



**Churchdown School Academy**  
ACHIEVING SUCCESS FOR ALL

## **Staff Code of Conduct**

### **1. Mission and principles**

#### **Churchdown School Mission Statement**

Our mission is to be a school where student development and learning are at the centre of everything we do. Students are expected to strive for personal excellence and demonstrate a commitment to learning as they fulfil their potential. Our community is a nurturing and caring one, where students are encouraged to show compassion, friendship, and support towards one another. We aim to provide an education which is fully inclusive, where every child is valued for who they are and who they can become.

At Churchdown School Academy (the 'School') the education we provide is guided by the values of integrity, resilience, respect, ambition, and tolerance. These values are particularly important to us as we develop the students into lifelong learners and prepare them for a life beyond school.

- As a member of staff in the School everything we say and do is guided by our mission. We treat one another as we hope they would treat us, and we remember that everyone is entitled to an equitable and high quality experience. This document lays out more formally the expectations of all staff who work at the School but please remember our success is down to you and is founded upon the excellent relationships that currently exist between us all. We can never take this for granted and are blessed that we work in such a caring and supportive environment. This only works because we all pull our weight and work hard to maintain the highest professional standards of conduct in all aspects of our work.
- The Governors are committed to securing the wellbeing of all members of the community by creating a safe, secure, and stimulating learning environment. This code sets out the key principles which govern the way in which we work together; it draws on Department for Education ('DfE') guidance, the Teaching Standards, the Single Equality Scheme, and a range of school policies.

This document links to the following policies: Behaviour, Equality, Child Protection and Safeguarding, Whistleblowing, etc. It is informed by DfE guidance on 'Screening Searching and Confiscation', 'Use of Reasonable Force' (both July 2013), 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2018) and 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (September 2021). All staff must also consult the Staff Handbook for specific expectations for the School.

This code of conduct applies to all staff (including Governors, casual workers, visitors, supply or agency staff, and those on student placements) and volunteers in the School regardless of their position, role or responsibility. It sets out clear guidance on the standards of behaviour expected from all staff at the School.

**All members of the Churchdown School Academy community should:**

- Have high expectations of themselves and of others;
- Maintain high personal standards in their attendance and punctuality;
- Treat one another with dignity, and respect, at all times;
- Display the characteristics they want others to show including honesty, patience and a genuine concern for others;
- Recognise others' achievements;
- Respect the boundaries in their relationships with each other and not abuse their position or age by: entering into inappropriate relationships; committing such acts against an individual which are illegal, e.g. physical assault, harassment; discrimination, undermining, bullying or intimidating any other member of the school community;
- Work within set deadlines and arrive on time for meetings, lessons and events;
- Take into account others' work pressures and commitments;
- Dress in an appropriate manner as set out in the School's dress/uniform code;
- Ask for support whenever needed;
- Report incidents or actions of others which they feel threaten the welfare and security of any member of the School community.

**We rely on all staff:**

- Demonstrating professionalism in their dealings with colleagues, students, parents and visitors to the School and treating each with respect;
- Understanding that they are in a unique position of trust and using that influence to act as good role models for pupils in behaviour, attitude, punctuality and professional dress for the young people in our care;
- Carrying out their responsibilities to the best of their abilities, bearing in mind the reliance that we all have on the co-operation and support of others;
- Actively committing to their own professional development and the aspirations of the School;

- In the case of teachers, in addition to this code of conduct, committing to meet the standards outlined in the Teachers' Standards published by the Teaching Agency ('Personal and Professional Conduct');
- Meeting the administrative, security (including computer network aspects) and health and safety requirements of the School;
- Ensuring confidentiality about school matters and ensuring that school and student/staff information is shared only with appropriate parties who need to know as part of the School's work;
- Demonstrating a desire and willingness to follow school policies and procedures;
- Promoting fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs;
- Maintaining high levels of attendance and punctuality as the norm;
- Ensuring that all CP (Child Protection) issues are passed on to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) immediately;
- The School expects all employees to comply with lawful written and oral instruction unless to do so would result in a health and safety risk;
- Maintain the professional standards expected of their role, contributing to the success of the School and working practices as directed by the Headteacher;
- Maintaining their reputation and the reputation of the School, both inside and outside working hours and whether they are inside or outside the work setting. This code of conduct therefore applies equally when staff are conducting lessons online or when it is necessary for them to work from home.
- Ensure that they have read and adhere to the following school policies located on the website: Appraisal policy; Attendance Management policy; Capability policy; Charging Remissions policy; Child Protection and Safeguarding policy; Complaints policy; Data protection policy; Discipline policy; [Equal Opportunities policy;] Finance policy; Freedom of Information policy; Grievance policy; Health and Safety policy; Relationship and Sex Education policy; SEND policy; Whistleblowing policy; [ICT Acceptable Use policy;] Pay policy; Gifts and Hospitality policy and Lettings policy.

The principles underlying the guidance aim to encourage staff to achieve the highest possible standards of conduct and minimise the risk of inappropriate conduct occurring.

The School requires that all staff have read and agree to comply with this code of conduct. Breach or failure to observe this policy may result in action being taken under the School disciplinary procedures including, but not limited to, dismissal.

Failure to follow this code of conduct may result in disciplinary action being taken, including, but not limited to, dismissal, as set out in the School's Disciplinary policy and procedures.

Please note that this code of conduct is not an exhaustive list of acceptable and unacceptable standards of behaviour. If situations arise that are not covered by this code, staff will use their professional judgement and act in the best interests of the School, and its pupils.

## **2. Staff dress code**

How we dress gives others an impression of how important we feel an occasion is, hence we dress up for interviews, weddings etc. Members of staff are asked to dress very smartly at all times as this gives the impression to everyone that we feel working in a school is a really important occasion. It is also important that we maintain the same high standards of dress as we expect from the children. The staff dress code must also be appropriate for the nature of the role undertaken. The staff dress code is formal business wear i.e. suits or tailored dresses with a jacket (no cardigans or cropped trousers).

Please ensure you wear formal shoes (i.e. no toes on show) and that any tattoos or additional piercings (apart from ear lobes) are not visible. The exception to this formal wear is on INSET days when staff wear casual clothes unless they are presenting.

When working from home or remotely (including the delivery of online lessons, or virtual meetings using a virtual meeting platform such as Zoom and/or Teams) staff must ensure they are dressed appropriately in clothing that is equally smart and of a similar style to what they would wear on a normal school day.

## **3. Safeguarding**

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

All staff must familiarise themselves with our Child Protection and Safeguarding policies and undertake all training provided. They must ensure that they are aware of the process to follow if they have concerns about a child and report to the appropriate person (see the school handbook for a list of Designated Safeguarding leads – DSL). Staff should also be aware of the Prevent initiative, online safety, mental health, peer-on-peer abuse, sexual violence, sexual harassment, and other areas that may cause a risk to the safety of a pupil.

Staff who work directly with children are required to read and understand Part One and Annex A of the statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'. Those members of staff who do not work directly with children will be required to read Part One or Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

#### **4. Communication**

Good communication between all members of the School community is vital. All communication between staff, pupils and parents should take place within clear, explicit and professional boundaries.

##### Communication with parents

Form tutors are expected to be the first point of contact between parents and the School, although enquiries will also come through the School Office. Staff can contact parents by telephone, email or letter. However, it is expected that a conversation takes place if needed either in person or over the phone and not by email. Staff should not contact pupils, parents or conduct any school business using personal email addresses.

Where a member of staff receives an email from a parent, a reply should normally be made within one working day. If a full reply cannot be made within that time, the member of Staff should send a brief acknowledgment e-mail and let the parent know when a fuller reply can be expected.

Staff sending emails to parents/carers are advised to send a copy (cc or bcc) to their line manager or the class teacher/tutor.

Staff must inform the Head or Senior Deputy Head if they receive an offensive email.

##### Communication with Pupils

Staff should carefully consider the manner in which they communicate with pupils at all times so as to avoid any possible misinterpretation of their motives or behaviours.

Staff should not give their personal mobile phone numbers or email addresses to pupils, nor should they communicate with them by social media, text message or personal email. If they need to speak to a pupil by telephone, they should use one of the School's telephones and email using the School system. Any communication on video call platforms, such as Microsoft Teams must be for professional reasons only and should always accord with the rules of this policy.

The group leader on all trips and visits involving an overnight stay should take a school mobile phone with him/her and may ask the pupils for their mobile numbers before allowing them out in small, unsupervised groups. The School mobile should be used for any contact with pupils that may be necessary. The group leader will delete any record of pupils' mobile phone numbers at the end of the trip or visit and should ensure that pupils delete any staff numbers that they may have acquired during the trip.

## **5. Staff / pupil relationships**

All staff must observe proper boundaries with pupils that are appropriate to their professional position and position of trust. They must act in a fair, professional and transparent way that would not lead anyone to reasonably question the appropriateness of their conduct or behaviour. The relationship between a member of staff and a pupil is not a relationship of equals, and consequently, staff have a responsibility to ensure that an unequal balance of power is not used for personal advantage or gratification.

If a staff member is concerned at any point that an interaction between themselves and a pupil may be misinterpreted, might appear compromising to others, and/or on reflection they believe they have behaved in a way that may be considered to fall below the expected professional standard, this must be reported to their line manager or the headteacher. Alternatively, staff are encouraged to self-refer under the School's Low-Level Concerns Procedure (contained within the Child Protection and Safeguarding policy). All concerns will be handled sensitively and will be dealt with appropriately and proportionately.

Staff are reminded that it is a criminal offence for a person aged 18 or over to have a sexual relationship with a child under 18 where that person is in a position of power, even if the child is over 16 and the relationship is consensual.

### **Infatuations**

On occasion, pupils may develop an infatuation for a member of staff. If a member of staff suspects or becomes aware of an infatuation, the advice of the [Head or Deputy Head] must be sought immediately.

Other members of staff must alert a colleague to the possibility of an infatuation in order that appropriate steps can be taken.

Staff should deal with these situations sensibly and appropriately to maintain the dignity and safety of all concerned.

### **One-to-one situations**

If staff members and pupils must spend time on a one to one basis, staff must ensure that:

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

Where it is necessary to conduct a one to one session online (for example, using a platform such as Zoom or Teams) staff must ensure that a senior member of staff is aware of the session and, wherever possible, arrange for a parent to be in the same room, or alternatively, ask a colleague or a member of SLT to join the session.

Where possible, a gap or barrier should always be maintained between the teacher and pupil. Any physical contact should be the minimum required for care, instruction, or restraint.

### **Contact with pupils outside of school**

Staff are encouraged to take part in school related activities such as trips, fixtures, rehearsals, and extra-curricular activities are an important part of the positive relationships between staff and pupils. However, staff should avoid contact with pupils outside of official school activities and non-school hours. Staff should not arrange private tuition of any of the School's pupils in school or outside of school whether in term-time or outside of term-time without the prior written approval of the Head.

Personal contact details should never be exchanged between staff and pupils. This includes mobile numbers, social media profiles, gaming sites or other methods of communication.

### **Gifts, rewards and favouritism**

While it is accepted that many pupils and their parents may wish to give gifts to staff, for example, at the end of the school year, gifts from staff to pupils are not acceptable (apart from class prizes or general incentives such as fruit or pencils given as part of school activities). Staff should take care to ensure that they do not appear to accept a gift that may be construed as a bribe or lead the giver to expect preferential treatment. Staff are required to familiarise themselves with the content of the School's Gifts and Hospitality Policy.

Staff should exercise care when selecting pupils for school teams, productions, trips and/or specific work tasks in order to avoid perceptions of favouritism or injustice. Similar care should be exercised when excluding a child from an activity without prior consultation with [the Head or the Deputy Head].

## **6. Physical contact with pupils**

There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate and proper for staff to have physical contact with pupils, but it is crucial that they only do so in ways appropriate to their professional role. Physical contact may be appropriate in the following circumstances:

- when a pupil needs to get comfort or reassurance e.g. following an accident or personal crisis;

- when a pupil needs encouragement to attempt a new challenge e.g. to climb on to a piece of apparatus; or
- when there is a need to take urgent action to avoid an incident or injury.

Staff should use their professional judgement at all times. Physical contact must be appropriate for the age, understanding and sex of the child and must never threaten or be sexually inappropriate. Staff must also be sensitive to an individual's cultural background and any special educational needs.

Staff should not have unnecessary physical contact with pupils and should be alert to the fact that minor forms of friendly physical contact can be misconstrued by pupils or onlookers.

Staff are referred to the School's [Behaviour Policy / Use of Restraint Policy] for guidance on the use of reasonable force in relation to pupils.

## **7. Transporting Pupils**

In certain circumstances it may be appropriate for staff to transport pupils offsite on approved school business. The Head must oversee the plan and provide oversight of all transport arrangements. Staff should not transport pupils without prior authorisation or in the case of an emergency.

Staff should ensure that the driver is not distracted while the vehicle is in motion for any reason other than an emergency and should also ensure all passengers are wearing correctly fastened seatbelts.

Prior to transporting pupils offsite, consent must be obtained from a pupil's parent/guardian and staff should be aware that the safety and welfare of the pupils is their responsibility until they are safely passed back to their parent/carer.

Staff should never be alone in a vehicle with a pupil, except in cases of an emergency.

## **8. Communication and Social Media**

All staff must ensure that their social media profiles adopt the highest security settings and are not available to pupils. If they have a personal profile on social media sites, they should not use their full names, as pupils may be able to find them. Staff should consider using a first and middle name instead and set public profiles to private.

Staff must not engage in inappropriate use of social network sites which may bring themselves, the School or the School community into disrepute.

Staff must remain mindful of their digital footprint and exercise caution in all their use of social media or any other web-based presence they have. This includes written content, videos or photographs and views expressed either directly or by 'liking' certain pages or posts or following certain individuals or groups.

Staff should not attempt to contact pupils or their parents/guardians via social media, or any other means outside school, in order to develop any sort of relationship. They must also not make any efforts to find pupil's or parents/guardians' social media profiles and should not accept or initiate friend requests or follow pupils' or their guardians' accounts on any social media platform. Staff must also exercise care when using dating websites where staff could encounter pupils.

Staff must ensure that they do not post any images online that identify children who are pupils at the School without their consent.

Staff must ensure that they are aware of the School's e-safety policies and check the school handbook for specific advice.

Staff who are also parents of children at a school, need to take additional care to ensure that their families social media presence does not compromise their own professional standing in the community or above guidance. If their children are able to see their social media profiles, care must be taken that this does not extend to their children's friends who are also pupils at the School. Please discuss with your headteacher if you have concerns about this aspect of the code of conduct.

### **9. Acceptable use of Technology**

Staff must 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 or offensive emails, gambling and/or viewing pornography or other inappropriate content.

Staff must not use personal mobile phones, laptops, or school equipment for personal use, in school hours (apart from breaks) or in front of pupils. They must never use personal mobile phones or cameras to take pictures of pupils, if they are taking pictures for school use on school equipment they must first check that parental permission has been given.

The School has the right to monitor emails and internet use on the School's IT system and will do so on a random basis and if a specific concern is raised. The School also filters for key words and phrases/ images as part of the safeguarding processes.

Staff should ensure that they are familiar with and comply with the School's ICT Acceptable Use Policy at all times.

### **10. Confidentiality**

In the course of their role, members of staff are often privy to sensitive and confidential information about the School, staff, pupils and their parents.

This information should never be:

- Disclosed to anyone without the relevant authority;
- Used to humiliate, embarrass or blackmail others;
- Used for a purpose other than that 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.

### **11. 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 must not accept bribes. Gifts that are worth more than £25 must be declared and recorded on the gifts and hospitality register.

Staff must ensure that all information given to the School about their qualifications and professional experience is correct. Any changes to their personal circumstances that may impact on their suitability to work with children must be discussed with their Headteacher or line manager

### **12. Conduct outside of work and online**

Staff must not act in a way that would bring Churchdown School or the teaching profession into disrepute. This covers relevant criminal offences, such as violence or sexual misconduct, as well as negative comments about the School or school personnel on social media.

### **13. Equality**

All staff, pupils and members of the local community have a right to be treated with fairness and equality regardless of their race or colour, nationality, national or ethnic origin, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, marital or civil partnership status, gender reassignment, age, and disability (together known as "Protected Characteristics"). Staff must ensure that they comply at all times with the School's Equal Opportunities Policy and Equality Statement, and all other school policies relating to equality issues. Victimisation, bullying and harassment of, or discrimination against, other work colleagues, pupils or members of the community will not be tolerated and may result in disciplinary proceedings for gross misconduct in accordance with the School's Disciplinary policy. All staff are expected to report any concerns or suspicions they may have about the treatment of others to their line manager or the Headteacher.

### **14. Personal Relationships – Conflict of Interest**

The School places the responsibility on the individual member of staff to withdraw from decisions where owing to their personal relationship, there might be either real or perceived conflicts of interest.

- Wherever possible, line managers should withdraw from exercising managerial/ supervisory responsibilities where a close relative/ partner/friend is involved. In all cases involving line management and performance/pay decisions, close relationships must be declared by the line manager to the Headteacher or in the case of a Headteacher to the Chair of Governors.
- If any member of staff believes that they may be personally adversely affected by a misuse of power/authority or conflict of interest they should raise this with their line manager or Headteacher either informally or through a grievance.

### **15. Smoking**

To promote a healthy and pleasant working environment and because of the fire risk, smoking (in any form, including the use of e-cigarettes) is not allowed anywhere on site or within any of the School's vehicles. You must not smoke on school premises or outside school gates. Any member of staff wishing to smoke must leave the school grounds.

You must not smoke whilst working with or supervising pupil's offsite.

### **16. Alcohol and Illegal Drugs**

Consumption of alcohol is not permitted on site, save where at a school function or as otherwise agreed when modest amounts of alcohol may be consumed. [Staff that reside

on site may consume modest quantities of alcohol in private accommodation when they are not on duty.] Consumption of illegal drugs is never permitted.

Your conduct and performance must not be adversely impacted by alcohol or drugs when undertaking your duties.

### **17. Security**

In the interests of security, staff must carry their identity card whilst in School and produce it on request. You must not remove any School documents from the site or take any photographs without due permission. The School reserves the right to search the outer clothing, bags, lockers and vehicles etc. of employees whilst on site. Staff may have a colleague in attendance on such occasions.

### **18. Health and Safety**

All Staff have a duty to ensure that a safe working environment exists. Fire and evacuation procedures must be adhered to at all times and Staff are required to familiarise themselves with the procedures and their responsibilities set out in the Health and Safety Policy.

### **19. Concerns or Complaints**

The School aims to create an atmosphere in which a diverse range of people can work together openly in the spirit of mutual respect and trust towards a common purpose. Nevertheless, we recognise that it is possible for misunderstandings and disagreements to arise or for mistakes to occur.

#### Staff Complaints

Complaints should be dealt with immediately and openly and staff should try to resolve issues informally in the first instance. If this approach is impractical or unsuccessful, Staff may wish to raise their concerns more formally in accordance with the School's Grievance Procedure or Whistleblowing Procedure, depending upon the nature of the concern.

#### Parental Complaints

Staff must ensure that parental complaints are dealt with in accordance with the School's Complaints Policy.

#### Safeguarding

For procedures for dealing with allegations or concerns about a child or disclosures / allegations of abuse, Staff should refer to the School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.