SAFE PEOPLE
SAFE PRACTICE
SAFE FUTURES

BRIGHTFIELD ACADEMY

Inclusion. Choice. Growth.

STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT

Our Staff Code of Conduct sets out the standards of behaviour and professional practice we expect from everyone who works for or represents Brightfield Academy. It ensures that we create a safe, respectful and positive environment where young people can thrive.

INCLUSION | CHOICE | GROWTH | PROTECTION | RESPECT



Professional conduct builds trust.
Trust creates safety.
Safety enables growth.

WE LEAD BY EXAMPLE.
WE CARE DEEPLY.
WE DO THE RIGHT THING.

By working together and living our values, we help every young person at Brightfield reach their full potential.

This code applies to all staff, including employees, volunteers, contractors, agency staff and trustees.

KINDNESS | RESPECT | ASPIRATION | COMMUNITY | INTEGRITY

Last Update: **June 2026**

Staff Code of Conduct

Staff Code of Conduct
Brightfield Academy
Policy Owner: Head of Provision
Approved by: Directors of Brightfield Academy
Date Adopted: July 2026
Review Cycle: Annual
Next Review: July 2027

1. Introduction

At **Brightfield Academy**, every member of staff plays a vital role in creating an environment where children and young people feel safe, respected, valued and able to flourish.

Our learners often arrive with complex educational journeys, including experiences of trauma, anxiety, emotionally based school avoidance (EBSA), special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), adverse childhood experiences, disrupted education or other vulnerabilities. They deserve adults who are calm, consistent, compassionate and professionally accountable in every interaction.

This Staff Code of Conduct sets out the professional standards expected of everyone working for or on behalf of Brightfield Academy. It explains the behaviours, attitudes and responsibilities that protect learners, support colleagues and maintain the confidence placed in us by families, commissioners and partner agencies.

Professional conduct is not simply about following rules. It is about exercising sound judgement, acting with integrity and recognising that every interaction contributes to a learner's sense of safety, belonging and trust.

This Code should be read alongside Brightfield Academy's:
Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
Behaviour Policy
Managing Allegations and Low-Level Concerns Policy
Whistleblowing Policy
Online Safety Policy
Health & Safety Policy
Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy
Data Protection Policy

Compliance with this Code forms part of every employee's professional responsibilities and applies equally to permanent staff, temporary staff, volunteers, governors, agency workers, contractors, students on placement and visiting professionals.

Everyone working within Brightfield Academy shares responsibility for safeguarding children and maintaining the highest standards of professional conduct.

2. Our Professional Culture
At Brightfield Academy we believe that professionalism begins with relationships.
We expect every adult to demonstrate the same qualities that we seek to develop within our learners:

Inclusion.
Everyone deserves to feel welcomed, respected and valued regardless of background, ability, identity or experience.

Choice.
Professional judgement should be thoughtful, proportionate and centred upon the individual needs of each learner. We seek solutions rather than confrontation and guidance rather than control.

Growth.
Every interaction presents an opportunity to build confidence, strengthen relationships and encourage positive development. We recognise that mistakes can become powerful opportunities for learning when they are approached honestly and constructively.

Our staff strive to be:
calm under pressure;
emotionally regulated;
professionally curious;
compassionate without losing appropriate boundaries;
consistent in expectations;
respectful in communication;
reflective in practice;
accountable for their actions.

Above all, we remember that children learn as much from how adults behave as from what adults teach.

Every conversation, decision and response contributes to the culture of Brightfield Academy.

3. Scope

This Staff Code of Conduct applies to everyone working for or on behalf of Brightfield Academy, regardless of role, employment status or length of service.

This includes:

- employees;
- directors;
- volunteers;
- agency staff;

- contractors;
- visiting professionals;
- students on placement;
- work experience students;
- consultants;
- anyone undertaking activities on behalf of Brightfield Academy.

Every adult has a shared responsibility to safeguard children, promote their welfare and uphold the professional reputation of Brightfield Academy.

The standards within this Code apply:
- whilst working on Brightfield Academy premises;
- during educational visits and off-site activities;
- whilst transporting learners where authorised;
- when communicating with learners, parents, carers or professionals;
- when representing Brightfield Academy in public;
- during online communication connected with work;
- where personal conduct outside work could reasonably affect professional suitability or public confidence.

Staff remain responsible for exercising professional judgement at all times. Where uncertainty exists, advice should be sought from a senior leader or the Designated Safeguarding Lead before proceeding wherever reasonably practicable.

Professional conduct is everyone's responsibility and safeguarding is never limited to designated roles.

4. Legislative Framework

This Code has regard to current legislation and national guidance, including, where applicable:
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE);
- Working Together to Safeguard Children;
- Children Act 1989;
- Children Act 2004;
- Education Act 2002;
- Education and Inspections Act 2006;
- Equality Act 2010;
- Human Rights Act 1998;
- Data Protection Act 2018;
- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR);

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974;
- The Teachers' Standards (where applicable);
- Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who Work with Children and Young People;
- Prevent Duty Guidance;
- Relevant Local Safeguarding Partnership procedures.

This Code should also be read alongside Brightfield Academy's safeguarding, behaviour, online safety, whistleblowing, managing allegations, health and safety, data protection and staff employment policies.

Where legislation or statutory guidance changes, Brightfield Academy will interpret and apply this Code in accordance with the most recent requirements.

5. Our Professional Responsibilities

Every adult working within Brightfield Academy has a duty to create an environment in which children and young people feel emotionally and physically safe.

Professional conduct is demonstrated through everyday actions, language, decisions and relationships. Staff are expected to act with honesty, integrity and accountability, recognising that learners observe and learn from adult behaviour.

All staff are expected to:
- place the welfare of children and young people above all other interests;
- safeguard and promote the wellbeing of every learner;
- maintain appropriate professional boundaries at all times;
- model respectful, calm and emotionally regulated behaviour;
- treat everyone with dignity, fairness and compassion;
- promote equality, diversity and inclusion;
- recognise and respond appropriately to signs of distress, abuse, neglect or exploitation;
- demonstrate professional curiosity where concerns arise;
- work collaboratively with colleagues, families and partner agencies;
- maintain confidentiality appropriately whilst recognising that safeguarding concerns must always be shared with those who need to know;
- comply with all Brightfield Academy policies and procedures;
- seek advice whenever uncertain about the safest or most appropriate course of action.

Professional judgement should always be guided by one simple question:

"Is this action in the best interests of the learner, and would I be comfortable explaining my decision to a parent, the Designated Safeguarding Lead, a commissioner or an inspector?“

Where the answer is uncertain, staff should pause, seek advice and record the rationale for any significant decisions.

6. Professional Behaviour

Professional behaviour extends beyond compliance with policies. It is reflected in every interaction, conversation and decision made throughout the working day.

Staff are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that promotes confidence, trust and respect whilst maintaining the highest standards of professionalism.

Every member of staff must:

- treat all learners, families, colleagues and visitors with dignity and respect;
- communicate honestly, courteously and professionally;
- remain calm and emotionally regulated, particularly during challenging situations;
- model the behaviour and attitudes expected from learners;
- maintain high standards of punctuality, attendance and reliability;
- work collaboratively with colleagues;
- demonstrate fairness and consistency whilst recognising individual needs;
- accept responsibility for their own actions and decisions;
- seek support when required rather than allowing situations to escalate;
- contribute positively to Brightfield Academy's culture and reputation.

Professional disagreements should always be addressed respectfully and through appropriate channels.

Staff should never:

- use sarcasm, ridicule or humiliation;
- shout at, threaten or intimidate learners;
- engage in confrontational or provocative behaviour;
- use discriminatory, offensive or inappropriate language;

- allow personal frustrations to influence professional judgement;
- undermine colleagues in front of learners or parents;
- discuss confidential matters in public or inappropriate settings;
- knowingly ignore safeguarding concerns;
- misuse their position of trust.

Every member of staff represents Brightfield Academy. Professional standards apply whether working directly with learners, communicating with families, attending meetings, engaging online on behalf of the Academy or representing Brightfield within the wider community.

7. Professional Curiosity

Brightfield Academy believes that safeguarding begins with noticing.
Many of our learners have experienced adversity, disrupted education, trauma, anxiety or other vulnerabilities. Their needs are not always communicated through words. Changes in behaviour, presentation, attendance, relationships or emotional wellbeing may indicate that a learner requires additional support or protection.

All staff are expected to demonstrate **professional curiosity**.
Professional curiosity means respectfully seeking to understand what may be happening when something does not seem right, rather than making assumptions or accepting explanations without reflection.

Staff should:
- notice changes in behaviour, mood or presentation;
- remain alert to patterns rather than isolated incidents;
- ask appropriate, open questions without investigating;
- listen carefully to learners;
- share concerns promptly with the Designated Safeguarding Lead;
- record concerns accurately and factually;
- work collaboratively with colleagues to build a fuller understanding of concerns.

Professional curiosity should always be exercised respectfully and without judgement.

Staff must never attempt to investigate safeguarding concerns themselves or place a learner under pressure to disclose information.
Where uncertainty exists, staff should:
Notice. Record. Report. Seek advice.

It is always preferable to share a concern that later proves unfounded than to overlook information that may have helped protect a child.

8. Safeguarding Responsibilities

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.
Every adult working within Brightfield Academy has an individual duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people.

Staff must:

- read and understand Part One (or Annex A, where appropriate) of *Keeping Children Safe in Education*;
- know the identity and contact details of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy DSLs;
- understand Brightfield Academy's safeguarding procedures;
- report safeguarding concerns immediately in accordance with those procedures;
- maintain professional curiosity;
- recognise that safeguarding includes physical, emotional and mental wellbeing;
- understand the signs and indicators of abuse, neglect, exploitation, radicalisation and peer-on-peer abuse;
- record concerns promptly, accurately and objectively using the Academy's reporting procedures;
- understand that concerns should be shared even where evidence is incomplete or uncertainty remains.

Staff must never:

- promise confidentiality to a learner making a disclosure;
- delay reporting concerns whilst seeking additional evidence;
- investigate allegations themselves;
- alter or embellish safeguarding records;
- assume someone else has reported a concern.

Where a learner makes a disclosure, staff should:

- remain calm and attentive;
- listen without interruption wherever possible;
- reassure the learner that they have done the right thing by speaking;
- explain that information must be shared with people who can help keep them safe;
- record the learner's words as accurately as possible;
- report the concern immediately to the DSL.

Safeguarding responsibilities continue beyond the Academy site and apply during educational visits, community activities, online interactions authorised by the Academy and any circumstances where staff become aware of information that may affect the safety or welfare of a learner.

9. Professional Boundaries
Professional boundaries exist to protect learners, staff and the integrity of the professional relationship.

Many learners attending Brightfield Academy may seek reassurance, consistency and trusted relationships with adults. While these relationships are essential to effective education and support, they must always remain professional, transparent and appropriate.

Staff are expected to build warm, respectful and trusting relationships whilst maintaining clear professional boundaries at all times.

Staff must:
- maintain relationships that are professional and appropriate;
- be open and transparent in their interactions with learners;
- ensure that professional decisions are centred upon the learner's welfare rather than personal feelings;
- avoid situations that may be misunderstood or give rise to allegations;
- seek advice whenever they are unsure whether a boundary may be becoming blurred.

Staff must never:
- form personal, intimate or exploitative relationships with learners;
- develop relationships that create emotional dependency;
- show favouritism towards individual learners;
- communicate through personal social media or private messaging applications;
- share personal telephone numbers, email addresses or social media accounts;
- meet learners socially or outside authorised educational activities;
- invite learners into their home or visit a learner's home unless this forms part of an authorised programme and appropriate risk assessments have been completed;
- give or accept gifts that could compromise professional judgement;
- borrow money from or lend money to learners or their families.

Professional relationships should always remain visible, accountable and capable of withstanding professional scrutiny.

Where staff believe that a learner is becoming overly dependent upon them, they should discuss this with a senior leader so that appropriate support can be provided whilst maintaining healthy professional boundaries.

10. Appropriate Physical Contact

Brightfield Academy recognises that appropriate physical contact is sometimes necessary when working with children and young people.

Appropriate physical contact may be required to

- administer first aid;
- protect a learner or another person from immediate harm;
- support practical learning activities;
- provide brief and proportionate reassurance where appropriate to the learner's age, needs and wishes;
- assist with personal care where authorised and planned;
- guide a learner safely within the environment.

All physical contact must be:

- necessary;
- proportionate;
- respectful;
- appropriate to the circumstances;
- explained wherever practicable;
- the least intrusive option available.

Wherever reasonably possible, physical contact should:

- take place where it can be observed by others;
- respect the dignity and privacy of the learner;
- reflect the learner's communication needs, sensory profile and known preferences;
- be consistent with any individual behaviour, healthcare or risk plan.

Staff must never:

- use physical contact as punishment;
- initiate unnecessary physical contact;
- continue physical contact when it is no longer required;
- engage in rough play, horseplay or physical games that blur professional boundaries;
- use physical contact that could reasonably be interpreted as intimate, secretive or inappropriate.

Any significant, unexpected or safeguarding-related physical contact should be recorded in accordance with Brightfield Academy's Behaviour and Safeguarding procedures.

Where physical intervention is required to prevent injury, staff must act in accordance with the Behaviour Policy and Restrictive Intervention procedures.

11. One-to-One Working

Individual work with learners forms an important part of Brightfield Academy's personalised approach to education.

One-to-one sessions should always be planned and conducted in ways that maximise both learning and safeguarding.

Wherever reasonably practicable, staff should:
- work in rooms with vision panels or open doors where appropriate;
- use spaces that remain accessible to colleagues;
- ensure another member of staff knows where they are working;
- position themselves so that visibility is maintained whenever possible;
- minimise unnecessary isolation.

Where confidential conversations are required, privacy should be balanced with safeguarding and accountability.

Staff should avoid:
- remaining alone with a learner for longer than necessary;
- working in secluded or inaccessible locations;
- creating situations where their actions cannot reasonably be accounted for.

Where circumstances require staff to work alone with a learner in less visible environments, the reason should be justifiable, proportionate and, wherever possible, known to another member of staff.

Professional transparency protects both learners and staff.

12. Communication, Technology and Digital Conduct

Technology plays an important role in education, communication and safeguarding. All staff are expected to use technology responsibly, professionally and in accordance with Brightfield Academy policies.

All electronic communication relating to learners, families or Academy business must be transparent, appropriate and capable of audit.

Staff must:

- use only Brightfield Academy approved systems, devices and communication platforms for work-related activities;
- communicate professionally and respectfully at all times;
- protect passwords, devices and confidential information;
- follow the Academy's Online Safety and Data Protection Policies;
- report any loss, theft or suspected compromise of devices or information immediately.

Staff must never:

- communicate with learners using personal mobile phones;
- use personal email accounts for Academy business;
- contact learners through personal messaging applications;
- store learner information on personal devices unless expressly authorised and appropriately secured;
- share confidential information through unapproved communication platforms;
- access, download or distribute inappropriate material using Academy systems.

Digital communication should always be professional, purposeful and proportionate.

Messages sent electronically should be written with the expectation that they may later be reviewed by parents, senior leaders, commissioners or inspectors.

13. Personal Mobile Phones and Electronic Devices

Brightfield Academy recognises that staff may carry personal mobile phones whilst at work. However, their use must never compromise supervision, safeguarding or professional conduct.

Staff should:

- keep personal devices secure;
- use personal phones only during authorised breaks wherever possible;
- ensure that learners cannot access personal devices;
- comply with any additional procedures relating to educational visits or examinations.

Staff must not:

- photograph or record learners using personal devices;
- store learner information on personal devices;

- use personal devices whilst directly supervising learners unless required during an emergency or authorised work activity;
- allow learners to use personal devices belonging to staff.

Where authorised Academy devices are used for photography or recording, staff must ensure that images and recordings are transferred securely and removed from the device as soon as reasonably practicable in accordance with Brightfield Academy's Data Protection Policy.

14. Social Media

Staff should recognise that professional responsibilities do not end when leaving the workplace.

Activity on social media may affect public confidence in Brightfield Academy and the trust placed in its staff.

Staff must:

- maintain appropriate privacy settings;
- exercise professional judgement before posting material online;
- ensure that personal views are not presented as representing Brightfield Academy unless authorised;
- behave online in a manner consistent with the standards expected within the workplace.

Staff must never:

- add, follow or communicate with learners through personal social media accounts;
- comment publicly about learners, families or colleagues;
- post confidential or identifying information relating to Brightfield Academy;
- share photographs or videos of learners using personal accounts;
- engage in online behaviour that could reasonably damage professional credibility or public confidence.

Where staff become aware of inappropriate online activity involving learners, colleagues or the Academy, they must report concerns promptly in accordance with safeguarding procedures.

Professional boundaries apply equally online and offline.

15. Confidentiality, Information Sharing and Data Protection

Brightfield Academy is committed to protecting personal information whilst recognising that effective safeguarding sometimes requires information to be shared appropriately.

Staff must:

- treat personal information with respect;
- access only information required for their professional role;
- comply with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR), the Data Protection Act 2018 and Brightfield Academy's Data Protection Policy;
- store information securely;
- share information only with those who have a legitimate professional need to know;
- record information accurately, objectively and promptly.

Information must never be:

- discussed in public places;
- shared casually with colleagues;
- disclosed to family members or friends;
- removed from Academy systems without appropriate authorisation;
- shared through unapproved digital platforms.

Safeguarding concerns must never be withheld because of uncertainty about confidentiality.

Where a child may be at risk of harm, information should be shared promptly with the Designated Safeguarding Lead in accordance with safeguarding procedures and statutory guidance.

When uncertain about whether information should be shared, staff should seek advice from the Designated Safeguarding Lead rather than delay action.

16. Dress, Appearance and Professional Presentation

Staff represent Brightfield Academy through their conduct, communication and professional appearance.

There is no expectation for formal business dress in every circumstance. As an alternative provision, staff may undertake practical activities, outdoor learning, sports, animal care, creative projects and therapeutic interventions. Clothing should therefore be appropriate to the role being undertaken whilst maintaining a professional standard.

Staff are expected to:

- dress in a manner that promotes confidence and professionalism;
- wear clothing that is safe, practical and appropriate to planned activities;

- maintain good standards of personal hygiene;
- wear suitable footwear for the environment and activities being undertaken;
- use any required personal protective equipment (PPE) where appropriate;
- present themselves in a way that reflects positively on Brightfield Academy.

Staff should avoid clothing or personal presentation that:
- could reasonably be considered offensive, discriminatory or intimidating;
- creates unnecessary safeguarding concerns;
- compromises health and safety;
- distracts from the professional learning environment;
- is unsuitable for the activities being undertaken.

Visible tattoos, cultural dress, religious clothing and personal expression will be respected provided they do not compromise safeguarding, health and safety or the professional standards expected within the Academy.

Professional appearance should always support positive relationships and help learners feel safe, confident and respected.

17. Health, Wellbeing and Fitness for Work
Working within an alternative provision can be physically and emotionally demanding.

Brightfield Academy recognises that staff wellbeing is essential to providing safe, consistent and effective support for learners.

Staff are expected to:
- attend work fit to carry out their duties safely and effectively;
- seek support where physical or mental health may affect their work;
- comply with health and safety procedures;
- work within the limits of their competence and training;
- report accidents, injuries or health concerns promptly;
- contribute to a culture in which colleagues feel able to seek help without stigma.

Brightfield Academy is committed to promoting staff wellbeing through:
- supportive leadership;
- reflective supervision;
- access to professional development;
- collaborative working;
- appropriate workload management where reasonably practicable;
- opportunities for reflective practice following significant incidents.

Seeking support is regarded as a professional strength, not a weakness.

18. Alcohol, Drugs and Other Substances

Learners have the right to be supported by adults who are alert, responsible and able to exercise sound professional judgement.

Staff must not:

- attend work whilst under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs;
- misuse prescription medication;
- misuse legal substances in a way that impairs judgement or performance;
- consume alcohol during working hours unless specifically authorised as part of an approved professional event and never whilst responsible for learners;
- possess, supply or use illegal drugs on Academy premises or during Academy activities.

Staff taking prescribed medication that may significantly affect alertness, concentration or their ability to carry out their duties safely should discuss this confidentially with an appropriate senior leader where reasonable adjustments or temporary support may be required.

The Academy recognises that many medical conditions require prescribed medication and encourages open, supportive conversations to ensure both staff wellbeing and learner safety.

19. Behaviour Management

Brightfield Academy believes that behaviour is a form of communication. Staff are expected to promote positive behaviour through relationships, consistency, understanding and effective support rather than through fear, confrontation or punishment.

Staff must:

- follow the Behaviour Policy at all times;
- prioritise prevention, co-regulation and de-escalation;
- maintain calm and emotionally regulated responses;
- recognise the impact of trauma, anxiety, SEND and individual needs;
- make reasonable adjustments where appropriate;
- use restorative approaches following incidents whenever appropriate;
- seek assistance early when situations begin to escalate.

Staff must never:

- shout at, threaten or humiliate learners;
- use sarcasm or ridicule;

- engage in unnecessary power struggles;
- use physical intervention other than in accordance with the Behaviour Policy;
- impose punitive or degrading sanctions;
- use language that may increase fear, shame or emotional distress.

Staff should remember that the way adults respond during difficult moments often has the greatest influence on how learners learn to regulate themselves. Every interaction should aim not only to resolve the immediate situation but also to strengthen trust, dignity and future relationships.

20. Gifts, Hospitality and Conflicts of Interest

Professional judgement must always remain impartial and be seen to be impartial.

Staff should not place themselves in situations where personal interests, gifts or relationships could influence, or reasonably appear to influence, professional decisions.

Gifts
Small tokens of appreciation from learners or families may occasionally be offered as a genuine expression of thanks.

Staff should:
- exercise professional judgement before accepting any gift;
- inform an appropriate senior leader of gifts that are more than of nominal value;
- ensure that acceptance of any gift cannot reasonably be interpreted as creating an obligation or favour.

Staff must never:
- request gifts from learners or families;
- accept money or cash equivalents;
- accept gifts that could influence professional judgement;
- give personal gifts to individual learners unless authorised as part of an agreed Academy initiative.

Where there is any doubt, staff should politely decline the gift and seek advice from a senior leader.

Hospitality

Reasonable hospitality offered as part of professional meetings or events may be accepted where appropriate.

Hospitality should never:
- influence professional decision-making;
- create a conflict of interest;
- compromise the reputation of Brightfield Academy.

Conflicts of Interest
Staff have a duty to declare any personal, financial or family interest that may conflict, or appear to conflict, with their professional responsibilities.

Examples include:
- family members attending Brightfield Academy;
- close personal relationships with parents, carers or contractors;
- financial interests connected with suppliers;
- involvement in organisations that may influence Academy decisions;
- private tutoring or paid educational support involving Brightfield learners.

Declaring a potential conflict does not necessarily prevent involvement. It allows the Academy to manage situations openly, fairly and transparently.

Failure to disclose a significant conflict of interest may be treated as misconduct.

21. Outside Employment
Brightfield Academy recognises that many staff undertake additional employment, self-employment or voluntary work.

Outside activities should not interfere with an employee's ability to fulfil their responsibilities safely, effectively or professionally.

Staff must ensure that outside employment:
- does not create a conflict of interest;
- does not compromise safeguarding;
- does not adversely affect attendance, performance or wellbeing;
- does not misuse confidential Academy information;
- does not create reputational risk for Brightfield Academy.

Where there is any possibility of a conflict arising, staff should declare the matter to a senior leader at the earliest opportunity.

22. Photography, Video and Media

Images and recordings of learners are personal information and must be treated with the same care as any other confidential record.

Photography and video recording may be used to celebrate achievement, support learning or maintain educational records where appropriate consent and authorisation are in place.

Staff must:

- use only authorised Academy equipment unless specific permission has been given otherwise;
- comply with parental consent arrangements;
- ensure images are appropriate and respectful;
- transfer images securely to authorised storage as soon as reasonably practicable;
- delete images from recording devices once securely transferred;
- report any accidental loss or unauthorised disclosure immediately.

Staff must never:

- use personal devices to photograph or record learners;
- upload learner images to personal cloud storage;
- share learner images through personal messaging applications or social media;
- alter or manipulate images in ways that could misrepresent events or compromise dignity.

Learners should always be treated with dignity and respect when photographs or recordings are taken.

23. Safer Working Practice

Safer working practice protects both learners and staff.
Not every situation will be covered by written procedures. Staff are therefore expected to apply sound professional judgement and to seek advice whenever uncertainty exists.

Before acting, staff should ask themselves:

- Is this in the learner's best interests?
- Is this professionally appropriate?
- Is it transparent and capable of being explained?
- Would I be comfortable if this decision were reviewed by a parent, the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Buckinghamshire Council or Ofsted?

- Does this align with Brightfield Academy's values and policies?

Where uncertainty remains, staff should:

Stop.
Seek advice.
Record significant decisions where appropriate.

Professional accountability is strengthened through openness, reflection and discussion.

Staff should avoid situations where they are:
- isolated unnecessarily;
- acting outside their competence;
- making significant safeguarding decisions alone;
- placing themselves or learners at avoidable risk.

Good professional judgement is demonstrated not by never asking for help, but by recognising when support is needed.

24. Low-Level Concerns

Brightfield Academy is committed to maintaining an open, transparent and reflective safeguarding culture.

Creating a safe environment depends upon staff feeling confident to raise concerns about behaviour that may not meet the expected standards of professional conduct, even where the behaviour does not appear to meet the threshold for formal disciplinary action or a safeguarding allegation.

A **low-level concern** is any behaviour by an adult working with children that:
- is inconsistent with this Code of Conduct;
- falls below the expected standards of professional behaviour;
- may create uncertainty about professional boundaries; or
- could reasonably be perceived as inappropriate, even where no harm is intended.

Examples may include:
- being unnecessarily over-familiar with a learner;
- using inappropriate or unprofessional language;
- failing to maintain appropriate professional boundaries;
- engaging in behaviour that could be misunderstood;
- neglecting agreed safeguarding procedures;
- making poor professional decisions where safeguarding could be affected.

Staff are expected to report:
- concerns about colleagues;
- concerns about volunteers, contractors or visitors;
- concerns about their own conduct where they believe their actions may have fallen below expected standards.

Self-reporting is viewed as a positive demonstration of professionalism, honesty and accountability.

All low-level concerns will be:
- taken seriously;
- recorded appropriately;
- considered proportionately;
- reviewed by senior leaders;
- managed fairly and confidentially;
- used, where appropriate, to improve professional practice and organisational learning.

Brightfield Academy recognises that most low-level concerns arise through human error rather than deliberate misconduct. Addressing concerns openly helps prevent situations from escalating and strengthens our safeguarding culture.

25. Whistleblowing
Every member of staff has a professional responsibility to raise concerns where they believe that the safety, welfare or rights of children or young people may be at risk.

Staff should never assume that someone else has already reported a concern.

Whistleblowing may relate to concerns including:
- unsafe safeguarding practice;
- abuse or neglect of a learner;
- professional misconduct;
- breaches of this Code of Conduct;
- failure to follow safeguarding procedures;
- unlawful or unethical practice;
- deliberate concealment of concerns;
- actions that place learners, staff or the Academy at significant risk.

Concerns should normally be raised through:
- the Designated Safeguarding Lead;
- the Head of Provision;

- a Director;
- another appropriate senior leader,
- in accordance with the Whistleblowing Policy.

Where a concern relates to senior leadership or where staff believe internal reporting is inappropriate, concerns may be raised through external safeguarding or regulatory procedures in accordance with the Whistleblowing Policy.

Brightfield Academy will not tolerate victimisation or detrimental treatment of any individual who raises a genuine concern in good faith.

26. Breaches of this Code

Every member of staff is expected to uphold the professional standards contained within this Code.

Where concerns arise that these standards have not been met, Brightfield Academy will respond fairly, proportionately and in accordance with its employment, safeguarding and disciplinary procedures.

Breaches may be managed through:

- professional discussion or reflective supervision;
- additional guidance or training;
- informal management action;
- formal disciplinary procedures;
- safeguarding procedures;
- referral to external agencies where required.

Depending upon the circumstances, this may include referral to:

- the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO);
- Children's Social Care;
- the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS);
- the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA), where applicable;
- the Police;
- other regulatory or statutory bodies.

The Academy will always distinguish between:

- honest mistakes;
- professional capability issues;
- low-level concerns;
- misconduct;
- gross misconduct;
- safeguarding allegations.

This ensures that concerns are managed fairly whilst maintaining the highest standards of safeguarding.
Where appropriate, staff will be offered guidance, supervision, training or support to improve professional practice.

27. Training, Monitoring and Continuous Improvement
Professional conduct is strengthened through continual learning, reflection and quality assurance.

Brightfield Academy will ensure that all staff receive appropriate induction and ongoing training relevant to their role.

This will include, where appropriate:
- safeguarding and child protection;
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE);
- professional boundaries;
- safer working practice;
- behaviour management and de-escalation;
- trauma-informed practice;
- SEND and additional needs;
- equality, diversity and inclusion;
- online safety;
- information security and data protection;
- whistleblowing;
- low-level concerns;
- health and safety.

Leaders will monitor the implementation of this Code through:
- induction and probation processes;
- supervision and reflective discussion;
- safeguarding audits;
- low-level concern reviews;
- observations of professional practice;
- incident reviews;
- feedback from learners, families and colleagues where appropriate;
- annual policy review.

The purpose of monitoring is not simply to identify concerns but to strengthen professional practice, promote consistency and continually improve the quality and safety of provision.

Brightfield Academy is committed to fostering a learning culture in which staff are encouraged to reflect, develop and continually improve.

28. Staff Declaration

Brightfield Academy places the safety, wellbeing and dignity of children and young people at the heart of everything we do.

Every adult working within the Academy is expected to uphold the professional standards contained within this Staff Code of Conduct and to contribute positively to a culture of safeguarding, inclusion and continuous improvement.

By signing this declaration, I confirm that I have:

- read and understood this Staff Code of Conduct;
- had the opportunity to ask questions about its contents;
- understood my safeguarding responsibilities;
- understood the expectations regarding professional boundaries and conduct;
- understood my responsibility to report safeguarding concerns, low-level concerns and whistleblowing matters;
- understood my responsibility to maintain confidentiality whilst recognising when information must be shared to safeguard children;
- agreed to comply with this Code and all associated Brightfield Academy policies.

I understand that failure to comply with this Code may result in:

- professional guidance or supervision;
- management action;
- disciplinary procedures;
- safeguarding investigation;
- referral to external safeguarding or regulatory agencies where appropriate.

I understand that I have an ongoing responsibility to familiarise myself with future updates to this Code and to seek advice whenever I am uncertain about the most appropriate course of action.

Staff Declaration
Name: _____
Role: _____
Signature: _____
Date: _____

Manager / Induction Confirmation
I confirm that this Staff Code of Conduct has been discussed with the above member of staff and that any questions raised have been addressed.
Manager's Name: _____
Role: _____
Signature: _____
Date: _____

Document Control

Policy Owner: Head of Provision
Approved by: Directors of Brightfield Academy
Date Adopted: July 2026
Review Cycle: Annual
Next Review: July 2027

The policy may be reviewed earlier where changes in legislation, statutory guidance, safeguarding requirements or operational practice make this necessary.

Final Brightfield Principle

'Every interaction shapes a life. Every decision builds trust. Every member of staff contributes to the culture that children experience each day.

At Brightfield Academy, professionalism is measured not only by what we do, but by how safely, compassionately and consistently we choose to do it.'

BRIGHTFIELD ACADEMY
Inclusion. Choice. Growth.

STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT
ONE-PAGE SUMMARY

Professional. Respectful. Safe. Every time.

Our Code of Conduct helps us keep learners safe, build trust and create a positive environment.
We all have a responsibility to uphold these standards.

1. PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOUR

- Treat all learners with respect and dignity
- Use appropriate language at all times
- Stay calm, patient and professional
- Model positive relationships
- No sarcasm, shouting, humiliation or favouritism

We lead by example.

2. SAFEGUARDING IS EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY

- Understand and follow safeguarding procedures
- Report concerns immediately to the DSL
- Never promise confidentiality
- Record concerns accurately and promptly
- Remain vigilant at all times

If in doubt, report.

3. PROFESSIONAL BOUNDARIES

- Keep relationships professional
- Do not share personal contact details
- Do not communicate via personal social media or messaging apps
- Do not meet learners outside of professional settings

Clear boundaries, safer relationships.

4. PHYSICAL CONTACT

- Only when appropriate, proportionate and necessary
- Examples: safety, first aid, appropriate reassurance
- Never intrusive or unnecessary
- Avoid contact that could be misinterpreted

Protecting learners and staff.

5. COMMUNICATION & TECHNOLOGY

- Use approved Brightfield channels only
- Do not contact learners via personal devices
- Only share information that is necessary
- Follow our Online Safety Policy

Professional communication only, always.

6. SOCIAL MEDIA & ONLINE PRESENCE

- Do not add or follow learners
- Do not message or interact with learners online
- Keep personal accounts private and secure
- Never post content that could bring Brightfield into disrepute

Keep your professional and personal lives separate.

7. CONFIDENTIALITY & INFORMATION

- Respect confidentiality
- Share information only when necessary
- Never discuss learners in public or socially
- Store data securely and follow our policies

Trust is earned. Confidentiality is crucial.

8. BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT

- Follow our Behaviour Policy
- Use de-escalation strategies
- Avoid confrontation or power struggles
- Physical intervention only as a last resort and in line with policy

Calm. Consistent. Supportive.

GREY AREAS – USE YOUR PROFESSIONAL JUDGEMENT

When situations are unclear, follow these golden rules:

- Ensure your actions are justifiable and appropriate
- Consider how your behaviour might be perceived by others
- Avoid situations that could lead to misinterpretation
- Record and report anything that could be questioned
- If in doubt, seek advice from the DSL or a leader

Ask yourself: "Would I be comfortable explaining this to a parent, DSL or an inspector?"

REPORTING & CONCERNS

- Report all safeguarding concerns immediately to the DSL
- Report low-level concerns about yourself or others
- Use the correct channels and record accurately
- We support transparency and early intervention

It's everyone's responsibility to speak up.

BREACHES OF THIS CODE

Breaches will be taken seriously and may result in:

- Informal management action
- Formal disciplinary procedures
- Suspension
- Referral to external agencies (e.g. LADO, DBS, TRA)

We are accountable for our actions.

Our Values

INCLUSION – We welcome everyone.
CHOICE – We empower individuals.
GROWTH – We help everyone thrive.
PROTECTION – We keep each other safe.
RESPECT – We treat everyone with respect.
PARTNERSHIP – We achieve more together.

We're here to make a difference.

SAFEGUARDING TODAY • SUPPORTING NOW • BELIEVING IN TOMORROW

BRIGHTFIELD
ACADEMY

APPENDIX A
PROFESSIONAL DECISION-MAKING GUIDE

Before acting, ask yourself:

- **Is this in the learner's best interests?**
- **Is it safe, necessary and proportionate?**
- **Does it maintain appropriate professional boundaries?**
- **Would I be comfortable explaining this to:**
  - The learner?
  - Their parent or carer?
  - The Designated Safeguarding Lead?
  - Buckinghamshire Council?
  - Ofsted?
- **Have I followed Brightfield Academy policies?**

IF YES

Proceed professionally and record any significant actions where required.

IF UNSURE

Pause, seek advice from a senior leader or the DSL, and record the decision where appropriate.

IF NO

Do not proceed. Choose a safer course of action or seek guidance.

SAFE. RESPECTFUL. PROFESSIONAL. ALWAYS IN THEIR BEST INTERESTS.