CODE OF CONDUCT FOR STAFF

Acting professionally. Maintaining trust.
Safeguarding pupils.



RIVERSIDE BRIDGE SCHOOL

INSPIRE, EMPOWER, ACHIEVE

This policy forms part of the Riverside Bridge School Policy Framework
and should be read alongside any related policies, procedures and guidance.

RIVERSIDE BRIDGE SCHOOL
INSPIRE, EMPOWER, ACHIEVE

OUR COMMITMENT

At Riverside Bridge School, every policy reflects our commitment to creating a safe, inclusive and ambitious school community in which every pupil is valued, every voice matters and every family is respected and supported.

Our policies translate our values into consistent practice. They support high expectations, clear responsibilities, effective partnership and informed decision-making, ensuring that the needs, rights, wellbeing and future outcomes of our pupils remain at the heart of our work.

We work collaboratively, act with integrity and continually reflect upon and improve our practice to achieve the best possible outcomes for every pupil.

POLICY PRINCIPLES

Our Policy Principles underpin how we work together and guide the decisions and actions we take to support every pupil and their families.



POLICY PURPOSE & FRAMEWORK

Riverside Bridge School policies set out the expectations, responsibilities and approaches that support safe, consistent and high-quality practice across the school. They translate our values, statutory responsibilities and professional expectations into clear guidance for everyday decision-making and practice.

Each policy forms part of the Riverside Bridge School Policy Framework and should be read alongside any related policies, procedures, statutory guidance and school frameworks referenced within the document.

Policies apply to the members of the school community identified within each document, including staff, governors, parents and carers, volunteers, contractors and other professionals where relevant. Everyone is expected to understand and apply the requirements appropriate to their role and to seek further guidance where clarification is required.

CURRICULUM DRIVERS



Our Drivers provide a shared golden thread across curriculum, school life, policy and leadership, helping ensure that our decisions and practice remain focused on the experiences and futures we want for every pupil.

STATEMENT OF INTENT

This Staff Code of Conduct sets out the personal and professional standards expected of all adults working at or on behalf of Riverside Bridge School. It explains the expectations, responsibilities and boundaries that support safe, ethical and professional practice and help maintain the trust placed in staff by pupils, families, colleagues and the wider school community.

Riverside Bridge School provides specialist education for children and young people with complex Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. Adults working within the school hold positions of trust and have a particular responsibility to protect pupils' safety, dignity and wellbeing while enabling them to communicate, participate, learn and develop increasing independence.

Professional conduct extends beyond carrying out assigned duties. It includes how staff communicate, make decisions, maintain boundaries, handle information, use technology, work with families and colleagues, represent the school and respond when they become aware of concerns. All adults are therefore expected to demonstrate high standards of integrity, professionalism, accountability and judgement at all times.

Our pupils may be particularly vulnerable because of their age, communication differences, learning needs, disabilities, health needs or reliance upon adults for aspects of their care and support. Staff must understand the inherent imbalance of power within adult–pupil relationships and ensure that their conduct is transparent, appropriate and capable of withstanding professional scrutiny.

The Code also protects staff. Clear professional boundaries, open working practices and prompt reporting of situations that may be misunderstood help reduce ambiguity and enable concerns to be addressed appropriately. Staff are encouraged to seek advice where they are uncertain and to self-report where an interaction or action may have been misinterpreted or fallen short of expected practice.

Safeguarding is central to this Code. Every adult has an individual responsibility to recognise and report safeguarding concerns, allegations and low-level concerns in accordance with the school's procedures. No role, seniority or professional relationship removes this responsibility.

Professional expectations apply both within and, where relevant, outside the workplace. Staff have a right to a private life, but conduct outside work may become a professional matter where it affects safeguarding, suitability to work with children, professional relationships or public confidence in the individual or the school.

The Code cannot anticipate every situation. Where expectations are not explicitly addressed, staff must act in the best interests of pupils, apply sound professional judgement and seek advice from their line manager, the Headteacher or the Designated Safeguarding Lead where appropriate.

Failure to meet the standards set out within this Code may be addressed through appropriate management, disciplinary, safeguarding or regulatory processes according to the nature and seriousness of the concern.

Our responsibility to staff, pupils and the school community

Riverside Bridge School has a responsibility to establish clear professional expectations and to support staff to understand and apply them consistently.

In fulfilling this responsibility, we will:

- communicate the standards of conduct expected of all adults working within the school;
- ensure staff receive appropriate induction, safeguarding training and professional guidance;
- maintain clear expectations regarding professional boundaries and positions of trust;
- support staff to seek advice where they are uncertain about appropriate professional conduct;
- promote an open culture in which concerns and potential boundary issues can be reported promptly;
- ensure allegations and low-level concerns are managed in accordance with statutory safeguarding requirements;
- apply expectations fairly, consistently and proportionately;
- respect confidentiality and individual rights while prioritising safeguarding responsibilities;
- provide reasonable adjustments where required;
- ensure professional concerns are managed through the appropriate policy or procedure;
- review the Code regularly to reflect changes in statutory guidance, professional expectations and school practice.

Through these commitments, we aim to maintain a professional culture in which staff act with integrity, pupils are safeguarded and the trust placed in Riverside Bridge School is protected and strengthened.

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APPROVED BY: Governing Board

APPROVED ON: September 2026

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Section 01

SCOPE

Defining expectations. Clarifying application.

This Code of Conduct applies to all individuals working at or on behalf of Riverside Bridge School, regardless of their role, employment status or length of service. It establishes the professional standards and expectations that apply whenever individuals are acting in connection with the school, whether on the school site, during educational visits, whilst working remotely or when representing the school in any professional capacity.

This Code applies to:

- employees, including teaching staff, co-educators, leaders, administrative staff, site staff and support staff
- agency and supply staff;
- volunteers and students on placement;
- governors and trustees when undertaking duties on behalf of the school;
- contractors, consultants and any other individuals working within the school environment where appropriate.

All individuals are expected to familiarise themselves with this Code and ensure that their conduct consistently reflects the values, ethos and professional expectations of Riverside Bridge School. Compliance with this Code forms part of each individual's professional responsibilities and should be read alongside the school's safeguarding, employment and operational policies.

Where professional standards, statutory guidance or regulatory requirements place a higher expectation on particular groups of staff, those requirements will apply in addition to the expectations contained within this Code. This includes, but is not limited to, the Teachers' Standards, statutory safeguarding guidance and any professional codes of practice relevant to an individual's role.

Failure to meet the standards set out within this Code may result in action being taken in accordance with the school's disciplinary procedures and, where appropriate, referral to external agencies or professional regulators.

Section 02

LEGISLATIVE AND PROFESSIONAL FRAMEWORK

Meeting duties. Applying standards. Maintaining professional accountability.

This Code of Conduct has been developed in accordance with the statutory, regulatory and professional requirements that apply to schools and to individuals working with children and young people.

It is informed by:

- the School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009;
- Keeping Children Safe in Education;
- Working Together to Safeguard Children;
- the Teachers' Standards, where applicable;
- the Equality Act 2010;
- the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulation;
- the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974;
- the Prevent duty under the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015;
- the school's funding agreement and the Articles of Association of Partnership Learning;
- any relevant professional standards, registration requirements or codes of practice applying to an individual's role.

This Code must be read alongside the school's policies and procedures, including those relating to:

- child protection and safeguarding;
- allegations and low-level concerns;
- whistleblowing;
- staff disciplinary and grievance procedures;
- equality, diversity, equity and inclusion;
- online safety and acceptable use of technology;
- mobile and smart technology;
- data protection and information sharing;
- health and safety;
- safer recruitment;
- gifts and hospitality;
- positive support, physical intervention and intimate care.

Where legislation, statutory guidance or a professional code place a higher or more specific duty on an individual, that duty will apply in addition to the expectations set out in this Code.

Staff are responsible for ensuring that they understand the requirements relevant to their role and for seeking guidance where they are unsure how those requirements apply in practice.

Section 03

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS AND EXPECTATIONS

Acting with integrity. Modelling professionalism. Maintaining trust.

Every member of staff is expected to uphold the highest standards of professional conduct and to act in a manner that reflects the values, ethos and reputation of Riverside Bridge School. Staff are role models for pupils and ambassadors for the school, and their behaviour should promote confidence, trust and respect at all times. All staff are expected to:

- act in the best interests of pupils and place their welfare above all other considerations;
- demonstrate honesty, integrity, professionalism and accountability in all aspects of their work;
- treat pupils, families, colleagues and visitors with dignity, courtesy and respect;
- promote equality, diversity, equity and inclusion, ensuring that everyone is treated fairly and without discrimination;
- contribute positively to a safe, respectful and collaborative working environment;
- maintain appropriate professional boundaries at all times;
- follow lawful and reasonable management instructions;
- comply with school policies, statutory guidance and professional standards relevant to their role;
- use professional judgement, seeking advice where necessary;
- recognise conduct, both inside and outside the workplace, may affect public confidence in the individual, the school and the wider profession.

Staff are expected to work collaboratively with colleagues and external professionals, recognising that effective partnership working is fundamental to achieving positive outcomes for pupils. Professional disagreements should be managed respectfully and constructively, using appropriate management processes where necessary.

Individuals must ensure that they remain professionally competent and participate in mandatory training, professional development and supervision appropriate to their role. Staff are responsible for keeping themselves informed of changes to statutory guidance, school policies and professional expectations that relate to their responsibilities. Where a member of staff becomes aware of any matter that may affect their suitability to work with children, their ability to undertake their role safely, or the reputation of the school, they must inform the Headteacher or an appropriate member of the Senior Leadership Team without delay. Professional judgement should always be exercised in a manner that protects pupils, supports colleagues and upholds the reputation and integrity of Riverside Bridge School.

Section 04

SAFEGUARDING RESPONSIBILITIES

Remaining vigilant. Reporting promptly. Protecting pupils.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is the responsibility of every adult working at Riverside Bridge School. All staff have a duty to create a safe environment in which pupils are protected from harm, abuse, neglect, exploitation and discrimination, and where they feel listened to, valued and supported.

Every member of staff must act in accordance with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Keeping Children Safe in Education and all other relevant statutory guidance. Safeguarding responsibilities apply at all times and cannot be delegated.

All staff are expected to:

- complete mandatory safeguarding, Prevent and relevant statutory training;
- understand the indicators of abuse, neglect, exploitation and extra-familial harm;
- maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' when considering safeguarding concerns;
- report any concern, disclosure or allegation immediately using the school's agreed safeguarding procedures;
- record concerns accurately, objectively and without delay;
- never promise confidentiality to a pupil where safeguarding concerns are disclosed;
- co-operate fully with safeguarding investigations and multi-agency working;
- contribute to a culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

Staff working at Riverside Bridge School should recognise that many pupils communicate in non-traditional ways and that changes in presentation, regulation, communication or engagement may be indicators of unmet need or potential harm. Professional curiosity, careful observation and timely information sharing are therefore essential components of safeguarding practice.

Failure to fulfil safeguarding responsibilities may place pupils at risk and may result in disciplinary action, referral to professional regulatory bodies or other statutory agencies where appropriate.

Section 05

ALLEGATIONS, LOW-LEVEL CONCERNS AND WHISTLEBLOWING

Speaking up. Reporting concerns. Maintaining openness.

Riverside Bridge School is committed to maintaining a culture of openness, transparency and accountability in which the welfare of pupils is paramount. All staff have a responsibility to report concerns about the behaviour or conduct of adults working within the school, regardless of their role or position. Concerns relating to the conduct of staff will be managed promptly, fairly and in accordance with statutory guidance, ensuring that pupils are safeguarded whilst providing appropriate support to those involved.

5.1 Allegations that Meet the Harm Threshold

An allegation that meets the harm threshold is one where it is alleged that a member of staff, volunteer, contractor or any adult working on behalf of the school 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;
- behaved, either inside or outside of work, in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

Where such an allegation is made, the Headteacher will act as the Case Manager. Where the allegation concerns the Headteacher, this responsibility will transfer to the Chair of Governors. The school will follow the procedures set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education, including consultation with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) where required.

All allegations will be managed confidentially, proportionately and without unnecessary delay.

5.2 Low-Level Concerns

A low-level concern is any behaviour by an adult working in or on behalf of the school that does not meet the harm threshold but is inconsistent with this Code of Conduct or gives rise to a sense of unease, however small.

Examples may include, but are not limited to:

- inappropriate familiarity or over-personal interactions with pupils;
- unnecessary one-to-one situations without appropriate transparency;
- inappropriate language, humour or comments;
- failing to maintain professional boundaries;

- behaviour that could be misinterpreted by others;
- any conduct that falls below the professional standards expected by the school.

All staff are expected to report low-level concerns promptly in accordance with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. Staff are also encouraged to self-report where they believe their own actions may have been misunderstood or where an unintended breach of professional expectations has occurred. Low-level concerns will be considered proportionately and used to promote a culture of continuous professional reflection, learning and safeguarding.

5.3 Whistleblowing

All staff have a professional duty to raise concerns where they believe that unlawful, unsafe, unethical or inappropriate practice is taking place.

Concerns may relate to, but are not limited to:

- safeguarding failures;
- conduct that places pupils or staff at risk;
- criminal activity;
- fraud or financial malpractice;
- breaches of statutory duties;
- serious health and safety concerns;
- attempts to conceal any of the above.

Concerns should normally be reported to the Headteacher. Where the concern relates to the Headteacher, or where this would be inappropriate, concerns should be reported to the Chair of Governors in accordance with the school's Whistleblowing Policy.

No member of staff will suffer detriment for raising a genuine concern in good faith. The school is committed to ensuring that concerns are taken seriously, investigated appropriately and managed confidentially wherever possible.

Section 06

PROFESSIONAL BOUNDARIES AND STAFF–PUPIL RELATIONSHIPS

Maintaining boundaries. Protecting pupils. Protecting staff.

All adults working at Riverside Bridge School are in positions of trust and must maintain clear, appropriate and professional boundaries with pupils at all times. Professional relationships must always promote the safety, dignity, wellbeing and best interests of the pupil.

Staff must recognise that many pupils attending Riverside Bridge School are particularly vulnerable due to their age, communication differences, learning needs or disabilities. Professional boundaries are therefore essential in protecting both pupils and staff from actual or perceived harm.

Staff are expected to:

- build positive, respectful and supportive relationships with pupils through consistent professional practice;
- treat all pupils fairly, without favouritism or discrimination;
- maintain relationships that are open, transparent and capable of withstanding professional scrutiny;
- ensure one-to-one working is appropriate, proportionate and, wherever possible, observable by others or known to colleagues;
- use only approved school communication systems and procedures;
- follow agreed positive support, intimate care, moving and handling, healthcare and other individual support plan;
- ensure that any physical contact is necessary, appropriate, proportionate and undertaken in accordance with the pupil's assessed needs and school procedures; and
- immediately report any incident that could be misunderstood or give rise to concern.
- Staff must not:
- develop personal, secretive or inappropriate relationships with pupils;
- exchange personal contact details or communicate using personal phones, email accounts, messaging applications or social media;
- meet pupils outside school without the explicit approval of the Headteacher and an appropriate risk assessment;

- give or accept gifts outside the school's agreed procedures where this could compromise professional judgement;
- use language, humour or behaviour that could reasonably be viewed as inappropriate, discriminatory, intimidating or grooming behaviour;
- engage in any conduct that could exploit the trust placed in them by pupils or their families.

Where a member of staff becomes concerned that their own actions, or those of another adult, may have crossed professional boundaries, they must report this immediately through the school's safeguarding procedures. Early reporting protects pupils, supports staff and promotes a culture of openness, accountability and continuous safeguarding vigilance.

Section 07

COMMUNICATION WITH PUPILS AND FAMILIES

Communicating respectfully. Maintaining boundaries. Building trust.

Effective communication is fundamental to building positive relationships with pupils and families. All communication must be professional, respectful, transparent and undertaken in accordance with school procedures.

Staff must communicate in ways that are appropriate to each pupil's communication profile, ensuring that interactions promote dignity, understanding and inclusion. Wherever possible, communication should reflect the school's Total Communication approach and support pupils to participate meaningfully in school life.

Communication with parents and carers should always be courteous, factual and solution-focused. Staff are expected to work collaboratively with families whilst recognising that professional boundaries must always be maintained.

Staff must:

- communicate respectfully and professionally at all times;
- use only approved school communication systems and platforms;
- maintain accurate and objective records where required;
- share information in accordance with safeguarding and data protection requirements;
- refer complaints, disagreements or complex matters through appropriate management channels;
- seek support from senior leaders where communication becomes challenging or contentious.

Staff must not:

- communicate with pupils or parents using personal email accounts, personal telephone numbers or private messaging applications;
- engage in arguments or inappropriate discussions in person or online;
- discuss confidential school matters with unauthorised individuals;
- make commitments or promises on behalf of the school without appropriate authority.

Section 08

SOCIAL MEDIA AND ONLINE CONDUCT

Thinking professionally. Protecting privacy. Maintaining confidence.

The school recognises that social media forms part of everyday life. However, staff must ensure that their online conduct maintains public confidence in their professional role and does not compromise the safety of pupils, colleagues or the reputation of Riverside Bridge School.
Professional standards apply equally to online activity as they do to conduct within the workplace.

Staff are expected to:

- maintain appropriate privacy settings on personal social media accounts;
- consider carefully the content they publish and its potential impact on their professional reputation;
- report any online activity that may place pupils or the school at risk;
- ensure any school-related social media activity is authorised and follows school procedures; and
- use professional judgement when engaging in online discussions.

Staff must not:

- communicate with pupils through personal social media accounts or messaging platforms;
- accept or request social media connections with current pupils;
- publish confidential information relating to the school, pupils, families or colleagues;
- post comments, photographs or content that may damage the reputation of the school or Trust;
- identify pupils online without appropriate consent and authorisation;
- engage in online behaviour that could reasonably call into question their suitability to work with children.

Staff should be aware that conduct outside working hours, including activity on social media, may still have professional consequences where it affects the confidence placed in them or the reputation of the school.

Section 09

USE OF TECHNOLOGY, MOBILE PHONES AND SMART DEVICES

Using technology safely. Protecting information. Minimising risk.

Technology provided by Riverside Bridge School exists primarily to support teaching, learning, communication and the effective operation of the school. All technology must be used responsibly, securely and in accordance with the school's ICT, Online Safety and Mobile & Smart Technology Policies. Staff are responsible for protecting school information, maintaining confidentiality and ensuring that technology is used safely and appropriately at all times.

Staff must:

- use school equipment primarily for professional purposes;
- protect passwords and maintain the security of school systems;
- report any data breaches, cyber security concerns or misuse immediately;
- follow all acceptable use, cyber security and information governance procedures;
- ensure electronic communication remains professional and appropriate.

Use of Personal Mobile Phones

To safeguard pupils and minimise unnecessary distractions, personal mobile phones, smart watches and similar devices must not be used whilst supervising pupils unless authorised by a member of the Senior Leadership Team in exceptional circumstances.

Personal devices should remain securely stored during working time and should only be used during authorised breaks in designated staff areas. Under no circumstances must staff:

- use personal devices to photograph, film or record pupils;
- store school information or pupil data on personal devices;
- use personal devices to communicate with pupils or parents;
- use mobile phones whilst directly supervising pupils except where authorised for emergency purposes;
- access inappropriate or unlawful material using school equipment or networks.

The school reserves the right to monitor the use of its ICT systems in accordance with relevant legislation, school policy and acceptable use agreements.

Failure to comply with these expectations may result in disciplinary action and, where appropriate, referral under safeguarding or data protection procedures.

Section 10

CONFIDENTIALITY, DATA PROTECTION AND INFORMATION SECURITY

Protecting information. Sharing lawfully. Maintaining confidentiality.

During the course of their employment, staff will have access to confidential and sensitive information relating to pupils, families, colleagues and the operation of Riverside Bridge School. All information must be handled lawfully, securely and only for legitimate professional purposes. Staff are expected to maintain the highest standards of confidentiality and comply with the Data Protection Act 2018, the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR), the school's Data Protection Policy and Information Sharing procedures.

Staff must:

- access only the information necessary to fulfil their professional responsibilities;
- share confidential information only where there is a lawful basis or safeguarding requirement to do so;
- ensure records are accurate, secure and stored appropriately;
- protect passwords, electronic devices and paper records from unauthorised access;
- follow the school's procedures for storing, transporting and disposing of confidential information;
- report any actual or suspected data breach immediately in accordance with school procedures;
- exercise professional judgement when discussing confidential matters.

Staff must not:

- disclose confidential information to unauthorised individuals;
- discuss pupils, families, colleagues or school business in public areas or on social media;
- remove confidential information from school unless authorised and appropriate security measures are in place;
- store school information on personal devices or personal cloud storage;
- use confidential information for personal benefit or any purpose unrelated to their professional duties.

The duty of confidentiality continues after employment with Riverside Bridge School has ended.

Safeguarding concerns should always be shared in accordance with statutory guidance and the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. The duty to safeguard children overrides any expectation of confidentiality where a child may be at risk of harm.

Section 11

EQUALITY, RESPECT AND PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Treating everyone fairly. Working respectfully. Strengthening relationships.

Riverside Bridge School is committed to fostering a professional culture built upon dignity, respect, inclusion and collaboration. Every member of staff has a responsibility to contribute positively to an environment in which pupils, families, colleagues and visitors feel valued, safe and respected.

Staff are expected to model the behaviours and attitudes that support the school's values and promote positive relationships throughout the school community.

All staff must:

- treat everyone with dignity, courtesy and professionalism;
- promote equality, diversity, equity and inclusion in all aspects of their work;
- challenge discrimination, prejudice, bullying, harassment and victimisation where it is safe and appropriate to do so;
- value different backgrounds, cultures, beliefs, identities and lived experiences;
- work collaboratively with colleagues and external professionals in the best interests of pupils;
- communicate respectfully, even where professional opinions differ;
- contribute to a positive working environment that supports staff wellbeing and effective teamwork.

Staff must not:

- engage in bullying, intimidation, harassment or victimisation;
- discriminate unlawfully against any individual;
- abuse their position, authority or influence;
- undermine colleagues publicly or behave in a manner that damages professional relationships;
- behave in any way that conflicts with the school's Equality, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy.

Professional disagreements should be managed respectfully through appropriate management processes. Staff are expected to raise concerns constructively and contribute to a culture of openness, accountability and continuous improvement.

Section 12

HONESTY, INTEGRITY AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Acting honestly. Declaring interests. Maintaining impartiality.

Staff are expected to demonstrate honesty, integrity and impartiality in all aspects of their professional practice. Decisions should always be made in the best interests of pupils and the school, free from personal gain or improper influence.

Staff must act in a manner that maintains public confidence in their professional judgement and the reputation of Riverside Bridge School.

Staff are expected to:

- provide accurate and truthful information in all professional records, reports and communications;
- use school resources responsibly and only for authorised purposes;
- declare any actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest as soon as it arises;
- declare outside employment where required under school procedures;
- disclose any circumstances that may affect their suitability to work with children or perform their role safely;
- comply with the school's financial procedures and procurement requirements;
- report any suspected fraud, financial irregularity, corruption or misuse of school resources.

Staff must not:

- falsify records, qualifications, timesheets, expenses or other documentation;
- misuse school funds, property or equipment for personal benefit;
- accept inducements, bribes or inappropriate hospitality;
- allow personal relationships or external interests to influence professional decisions;
- knowingly withhold information that the school has a legitimate need to receive.

Where uncertainty exists regarding a potential conflict of interest or ethical issue, staff should seek advice from their line manager before proceeding.

Any suspected dishonest, fraudulent or corrupt activity will be investigated in accordance with the school's disciplinary procedures and, where appropriate, referred to external agencies.

Section 13

GIFTS, HOSPITALITY AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Maintaining independence. Avoiding influence. Declaring appropriately.

Professional judgement must never be influenced, or be seen to be influenced, by gifts, hospitality or personal relationships. Staff are expected to act with integrity at all times and to avoid any situation that could create an actual, perceived or potential conflict of interest.

Modest tokens of appreciation from pupils or families, such as those traditionally offered at the end of the school year or at festive periods, may be accepted where they are of nominal value and could not reasonably be perceived as influencing professional judgement.

Staff must:

- declare any gift, hospitality or benefit that could reasonably be perceived as influencing their professional responsibilities;
- decline gifts, hospitality or favours that may create an obligation or conflict of interest;
- seek advice from a member of the Senior Leadership Team where there is uncertainty about accepting a gift;
- comply with the school's Gifts and Hospitality Policy and financial procedures.

Staff must not:

- solicit gifts or personal benefits;
- accept money, loans or significant personal gifts from pupils, parents or external organisations;
- offer gifts to individual pupils outside approved school arrangements;
- use their professional position for personal, financial or commercial gain;
- allow personal relationships or external interests to influence professional decisions.

Any actual or perceived conflict of interest should be declared immediately to the Headteacher or an appropriate member of the Senior Leadership Team.

Section 14

DRESS, APPEARANCE AND PERSONAL PRESENTATION

Presenting professionally. Dressing safely. Reflecting our setting.

Staff are ambassadors for Riverside Bridge School and are expected to present themselves in a manner that promotes confidence, professionalism and safety. Dress and personal presentation should reflect the specialist nature of the school, support positive relationships with pupils and families, and enable staff to carry out their duties safely.

Clothing, footwear, jewellery, nails and other aspects of personal presentation must be appropriate to the activities undertaken. Staff should recognise that many roles involve physical activity, personal care, moving and handling, positive support, outdoor learning and close contact with pupils.

Staff are expected to:

- dress professionally and appropriately for their role;
- maintain a good standard of personal hygiene and presentation;
- wear clothing and footwear that allow them to move safely and respond appropriately to pupils;
- wear school-issued identification at all times while on site;
- wear any required uniform, personal protective equipment or high-visibility clothing;
- ensure jewellery, nails and accessories do not create a risk to pupils, colleagues or themselves;
- follow any additional dress or safety requirements applying to particular activities or areas of work.

Examples of clothing and presentation that are not appropriate

The following examples are provided to make the school's expectations clear. They are not exhaustive, and professional judgement must still be exercised.

Staff must not wear:

- clothing that is excessively revealing, transparent, very low-cut or exposes underwear or excessive areas of skin;
- spaghetti-strap tops, low-cut vest tops or clothing that is unsuitable for close physical work with pupils;
- ripped jeans, ripped trousers or clothing with significant tears or holes;

- flip-flops, sliders, backless footwear, open-toed shoes or open-toed sandals;
- footwear that does not provide adequate grip, stability or protection;
- clothing displaying offensive, discriminatory, sexual, party-political or otherwise inappropriate slogans, symbols or images;
- hats or hoods inside the school building, except where required for religious, medical or disability-related reasons;
- any clothing or accessory that could be grabbed easily, cause injury or interfere with the safe delivery of support.

Skirts and dresses must be of an appropriate and modest length. Shorts must be tailored and suitable for a professional school environment. Sportswear may be worn where it is appropriate to the activity being delivered, but staff should change into suitable professional clothing afterwards where required.

Smart, comfortable footwear should be worn and must be secure, practical and appropriate to the physical demands of working within a specialist school. Trainers are permitted; however, staff are advised to avoid expensive brands or particularly bright colours where possible. Footwear must provide appropriate grip, stability and protection for the duties being undertaken.

Jewellery, nails and accessories

Jewellery must be discreet and must not present a foreseeable risk during teaching, personal care, moving and handling or positive support. Staff wear personal jewellery at their own risk, and the school cannot accept responsibility for its loss or damage.

False nails, acrylic nails and excessively long natural nails are not appropriate where they may:

- scratch or graze a pupil;
- affect safe personal or intimate care;
- interfere with infection prevention and hygiene;
- compromise the safe use of gloves or other protective equipment;
- create a risk during physical support or intervention.

Where nails, jewellery or accessories present a health and safety concern, the member of staff will be required to remove, shorten or otherwise address them.

Off-site activities and high-visibility clothing

Staff must wear school-issued high-visibility clothing when required, including during:

- morning arrival and end-of-day dismissal;
- playground, break and lunchtime duties;
- community-based learning;
- educational visits;
- any activity where increased visibility is necessary to support safety.

School jackets should be worn for off-site activities where directed or where this supports the clear identification of staff.

The school recognises and respects religious, cultural, disability-related and medical requirements and will consider reasonable adjustments where appropriate, provided that pupil and staff safety is not compromised.

Where a member of staff's clothing or presentation does not meet these expectations, the matter will normally be addressed promptly and professionally. Where the concern cannot be resolved immediately, or where the clothing presents a health and safety or safeguarding risk, the member of staff may be required to change before undertaking their duties. Repeated or serious breaches may be addressed through the school's disciplinary procedures.

Section15

HEALTH, SAFETY AND FITNESS FOR WORK

Working safely. Managing risk. Protecting wellbeing.

Riverside Bridge School is committed to providing a safe working environment for pupils, staff and visitors.

Every member of staff shares responsibility for maintaining high standards of health and safety and for complying with the school's Health and Safety Policy.

Staff must take reasonable care for their own health, safety and wellbeing, as well as that of others who may be affected by their actions or omissions.

Staff are expected to:

- comply with all health and safety procedures, risk assessments and safe systems of work;
- report hazards, defects, accidents, incidents and near misses promptly using the school's reporting procedures;
- use equipment and personal protective equipment safely and appropriately;
- participate in mandatory health and safety training relevant to their role;
- co-operate with emergency procedures, including fire evacuation, lockdown and emergency management arrangements;
- inform the school where a medical condition, medication or other circumstance may affect their ability to undertake their duties safely.

Staff must not:

- intentionally misuse safety equipment or emergency systems;
- undertake tasks for which they have not received appropriate instruction or training;
- ignore identified health and safety risks;
- place themselves, pupils or colleagues at unnecessary risk through unsafe practice.

Managers have an additional responsibility to promote a positive safety culture, ensure that appropriate risk assessments are implemented and reviewed, and support staff in maintaining safe working practices.

Section 16

DECLARATION OF SUITABILITY TO WORK WITH CHILDREN

Remaining suitable. Declaring changes. Protecting trust.

Riverside Bridge School is committed to ensuring that all adults working within the school remain suitable to work with children throughout their employment. Staff have an ongoing professional and contractual responsibility to disclose any change in circumstances that may affect their suitability to undertake their role or fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities.

The duty to disclose applies throughout employment and is not limited to recruitment or pre-employment checks.

Staff must inform the Headteacher, or where appropriate the Chair of Governors, without delay if they:

- are arrested, charged with, cautioned for or convicted of any criminal offence (other than minor motoring offences that do not affect their role);
- become subject to police investigation or bail conditions that may affect their employment or safeguarding responsibilities;
- become subject to any professional conduct investigation or restriction imposed by a regulatory or professional body;
- become disqualified from working with children or become subject to any prohibition, barring or restriction;
- become aware of any change that may affect their enhanced DBS status or suitability to work with children;
- become subject to any court order or legal restriction relevant to safeguarding;
- become subject to immigration or employment restrictions affecting their right to work;
- develop a medical condition or commence medication that may significantly affect their ability to perform their duties safely;
- become aware of any other circumstance that could reasonably call into question their suitability to work in a specialist educational setting.

Relationships and personal connections

To protect pupils, maintain professional boundaries and avoid conflicts of interest, staff must declare any personal relationship that could reasonably affect their professional responsibilities.

This includes, but is not limited to:

- close personal or family relationships with pupils or their families that are not already known to the school;
- intimate or close personal relationships with another employee where there is a direct or indirect line management, recruitment, disciplinary or decision-making responsibility;
- relationships that could create an actual or perceived conflict of interest;
- any circumstance that could compromise professional judgement or public confidence in the school's decision-making.

Such declarations will be managed sensitively and confidentially and will not necessarily prevent employment. Where appropriate, reasonable management arrangements will be implemented to avoid conflicts of interest or maintain appropriate professional boundaries.

Failure to disclose relevant information may itself be treated as a disciplinary matter and, where safeguarding concerns arise, may result in referral to the appropriate external agencies.

Section 17

ALCOHOL, DRUGS, SMOKING AND VAPING

Remaining fit for work. Protecting safety. Maintaining professionalism.

Riverside Bridge School is committed to providing a safe, healthy and professional environment for pupils, staff and visitors. Staff are expected to report for work fit to undertake their duties safely and effectively and must not allow alcohol, drugs or other substances to impair their judgement, performance or ability to safeguard pupils.

Staff must not:

- attend work whilst under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs;
- consume alcohol during the working day, including during breaks, unless expressly authorised by the Headteacher for an official school event;
- possess, use, distribute or supply illegal drugs on school premises or whilst undertaking school business;
- misuse prescription or over-the-counter medication in a way that affects their fitness for work;
- permit their professional judgement or conduct to be impaired by alcohol or drugs.

Staff taking prescribed medication that may affect their ability to work safely, operate equipment, drive or respond to emergencies must inform their line manager at the earliest opportunity so that appropriate support or adjustments can be considered. Information will be managed sensitively and confidentially.

Smoking and vaping are not permitted anywhere within the school buildings, school grounds, school vehicles or during the supervision of pupils, including educational visits and off-site activities.

Staff should not smoke or vape whilst wearing clothing or identification that clearly identifies them as representing Riverside Bridge School in public.

Concerns regarding alcohol or substance misuse will be managed sensitively through the appropriate employment, wellbeing or disciplinary procedures according to the circumstances. Where pupil safety may be affected, safeguarding action will take priority.

Section 18

ATTENDANCE, PUNCTUALITY AND RELIABILITY

Being dependable. Meeting responsibilities. Supporting continuity.

The effective operation of Riverside Bridge School depends upon staff being reliable, punctual and available to fulfil their contractual responsibilities. Consistent attendance supports continuity of education, positive relationships with pupils and the safe operation of the school.

Staff are expected to:

- attend work punctually and be ready to commence duties at their contractual start time;
- follow the school's procedures for reporting absence, lateness and medical appointments;
- provide certification for sickness absence where required;
- attend mandatory meetings, training and professional development unless authorised otherwise;
- notify their line manager as soon as reasonably practicable where unforeseen circumstances affect attendance;
- work collaboratively to minimise disruption to pupils and colleagues.

Persistent lateness, unauthorised absence or repeated failure to comply with absence-reporting procedures may be managed through the Sickness Absence Policy, Leave of Absence Policy or Disciplinary Policy, as appropriate.

The school recognises that staff may experience periods of ill health or personal difficulty and is committed to supporting employee wellbeing through appropriate occupational health referrals, reasonable adjustments and supportive management where appropriate.

Section 19

CONDUCT OUTSIDE OF WORK

Maintaining trust. Exercising judgement. Protecting professional standing.

Staff are expected to recognise that their conduct outside working hours may affect public confidence in their professional role and the reputation of Riverside Bridge School.

While staff have the right to a private life, this must be balanced against their professional responsibilities and their position of trust.

Staff must ensure that their behaviour outside work does not:

- undermine their suitability to work with children;
- bring the school or Trust into disrepute;
- compromise safeguarding;
- damage professional relationships with pupils, families or colleagues;
- conflict with the Nolan Principles of public life.

Staff must comply with the disclosure requirements set out in Section 16 - Declaration of Suitability to Work with Children. Any conduct or change in circumstances outside work that may affect safeguarding, professional suitability or the school's legitimate interests must be reported in accordance with that section.

Staff must not engage in conduct, whether in person or online, that could reasonably be viewed as discriminatory, abusive, threatening, harassing or otherwise incompatible with their professional responsibilities.

The school will consider conduct outside work on a case-by-case basis, taking account of its relevance to the individual's role, safeguarding responsibilities, public confidence and the reputation of Riverside Bridge School.

Section 20

USE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY, EQUIPMENT AND VEHICLES

Using resources responsibly. Protecting assets. Maintaining security.

Riverside Bridge School provides staff with access to buildings, equipment, technology, vehicles and other resources to support the delivery of education and the safe operation of the school. Staff are expected to use all school property responsibly, lawfully and solely for authorised purposes.

All staff have a duty to protect school assets, minimise waste and report damage, defects or loss promptly. Staff must:

- use school equipment, technology and resources responsibly and in accordance with relevant policies;
- take reasonable care of school buildings, furniture, vehicles and equipment;
- report faults, defects, accidents, theft or damage without delay;
- ensure school property is returned when requested or upon leaving employment;
- use school vehicles only where authorised and appropriately licensed;
- follow all security procedures relating to keys, access cards, alarms and restricted areas.

Staff must not:

- deliberately misuse, damage or remove school property without authorisation;
- use school equipment or resources for unauthorised personal, political or commercial purposes;
- permit unauthorised individuals to use school equipment, buildings or vehicles;
- duplicate or share security passes, keys or access codes without permission;

  install unauthorised software or connect unauthorised devices to the school's network.

The school reserves the right to monitor the use of its premises, ICT systems and equipment where this is lawful, proportionate and necessary to protect pupils, staff, information or school property.

Section 21

BREACHES OF THIS CODE

Addressing concerns. Acting proportionately. Maintaining standards.

This Code of Conduct forms part of the professional expectations for all individuals within its scope. Staff are expected to familiarise themselves with its contents and to seek clarification where they are uncertain about any aspect of their responsibilities.

Where concerns arise that an employee has failed to meet the standards set out within this Code, the school will consider the circumstances of each case individually, taking account of the nature of the concern, any safeguarding implications, previous conduct and the potential impact on pupils, colleagues or the wider school community.

Depending upon the seriousness of the matter, a breach of this Code may be addressed through:

- professional guidance or informal management support;
- additional supervision, training or development;
- formal management action;
- the school's Capability Procedure where appropriate;
- the school's Disciplinary Procedure;
- referral to external agencies, including the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA), professional regulators or the police where required.

Serious misconduct or gross misconduct may result in dismissal.

Nothing within this Code prevents the school from taking immediate action where this is necessary to safeguard pupils, staff or members of the public.

Section 22

MONITORING, REVIEW AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Monitoring practice. Maintaining accountability. Reviewing expectations.

The Governing Board has overall responsibility for ensuring that Riverside Bridge School maintains high standards of professional conduct, integrity and safeguarding.

The Headteacher is responsible for implementing this Code, promoting a culture of professionalism and ensuring that expectations are applied fairly and consistently across the school.

Senior leaders and line managers are responsible for:

- modelling the standards set out within this Code;
- ensuring staff understand their professional responsibilities;
- addressing concerns promptly and proportionately;
- supporting staff through advice, supervision and professional development;
- monitoring compliance through routine leadership, supervision and quality assurance processes.

All employees are individually responsible for complying with this Code and for seeking advice whenever they are uncertain about the appropriate course of action.

This Code will be reviewed annually, or sooner where changes in legislation, statutory guidance or operational requirements make this necessary.

Section 23

RELATED POLICIES & FRAMEWORKS

Connecting practice. Strengthening consistency.

This Code should be read alongside the school's wider governance framework, including but not limited to:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Disciplinary Policy
- Capability Policy
- Equality, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Staff Wellbeing Policy
- ICT Acceptable Use Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Mobile and Smart Technology Policy
- Positive Support Policy
- Intimate Care Policy
- Educational Visits Policy
- Emergency Management and Business Continuity Plan
- Risk Assessment Policy
- Sickness Absence Policy
- Leave of Absence Policy

All staff are required to confirm that they have read, understood and will comply with this Code of Conduct as part of the school's induction process and whenever significant revisions are made.

APPENDIX

RIVERSIDE
BRIDGE SCHOOL
INSPIRE, EMPOWER, ACHIEVE

CODE OF CONDUCT
FOR STAFF

Professional standards that protect our pupils, colleagues and school community.

We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of every pupil. Every member of staff is expected to uphold the highest standards of professionalism, integrity and conduct in everything they do.

SAFEGUARD EVERY CHILD
The welfare and safety of pupils is our highest priority. We follow safeguarding procedures and speak up about any concerns.

PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS
We maintain clear boundaries, act with integrity and build positive, respectful relationships with pupils, families and colleagues.

COMMUNICATION MATTERS
We communicate professionally, respectfully and using approved school systems at all times.

USE TECHNOLOGY RESPONSIBLY
We use school technology and devices safely, securely and only for professional purposes.

RESPECT & CONFIDENTIALITY
We treat everyone with respect and protect personal information. Safeguarding concerns are shared in line with policy.

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION
We value diversity and ensure equality, inclusion and fairness in everything we do.

ACT WITH INTEGRITY
We are honest, fair and impartial. We avoid conflicts of interest and use school resources responsibly.

GIFTS, HOSPITALITY & CONFLICTS
We do not accept or offer gifts or favours that could influence our judgement or create a conflict of interest.

HEALTH, SAFETY & WELLBEING
We follow health and safety procedures and take care of ourselves and others in our school environment.

BE RELIABLE
We are punctual, attend regularly and follow absence procedures.

PROTECT SCHOOL PROPERTY
We use school property and equipment responsibly and report damage, loss or misuse.

DECLARATIONS & DISCLOSURES
We must declare any changes that may affect our suitability to work with children.

ALCOHOL, DRUGS, SMOKING & VAPING
We do not attend work under the influence and do not smoke or vape on site.

CONDUCT OUTSIDE WORK
We uphold the values of the school in our personal lives and online activity.

RAISE CONCERNS & SEEK ADVICE
We understand this Code and know where to get support and report concerns.

IF YOU ARE UNSURE, ASK. IF YOU HAVE A CONCERN, REPORT IT.
- Report safeguarding concerns immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
- Speak to your Line Manager regarding professional conduct or policy queries.
- Concerns about the Headteacher should be reported to the Chair of Governors.
- The Whistleblowing Policy may be used where appropriate.

WHY IT MATTERS
- It keeps our pupils safe
- It maintains trust and confidence in our school
- It supports a positive and respectful environment
- It protects you and your colleagues
- It upholds the reputation of Riverside Bridge School

Inspiring communication, empowering independence, achieving brighter futures.