

STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY

Non Sibi Sed Aliis

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.
Psalm 119, vs 105

"Show yourself in all respects to be a model of good works, and in your teaching show integrity, dignity, and sound speech that cannot be condemned, so that an opponent may be put to shame, having nothing evil to say about us."
Titus 2: 7-8

This policy document and the content contained therein remains the responsibility of the Headteacher and Governing Body of the school. No amendments can be made without their express instructions and they remain the final arbiters in any matters relating to it.

Review Date: Autumn 2024

Next Review Date: Autumn 2025

Reviewed By: Mrs A Wilson

APPROVED BY THE HEADTEACHER – Autumn Term 2024

Balshaw's Staff Code of Conduct

Balshaw's C.E High School is committed to achieving positive academic, social, emotional, economic and safeguarding outcomes for its students. We are equally committed to the protection and welfare of our staff. Our duty to safeguard students is paramount and is just as important as our determination to make all our teaching and learning outstanding. We need to ensure that students and staff are safe. Safeguarding involves not only health and safety issues, but establishing a culture that prevents any kind of abuse of students being perpetrated either in school or elsewhere.

All members of the school community are entitled to expect the highest standards of conduct from all staff employed in schools cross Lancashire and this policy reflects relevant legislation and expectations applying to all employees working in such establishments.

The achievement of positive outcomes for our students necessitates the need to ensure that all adults working with children are competent, confident and safe to do so. As such, all staff at Balshaw's C.E High School are expected to comply with the following Code of Conduct. Teaching staff are furthermore expected to conduct themselves within the guidance of the 'personal and professional conduct' section of the Teachers' Standards. Deviation from the aforementioned codes of conduct and practice may lead to disciplinary action being taken where appropriate.

(Teachers' standards, GOV.UK – DfE, see pages 5 and 14)

General Principles

Staff are expected to fulfil the obligations placed upon them under the terms of their contract of employment, i.e.

- Be ready and willing to work as specified in their role definition /Job Description
- Conduct their work in a co-operative manner.
- Attend work
- Be punctual in time keeping
- Be honest and trustworthy
- Obey reasonable management instructions
- Take care of themselves, their colleagues and others while at work
- Take care of school property
- Familiarise themselves with, and follow the Health and Safety rules applicable in their school
- Compliance with the school's Smoking at Work Policy.

Specific Requirements

- Teachers are expected to adhere to the Teachers Standards as set out in the School Teachers Pay and Conditions Document.
- All staff are expected to adhere to and conduct themselves in line with the Department for Education's 'Guidance for Safer Working Practice for those who working With Children and Young People in Education Settings' (May, 2019)
- All staff are expected to adhere to and conduct themselves in line with the Department for Education's statutory guidance for school and colleges on 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (September 2020)

The guidance aims to:

- keep children safe by clarifying which behaviours constitute safe practice and which behaviours should be avoided;
- assist adults working with children to work safely and responsibly and to monitor their own standards and practice;
- support managers and employers in setting clear expectations of behaviour
- and/or codes of practice relevant to the services being provided;
- support employers in giving a clear message that unlawful or unsafe behaviour is unacceptable and that, where appropriate, disciplinary or legal action will be taken;
- support safer recruitment practice;
- minimise the risk of misplaced or malicious allegations made against adults who work with students;
- reduce the incidence of positions of trust being abused or misused.

Purpose

This document sets out a code of conduct for all staff in schools with delegated budgets. This policy is intended to:

- give clear guidance to all concerned regarding appropriate conduct in the workplace;
- enable schools to set out clear expectations of all staff in order to minimise the likelihood of misconduct in the workplace;
- comply with legislation that affects staff employed in educational settings.
- This procedure applies to all staff employed in Balshaw's High School.
- Reference to 'Headteacher' throughout this document should read 'Chair of Governors' in the case of the conduct of the Headteacher.
- This policy has been the subject of consultation between the Authority and the recognised Trade Unions and Teacher Associations.
- This policy has been adopted and is published as part of the staffing policies of the Governing Body of Balshaw's CE High School.

ALL STAFF ARE EXPECTED TO:

Professional Conduct

All staff are expected to:-

- Accept and adhere to school policies and procedures
- Undertake their duties and responsibilities effectively, efficiently and diligently.
- Show respect for all members of the school community by being polite, courteous and refraining from the use of inappropriate language in all forms of communication eg verbal, face to face and electronic communications.
- Notify the Headteacher either at appointment or during employment of any personal relationship in or outside of school which may result in honesty, objectivity or integrity being brought into question.
- Notify the Headteacher of any change in personal (including medical) circumstances which could impact on ability to carry out their role.
- Not engage in outside employment (eg private tutoring of the school's own pupils) which could be considered as undermining or conflicting with the business of the school.
- Declare any interest/involvement with any outside organisations which may benefit financially or contractually from decisions taken by the school, eg the procurement of goods or services.
- Ensure fairness at all times when dealing with customers, suppliers, other contractors and sub contractors. No special favour should be given to current/former employees or partners/relatives or associates.
- Comply with the school's [Statement of Ethical Standards](#) in relation to the acceptance of gifts in cash or kind and hospitality noting that it is a criminal offence under the Bribery Act 2010 to offer, promise or give financial advantage or other advantage to someone; or to request, agree or accept or receive a bribe from another person.
- Use appropriate lines of communication and/or the relevant procedure to express views relating to their employment or the activities of the school.
- Notify the Headteacher of any known or suspected breaches of the law or of the school's policies, procedures and regulations and co-operate with any investigation of such breaches, particularly in relation to the safeguarding of children, health and safety and financial irregularity. Where this is considered not possible, reference should be made to the school's whistleblowing policy.
- Disclose on appointment or at any time any civil/criminal charges, convictions or being the subject of a criminal investigation process (being charged or in possession of a conviction may not necessarily debar from appointment/employment or lead to disciplinary action; however failure to disclose where required will be considered as a serious act of misconduct).

Policies (S)

- Provide accurate information on the Annual Staff Confirmation Form and notify the Headteacher of any changes to your circumstances that may impact on the information provided on the Annual Staff Confirmation Form.
- Use school equipment provided for the purposes of carrying out their role in a responsible and lawful manner.
- Not provide a professional reference on behalf of the school unless the contents of such reference have been agreed by the Headteacher.
- Act appropriately in terms of their behaviour, the views they express (in particular political views) and the use of school resources at all times, and should not use school resources for party political purposes.

Staff are expected to behave in a manner both within and outside of working hours which would not lead any reasonable person to question their suitability to work with children or act as a role model. All adults working with students have a responsibility to maintain public confidence in their ability to safeguard the welfare and best interests of students.

Dress and appearance –

Dress in a way which is appropriate for a school setting and which reflects Section 8 of the 'Guidance for Safer Working Practice for those who working With Children and Young people in Education Settings' (October, 2015). Conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times when wearing clothing or an identification badge that identifies them as an employee of the school

Ensure personal hygiene and appearance is respectful of being employed in a school setting.

All staff are expected to be well groomed and should dress in ways which are appropriate to their role and this may need to be different to how they dress when not at work.

Staff should wear any uniform, clothes, overalls or protective clothing as required for their role in school.

Staff should ensure they are dressed appropriately for the tasks and the work. This usually means business dress for **all** teaching, support and administrative staff for example:

Staff dress code:

Full trousers (no jeans/combat pants), shirt and tie **are expected at all times**. Full shoes at all times (no trainers, sandals or flip flops unless for medical reasons – please discuss with your Line Manager if this is required).

Smart office/business wear **are expected at all times** . No clothing with thin 'spaghetti' straps or revealing necklines. No flip flops/backless shoes or Ugg style boots.

The exception to the guidance above is PE staff who should wear Balshaw's PE kit or smart sports kit.

Any staff member who chooses to dress in a manner which could be considered as inappropriate could render themselves vulnerable to criticism or allegations.

For all staff:

Jewellery – should be discreet and visible piercings restricted to ears. Single nose studs may be worn for religious or cultural reasons only.

Body Art and Tattoos –Staff are asked to cover up visible tattoos whilst at work where the location of the tattoo makes it reasonably practical to do so.

Hair Style/Colour - Hair should not be styled in any extreme manner or have unnatural colouring.

Attendance and Punctuality – Staff are expected to strive for 100% attendance and punctuality including INSET days, except for sickness, approved compassionate grounds, or where punctuality is concerned, unforeseen or circumstances outside of the individual's control. Staff absence is to be notified by 8a.m. on the first day of absence. You should phone

the school absence line to let school know and then e-mail Diane Newsome/Wendy Peach by 8.30am with details of the work for your classes and an estimate of your return date. Holidays are to be taken as per the school's published term dates.

Language – All staff are expected to act, speak and conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times during the school day whilst on premises. Staff are expected to treat each other and speak to each other in ways that are consistent with the Christian ethos of the school. Racist, sexist, inflammatory, discriminatory, homophobic language from one member of staff to another will not be tolerated and may result in a verbal or written warning.

School Policies and Procedures – All policies should be read and observed by all. It is the responsibility of staff to familiarise themselves with these. Some policies will require staff to acknowledge they have read them. Copies may be found in the office and on the school website.

Duty of Care – All staff have a duty of care to keep young people safe and to protect them from sexual, physical and emotional harm. Children have a right to be safe and to be treated with respect and dignity. Staff should understand their responsibilities and always act in the child's best interests. They should work and be seen to work in an open and transparent way. 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 intervention.

Equality – Professional standards should always be maintained when dealing with both staff and students regardless of culture disability, gender, language, race, religion and/or sexual identity. You must treat all children equally and with respect. (This is reinforced by our Equality Policy.)

Confidentiality – -Maintain the confidentiality of sensitive information (particularly relating to pupils) obtained in the course of their employment. Any information obtained in the course of employment should be not used for personal gain or benefit, nor should it be passed on to others who might use it in the same way. Any queries about what constitutes 'sensitive' information and who it can be shared with should be directed to the appropriate member of the school's leadership team or the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Staff are expected to treat **any** information they may receive about students in a discreet and confidential manner. Staff should never use confidential or personal information about a student or her/his family for their own, or others' advantage. Information must never be used to intimidate, humiliate, or embarrass the student. Individual students should never be discussed by staff in front of other students. Staff should make it clear to students that any disclosures implying threats to the welfare or safety of the student, cannot be kept confidential, and may need to be discussed with an appropriate adult.

Professional Boundaries – Staff are in a position of trust and the relationship with students is not one of equals. Professional boundaries should be maintained at all times and power and trust should not be misused. The aim is to offer friendly care and not to imply a special friendship with any student.

Gifts, Rewards and Favouritism – ensure fairness at all times when dealing with customers, suppliers, other contractors and sub contractors. No special favour should be given to current/former employees or partners/relatives or associates. Comply with the school's Statement of Ethical Standards in relation to the acceptance of gifts in cash or kind and hospitality noting that it is a criminal offence under the Bribery Act 2010 to offer, promise or give financial advantage or other advantage to someone; or to request, agree or accept or receive a bribe from another person.

Staff should ensure that the motivation behind the giving of gifts/awards or rewards is clear to all students in order to avoid any misunderstandings of intent. You must not give child gifts personally, any appropriate gifts should come from the school as an organisation. The giving of gifts or rewards to students should be part of an agreed policy for supporting positive behaviour or recognising particular achievements. Staff must not accept gifts from children unless they are small token gifts appropriate to a celebration. All gifts over £25 in value must be reported to the Head Teacher.

Power and Positions of Trust – All staff working in school are in positions of trust in relation to the students in their care. Relationships between adult and student is not a relationship between equals. Staff should always maintain appropriate professional boundaries and avoid behaviour which might be misinterpreted by others. They should report and record any incident with this potential.

Infatuations - Occasionally, a student may develop an infatuation with a staff member who works with them. All staff should deal with these situations sensitively and appropriately to maintain the dignity and safety of all concerned. Should any student become infatuated with a member of staff, this must be reported to the Head Teacher immediately. The maintenance of professional boundaries at all times should go some way to avoiding this situation however.

Behaviour Management - All students have a right to be treated with respect and dignity even in those circumstances where they display difficult or challenging behaviour. Staff should not use any form of degrading treatment to punish a child. The use of sarcasm, demeaning or insensitive comments towards students is not acceptable in any situation. Where students display difficult or challenging behaviour, staff must follow the Behaviour for Learning Policy.

General conduct - All staff are expected to carry out their duties within the spirit of mutual respect, co-operation and support. A teacher should not deliberately behave in such a way as to bring Balshaw's Church Of England High School into disrepute.

Home Visits – Staff are not permitted to visit the home of a student unless pre-arranged and the Headteacher and the designated Safeguarding Lead are informed. The appointment must be logged by the Designated Safeguarding Lead on the safeguarding and home visits log of the young person. A young person should never be invited into the home of a staff member.

Social Contact with students – All social contact outside of school hours with students should be avoided. Home or mobile phone numbers; addresses or email addresses should not be exchanged. Staff should not establish or seek to establish social contact with students for the purpose of securing a friendship or to pursue or strengthen a relationship. There will be occasions when there are social contacts between students and staff, where for example the parent and teacher are part of the same social circle. These contacts will be easily recognised and openly acknowledged. Nevertheless, there must be awareness on the part of those working with students that some social contacts can be misconstrued as being part of a grooming process.

Sexual Contact - sexual activity between an adult and a student with whom they work (including verbal comments, letters, emails, phone contact, and physical contact) may be regarded as a criminal offence and will always be a grave breach of trust and a matter for disciplinary action. 'Working Together to Safeguard Children', defines sexual abuse as “forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware.

Physical Contact with Students – should be avoided unless within the guidance of the Use of Reasonable Force Policy and Behaviour for Learning policies. Possible exceptions using professional judgement might be greetings or congratulations such as handshakes; the guiding of a student to where they need to be or a hug in an appropriate situation. There should never be any physical contact when students are getting changed or showering and respect and privacy must be shown to them at this time.

First Aid – should only be administered by trained members of staff whose names are displayed in the staff room or on the list emailed out by the School Office.

One to One Situations – should be conducted in an open and transparent fashion i.e. with the knowledge of, or with other staff nearby, and if necessary with an open door. Where after school detentions are one to one, these should be limited to one hour and only with the parent/carer's consent.

Transporting Students - staff should not travel alone with students unless in an emergency or where the child is at risk. If staff are expected to use their own vehicles for transporting students they should ensure that the vehicle is roadworthy, appropriately insured and that the maximum capacity is not exceeded, seat belts are worn.

Curriculum - Many areas of the curriculum can include or raise subject matter which is sexually explicit, or of an otherwise sensitive nature. The curriculum can sometimes include or lead to unplanned discussion about subject matter of a sexually explicit or otherwise sensitive nature. Responding to students' questions can require careful judgement. Parents have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of any sex education provided (but not from the teaching of reproduction/human growth under the science curriculum).

The Use of Personal Living Space - No student should be invited into, the home of an adult who works with them, unless the reason for this has been firmly established and agreed with parents/ carers and a member of SLT or the Head teacher. Under no circumstances should students assist with chores or tasks in the home of a member of staff who works with them. This also applies to friends or family of a staff member.

Educational Visits and After-School Activities - Organisers must conduct risk assessments and adhere to Health and Safety guidelines. Staff/child ratios should be considered and where overnight stays are involved, the gender mix should be carefully organised. No students of the opposite sex should be allowed to enter the bedroom area of another student. On residential trips staff must not smoke and no alcohol should be consumed.

Communication with Students (including the Use of Technology) - Staff must ensure that they establish safe and responsible online behaviours. All staff are asked to sign the Staff Acceptable Behaviour ICT Policy. Communication between students and staff, by whatever method, should take place within clear and explicit professional boundaries. Staff should not share any personal information with a child or young person. Staff should ensure that all communications are transparent and open to scrutiny. Conduct themselves both on and off duty (including use of social media – See [Model Policy On The Use Of Social Networking Sites And Other Forms Of Social Media](#)) in a manner compatible with their employment status with the school.

Photography and Videos – Staff should be clear about the purpose of recording images and about what will happen to them once the activity is concluded. Informed written consent from parent/carers is sought and those students whose images cannot be used are recorded on SIMS.

Use of Images and ICT –Staff must ensure that children are not exposed to any unsuitable material and that any films, Youtube clips or other materials shown to students are age appropriate. Staff must not access any inappropriate material for their own consumption. Staff are advised not to post their personal details or inappropriate materials on social networking sites. Accessing, making and storing indecent images of children is illegal and will lead to criminal investigation.

Use of Mobile phones - Mobile phones should be switched off or silent at all times. Staff should only use their mobile phones for personal calls or messages during personal time in private away from the eyes of the students. Staff should never store parent's or student's telephone numbers on their mobile phone. Staff will be issued with a school phone for use in case of emergency on school trips or off site activities. Staff should not use their mobile phone or other mobile device as a camera or video /audio recorder to record sound or images of students. **Staff should not have their own mobile phones out or on their desk when children are present.**

Contact with the Media – Have no contact with the media regarding school matters without the express permission of the Headteacher. Only designated persons are entitled to communicate with the press, radio or television companies.

Whistle Blowing – Whistle blowing is the mechanism by which staff can voice their concerns, made in good faith, without fear of repercussion. Balshaw's has a clear and accessible whistle blowing policy that meets the terms of the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998. In accordance with the Balshaw's CE High School Whistle Blowing Policy, staff should report any behaviour by colleagues that raises concern to either the Head teacher or to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, as appropriate. General guidance can be found at- [Advice on whistleblowing](#). The [NSPCC whistleblowing helpline](#) is available for staff who do not feel able to raise child protection or safeguarding concerns internally. Tel: **0800 028 0285** (8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday) Email: help@nspcc.org.uk.

Anyone can make a referral to Children's Services too of course - Children's Social Care Lancashire **0300 123 6720** (Emergency Duty Team / Out of Hours) **0300 123 6722**

Sharing concerns, recording incidents – Staff should be aware of child protection procedures including procedures for dealing with allegations against adults. (See flowchart in staffroom.) Staff who are the subject of an allegation should contact their professional association. Staff are responsible for recording any incident and passing on any information where they have concerns about any matter pertaining to the welfare of any individual or child to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Background

-The code sets out the minimum standards that should apply and is not exhaustive.

-It is recommended that this document is shared with all staff on appointment and those in current employment and that a copy is included in the school's staff handbook.

-Employees whose conduct fails to meet the standards of conduct as set out in this document may be regarded as being in breach of discipline and may be dealt with under the School's Disciplinary Procedure.

Breaches of the law or school policies

- Notify the Headteacher of any known or suspected breaches of the law or of the school's policies, procedures and regulations and co-operate with any investigation of such breaches, particularly in relation to the safeguarding of children, health and safety and financial irregularity. Where this is considered not possible, reference should be made to the school's whistleblowing policy.
- Disclose on appointment or at any time any civil/criminal charges, convictions or being the subject of a criminal investigation process (being charged or in possession of a conviction may not necessarily debar from appointment/employment or lead to disciplinary action; however failure to disclose where required will be considered as a serious act of misconduct)
- Use school equipment provided for the purposes of carrying out their role in a responsible and lawful manner.
- Not provide a professional reference on behalf of the school unless the contents of such reference have been agreed by the Headteacher.

Low Level Concerns

- We ensure that all staff are aware of how to recognise and report **low level concerns** around staff behaviour or conduct.
- 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 pupils.
- We promote an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about all adults working in or on behalf of the school or college (including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors) are dealt with promptly and appropriately. We strive to embed a culture of openness, trust and transparency in which our school's values and expected behaviour set out in the staff code of conduct are lived, monitored and reinforced constantly by all staff.
- We ensure that staff are encouraged and feel confident to self-refer, where, for example, they have found themselves in a situation which could be misinterpreted, might appear compromising to others, and/or on reflection they believe they have behaved in such a way that they consider falls below the expected professional standards.
- All staff are clear on how to report low level concerns and will be empowered to do so. Staff must report their concerns to the Head teacher, Mr Haycocks or Mrs Wilson, Deputy Headteacher. The Headteacher will always be kept informed of a low-level allegations in a timely manner. If concerns are surrounding the Head teacher, this must be referred to the Chair of Governors. If the concern relates to the Chair of Governors the LADo should be contacted. Guidance from Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2023 will be followed in view of recording and storage of such concerns.
- If in doubt whether the concern is a low-level concern, the Headteacher will consult with LADO for guidance.
- The governing body will ensure low level concern procedures and staff behaviour expectations are clearly addressed within the Staff Code of Conduct and procedures are implemented effectively, ensuring that appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard children and facilitate a whole school or college approach to dealing with any concerns.

Staff should ensure they are aware of relevant documentation relating to safeguarding young people:

- **'Guidance for Safer Working Practice'** (Safer Recruitment Consortium, October 2015)

<http://www.rrrecruitment.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/Guidance-for-Safer-Working-Practice-October-2015.pdf>

- **'Professional Standards for Teaching Assistants'** (Unison, NAHT et al, June 2016)

<http://www.naht.org.uk/welcome/news-and-media/key-topics/staff-management/professional-standards-for-teaching-assistants-published/>

- **Behaviour and Discipline in Schools** (DfE, January 2016)

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/488034/Behaviour_and_Discipline_in_Schools_-_A_guide_for_headteachers_and_School_Staff.pdf

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>

This staff Code of Conduct should be read alongside the following documents:

Staff Handbook

Safeguarding, Child Protection Policy and Procedures

Staff Acceptable Behaviour Policy – signed for on 1/9/23 or your first day of work thereafter

Behaviour for Learning Policy

Whistleblowing Policy

Online Safety Policy

I have read and agree to comply with the Balshaw's CE High School Code of Conduct in order to ensure professionalism at all times

Signed:

Print Name:

Date: