



SCC: Code of Conduct Policy

Signed by headteacher: *A Hughes*

Signed by Chair of Governors: *David Bradley*

Date of Approval: March 2026

Date for review: March 2028



NB Any differences between SCC Policy and BMPS Policy are in green

AI Generated Summary

Purpose: Standards of conduct, professionalism, and respect for all staff

Scope: Applies to all employees, governors, volunteers, and work-related events

Expectations: Role-modelling behaviour in line with Teachers' Standards

Safeguarding: Duty to protect pupils; report concerns and low-level issues promptly

Professional Boundaries: Appropriate staff/pupil relationships; no personal contact or favouritism

Behaviour Standards: Respectful language, equality, inclusion; no humiliating treatment of pupils

Social Media & Communication: Maintain professionalism; no inappropriate contact or postings

Technology Use: Safe and appropriate use of IT; no offensive or illegal material

Dress & Appearance: Professional smart-casual standards; health and safety considered

Integrity & Conduct: Confidentiality, honesty, avoidance of conflicts of interest or corruption

School Property: Resources used for official purposes only; care taken to prevent loss or misuse

Consequences: Breaches addressed through the Disciplinary Policy

Southampton City Council

Code of Conduct

Model Policy - Schools

December 2025

1. Policy Statement

This policy aims to set and maintain standards of conduct that we expect all staff to follow. We aim to ensure Bitterne Manor Primary School operates in an environment where everyone is safe, happy and treated with respect. Many of the principles in this code of conduct are based on the Teachers' Standards. School staff have an influential position and will act as role models for pupils by consistently demonstrating high standards of behaviour.

We expect that all teachers will act in accordance with the personal and professional behaviours set out in the Teachers' Standards. We expect all support staff, Governors and volunteers to also act with personal and professional integrity, respecting the safety and wellbeing of others. This includes reporting any breach of the code to an appropriate manager if necessary. Please note that this code of conduct is not exhaustive. If situations arise that are not covered by this code, staff will use their professional judgement and act in the best interests of the school and its pupils.

In striving to be excellent, it is necessary to be clear from the outset about the consequences if there is a breach of these rules. Failure to comply with the standards set out in this Code will be dealt within the scope of the Disciplinary Policy.

2. This applies to:

In line with the statutory safeguarding guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', we should have a staff code of conduct, which should cover acceptable use of technologies, staff/pupil relationships and communications, including the use of social media.

The Code applies to all employees and there is an expectation that this policy will be read by the end of Week 1 of the induction period. This policy also applies to work-related functions held outside of normal working hours, either on or off the school's premises, such as Christmas parties, leaving celebrations, working lunches as well as extra-curricular activities and residential trips. Under no circumstances will Bitterne Manor Primary School accept unacceptable behaviour towards its staff from former employees. In such cases, consideration will be given to referring the matter to the Police.

3. General obligations

Staff set an example to pupils. They will:

- Maintain high standards in their attendance and punctuality
- Model appropriate behaviour and conduct with regards to equality and diversity and inclusion
- Use appropriate language in the school and when undertaking school business - never direct inappropriate or offensive language towards pupils
- Treat pupils and others with dignity and respect
- Show tolerance and respect for the rights of others
- Not undermine fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
- Express personal beliefs in a way that will not overly influence pupils, and will not exploit pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law
- Adhere to and model the school's values
- Work as part of a team, contributing as well as learning from others and helping to maintain a strong and respectful workplace community
- Work collaboratively and respectfully with all stakeholders, considering how our actions impact on others.
- Avoid workplace gossip and negativity as it detracts from effective communication and collaboration. We all have a duty to take active steps to divert conversations away from this if we come across it.
- Understand the statutory frameworks they must act within
- Adhere to the Teachers' Standards
- Staff will ensure that all information given to the school about their qualifications and professional experience is correct and truthful.
- Ensure they abide by the school's Health & Safety policy and processes
- Employees will also comply with the school's rules regarding attendance and absence.

4. Safeguarding

All employees have a duty to safeguard pupils from harm, and to report any concerns they have. This includes physical, emotional and sexual abuse, or neglect. Employees will familiarise themselves with our Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy and procedures and the Prevent initiative and ensure they are aware of the processes to follow if they have concerns about a child.

5. Physical contact with pupils

There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate and proper for staff to have physical contact with pupils. Employees must ensure that they only do so in ways that are appropriate to their professional role and in response to the pupil's needs at the time. This should be of limited duration and appropriate to the age, stage of development, gender and background of the pupil.

Employees should always be able to explain why they have made physical contact with a pupil. There may also be occasions where a pupil is in distress and needs comfort and reassurance which may include age-appropriate physical contact. If an employee is in this position, then they should consider the way in which they offer comfort, ensuring that it is not open to misinterpretation and is always reported to the DSL/DDSL.

Staff may legally physically intervene with pupils to prevent them from committing a crime, injuring themselves or others, causing damage to property, engaging in behaviour prejudicial to good order and to maintain good order and discipline. Physical force should never be used as a form of punishment. Sexual contact, including grooming patterns of behaviour, with pupils is unlawful and unacceptable in all circumstances.

6. Behaviour management

Employees should not use any form of degrading or humiliating treatment to punish a pupil. The use of sarcasm, demeaning or insensitive comments towards pupils is completely unacceptable. Where pupils display difficult or challenging behaviour, employees should follow the school's policies and procedures using strategies appropriate to the circumstance and situation.

7. Low-level concerns about a member of staff

A low-level concern is a behaviour towards a child by a member of staff that does not meet the harms threshold, is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, and may be as simple as causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt'.

For example, this may include:

- Being over-friendly with children
- Having favourites
- Taking photographs of children on a personal device
- Engaging in one-to-one activities where they can't easily be seen
- Using inappropriate language

Low-level concerns can include inappropriate conduct inside and outside of work. All employees should share any low-level concerns they have using the reporting procedures set out in our Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy. We also encourage staff to self-refer if they find themselves in a situation that could be misinterpreted. If staff are not sure whether behaviour would be deemed a low-level concern, we encourage employees to report it. All reports will be handled in a responsive, sensitive and proportionate way.

Unprofessional behaviour will be addressed, and the employee supported to correct it, at an early stage. This creates and embeds a culture of openness, trust and transparency in which our values and expected behaviour are constantly lived, monitored and reinforced by all staff, while minimising the risk of abuse. Reporting and responding to low-level concerns is covered in more detail in our child protection and safeguarding policy.

8. Equality

Bitterne Manor Primary School aims to meet its obligations under the public sector equality duty by having due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- Foster good relations across all characteristics – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

9. Alcohol, Drugs and Other Substance Misuse

Bitterne Manor Primary School wishes to promote the health and well-being of employees and minimise problems at work arising from the effects of alcohol, drugs (whether prescribed or illegal), solvents, etc. Employees are encouraged to seek help from occupational health as soon as they believe they have a problem. Any such help or onward referral will be handled confidentially.

Employees whose performance or behaviour falls below the acceptable standard may be the subject of the school's Disciplinary and/or the Capability Policy. Employees who cause danger or inconvenience because of alcohol, drugs or other substance misuse may be the subject of the school's Disciplinary Policy.

Employees taking prescribed drugs are required to advise their manager if any such drugs being taken are likely to influence their ability to drive, to use equipment, etc. as required by their employment with the school. There is a no smoking policy on the school site.

10. Staff/pupil relationships

Employees will observe proper boundaries with pupils that are appropriate to their professional position. They will act in a fair and transparent way that would not lead anyone to reasonably assume they are not doing so. All employees should maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their role. This includes when dealing with pupils, handling money, claiming expenses and using school property and facilities.

If employees and pupils must spend time on a one-to-one basis, staff will ensure that:

- This takes place in a public place that others can access
- Others can see into the room
- A colleague or line manager knows this is taking place

Employees should avoid contact with pupils outside of school hours if possible. Personal contact details should not be exchanged between employee's pupils. This includes social media profiles. While we are aware many pupils and their parents may wish to give gifts to staff, for example, at the end of the school year, gifts from staff to pupils are not acceptable. If an employee is concerned at any point that an interaction between themselves and a pupil may be misinterpreted, this should be reported to their line manager or headteacher.

11. Personal Relationships

There is a requirement for all applicants to declare any relationship with an employee of the school. Failure to do so could result in disciplinary action. Where an employee who is involved in any part of the recruitment process identifies that they are related to, or have a close personal relationship with an applicant, they should take no further part in the recruitment process and should inform their line manager accordingly. They should also not act as a referee for that person.

Employees must declare to their headteacher/appropriate line manager any situation where their impartiality, objectivity, or honesty may be compromised due to their being related to or having a close personal relationship with someone at work. If you are in doubt about a personal relationship impinging on your work relationship, please discuss this with your headteacher or line manager in the first instance. Employees who marry, register a civil partnership or form close personal relationships during employment in the same work areas will not be expected to move to separate work areas unless circumstances arise which make such a change appropriate for personal, operational, management or public interest reasons. The policy applies to all permanent and temporary employees including agency staff.

12. Communication and social media

Bitterne Manor Primary School staff's social media profiles should not be available to pupils. If they have a personal profile on social media sites, they should not use their full name, as pupils may be able to find them. Employees should consider using a first and middle name instead and set public profiles to private. Employees are strongly advised not to add parents as 'friends' on their personal social media accounts. Staff must not post comments about the school, pupils, parents or colleagues (including members of the governing body) that could bring them into disrepute. Employees should not attempt to contact pupils or their parents via social media, or any other means outside the school, in order to develop any sort of relationship. They will not make any efforts to find pupils' or parents' social media profiles. Employees will ensure that they do not post any images online that identify children who are pupils at the school without their consent and they should be aware of the school's e-safety policy. No member of staff shall disclose to the public or media the contents of a confidential or exempt report made to a Committee or the

school. No proceedings of any Committee meeting taken in confidence, including the content of any data, document, paper, report nor the contents of any document before the Committee in confidential session should be disclosed unless required by law or the media without consulting the headteacher or Chair of Governors.

13. Acceptable use of technology

Employees will not use technology in the school to view material that is illegal, inappropriate or likely to be deemed offensive. This includes, but is not limited to, sending obscene emails, gambling and viewing pornography or other inappropriate content. Employees will not use personal mobile phones and laptops, or school equipment for personal use, in school hours or in front of pupils. They will also not use personal mobile phones or cameras to take pictures of pupils. The school has the right to monitor emails and internet use on their IT system.

14. Dress Code

The Trust expects employees, agency staff, and volunteers to observe a standard of personal appearance which is appropriate to the nature of the work undertaken, follows operational requirements and which portrays a professional approach. Employees are expected to observe a high standard of cleanliness and personal hygiene.

Employees working from home, should continue to abide by these guidelines.

- We expect you to be clean and presentable at work, whether you are working in the school or elsewhere whilst representing the school.
 - When working remotely and/or taking part in video meetings (for example via Teams or Zoom), your appearance should be in line with the standards of this policy, particularly when holding meetings with stakeholders.
 - You are required to maintain a standard of personal appearance which is appropriate to the nature of the work undertaken, follows operational requirements and which portrays a professional approach.
- *Smart casual attire no Jeans/Denim.
- Clothing must not include micro-shorts, mini or micro skirts, low-cut or transparent clothing.
 - Your clothes must not display prominent logos or images, messages or symbols that could cause offence.
 - Your clothes should not expose too much skin and should cover the midriff, shoulders and any other areas of the body normally covered during work time.
 - You should not display tattoos that could cause offence. If you are unsure whether a tattoo may be offensive, you should speak to your line manager for advice.
 - Any jewellery should not pose a health and safety risk.
 - Your footwear should be clean and not pose a health and safety risk.
 - If your role requires protective clothing (for example hard hats, masks or gloves), you are required to wear this clothing while carrying out your duties and whenever required by law.
 - If your job involves working with machinery/food, your hair must either be short or tied back and you must not wear any jewellery [other than a wedding ring]. These rules are in place for safety/hygiene reasons.

15. Corruption, other employment, contractors & private trading

Employees must be aware that it is a serious criminal offence for them corruptly to receive or give any gift, loan, fee, reward or advantage for doing, or not doing, anything or showing favour, or disfavour, to any person in their official capacity.

Under no circumstances should school orders be used for personal advantage or purchases, and no employee should receive any discount or advantage because of their employment with the school.

Employees are not allowed to carry out private trading either for goods or services, including the posting and distribution of private trading literature on the school premises nor may they do so elsewhere whilst on school duties. Employees must not allow their private interests to come into conflict with their work. Employees shall devote their whole-time service to the work of the school and may not engage in any other business or take up any other additional employment without the written permission of their line manager or headteacher. This does not preclude employees from undertaking additional work outside their working hours providing that it does not impact on, distract them from or conflict with their schoolwork and is always subject to the written permission being granted. Regardless of the grade of the post, all employees who undertake additional work (either paid or voluntary) must notify their line manager to comply with the Working Time Regulations 1998.

Any relationship or friendship with external contractors or potential contractors should be made known to the headteacher. Orders and contracts must be awarded on merit by fair competition in accordance with relevant procedure rules and regulations and no special favour should be shown to businesses run by, for example, friends, partners or relatives.

No part of the local community should be discriminated against. The school will abide by the DfE guidance on related party transactions. Employees who engage or supervise contractors or have any other official relationship with contractors and have previously had or currently have a relationship in a private or domestic capacity with contractors, should declare that relationship to the headteacher. When a conflict of interest is disclosed, the school reserves the right to remove the employee from any areas of direct or indirect involvement in the matter concerned

16. Confidentiality

Employees will receive from time to time written, oral and computerised data which is of a confidential nature. Employees are required to understand which information held by the school is considered confidential and which is not, and to act accordingly. Unless expressly approved by an authorised person acting in the school's best interests, such information should not be disseminated outside of the school. Employees should consult the DPO if there is any uncertainty regarding whether information can be disclosed. Regulations under the GDPR must be followed. Employees must ensure that when communicating at work or working from home whether via email or video conferencing for example that confidentiality is maintained. Every effort must be made to ensure verbal and visual communications are not overheard.

17. Use of School Property and Facilities

All school assets and facilities, including stationery, tools, office telephones, mobile phones, PCs, laptops, machinery, photocopiers, vehicles, offices, car parks may only be used for official school business and not for personal use, unless permission for their private use is obtained from the appropriate manager. Where the school supplies a mobile telephone to a user, this is for business use. Private use of a school supplied mobile telephone line is acceptable in the following circumstances, only where the user's own mobile telephone or other telephone line is unavailable to be used instead:

- in an emergency, where the user or another individual's health and safety is at risk.
- where an appointment in relation to the user's work duties over-runs and the employee needs to notify, for example, a family member, partner, dependant, of their whereabouts and change of timescales.

This restriction also applies to software and data, which should not be used for private purposes or removed from the premises without the express or prior consent of the appropriate manager. The overriding consideration should be that of common sense, so that the situation can never arise whereby suspicion is aroused that an individual has taken advantage of their position as an employee of the school for personal benefit. Users accept that communications via a mobile telephone are normally

not secure or encrypted and should therefore take particular care when communicating potentially sensitive or confidential information via a mobile telephone. All Users must ensure that they set up password protection or pin number before they begin using their mobile telephone.

All school resources must be used with care to avoid wastage, loss or damage. All school property must be returned on leaving employment or if transferred/promoted into a role in which it is not required. Where any equipment which is provided by the school is damaged or stolen/lost through carelessness, staff may be responsible for the cost of repair or replacement (e.g. via their own insurance)