criminal offence under The Sexual Offences Act 2003 for a person aged 18 or over who is in a position of trust to relate to another person under that age and to engage in sexual activity with that person. The offence is punishable by up to six months imprisonment and/or an unlimited fine. The School will regard any such relationship as gross misconduct which would most likely give rise to termination of the staff member's contract of employment.

The Sexual Offences Act 2003 also introduced the offence of "meeting a child following sexual grooming". This applies where an adult arranges to meet a child aged under 16 in any part of the world, if he has met or

communicated with that child on at least two earlier occasions and intends to commit a sexual offence against that child. The law is clearly intended to apply where adults contact children through the internet. However, the prior meetings or communications need not have an explicitly sexual content.

Every complaint by a pupil must be taken seriously and investigated. It may be necessary to involve social services who may themselves involve the police if there are grounds for thinking that a criminal offence has been committed.

7. Confidentiality and Data Protection

Members of staff may have access to confidential information about pupils, parents and colleagues and we must not pass information about, for example, addresses or telephone numbers to others, e.g. parents or pupils, without express permission from the person concerned. The School as a data controller for the purposes of Data Protection legislation has certain duties in law and staff must ensure that they do not render the School in breach of such duties. Information regarding data protection obligations can be obtained from the Bursar who is the Privacy and Compliance Officer.

Information about pupils, parents or colleagues must never be disclosed to telephone enquirers. The enquirer should be asked to put the request in writing to the Head or Bursar or other senior manager concerned so that it can be dealt with appropriately.

There are some circumstances in which a member of staff may be expected to disclose information about a pupil, for example when abuse is alleged or suspected (please see the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy). Where such requests are made they should be passed to the Head, Bursar, Head of the Prep School, Deputy Head or Head of Pre Prep. In such cases, there is a duty to pass information on without delay but only to those with designated child protection responsibilities.

Staff must not discuss personal details of colleagues with pupils.

8. Comments and Discussions with Pupils

Staff must not make comments to or about pupils which could be taken to have sexual overtones. It is equally unacceptable for staff to encourage debate and discussion between groups of students, which could be interpreted as having sexual overtones, unless they are justified in the context of the teaching programme. Schemes of work should highlight particular areas of risk and sensitivity. Specific guidance may be needed to assist newly qualified or other teachers who are new to this area of work. This will call for the exercise of careful judgement in responding to questions raised by pupils.

Notwithstanding the advice given above, it is recognised that in order to discharge particular pastoral responsibilities, staff may, from time to time, need to engage in conversations with pupils which cover sensitive matters. Teachers must use their professional judgement to ensure that they are not drawn into areas inappropriate to their duties or their relationship with the pupils concerned. Staff must also use their discretion to ensure that, for example, any probing for details cannot be construed as unjustified intrusion.

The persistent and hurtful use of sarcastic, demeaning or insensitive comments towards young people can also be regarded as a form of abuse which is potentially very damaging and must be avoided. In particular staff must not make any racist, sexist or homophobic comments. Particular care should be taken when engaging in humour with pupils, however well intended.

9. Infatuations and Crushes

These, unfortunately, do develop and can involve pupils and teachers of both sexes on both a heterosexual and homosexual basis. They need to be handled sensitively. Careless and insensitive reactions have been known to provoke false accusations. It is therefore in the interest of all parties to avoid adding to a pupil or colleagues' problems by encouraging the crush or making jokes about the situation. In such situations the advice of the Deputies, Head of Prep School or Head of Pre Prep must be sought. Other members of staff may have a part to play, too, in alerting a colleague to the possibility of an infatuation in order that appropriate steps can be taken to minimise hurt and distress and the risk to the teacher concerned. Whilst the risk of infatuation is not limited to younger members of staff, new teachers must recognise their particular vulnerability to adolescent infatuation. If a member of staff is concerned that they are developing a friendship with a pupil which would have the potential to become an unacceptable relationship, they must ensure that the relationship does not develop further. Any such incidents should be reported to the Deputies, Head of Prep School or Head of Pre Prep so that they may be recorded to protect that colleague.

10. Out of School and After School Activities

Staff must take particular care when supervising pupils in the less formal atmosphere of a residential setting or after-school activity. The more relaxed relationships that may promote successful activities can be misinterpreted by young people. It is important to emphasise that the standards of professional conduct and behaviour expected of staff are no different from those which apply within school. Staff should be aware of the particular care which should be taken with older, more mature students in these circumstances.

There is a particular risk that staff socialising themselves in bars or clubs may bump into older pupils legitimately doing the same. It is important to remain professional in these situations too and remember the boundaries that also exist between staff and pupils outside of school. Staff and pupils must not socialise as equals in these situations.

11. Teaching Materials

The use of online material of an explicit or sensitive nature, particularly in relation to language or sexual behaviour must be given careful consideration to ensure that its selection is not subsequently misinterpreted. There must always, therefore, be a clear link with the scheme of work.

12. Reporting Incidents

Staff must report any concerns they may have following any incident where they feel that their actions may have been misinterpreted. This report must be made to the Deputies as soon as possible after the incident and should include as an immediate follow up the preparation of a written note of the incident, a copy of which must be given to the Deputies.

All concerns, decisions and actions relating to safeguarding or professional conduct must be recorded clearly and contemporaneously and passed to the DSL in accordance with the School's safeguarding record-keeping procedures.

All staff have a duty to report any concerns about unsafe practice, professional misconduct, or behaviour that may pose a risk to pupils. Staff who raise concerns in good faith are protected from detriment. Concerns may be raised with the Head, the Designated Safeguarding Lead or, where appropriate, the Chair of Governors. For full procedures, including external escalation routes, staff must refer to the Whistleblowing Policy.

13. Personal Letters, Gifts and Electronic Communication

Staff should usually only write letters or send e-mails to individual pupils about routine matters of academic study or pastoral care, congratulations on recent achievements or other purely professional issues. Staff should not give presents to an individual pupil (as opposed to small gifts such as confectionary to a whole group). If a teacher believes it to be necessary to write a personal note or give a present to an individual pupil, he/she should discuss the purpose and context with the Deputies (it is entirely appropriate to send a message of thanks for an end of term gift, for example, but it is still worth letting the Deputies know).

Staff must not give or accept gifts that could be perceived as showing favouritism or that create a sense of obligation. Token, low-value gifts may be given to whole groups, but individual gifts must be exceptional and declared.

All staff using e-mail, mobile phones, text messages, and social media, need to be aware of the less formal style that can characterise these forms of communication and should ensure that messages do not convey an inappropriate tone. Repeated electronic communication is a particular cause for concern, as it can spiral out of control almost unnoticed by those conducting it. To protect themselves staff should not have contact with pupils through social networking sites, chat rooms, games forums etc. Likewise, text message should only be sent in case of emergencies and this must be using a school device. Staff are strongly advised not to post personal information and images of themselves on social media unless they apply privacy settings. See the Policy on Staff Use of Social Media. Such information and/or images (e.g. descriptions and photos of nights out) could be professionally compromising and potentially bring the School into disrepute.

Staff should be circumspect in their communications with children so as to avoid any possible misinterpretation of their motives or any behaviour which could be construed as grooming. Staff should not give their personal contact details to pupils, including personal e-mail, home or mobile numbers, unless the need to do so is agreed with senior management.

Staff should not use their personal device to record images of pupils.

Staff should not use School equipment to access inappropriate material such as pornography; neither should personal equipment containing these images or links to them be brought into the workplace as this would raise serious concerns about the suitability of the individual to continue to work with children. Staff should ensure that pupils are not exposed to any inappropriate images or web links. Please see the Staff ICT Acceptable Use Policy.

Where indecent images of children or other unsuitable material are found, the police and Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) will be immediately informed. In such a situation, the School would not attempt to investigate the matter or evaluate the material themselves, as this may lead to evidence being contaminated.

Separate arrangements for online communication between boarding pupils and boarding staff are in place. Please see boarding staff handbook for guidance.

14. Dress and Appearance

A person's dress and appearance are matters of personal choice and self-expression. However, staff are expected to maintain a smart, professional appearance appropriate to their role and duties, with reasonable adjustments made where required for disability, faith or safety considerations.

15. Alcohol

All staff should be aware of the Controlled Drugs and Substances, Alcohol and Tobacco Policy which expressly forbids the consumption of alcohol by students under 16 years. Sixth Formers may only consume alcohol in strict moderation at approved school social events (e.g. the school Ball or on school trips) in accordance with the Educational Visits Policy, following a risk assessment.

Teachers have a duty to set a responsible example to pupils. They must therefore not consume alcohol in front of pupils unless at an approved school social event or on an extended school trip, and in all cases alcohol must only be consumed in moderation. At such an event or on a trip, a minimum of two members of staff should be 'on duty' and alcohol free so that adequate care for all pupils can be provided at all times. If alcohol is permitted, then it must be addressed in the risk assessment carried out in advance of the trip

Staff must not invite pupils to bars or pubs. Drinking games with or in front of pupils are expressly forbidden. Teachers must not drink alcohol on school premises during the school day unless at an approved school function. (The school day is 8.20am to 4.00pm)

16. Smoking

Smoking and/or vaping is not permitted on the Chigwell School site by either staff or visitors.

17. Allegations Against Staff

Allegations against staff will be dealt with in accordance with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. All staff are expected to be fully aware of this policy.

18. Boarding Staff

Boarding staff are in a different position with regard to the Sixth Form students in their care because they are responsible for them outside regular school hours and most of the students' parents live overseas. However, it is important too for them to behave professionally at all times, maintain appropriate staff-student relationships, and to appreciate that at all times staff represent the School.

Inevitably, boarding staff act in loco parentis, and therefore under the guidance of the Director of Boarding they may need vary some of the procedures listed in this policy. For example, boarding staff may need to drive boarders in their cars, will give boarders the numbers of the Boarding House duty mobile phone and communicate with them outside of usual school communication routes (email), while following the approved procedure, as described in the boarding staff handbook. Heads of the relevant Boarding Houses are responsible for the guidance of their teams on such matters in conjunction with the Director of Boarding.

Even though their basic permission is acquired in the documentation which accompanies an acceptance of a boarding place at the School it will not always be possible to seek overseas parents' permission for students to participate in various school activities. However, permission should be sought before boarders are permitted to stay away from the Boarding House overnight and with regard to their accommodation at half term. If boarders are asking to participate in an activity that is going to require their parents to pay a reasonable sum of money, then the Head of House should get in touch with home for authorisation.

Living in the same Boarding House, staff and students will naturally meet informally and there may be a number of social occasions in the Boarding House at which both staff and students are present – for example house dinners or birthday parties. The Heads of the Boarding Houses are responsible for ensuring that the standards of professional conduct and behaviour expected of staff are maintained at all times and that students are appropriately supervised.

If House Tutors are in any doubt as to the boundary that exists between them and the boarders in their care, they should consult with their relevant Head of House and the Heads of Houses can consult with the Director of Boarding. On the one hand we need a system that is workable and practical, but it is also important that staff are aware of the position of trust that they are in and that they protect themselves from breaches of professional etiquette, inadvertent or otherwise.

19. Concerns

We hope that all members of staff will feel confident that they are able to raise any concerns informally and in the majority of cases these will be resolved easily. If not, staff should be aware of the complaints and grievance procedures as well as the whistle blowing policy. Further details are given in the staff handbook.

20. Low Level Concerns

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Concerns may be graded as low level if they do not meet the criteria for an allegation, but the person has acted in a way that is inconsistent with the Staff Code of Conduct. If staff have concerns, however small, about their own or another member of staff's behaviour, they should raise them with the Head, or in the case of the Head, with the Chair of Governors or Safeguarding Governor. This may include: being over friendly with pupils; taking photos of children on their personal phone; engaging with a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door; or using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language.

The purpose of the Low Level Concerns Policy is to create and embed a culture of openness, trust and transparency through which the School's values and expected behaviour, as set out in this Staff Code of Conduct, are constantly lived, monitored and reinforced by all staff. Further details are given in the Low-Level Concerns Policy.

Code of Conduct for Visiting Teachers Including Music and LAMDA

Peripatetic teachers are in a relatively unusual position in that they frequently work one to one with pupils. They should, therefore, abide by the following:

1. Allegations of unprofessional conduct or improper contact or words can arise at any time. You are reminded that professionalism and vigilance are required, so as to ensure the safety of children in your care, and to reduce the risk of an allegation of impropriety against you or a member of staff.
2. You need to take particular care when dealing with a pupil who:
 - appears to be emotionally distressed, or generally vulnerable and / or who is seeking expressions of affection;
 - appears to hold a grudge;
 - acts in a sexually provocative way, or who is inclined to make exaggerated claims about himself or herself and others, or to fantasise, or one whose manner with adults is over-familiar;
 - may have reason to make up a story to cover the fact that he or she has not worked hard enough for public examinations.

Note: some of these behaviours may be indications that a child has been, or is currently being, abused and should therefore be reported to the Child Protection Officer under the School's Child Protection Procedures.

3. Always act within the spirit of these guidelines.
4. When conducting a lesson with a pupil you should take particular care in the following ways:
 - use a room that has sufficient windows onto a corridor so the occupants can be seen, or keep the door open, or inform a colleague that the lesson / meeting is taking place;
 - arrange the meeting during normal school hours when there are plenty of other people about;
 - do not continue the meeting for any longer than is necessary to achieve its purposes;
 - avoid sitting or standing in close proximity to the pupil, except as necessary to check work;
 - avoid idle discussion;
 - avoid all unnecessary physical contact and apologise straight away if there is accidental physical contact;
 - avoid any conduct that could be taken as a sexual advance;
 - avoid words or expressions that have any unnecessary sexual innuendo; avoid displays of affection either personally or in writing (e.g. messages in birthday cards, text messages, emails etc.);
 - avoid any form of aggressive contact such as holding, pushing, pulling or hitting, which could amount to a criminal assault, or threatening words;
 - avoid any words or actions that are over-familiar;
 - do not swear, blaspheme or use any sort of offensive language in front of pupils;
 - report any incident that causes you concern to the Child Protection Officer, and make a written record (dated and signed).
5. Physical contact between you and a pupil may be necessary and beneficial in order to demonstrate a required action, or a correct technique in, for example, singing and other music lessons.
6. You should observe the following guidelines (where applicable):
 - explain the intended action to the pupil;
 - do not proceed with the action if the pupil appears apprehensive or reluctant, or if you have other concerns about the pupil's likely reaction;
 - ensure that the door is open and if you are in any doubt, ask a colleague or another pupil to be present during the demonstration.
7. If you are at all concerned about anything which has occurred during the demonstration, inform the appropriate line manager e.g. Director of Music or Director of Drama without delay, and make a written record.
8. It is a criminal offence under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 for a person aged 18 or over who is in a position of trust in relation to another person under that age to engage in sexual activity with that person. The offence is punishable by up to six months imprisonment and/or an unlimited fine.

9. The Sexual Offences Act 2003 also introduced the offence of "meeting a child following sexual grooming". This applies where an adult arranges to meet a child aged under 16 in any part of the world, if he has met or communicated with that child on at least two earlier occasions and intends to commit a sexual offence against that child. The law is clearly intended to apply where adults contact children through the internet. However, the prior meetings or communications need not have an explicitly sexual content.
10. Most sexual activity involving a person under the age of 16 (male or female) is an indecent assault which is both a criminal offence and a matter for which damages can be awarded. This is so, even when the younger person is alleged to have provoked or encouraged the activity.
11. Every complaint by a pupil must be taken seriously and investigated. It may be necessary to involve social services who may themselves involve the police if there are grounds for thinking that a criminal offence has been committed.

For and on behalf of the Governors
D.A.P. King