



Devonshire House Preparatory School

CODE OF CONDUCT

Last review date	<i>September 2025</i>
Next review date	<i>September 2026</i>
Lead reviewer	<i>Liesl Chaudhury</i>

Serving North London Families

Devonshire House is a co-educational prep school, offering unparalleled preparation for senior school and life thereafter. Our unwavering emphasis on individual growth, within an inclusive community, balances traditional values and modern practice to inspire fearless life-long learning.

Our school values are:

- **Growth** – we reach high
- **Courage** – we learn fearlessly
- **Wonder** – we are inspired to find our spark
- **Belonging** – we care and come together

Introduction

This policy applies to all staff 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 (as defined below) at the school.

This policy relates to all the following groups:

- all members of staff including teaching and support staff
- governors
- volunteers
- casual workers
- temporary and supply staff, either from agencies or engaged directly; and
- student placements, including those undertaking initial teacher training and apprentices



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

You are in a unique position of trust and influence as role models for pupils and must adhere to behaviour that sets a good example to all pupils within the school.

You also have an individual responsibility to maintain your reputation and our reputation, both inside and outside working hours and whether you are inside or outside the work setting. This policy therefore applies equally when you are conducting lessons online or when it is necessary for you to work from home.

We require that you have read and agree to comply with this policy. Breach or failure to observe this policy may result in action being taken under our disciplinary procedures including, but not limited to, dismissal.

This policy is not an exhaustive list of acceptable and unacceptable standards of behaviour. In situations where guidance does not exist in this policy, you are expected to exercise your professional judgement and act in the best interests of the pupils and the school.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following related policies and procedures:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Low Level Concerns Policy
- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy
- Sexual Harassment Policy
- Anti-Harassment and Bullying Policy
- Social Media Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Bribery Policy
- The Whistleblowing Policy

You should ensure that you have read and are familiar with these policies and procedures.

If you work directly with children, you are required to read and understand Part One and Annex A of the statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (KCSIE). If you do not work directly with children, you will be required to read Part One or Annex A of KCSIE.

Attendance and Timekeeping

Please refer to the following policies regarding attendance and timekeeping:



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- Sickness Policy
- Special Leave Policy
- Attendance and Punctuality Policy
- Attendance Management Policy

The above policies can be located on Bob.

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 our school vehicles. You must not smoke on school premises or outside school gates. If you wish to smoke, you must leave the school grounds.

You must not smoke whilst working with or supervising pupils offsite.

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. Consumption of illegal drugs is never permitted. Your conduct and performance must not be adversely impacted by alcohol or drugs when undertaking your duties.

Security

In the interests of security, you must carry your 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. We reserve the right to search the outer clothing, bags, lockers and vehicles etc. of you whilst you are on site. You may have a colleague in attendance on such occasions.

Health and Safety

You have a duty to ensure that a safe working environment exists. Fire and evacuation procedures must be adhered to at all times, and you are required to familiarise yourself with the procedures and your responsibilities set out in the Staff Handbook and our Health and Safety Policy.

Personal Appearance

We regularly receive visits from parents, potential parents, and others, and naturally wish to convey an impression of professionalism and organisation.



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Therefore, whilst not wishing to impose unreasonable obligations, you are, nonetheless, required to look smart in appearance at all times.

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) you must ensure you are dressed appropriately in clothing that is smart and of a similar style to what you would wear on a normal school day.

Political Impartiality in Schools

All members of staff are expected to adhere to the principles laid out in the Department for Education guidance 'Political Impartiality in Schools' (March 2025):

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/political-impartiality-in-schools/political-impartiality-in-schools>

We believe that pupils should be exposed to a range of views on all topics, appropriate to their age, aided by trusted publications such as 'The Week Junior'. Staff members must not promote their own causes and beliefs and must remain impartial and balanced in their framing of complex themes. All staff members have a duty to promote Fundamental British Values, as guided by the DfE.

Staff with Children who Attend the School

Members of staff are welcome to apply for places for their children to become Devonshire House pupils, where places are available and their children meet the admissions criteria. A discretionary discount is applied to the fees (not applied to paid extras) and this is pro-rated for part-time members of staff. A staff discount on fees cannot be combined with bursary applications and further fee reductions.

It is vital that members of staff, both as prospective and current parents of pupils at the school, adhere to the Terms and Conditions signed by all parents. This includes all aspects of deposit payment, fee payment timelines and notice periods for withdrawal of pupils.

Staff members must separate their professional roles as employees from that of parent of a pupil at the school. They must not abuse their position within the staff to promote their child inappropriately (e.g. in academic setting, sports team selection, positions of responsibility) or consult colleagues regarding their child's school life outside of organised meetings.

Staff members must ensure that they do not share confidential information about school life with other parents or other external bodies. Whilst they may form social relationships with fellow parents at the school, it is imperative that this does not have a negative effect on their professional duties.



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Mobility and Flexibility

Due to the demands and nature of the school, you should be prepared to transfer upon request within departments either temporarily or permanently and/or to undertake work of a different nature, providing it is reasonable and safe to do so, and the individual is adequately trained. This may include working from home, if appropriate, and at the Head's discretion.

Gifts, Rewards and Favours

You should take care to ensure that you do not appear to accept a gift that may be construed as a bribe or lead the giver to expect preferential treatment. You are required to familiarise yourself with the content of our Bribery Policy which can be located on our website and on Bob.

You 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 senior leadership team.

You should not give presents/rewards to an individual outside of our reward system.

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. You should not contact pupils, parents or conduct any school business using personal email addresses. You must inform the relevant senior leader if you receive an offensive email.

Communication with Pupils

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

You should not give your personal mobile phone numbers or email addresses to pupils, nor should you communicate with them by social media, text message or personal email. Any communication on video call platforms, such as Microsoft Teams or Zoom must be for professional reasons only and should accord with the rules of this policy at all times.

Relationships with Pupils

You should understand that you are in a position of trust in relation to pupils, giving them influence and power by virtue of the knowledge you have and/or the authority invested in your role. You should ensure that your relationship with pupils



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clearly takes place within the boundaries of a respectful, professional relationship and avoid behaviour which may be misinterpreted by others.

You are encouraged to self-refer under our Low Level Concerns Policy in the event that you have found yourself in a situation which may be misinterpreted, might appear compromising to others, and/or on reflection you believe you have behaved in a way that may be considered to fall below the expected professional standard. All concerns will be handled sensitively and will be dealt with appropriately and proportionately.

You 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 you suspect or become aware of an infatuation, the advice of the Head or Senior DSL 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.

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

One to One Situations

If working individually with pupils, you should be aware of the potential vulnerability of pupils and staff in such situations. You should manage these situations and take reasonable and sensible precautions to ensure the safety and security of the pupil and yourself alike.

Individual work with pupils should not be undertaken in secluded areas or behind a closed door. Where it is necessary to close doors for reasons of confidentiality a colleague should be made aware of this and asked to remain vigilant. Wherever possible one to one work should only be undertaken with the knowledge and consent of a senior member of staff to minimise risk to those involved.

Where it is necessary to conduct a one to one session online (for example, using a platform such as Zoom or Teams) you 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 the senior leadership team to join the session.



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

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.

You should use your 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. You must also be sensitive to an individual's cultural background and any special educational needs.

You 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.

You are referred to our Behaviour and Discipline Policy for guidance on the use of reasonable force in relation to pupils.

Prevent Duty

You should understand that we have a legal duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 to have 'due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism'. This is known as the Prevent duty.

We are required, in recognition that pupils may be susceptible to being drawn into terrorism or other forms of extremism, to carry out appropriate risk assessments which assess how pupils or staff may be at risk of being radicalised into terrorism, including online. Consequently, you should:

- understand the factors that lead people to support terrorist ideologies or engage in terrorist related activity
- be able to recognise susceptibility to terrorism and be aware of what action to take in response



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- be aware of what action to take in response, including our internal Prevent referral arrangements

We protect children from being drawn into terrorism by having robust safeguarding policies in place to ensure that those at risk of radicalisation are identified and appropriate support is provided. Our procedure for dealing with concerns that a pupil may be susceptible to being drawn into extremist ideology and radicalisation is set out in our Safeguarding Policy.

There is no single way of identifying whether a child is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology, there are possible indicators that should be taken into consideration alongside other factors and contexts. As with other safeguarding risks, you should be alert to changes in children's behaviour, which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. You should use your judgement in identifying children who might be susceptible and act proportionately, which may include making a Prevent referral. More guidance for schools from the DfE on this can be found at:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/64f8498efdc5d10014fce6d1/14.2_58_HO_Prevent_Duty_Guidance_v5c.pdf
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-prevent-duty-safeguarding-learners-vulnerable-to-radicalisation>

This guidance should be read in conjunction with other relevant guidance including:

- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023;
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), and;
- Information Sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children, young people, parents and carers.' (July 2018)

Protect Duty

You should understand the requirements under the Protect Duty. We will provide the appropriate risk assessments and training required by Martyn's Law. You must consider the Law when planning any event involving more than 100 members of the public (including parents). Further information is available from the Head/DSL. There are enhanced requirements for any event with an attendance over 800.

Transporting Pupils

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



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You 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 you should be aware that the safety and welfare of the pupils is your responsibility until they are safely passed back to their parent/carer.

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

Contact with Pupils out of School

You should not:

- arrange meetings with pupils off the school premises (whether in person or online) without the prior approval of the Head;
- arrange private tuition of any of our pupils in school or outside of school whether in term-time or outside of term-time without the prior written approval of the Head; and
- give pupils your home address or any of your personal contact details.

Conduct out of School

You are expected to be loyal to our stated aims and objectives and may not engage in any outside activities paid or unpaid, which in the reasonable view of the Head might conflict with the school's interests or might interfere with the efficient discharge of your duties, without the written consent of the Head.

You should at all times, both in and out of school, uphold our ethos and conduct yourself in a manner consistent with your position.

You must notify us of any outside conduct, activity or circumstances that are likely to either bring the school into disrepute or put into question a staff members suitability for their role at the school.

If you are in any doubt as to whether a conflict of interest exists, you should discuss the situation with the Head.

School Events

You are expected to behave appropriately at school events, including school organised social occasions. A school event, which may or may not take place outside of working hours or on school premises, is sufficiently connected to the school such that the standards of behaviour expected will be in line with the requirements in this policy.



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Acceptable Use of Technologies

You should ensure that you are familiar with and comply with our E-Safety Policy and Social Media Policy at all times. In particular, you must:

- not engage in inappropriate use of social network sites which may bring yourself, the school or the school community into disrepute;
- adopt the highest security settings on any personal profiles you have;
- remain mindful of your digital footprint and exercise caution in all your use of social media or any other web-based presence you 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;
- exercise care when using dating websites where you could encounter students; and
- not contact pupils, their guardians or family members, accept or initiate friend requests or follow pupils' or their guardians' accounts on any social media platform.

Equal Treatment

We are committed to equal treatment for all staff and pupils regardless of their race or colour, nationality or national or ethnic origins, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, marital or civil partnership status, gender reassignment, age, and disability (together known as "Protected Characteristics").

We aim to create a friendly, caring and perceptive environment in which every individual is valued. We endeavour to contribute positively towards the growing autonomy, self-esteem and safety of each pupil.

Bullying, harassment, victimisation and/or discrimination will not be tolerated. We treat all our pupils and their parents fairly and with consideration which we expect them to reciprocate towards each other, the staff and the school. You should ensure that you are familiar with our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy; Anti-Harassment and Bullying Policy; Sexual Harassment Policy; and our pupil policies on Equal Opportunities and Anti-Bullying.

Photographs

Many school activities involve recording images as part of the curriculum, extra school activities, publicity or to celebrate an achievement. In accordance with data protection legislation, the image of a pupil is personal data.

The school's detailed rules on using images of pupils are contained within the E-Safety Policy, which must be complied with by all staff at all times.



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Photographs must only be taken of children with the permission of a parent or an individual with parental responsibility. Such consent must have been provided in writing [via our consent form]. It is also important to consider the wishes of the pupil, remembering that some pupils do not wish to have their photograph taken or be filmed.

Where photographs are taken by you to evidence a child's progress, such photos should only be taken on school cameras. They must then be downloaded onto a school computer. Photos cannot be used or passed on outside the school. Neither you nor children should use your own mobile phones or any other personal device to take or store photographs.

Concerns or Complaints

We aim 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 you should try to resolve issues informally in the first instance. If this approach is impractical or unsuccessful, you may wish to raise your concerns more formally in accordance with our Grievance Policy or Whistleblowing Policy, depending upon the nature of the concern.

Parental Complaints

You must ensure that parental complaints are dealt with in accordance with our Complaints Policy.

Safeguarding

For procedures for dealing with concerns or allegations about a child or disclosures / allegations of abuse, you should refer to our Safeguarding Policy.

Low Level Concerns

As part of our whole school approach to safeguarding, we promote 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. This includes any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' – that an adult working in or on behalf of the school may have acted in a way that:



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- is inconsistent with the Staff Code of Conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work; and
- does not meet the harm threshold set out in Part 4 of the statutory guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), or is otherwise not serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

Such allegations or concerns are referred to as “low level concerns” within KCSIE. The term “low level” does not mean that it is insignificant. Such behaviour can exist on a wide spectrum, from the inadvertent or thoughtless, or behaviour that may look to be inappropriate, but might not be in specific circumstances, through to that which is ultimately intended to enable abuse.

In order to create and embed a culture of openness, trust, and transparency in which our values and expected behaviours, set out in the Staff Code of Conduct, are lived, monitored and reinforced constantly by all staff, it is vital that any such low level concerns are shared in accordance with our Low Level Concerns Policy which can be accessed on Bob.

Any questions regarding low-level concerns and/or the procedure for reporting them should be raised with the DSL.