

# SoundSkool Music

## Staff Code of Conduct

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Last

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## **Aim of this code of conduct**

SoundSkool expects all students to receive high-quality teaching and learning in a positive and respectful environment.

Employees at the college should ensure that their own behaviour, and the manner in which they conduct themselves with colleagues, students, parents and other stakeholders, sets a positive and professional example for students.

We recognise that the majority of staff members act appropriately and treat each other with dignity and respect; however, we consider it important to clarify the expected standards.

This policy forms part of a staff member's contract of employment and failure to comply with it, along with the associated college policies, may result in disciplinary action being taken, including legal action where this is warranted.

This document applies to staff members who are:

- Employed by the college, including the Head of College and volunteers.
- Employed in units or bases that are attached to the college.

This document does not apply to:

- Employees of external contractors.

These employees are governed by their employment contracts and any relevant laws pertaining to their activities within the college, for example, the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.

## 1. Professional behaviour and conduct

Staff are expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct such that public confidence in their integrity is sustained.

Staff will:

- Have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the college.
- Maintain high standards in their attendance and punctuality.
- Take care of themselves and others affected by their activity at college.
- Cooperate with college leaders in meeting their duties under the relevant regulations.
- Treat students, parents, colleagues and external contacts with dignity and respect.
- Observe proper boundaries appropriate to their professional position, showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others.
- Inform the Head of College if they are subject to a criminal conviction, caution, ban, police enquiry, investigation or pending prosecution.
- Be aware that professional behaviour and conduct is expected to be extended to extracurricular trips and visits.
- Act appropriately in terms of the views they express – in particular, political views – and the use of college resources at all times.

Staff will not:

- Use foul or abusive language.
- Perpetrate discrimination, bullying, harassment, or intimidation, including physical, sexual and verbal abuse.
- Misuse or misrepresent their position, qualifications, or experience.
- Seek to bring the college into disrepute.
- Use college resources for political purposes.

### • **Safeguarding students**

In accordance with 'Keeping children safe in education 2025' (KCSIE), staff have a responsibility to safeguard students by:

- Providing help and support to meet the needs of students as soon as problems emerge.
- Protecting students from maltreatment, whether that is within or outside the home, including online.
- Preventing the impairment of students' mental and physical health or development.
- Ensuring that students grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- Taking action to enable all students to have the best outcomes.

To effectively safeguard students, staff are required to follow the procedures outlined in this Staff Code of Conduct, the Behaviour Policy, the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy,

All staff must ensure that they do not act in a way that may put students at risk of harm, or lead others to question their actions. Staff should also be aware of the role of the DSL and when to contact them

In accordance with the college's Behaviour Policy and Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, staff will be prepared to identify students who may be subject to, or at risk of, various types of abuse, neglect and exploitation including, but not limited to, the following:

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect
- Child-on-child abuse
- Child criminal exploitation (CCE)
- Child sexual exploitation (CSE)
- Domestic abuse
- FGM
- Serious violence

Staff will also be expected to understand that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a student has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Copies of policies and a copy of Part one (or, where appropriate Annex A for staff not working directly with children) of KCSIE will be provided to staff at induction. Staff will have a clear understanding of the college's policies and procedures with regards to safeguarding issues, e.g. abuse, and the important role they play in preventing harm against students.

In accordance with the college's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, staff will also be aware of the factors that could increase a student's risk of being subject to safeguarding issues, including but not limited to:

- Students who need a social worker (Child in Need and Child Protection Plans).
- Students requiring mental health support.
- LAC, PLAC and care leavers.
- Students with SEND or health issues.
- Students who identify as or are perceived to be LBGTQ+.

If a member of staff has any concerns about a student's welfare, they will act on them immediately. They will follow the necessary reporting and referral procedures outlined in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and speak to the DSL. Staff will be aware of the procedures to follow if a student tells them they are experiencing abuse, exploitation, or neglect.

In all cases, if a member of staff feels unsure as to whether an incident or student would be classed as a safeguarding concern, they will speak directly to the DSL. Staff will not assume a colleague will take action and share information that might be critical in keeping children safe.

Staff will recognise, acknowledge, and understand that even if there are no reports of child-on-child abuse in the college, this does not mean it is not happening. Staff will understand the scale of harassment and abuse and challenge inappropriate behaviours between peers

that are abusive in nature and report any concerns regarding any form of abuse to the DSL without undue delay.

Any member of staff member that has concerns about another staff member's actions or intent or believes these actions may lead to a student being put at risk of harm, will report this in line with the Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy or Whistleblowing Policy immediately so appropriate action can be taken. This includes if the staff member in question is a volunteer, supply staff or an individual using college premises to host extra-curricular activities.

If the concern is regarding the Head of College, staff will report this to the Governance board.

If a member of staff feels unable to raise an issue with the college, they will use other whistleblowing channels, including contacting the NSPCC's helpline on 0800 028 0285 (between the hours of 8:00am and 8:00pm Monday to Friday) or email address [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk). Staff can also access guidance at [www.gov.uk/whistleblowing](http://www.gov.uk/whistleblowing). Fear about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of students.

Staff will undergo safeguarding and child protection training at induction. This will include training around online safety, particularly concerning the understanding of roles and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring, in line with the [filtering and monitoring standards](#). This training will be updated at least annually to continue to provide staff members with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.

Staff will recognise that, when teaching students about safeguarding and online safety, a one-size-fits-all approach may not be appropriate for every student, and a more personalised or contextualised approach may be needed for students who are vulnerable, victims of abuse and/or have SEND.

Staff will be aware of their local early help process and understand their role in it.

Staff will be aware of the process for making referrals to children's social care service (CSCS) and for statutory assessments under the Children Act 1989, along with the role they may be expected to play in such assessments.

Staff will reassure victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe by the college. They will never give the impression that students are creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment, nor should a student ever be made to feel ashamed for reporting an incident.

Staff will know how to manage the requirement to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality, involving those who need to be involved, but will never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of any form of abuse, as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child.

Staff will be aware of the college's legal duty to make a referral to the DBS where they consider an individual has engaged in contact that has harmed, or is likely to harm, a child.

### **3. Appearance and dress**

The college expects that staff will:

- Ensure that their appearance is clean and neat when at work or representing the college.
- Dress in a manner that is appropriate to their role – the college will make reasonable adjustments to uniform expectations to suit disabilities, medical conditions, and religious and cultural beliefs.
- Not wear clothing that could have implications for the health and safety of themselves, or others in their care.
- Remember that they are role models for students, and that their dress and appearance should reflect this.
- Not dress in a way that would cause embarrassment to students, parents, colleagues, or other stakeholders.
- Ensure that, if visible, tattoos do not cause offence to others; if tattoos are likely to cause offence, they must be covered up whilst in work.
- Ensure that jewellery and piercings are minimal and, in the health and safety interests of both staff and children, avoid anything that could catch or be caught by students.

### **3...Attendance**

The college expects that staff will:

- Attend work in accordance with their contract of employment and associated terms and conditions in relation to hours, days of work and holidays.
- Comply with the college's notification of sickness absence procedures.
- Make routine medical and dental appointments outside of their working hours or during holidays where possible.
- Refer to the college's Staff Leave of Absence Policy if they need time off for any reason other than personal illness.
- Follow the college's absence reporting procedure when they are absent from work due to illness or injury.

### **4...Conduct outside of work**

Staff may undertake work outside college, either paid or voluntary, provided that it does not conflict with the interests of the college.

Staff will not engage in outside work which could seriously damage the reputation and standing of the college, the employee's own reputation, or the reputation of other members

of the college community. Staff will also not engage in outside work at a level which may contravene The Working Time Regulations 1998 or affect an individual's work performance.

Staff committing offences that involve violence, possession or use of illegal drugs, or sexual misconduct is unacceptable, and will result in disciplinary procedures in line with the college's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

Staff will not engage in inappropriate use of social network sites which may bring themselves, the college, college community or employer into disrepute. This is explored further in the [Acceptable use of technology](#) section of this policy.

## **5. Smoking, e-cigarettes, alcohol, and other substances**

Staff will not smoke or vape in the sight of students, parents or visitors.

Staff will not smoke or vape whilst working with or supervising students off-site, such as when on educational visits and trips.

Staff will report for work and remain in a condition to perform their duties free from the effects of drugs, alcohol or any other substances that may hinder judgement and cause changes in behaviour; this does not include over-the-counter painkillers such as paracetamol.

## **6. Health and safety**

Staff will:

- Be familiar with, and adhere to, the college's Health and Safety Policy and ensure that they take every action to keep themselves and everyone in the college environment safe and well.
- Comply with health and safety regulations, adhering to any rules, routines and procedures in place, and cooperate with college leaders and colleagues on matters relating to health and safety.
- Use the correct equipment and tools for the job and any protective clothing supplied.
- Inform the Head of College of any paid work which is undertaken elsewhere,
- Adhere to their common law duty to act as a prudent parent would when in charge of students.

## **7...Conflicts of interests**

The college is aware that situations may arise where family interests or loyalties conflict with those of the college; however, staff have an obligation to act in the best interests of the college community to avoid situations where there may be a potential conflict of interest.

All staff will be able to demonstrate that they do not have a vested interest in any decision making or budget spending. All declarations will be submitted in writing to the Head of College for inclusion on the college's Declared Conflicts of Interest Register.

Failure to make a relevant declaration of interests is a serious breach of trust and, therefore, if employees are in doubt about a declaration, they are advised to contact the college or trade union.

Any member of staff found to be withholding information about a conflict of interest will be subject to disciplinary action in line with the Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

Staff and volunteers will be responsible for:

- Following the provisions outlined within the college's Conflict of Interests Policy.
- Declaring any conflicts of interest.
- Acting in accordance with this policy at all times.
- Identifying any conflicts of interest that have not been previously declared.
- Following the college's Whistleblowing Policy where there are concerns that a conflict of interest has not been declared, and an individual might have subsequently benefitted.
- Ensuring that all individuals in a discussion do not have a vested interest in the subject.
- Informing the Head of College of any relatives who may have a declarable interest.
- Consider whether they need to declare their relationship with any individual where this might cause a conflict with college activities.

Membership to a trade union or staff representative group does not need to be declared.

### **Financial inducements**

Staff will:

- Familiarise themselves and comply with the college's financial regulations.
- Declare to the Governance board, in writing, any gifts received, with the exception of:
  - Low cost, functional items suitable for business rather than personal use and displaying the supplier's logo – these items may be accepted.
  - Non-excessive gifts offered by parents or students to college staff to express their gratitude, but staff members should always refuse monetary gifts.
  - Hospitality in the form of meals and drinks where it is part of a normal business meeting.
  - Authorised visits to exhibitions, demonstrations, conferences, business meals and social functions in connection with the college's business, which shall be at the college's expense.
- Not accept a personal gift, payment, or other incentive from a business contact – any such gifts should be returned.
- Declare any gift that cannot be returned to the governing board, who will decide how it will be used
- Only accept offers to specific events after authorisation from the governing board.

### **Contacts**

Staff members will not use college business contacts for acquiring materials or services at trade/discount prices for non-college activities, unless participating in concessionary schemes arranged by trade unions or other such groups.

## **9. Maintaining professional relationships with students**

The college expects that staff will:

- Maintain professional boundaries and relationships with students at all times, and will consider whether their actions are warranted, proportionate, safe and necessary.
- Act in an open and transparent way that would not lead to others questioning their actions.
- Ensure that they do not establish social contact with students for the purpose of securing a friendship, or to pursue or strengthen a relationship.
- Ensure that they do not develop personal or sexual relationships with students: this includes sexual remarks and discussing their own sexual relationships with, or in the presence of, students.
- Only contact students via the college's established mechanisms: personal phone numbers, email addresses or social media platforms will not be used to contact students.

Staff are aware that they must not:

- Discuss personal information with students, such as concerning their lifestyle or marital status, unless it is directly relevant to the topic being taught.
- Correspond in a personal nature through any medium with students, e.g. phone calls or text messages, unless it is within the staff member's role and via an approved communication method, e.g. college emails.
- Adopt an ongoing support role beyond the scope of their position.
- Use personal equipment for approved activities, such as a personal camera, unless approved in writing by the Head of College and will not photograph, audio record or film students without authorisation from the Head of College/CEO and consent from the student's parent.
- Save images, videos or audio recordings of students on personal devices, unless authorised by the SLT or parents.
- Upload images, videos or audio recordings of students to any location without consent from parents and the Head of College/CEO
- Discuss or share information regarding other students or members of staff; staff should be aware of their surroundings when speaking to others, as their conversations may be overheard.
- Ignore instances of sexual harassment and inappropriate behaviour amongst students.
- Invite or allow students to visit their home
- Allow students to access staff members' personal devices.
- Attend students' homes or their social gatherings, unless approved by the Head of College/CEO
- Be alone with a student outside of teaching responsibilities, unless approved by the Head of College.

- Enter changing rooms or toilets occupied by students, when supervision is not required or appropriate, use toilet facilities allocated to students, or undress in facilities intended for use by students.
- Carry out one-to-one tutoring, mentoring or coaching of students, unless approved by the Head of College or CEO
- Give personal gifts or special favours, or disproportionately single specific students out for special duties or responsibilities.
- Offer overnight, weekend or holiday care as a respite to parents without the approval of the Head of College.

Under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, it is an 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 trust in respect to that child, even if the relationship is consensual.

Where inappropriate contact is made with students, this will be raised with the Head of College, and handled in line with the college's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Staff Code of Conduct.

If a student is consistently attempting to befriend or contact a member of staff on social media, the member of staff will inform the Head of College as soon as possible.

Staff are strongly discouraged from forming personal relationships with former students, including on social media, as well as with the parents of any students on social media.

In the event of the college becoming aware of a close relationship between a member of staff and a former student which may raise concerns about their suitability to work with children, the Head of College will contact the LA designated officer (LADO) for advice and guidance.

Any inappropriate contact made with former students will be handled in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Staff Code of Conduct.

### **Appropriate language**

Staff will be informed that students should not be treated as friends. Staff will not:

- Use inappropriate names or terms of endearment.
- Allow inappropriate conversations or enquiries of a sexual nature to occur.
- Comment on a student's appearance, including personal flattery or criticism.
- Treat students disrespectfully or discriminatorily, based upon their perceived or actual protected characteristics.
- Subject students to humiliation, profanity, or vilification.
- Allow or partake in suggestive humour, banter, jokes or innuendos of a sexual nature.
- Use obscene or inappropriate gestures and language.
- Partake in personal conversations, including on the phone, where this may be overheard by students.

## **9. Physical contact with students**

All staff members will respect the personal space and privacy of all students and will avoid situations which unnecessarily result in close physical contact.

The college understands that there are circumstances in which it is entirely necessary for staff to have physical contact with students, e.g. when applying first aid and assisting with intimate care, but staff will only do so in a professional and appropriate manner in line with relevant college policies.

When physical contact is made with students, it is imperative that it is conducted in a way which is responsive to the student's needs, is of limited duration and is appropriate to their age, stage of development, gender, and background.

Staff will seek the student's permission, where possible, before initiating contact.

Staff will always use their professional judgement when determining what physical contact is appropriate, as this may differ between students, and ensure that the student's feelings and wishes are always taken into account.

Staff will never touch a student in a way which is indecent and will be aware that even well-intentioned physical contact may be misconstrued by a student, an observer or by anyone to whom this action is described and, therefore, will always be prepared to explain their actions.

Staff will not engage in rough play,

Physical contact will never be secretive; if a member of staff believes an action could be misinterpreted, this will be reported to the Head of College, or the Governance board if the concern is about the Head of College, and appropriate procedures will be followed.

If a student is in distress and in need of comfort as reassurance, staff may use age-appropriate physical contact, such as placing their hand on the student's shoulder. Staff will remain self-aware of their actions at all times and ensure that their contact is not threatening, intrusive or subject to misinterpretation.

The college acknowledges that situations may arise in which staff members will be required to use physical intervention, and in some cases reasonable force, in order to manage conflict, disruption and distressed behaviour when other measures have failed to do so. In these cases, staff will ensure that actions such as safe touch and reasonable force are used in a correct and safe manner,

In all interactions with students staff will always behave and act in a respectful and professional manner and staff will be aware that extra caution and consideration may be needed where it is known that a student has previously suffered from abuse or neglect.

## **11. Showering and changing**

Staff will ensure that students are afforded respect and privacy whilst they are changing, e.g. before and after performances; Staff will adhere to the appropriate policies and risk assessments, eg. PE risk assessment and ensure that appropriate supervision and support is given to all students, including those who may need assistance with showering and changing.

Staff will announce their intention of entering the changing room to allow students to maintain their privacy and will only remain in the changing room for as long as is necessary.

Staff will never change or shower in the same area as students.

## **12. Acceptable use of technology**

Staff are aware of the benefits and challenges associated with using technology in college. When using technology staff will always adhere to the various procedures, freedoms and limitations outlined in the relevant college policies, which include but are not limited to:

- Online Safety Policy
- Staff ICT and Electronic Devices Policy

All staff will maintain a professional level of conduct in their personal use of technology, and read, sign, and adhere to the college's Technology Acceptable Use Agreement.

Staff will be aware of how the use of technology can impact safeguarding and wellbeing issues, e.g. online abuse.

Staff will be vigilant to ensure their own behaviour is respectful and that students are using technology appropriately while under their care.

### **Personal devices**

Personal devices are used in accordance with the provisions outlined in the policies above and within the Staff ICT and Electronic Devices Policy and the Device User Agreement. Any personal electronic device that is brought into college is the responsibility of the user.

Staff are not permitted to use their personal devices during lesson time, other than in an emergency.

Staff are not permitted to use their personal devices to take photos or videos of students.

### **Social media**

Staff will be aware that their conduct on social media can have an impact on their role and reputation within the college.

Staff will remain mindful of their use of social media and their web-based presence including written content, videos or photographs, and views expressed directly or indirectly which may bring themselves, the college, or the college community into disrepute.

Staff are required to employ the highest security settings on any personal profiles they may have.

Staff will not engage in inappropriate use of social networking sites including contacting students or their family members, accepting or inviting friend requests from students or their family members, or following students or their family members on social media.

The college understands that some staff are also parents of students at the college and, therefore, may wish to contact other parents. When doing so, staff will exercise their professional judgement and will not contact family members on social media if this would lead to a conflict of interest.

## **13. Photography, images and videos**

Photographs, images and videos will only be taken using college equipment – using personal mobile phones for this purpose is prohibited and taking images of students will not be taken for personal use.

Staff will ensure that imagery and videos will be kept in an appropriate and secure place in college.

No student will be photographed in a state of undress or semi-undress, or in a situation which could be considered as indecent or sexual.

Staff will not take images of a student's injury, bruising or similar (e.g. following a disclosure of abuse), even if they have been requested to do so by children's social care and staff members will not make audio recordings of any disclosure made by a student.

Consent for taking photographs will be obtained from parents, or the student themselves, if they are deemed old enough and able to make the decision for themselves.

Students who have not provided consent, either personally or via their parents, to have their photograph taken or be filmed will have their wishes respected, in line with the Photography Policy.

The Head of College will be notified of the proposed use of the imagery or video and the equipment and ensure that the use of such is included in lesson plans where this is necessary.

All photographs and videos will be available for scrutiny, and staff will be prepared to explain and justify the images or footage taken.

Careful consideration will always be given to the activities which are being filmed or photographed, to ensure that images or videos are not indecent and cannot be misused.

## **14. Premises, equipment, and communication**

Staff are responsible for:

- Being aware of and following the requirements of the College Security Policy.
- Securing windows and doors when rooms are not in use.
- Ensuring that visitors sign in and out at the college office.
- Challenging any unidentified individuals and notifying the Head of College of any unauthorised person.
- Securing valuable equipment after use.
- Ensuring the security of college equipment when taken off the college premises, such as laptops.
- Acting in accordance with the college's Data Protection Policy and Data and Cyber-security Breach Prevention and Management Plan, ensuring that data and information is secure.
- Reporting any minor security concerns to the Head of College.
- Reporting major security concerns directly to the police or emergency services, where appropriate.

- Carrying their college ID with them at all times.
- Being responsible for the security of any of their own property that they bring to the college site.

College equipment and systems are available only for college-related activities and will not be used for the fulfilment of another job or for personal use, unless specifically authorised by the Head of College. Illegal, inappropriate, or unacceptable use of college equipment or communication systems may result in disciplinary action and, in serious cases, could lead to an employee's dismissal.

Employees receiving inappropriate communication or material, or who are unsure about whether something they propose to do might breach this policy, should seek advice from the Head of College.

The college reserves the right to monitor emails, phone calls, internet activity or document production on college-owned equipment, principally in order to avoid offensive or nuisance material and to protect systems from viruses, but also to ensure proper and effective use of systems.

Communication systems may be accessed when the college suspects that the employee has been misusing systems or facilities, or for the investigation of suspected fraud or other irregularity. Access will be secured by the systems manager, only with the permission of the governing board.

Passwords should not be shared and access to computer systems must be kept confidential except on the express request of the Head of College or systems manager. Breaches of this confidentiality may be subject to disciplinary action.

College equipment that is used outside the premises, e.g. laptops, will be returned to the college when the employee leaves employment or if requested to do so by the Head of College.

## **16. Data protection and confidentiality**

All staff will be aware of their responsibilities as laid out in the colleges Data Protection Policy and in line with the core principles of the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.

Staff members will not disclose sensitive information about the college, its employees, or the LA to other parties. The only exception to this being when the confidential information gives rise to concerns about the safety or welfare of a student.

Staff members have the right to request access to data that is held about them. Such requests will be made to the Head of College in writing in accordance with the college's Data Protection Policy and Records Management Policy.

Staff will ensure that:

- Confidential paper records are kept in a locked filing cabinet, drawer or safe, with restricted access, and will not be left unattended or in clear view anywhere with general access.
- Implement a 'clear desk policy' to avoid unauthorised access to physical records containing sensitive or personal information.

- Memory sticks are not used to hold personal information unless they are password-protected and fully encrypted.
- They will not use their personal laptops or computers for college purposes. All necessary members of staff are provided with their own secure login and password, and every computer regularly prompts users to change their password.
- When sending confidential information staff will always check that the recipient is correct before sending.
- They involve the DPO in all data protection matters closely and in a timely manner.

If staff and governors need to use their personal laptops for college purposes, particularly if they are working from home, they will bring their device into college before using it for work to ensure the appropriate software can be downloaded and information encrypted.

Before sharing data, all staff will ensure:

- They are allowed to share it.
- That adequate security is in place to protect it.
- Who will receive the data has been outlined in a privacy notice.

Where personal information that could be considered private or confidential is taken off the premises, either in electronic or paper format, staff will take extra care to follow the same procedures for security, e.g. keeping devices under lock and key. The person taking the information from the college premises accepts full responsibility for the security of the data.

When students and staff join the college, the staff member or student (or, where appropriate, student's parent) will be required to complete a consent form for personal data use. This consent form deals with the taking and use of photographs and videos, amongst other things. Where appropriate, third parties may also be required to complete a consent form.

The college holds the right to take the necessary disciplinary action against a staff member if they believe them to be in breach of the above security measures.

## **17. Probity of records**

The deliberate falsification of documents, such as references, academic qualifications, or legal documents, is unacceptable. Where a staff member falsifies records or other documents, including those held electronically, this will be regarded as a serious disciplinary matter and potentially a criminal offence.

## **18. Monitoring and review**

This document will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Head of College, and any changes made will be communicated to all members of staff.

The next scheduled review date of this document is **31 August 2026**

All members of staff are required to familiarise themselves with this document as part of their induction programme.