LOVE, COURAGE & RESPECT

Learning and Achieving Through Love, Courage and Respect

# BRIGHSTONE C.E. PRIMARY SCHOOL

# Staff Behaviour Policy (Code of Conduct)

**Date Agreed: September 2026**

**Review Date: September 2027**

**Revision Record**

| Revision No. | Date Issued | Prepared By | Approved | Comments |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 27.04.2020 | ES | | Reviewed Policy |
| 2 | September 2022 | RL | | Reviewed Policy |
| 3 | December 2023 | RL | FGB | Reviewed Policy |
| 4 | December 2024 | RL | FGB | Reviewed Policy; added reference to Respect Policy |
| 5 | September 2026 | EG | FGB | Reviewed Policy |
| 6 | | | | |

**To be read in conjunction with the national guidance:** Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026

## 1. Definition

1.1 References made to 'child' and 'children' refer to children and young people under the age of 18 years. However, the principles of the document apply to professional behaviours towards all pupils, include those over the age of 18 years. 'Child' should therefore be read to mean **any pupil** at the education establishment.

1.2 References made to adults and staff refer to all those who work with children in an educational establishment, in a paid capacity (for volunteers and visitors, please see 'Volunteers and Visitors' policy, and 'Visiting Speakers' policy).

1.3 The term 'allegation' means where it is alleged that a person who works with children has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; or,
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children.

1.4 The term 'low-level' concern means that the behaviour towards a child does not meet the threshold for a LADO referral. A low-level concern is 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 or college may have acted in a way that:

- is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work; and
- does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

For further guidance, please refer to our Low-Level Concerns policy.

## 2. Introduction

2.1 The Governing Body of Brighstone Church of England Primary School have a legal duty under section 175/157 of the Education Act 2002 to create and maintain a safe learning environment for

children. A staff Code of Conduct is a **mandatory** requirement as described in the DfE statutory guidance: Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026

2.2 The school seeks to provide a safe and supportive environment, which promotes the mental health and wellbeing and the very best outcomes for children in our care. The following code draws together existing laws, regulations and conditions of service designed to protect the interests of staff and the children with whom they work.

2.3 Staff should be aware that a failure to comply with this code could result in disciplinary action, including dismissal.

**3. Purpose and Scope**

3.1 All staff working in the school setting have a legal and moral duty to keep children safe and protect them from harm. Staff should ensure they do not put themselves in situations in which allegations of abuse or inappropriate behaviour could be made.

3.2 This code applies to all paid staff working in schools whatever their position, role or responsibilities. It aims to establish a set of principles that underpin the expected conduct of adults with the intention of encouraging staff to achieve the highest standards of conduct at work and of minimising the risk of improper conduct occurring.

3.3 All staff have a responsibility to be aware of systems within their school which support safeguarding, which is explained as part of staff induction and through regular staff training. The school requires that all staff have read and comply with this Code of Conduct. Where clarification is needed on any aspect of this document, this should be sought from the headteacher or DSL without delay.

3.4 The code should be read in conjunction with the relevant statutory and other guidance documents issued nationally or by the DfE and Home Office as well as other related school policies.

3.5 This code cannot cover every eventuality. Its purpose is to show the standard expected of staff but it does not replace the general requirements of the law. Where guidance does not exist, individuals are expected to use their professional judgement and act in the best interests of the school and its pupils.

3.6 All staff employed under Teachers' Terms and Conditions of Employment have a statutory obligation to adhere to the 'Teachers' Standards 2011' (updated 2013 and 2021) and in relation to this code, Part 2 of the Teachers' Standards - Personal and Professional Conduct which this code supplements.

3.7 It is recognised that the vast majority of adults who work with children act professionally and aim to provide a safe and supportive environment that secures the wellbeing and very best outcomes for children in their care. Achieving these aims is not always straightforward, as much relies on child and staff interactions where tensions and misunderstandings can occur. This code aims to reduce the risk of that.

**4. Core Principles**

4.1 The welfare of the children is paramount.

4.2 Staff are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should seek to avoid any conduct that would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation or intentions.

4.3 Staff should dress appropriately at all times for the tasks they undertake and ensure they promote a positive and professional image.

4.4 Staff should apply the same professional standards regardless of culture, age, disability, gender identity and gender reassignment, language, race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy and sexual orientation. The school expects staff to treat each other with dignity and respect at all times.

4.5 Staff should not consume or be under the influence of alcohol or substances, including prescribed medication that may affect their ability to care for children.

4.6 Staff should be aware that breaches of the law and other professional guidelines could result in disciplinary action being taken against them, criminal action and/or other proceedings including barring by the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) from working in regulated activity, or for acts of serious misconduct, prohibition from teaching by the Teacher Regulation Agency.

4.7 Staff and leaders should continually monitor and review practice to ensure this guidance is followed and should understand their responsibilities to safeguard and protect children.

4.8 Staff should discuss and/or take advice promptly from their line manager, DSL or another senior member of staff over any incident, which may give rise to concern where a Low-Level Concern or referral to LADO may be required.

4.9 Records should be made of any incident and decision made or where further actions have been agreed, in accordance with school policies and confidentiality.

4.10 All staff should know who the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead is, as well as any Deputy DSLs, and be familiar with local child protection and safeguarding arrangements, Low-Level Concerns and LADO arrangements for managing allegations against staff, protected disclosure (whistleblowing) procedures and their Isle of Wight Safeguarding Children Partnership procedures.

4.11 Staff should be aware of and comply with the school's financial and administrative regulations and any other procedure manuals, as relevant.

**5. Appropriate Relationships**

**Pupils**

5.1 Individuals who work in a school environment are in a position of trust. Staff should be mindful of the need to maintain professional boundaries appropriate to their position and must always consider whether their actions are warranted, proportionate, safe and applied equitably.

5.2 Staff should act in an open and transparent way that would not lead any reasonable person to question their actions or intent. Staff should think carefully about their conduct so that misinterpretations are minimised.

5.3 Staff must avoid unnecessary physical contact with children. Where physical contact is essential, e.g. for safety reasons, the pupil's permission must be gained for that contact, wherever possible. If physical contact is made to remove a pupil from a dangerous situation or an object from a pupil to prevent either harm to themselves or others, then this should be recorded on MyConcern and reported to the DSL or headteacher. In cases where accidental physical contact was made where the child was accidently hurt or felt uncomfortable, it should be reported on MyConcern.

5.4 Any sexual behaviour by a member of staff with or towards a pupil is illegal. Staff are reminded that under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, 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 trust in respect of that child, even if the relationship is consensual.

**Parents**

5.5 Staff are expected to interact with parents in a polite and respectful manner and recognise parents' entitlement to express any concerns they may have about their child's learning, safety or wellbeing. Staff should avoid discussing school matters with parents outside school if approached and should instead refer the parent to the normal school communication channels. Where staff feel uncomfortable communicating with a parent (either in person or via email or telephone call) where the parent isn't following our Respect Policy, they will refer the matter to the headteacher.

5.6 When communicating with parents, staff should use the appropriate channels (Teachers 2 Parents, school email systems and printed letters). Emails, texts and letters that address potentially difficult subjects will be sent to the headteacher for approval before being sent home. Video conferencing with parents/carers or children may be used with prior consent.

**6. Confidentiality and Information disclosure**

6.1 Staff must ensure that they do not disclose confidential information to anyone who does not have the right to receive it. Where information is disclosed, this should be in line with the principles of the Data Protection Act 2018. Equally staff should not prevent another person from gaining access to information to which that person is entitled by law. If there is doubt about whether or not to share information, advice must be sought from the headteacher or DSL.

6.2 Staff should not use any information obtained in the course of their duties to the detriment of Brighstone Church of England Primary School or for personal gain or benefit or pass this information on to others who might use it in such a way.

6.3 Staff must also take all reasonable steps to ensure that the loss, destruction, inaccuracy or disclosure of information does not occur as a result of their actions, including information relating to school business and pupil data.

6.4 There are some circumstances in which staff may be expected to share information about a child, for example, when child protection issues arise. In such cases, staff have a duty to pass information on without delay in line with the school policy/local procedures. If staff are in any doubt about whether to share information or keep it confidential, they should seek guidance from the DSL or headteacher.

**7. Equality Issues**

7.1 The School is committed to equality for all in the appointment, development, training and promotion of staff, and in all dealings with pupils and parents. It also recognises that all members of staff have the right to work in a safe environment without fear of discrimination, harassment or abuse.

7.2 All pupils, colleagues, parents, members of the public and wider school community have the right to be treated with fairness and equality and must not be discriminated against. The school expects staff to uphold these principles.

**8. Employment Matters**

8.1. All staff involved in recruitment and selection processes follow Safer Recruitment procedures, and at least one member of all recruitment boards is trained in Safer Recruitment.

8.2. Any staff involved in tendering processes should ensure that these are made on the basis of merit and in accordance with delegated financial limitations and the Finance policy.

8.3. No member of staff should be involved in any appointment or decision relating to discipline, promotion, or pay adjustments for any individual who is a relative or with whom they are in a close personal relationship.

8.4. All relationships of a business or private nature with external contractors, or potential contractors, should be made known to the headteacher or the Chair of the Governing Body (if the headteacher) and recorded on the school's Register of Interests and declared at FGB.

**9. Public Duty and Private Interest, and Conduct outside of Work**

9.1. Staff should not put themselves in a position where their duty to the school and their private interests conflict.

9.2 Staff must disclose any misconduct or alleged misconduct made against them, including any incidents arising from alternative or additional employment outside of this school. Disclosure must be made to the headteacher without delay, after which consideration will be given to the relevance or otherwise of the misconduct to their role.

**10. Other Employment/Private Work**

10.1 Should a full-time member of staff wish to seek a second employment, they should first discuss this with the headteacher.

10.2 Any external work undertaken must not bring the school into disrepute or conflict with the school's interest.

10.3 Any copyright created by a member of staff during the course of their employment in line with their duties becomes the property of the school.

**11. Dress and Appearance**

11.1 Staff should ensure that they are dressed decently, safely and appropriately for the tasks that they undertake and that they promote a positive and professional image.

11.2 The dress code does not discriminate in any way.

11.3 All staff are expected to dress in keeping with their professional status and as a good example to pupils and visitors.

The following **should not be worn** in school:

- Beach style flip flops.
- T-shirts with slogans or graphic words or images.
- Stretchers in ears and any piercings other than in the earlobe unless they are discrete.
- Mini-skirts and other clothing that is inappropriately revealing.
- Jeans other than on educational visits depending upon the activity. They should not be ripped or torn.
- Sportswear unless taking part in sporting activities with the children.

11.4 The school recognises the diversity of cultures and religions of its staff and will take a sensitive approach when this affects dress and uniform requirements. However, priority will be given to health and safety, security and other similar considerations of other staff, pupils and the school.

**12. Safeguarding and whistleblowing**

12.1 The school recognises its statutory and moral duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils and understands that staff play a vital role in meeting these responsibilities. Staff must be aware of their individual safeguarding responsibilities, including to provide a safe environment in which children can learn, to be aware of the signs of abuse and neglect, to identify children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm and to take appropriate action in such cases to prevent concerns from escalating.

12.2 All members of staff must be aware of the school's systems for supporting child safeguarding, including the role of the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

**The DSL in this school is Mrs Elizabeth Grainger and the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads are Mrs Melissa Jones, Mrs Georg Westhorpe and Mrs Heather Eggleton.**

12.3 Staff have a professional duty to report concerns about the welfare of a child. Any such concerns must be raised immediately to the school's DSL in the first instance, by inputting their concern onto the online portal MyConcern, for which each member of staff has their own login details. There should be no delay in reporting a concern verbally as well as written on MyConcern if there is risk of immediate serious harm to a child.

12.4 Staff are reminded of their duty to report safeguarding concerns about staff. Any low-level concerns or allegations must be raised without delay to the headteacher in the first instance (using

the Low-Level Concerns form). If the concern is about the headteacher and/or DSL, the concern should be directed to the Chair of Governors and the safeguarding governor.

12.5 Staff should be familiar with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection policy, which is available to all staff in the staffroom, website and MyConcern. All staff will receive appropriate child protection training and will be provided with guidance on child safeguarding as part of their induction.

12.6 The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 (as amended) gives protection to people who disclose reasonable concerns about serious misconduct or malpractice at work. This is sometimes known as Whistleblowing. The school will treat all matters of malpractice very seriously and allegations about such matters will be dealt with quickly and with appropriate confidentiality.

12.7 Staff should acknowledge their individual responsibilities in bringing matters of concern to the attention of senior leadership. This is particularly important where the welfare of children may be at risk.

12.8 A clear procedure is provided for staff to raise issues with the purpose of assisting in reducing the risk of serious concerns being mishandled, whether by the individual or by the school. Please refer to the Whistleblowing Policy for further details.

**13. Financial inducements, gifts, hospitality and sponsorship**

13.1 Staff should not seek or receive preferential rates for themselves by virtue of their dealings on behalf of the school.

13.2 Staff should not receive substantial gifts and will inform the headteacher if they are offered any.

13.3 Where staff provide gifts, they should ensure they are of insignificant value and given to all children equally.

13.4 There may be occasions where children or parents wish to pass small tokens of appreciation to staff, for example as an end of year 'thank you', and this is acceptable. However, it is unacceptable to receive gifts on a regular basis or of any significant value or to suggest to pupils that gifts would be appropriate or desired. Money should never be accepted as a personal gift, unless it is considered a donation to school funds.

**14. Use of School Property and Facilities**

14.1 The school's property and facilities (e.g. stationary, computers, photocopiers etc) may only be used for school business, unless permission for their private use has been granted.

**15. Publication of Books/Articles**

15.1 Staff must consult with the headteacher before publishing books, articles, letters, dissertations etc. where they are described as holding an appointment at the school.

**16. Disciplinary Action**

16.1 All staff should be aware that a failure to meet these standards of behaviour and conduct may result in disciplinary action, including dismissal.

**17. Health and Safety**

17.1 Staff must adhere to the School's Health and Safety policy and should ensure that they take every action to keep themselves and others in the school safe. Please refer to the Health and Safety policy in its entirety for expectations placed upon staff.

**18. Smoking, including e-cigarettes**

18.1 The smoking of cigarettes and e-cigarettes is strictly forbidden on the premises.

**19. Punctuality, Attendance, Absence Reporting and fitness for work**

19.1 Teaching staff are expected to be on site for sufficient time to ensure that the job is carried out effectively as stipulated in Teachers Standards. Support staff are expected to be on site in sufficient time to enable them to start in accordance with their hours.

19.2 If staff are absent as a result of illness, they must notify the headteacher by 7.00am on the day of their illness. This must be done by phone call or text message. This applies to all staff. In addition, staff should email the school office on the same day. Staff must notify the headteacher and the school office prior to 4.30pm as to whether they will be well enough for work the following day or not.

**20. General**

20.1 All staff must:

- Be familiar with and work in accordance with the school's policies and practices including in particular:
    - Safeguarding and Child Protection
    - Low-Level Concerns
    - KCSIE 2026 (at least part 1)
    - Promoting Positive Behaviour
    - E-Safety
    - Health and Safety
    - Whistleblowing
    - Staff Special Leave

- It is expected that staff will adhere to the statutory duties and/or best practice outlined within other policies that are available in the staff room, on MyConcern and on the school website.

**21. Employee Assistance Programme**

Emotional, health and social problems can affect many of us from time to time. They can cause great personal distress and affect our quality of life, both at home and at work. Staff wellbeing is very important to us at Brighstone Primary School and The Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) provides professional support and guidance for employees and immediate family experiencing issues linked with health and wellbeing, money worries, carers, consumer and legal, family and home, and work/life. For confidential, independent and unbiased information and guidance from a team of trained wellbeing and counselling practitioners, the telephone number is in the staff room.

**Declaration of receipt**

Staff are expected to read and sign this policy on MyConcern to recognise their statutory, legal and moral responsibilities.