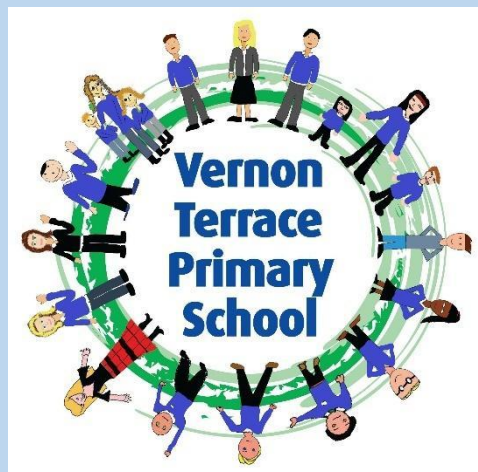


Vernon Terrace Primary School

Adult Code of Conduct Policy

2025 - 2026



1. Aims, scope and principles

This policy sets out the standards of conduct expected from all staff at Vernon Terrace Primary School. By establishing these expectations, we aim to create and maintain a school environment where everyone feels safe, valued, respected, and happy.

All school staff hold a position of trust and influence, and therefore serve as role models for pupils. As such, we expect all staff to demonstrate high standards of personal and professional behaviour.

Teachers are expected to act in accordance with the Teachers' Standards, upholding the principles of personal and professional conduct and adhering to safe working practices. Similarly, we expect all support staff, governors, and volunteers to act with integrity, professionalism, and respect for the wellbeing and safety of others.

Failure to uphold this Code of Conduct may lead to disciplinary action in line with the school's staff disciplinary procedures.

This Code is not exhaustive. In situations not explicitly covered, staff are expected to exercise their professional judgement and act in the best interests of the school and its pupils.

We are committed to fostering a culture of transparency, accountability, and mutual respect across all levels of the school.

2. Legislation and guidance

In line with the statutory safeguarding guidance '[Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)', & we must have a staff code of conduct, which covers acceptable use of technologies, staff/pupil relationships and communications, including the use of social media.

This policy links with our policies on:

- Equality Act 2010 and the Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act) Act 2023
- 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 procedures
- Safeguarding
- Online safety
- School's financial procedures manual
- Staff handbook

3. General obligations

Staff set an example to pupils. They will:

- Maintain high standards in attendance and punctuality
- Never use inappropriate, offensive, or discriminatory language in school (including swearing, sexually suggestive language, or terms related to race, gender, religion, disability, or sexuality)
- Treat pupils and others with dignity and respect, avoiding derogatory, belittling, or dismissive language (e.g., “silly,” “stupid,” “useless”)
- Show respect for the rights of others, including those protected by the Equality Act 2010
- Not undermine fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
- Express personal views and beliefs in a balanced and appropriate way, without exploiting pupils’ vulnerability or encouraging illegal or harmful behaviour
- Understand and operate within all relevant statutory frameworks (e.g. KCSIE, Working Together to Safeguard Children, Data Protection Act)
- Adhere to the Teachers’ Standards (or appropriate professional standards for support staff)
- Dress in a professional, appropriate, and safe manner, suitable for the school environment and in line with the school’s dress code
- Model safe and appropriate use of technology, including social media, and follow the school’s Acceptable Use Policy
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries at all times, both in person and online
- Report any safeguarding concerns immediately, in line with school policy, including concerns about the behaviour of other staff members

4. Safeguarding

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

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

Our safeguarding policy and procedures are available in the school office. New staff will also be emailed a copy once they have completed their induction meeting.

Staff will maintain pupil and parent/carers dignity and work professionally when managing safeguarding concerns/disclosures/investigations.

5. Staff-pupil relationships

Staff will observe boundaries with pupils 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 members and pupils must spend time on a one-to-one basis, staff will ensure that:

- This takes place in a public place that others can access
- Others can see in to the room
- A colleague or line manager knows this is taking place

Staff should have no contact with pupils outside of school hours. If you know a pupil/s family and see them outside of school this must be declared.

If a parent approaches a teacher asking them to tutor their child and the teacher wishes to pursue this arrangement the teacher must discuss this with the Headteacher before going ahead.

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

Staff should seek advice from SLT regarding gifts to pupils.

Besides end of term/year gifts from parents, teachers should inform SLT if a child regularly brings a gift in for them.

If a staff member is concerned at any point that an interaction between themselves and a pupil may be misinterpreted, this should be reported to their line manager or the Headteacher.

Avoid all physical contact with pupils. Pupils in the EYFS and KS1 may want to cuddle staff. Make these interactions swift.

Never try to restraint a child if you are not trained to do so. Make the area as safe as possible and call for assistant. A child should never be grabbed by a member of staff in order to stop them running off. The school has been made secure so no child can leave the building. Call for SLT if this happens.

Use of Physical Intervention

Staff must never attempt to physically restrain a child unless they have received accredited positive handling or restraint training (e.g. Team Teach or equivalent). If a child is in crisis or behaving in a way that poses a risk to themselves or others, staff should:

- Make the area as safe as possible
- Avoid physical contact unless absolutely necessary and trained to do so
- Call for assistance (you can ask a pupil or another adult to call for support on your behalf) immediately from a trained colleague or member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT)
- Under no circumstances should a child be grabbed, pulled, or physically held to prevent them from leaving an area. Staff must not attempt to chase or physically stop a child from running off, as this can escalate risk or cause injury to the child/staff member.
- The school environment is designed to be secure and safe, with controlled exits to prevent unsupervised leaving.
- Monitor from a safe distance, maintaining line of sight where possible

All incidents of serious behaviour or potential absconding must be recorded and reported to SLT and the DSL if appropriate.

6. Professional Working Relationships

The school is committed to fostering a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment in which all members of the community are protected from aggression, discriminatory behaviour, bullying, sexualised behaviour, and sexual harassment. We recognise that such conduct can cause lasting harm, whether it occurs in person or online.

Sexual harassment is defined as unwanted conduct of a sexual nature—including comments, gestures, or physical contact—that violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, humiliating, hostile, degrading, or offensive environment.

In accordance with the Equality Act 2010 and the Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act) Act 2023, which came into force in October 2024, the school has a legal duty to take all reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment, including from third parties such as visitors, contractors, and parents.

If any member of staff or the school community feels they are being treated in a way that makes them feel uncomfortable, this must be reported to the Headteacher. If the allegation is about the Headteacher this must be reported to the school's chair of governors. The concern will be handled sensitively and appropriately, and the Headteacher (or the chair of governor) will determine whether the matter should be addressed through a formal procedure or resolved under the school's grievance policy.

7. Communication and social media

Staff are expected to maintain professional boundaries at all times, including in their use of social media and online communication. All staff must take steps to protect themselves, the pupils, and the reputation of the school.

Personal Social Media Use

- Staff should ensure that their personal social media profiles are private and not accessible to pupils.
- If using personal social media accounts, staff are advised to avoid using their full legal name, as this may make it easier for pupils to locate them online. Using a first and middle name is encouraged.
- Staff must not accept friend requests or follow requests from current or former pupils under the age of 18, or their family members.
- Privacy settings should be reviewed regularly to ensure content is restricted to trusted contacts only.
- Staff must never post content that could undermine their professional role or bring the school into disrepute.

Professional or Public Social Media Use

Professional social media accounts (e.g. for education networking or sharing teaching resources) may be used provided they uphold the highest standards of conduct. If staff choose to have a public-facing account, they must:

- Avoid using their full name
- Not disclose the school's name or location
- Do not post negative comments about: the DfE, education politics, the profession, your colleagues, or employer
- Remain politically neutral and avoid sharing partisan views
- Avoid any language, images, or opinions that could damage their own or the school's reputation
- Never share photographs of pupils
- Avoid posting personal images that could be deemed inappropriate or unprofessional

Contact with Pupils and Families

- Staff must not contact pupils or parents/carers via social media, messaging apps, or other platforms for any personal reason (unless this is a person you have declared you know outside of school)
- Staff must never make attempts to view or follow pupils' or parents' social media profiles
- All communication with pupils and parents must be carried out via approved school channels (e.g. school email, official learning platforms)

8. 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 pupils. They will also not use personal mobile phones or cameras to take pictures of pupils.

We have the right to monitor emails and internet use on all school devices.

9. Confidentiality

In the course of their role, members of staff are often privy to sensitive and confidential information relating to the school, other staff, pupils, and their parents or carers. This information will never be:

- Disclosed to anyone without the relevant authority
- Used to humiliate, embarrass or blackmail others
- Used for a purpose other than what it was collected and intended for

This does not overrule staff's duty to report child protection concerns to the appropriate channel where staff believe a child is at risk of harm.

All staff will work alongside GDPR privacy policies.

10. Honesty and integrity

Staff should maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their role. This includes when dealing with pupils, handling money, claiming expenses and using school property and facilities.

Staff will not accept bribes. Gifts that are worth more than £20.00 must be declared.

Staff will ensure that all information given to the school about their qualifications and professional experience is correct.

11. Dress code

See staff handbook

12. Conduct outside of work

Staff will not act in a way that would bring the school, or the teaching profession into disrepute. This covers relevant criminal offences, such as aggressive (including verbally such as swear words), violent or sexual misconduct, as well as negative comments about the school, staff, pupils or parents on social media.

13. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually, but can be revised as needed. It will be by the full Governing Body.

Approved by:	Michael Henderson	Date: 1st September 2025
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Last reviewed on:

Next review due by:
