

# Staff Code of Conduct Policy



**RIVERSIDE BRIDGE SCHOOL**  
**INSPIRE, EMPOWER, ACHIEVE**



Partnership Learning

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Reviewed and evaluated: September 2024  
Ratified by Governors: September 2024  
Next Review date: September 2025

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## 1. Aims, scope and principles

This policy aims to set and maintain standards of conduct that we expect all staff to follow.

By creating this policy, we aim to ensure our school is an environment where everyone is safe, happy and treated with respect.

Many of the principles in this code of conduct are based on the [Teachers' Standards](#).

School staff have an influential position in the school and will act as role models for pupils by consistently demonstrating high standards of behaviour.

We expect that all teachers will act in accordance with the personal and professional behaviours set out in the Teachers' Standards.

We expect all support staff, governors and volunteers to also act with personal and professional integrity, respecting the safety and wellbeing of others.

Our vision is to cultivate a safe and inclusive community where every individual feels empowered, valued and respected. We strive to foster effective communication, emotional well-being and lifelong learning, encouraging curiosity, independence and a meaningful role in society.

The school's values of Achievement, Independence, Inclusion, Resilience, Respect and Well-Being aim to create excellent attitudes to learning, to build character, to shape the mindsets and behaviours of future independent and responsible adults and promote the highest achievement for our pupils.

The school expects the highest standards of personal and professional conduct from all Employees.

As such the school requires all employees to act in a manner which reflects the value and ethos of the school.

Employees must ensure that their behaviour and actions are consistent with their position as a role model to pupils and are compatible with working with young people and in a school setting.

Employees must act with integrity, honesty and demonstrate ethical and respectful working practices towards pupils /pupils, colleagues, parents/carers and other members of the school community.

All Employees have a responsibility to observe appropriate professional boundaries and act at all times in a manner which safeguards and promotes the welfare of pupils.

Employees must disclose any relevant information which may impact on their job role or suitability to work with young people or in a school setting.

The school requires employees to adhere to all school policies and observe the highest standards of business / financial practice.

Each Employee has an individual responsibility to act in a manner which upholds the school in providing effective and professional education to pupils and protects its reputation to do the same with confidence in the local community.

Employees are accountable for their actions and conduct and should seek advice from their Line Manager / Headteacher if they are not sure of the appropriate action to take.

Employees should be aware that a failure to comply with the following Code of Conduct could result in disciplinary action being considered. A serious breach could potentially result in dismissal.

Failure to follow the code of conduct may result in disciplinary action being taken, as set out in our staff disciplinary procedures.

Please note that this code of conduct is not exhaustive. If situations arise that are not covered by this code, staff will use their professional judgement and act in the best interests of the school and its pupils.

## Responsibilities of the School

- Explain the provisions of the Code of Conduct to employees and signpost employees to other relevant policies, document and guidelines
- Provide additional advice and guidance to employees in relation to queries they may have regarding the application of the Code of Conduct
- Coach, support and provide feedback to employees on their performance in relation to the required standards of conduct
- Take appropriate action at the earliest opportunity to address breaches of the expected standards of conduct

## Responsibilities of the Employee

- To read, understand and comply with the Code of Conduct at all times
- To use this code, alongside other relevant school policies and professional codes, to guide them in their role
- To seek guidance from the Headteacher / Line Manager (or Chair of Governors in the case of the Headteacher) if they are unclear about the conduct or actions expected of them
- To alert the Headteacher (or Chair of Governors in the case of the Headteacher) at the earliest opportunity where an Employee believes they may have acted in a manner which is inconsistent with the Code of Conduct and other relevant School Policies and professional codes.

## 2. Legislation and guidance

We are required to establish procedures for the regulation of staff conduct under regulation 7 of [The School Staffing \(England\) Regulations 2009](#).

In line with the statutory safeguarding guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#), we should have a staff code of conduct, which should cover low-level concerns, allegations against staff and whistleblowing, as well as acceptable use of technologies (including the use of mobile devices), staff/pupil relationships and communications, including the use of social media.

This policy also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

## 3. General obligations

Staff set an example to pupils. They will:

- Maintain high standards in their attendance and punctuality
- Never use inappropriate or offensive language in school
- Treat pupils and others with dignity and respect
- Show tolerance and respect for the rights of others

- Not undermine fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
- Not express personal beliefs in a way that exploits pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law
- Understand the statutory frameworks they must act within
- Adhere to the [Teachers' Standards](#)
- Never use threatening or intimidating actions

## 4. Safeguarding

Staff have a duty to safeguard pupils from harm, and to report any concerns they have. This includes physical, emotional and sexual abuse, and neglect.

Staff will familiarise themselves with our child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures, and the Prevent initiative, and ensure they are aware of the processes to follow if they have concerns about a child.

### 4.1 Allegations that may meet the harm threshold

This section is based on 'Section 1: Concerns or allegations that may meet the harm threshold' in part 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

This section applies to all cases in which it is alleged that anyone working in the school, including a supply teacher, volunteer or contractor, has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child, and/or
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, and/or
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children, and/or
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children - this includes behaviour taking place inside or outside of school

We will deal with any such allegation quickly and in a fair and consistent way that provides effective child protection while also supporting the individual who is the subject of the allegation.

A case manager will lead any investigation. This will be the Headteacher, or the chair of governors where the Headteacher is the subject of the allegation.

### 4.2 Low-level concerns about members of staff

A low-level concern is a behaviour towards a child by a member of staff that does not meet the harm threshold, is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, and may be as simple as causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt'.

For example, this may include:

- being over-friendly with children
- having favourites
- taking photographs of children on a personal device
- engaging in 1-to-1 activities where they can't easily be seen
- humiliating pupils

Low-level concerns can include inappropriate conduct inside and outside of work.

All staff should share any low-level concerns they have using the reporting procedures set out in our child protection and safeguarding policy. We also encourage staff to self-refer if they find themselves in a situation that could be misinterpreted. If staff are not sure whether behaviour would be deemed a low-level concern, we encourage staff to report it.

All reports will be handled in a responsive, sensitive and proportionate way.

Unprofessional behaviour will be addressed, and the staff member supported to correct it, at an early stage.

This creates and embeds a culture of openness, trust and transparency in which our values and expected behaviour are constantly lived, monitored and reinforced by all staff, while minimising the risk of abuse.

Reporting and responding to low-level concerns is covered in more detail in our child protection and safeguarding policy.

Our procedures for dealing with allegations will be applied with common sense and judgement.

### 4.3 Whistleblowing

Whistleblowing reports wrongdoing that it is "in the public interest" to report. Examples linked to safeguarding include:

- pupils' or staff members' health and safety being put in danger;
- failure to comply with a legal obligation or statutory requirement;
- attempts to cover up the above, or any other wrongdoing in the public interest.

Staff are encouraged to report suspected wrongdoing as soon as possible. Their concerns will be taken seriously and investigated, and their confidentiality will be respected.

Staff should consider the examples above when deciding whether their concern is of a whistle-blowing nature. Consider whether the incident(s) was illegal, breached statutory or school procedures, put people in danger or was an attempt to cover any such activity up.

Staff should report their concern to the Headteacher. If the concern is about the Headteacher, or it is believed they may be involved in the wrongdoing in some way, the staff member should report their concern to the chair of the governing board.

Concerns should be made in writing wherever possible. They should include names of those committing wrongdoing, dates, places and as much evidence and context as possible. Staff raising a concern should also include details of any personal interest in the matter.

For our school's detailed whistle-blowing process, please refer to our whistle-blowing policy.

## 5. Staff-pupil relationships

Staff will observe proper boundaries with pupils that are appropriate to their professional position. They will act in a fair and transparent way that would not lead anyone to reasonably assume they are not doing so.

If staff members and pupils must spend time on a one-to-one basis, staff will ensure that:

- this takes place in a public place that others can access;
- others can see into the room;
- a colleague or line manager knows this is taking place.

Staff should avoid contact with pupils outside of school hours if possible.

Personal contact details should not be exchanged between staff and pupils. This includes social media profiles.

While we are aware many pupils and their parents/carers may wish to give gifts to staff, for example, at the end of the school year, gifts from staff to pupils are not acceptable.

If a staff member is concerned at any point that an interaction between themselves and a pupil may be misinterpreted, or if a staff member is concerned at any point about a fellow staff member and a pupil, this should be reported in line with the procedures set out in our child protection and safeguarding policy.

## 6. Communication and social media

School staff's social media profiles should not be available to pupils. If they have a personal profile on social media sites, they should not use their full name, as pupils may be able to find them. Staff should consider using a first and middle name instead and set public profiles to private.

Staff should not attempt to contact pupils or their parents/carers via social media, or any other means outside school, in order to develop any sort of relationship. They will not make any efforts to find pupils' or parents/carers' social media profiles.

Staff will ensure that they do not post any images online that identify children who are pupils at the school without their consent.

Any email correspondence to parents/carers should ideally be made through the Riverside Bridge School account rather than through work emails. This is to safeguard staff and parents/carers of any inappropriate contact that may occur.

Staff will ensure that they do not post any images online that identify children who are pupils at the school without their consent.

Staff should be aware of the school's e-safety policy and mobile phone policy.

Staff should not post any images or text which could be deemed as sexist, racist etc.

Staff should not post any information which could be deemed as derogatory about other staff members, visitors, volunteers, the school, pupils, parents/carers, any professional linked to the school or any other person or organisation linked to Riverside Bridge School.

Staff should be aware of the school's e-safety safety policy and mobile phone policy.

## 7. Mobile Phones

The school recognises the potential for both mobile phones and cameras to be used inappropriately and therefore, compromising the confidentiality of the children in our care.

The school has established the following policy for mobile phones that provides teachers, pupils, parents/carers guidelines and instructions for the appropriate use of mobile phones during school hours.

This policy for mobile phones also applies to staff during school excursions and extra-curricular activities.

## 8. Staff

- No member of staff should have a phone on their person during teaching time, except with the explicit permission of a member of the SLT in emergency situations.
- Mobile phones can only be used at break times outside or in an empty room and must never be used during lesson.

- No staff member should ever give their personal phone number to pupils or parents/carers.
- No member of staff will on any occasion use the camera function, video function or sound recording function on their phone either in school, on the school premises or on educational/residential visits.
- Mobile phones/tablets/cameras belonging to school should be taken on educational/residential visits for use in emergencies.
- If a member of staff needs to be made a call relating to a child in their care, they should call for support on the radio or use their class landline.
- At lunchtime if a member of staff needs to make a call, they should step outside the building to do so or go to the staffroom.

## 9. Visitors

- All visitors (including parents/carers and contractors) should switch off their phones when they are on school premises or at least turn them to silent.
- We recognise that there will be occasions where contractors may need to make calls on their mobile phones. This should not be done in the vicinity of the pupils.

## 10. Responsibility for mobile phones

The school accepts no responsibility whatsoever for the theft, loss, damage or health effects (potential of actual) relating to mobile phones. It is the responsibility of staff, visitors, and parents/carers to ensure mobile phones are properly insured.

## 11. Acceptable use of technology

Staff will not use technology in school or belonging to the school to view material that is illegal, inappropriate or likely to be deemed offensive. This includes, but is not limited to, sending obscene emails, gambling and viewing pornography or other inappropriate content.

Staff will not use personal mobile phones and laptops, or school equipment for personal use, in school hours or in front of pupils. They will also not use personal mobile phones or cameras to take pictures of pupils.

We have the right to monitor emails and internet use on the school IT system.

## 12. Confidentiality

Employees may have access to confidential or sensitive information about pupils /students, colleagues or the business and operation of the school as part of their job role.

Such information must not be disclosed to any person who is not entitled to have access to this or legitimately needs it for work purposes.

Specifically, all Employees must:

- work in accordance with the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation (2018) and associated legislation;
- observe the school's procedures for the release of information to other agencies and members of the public;
- not use or share confidential information inappropriately or for personal gain
- not speak inappropriately about the school community, pupils, parents/carers, staff or governors including discussing incidents, operational or employment matters with parents/carers or members of the public;
- ensure all confidential data is kept secure and password protected.



Should employees be in doubt about the appropriateness of sharing information they should seek guidance from the Headteacher.

In the course of their role, members of staff are often privy to sensitive and confidential information about the school, staff, pupils and their parents/carers.

This information should never be:

- disclosed to anyone unless required by law or with consent from the relevant party or parties;
- used to humiliate, embarrass or blackmail others;
- used for a purpose other than what it was collected and intended for.

Staff will not discuss pupils, other staff members or any sensitive information in shared areas, such as the staffroom and corridors.

Staff should be mindful that on a shared campus it is not always possible to know who is in your immediate vicinity as staff, visitors and volunteers from all three schools within the campus access the shared areas.

This does not overrule staff's duty to report child protection concerns to the appropriate channel where staff believe a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm, as detailed further in our child protection and safeguarding policy.

### 13. Honesty and Integrity

Staff should maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their role. This includes when dealing with pupils, handling money, claiming expenses and using school property and facilities.

Employees must maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their work.

Employees should not behave in a manner which would lead a reasonable person to call into question their motivation or intentions.

During the course of their work employees should ensure they do not:

- wilfully provide false / misleading information;
- destroy or alter information / records without proper authorisation;
- wilfully withhold information or conceal matters which they could reasonably be expected to have disclosed;
- misrepresent the school or their position;
- accept or offer any form of bribe / inducement or engage in any other corrupt working practice.

Should an employee become aware of any conduct on the part of a colleague which raises concerns regarding health and safety, safeguarding or criminal activity' they have a duty to disclose this.

Allegations concerning fraudulent, dishonest or corrupt practices or the falsification or withholding of information will be investigated under the school's Disciplinary Policy and formal disciplinary action taken where appropriate.

Staff will ensure that all information given to the school is correct. This should include:

- background information (including any past or current investigations/cautions related to conduct outside of school);
- qualifications;

- professional experience.

Where there are any updates to the information provided to the school, the member of staff will advise the school as such as soon as reasonably practicable. Consideration will then be given to the nature and circumstances of the matter and whether this may have an impact on the member of staff's employment.

## 14. Setting an Example

School Employees are role models and must strive to adhere to behaviour that sets a good example to all the pupils/students within the school and is appropriate in a school setting.

This includes:

- refraining from abusive or potentially offensive / discriminatory language or actions. The use of profanity, vulgar expressions, personal insults, violence, harassment for example, will be considered unacceptable;
- being mindful and sensitive to the customs, practices, culture and personal belief of others;
- positively contributing to the creation of a fair and inclusive work environment where everyone can thrive and do their best work;
- demonstrating tolerance and respects towards others by being mindful and sensitive to the customs, practices, culture and personal belief of others;
- contributing to the creation of a fair and inclusive school environment where everyone can thrive and do their best work;
- observing boundaries appropriate to their role and a school setting.
- ensuring any topics of conversation with pupils/students are suitable to the school setting / curriculum
- not undermining fundamental British values;
- ensuring personal / political opinions or beliefs do not impact on the discharge of duties and/or are not expressed in a way which exploits pupils /students' vulnerability or seeks to unduly influence;
- maintaining high standards of personal presentation, attendance and punctuality.

Should employees be in doubt about the appropriateness of their behaviour they should seek guidance from the Headteacher (or Chair of Governors in the case of the Headteacher) or HR department. Breaches of expected behaviour may be considered under the disciplinary procedure; this may result in formal disciplinary action including dismissal.

## 15. Dress and Presentation

### Personal Choice and Professionalism

- While dress and appearance are matters of personal choice, all Employees must ensure their attire is appropriate to their role within the school and promotes a professional image.
- Employees should be mindful of setting a good example to both pupils and visitors through their dress and personal hygiene.

### Appropriateness for Role and Safety

- Clothing should be appropriate to the activities undertaken and comply with any health and safety requirements.

- Suitable protective equipment must be worn where provided.
- Uniforms should be worn when issued.
- Identity badges must be worn at all times while in the workplace.

#### Prohibited Attire

- Clothing should not be offensive, overly revealing, or sexually provocative.
- Attire should not feature political slogans, offensive language, or contentious symbols or imagery.
- Fingernails must be no longer than the fingertips, not sharp, and of a suitable shape (e.g., not pointed).

#### Cultural and Religious Sensitivity:

- The school will take a sensitive approach to dress and uniform requirements for Employees from diverse cultural and religious backgrounds.

#### Dress Code Specifics:

- Staff must dress in a professional and appropriate manner.
- Outfits must not be overly revealing, low-cut, or expose excessive skin.
- Clothing should not display offensive or political slogans.
- Skirts and dresses must be knee-length and modest.
- Staff must not wear ripped jeans or trousers, vest tops, spaghetti strap tops, flip-flops, or open-toed shoes or sandals.
- All footwear must be comfortable, fully enclosed, with closed backs and covered toes.
- Hats or hoods are not permitted inside the building.
- Jewellery must be worn at the owner's risk. The school will not be responsible for any loss or damage to personal effects, including jewellery.

#### Offsite and High-Visibility Requirements:

- Staff must wear their blue high-visibility jacket when involved in offsite activities.
- High-visibility jackets must also be worn during transitions, such as collecting pupils in the morning, break and lunch times, and at the end of the day.

Staff wearing inappropriate attire not in line with this code may be asked to return home and change.

## 16. Smoking and the use of drugs and alcohol

The school is a non-smoking environment. Smoking and the use of e-cigarettes or “vaping” is not allowed on school premises or during working time. Staff should also refrain from smoking immediately outside of the school entrances.

Employees must not consume illegal drugs in the workplace or be under the influence of such substances whilst at work. This includes the use of ‘legal highs or psychoactive substances.

Employees must not consume alcohol in the workplace or be under the influence of such substances whilst pupils are on site and during working hours. Alcohol should in circumstances be brought onto school premises without the authorisation from the Headteacher.

Employees must ensure that any use of alcohol / illegal drugs outside of work does not adversely

affect their work performance, attendance, conduct, working relationships, health and safety of themselves and others or damage the school's image and reputation. Employees are expected to behave in a manner which would not lead any reasonable person to question their suitability to work with children or act as a role model. For example, presenting for work with clothing or breath smelling of alcohol or drugs is likely to raise reputational concerns.

If an Employee has a drug or alcohol dependency which is impacting on their work hours or has the potential to impact on their work, they should discuss this with the Headteacher. Where an Employee engages with the school regarding addressing their dependency, consideration will be given to how to best support the employee.

External advice may be sought prior to or during the implementation of the school's disciplinary procedure where conduct issues arise due to alcohol or drug use.

## 17. Health and Safety at Work

All Employees must, by law, take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that of others in the workplace.

Employees are required to comply with the school's Health and Safety policy and agreed procedures at all times.

This includes:

- avoiding risk of injury or danger to yourself or others;
- using any protective clothing and equipment supplied;
- complying with hygiene requirements;
- reporting, at the earliest opportunity, any hazards, defects, accidents or incidents to the Headteacher or other designated person;
- not interfering with, or misusing, anything provided for health, safety or welfare;
- informing the school of any medical condition or medication which has been prescribed which may have an impact on health and safety in the workplace.

Employees with specific additional responsibilities and those in managerial roles should also be aware of and comply with any additional health and safety obligations associated with their role.

Employees should inform their manager if they have a medical condition or are taking prescription medication which may impair their work performance or affect their health and safety or that of other.

## 18. Conduct outside of work

Staff will not act in a way that would bring the school, or the teaching profession, into disrepute. This covers conduct including but not limited to relevant criminal offences, such as violence or sexual misconduct, as well as negative comments about the school on social media.

## 19. Items issued by the school

Riverside Bridge School will issue all permanent staff members with an ID badge, necessary keys, a hi visibility jacket and a school coat at the beginning of their employment.

## 20. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually but can be revised as needed. It will be approved by the full governing board.

Our governing board will ensure this code of conduct is implemented effectively and will ensure appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard children and deal with any concerns.

## 21. Links with other policies

This policy links with our policies on:

- staff disciplinary procedures, which will be used if staff breach this code of conduct. It also sets out examples of what we will deem as misconduct and gross misconduct
- staff grievance procedures
- child protection and safeguarding
- e-safety safety
- whistleblowing