Meadow Pathways Wellbeing and Education Cornwall (MPWEC)

Staff Conduct Policy

Education other than at School (EOTAS)

Responsibility to update: Zoe Waitz and Michelle Pascoe
Applies to: All staff, contractors, volunteers and visiting professionals working with children and young people (CYP) engaged in Meadow Pathways EOTAS packages (including tuition in homes, community venues and online).

Version No: 3
Date: September 2026
Review Date: September 2027

Summary of Changes – September 2026 Review

This policy has been reviewed and updated in September 2026 to reflect Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026 and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026. Key changes made at this review:

- Added explicit references to KCSIE 2026 and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026.
- Added a new section on reporting low-level concerns about a colleague's conduct, as distinct from allegations of harm, in line with KCSIE 2026.
- Added a cross-reference to the Safer Working Practice Guidance, which sets out the detailed rules on personal device use, image capture and communication with children – this policy's general mobile phone wording should be read alongside that guidance, which takes precedence on those specific points.
- **Version 3 (September 2026):** added sections on allegations against staff and whistleblowing, so that this policy covers low-level concerns, allegations and whistleblowing as expected by the DfE's voluntary national standards for non-school alternative provision; added online sessions.

This summary is provided for ease of reference; the changes are reflected throughout the policy below.

Introduction

This Staff Conduct Policy outlines the standards of behaviour expected of all staff working at Meadow Pathways Wellbeing and Education Cornwall.

It is based on statutory guidance including Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026 and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026.

All staff must understand and adhere to this policy to maintain the highest standards of safeguarding, professionalism, and ethical behaviour.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Promote safe and positive relationships between staff and learners.
- Safeguard children and young people from harm.
- Uphold Meadow Pathways values of respect, care, and inclusion.
- Ensure staff are aware of professional boundaries and responsibilities.

Expectations of Staff Conduct

All staff must:

- Act in the best interests of children at all times.
- Treat all learners with dignity and respect.
- Report any concerns about a child's welfare immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries in person and online.
- Avoid any behaviour that could be perceived as favouritism or inappropriate.
- Communicate with children and families in a respectful, professional manner.

- Ensure all learning and interaction spaces are safe, inclusive and supportive.
- During online sessions, follow the Online Safety Policy, use only Meadow Pathways' approved platform and organisation accounts, and maintain the same professional standards as in person.

Use of Personal Mobile Phones and Devices

Due to the community-based nature of Meadow Pathways, staff may use personal phones in the course of their work.

To protect children and staff:

- Personal devices must only be used in line with this policy and for work purposes.
- No photographs or recordings of learners are to be taken on personal devices, except as permitted under the Safer Working Practice Guidance.
- Personal devices used must have filtering and appropriate security settings enabled.
- Staff must never share personal numbers with learners.
- Work-related communication must be professional and documented where appropriate.

The detailed rules on device use, withholding personal numbers, and capturing or storing images of children are set out in the Safer Working Practice Guidance, which staff must also follow.

Safeguarding Responsibilities

All staff are responsible for ensuring they:

- Understand and follow the latest statutory safeguarding guidance.
- Complete relevant safeguarding and child protection training annually.
- Report safeguarding concerns without delay to the DSL, Michelle Pascoe, or the Deputy DSL, Zoe Waitz.
- Cooperate fully with any investigations or reviews regarding staff conduct or safeguarding.

Low-Level Concerns

A low-level concern is any behaviour that does not meet the threshold of an allegation of harm to a child but feels "not quite right" – for example, a lapse in professional boundaries. Staff must report low-level concerns to the DSL, Michelle Pascoe, via the Low Level Concern Form, in the same way as any other concern. Raising a low-level concern is not, in itself, a disciplinary matter, and is part of maintaining an open and supportive safeguarding culture, in line with KCSIE 2026.

Allegations Against Staff

If anyone believes a member of staff, volunteer or contractor has harmed a child, may have harmed a child, may have committed a criminal offence against a child, or may not be suitable to work with children, they must report it to the DSL immediately. The DSL will contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) within one working day, in line with KCSIE 2026 Part 4 and our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

If the allegation is about the DSL, report it to the Deputy DSL (and the reverse). If it is about both Directors, or you do not feel able to raise it internally, contact the LADO directly on 01872 326536 or lado@cornwall.gov.uk.

Whistleblowing

Staff who have concerns about poor or unsafe practice, or about the way Meadow Pathways is run, should follow our Whistleblowing Policy. Staff who raise genuine concerns will not suffer any detriment. Staff can also contact the NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line on 0800 028 0285.

Confidentiality

Staff must maintain confidentiality at all times. Information about learners or staff must not be shared unless there is a safeguarding concern or a legal requirement to do so. Conversations or observations about learners must not be discussed outside of work or on social media.

Breaches of the Policy

Breaches of this policy will be taken seriously and may result in disciplinary action. Serious misconduct may lead to suspension or dismissal.

Declaration

All staff must read, understand, and sign their agreement to comply with this Staff Conduct Policy. A signed copy will be retained on each employee's file.