



BRIDGEWATER PRIMARY SCHOOL: ADULT CODE OF CONDUCT 2025-26

This policy applies to all staff, regardless of their designation. 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. School staff and other adults within the school have an influential position in the school and are expected to act as role models for pupils and colleagues by consistently demonstrating high standards of behaviour.

We are required to establish procedures for the regulation of staff conduct under regulation 7 of [The School Staffing \(England\) Regulations 2009](#) and in line with the statutory safeguarding guidance in [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#).

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

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

Aims and Purpose

It is recognised that the majority of adults who work with children act professionally and aim to provide a safe and supportive environment which secures the well-being and very best outcomes for children in their care.

The Safer Working Guidance Practice, February 2022 states that:

The safeguarding culture of a school is, in part, exercised through the development of respectful, caring and professional relationships between adults and pupils and behaviour by the adult that demonstrates integrity, maturity and good judgement. (GSPW, 2022)

*The Safer Working Practices should assist staff to monitor their own standards and practice and reduce the risk of allegations being made against them. It is also recognised that not all people who work with children work as paid or contracted employees. The principles and guidance outlined in this document still apply and **should be followed by any person whose work brings them into contact with children.**' (GSPW, 2022.)*

Underpinning principles

- The welfare of the child is paramount
- Staff should understand their responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils.
- Pupils have a right to be safe and to be treated with respect and dignity. As trusted adults, all colleagues are expected to take reasonable steps to ensure their safety and well-being. Failure to do so may be regarded as professional misconduct.

- Staff are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions.
- Staff should work, and be seen to work, in an open and transparent way including self-reporting if their conduct or behaviour falls short of these guiding principles.
- Staff should acknowledge that deliberately invented/malicious allegations are extremely rare and that all concerns should be reported and recorded.
- Staff are accountable for the way in which they: exercise authority; manage risk; use resources; and safeguard children.
- Staff should discuss and/or take advice promptly from their line manager if they have acted in a way which may give rise to concern.
- Actions must be taken with the best interests of the children in mind. Staff must be prepared to discuss the circumstances that informed any action they have taken with the Head teacher or DSL.
- Staff should apply the same professional standards regardless of culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and sexual orientation.
- Staff should not consume or be under the influence of alcohol or any substance, including prescribed medication, which may affect their ability to care for children.
- Staff should be aware of and understand our school's Safeguarding and Child Protection policy/ arrangements for recording concerns including expected timescales, arrangements for managing allegations against staff, Behaviour Policy, our Adult Code of Conduct, as well as the Whistleblowing Policy and procedures related to these. (GSWP, 2022)

Introduction

In our capacity as School Staff members and Governors of our school, we have a duty to behave in a way that reflects well on the school, working at all times within the law and according to our School and West Northants Council's policies and procedures. At no time should public confidence in the school be put at risk by the actions or words of a member of school staff or governing body. It is also designed to raise awareness of '*illegal, unsafe, unprofessional and unwise behaviour.*' (GSWP, 2022) Volunteers are asked to make a similar commitment.

It is important that adults read, understand and sign the school's Adult Code of Conduct. If the behaviour of a member of staff falls below the standards in this code, the Head Teacher/Chair of Governors may take disciplinary action against you, including dismissal.

It is also important that staff are aware that this Code of Conduct relates to behaviour both in and outside of school:

Staff should be aware that their behaviour, either in or out of the workplace, could compromise their position within the work setting in relation to the protection of children, loss of trust and confidence, or bringing the employer into disrepute (GSWP, 2022.)

This Code of Conduct cannot cover every eventuality. Its purpose is to alert you to some areas of common agreement and potential risks of accusation, whilst working in a school environment.

It does not replace the general requirements of the law, common sense and good conduct.

The Code of Conduct sets out statements of appropriate conduct, with any guidance given below. 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. If any points are unclear or you are not sure of the appropriate action to take in a situation, whether or not it is covered in this code, please consult the Head Teacher.

The following document: *Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings – 2022* must be read in conjunction with this document.

[Professional and Personnel Relationships \(saferrecruitmentconsortium.org\)](https://saferrecruitmentconsortium.org)

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Adult Code of Conduct Agreement

1. We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children.

"All staff have a responsibility to be aware of systems within their school which support safeguarding." Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings –February 2022.

As a member of staff, governor or visitor we follow the school's safeguarding procedures as set out in the policy and supporting documentation, signed for by all staff members.

- We recognise that the welfare of the child is paramount and we understand our responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils.
- We recognise that all matters relating to child protection are confidential.
- The Head teacher or Senior Leaders for Child Protection will disclose any information about a child to other members of staff on a need-to-know basis only.
- All staff will be aware that they have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children.
- All staff must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets, which might compromise the child's safety or wellbeing.
- We will always undertake to share our intention to refer a child to Social Care with their parents /carers unless to do so could put the child at greater risk of harm or impede a criminal investigation.
- We are aware of and follow the guidelines of the Prevent agenda for preventing radicalisation and extremism.
- We uphold the British Values, which are democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. See BPS British Values Statement – updated annually.
- We will attend training, read and sign for safeguarding documents, including *Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025*, *What to do if you're worried a child is being abused - Advice for practitioners, 2015* and *Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings- February 2022*. We will read and ask if we do not understand anything or need further clarification.
- We are familiar with the key definitions regarding sexual harassment and sexual violence between children, including child-on-child abuse (formerly called peer-on-peer abuse) from the guidance (KCSIE) and understand some of the ways we can minimise the risk of this occurring and what to do if it occurs.
- We understand that we are responsible for our own actions and behaviour (both in and out of school) and should avoid any conduct, which would lead any reasonable person to question our motivation and intentions.

- We understand that we should work, and be seen to work, in an open and transparent way including self-reporting on Confide if our conduct or behaviour falls short of these principles.
- We understand that we should apply the same professional standards regardless of culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and sexual orientation.
- We have read and understood all required school policies.
- In line with Keeping Children Safe in Education, we understand the requirement to disclose any relationship or association (in the real world or online) that may impact on the school's ability to safeguard pupils.

Any queries or concerns **MUST** be followed up in the appropriate way and with the appropriate members of staff.

The Designated Senior Leader for Child Protection is Frances Troop under the direction of the Head teacher: Alison Harvey.

Deputy DSLs are Alison Harvey (Head Teacher) Nicola Redden (SENDCo/Inclusion/Online Safety) Emma Ottaway (Learning Mentor/Early Help) and Jessica Wise (Early Phase Leader/Mental Health Lead)

We will speak with a DSL/DDSL if we have any concerns about any of the children in our care and use the school's online safeguarding tool, **My Concern**, to record any concern **professionally, accurately and promptly**.

Confide is our online reporting tool for **concerns about colleagues or for self-reporting**. Confide is used for recording and case-managing allegations and concerns against staff members or others who are working or volunteering in the school. If there are concerns about a colleague, we will speak to the Head Teacher immediately, if we have concerns about the Head Teacher we will speak to the Chair of Governors.

The Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy is updated annually, is available on the school website and will be distributed to staff via email.

Any safeguarding documents that staff are requested to read will be sent via email. Emails will also be sent to share updated information, briefings and other safeguarding information. **It is the staff member's duty to read these emails, act on the advice contained in them and ask if they have any questions or queries.**

2. We know and follow the school aims and values at all times.

These are reflected in the Aims, Values and Ethos statements, with yearly priorities being shared with staff from the School Development Plan. These are displayed in the school and any member of staff may request a personal copy from the Head Teacher.

3. We will respect confidentiality at all times.

- We will not pass on to **anyone** information about any child or adult unless there is a need for them to have this information in the course of their work. This will be agreed beforehand with the Head Teacher or a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

- Staff should never use confidential or personal information about a pupil or her/his family for their own, or others advantage (including that of partners, friends, relatives or other organisations).
- Information must never be used to intimidate, humiliate, or embarrass the child.
- Confidential information should never be used casually in conversation or shared with any person other than on a need-to-know basis. In circumstances where the pupil's identity does not need to be disclosed the information should be used anonymously.
- We will conform to the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018 and will take all reasonable steps to ensure that the loss, destruction, inaccuracy or disclosure of information does not occur as a result of our actions. This includes information relating to school business and pupil data. Children's names and any records, which may identify pupil or staff information must be stored securely via the Staff Drive on the One Drive/ Teams. We will ask for advice if we are unsure of procedures around Data protection and information sharing.
- We will not disclose personal or financial information about any other member of staff or other adult involved with the school to any unauthorised person, external organisation or agency without the express consent of the individual concerned or that of the Head Teacher.
- We will not use information obtained in the course of our duties to the detriment of the School or for personal gain or benefit; nor will we impart this information to others who might use it in such a way. This includes the use of school records, planning, resources and other school documents, without the school's written permission.
- Confidential information belonging to the School will not be disclosed to any person not authorised to receive it.

4. We will treat others equally well, avoiding all forms of discrimination.

The same professional standards should always be applied regardless of culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief, pregnancy/maternity, age, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnership or sexual orientation.

The Equality Duty states our school's commitment to equality for all stakeholders. This is available on the school website and is updated annually. See also the British Values statement and the Equality Duty.

5. We will be good role models for children.

Our behaviour at all times of the school day and in all locations within the school will reflect our professional standards, as detailed in the Teaching Standards (updated 2021) and the Job Families from the local authority, Level 2 and Level 4 as appropriate.

We have a professional responsibility to inform an appropriate person if we believe that a colleague is behaving in a way which compromises the safety or well-being of any child or group of children. See also Section 20 and 21.

We understand that no smoking is acceptable on or adjacent to the school site, where it can be viewed by children.

We will not consume or be under the influence of alcohol or any substance, including prescribed medication, which may affect our ability to care for the children or work with our colleagues.

6. We will be punctual and fully prepared for our role.

We understand that punctuality is required daily unless there is an exceptional circumstance which has been discussed with the Head Teacher or, in her absence, a Senior Leader. Starting times for each part of the school day, including after break and lunch, reflect the time when staff should be in the classrooms ready to support learning. Some lunchtimes may be staggered to support nurture lunches or to support individual children across the buildings; these will be organised by the year group leaders, in conjunction with the SENDCo.

Absence must be shared as soon as practically possible, by sending an email to the absence line, plus a text message to the Headteacher. absence@bridgewaterprimary.net This ensures that the correct colleagues are aware and can support cover. It is also the absent person's responsibility to contact their year group leader or line manager. Any queries about the Local Authority protocol regarding absence can be obtained from the School Business Manager or the HR Administrator.

7. We will respect and safeguard the school's property and resources.

We are committed to ensuring that resources are used carefully and that requests for new equipment and resources are in keeping with the School Development Plan and other school priorities. Stationery and other consumables will be used responsibly and waste avoided. School orders **must** be signed for by the appropriate member of the Senior Leadership Team. We must all be aware of the need to work within the budget and obtain purchases, which are best value for money.

We understand that resources and documents on the One Drive/Teams are the property of the school. We will not pass on or copy these resources without first asking permission. If we leave employment at the school, we understand that resources cannot be copied and shared within another setting, without first gaining permission from the Head Teacher. All documents must be credited to the school if permission to share is agreed.

8. We will engage in a professional dialogue when our ideas and opinions differ.

Every member of staff has a line manager who will direct and support them. If ideas and opinions differ, concerns must be raised appropriately at a mutually agreeable time and place in a polite and respectful manner. If we have a concern, we understand that we need to share it via the appropriate pathways, so that it can be addressed without spreading negativity and potentially false information. Decisions are always made in the best interests of the children and we are aware that sometimes it is not appropriate for all staff to know all information for confidentiality reasons.

9. We will speak and listen with care to children and adults.

Our manner of speaking and listening to adults and children will reflect our professional positions at all times. We will show empathy and understanding to all children and other stakeholders and listen to their views whilst sharing the bigger picture. Written records must reflect our positive, supportive approach. We will read and follow the school's Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policies and procedures. We will follow the Behaviour Policy, including the stages, and use Restorative Approach when working with children.

10. We will dress modestly and appropriately for working with children.

Whilst a person's dress and appearance are matters of personal choice and self-expression, we understand that adults should dress in ways that are professional, appropriate and safe for their role and this may need to be different from dress when not at work. It must be absent of any political slogans or statements. Professional dress standards are applicable when working on site and when online, for example, a Teams meeting.

Please ensure:

- Tattoos are covered wherever possible.
- Facial piercings are removed wherever possible.

No jeans are acceptable on a normal working day. Extremes of fashion, including in hair, should be avoided. Trouser styles should be professional. Shorts in warm weather should be of a professional style and to the knee. PE kits, including shorts, must be appropriate for the working environment of the school and only worn on days when adults will be engaged in teaching or supporting in PE.

11. We will follow Health and Safety guidelines.

Please refer to the Health and Safety policy.

12. We are aware of the guidelines for giving food

We are aware that food must not be given to a child that has not been previously agreed by parents/carers. This will help to reduce the risk of allergic reactions and avoid inappropriate food being given that is not in accordance with the different faiths of our pupils and families. Food cannot be used as a reward without permission from parents/carers. Class lists are given out that detail allergies and medical needs, as far as they are known, but please seek guidance if unsure.

13. We are aware of the guidelines for giving medicines.

We will follow the guidelines and only administer medicines to children when the School Office holds the appropriate forms, signed with clear directions from parents/carers. All medicine must be in a bottle with the child's name and we will check the name, date and dosage before administering it. We are aware of the children who have Health Care Plans in our year groups. A trained member of staff in First Aid can support any member of staff in this. Please see the Supporting Children with Medical Conditions Policy and the First Aid Policy.

We are aware that any personal medication, such as painkillers, must be stored kept away from the reach of children.

14. We are aware of the guidelines regarding transportation of children in private cars

The guidelines that we agree to follow are stated below;

- Adults will only transport a pupil in their car, as part of school duties, if they have provided the school with evidence of an appropriate driving licence. Car insurance is held by the school for these purposes.
- Adults will transport pupils, in relation to school activities only, in their private car with the knowledge and consent of the Head Teacher and the agreement of the child's parent.
- No adult will, as part of their general school duties, transport a child in their car without another responsible adult (e.g. parent, member of staff) **or** other children present.
- In an emergency when children are taken to hospital in a staff car there will always be another member of staff present. Depending upon the nature of the emergency, permission from parents may not be requested before transportation.
- The normal rules of the road apply, for example, all children being transported should be wearing a seat belt and using a child seat as appropriate.

15. We understand how to manage social contact outside of the workplace

It is acknowledged that staff may have genuine friendships and social contact with parents of pupils, independent of their professional relationship, for example, if they are also parents at the school. Staff should, however, also be aware that professionals who sexually harm children often seek to establish relationships and contact outside of the workplace with both the child and their parents, in order to 'groom' the adult and the child and/or create opportunities for sexual abuse.

This means that staff should:

- always share and gain approval of any planned social contact with pupils or parents
- advise SLT of any regular social contact they have with a pupil which could give rise to concern or speculation
- refrain from sending personal communication to pupils or parents unless first agreed with the Head Teacher.

We understand that if a pupil or parent seeks to establish social contact, or if this occurs coincidentally, we must exercise our professional judgement to ensure that professional boundaries are maintained. This also applies to social contacts made through outside interests or the staff member's own family.

16. We are aware of the guidelines on the use of "Personal Living Space."

We understand that no child or young person should be invited into the home of an adult who works with them, unless the reason for this has been shared and agreed with the parents/carers and the Head Teacher. We should also not visit children in their homes unless this has an agreed purpose and has been authorised by the Head Teacher or DSL. Home visits as part of induction into Reception are conducted with understanding of our Safeguarding duties and take place with two school staff members together. See also Section 19.

17. We are aware of the need to be open and transparent with receiving or giving gifts or rewards.

The Head Teacher shares with staff school protocols in this area. We are aware to be cautious around the receiving of gifts to ensure that it is not construed as a bribe by others or leads the giver

to expect preferential treatment. There are occasions when pupils or parents wish to pass small tokens of appreciation to staff, for example, at Christmas or as a thank-you at the end of the academic year and this is usually acceptable. However, it is unacceptable to receive gifts on a regular basis or of any significant value. If you are unsure, please speak with the Head Teacher or School Business Manager or the HR administrator for advice.

There may be times when the Head Teacher decides that it is not appropriate to accept gifts for a given reason (for example, within the previous pandemic) and this must be respected and adhered to by all staff.

Similarly, it is inadvisable to give personal gifts to pupils or their families. This could be interpreted as a gesture either to bribe or groom. If a gift is given in an extraordinary circumstance, the Head Teacher/ SLT should be informed and it be agreed **beforehand**, so it is open and transparent.

Any reward given to a pupil should be in accordance with agreed practice, consistent with the school's behaviour policy.

Favouritism: We will exercise care when selecting children for specific activities, jobs or privileges in order to avoid perceptions of favouritism or injustice. Similar care should be exercised when pupils are unable to participate in an activity. Methods of selection should always be subject to clear, fair, agreed criteria.

18. We understand the boundaries of professional relationships with parents/carers.

Some staff may, as part of their professional role, be required to support a parent or carer. We understand that we must keep professional boundaries at all times and this should be reflected in the way that we interact with parents/carers, our approach and our manner of addressing them. Professional terms/manners of address should always be used, whether face to face or via a telephone call. Over familiarity or expressions of endearment should be avoided at all times to prevent confusion over the type and scope of the relationship.

If any adult/parent/carer comes to overly depend upon the staff member or seeks contact or support outside of their professional role this should be discussed with SLT immediately and an alternative member of staff will take over this support.

19. We understand how to conduct a home visit

There may be occasions in response to an urgent, planned or specific situation or job role, where it is necessary to make one-off or regular home visits.

If a home visit is needed, we understand we need to follow appropriate policies. If a home visit is planned, we understand that we should:

- agree the purpose for any home visit with our line manager.
- attend with a colleague.
- avoid unannounced visits wherever possible.
- ensure there is visual access and/or an open door in one-to-one situations (these should be avoided wherever possible.)

The assessment should include an evaluation of any known factors regarding the pupil, parents/carers and any others living in the household. We will give consideration to any

circumstances which might render a staff member becoming more vulnerable to an allegation being made e.g. hostility, child protection concerns, complaints or grievances.

20. We are aware of the safe and appropriate use of ICT and the internet

We understand that all adults working in our school community are trained and made aware of the issues around technology and the acceptable use of ICT. It is not appropriate for staff to take pictures of the children for their personal use. When using photographs for school purposes, we understand that school records must be checked to ensure images are not used of children those parents have refused permission for information/images to be shared. These records are held in the School Office.

Social media, such as Facebook or Instagram, will be used responsibly and with high privacy settings, as we are aware that our online profile reflects on our professional standing and the wider school.

School devices, such as laptops and iPads are to be used in line with the **Acceptable Use Policy** and no inappropriate websites will be accessed.

Mobile phones will be turned off or switched to silent during contracted hours. Phones must not be accessed during lessons, unless in exceptional circumstances and/or by prior arrangement with the Head teacher. Staff should only use their mobile phones in the offices, staff room and PPA room.

Mobile phones and other electronic devices with imaging and image sharing capabilities will be locked away in the Nursery and Reception.

From September 2025, no child will be allowed to bring a smartphone onto the school site. Phones are only allowed for children in Year 5 and 6 and these will be call/message only. In line with the new policy, we understand that we will remain aware of phone usage by pupils and will immediately inform our year group leader or a member of the SLT if we witness a breach of the policy.

Filtering and Monitoring: We understand and are aware of filtering and monitoring processes in place, which are detailed in the Online Safety Policy, and we understand the importance of preventing the misuse or access to inappropriate materials.

We understand the importance of reporting abuse, misuse or access to inappropriate materials and know how to do so.

Please refer to the Acceptable Use Policy for further information on guidelines for staff, children and parents, as well as the Online Safety Policy. Training is updated annually and is available as a refresher for any staff member who requests it.

21. We are aware of the protocols of working online with children and families

If, in the future, if some aspects of teaching and learning need to be conducted online, we understand that we must ensure we demonstrate safe and responsible online behaviours. These will follow school, local and national guidelines.

We understand that communication with children both in the 'real' world and through web based and telecommunication interactions should take place within professional boundaries set out in the

Acceptable Use Policy, the Safeguarding Policy and with regard to the directions of the Head Teacher. This includes, but is not limited to, the use of computers, tablets, phones, texts, e-mails, instant messages, social media such as Facebook and Twitter, chat-rooms, forums, blogs, websites, digital cameras, videos, web-cams and other hand-held devices.

As a staff member, we will not request or respond to any personal information from children other than which may be necessary in our professional role. We will ensure that all communications are appropriate, open and transparent.

We understand that, when working online with children and families, or with other professionals in meetings, we will model professional standards in dress and behaviour.

We also understand that the staff member will be the moderator in any online learning or interaction and if we have concerns regarding the suitability of dress, setting or behaviour of a child or family member we may need to end the online interaction. We will contact our line manager or a senior leader with these concerns immediately.

22. We are aware of the guidelines regarding privacy when speaking to or working with children

- As a general rule, adults should not speak or work with a child alone in a room with the door closed. If an adult needs to speak to or work with a child out of the earshot or sight of other children, they should ask another adult, (who also follows the school's expectations regarding confidentiality), or who is related to the child, to be present.
- If tutoring or additional support is taking place on a 1:1 basis this should be positioned within view and hearing of another adult.
- In circumstances where quiet or confidentiality is essential, the work or conversation should take place in a room with a window in the door or wall allowing others to see into the room.
- The above rules apply to the administration of first aid and in all other circumstances except in situations which the adult believes may be life-threatening.
- Toilet areas can be subject to unacceptable behaviour and adults may legitimately enter them in these or other work-related circumstances. When entering adults should knock and warn pupils, leaving a reasonable pause before entering the toilets to allow children time to cover up. Alternatively, a child may be sent into the toilets to check that they are empty before the adult enters.
- In known or agreed cases an adult may be present to support a child requiring additional assistance with toileting, a second adult should be present/nearby as a safeguarding precaution.
- If attending swimming lessons similar precautions (warn and pause) will be taken to ensure the privacy and safety of children changing before or after lessons.

All staff are likely at some point to witness actions which need to be confidentially dealt with. For example, where a pupil is bullied by another pupil (or by a member of staff), this needs to be reported and actioned in accordance with the appropriate school procedure. It must not be discussed outside the school, through any form of communication (including social media), nor with colleagues in the school, except with a **senior** member of staff with the appropriate role and authority to deal with the matter. Parents and carers will be informed as soon as possible.

Staff have an obligation to share with the DSLs any information, which gives rise to concern about the safety or welfare of a pupil/student. Staff must never promise a child that they will not act on information that is given to them by the child.

23. We understand what is considered appropriate physical contact between adults and children

In order to maintain an appropriate professional relationship, we understand that physical contact between adults and pupils should be kept to a minimum. Young children may be comforted when distressed and may initiate physical contact in other circumstances, but adults should always be aware that innocent physical contact may be misinterpreted by observers or by the recipient. We understand that we should avoid putting ourselves in potentially compromising situations by observing the following rules:

- Physical control or restraint should only take place by colleagues trained and up-to-date with Team Teach or a similar recognised physical restraint qualification, unless there is an immediate safety concern, then it is minimum hold for minimum of time and immediate help should be requested.
- Intimate touches, including kisses, should never be given by adults to pupils. Children who give them to adults must be kindly, but firmly, told that it is inappropriate.
- Some children, such as children with additional needs related to social interaction for example, may persist with this behaviour throughout primary school. In such circumstances staff should ensure that other adults are aware, continue to discourage the behaviour in a kind but firm way, and involve the parents in working towards more appropriate social behaviour.
- Children with additional needs or complex SEND may require more physical contact than other children to assist them within the school day, but this will be known, agreed and consistently carried out and transparent to all.
- Where a child is distressed or hurt, they may seek some sort of physical comfort. Adults should confine this to the *minimum required* to comfort the child, for example taking the child's hand, putting a hand on their shoulder. Younger children may actively seek reassurance, but the aim of the adult must always be to minimise such contact and it should never take place privately.
- Extra caution may be required where it is known that a child may have been subject to previous abuse or neglect, where a child may either become distressed by touch or seek inappropriate physical contact. Staff members will support the child to understand boundaries with care and sensitivity.
- It is inappropriate to lift up or carry a child, unless this is part of an agreed Personal Evaluation Plan and the threat is real (not a drill) or is supporting an injured child when this is appropriate, or when supporting a child with additional needs with an agreed protocol.
- Physical contact may be suggested as part of instruction, for example in PE. Whenever practicable, demonstration or instruction should take place without physical contact to maintain social distance. Where it is needed, for example, with children with SEN, who require hand-over-hand support, it should be for the shortest time possible, with minimal contact.

Toileting and Intimate Care: We understand the need at all times to act with regard to a child's dignity and safety and with an understanding of the safeguarding of staff. Pupils should be encouraged to act as independently as possible to undertake as much of their own personal care as is possible and practicable. When assistance is required, this should normally be undertaken by a nominated member of staff, unless circumstances prevent this (for example, absence or other availability.) An adult managing the intimate care of a child should ensure that another appropriate adult is in the vicinity and that, wherever possible, they are visible and/or audible. Whenever possible, intimate care should be provided by a staff member that the child knows and is comfortable with.

A Toileting Plan should be kept of all intimate and personal care tasks and any procedures needed, which has been shared and agreed with parents/carers. Any vulnerability, including those that may arise from a physical or learning difficulty should be considered when formulating the individual pupil's care/toileting plan. The views of parents, carers and the pupil, taking into account their age and understanding, should be actively sought in formulating the plan and in the necessary regular reviews of these arrangements.

24. We understand the need to use appropriate language at all times

- Adults will always model the best use of language, in line with school values.
- Adults will not use inappropriate language at or in the presence of pupils.
- Adults will be polite and use respectful language with and in the presence of pupils.
- When speaking to children, we always consider how we would expect to be spoken to ourselves.
- When speaking about children, we will be professional at all times, in both words and expressions. If we have a concern, we will address it appropriately with the relevant line manager or senior leader.
- When managing inappropriate behaviour adults will ensure their response is fair, proportionate and consistent and meets the guidelines of the Behaviour Policy. Staff are mindful of and sensitive to factors both inside and outside of the school or setting which may impact on a pupil's behaviour and will follow the Behaviour Policy and seek advice from the Headteacher or a member of the Inclusion Team if needed.
- No child should hear any staff member speaking to them or with others in a way that does not uphold the values of the school.
- Adults will avoid sarcasm. Many children do not understand it and some may feel hurt or worried by it. Care will be taken when "joking" with the children, so the meaning is not misconstrued or felt to be unkind. This includes the use of inappropriate facial expressions, such as eye-rolling.

25. We are aware that children may develop an infatuation or a crush on an adult.

All staff need to recognise that it is not uncommon for pupils to be strongly attracted to a member of staff and/or develop a 'crush' or infatuation. They should make every effort to ensure that their own behaviour cannot be brought into question, does not appear to encourage this and be aware that such infatuations may carry a risk of their words or actions being misinterpreted.

Any member of staff who receives a report, overhears something, or otherwise notices any sign, however small or seemingly insignificant, that a child has become or may be becoming infatuated with either themselves or a colleague, should immediately report this to the Head teacher or a DSL/senior leader. In this way appropriate early intervention can be taken which can prevent escalation and avoid hurt, embarrassment or distress for those concerned.

The Head teacher, DSL or senior leader should give careful thought to those circumstances where the staff member, pupil and their parents/carers should be spoken to and should ensure a plan to manage the situation is put in place. This plan should respond sensitively to the child and staff member and maintain the dignity of all. This plan should involve all parties, be robust and regularly monitored and reviewed.

26. Curriculum

Occasionally, areas of the curriculum can include or raise subject matter which could be interpreted as having a political or sensitive nature, such as within PSHE.

We understand that care should be taken to ensure that resource materials cannot be misinterpreted and clearly relate to the learning outcomes identified by the class teacher. This can be supported by developing ground rules with pupils to ensure sensitive topics can be discussed in a safe learning environment. Such lessons should be carefully considered and particular areas of sensitivity should be highlighted.

We understand that on occasion the curriculum can sometimes include or lead to unplanned questions/discussion about subject matter of a sensitive nature. Responding to children's questions requires careful judgement and staff should do this away from the rest of the class, in line with school policy. This also includes responding to questions put into the 'Ask It Box'. If unsure please staff will take guidance from the Designated Safeguarding Lead/ PSHE leader.

Care should be taken to comply with all school policies, the requirements of the British values, and the Relationships education (RSHE) policy, promoting healthy relationships including an understanding of consent. It should be noted that parents have the right to withdraw their children from all or any part of the sex education provided, but not from the Science national curriculum.

We also understand we are responsible for checking the materials that pupils access in the library, the class book areas and other resources, to ensure they are reviewed, age appropriate and appropriate within the context of the year group.

27. We understand the procedures regarding making allegations against other members of staff. ("Whistleblowing")

These are contained in the Whistleblowing Policy, available from the school office. Further information is available on notices within school detailing the steps involved. The head teacher is the only point of contact for these concerns. If the concern is about the head teacher, the concern should be raised with the Chair of Governors.

28. Allegations that may meet the harm threshold

We will be aware of where allegations may meet the harm threshold. This is based on '*Section 1: Allegations that may meet the harm threshold*' in Part 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2024.

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. Please see the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

29. Low-level concerns about members of staff

We understand that as a member of staff, we should share any low-level concerns we have using the reporting procedures set out in the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy.

+We also understand that we should self-refer, using Confide, if we find ourselves in a situation that could be misinterpreted. If we are not sure whether behaviour would be deemed a low-level concern, we understand that it is best to report it, so appropriate action and support can be given.

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 Adult 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 reports will be handled in a responsive, sensitive and proportionate way and allegations addressed with common sense and judgement.

By understanding what low-level concerns are, unprofessional behaviour will be quickly 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 demonstrated, monitored and reinforced by all staff, while minimising the risk of abuse.

30. Making a Professional Judgement

There may be occasions and circumstances in which adults have to make decisions or take actions in the best interests of the child, which could contravene the guidance given or where no guidance exists. Individuals are expected to make judgements about their behaviour in order to secure the best interests and welfare of the children in their charge. Such judgements should always be recorded and shared with a member of the Senior Leadership Team and with the parent/carer. In undertaking actions that fall within the best interests of the child, individuals will be seen to be acting reasonably.

31. Further information *(sent out by email):*

Keeping children safe in education -Statutory guidance for schools and colleges – July 2025, followed by September 2025 updates

Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings, 2022

Please also refer to the:

Teaching Standards for Teachers – 2021:

Teachers must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they teach and maintain high standards in their own attendance and punctuality. Teachers must have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities. Teachers' Standards July 2021. p.14

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1007716/Teachers_Standards_2021_update.pdf

Professional Standards for Teaching Assistants 2016, states that:

Teaching assistants should uphold public trust in the education profession by:

having proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they work as professional members of staff, demonstrating positive attitudes, values and behaviours to develop and sustain effective relationships with the school community ...and upholding values consistent with those required from teachers by respecting individual differences and cultural diversity (p.7)

<https://www.unison.org.uk/content/uploads/2016/06/Teaching-Assistant-Professional-Standards.pdf>

Please see complete documents for full guidance.

A copy of the Job Family document can be obtained from the School Business Manager.

School policies and documentation mentioned in the Adult Code of Conduct can be requested from the HR Administrator, Emma Watson.

Policies referenced and/or relevant to this document are:

- Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, including Prevent.
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- The British Values Statement (Values of Our Society)
- The Public Sector Equality Duty



Appendix 1

An aide-memoire for staff

When we speak to others we will:

- use a positive statement rather than a negative one so that children can learn what we expect of them in any situation.
- use a calm tone of voice at all times, to explain something to or instruct the children, so that they can follow our words without feeling threatened or uncomfortable.
- avoid using sarcastic words or phrases as these demean children and prevent them from developing high self-esteem.
- understand behaviour can be an indication of unmet need and work within the school's policy and procedures to support the child to manage and self-regulate.
- speak respectfully to other adults at all times, even if we disagree with them.
- speak to others in the appropriate way, at the appropriate time and place

As professionals we will:

- avoid workplace gossip and negativity as it breeds resentment and becomes a barrier to effective communication and collaboration. We all have a duty to take active steps to divert conversations away from this if we come across it.
- maintain confidentiality about anything that we see or hear in the school, so that parents and children can trust us, and as a way of showing respect to our fellow professionals.
- work as part of a team, contributing as well as learning from others and helping to build up a strong workforce so that we can provide the best possible learning opportunities for the children.
- work within the school's policies and practices, so that what we do is consistent with what has been agreed between all members of the staff and the governors.
- behave in a positive way despite any personal problems that we may have, especially in front of the children
- treat pupils with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect and at all times and in all places observing proper boundaries appropriate to a teacher's professional position
- have regard to low level concerns about colleagues and allegations which could meet the harm threshold
- have regard for the need to safeguard pupils' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions
- treat everyone with respect and show tolerance of 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
- have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which we work, and maintain high standards in our own attendance, dress and punctuality.
- maintain the same high standards online in our use of social media, understanding the need for high privacy settings and that the content of the profiles reflects our professional standing as a member of the school.



Adult Code of Conduct for Bridgewater Primary School Agreement

2025-26

A sign-in sheet will be sent to you via Parent Mail forms, by signing this you agree the following:

I confirm that I have read and understood The Adult Code of Conduct for Bridgewater Primary School 2025-26, including Appendix 1 and agree to abide by its content.

I confirm that I have read and understood the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and any updated versions sent to me/ available via the website.

I further confirm I have read and understood:

- Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings - May 2022
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 Part One /Annex A (condensed version of Part One) and Annex B – this will include the July version and the following September version.
- Working Together to Safeguard Children, December 2023

and other signposted safeguarding documents and agree to abide by the content therein.

I will read any Safeguarding briefings and email updates as sent to me throughout the course of the year and ask if I have any questions or concerns.

I am aware that breaches of the law and other professional guidelines could result in disciplinary action being taken.

Disciplinary Action

Any breach of this Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action, which could result in dismissal, in accordance with the Local Authority Disciplinary Policy 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 Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA).

Please keep this document for your personal reference.

If you require assistance with the sign-in form, please contact Michelle Martin or Emma Watson.