



# Staff Code of Conduct

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**To be used in conjunction with HOPECFI's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**

At HOPECFI, we are committed to upholding the highest standards of professionalism, integrity, and ethical behaviour. This Code of Conduct outlines the expectations for all staff to ensure a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment that supports the academic and personal development of our children. Adherence to this Code is essential to maintaining the trust and confidence of children, parents, colleagues, and the wider community.



## 1. Professional Behaviour and Responsibilities

All staff members are expected to:

- Exhibit professionalism in their conduct, communication, and approach to teaching and behaviour management always.
  - Treat children, colleagues, parents, and visitors with respect, fairness, and dignity, fostering positive relationships and a harmonious HOPECFI community.
  - Provide a supportive and inclusive learning environment that values diversity and promotes equal opportunities for all children.
  - Communicate effectively and collaboratively with children, parents, and colleagues, ensuring clarity, transparency, and professionalism in all interactions.
  - Uphold the HOPECFI's policies, procedures, and values, and comply with all ethical and legal standards relevant to their role.
  - Address any issues of misconduct, unprofessional behaviour, or breaches of this Code of Conduct in line with established procedures.
  - Act as ambassadors for HOPECFI maintaining its reputation both within and outside the workplace.
  - Demonstrate accountability for their performance, seeking opportunities for professional development and reflecting on their practice.
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## 2. Safeguarding and Child Protection

The safety and well-being of children is paramount.

Safeguarding refers to the proactive and comprehensive measures taken to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm. It encompasses a wide range of activities designed to create a safe and nurturing environment.

Child protection is a specific aspect of safeguarding that focuses on responding to concerns, risks, or situations where a child is suffering or at risk of significant harm.

**All staff must:**

- Prioritise the welfare of children by adhering to HOPECFI's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
  - Report any concerns about a children's safety or well-being immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy DSL.
  - Maintain appropriate professional boundaries with children, avoiding actions or behaviours that could be misinterpreted.
  - Refrain from personal relationships with children and the sharing of personal information, either in person or via social media.
  - Attend mandatory safeguarding training and apply the knowledge to ensure the highest standards of child protection.
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### 3. Relationships and Communication

Staff must:

- Build professional relationships with children that are based on mutual respect and trust, ensuring all interactions are friendly but appropriate.
  - Communicate clearly, respectfully, and professionally with children, parents, and colleagues in all mediums, including verbal, written, and digital forms.
  - Avoid showing favouritism or forming inappropriate personal relationships with children.
  - Always maintain professional boundaries and exercise caution in any communication or behaviour that could be perceived as inappropriate.
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### 4. Personal Presentation

Staff are representatives of HOPECFI and must:

- Present themselves in a professional manner, dressing appropriately for their role and HOPECFI's environment.
  - Adhere to HOPECFI's dress code, ensuring their appearance reflects the values and ethos of the institution.
  - Maintain high standards of personal hygiene and grooming to support a positive and professional image.
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### 5. Confidentiality

To protect the integrity of HOPECFI and its community, staff must:

- Respect the confidentiality of all information related to children, families, colleagues, and HOPECFI operations.
  - Share sensitive information only with those authorised to receive it, in line with HOPECFI's policies and GDPR regulations.
  - Avoid discussing confidential matters in inappropriate settings or with unauthorised individuals.
  - Comply with legal obligations and organisational standards regarding the handling and storage of personal data.
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### 6. Use of Technology

Staff must:

- Use HOPECFI provided technology solely for professional purposes and in accordance with HOPECFI's Acceptable Use Policy.
- Avoid personal use of mobile phones, tablets, or other electronic devices during work times. Personal mobile phones be stored away in the designated box or room and must not be used



within the premises except in the designated staff room during staff lunch breaks. This is applicable to all staff including managers. Work electronic devices including mobile phone and computer where provided, must not be used for personal reasons and must solemnly be use for conducting HOPECFI business.

- Refrain from engaging with children on personal social media platforms or sharing personal information.
- Report any breaches of technology use or data security immediately to the appropriate authority.

#### **a) Acceptable Use Policy (AUP)**

The Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) establishes clear guidelines and expectations for the proper use of HOPECFI's resources. This includes technology, internet access, and communication systems, with the aim of maintaining a safe, respectful, and productive environment for all users. The policy applies to all staff, children, parents, and visitors who access HOPECFI's facilities and systems. It covers the use of digital devices such as computers, tablets, and smartphones connected to the organisation's network; internet and Wi-Fi access; email and messaging platforms; hardware, software, and cloud-based services provided by HOPECFI; and communication tools, including phones and social media accounts managed by the organisation.

#### **Guidelines for Acceptable Use:**

For Staff, resources are to be used exclusively for educational, administrative, or professional purposes, with strict adherence to data protection protocols to safeguard personal and confidential information. Communication systems, including email, messaging, and social media, must be used respectfully and professionally. Staff are strictly prohibited from accessing, downloading, or distributing inappropriate, illegal, or offensive content. Additionally, personal communication with children and parents via social media is not permitted, always maintaining professional boundaries.

For Children, technology must be used solely for educational activities as directed by teachers. Children must prioritise online safety by avoiding the sharing of personal information and refraining from cyberbullying or other harmful behaviours. Access to inappropriate websites, images, or materials is strictly prohibited. Children are also expected to handle HOPECFI-provided devices with care and report any issues or damages promptly.

For Parents and Visitors, access to HOPECFI's internet and devices is limited to authorised purposes only. Privacy must be respected and attempts to access staff or children records without proper authorisation are not permitted. Social media use requires sensitivity, including refraining from posting images or information about other children without explicit permission.

#### **Prohibited Activities:**

The following activities are strictly prohibited for all users:

- Using HOPECFI resources to access illegal, inappropriate, or offensive content.
- Sharing or distributing confidential or sensitive information without permission.
- Engaging in activities that could harm the HOPECFI's network or compromise its security.
- Downloading or installing unauthorised software.



Plagiarising or using copyrighted material without proper attribution.  
Sending spam, phishing emails, or fraudulent messages.

### **Monitoring and Enforcement:**

HOPECFI monitors the use of its resources to ensure compliance with this policy.

Any violations will result in disciplinary action, which may include:

Revocation of access to HOPECFI resources.  
Suspension or expulsion (for children).  
Termination of employment (for staff).  
Reporting to legal authorities for serious breaches.

### **User Responsibilities:**

**Staff:** Must act as role models in the use of technology and guide children in understanding appropriate usage.

**Children:** Must follow all rules outlined in this policy and report any misuse of technology to a staff member.

**Parents:** Should monitor their child's use of technology at home and support HOPECFI's policies.

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## **7. Low-Level Concern Policy**

HOPECFI recognises the importance of addressing minor concerns about staff conduct promptly to prevent escalation and maintain a culture of safeguarding.

### **Definition of a Low-Level Concern**

A low-level concern is any behaviour by a staff member that:

- Does not meet the threshold for a safeguarding allegation.
- May be inconsistent with HOPECFI's Code of Conduct.
- Could cause unease or raise questions about a staff member's professional judgement.

Examples include:

- Being overly familiar with children.
- Using inappropriate language or humour.
- Failing to adhere to professional boundaries.

### **Reporting Low-Level Concerns**

- Staff are encouraged to report low-level concerns to the DSL promptly.
- Concerns may be reported verbally or in writing and will be handled confidentially.
- Self-reporting is encouraged if a staff member recognises their own behaviour may be misinterpreted.



## Addressing Low-Level Concerns

- The DSL will review and address low-level concerns in line with HOPECFI policies.
- Support, training, or guidance may be offered to the staff member involved.
- Repeated or unaddressed concerns may result in formal action, including disciplinary measures.

## Fostering a Culture of Openness

HOPECFI is committed to creating an environment where staff feel safe and supported in reporting concerns without fear of retaliation. This culture of openness strengthens safeguarding practices and promotes accountability.

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## 8. Commitment to Equality and Diversity

Staff must:

- Promote inclusivity and respect for all children, colleagues, and community members, irrespective of race, gender, disability, religion, or socioeconomic background.
  - Challenge discriminatory behaviour or language and report it in line with HOPECFI's policies.
  - Actively support initiatives that foster diversity and inclusion within HOPECFI community.
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## 9. Accountability and Compliance

Staff are required to:

- Read and understand the Staff Code of Conduct and all relevant HOPECFI policies.
  - Comply with all statutory responsibilities and professional standards.
  - Be accountable for their actions and decisions, seeking clarification when needed.
  - Cooperate fully with internal or external audits, reviews, and inspections.
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## 10. Consequences of Breaching the Code

Failure to adhere to this Code of Conduct may result in:

- Informal or formal disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.
- Referral to external regulatory or safeguarding authorities where appropriate.
- Potential legal consequences for breaches of statutory or regulatory requirements

