

Vigo Primary School



STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY 2026-27

Introduction:

The school is required to set out a Code of Conduct for all employees. The Code of Conduct outlines the expected conduct of staff at all times. All communication and interaction between members of staff, children, parents, carers, governors and visitors must reflect our Code of Conduct.

Staff are expected to be conscientious and loyal to the aims and objectives of Vigo Primary School.

In addition, staff are required to develop and maintain the professional character of the school. All staff employed by Vigo Primary School are to follow the Code of Conduct. Staff should be aware that a failure to comply with the following Code of Conduct could result in disciplinary action including dismissal. Volunteers and governors are also expected to follow the code of conduct.

Throughout this document the term staff should be taken to include any adult in the school (and in particular teachers, teaching assistants, other support staff, governors and volunteers).

General

It is an expectation that all members of staff (and adult volunteers, governors and visitors) model courteous and respectful behaviour to the children through their appearance and all aspects of their conduct. This includes the way in which adults talk to the children as well as to each other. A Code of Conduct is designed to give clear guidance on the standards of behaviour all staff are expected to observe, and the school should notify staff of this code and the expectations therein. Staff may be in a unique position of influence and must adhere to behaviour that models the highest possible standards. Each employee has an individual responsibility to maintain their reputation and the reputation of the school whether inside or outside working hours.

Staff rights

To:

- Work in an atmosphere of mutual respect
- Be treated fairly
- Be listened to and for views to be respected
- Be valued for the efforts and strengths of the work undertaken and to receive support for those areas that need developing
- Work in a clean, safe, secure, unthreatening stimulating and well organised work place
- Be kept appropriately informed through open channels of communication
- Have a workload that is conducive to work-life balance

Staff Responsibilities

To:

- Put children at the centre of all that we do
- Separate personal and professional lives by creating clearly defined boundaries
- Challenge prejudice in the workplace and support colleagues of all social, cultural and ethnic backgrounds
- Listen to and respect the opinions of others
- Support the development of others
- Promote positive relationships with pupils and the local community
- Safeguard the emotional and physical well-being of pupils
- Arrive on time for events/activities appropriately dressed

- Switch mobile phones off during teaching time, staff meetings and when on playground duty
- Raise concerns in a non-threatening manner before they become a more serious problem
- Take responsibility for the working environment leaving it as others would wish to find it
- Challenge unprofessional behaviour in an appropriate manner

The school will:

- To the best of its ability provide high quality CPD for all staff
- Ensure appropriate performance management procedures are in effect
- Value staff achievements and support their further development
- Treat the workforce both fairly and consistently
- Ensure the environment is clean, and that resources are well maintained and accessible
- Listen to the ideas and concerns of all staff
- Raise management concerns with staff appropriately
- Be aware of the requirement to ensure the work-life balance of staff
- Endeavour to make the school an enjoyable place to work.

Setting an example:

All staff who work at Vigo Primary School must set examples of behaviour and conduct which can be copied by pupils. Staff must therefore not use inappropriate or offensive language at any time.

All staff must, therefore, demonstrate the highest standards of conduct in order to encourage our pupils to do the same. All staff must also avoid putting themselves at risk of allegations of abusive or unprofessional conduct. This Code helps all staff to understand what behaviour is and is not acceptable.

Safeguarding Pupils:

Staff, governors and volunteers have a duty to safeguard pupils from:

- physical abuse
- sexual abuse
- emotional abuse
- neglect

The duty to safeguard pupils includes the duty to report concerns about a pupil to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) in line with the school's Child Protection Policy and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026. Copies of the school's Child Protection Policy and Whistleblowing Procedure are available from the school and will be given to all staff at induction and at the beginning of each school year. Staff must be familiar with these documents. Staff must not demean or undermine pupils, their parents or carers, or colleagues. Staff must take the up most care of pupils under their supervision with the aim of ensuring their safety and welfare. Staff must not use their personal mobile phone as a camera in school. Any photograph/video must be taken using school equipment. Staff must only save images on school computers/devices.

All staff must understand that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Staff must maintain an attitude of "it could happen here" where safeguarding concerns arise. All concerns about a child's welfare, behaviour, attendance, mental health, online activity, peer relationships, or possible abuse must be reported promptly in accordance with the

school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. Staff must never assume that somebody else has taken action. Staff must act immediately if a child may be at risk of harm.

Mental Health Statement

Staff should be aware that mental health concerns may be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Staff should not attempt to diagnose mental health conditions but should report concerns in line with safeguarding procedures.

Child-on- Child Abuse

Staff must recognise that children can abuse other children. This can include bullying, harassment, sexual violence, sexual harassment, online abuse, abuse within intimate personal relationships, harmful sexual behaviour and other forms of child-on-child abuse. Such concerns must never be dismissed as "banter", "part of growing up" or harmless behaviour.

Low-Level Concerns

The school promotes a culture of openness and transparency in which concerns about the behaviour of adults working with children are addressed promptly. Staff must report any low-level concern about the behaviour of another adult, including supply staff, contractors, volunteers, governors or leaders, where that behaviour may be inconsistent with the Staff Code of Conduct, even if it does not meet the harm threshold. Concerns should be shared with the Headteacher as soon as possible. Concerns relating to the Headteacher should be reported to the Chair of Governors. All low-level concerns will be recorded and managed in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures.

Pupil Development:

Staff must comply with school policies and procedures that support the well-being and development of pupils. Staff must co-operate and collaborate with colleagues, schools and with external agencies where necessary to support the development of pupils. Staff must follow reasonable instructions that support the development of pupils.

Honesty and Integrity

Staff must maintain the highest standards of honesty and integrity in their work. This includes the handling and claiming of money. All staff must comply with the Bribery Act 2010. A person may be guilty of an offence of bribery under this act if they offer, promise or give financial advantage or other advantage to someone; or if they request, agree or accept, or receive a bribe from another person. If you believe that a person has failed to comply with the Bribery Act, you should refer to the Whistleblowing procedure. Staff have a duty to report any concerns they have about any adult or child in the school and the school has a duty to investigate and take appropriate action. But staff should also be aware that making a false accusation could lead to disciplinary action, clearly the

school and governors would wish to differentiate between an honest mistake and wilful misconduct in this matter, making an honest mistake will not lead to disciplinary action.

Staff must understand the difference between:

- Concerns that meet the harm threshold and require referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).
- Low-level concerns that do not meet the harm threshold but still require reporting and recording.

Staff must report concerns immediately and not investigate allegations themselves.

Conduct outside Work:

Staff must not engage in conduct outside work which could seriously damage the reputation and standing of the school or the employee's own reputation or the reputation of other members of the school. Any such conduct could lead to dismissal. In particular, criminal offences that involve violence or possession or use of illegal drugs or sexual misconduct are likely to be regarded as unacceptable and could lead to dismissal.

Staff must exercise caution when using information technology and be aware of the risks to themselves and others. Staff must not use social media e.g., Facebook with pupils or discuss work on social media. Staff must not engage in inappropriate use of social network sites which may bring themselves, schools or wider community into disrepute.

Confidentiality:

Where staff have access to confidential information about colleagues, pupils or their parents or carers, staff must not reveal such information except to those colleagues who have a professional role in relation to the individual.

All staff are likely at some point to witness actions which need to be confidential. For example, where a pupil is bullied by another pupil (or by a member of staff), this needs to be reported and dealt with in accordance with the appropriate school's procedure. It must not be discussed outside of the school, including with the pupil's parent or carer, nor with colleagues in the school except with a senior member of staff with the appropriate role and authority to deal with the matter. However, staff have an obligation to share with the Headteacher or school's Designated Safeguarding Lead any information which gives rise to concern about the safety or welfare of a pupil/student. Staff must never promise a pupil/student that they will not act on information that they are told by the pupil.

Disciplinary Action:

All staff need to recognise that failure to meet these standards of behaviour and conduct may result in disciplinary action, including dismissal.

Staff Dress Code:

The governing body (GB) takes the view that all staff at the school should be dressed appropriately for their particular role. The GB is also mindful of the need to avoid direct or indirect discrimination against any employee on the grounds of their sex, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion or

belief, or age. The GB is aware of its responsibility to consider possible health and safety issues in determining an acceptable dress code.

Standard of Dress

In general, the dress of all teaching and support staff must be tidy and smart, reflecting the business-like ethos that the governors wish to foster and maintain in staff and pupils. The governors accept those engaged in caretaking, cleaning and lunchtime supervision will wear dress appropriate for their work. In teaching and areas visited by pupils and visitors' staff will be expected to wear appropriate professional dress. Staff will normally be expected to wear smart work wear except for during PE or art related activities. No inappropriately casual clothing should be worn including any items deemed to be too revealing or carrying logos that could be offensive in any way. Denim is not considered smart work wear.

Footwear should also be smart and safe. Shoes and not trainers should be worn for classroom activities. (An exception is if teachers or other adults are involved in PE lessons – in which case it is appropriate for adults to wear sensible PE kit including trainers, please be mindful of where and when you get changed – it is very strongly suggested you use the staff toilets). For safety reasons all footwear should be closed –flip-flops are not permitted. Any person choosing to wear open toed shoes does so at their own risk.

The Head Teacher is empowered to determine the standard of smartness that is acceptable.

Religious Symbols, Ornaments and Dress

Staff are permitted to wear religious symbols and ornaments, but the governors expect these to be discreet and worn in a safe manner. The Head Teacher in consultation with the governors is empowered to determine whether a particular symbol or ornament is sufficiently discreet, and commensurate with health and safety standards.

Use of mobile phones

The use of personal mobile phones by staff is only permitted at break times and in areas to which children do not normally have access –staff room, PPA room etc. Mobile phones should never be used by staff while teaching or supervising children.

Never use your own mobile devices to take pictures of children.

Social Media

Staff must not post comments, photographs, videos or other material online which could bring the school, pupils, parents, colleagues or the profession into disrepute. Staff should consider that information posted online may remain accessible indefinitely and may be subject to public scrutiny. Privacy settings do not remove professional responsibilities.

Online Safety

Staff must safeguard children from online harm and model safe online behaviour at all times. Staff must comply with the school's Online Safety, Acceptable Use and Information Security policies. Staff should remain vigilant to risks associated with online abuse, exploitation, misinformation, radicalisation, cyberbullying and harmful online content. Any online safety concern must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Professional Boundaries

Staff must maintain professional boundaries at all times. Staff should avoid situations where they are alone with a child behind closed doors unless this is necessary for their role and follows school risk-assessed procedures. Any one-to-one working should be transparent, justifiable and, where possible, observable by others. Staff must not develop inappropriate relationships with pupils or former pupils.

Equality and Inclusive Practice

Staff must treat all children with dignity and respect regardless of age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity status. Staff must challenge discrimination, prejudice, discriminatory language and harmful stereotypes whenever encountered.

Complaints

Any complaints about the operation of this policy should be made at first to the Head Teacher. If not satisfied, the complainant may take his/her complaint to the governing body via the Clerk to the Governing Body. The governors' decision will be final.

Vigo Primary School Staff Code of Conduct 2026-27



The code below is developed in line with the school Child Protection Policy and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026

Safe Professional Culture

All staff and volunteers should;

- Follow all guidance laid out in the school's Staff Code of Conduct Policy
- Ensure they follow the school Child Protection Policy and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026
- Work in an open and transparent way, avoiding any actions that would lead a reasonable person to question their motivation and/or intentions
- Dress appropriately for their role
- Understand their position of power and influence over children and not misuse it in any way. This includes but is not limited to;
 - accepting regular gifts from children
 - giving personal gifts to children
- Ensure they are sharing information about children on a need-to-know basis and have principles of confidentiality and data sharing at the heart
- Recognise their influence and not engage in activities out of school that might compromise their position within school
- Not establish or seek to establish social contact with pupils outside of school. This includes;
 - communication with pupils in inappropriate ways, including personal e-mails and mobile telephones or any contact through social networking sites.
 - passing your home address, phone number, e-mail address, social media profile or other personal details to pupils/children
 - the transportation of pupils in your own vehicle without prior management and parental approval

Safe working practice.

All staff, volunteers and Governors should;

- Only use e-mail contact with pupils via the school's system and for learning purposes only.
- Be careful about recording images of children and do this only when it is an approved educational activity. This can only be done when parents have given their express permission and only on school owned devices
- If you have any concerns refer to and follow procedures laid out in the school's Child Protection and Whistleblowing policies.
Staff have a professional duty to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in safeguarding. Concerns should be raised through the school's

Whistleblowing Policy. Staff may also contact external agencies where appropriate if concerns are not being addressed adequately within the school. All staff will be supported in raising genuine concerns in good faith.

I confirm that I have read, understood and agree to comply with:

- This Staff Code of Conduct;
- The School Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy;
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026;
- The Whistleblowing Policy;
- The Online Safety and Acceptable Use Policies;
- Behaviour and Professional Expectations applicable to my role.

I understand that failure to comply with these requirements may result in disciplinary action.

Signed: _____

Name (please print): _____

Date: _____