



St Peter's

BUDLEIGH SALTERTON CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

Code of Conduct

Created: Summer 2015

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Overview

Employees/volunteers/governors/working ('adults in school') in school are role models, are in a position of influence and must demonstrate behaviour that sets a good example to all the pupils within the school.

- As a member of a school community, every adult has an individual responsibility to maintain their reputation and the reputation of the school, whether inside or outside working hours.

In adopting this policy the school is committed to working towards creating **a working environment in which all 'adults in school' are treated fairly, with dignity and respect and where unacceptable behaviour will not be tolerated.**

- This Code of Conduct applies to all employees and 'adults in school'. This Code of Conduct does not form part of the contract of employment.
- Casual and self-employed workers, agency staff and volunteers working in the school would also be expected to observe the standards of behaviour set out in this document.
- In addition to this Code of Conduct, all employees engaged to work under Conditions of Service for Schools Teachers have a statutory obligation to adhere to the most recent 'Teachers' Standards' and in relation to this policy, Part 2 of the Teachers' Standards - Personal and Professional Conduct.
- This Code of Conduct should be read in conjunction with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and the statutory guidance, including:
 - Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026: All adults must read Part One in its entirety.
 - Working together to improve school attendance (statutory guidance): This guidance outlines the responsibilities of schools to ensure good attendance.

1. Compliance

- 'Adults in school' must familiarise themselves and comply with all school policies and procedures.
- As members of the school community, we are committed to upholding and promoting the Christian ethos of the Church of England, which is central to the values of our school. In line with our mission, 'Love your neighbour as you love yourself,' adults are expected to demonstrate respect, kindness, and integrity in all interactions with pupils, colleagues, and the wider community. We strive to foster an inclusive, compassionate environment where every individual is valued and supported in their personal, academic, and spiritual growth.
- Each year, 'adults in school' must complete the electronic form or the form in the Appendix to confirm they have read, understood and agreed to comply with the Code of Conduct.

2. Disciplinary Action

- Employees should be aware that a failure to comply with this Code of Conduct could result in disciplinary action including but not limited to dismissal.

3. Setting an Example

- 3.1 This Code helps all 'adults in school' to understand what behaviour is and is not acceptable. All 'adults in school' are working towards the schools stated aim in it's vision, including the Christian Ethos:

*We exist to **help our pupils grow** academically, emotionally, socially, physically and spiritually.*

*We have a core belief in the **value of each and every person** and the aim that **every pupil can flourish**. We achieve this through our **academic, character and enrichment** curriculums, ensuring pupils spend their time with us **living life in all its fullness**.*

3.2 'Adults in school' must not discriminate, harass or victimise someone because they have or are perceived to have a protected characteristic as defined by the Equality Act 2010 or are associated with someone who has a protected characteristic. Protected characteristics are:-

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

3.3 'Adults in school' must set good examples of behaviour and demonstrate high standards of conduct in order to encourage our pupils to do the same.

3.4 'Adults in school' must avoid using inappropriate or offensive language at all times.

3.5 'Adults in school' must avoid putting themselves at risk of allegations of abusive or unprofessional conduct.

4. Safeguarding Pupils

4.1 'Adults in school' have a duty to safeguard pupils from harm.

4.2 The duty to safeguard pupils includes the duty to report concerns about a pupil or colleague to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for Child Protection. Staff/adults who have low level concerns for any colleague should report these concerns confidentially to the Headteacher. There is a list of examples in the Appendix.

4.3 'Adults in school' must make themselves aware of the name of the school's current DSL. This information is available on notice boards in the staffroom and around the school.

4.4 'Adults in school' must take reasonable care of pupils under their supervision with the aim of ensuring their safety and welfare.

4.5 'Adults in school' must never promise a pupil that they will not act on information that they are told by the pupil.

4.6 'Adults in school' are provided with a copy of the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Keeping Children Safe in Education pt1 (Dfe) and Whistleblowing Procedure, and must become familiar with these documents each year.

4.7 All adults in school are required to wear a lanyard that must be visible at all times. Anyone not wearing a lanyard must be challenged. This is to ensure all adults in school are suitable to be working with pupils.

5. Relationships with Pupils

5.1 Employees must declare any relationships that they may have with pupils outside of school; this may include mutual membership of social groups, tutoring, or family connections. Employees should not assume that the school is aware of any such connections. A declaration form is completed using the online form.

5.2 Physical relationships with pupils, regardless of their age, are strictly forbidden and may lead to a criminal conviction. This may also apply to former pupils and advice must be sought before commencing any such relationship.

5.3 'Adults in school' must treat pupils with respect and dignity and must not demean or undermine them, their parents or carers, or work colleagues.

5.4 'Adults in school' must not behave in a way that may be perceived as sarcastic, nor should they make jokes at the expense of pupils, embarrass or humiliate pupils, discriminate against or favour pupils.

6. Professional Relationships with Colleagues

- 6.1 'Adults in school' must strive toward and promote harmonious and professional relationships with all colleagues. It is understood that, at times, differences of opinions can occur and at such times it is expected that 'Adults in school' will attempt to resolve matters informally in the first instance unless they feel unable to do so in which case they should refer the matter to their line manager.

7. Honesty and Integrity

- 7.1 'Adults in school' must maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their work. This includes the handling and claiming of money and the use of school property and facilities.
- 7.2 'Adults in school' must comply with the Bribery Act 2010. A person may be guilty of an offence of bribery under this act if they offer, promise or give financial advantage or other advantage to someone; or if they request, agree or accept, or receive a bribe from another person. If you believe that a person has failed to comply with the Bribery Act, you should refer your concerns to the attention of your Headteacher / Chair of Governors.
- 7.3 'Adults in school' must not accept gifts or hospitality from suppliers or associates of the school, with the exception of 'one off' token gifts from parents. Personal gifts from 'Adults in school' to pupils are inappropriate and could be misinterpreted and may lead to disciplinary action.
- 7.4 'Adults in school' must make known to the Headteacher all financial and non-financial interests that could bring them into conflict with the school's interests.
- 7.5 All personal relationships with contractors, or potential contractors should be made known by the employee to the Headteacher.
- 7.6 Employees must not be involved in any recruitment process if they have a personal relationship with the applicant inside or outside of work.
- 7.7 Without fear of recrimination, 'Adults in school' can report any impropriety or breach of procedures using the process laid out within the School's Whistleblowing Policy.

8. Conduct Outside of Work

- 8.1 'Adults in school' must not engage in conduct outside work which could damage the reputation and standing of the school or the employee's own reputation or the reputation of other members of the school community.
- 8.2 Criminal offences that involve violence or possession or use of illegal drugs or sexual misconduct will be regarded as unacceptable and dealt with under the School's Policy.
- 8.3 Behaviour or activities that have the potential to make 'Adults in school' unsuitable for the role they are employed to perform will be dealt with under the Disciplinary Policy.
- 8.4 **NEW** - Notice of Online Searches: the school can conduct a search of publicly available online information, including social media, as part of statutory safeguarding due diligence.

9. Employment outside of School

- 9.1 Employees may undertake work outside school, either paid or voluntary, provided that it does not conflict with the interests of the school nor be to a level which may contravene the working time regulations or affect an individual's work performance in the school. In line with the Statement of Particulars, support employees who are employed on or above Grade E must seek the consent of the Headteacher should they wish to take up employment outside the school.

10. Online Safety

- 10.1 'Adults in school' must exercise caution when using information technology and be aware of the risks to themselves and others. 'Adults in school' have to follow the 'Acceptable Use of ICT' Statement found in the appendix.
- 10.2 'Adults in school' must not use equipment belonging to the school to access pornography; neither should personal equipment containing pornographic images or links to them be brought into the workplace. Doing so will raise serious concerns about the suitability of the employee to continue to work in schools.

- 10.3 'Adults in school' must not engage in inappropriate use of social network sites which may bring themselves, the school, school community or employer into disrepute. 'Adults in school' should ensure that they adopt suitably high security settings on any personal profiles they may have.
- 10.4 'Adults in school' must exercise caution in their use of all social media or any other web based presence that they may have, including written content, videos or photographs, and views expressed either directly or by 'liking' certain pages or posts established by others. This may also include the use of dating websites where 'Adults in school' could encounter pupils either with their own profile or acting covertly.
- 10.5 'Adults in school' must not link themselves with the school on any social network site they use unless with prior consent of the Head teacher.
- 10.6 'Adults in school' must not respond to negative comments posted online but bring this to the attention of the Headteacher.
- 10.7 'Adults in school' must only contact pupils via school authorised mechanisms. At no time should personal telephone numbers, email addresses or communication routes via personal accounts on social media platforms be used to communicate with pupils.
- 10.8 'Adults in school' must report to the Headteacher any contact by a pupil by an inappropriate route.
- 10.9 Photographs/still images or video footage of pupils should only be taken using school equipment, for purposes authorised by the school. Any such use should always be transparent and only occur where parental consent has been given. The resultant files from such recording or taking of photographs must be stored in accordance with the school's procedures on school equipment.
- 10.10 Filtering and Monitoring: 'Adults in school' must be aware of the school's filtering and monitoring systems, manage them effectively, and escalate concerns to the headteacher. Staff should report any instances where they believe inappropriate content has bypassed the school's filtering systems.
- 10.11 Online Risks: The school recognises that safeguarding risks online extend beyond illegal content to include misinformation, disinformation, and conspiracy theories. Staff/adults must be aware of these new risks and understand their role in protecting pupils from them.
- 10.12 The school's Acceptable Use Policy for digital technology applies to all use of school systems and equipment, as well as the use of personal devices on school premises or in situations related to employment. This includes using social media, which must be done in a way that does not jeopardise the staff member's reputation or bring the school into disrepute.
- 10.13 **NEW** - Staff have a mandatory requirement to recognise and challenge online misogynistic and misandric content within the school community, which is frequently popularised via social media algorithms. Staff must be alert to how this material influences pupil attitudes and its potential to manifest within the school community as sexual harassment, child-on-child abuse, physical boundary violations, or digital coercive control. All staff are expected to support the school's proactive approach to addressing these harms by reinforcing lessons on digital consent, healthy boundaries, and the reporting of digital harassment.

11. Confidentiality

- 11.1 'Adults in school' must not reveal confidential information about pupils or their parents or carers except to those colleagues who have a professional role in relation to the pupil.
- 11.2 'Adults in school' are likely at some point to witness actions which need to be confidential. For example, where a pupil is bullied by another pupil (or by another employee), this needs to be reported and dealt with in accordance with the appropriate school procedure. It must not be discussed outside the school, including with the pupil's parent or carer, nor with colleagues in the school except with a senior member of staff with the appropriate authority to deal with the matter.
- 11.3 Confidentiality and Information Sharing: Staff/adults have a professional duty to share concerns about a child's welfare with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a deputy. Do not assume a colleague or another professional will take action. Staff/adults must be mindful that early information sharing is critical for effective identification, assessment, and appropriate service provision for children and their families. This is a vital part of a child-centered approach to safeguarding.

12. GDPR

- 12.1 'Adults in school' must agree to and comply with the school's GDPR policies as covered in the Data Protection policy and associated GDPR policies/
- 12.2 Staff must agree to follow good practice when managing pupil or staff data;
- 'Adults in school' must not share information concerning pupils unless there is a lawful reason and must not leave confidential information where others could see it.
 - 'Adults in school' must delete all information on pupils unless there is a lawful reason to hold it.
- 12.3 Staff must log and report any subject access request from parents with the Headteacher immediately.

13. Dress and Appearance

- 13.1 'Adults in school' must dress in a manner that is appropriate to a professional role and promotes a professional image.
- 13.2 'Adults in school' must not dress in a manner that could be regarded by others as offensive, revealing or sexually provocative.
- 13.3 'Adults in school' must not wear clothes with political or other contentious slogans.

14. Cautions or investigations by children's agencies or Police.

'Adults in school', volunteers and governors must let the school know if they receive a caution, any criminal or civil charge, or are under investigation/assessment from a children's service (e.g. from Police, MASH or Social Services). Minor driving offences such as fixed penalty notices do not need to be declared unless it results in disqualification from driving or driving is a key requirement of your role.

15. Further specific guidance for 'Adults in school':

- 15.1 We do not use **mobile phones** in any classrooms. You are never allowed to use it to take photos of children. You must challenge any visitor using their mobile phone in school.
- 15.1.1.1 *Exception - staff working in Oak class due to the need to discreetly phone for adult support.*
- 15.2 Never use any kind of **physical punishment** or chastisement such as smacking or hitting.
- 15.3 Do not **smoke** in front of any child or young person.
- 15.4 Do not use unprescribed **drugs** or be under the influence of **alcohol**.
- 15.5 Generally you should never give children **presents** or personal items. The exceptions to this would need be agreed with the Headteacher and the young person's parents.
- 15.6 You should not invite a young person to **your home** or arrange to see them outside of school.
- 15.7 Avoid being **alone with a child**. In situations where this may be needed (for example where a young person wants to speak in private) think about ways of making this seem less secret: for example by telling another worker or volunteer what you are doing and where you are, leaving a door ajar, being in earshot of others.
- 15.8 Be aware of the potential for misunderstanding when **touching children**. If it is an accepted part of an activity, touching should be appropriate to the situation and follow school policies. Comforting a child who is upset, administering first aid or supporting a participant in an activity is acceptable and necessary behaviour. Workers should, however, endeavour to minimise any possible misunderstanding of their actions, and seek consent from the child first. Physical contact should be open and initiated by the child's needs, e.g. for a hug when upset or help with toileting. Always prompt children to carry out personal care items themselves and if they cannot manage ask if they would like help.
- 15.9 Do not **kiss** children.
- 15.10 Avoid giving children a **lift in your car** except in emergencies or on pre-planned school business e.g. driving to sports event.
- 15.11 If you have to speak to a child about their behaviour, remember you are challenging what they did not who they are. **Focus on the behaviour and not the child**.
- 15.12 **NEW** - Staff/adults must understand that the statutory definition of 'nudes and semi-nudes' now explicitly includes digitally altered, manipulated, or entirely AI-generated explicit imagery, including 'deepfake' or 'deep nude' content. All adults in school must recognise that the creation,

possession, sending, or posting of any AI-generated nude or semi-nude image involving an individual under the age of 18 is a serious safeguarding concern. Such incidents require an immediate, documented safeguarding response, regardless of whether the imagery is synthetic or considered 'consensual'.

- 15.13 **NEW -** Staff/adults should also be aware that standard pupil photographs can be harvested from public channels by perpetrators to create abusive imagery for blackmail or harassment; therefore, the publication of high-resolution pupil imagery on personal or public social media is strictly limited.

16. Allegations and Low-Level Concerns (see appendix)

- 16.1 The school has a procedure for managing and recording low-level concerns about staff conduct. A low-level concern is any concern, no matter how small, that an adult working in the school may have acted in a way that could suggest they are unsuitable to work with children.
- 16.2 All such concerns must be reported within 24 hours and recorded to allow the school to identify and address inappropriate or problematic behaviour early, thereby minimising the risk of abuse and ensuring professional boundaries are maintained. This includes concerns that do not meet the threshold for a formal allegation.
- 16.3 These requirements apply to concerns regarding colleagues, agency staff, and contractors on site.

Appendix: Examples of Unacceptable Behaviour

- Using aggressive language, threatening, ridiculing, ignoring people or repeatedly shouting;
- Telephoning/emailing people at home unnecessarily (for example, demanding work when the person is absent due to sickness or ill health);
- Focusing only on weaknesses;
- Bringing up details of someone's private life inappropriately;
- Leaving impossibly long lists of tasks and making unreasonable demands;
- Criticising people or maliciously gossiping about them in their absence;
- Ridiculing or demeaning someone – picking on them or setting them up to fail;
- Comments or jokes, about distinctive peoples and nationalities;
- Frequent comments about aspects of physical appearance or using forms of address that are demeaning;
- Threatening or implying, without reason, that, as a colleague, you will cause the person to lose his/her job or fail to get a promotion or suffer some other form of career difficulty or financial disadvantage;
- Coercing someone to join the harassment/bullying of another person;
- Excluding or marginalising someone or refusing to engage with them appropriately.

This list is not exhaustive. It is simply a guide to help individuals consider their own and others behaviour and gain understanding of what behaviours are unacceptable in the workplace.

Appendix - Low level concerns

The term 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant. 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 harm threshold or is otherwise not serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:

- being over friendly with children
- having favourites
- taking photographs of children on their mobile phone, contrary to school policy
- engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door, or
- humiliating children.

Any low-level concern must be reported to the Headteacher within twenty-four hours of becoming aware of the incident.

Appendix: Acceptable Use of ICT Policy Agreement

I understand that I must use school systems in a responsible way, to ensure that there is no risk to my safety or to the safety and security of the systems and other users.

For my professional and personal safety:

- I understand that the school will monitor my use of the school digital technology and communications systems.
- I understand that the rules set out in this agreement also apply to use of these technologies (e.g. laptops, email, VLE etc.) out of school, and to the transfer of personal data (digital or paper based) out of school
- I understand that the school digital technology systems are primarily intended for educational use and that I will only use the systems for personal or recreational use within the policies and rules set down by the school. (schools should amend this section in the light of their policies which relate to the personal use, by staff and volunteers, of school systems)
- I will not disclose my username or password to anyone else, nor will I try to use any other person's username and password. I understand that I should not write down or store a password where it is possible that someone may steal it.
- I will immediately report any illegal, inappropriate or harmful material or incident, I become aware of, to the appropriate person.

I will be professional in my communications and actions when using *school* ICT systems:

- I will not access, copy, remove or otherwise alter any other user's files, without their express permission.
- I will communicate with others in a professional manner, I will not use aggressive or inappropriate language and I appreciate that others may have different opinions.
- I will ensure that when I take and / or publish images of others I will do so with their permission and in accordance with the school's policy on the use of digital images. I will not use my personal equipment to record these images, unless I have permission to do so. Where these images are published (e.g. on the school website) it will not be possible to identify by name, or other personal information, those who are featured.
- I will only communicate with pupils and parents / carers using official school systems. Any such communication will be professional in tone and manner.
- I will not engage in any on-line activity that may compromise my professional responsibilities.

The school and the local authority have the responsibility to provide safe and secure access to technologies and ensure the smooth running of the *school*:

- When I use my mobile devices (laptops / tablets / mobile phones / USB devices etc) in school, I will follow the rules set out in this agreement, in the same way as if I was using *school* equipment. I will also follow any additional rules set by the *school* about such use. I will ensure that any such devices are protected by up to date anti-virus software and are free from viruses.
- **I will not open any hyperlinks in emails or any attachments to emails**, unless the source is known and trusted, or if I have any concerns about the validity of the email (due to the risk of the attachment containing viruses or other harmful programmes)
- I will ensure that my data is regularly backed up, in accordance with relevant school policies.
- I will not try to upload, download or access any materials which are illegal (child sexual abuse images, criminally racist material, adult pornography covered by the Obscene Publications Act) or inappropriate or may cause harm or distress to others. I will not try to use any programmes or software that might allow me to bypass the filtering / security systems in place to prevent access to such materials.

- I will not install or attempt to install programmes of any type on a machine, or store programmes on a computer, nor will I try to alter computer settings, unless this is allowed in school policies.
- I will not disable or cause any damage to school equipment, or the equipment belonging to others.
- I will only transport, hold, disclose or share personal information about myself or others, as outlined in the School GDPR Policy. Where digital personal data is transferred outside the secure local network, it must be encrypted. Paper based Protected and Restricted data must be held in lockable storage.
- I understand that data protection policy requires that any staff or student / pupil data to which I have access, will be kept private and confidential, except when it is deemed necessary that I am required by law or by school policy to disclose such information to an appropriate authority.
- I will immediately report any damage or faults involving equipment or software, however this may have happened.

When using the internet in my professional capacity or for school sanctioned personal use:

- I will ensure that I have permission to use the original work of others in my own work
- Where work is protected by copyright, I will not download or distribute copies (including music and videos).

I understand that I am responsible for my actions in and out of the school:

- I understand that this Acceptable Use Policy applies not only to my work and use of school digital technology equipment in school, but also applies to my use of school systems and equipment off the premises and my use of personal equipment on the premises or in situations related to my employment by the school
- I understand that if I fail to comply with this Acceptable Use Policy Agreement, I could be subject to disciplinary action. This could include a warning, a suspension, referral to Governors and / or the Local Authority and in the event of illegal activities the involvement of the police.

Disclosure of interests

It is important that school staff not only act impartially, but are also seen to act impartially. School staff have a responsibility to avoid any conflict between their business and personal affairs and those of the school.

Examples of Interests that should be declared

The list below provides some examples of where a conflict may arise but is not exhaustive. If you are unsure whether a conflict exists you should declare it and seek advice from your Headteacher.

- **Contracts/Suppliers**
- **Interests in companies and securities**
- **Interests in other educational establishments**
- **Family members associated with the school**
- **Friends or Family members applying for a position at the school**
- **Other Employment, office, trade, profession or vocation**
- **Gifts and Hospitality linked to the school in excess of £100**
- **Organisations which may seek to influence schools policies**
- **Secret Societies**