

Banks Road Primary School



Staff Code of Conduct

Provenance/ Author	Person(s) Responsible	Version	Reviewers	Effective Date	Recommended Review Date	Distribution
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1. Aims, scope and principles

This policy sets out the standards of conduct that we expect all staff to follow at Banks Road Primary School. By establishing clear expectations, we aim to ensure that our school remains a safe, inclusive and respectful environment where everyone can thrive.

Many of the principles in this code of conduct are based on the Teachers' Standards. All staff at Banks Road – including teachers, support staff, governors and volunteers – are expected to act with personal and professional integrity, and to consistently demonstrate high standards of behaviour.

Staff at Banks Road hold a position of trust and influence. As such, they are expected to act as positive role models for pupils, upholding the values of our school community. These include our Banks Road Values of respect, determination, trust, positivity and friendship, as well as a commitment to every child's success.

We expect all teachers to act in accordance with the personal and professional behaviours set out in the Teachers' Standards. Support staff and volunteers are also expected to uphold the same high expectations in their conduct and interactions.

Failure to follow this code of conduct may result in disciplinary action, in line with our staff disciplinary procedures.

In some cases, minor breaches of this Code of Conduct may be addressed through informal management advice. This approach allows concerns to be raised and resolved promptly without initiating formal disciplinary action. A record of such advice may be kept and referred to if similar issues arise in the future. Repeated or more serious breaches may lead to formal disciplinary procedures, as outlined in the school's Disciplinary Policy.

This code is not exhaustive. Where situations arise that are not specifically covered, staff are expected to use their professional judgement and act in the best interests of the school and its pupils.

2. Legislation and guidance

As a maintained school, we are required to establish procedures for the regulation of staff conduct under regulation 7 of The School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009.

This code of conduct is also in line with the statutory safeguarding guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE). It covers key areas including:

- Low-level concerns
- Allegations against staff
- Whistle blowing
- Acceptable use of technologies (including mobile devices)
- Staff/pupil relationships and communications, including the use of social media

This policy is aligned with, compliant with and informed by:

Legislation

1. **The School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009** – Regulation of staff conduct in maintained schools.
2. **Education Act 2002** – Section 175: Duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
3. **Data Protection Act 2018** – Governs the handling of personal and sensitive data.
4. **UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)** – Sets out lawful bases for processing and sharing safeguarding data.
5. **Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998** – Protects whistleblowers acting in good faith.
6. **Equality Act 2010** – Prohibits discrimination and promotes equality in the workplace.

7. **Human Rights Act 1998** – Protects dignity, privacy, and freedom from degrading treatment.
8. **Sexual Offences Act 2003** – Defines abuse of position of trust and related offences.
9. **Prevent Duty (Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015)** – Duty to prevent radicalisation and extremism.

Statutory and Non-Statutory Guidance

1. **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)** – Core safeguarding guidance for schools.
2. **Guidance for Safer Working Practice for those working with children and young people in education settings** – Professional boundaries and conduct.
3. **Working Together to Safeguard Children** – Multi-agency safeguarding responsibilities.
4. **Teachers’ Standards (DfE)** – Professional and personal conduct expectations.
5. **Online Safety Guidance (DfE)** – Expectations for safe use of digital technologies.
6. **Whistleblowing for Employees (Gov.uk)** – Procedures for reporting concerns.
7. **Protect (formerly Public Concern at Work)** – Independent whistleblowing advice.
8. **Local Authority and Local Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP) procedures** – Local safeguarding protocols.

3. General obligations

All staff at Banks Road Primary School are expected to set a positive example for pupils and the wider school community. In doing so, they will:

- Maintain high standards of attendance and punctuality
- Use language that is appropriate and professional at all times
- Treat pupils, colleagues, parents/carers, and others with dignity, courtesy and respect
- Show tolerance and respect for the rights and beliefs of others
- Uphold and promote fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
- Avoid expressing personal beliefs in ways that exploit pupils’ vulnerability or might lead them to break the law
- Understand and operate within the statutory frameworks that apply to their role
- Adhere to the Teachers’ Standards (where applicable) and demonstrate the personal and professional behaviours expected of all staff

All staff have a responsibility to contribute to a working environment where everyone is treated fairly and with dignity. This includes upholding an inclusive culture that is free from harassment, bullying, discrimination, and disrespectful behaviour, regardless of role, background, or personal characteristics.

Staff have a responsibility to challenge inappropriate behaviour between pupils, including behaviour that may be harmful, discriminatory, or abusive, and to act where they have any concerns.

Where concerns arise between colleagues, staff are expected to resolve issues through open, respectful dialogue in the first instance. Where appropriate, informal resolution or mediation may be offered to support positive working relationships and prevent escalation.

These expectations apply to all staff, including teaching and support staff, volunteers, governors, and any adults working on behalf of the school.

4. Safeguarding

All staff at Banks Road Primary School have a duty to safeguard pupils from harm and to report any concerns they may have. This includes concerns about physical, emotional or sexual abuse, neglect, or any other safeguarding issue. Staff must ensure that all safeguarding concerns, discussions and actions are recorded accurately, clearly and in a timely manner, in line with the school's safeguarding procedures.

Staff must also be aware of contextual safeguarding. This means recognising that risks to pupils may arise from outside the home or school environment, including peer relationships, online activity, or community influences. Staff should consider these wider factors when assessing concerns and reporting safeguarding issues.

Staff must maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' and demonstrate professional curiosity. This means respectfully questioning and exploring concerns, rather than making assumptions, and being alert to indicators that may suggest a child is at risk of harm.

Staff also have a duty to escalate safeguarding concerns if they believe a child remains at risk or if appropriate action has not been taken. This includes making a referral directly to Children's Services if necessary, and informing the Designated Safeguarding Lead of any action taken.

Staff must not allow concerns about sharing information to prevent them from taking action to safeguard a child. Information should be shared proactively and as early as possible where it is necessary to protect a child's welfare, in line with safeguarding procedures.

Staff must familiarise themselves with the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, the Prevent Duty, and all relevant safeguarding procedures. They must ensure they understand the processes to follow if they have concerns about a child's welfare or safety.

Our safeguarding policies are available in the staff room, from the school office, and on the school website. New staff will receive copies as part of their induction.

4.1 Allegations that may meet the harm threshold

This section applies to all cases in which it is alleged that anyone working in the school (including supply teachers, volunteers, or contractors) 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
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children – including behaviour outside of school

Any such allegation will be dealt with promptly, fairly and consistently, in a way that ensures effective child protection while supporting the individual subject to the allegation. A designated case manager will lead the investigation – this will usually be the Headteacher, or the chair of governors if the allegation concerns the Headteacher. Where an allegation may lead to disciplinary action, the school will follow the procedures outlined in the Staff Disciplinary Policy, including the investigation process and, where necessary, the use of suspension. Suspension will only be considered where it is necessary to protect the integrity of the investigation or the safety of pupils or staff, and will be managed in line with the school's Suspension Protocol.

4.2 Low-level concerns about members of staff

A low-level concern is any behaviour by a member of staff that does not meet the harm threshold but is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct. This may include behaviour that causes a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt'. Examples include:

- Being over-friendly with children
- Having favourites
- Taking photographs of children on a personal device
- Engaging in one-to-one activities where they cannot easily be seen
- Humiliating pupils

Low-level concerns may relate to conduct both inside and outside of school. All staff are expected to report any low-level concerns using the procedures outlined in our safeguarding policy. Staff are also encouraged to self-refer if they find themselves in a situation that could be misinterpreted.

All reports will be handled sensitively, proportionately and in a timely manner. Unprofessional behaviour will be addressed early, and staff will be supported to improve. This approach helps to foster a culture of openness, trust and transparency, and reduces the risk of harm to pupils.

All staff must follow the 'Guidance for Safer Working Practice for those working with children and young people in education settings' and report any low-level concerns about themselves or others, even if the behaviour does not meet the harm threshold. This includes self-reporting situations that could be misinterpreted or appear compromising.

4.3 Whistle blowing

Whistle blowing involves reporting wrongdoing that is in the public interest. In the context of safeguarding, this may include:

- Endangering the health or safety of pupils or staff
- Failing to comply with legal or statutory obligations
- Attempts to cover up wrongdoing

Whistleblowing concerns may also relate to a wide range of additional serious issues, including:

- Fraud, bribery, corruption, tax evasion or money laundering
- Criminal offences or miscarriages of justice
- Health and safety risks (to staff, pupils, or the public)
- Breaches of legal obligations or school policies
- Child protection concerns
- Environmental damage
- Unethical or unprofessional conduct
- Attempts to conceal any of the above

Staff are encouraged to report concerns as soon as possible. Reports will be taken seriously, investigated thoroughly, and treated confidentially. The school is committed to supporting whistle-blowers who raise genuine concerns, even if they turn out to be mistaken. Staff who raise concerns in the public interest are protected under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998. The school will not tolerate any form of victimisation, discrimination or disadvantage against whistleblowers acting in good faith.

Concerns should be reported to the Headteacher. If the concern involves the Headteacher, it should be reported to the Chair of the Governors. If the concern involves the Headteacher or Chair of Governors, staff should report it to the Deputy Chair of Governors. If the concern involves the Governing Board or local authority officers, it may be raised with the Director of Children and Young People's Services or the City Solicitor. For financial irregularities, concerns must also

be reported to the Internal Audit Service at Liverpool City Council. Reports should be made in writing where possible and include relevant details such as names, dates, locations, and any supporting evidence.

While the school encourages concerns to be raised internally, staff may also contact external bodies if they believe internal reporting is not appropriate or has not been addressed. These include:

- **Protect (formerly Public Concern at Work):** 020 3117 2520 | protect-advice.org.uk
- **Ofsted, Health and Safety Executive, Information Commissioner's Office, Merseyside Police,** and other relevant regulators.

Staff are encouraged to seek advice before making an external disclosure.

For more information, please refer to our Whistle Blowing Policy.

5. Sexual harassment

Banks Road Primary School is committed to creating a safe, respectful and inclusive environment for all members of the school community. Sexual harassment of any kind is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

Sexual harassment is any unwanted conduct of a sexual nature – whether physical, verbal or non-verbal – that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. It also includes treating someone less favourably because they have submitted to or rejected such conduct in the past.

Examples of sexual harassment include (but are not limited to):

- Unwanted physical contact or 'horseplay', including touching, pinching, pushing or grabbing
- Sexual comments, jokes or gestures
- Sending or displaying offensive or pornographic material
- Unwelcome sexual advances or suggestive behaviour
- Staring or leering in a sexual way
- Sexual propositions or requests for sexual favours
- Inappropriate messages or content shared via email, text or social media
- Promising rewards in exchange for sexual favours

All staff have a responsibility to help create a culture that prevents sexual harassment. This includes challenging inappropriate behaviour and reporting concerns, even if they are not the direct target.

The school operates a zero-tolerance approach to abuse, including sexual harassment, sexual violence, and harmful behaviour between pupils. Such behaviour must never be dismissed as 'banter', 'just having a laugh' or 'part of growing up'.

If a staff member experiences or witnesses sexual harassment, they should report it immediately to the Headteacher. If the concern involves the Headteacher, it should be reported to the Chair of Governors. All reports will be taken seriously, investigated promptly and handled with sensitivity and confidentiality.

Staff who report concerns or act as witnesses will be protected from victimisation. The school will provide appropriate support and take action to address any incidents of sexual harassment.

All staff will receive training on recognising and responding to sexual harassment as part of our ongoing commitment to safeguarding and professional conduct.

5.1 Harassment, bullying and victimisation

Banks Road Primary School is committed to ensuring that all staff are treated with dignity and respect. Harassment, bullying, and victimisation of any kind are unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

- **Harassment** is unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic (e.g. age, disability, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation) that violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.
- **Bullying** is offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, or an abuse of power that undermines, humiliates or causes harm.
- **Victimisation** occurs when someone is treated unfairly because they have made or supported a complaint or grievance.

These behaviours may be overt or subtle, intentional or unintentional, and may occur in person or online. All staff have a responsibility to challenge such behaviour and report concerns through the appropriate channels.

6. Staff-pupil relationships

Staff at Banks Road Primary School are expected to maintain professional boundaries in all interactions with pupils. These boundaries are essential to protect both pupils and staff, and to uphold the integrity of the school community.

Staff are expected to maintain professional curiosity and build trusted relationships with pupils to support open communication and facilitate safeguarding disclosures. This includes being approachable, listening actively, and responding appropriately to any concerns or disclosures.

Staff will:

- Always act in a fair, respectful and transparent manner
- Maintain appropriate boundaries that reflect their professional role and responsibilities
- Avoid any behaviour that could be misinterpreted or give rise to concern about their intentions

If staff need to work with pupils on a one-to-one basis, they must ensure that:

- The interaction takes place in a public or visible space whenever possible
- The room is open or has clear visibility (e.g. through a window or open door)
- A colleague or line manager is informed in advance

Staff should avoid contact with pupils outside of school hours unless it is part of a planned school activity or authorised by the Headteacher. Personal contact details, including phone numbers, email addresses and social media profiles, must not be shared with pupils.

While it is recognised that pupils and their families may wish to give gifts to staff (e.g. at the end of term), staff must not give gifts to pupils. Any concerns about gifts or favouritism should be discussed with a senior leader.

If a staff member is concerned that an interaction with a pupil may be misinterpreted, or if they have concerns about the conduct of a colleague, they must report this in line with the procedures set out in the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

7. Communication and social media

Staff at Banks Road Primary School must maintain professional boundaries in all forms of communication with pupils and their families, both within and outside of school.

To uphold these standards:

- Staff must not communicate with pupils or their parents/carers via personal social media accounts, messaging apps, or personal email addresses.
- Staff must not add, follow, or accept friend requests from parents/carers on personal social media platforms (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, TikTok).
- Staff must not attempt to seek out pupils' or parents' social media profiles or engage with them online.
- If a staff member has a personal social media profile, they should take steps to ensure it is private and not accessible to pupils. This includes avoiding the use of full names that could make them easily searchable.
- Staff must not post images or information online that could identify pupils without appropriate consent.
- Staff must not post anything online – including on personal accounts – that could bring the school into disrepute or breach confidentiality.
- All communication with pupils and parents/carers should be professional, respectful, and in line with the school's expectations.
- Staff should be familiar with and follow the school's Online Safety Policy and any other relevant ICT or communications policies.
- Staff should avoid using their full name on public social media profiles where pupils or parents/carers may be able to identify or search for them.

Any concerns about inappropriate communication – by staff, pupils, or others – must be reported in line with the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

If staff become aware of any online content, posts, or communications that may be defamatory, discriminatory, or bring the school or its staff into disrepute, they must report this immediately to the Headteacher or designated safeguarding lead.

8. Acceptable use of technology

Staff at Banks Road Primary School are expected to use technology responsibly and in line with school policies to ensure a safe and professional environment for all.

Use of technology in school

- Staff must not use school technology to access, view, create or distribute material that is illegal, inappropriate, or likely to be considered offensive. This includes, but is not limited to, obscene content, gambling, or extremist material.
- Personal mobile phones, tablets and laptops must not be used in the presence of pupils unless there is a clear, authorised educational purpose approved by a senior leader.
- Staff must not use personal devices to take photographs or videos of pupils under any circumstances.
- The school promotes a mobile phone-free environment for pupils wherever possible. Staff must model appropriate behaviour in relation to mobile phone use and support the consistent implementation of the school's expectations.
- School devices and internet access must be used primarily for professional purposes. Any personal use must be limited to non-contact time (e.g. before or after school or during unpaid breaks) and must comply with this code of conduct.
- Unacceptable use of school ICT systems includes, but is not limited to:

- Accessing, creating, storing, or sharing material that is pornographic, offensive, or otherwise inappropriate
- Using ICT to bully, harass, or discriminate against others
- Sharing confidential school information without authorisation
- Attempting to bypass school filtering or monitoring systems
- Using AI tools without permission, or entering personal or sensitive data into AI platforms
- Failing to disclose when AI has been used to generate content
- Using school systems for personal business or political activity
- Connecting unauthorised devices or installing unapproved software
- The school reserves the right to monitor the use of its IT systems, including internet access and email communications, to ensure compliance with this policy.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) and emerging technologies

The use of AI tools in school is restricted and must comply with the school's Data Protection Policy and safeguarding responsibilities at all times. Staff must not use unapproved AI tools for school-related tasks unless authorised by a senior leader and in line with the school's AI Register and Data Protection Policy.

Staff must be aware that safeguarding risks increasingly occur both online and offline, often simultaneously. This includes risks associated with generative AI, such as deepfakes, manipulated images, online exploitation, and harmful content. Any concerns arising from online activity must be treated as safeguarding concerns and reported accordingly.

Staff must not:

- Use unapproved AI tools without written permission
- Input personal data, pupil information, or confidential content into AI tools
- Present AI-generated work as original pupil work
- Use AI to bypass curriculum expectations or replace teacher-led pedagogy
- Share misleading or unverified AI-generated content

All AI-generated content must be clearly marked and attributed.

The school reserves the right to monitor all use of its ICT systems, including internet access, email, and device activity. Monitoring is conducted to ensure safeguarding, data protection, and compliance with school policies. Staff should have no expectation of privacy when using school systems.

9. Confidentiality

In the course of their work, staff at Banks Road Primary School may have access to sensitive or confidential information about pupils, families, colleagues, and/or the school itself.

Staff must:

- Confidential information must not be disclosed to any third party unless this is required by law or with appropriate consent.
- Treat all information with care and discretion
- Only share confidential information when it is legally appropriate or necessary for safeguarding purposes
- Never use confidential information to humiliate, embarrass, or blackmail others
- Never use confidential information for personal gain or for purposes other than those for which it was intended

Staff must be mindful of their responsibilities under data protection legislation, including the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018. Any concerns about data breaches or misuse of information must be reported immediately to the school's Data Protection Officer.

This duty of confidentiality does not override a staff member's responsibility to report safeguarding concerns. If a member of staff believes a child is at risk of harm, they must report this to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or follow the procedures outlined in the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

All staff involved in any aspect of an investigation or disciplinary process must treat all information as strictly confidential. This includes not discussing the matter with colleagues, pupils, or others outside of the formal process. Maintaining confidentiality is essential to ensure fairness, protect the rights of all parties, and uphold the integrity of the school's procedures.

10. Honesty and integrity

All staff at Banks Road Primary School are expected to demonstrate the highest standards of honesty and integrity in all aspects of their work.

This includes:

- Acting with fairness and transparency when dealing with pupils, colleagues, parents/carers, and external partners
- Handling school property, finances, and resources responsibly and in accordance with school procedures
- Staff must use school-provided email accounts for all work-related communication. Personal email addresses must not be used to contact pupils or parents/carers. Staff must not store personal files on school systems or use school devices for personal matters beyond occasional, appropriate use. All devices must be password-protected, encrypted, and locked when unattended. Any data breach must be reported immediately to the Headteacher or Data Protection Officer.
- Accurately claiming expenses and not using school funds or resources for personal gain
- Not accepting bribes or inducements. Any gifts or hospitality offered to staff must be declared. Gifts with a value of more than £50 must be recorded in the school's Gifts and Hospitality Register
- Ensuring that all information provided to the school is accurate and up to date. This includes:
 - Background information (including any past or current investigations or cautions related to conduct outside of school)
 - Qualifications and professional experience
 - Any changes to personal circumstances that may affect their suitability to work with children

Staff must inform the Headteacher as soon as reasonably practicable if there are any updates to the information they have provided. The school will consider the nature and context of any changes to determine whether they have an impact on the staff member's role or employment.

11. Dress code

At Banks Road Primary School, we expect all staff to dress in a way that is professional, appropriate to their role, and reflective of the high standards we uphold as a school community.

Our approach is to 'mirror' the expectations we set for our pupils, promoting a sense of unity, professionalism and respect.

Staff must ensure that:

- Clothing is clean, smart, and suitable for a school environment
- Outfits are not overly revealing or likely to cause offence
- Clothing does not display offensive, political, or inappropriate slogans or imagery
- Footwear is practical and appropriate for the school setting. Trainers should only be worn on days when staff are teaching or supporting physical education or outdoor learning activities

Staff working in early years or in roles that involve physical activity may wear clothing that is practical and safe for their duties, while still maintaining a professional appearance.

The Headteacher or a member of the senior leadership team may speak with staff if their attire is considered inappropriate for the school setting.

Reasonable adjustments to dress expectations will be made where required, including for medical needs, disability, pregnancy, or religious observance.

12. Conduct outside of work

Staff at Banks Road Primary School are expected to uphold the reputation of the school and the wider teaching profession at all times, including outside of working hours.

Conduct that occurs outside of school may be considered a disciplinary matter if it:

- Brings the school into disrepute
- Undermines public confidence in the education profession
- Raises concerns about the staff member's suitability to work with children
- Involves criminal behaviour, including but not limited to offences related to violence, dishonesty, or sexual misconduct
- Includes inappropriate or offensive comments about the school, colleagues, pupils or parents/carers on social media or other public platforms

Staff must be mindful that their behaviour in their personal lives can have an impact on their professional role. Any concerns about a staff member's conduct outside of work will be considered in line with the school's disciplinary procedures and safeguarding policies.

Staff have a responsibility to report any behaviour or content they become aware of without delay – including online posts or public comments – that may damage the reputation of the school or its staff, or that may be defamatory, discriminatory, or otherwise inappropriate.

Staff must self-report any incidents or situations where their behaviour may be misinterpreted, or where they believe they may have fallen below the standards set out in this Code of Conduct. This includes behaviour outside of work that may impact their suitability to work with children.

13. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if required, to ensure it remains up to date with statutory guidance and best practice.

It will be approved by the full Governing Board.

The Governing Board is responsible for ensuring that this code of conduct is implemented effectively and consistently across the school. It will also ensure that appropriate action is taken promptly to safeguard pupils and respond to concerns about staff conduct, including those related to safeguarding.

This code of conduct is not exhaustive. Where situations arise that are not explicitly covered, staff are expected to exercise professional judgement and act in the best interests of pupils and the school, in line with safeguarding principles and statutory guidance.

14. Links with other policies

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. Examples of gross misconduct may include (but are not limited to):

- Theft or fraud
- Physical violence or bullying
- Serious misuse of school property or name
- Deliberate access to offensive or obscene material
- Serious insubordination
- Unlawful discrimination or harassment
- Bringing the school into serious disrepute
- Serious incapability at work due to alcohol or drugs
- Causing loss, damage or injury through serious negligence
- A serious breach of health and safety or confidentiality

In line with the school's Disciplinary Policy, staff have the right to be accompanied by a trade union representative or a colleague during formal disciplinary meetings or hearings. This ensures that all staff are supported and treated fairly throughout any formal process.

- Child Protection Policy and Online Safety Policy
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy, which outlines how to raise concerns about wrongdoing, the protections available to whistleblowers, and the procedures for investigation and response
- Dignity at Work and Grievance Policy and Procedure, which outlines how staff can raise concerns about inappropriate behaviour, bullying, harassment, or other workplace issues, and the steps for informal and formal resolution