Staff Code of Conduct Policy

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1. Aims, Scope and Principles

This policy sets and maintains the standards of conduct expected of all staff across Keys Group Schools. Our aim is to ensure a safe, respectful, and nurturing environment where pupils, many of whom have experienced trauma or challenging circumstances, can thrive. Staff hold influential roles and must act as role models by consistently demonstrating high standards of behaviour and professional integrity.

Many principles in this code are based on the Teachers' Standards, alongside guidance for all staff to work in trauma-informed and therapeutic ways, recognising the complex needs of our pupils. All staff, including teachers, support staff, governors, and volunteers, are expected to act with personal and professional integrity, respecting the safety, wellbeing, and dignity of others. Staff are expected to uphold these standards to ensure a safe and nurturing environment; breaches may be addressed through appropriate procedures.

This code is not exhaustive; staff are expected to use professional judgement and act in the best interests of the pupils and the school.

2. Legislation and Guidance

This policy complies with:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025)
- Teachers' Standards (2013)
- Initial Teacher Training and Early Career Framework (2024)
- Behaviour in Schools Guidance (2022)
- Equality Act 2010
- Keys Group Safeguarding and Behaviour Policies

3. General Obligations

All staff will:

- Maintain high standards of attendance and punctuality.
- Use professional, respectful language; avoid inappropriate or offensive language.
- Treat pupils and others with dignity, respect, and fairness.
- Show tolerance and respect for the rights of others, promoting fundamental British values.
- Not express personal beliefs in ways that exploit pupil vulnerability or encourage unlawful behaviour.
- Understand and act within statutory frameworks and adhere to the Teachers' Standards or relevant professional standards.
- Work collaboratively to create a trauma-informed, therapeutic environment that recognises and responds to pupils' emotional and behavioural needs.
- Staff will actively include pupils and colleagues who may feel isolated, and to foster psychological safety.
- Adopt a positive, 'can do' attitude, focusing on continuous improvement and the central question: *"How will this help our children?"*

4. EPIC Values and Evidence-Based Professional Practice

All staff are expected to embody Keys Group's **EPIC values** in their work:-

- **Excellence:** Strive for the highest standards in teaching, care, and professional development. Engage in sustained, research-informed learning to improve pupil outcomes.
- **Passion:** Demonstrate enthusiasm and commitment, inspiring pupils through positive, engaging interactions and embedding social and emotional learning (SEL) across all areas.
- **Integrity:** Uphold professional conduct and safeguarding, apply consistent behaviour management, and make decisions prioritising pupils' best interests.
- **Caring:** Build trusting, empathetic relationships, promote inclusivity, reinforce SEL skills through a nurturing ethos, and support pupils' holistic development.

Staff put these values into practice by:-

- Participating in high-quality professional development and reflective practice.
- Collaborating effectively with colleagues, families, and specialists to meet pupils' needs.
- Maintaining consistent routines and positive reinforcement to support behaviour and wellbeing.

- Engaging parents and carers as partners in learning and development.

5. Safeguarding

- Staff have a duty to safeguard pupils from all forms of harm and report concerns immediately.
- Familiarise with child protection policies, safeguarding procedures, and the Prevent duty.
- Allegations meeting the harm threshold will be dealt with promptly and fairly, led by a designated case manager.
- Low-level concerns must be reported following school procedures to maintain a culture of transparency and safety.

6. Managing Behaviour Effectively

- Establish and reinforce clear, consistent routines and expectations aligned with the school's behaviour policy to create a predictable, safe learning environment.
- Use positive reinforcement and early, least-intrusive interventions to support behaviour and minimise disruption.
- Recognise the importance of pupils' ability to self-regulate emotions and support social and emotional skills development through modelling and teaching.
- Tailor approaches where necessary, understanding that behaviour needs vary and not all pupils with SEND require additional behaviour support.
- Address bullying, including cyberbullying and discriminatory behaviour, promptly and effectively.
- Build trusting relationships by considering pupils' feelings and experiences, promoting resilience and motivation.

7. Professional Development and Reflective Practice

- Engage actively in sustained, high-quality professional development focused on improving practice and pupil outcomes.
- Reflect on practice regularly, seeking and acting on feedback from mentors and colleagues in an open, trusting environment.
- Participate in professional dialogue, research-informed learning, and collaborative working to enhance expertise.
- Support and develop effective professional relationships with colleagues, parents, carers, and specialist staff such as SENCOs.
- Teaching assistants should supplement teacher-led support and be prepared for lessons through clear communication of intended outcomes.
- Staff are encouraged to regularly reflect on their practice, seek feedback, and engage in professional dialogue to improve outcomes for pupils.

8. Wellbeing and Workload

- Use personalised systems and routines to manage time and tasks efficiently.
- Collaborate with colleagues to share planning and resources, reducing workload.
- Protect time for rest and recovery, and be aware of available wellbeing support.
- Understand rights to support in managing behaviour and supporting pupils with SEND.

9. Dress Code and Language

- Dress professionally and appropriately for working with pupils with complex needs, avoiding offensive or inappropriate clothing.
- Use respectful, clear, and professional language at all times, avoiding slang, jargon, or language that could cause misunderstanding or offence.

10. Use of Technology and Social Media

- Adhere to the school's acceptable use policies.
- Protect confidentiality and avoid actions that could harm the school's reputation or pupil wellbeing.
- Avoid using personal devices for work-related communication.
- Ensure all interactions with pupils are professional and in line with safeguarding expectations.

11. Accountability and Reporting

- Staff are accountable for their conduct within and outside school when representing Keys Group.
- Breaches of this code may lead to disciplinary action, including dismissal.
- Staff should raise concerns or whistleblow confidently, knowing they will be supported and protected. Staff should feel confident to report concerns, knowing they will be supported and protected under the whistleblowing policy.

12. Pupil-Centred Focus and Culture

- The guiding principle for all staff decisions and actions is: *"How will this help our children?"*
- Staff prioritise pupil wellbeing, adopting trauma-informed, therapeutic approaches.

- Promote a culture of high expectations, inclusion, and continuous improvement.
- Contribute positively to the school culture by modelling positive behaviours, supporting colleagues, and celebrating successes.

Implementation

- This code will be part of staff induction and ongoing professional development.
- All staff must sign an acknowledgment of understanding and commitment.
- The code will be reviewed regularly to reflect best practice and legislative changes.

Appendix A: Wellbeing and Support Resources (Local Provision)

Information about local wellbeing support available to staff, including:-

Support/Service	**Details**
Employee Assistance Programmes (EAPs) or counselling services	Care First The Freephone number is 0800174319 www.carefirst-lifestyle.co.uk. Username: keys Password: group
Mental health first aiders and wellbeing champions within the school	Lucie Owen (STA)
Local training or workshops on stress management, resilience, and work-life balance	Available on Educare
Procedures for requesting reasonable adjustments or flexible working	HR policies on RADAR