Upperby Primary School

Safer Working Practices Code of Conduct for Adults 2026 - 2027

Safer working practices code of conduct for adults

The DFE acknowledges the work of the Safer Recruitment Consortium in revising the detailed 'Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings.' 'Guidance for Safer Working Practice for professionals working in Education' 2022

All staff and volunteers and Trainee Teachers should receive this guidance as part of their induction. It should be revisited as part of on-going training to support everyone's understanding of key expectations.

It's important that staff and volunteers are provided with opportunities to consider the implications of the guidance for their setting and their own role and seek clarification.
All staff have received the KCSIE 2026 training and are up to date with other Safeguarding training. Eg- Prevent and Level 1 /2.

Safer working practices code of conduct

Introduction:

Keeping Children Safe in Education (DFE Sept 2026) sets out the requirement for all schools to have a staff code of conduct, sometimes referred to as a staff behaviour policy.

References made to 'child' and 'children' refer to children and young people under the age of 18 years. However, the principles of the Code apply to professional behaviours towards all pupils, including those over the age of 18 years. 'Child' should therefore be read to mean any pupil at the school or setting.
References made to adults and staff refer to all those who work with pupils in an educational establishment, in either a paid or unpaid capacity. This would also include, for example, those who are not directly employed by the school or setting, e.g., Local Authority staff, independent/ peripatetic sports coaches and music tutors, governors, trustees, and volunteers.

Our school is committed to safeguarding children and promoting children's welfare and expects all staff, governors, volunteers and visitors to share this commitment and maintain a vigilant and safe environment. It is our willingness to work in a safe manner and challenge inappropriate behaviour that underpins this commitment.

Everyone is expected to adhere to this 'Code of Conduct' along with the Safer Recruitment Consortium Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education Settings 2024 and Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings; Addendum 2025

Everyone must also read and understand part one and annex B of Keeping Children Safe in Education (DFE 2025). This code of conduct aims to support adults so they don't work in a manner which might lead to an allegation against them by raising awareness of illegal, unsafe, unprofessional and unwise behaviour and by supporting staff and volunteers to understand what safe, professional conduct is. Equally it aims to reduce the opportunity for any adult intent on grooming or harming a young person. The policy aims to reduce the risk of incidents or misunderstandings occurring by developing and setting out clear guidelines and boundaries. It encourages you to work in an open and transparent way that should avoid someone questioning your motives, intentions or suitability to work with young people.
In line with 2026 KCSI updates: The focus Areas are:

Online Safety: The guidance now explicitly addresses misinformation, disinformation theories as safeguarding concerns, with expanded responsibilities for filtering and monitoring, including the use of artificial intelligence(AI) This includes check that filter and monitor all devices connected to the internet

Mobile phones should not be used during the working day. Must not be used to take photo's
See mobile phone policy which make clear relevant procedures how this is implemented in the settling.

Absent Children: Follow the new information guidance on recognising absences and from education as potential warning signs for various safeguarding issues, including sexual abuse and criminal exploitation. All staff are asked to monitor children who arrive late and pass to the office/DSL so that this is followed up at the earliest opportunity before this becomes a regular occurrence.

Online Pre- Recruitment Checks: Enhanced guidance is provided on conducting online pre- recruitment checks for shortlisted candidates.

Our school promotes an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about adults working in or on behalf of the school are dealt with promptly and appropriately. Creating this culture in which all concerns are shared responsibly, in a timely way with the right person, and are recorded and dealt with appropriately is critical to effective safeguarding practice. This culture enables the school to identify concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour at the earliest possible stage, minimises the risk of abuse and ensures that all adults working in or on behalf of the school are clear about professional boundaries and act within these, in accordance with our ethos and values. This culture also empowers individuals to share concerns with key staff about their own behaviour at the earliest possible opportunity.

It is a key principle of this code of conduct that **everyone** understands their responsibility to share **without delay** any concerns they may have about a child's welfare or an adult's behaviour towards a young person. This includes any behaviours which may not meet the harm threshold and may be deemed to be a 'low level concern' as set out in our child protection policy. In addition, **everyone** has a responsibility to escalate their concerns to the Local Authority Designated Officer if they feel that safeguarding concerns they have raised about a child or adult working at the school are not being addressed by the school. Further information and guidance regarding how school will respond to concerns about an adult's conduct towards children where the harm threshold is met are set out in our managing allegations policy.

Code of Conduct:

Our school will create a culture of openness, transparency, trust and support where all members of the school community feel empowered to share relevant information about themselves or someone else.

- Staff are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions.
- If you have any concerns that a child is being harmed, abused or neglected you must share your concerns immediately both verbally and on CPOMs or in writing with the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead or another member of the school's Leadership Team. Always listen carefully to the child and report what they tell you in the child's own words. Never promise to keep a secret.

- If you receive an allegation against an adult working in the school or observe behaviour that concerns you, you must discuss your concerns without delay with the Head teacher. In the absence of the Headteacher, concerns should be shared with another senior member of staff such as the Deputy Headteacher or Designated Safeguarding Lead, or the Chair of Governors. Concerns regarding the Headteacher should be directed to the Chair of Governors or Local Authority Designated Officer. The school's Whistleblowing Policy and the NSPCC whistleblowing helpline are available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns internally.
  Staff can call the **NSPCC on 0800 028 0285** – the line is available from 8:00am to 8:00pm, Monday to Friday or email: help@nspcc.org.uk.
- If you are worried that the behaviour of an adult working in the school (including all third-party staff, supply staff and volunteers) is giving cause for concern, no matter how small the concern is and even if it does not meet the harm threshold, you must share your concerns with the designated safeguarding lead without delay. This is in line with the low-level concern procedures set out within our child protection policy. Concerns regarding the designated safeguarding lead should be directed to the headteacher.
- Anyone (in emergencies or if they are required to) can make a referral about their concerns for a child directly to Children's Services.

You should:

- Follow the school's child protection policy and procedures and in line with this share safeguarding information appropriately but also act accordingly with sensitive and confidential information.
- Be alert to the indicators of harm and abuse towards a child, including peer to peer abuse.
- Dress appropriately according to your role, ensuring that clothing is compliant with professional standards and is not likely to be viewed as offensive or revealing and that it is absent of any political or other contentious slogans or images.
- Act as an appropriate role model, treating all members of the school community with respect and tolerance.
- Ensure that you appropriately challenge any form of derogatory and sexualised language or behaviour to ensure that everyone is respectful at all times.
- Ensure gifts given or received are recorded and discussed with your Line Manager.
- Respect others' confidentiality unless sharing information is appropriate to ensuring their welfare.
- Adhere to the school's policies, particularly those related to safeguarding - including child protection, behaviour, attendance, physical intervention, intimate care, anti-bullying, equal opportunities, data protection, health and safety and online safety (acceptable use policy).
- Ensure that you understand your responsibilities under the General Data Protection Regulation and Data Protection Act 2018 and be clear that where personal information is recorded electronically, systems and devices are kept secure.
- Report any behaviour or situations which you may feel give rise to a complaint or misunderstanding in respect of your own actions both in and out of school. Also share situations with your designated safeguarding lead if you feel your actions might have sat outside this code of conduct, or may appear to others that they have done so.
- Share with your designated safeguarding lead or Headteacher any behaviour of another adult in the school where it gives you cause for concern or breaches this code of conduct or the school's safeguarding policies in line with the low-level concern procedures set out in our child protection policy. Examples of such behaviour include, but are not limited to, being over friendly with children, having favourites, using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language, taking

photographs of children on their mobile phone or engaging with a child on a one to one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door. Your intervention may allow for their practice to be supported and developed and/or prevent a child from being harmed.

- Understand that it may be appropriate to discuss with the Head teacher matters outside of work, including online, which may have implications for the safeguarding of children in the workplace. This includes information about yourself. You must ensure that you are aware of the circumstances where this would be applicable.
- Be aware that behaviour by yourself, those with whom you have a relationship or association, or others in your personal life (in or out of school or online), may impact on your work with children.
- Staff are encouraged to declare any relationships which exist outside of the workplace with any children, families or staff. This is in line with our school culture and enables any implications for practise to be considered and staff to be provided with appropriate advice to support safer working practices.
- Understand the circumstances where it may be necessary to 'self-report' incidents where they could have found themselves in a situation which could be misinterpreted, or may appear compromising to others, or if they have behaved in a manner which, on reflection, they consider to fall below the standards set out within the code of conduct for staff.
- Be aware that behaviour by themselves, those with whom they have a relationship or association or others in their personal lives (in or out of school, or online), may impact on their work with children.
- Inform the head teacher of any cautions, convictions or relevant order accrued during your employment, and/or if you are charged with a criminal offence.
- Understand that if you commit a relevant offence that would appear on your Enhanced DBS certificate or you become disqualified under the Childcare Act 2006 (those staff covered by the scope of the guidance): www.gov.uk/government/publications/disqualification-under-the-childcare-act-2006 then you must inform your headteacher. (The Childcare Act 2006 does not cover all settings or even all staff within a setting.)

Never:

- Act in a way both at work and/or in your personal life that brings yourself, school or the teaching profession into disrepute.
- Make, encourage or ignore others, making personal comments which scapegoat, demean or humiliate any member of the school community including ignoring any form of peer to peer abuse.
- Use your position to intimidate, bully, humiliate, coerce or undermine any member of the school community. This includes shouting in anger and aggressively to punish them rather than raising your voice to be heard or avoid danger.
- Undermine fundamental British values including democracy, rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance for those with different faiths, beliefs or from different cultures.
- Develop 'personal' or sexual relationships with children and young people, including making sexual remarks or having inappropriate sexual banter. In addition, the Sexual Offences Act 2003 makes it clear that all members of staff are in a position of trust and would therefore be committing a criminal offence to have a sexual relationship with a young person in full time education/below the age of 18, even if that pupil is over the age of consent.
- Engage in inappropriate conversations with students or share inappropriate personal information about yourself or others.
- Discriminate favourably or unfavourably towards a child.

- Give personal contact details to pupils or communicate outside of school using social networks, email, text, twitter, etc. or meet a young person out of school unless part of a planned school activity with the knowledge of your Line Manager.
- Have conversations on social networking sites that make reference to children, parents or other colleagues at the school or be derogatory about the school. Never make any statements or post images on social networking sites that might cause someone to question your suitability to act as a role model to young people or bring your own or the school's reputation into disrepute. You should never communicate with parents through social network sites and you are strongly advised to declare any existing friendships/relationships to your Line Manager.
- Use personal equipment to photograph children (always use the school's equipment) and ensure any photographs are only stored on the designated secure place on the school's network and not on portable equipment.
- Post on the school's website or social media accounts any photographs of children without their consent. (Some children may be put at risk by their whereabouts being made publicly).
- Use your personal mobile phone (or other personal IT equipment) in areas used by children unless in emergencies or under an agreed protocol set out by the headteacher. In Early Years mobile phones should be locked away rather than carried by staff in areas occupied by children.
- Undertake 'one to one' activities out of the sight of others unless it is a planned activity with the knowledge of your Line Manager and in keeping with your own responsibilities. You should not cover windows or door panels but always act in an open and transparent way.
- Transport children unsafely, for example by driving whilst using your mobile phone, consuming alcohol, failing to ensure that seat belts are worn or driving without appropriate insurance. Any trips should be planned and with the knowledge of your Line Manager. Unforeseen events should be reported to your Line Manager. It is good practice to have another adult to act as an escort during the journey
- Have physical contact with young people that might be misconstrued or considered indecent or harmful. Ensure you are always able to give an account of the reasons for physical contact or physical intervention. Where physical contact is required it is good practice for it to be within the sight of others. Any physical contact with a child that was needed to control or restrain a child should always be the minimum required.
- Toilets
- • Schools must not allow children into toilets designated for the opposite
- biological sex. This includes where schools are responding to requests to
- support social transition for children who are questioning their gender.
- • Schools must provide separate toilets for boys and girls aged 8 and over, apart
- from where a mixed-sex toilet is in a room intended for use by one pupil at a
- time and is lockable from the inside. Schools should assess the safeguarding
- risks of mixed-sex toilets and plan accordingly.
- • If a gender-questioning child does not want to use the toilet designated for their
- biological sex, schools should consider whether they can provide an alternative
- toilet facility, without compromising single-sex toilet provision. Schools should
- keep a clear record of these situations, communicate them appropriately and
- review them regularly.
- Changing rooms and showers
- • Schools must not allow a child aged 11 years or older at the start of the school
- year to undress in front of a child of the opposite biological sex.

All school employees should have a clear understanding of their responsibilities under this code of conduct. It aims to help avoid poor working practices that may lead to a person's behaviour being *investigated* and the *consideration* of disciplinary procedures.

Key Safeguarding Staff

Designated Safeguarding Lead	Mrs J Chandler
Headteacher	Mrs P Burns
Safeguarding Governor	Mrs C Wilson
Co/Chair of Governors	Mr W Atkinson/Miss R Mason

Key Contact Numbers

Cumbria Safeguarding Children Partnership	0333 240 1727
NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline	0800 028 0285

To speak to a LADO for advice:

Phone: **0300 303 3892 (Cumberland Council**