



Lanesend Primary School

Code of Conduct Policy 2022

Statutory Policy

Signed: **Date:**
(Headteacher)

Signed: **Date:**
(Chair of Trustees)

Review Date: January 2023 (Yearly)
Reviewed By: Headteacher and Money Group

Lanesend Primary School

Code of Conduct Policy

1. Introduction

The Trustees of Lanesend Primary School have a legal duty under section 175 of the Education Act 2002 to safeguard and promote the welfare of children by creating and maintaining a safe learning environment.

In this regard, all Lanesend Primary School staff have a duty to keep children and young people safe and protect them from harm. Throughout this code of conduct the word 'staff' refers to both paid and unpaid members of the school and applies to all staff, Trustees and volunteers working in school.

Staff should ensure that they set examples of behaviour and conduct which can be copied by our children. All staff must, therefore, demonstrate high standards of conduct in order to encourage our children to do the same, and must avoid putting themselves at risk of allegations of abusive or unprofessional conduct. Adults should work and be seen to work, in an open and transparent way.

The Public are also entitled to expect the highest standards of conduct from school staff, Trustees and volunteers and to have trust and confidence in their integrity.

All adults working in Lanesend Primary School must therefore act with the utmost good faith with regard to the business of the school and not do anything, which may adversely affect its reputation.

The following code has been drawn up with a view to reducing the risk of staff being accused of improper or unprofessional conduct in all aspects of their work. It aims to help staff work safely and professionally and clarify what behaviour constitutes safe practice and what is unacceptable and/or illegal.

The Code refers closely to the IRSC Guidance for Safe Working Practice for the Protection of Children and Adults in Education Settings and has been agreed following consultation with the recognised trade unions.

2. Scope

The Code applies to all adults working in schools whatever their position, roles or responsibilities and is therefore aimed at all school-based staff and volunteers.

The Code is predominantly geared towards safe working practices for the protection of children and in this connection should be read in conjunction with Lanesend Primary School's Safeguarding Policy. However, the code also encompasses other general aspects of conduct expected within Lanesend Primary School

The Code cannot cover every eventuality. Its purpose is to show the standard expected of employees, but it does not replace the general requirements of the law. Nor can the code provide a complete checklist of what is, or is not appropriate behaviour for staff in all circumstances. There may be occasions and circumstances in which adults have to make decisions or take action in the best interests of the child or young person which could contravene this guidance or where no guidance exists. Individuals are expected to make judgements about their behaviour in order to secure the best interests and welfare of the children in their charge. Such judgements should always be recorded and shared with the Head teacher or Assistant Head in his/her absence. In undertaking these actions individuals will be seen to be acting reasonably.

In respect of teachers specifically, the Code supplements the Teachers Standards 2021, Code of Conduct and Practice for Registered Teachers (GTC.) The Code is recommended to all school Governing Bodies for adoption.

The EFA (Education Funding Agency) will not accept liability for any actions, claims, costs or expenses arising out of a school's decision not to follow these recommended guidelines, where it is found that the school's Board of Trustees has been negligent or has acted in an unfair or discriminatory manner.

3. General Obligations

Staff should understand the responsibilities that are an intrinsic part of their employment or role. They should make a professional judgment about their actions and behaviour and seek to avoid conduct, which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation or intentions.

If there is an incident where staff feel there may be a concern, they should discuss the circumstances that informed their action, or their proposed action with a senior colleague, to help ensure that the safest practices are employed and the risk of actions being misinterpreted reduced.

Records should be made of any incidents and decisions made or further actions agreed, with their justifications, in accordance with school policy, guidance and protocol.

All staff should know the school Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL), be familiar with local child protection arrangements and understand their responsibilities to safeguard and protect children and young people. Currently the Lead DSL for Child Protection in school is Caroline Sice, with deputies Andrea Flux and Hannah Holmes and Nikki Napier are also trained DSLs and fulfill the role when the Headteacher is not in school. Vicki Thomas, Inclusion Lead, is also trained as a DSL to ensure that Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures are monitored for children with a disability. Jo Hunter is the Safeguarding Trustee and is also trained to Level 3. There are other staff trained at Level 3 within the school to support all staff.

Staff should understand their responsibility to voice any general concerns that they might have about practice within the school, in accordance with the Whistle Blowing Policy for the school.

Staff should also be aware of and comply with financial and administrative regulations for Lanesend Primary School.

Unlawful, unsafe or inappropriate behaviour may result in disciplinary action being taken.

4. Good Practice Guidelines

The following Code and guidelines set out specific areas of conduct and behaviour that constitute expected and safe practice.

If staff are in any doubt about any aspect of this guidance or need to seek further clarification about a particular situation in the absence of specific guidance, they are advised to speak to the Head teacher.

4.1 Propriety and Behaviour

All adults working with children and young people are in a position of trust in relation to the individuals in their care. Staff are expected to adopt high standards of personal integrity and conduct and behave in such a way that does not compromise their position both within or outside Lanesend Primary School.

Staff should not:

- behave in a manner, which would lead any reasonable person to question their suitability to work with children or act as a role model
- use their power to intimidate, threaten, coerce or undermine children
- make (or encourage others to make) unprofessional personal comments which scapegoat, demean or humiliate other individuals or which might be interpreted as such.

- use their position to gain access to information for their own advantage or to intimidate, humiliate or embarrass a child

4.2 Confidentiality and Information Disclosure

Staff should not use any information obtained in the course of their duties to the detriment of either Lanesend Primary School or for personal gain or benefit or pass this information on to others who might use it in such a way.

Staff should exercise due confidentiality towards matters that are either discussed or overheard.

Staff must also take all reasonable steps to ensure that the loss, destruction, inaccuracy or disclosure of information does not occur as a result of their actions, including information relating to school business and personal data of children and their families.

There are some circumstances in which staff may be expected to share information about a child, for example, when child protection issues arise. In such cases staff have a duty to pass information on without delay in line with local procedures. If staff have any doubt about whether to share information or keep it confidential they should seek guidance from one of the school DSLs with designated child protection responsibilities.

- staff are expected to treat any information they receive about children and young people in a discreet and confidential manner
- staff need to be cautious when passing on information to others about a child and if in any doubt about sharing information, seek the advice of a senior member of staff, or DSLs with designated child protection responsibilities

4.3 Equality Issues

All staff should adhere to the Equality Policy, in addition to the requirements of the law.

- staff should not discriminate in recruitment and employment practices, nor in the delivery of services
- staff should also ensure that in their dealings with families and other members of the public, they ensure the provision of an efficient and impartial delivery to all individuals.

4.4 Employment Matters

All staff involved in appointments and/or tendering process should ensure that these are made on the basis of merit.

- All relationships of a business or private nature with external contractors, or potential contractors should be made known to the Head teacher.
- There may be occasions where staff may have to be involved in decision making or employment for relatives or someone with whom they have a close personal relationships. These relationships must be declared and a discussion to the way forward when this situation arises will take place with the Headteacher and Chair of Trustees.
- All relationships need to be declared to the Headteacher and Chair of Trustees.

4.5 Public Duty and Private Interest

It is important that staff do not put themselves in a position where their duty to either Lanesend Primary School or their private interests conflict.

- Staff should not allow their own personal or political opinions to interfere with their work and the provision of a balanced and professional service, ensuring that they work to the professional standard required

4.6 Other Employment or Private Work

Any external work that staff undertake must not bring Lanesend Primary School into disrepute or conflict with the school's interest.

Any copyright created by a member of staff during their employment with either Lanesend Primary School becomes the property of the school.

- staff should not set up a business or accept employment with a business that is engaged in work, which is in direct competition with either Lanesend Primary School
- private work should not be undertaken in the school's time, or using the school's premises or equipment, without prior approval of the Head Teacher

The member of staff should write to the Headteacher if considering additional employment and follow the Additional Employment Policy.

4.7 Dress and Appearance

Staff should ensure that they are dressed decently and modestly, maintaining a positive and professional image at all times. This includes not wearing vest tops, boob tubes, miniskirts, hot pants or short shorts and clothing that is too revealing.

Staff should ensure that they are dressed safely and appropriately for the tasks that they undertake and that through their appearance, they promote a positive and professional image that is clean and well looked after.

Staff should change if teaching P.E. sessions into appropriate sports clothing.

Staff should ensure their clothing does not discriminate in any way.

4.8 Financial Inducements, Gifts, Hospitality and Sponsorship

Staff should ensure that they use public funds entrusted to them in a responsible and lawful manner and that they do not give or receive any gift, loan, fee, reward or advantage, which might be misinterpreted.

Although staff should not give or receive gifts from children or families on a regular basis or of any significant value, it is acceptable for staff to receive small tokens of appreciation, such as at Christmas time, Easter and the end of year.

- staff should not seek or receive preferential rates for themselves by virtue of their dealings on behalf of the school.
- staff should ensure that gifts are declared if they are received
- staff should generally only give gifts to an individual young person as part of an agreed reward system
- where staff do give gifts, they should ensure that they are of insignificant value and given to all children equally.

4.9 Use of School Time and Facilities

The School's property and facilities (e.g. stationery, computers, and photocopiers) may only be used for school business unless permission for their private use has been granted by the Headteacher.

4.10 Publication of Books/Articles

If staff want to publish books, articles, letters, dissertations etc. that they have written in connection with their duties and in which they describe themselves as holding an appointment with the school they must consult the Headteacher beforehand.

4.11 Infatuations

In cases where a young person develops an infatuation, there is a high risk of words or actions being misinterpreted and for allegations to be made against staff.

- staff should report to the school's Headteacher or Assistant Head of any clear/apparent indications (whether they are verbal, written or physical), that suggest a child may be infatuated with them and respond sensitively to such situations in order to maintain the dignity of all parties.

4.12 Social Contact

Staff should not establish or seek to establish social contact with children to secure or strengthen a friendship. This includes giving any personal details to a child such as a home/mobile phone number, home or email address. Only in exceptional circumstances can this be done, with the prior approval of the Headteacher. There will be occasions when there are social contacts between children and staff, where for example the family and teacher are part of the same social circle. These contacts however, must be easily recognised and openly acknowledged.

- Do not give out personal details such as home/mobile numbers, home address or e-mail address to children
- staff should always approve any planned social contact with children with the Headteacher, for example, when it is part of a reward scheme or pastoral care programme
- staff should advise senior management of any regular social contact they have with a child, where it is apparent that it may give rise to a concern

4.13 Physical Contact

It is unrealistic to suggest that teachers should never touch children. There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate and proper for staff to have physical contact with children, such as when a distressed child needs comfort and reassurance or as an integral part of some lessons such as PE.

However, innocent actions and appropriate physical contact can often be misconstrued and it is therefore crucial that staff only initiate physical contact for the minimum time necessary and in ways appropriate to their own role and the needs of the child.

Staff should use their professional judgment at all times. Where feasible, staff should seek the child's permission before initiating contact. Where a member of staff thinks that an incident could have been misinterpreted it should be reported to the Head teacher.

Any formally agreed plan for children with AEN or physical disabilities should be understood and agreed by all concerned. Staff should be provided with relevant information about vulnerable children in their care where it is relevant for this to be provided in order for staff to be able to undertake tasks appropriately.

Extra caution may also be required where it is known that a child has suffered previous abuse or neglect. Many such children are often needy and seek out inappropriate contact, thereby leading staff to be vulnerable to allegations of abuse. In this regard, staff should:

- be aware that even well intentioned physical contact may be misconstrued by the child, an observer or by anyone to whom this action is described
- never touch a child in a way which may be considered indecent
- always explain to a child the reason why contact is necessary and what form that contact will take
- look at alternatives, where it is anticipated that a child might misinterpret contact and consider involving another member of staff, or a less vulnerable child in a demonstration
- never indulge in horseplay, tickling or fun fights
- always tell a colleague when and how they offered comfort to a distressed child and record any situations, where they think they may give rise to concern
- Adhere to the school's Positive Handling policy and be acquainted with DfES Guidance in respect of physical contact with children and Supporting Children in School with a Medical Condition Policy.

4.14 Showers and Changing

Children are entitled to respect and privacy when changing clothes or taking a shower.

However, there does need to be an appropriate level of supervision to safeguard young people and satisfy health and safety considerations. Any supervision must therefore be appropriate to the needs and age of the young people concerned. Please refer to our Intimate Care policy.

- staff should avoid any physical contact when children are in a state of undress or any visually intrusive behaviour where there are changing rooms
- staff should announce their intention of entering a changing room and avoid remaining in the room unless child needs require it
- staff should not change in the same place as or shower with children

4.15 Behaviour Management and Physical Intervention

Corporal punishment is unlawful in all schools and physical force should never be used as a form of punishment; to do so is likely to constitute a criminal offence.

However in some circumstances, staff in schools have the right to use physical intervention/reasonable force for the shortest period necessary to control or restrain children. The Education and Inspections Act 2006 provides the legal power for school staff to use reasonable force to prevent children from committing a crime or causing injury, damage or disruption.

- staff should try to defuse situations before they escalate
- staff should keep families informed of any sanctions
- staff should adhere to Lanesend Primary School policies on Behaviour Management and Positive Handling
- where it is identified that staff are likely to have to restrain on a regular basis they should have received appropriate training via Maybo.

4.16 Sexual Contact with children and Curriculum Issues

It is a criminal offence for any adult in a position of trust to engage in any form of sexual activity with a young person under 18, even with their consent (Sexual Offences Act 2003). This also includes non-contact activities such as causing children to engage in or watch sexual activity. This is a criminal offence and will always be a matter for disciplinary action.

There may be occasions when, as part of the curriculum, a teacher has to raise subject matter that is sexually explicit. In such situations, any lesson plan should highlight the areas of risk and sensitivity. Staff should respond to questions with careful judgment and avoid entering into inappropriate or offensive discussions about sexual activity.

In this regard, staff should not:

- use their status and standing to form or promote relationships with children, which are of a sexual nature
- pursue sexual relationships with children and young people either in or out of school
- enter into or encourage inappropriate or offensive discussion about sexual activity
- make sexual remarks to a child (including email, text messages, phone or letter), or use any communication including body language which could be interpreted as sexually suggestive or provocative
- discuss their own sexual relationships with, or in the presence of the children
- discuss a child's sexual relationships in inappropriate settings or contexts

- confer special attention and favour upon a child who might be misconstrued as being part of a 'grooming' process.

4.17 One to one situations and overnight supervision

When staff work regularly on an individual basis with children, they are generally more vulnerable to allegations.

To avoid such situations arising meetings should, wherever possible, be arranged so that staff are visible and/or audible and not in secluded areas of the school.

Staff should not arrange to meet a child away from the school premises without good reason, but if this is necessary, only with the expressed approval of the families and the Headteacher.

Staff should:

- ensure there is visual access and/or an open door in one to one situations
- inform other staff of the meeting beforehand, assessing the need to have them present or close by
- avoid the use of 'engaged' or equivalent signs wherever possible, as they may create an opportunity for secrecy or the interpretation of secrecy
- always report to the Headteacher any situation which gives rise to complaint, disagreement or misunderstanding or where a child becomes distressed or angry.

4.18 Transporting Children

In such cases where children need to be transported between different locations, we refer to our Transporting Children Policy.

Wherever practicable, an adult additional to the driver should act as an escort and all arrangements agreed with relevant parties in advance.

All staff:

- should avoid using private vehicles wherever possible
- must ensure that they have the appropriate insurance (for business use) where they do have to use their private vehicle
- should ensure that they are alone with a child for the minimum time possible
- should be aware that the safety and welfare of the child is their responsibility until this is safely passed over to the adult with permission to collect the child.
- should report the nature of the journey, the route and expected time of arrival in accordance with agreed procedures

- should ensure that their behaviour and all arrangements ensure vehicle, passenger and driver safety, taking into account any specific needs that the child may have recognise that it is inappropriate for adults to offer lifts to a child or young person outside of their normal working duties, unless this has been brought to the attention of the line manager and has been agreed with the family.

There may be occasions where the child or young person requires transport in an emergency situation or where not to give a lift may place the child at risk. Such circumstances must always be recorded and reported to the Head teacher and family.

4.19 Educational Visits and After School Clubs

Staff should always take care to have another adult present during out of school activities, unless otherwise agreed with the Head Teacher. Health and safety requirements should be strictly adhered to.

Staff should ensure that they display professional behaviour during activities that take place off the school site and ensure that their behaviour cannot be interpreted as seeking to establish an inappropriate relationship or friendship. Staff should therefore maintain a professional relationship with children at all times.

Where out of school activities include overnight stays, particular consideration should be given to sleeping arrangements, if applicable and children, staff and families informed of the arrangements in advance.

In this regard, staff should therefore:

- undertake risk assessments
- have parental consent to the activity
- ensure that their behaviour remains professional at all times

4.20 First Aid and Administration of Medication

In cases where first aid or medication needs to be administered, all staff should adhere to the Supporting Children in School with a Medical Condition Policy located on the website.

A health care plan and risk assessment should be drawn up in circumstances where the child needs to take regular medication and any such agreement between the child, family and the school must be negotiated, agreed and recorded.

Staff should:

- make other staff aware of the task being undertaken
- explain to the child what is happening
- any administration of medicine needs to be recorded as set out in the Supporting Children in School with a Medical Condition Policy.

4.21 Intimate Care

All children have a right to safety, privacy and dignity when contact of an intimate nature is required. A care plan should be drawn up and agreed with families for all children, including those with additional educational needs, who require intimate care on a regular basis.

In this regard staff should:

- adhere to the school's Intimate Care policy
- make other staff aware of the task being undertaken
- explain to the child what is happening
- consult with colleagues where any variation from the agreed procedure or care plan is necessary and record the justification, sharing the information with families.

A detailed Intimate Care Policy has been produced for the school which should be referred to for further detail.

4.22 Mobile Phones, Smart Watches, Photography, Videos and other Creative Arts

Many school activities involve recording images, but the use of such images needs careful consideration and handling. In particular, children who may have been abused in this way may feel threatened by the use of photography and filming.

The use of any images of children for publicity purposes will also require the appropriate consent of the individual concerned and their legal guardians. Staff should therefore:

- be clear about the purpose of the activity and about what will happen to the photographs when the lesson or activity is concluded
- ensure consent is gained from the child and their legal guardians where being used for publicity purposes
- ensure that a senior member of staff is aware that the photography/image equipment is being used and for what purpose
- ensure that all images are available for scrutiny in order to screen for acceptability
- be able to justify images of children in their possession

- only use mobile phones with permission from the Headteacher, ensuring that usage complies with our Mobile Phone policy
- avoid making images in one to one situations
- Mobile phones and Smart Watches are not to be used by staff throughout the day for anything other than taking Photographs of children's learning unless they are in the staffroom or a classroom where there are no children. They are only to be used during staff break times and lunchtimes. The exception is the Headteacher and Site Manager. Please refer to the Mobile Phone Policy for further details.

4.23 Internet Use

Accessing child pornography or indecent images of children on the computer is illegal.

Under no circumstances should adults in schools access inappropriate images on the internet. There are no circumstances that will justify staff possessing indecent images of children. The same rule applies to the use of the school's equipment by members of staff at home, e.g. use of laptops, Ipads.

- staff that access and possess links to such websites will be viewed as a significant and potential threat to children. Accessing, making and storing indecent images of children is illegal. This will lead to criminal investigation and the individual being barred from working with children, if proven.
- Staff should ensure that children are not exposed to any inappropriate images or web links. Staff need to ensure that internet equipment used by children have the appropriate controls with regards to access e.g. personal passwords should be kept confidential and that children are supervised using the internet
- Staff should read and abide by the procedures outlined in the Social Media Policy to avoid placing themselves in a vulnerable position with families associated with the school.

4.24 Honesty and Integrity

Staff 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.

All staff have a responsibility to look after the resources of the school. This includes:

- Not wasting resources unnecessarily (including physical resources and those such as heat/electricity)
- Following the principles of 'reduce, re-use, re-cycle' where appropriate
- All money handled should be clearly labelled and sent as soon as practicable to the school office.

- Staff handling money frequently need to be aware of the EFA procedures for handling money, and are expected to follow these.
- Staff are expected to follow the school's Financial Management policy and procedures.

4.25 Professional Conduct

- All staff are expected to behave thoughtfully, with honesty and responsibly.
- Staff should be punctual and well-prepared, and should carry out tasks to the best of their ability, taking pride in their work.
- All absences must be genuine
- Staff are expected to dress appropriately; setting a good example in what they wear.
- All staff are encouraged to look after their physical and mental wellbeing. This includes maintaining a healthy work-life balance.
- All staff must recognise that a failure to meet appropriate standards of behaviour and conduct may result in disciplinary action, including dismissal, please refer to the Disciplinary Policy located in the staff room.

4.26 Linked Policies

- Behaviour Policy
- Equality Policy
- Confidentiality Policy
- Positive Handling Policy
- Safeguarding and Children Protection Policy
- Transporting Children Policy
- Educational Visits Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Intimate Care Policy
- Mobile Phone Policy

The guidance for Safer Working Practices was updated in April 2020 to account for online learning during the Coronavirus outbreak in the UK:

<https://www.safeguardinginschools.co.uk/guidance-for-safer-working-practice-for-adults-who-work-with-children-and-young-people-in-education-2019/>