

Code of Conduct

2026–2027

The Governing Body of Headlands Primary School
endeavors to write and adopt policies that are fully inclusive
for all children / staff / parents / carers / Governors and
members of the wider community.



Policy approved by Governors:	September 2026
Signature of Chair of Governors:	
Date for renewal:	September 2027

Working together to ensure that all children will reach their full potential in a happy, caring, safe and respectful environment.

1. Purpose and scope

Headlands Community Primary School is committed to the highest standards of professional conduct. This Code sets out the standards of behaviour expected of all adults working in or on behalf of the school, including teaching and support staff, governors, volunteers, supply staff, students, contractors and regular visitors, where relevant to their role.

The Code should be read alongside the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, Whistleblowing Policy, Behaviour Policy, Online Safety arrangements, Data Protection requirements and other relevant employment and school policies.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. All adults must act in the best interests of children, maintain appropriate professional boundaries and work in a way that is open, transparent and capable of appropriate scrutiny.

2. Professional standards

All adults are expected to:

- uphold public trust and act with honesty, integrity, fairness and professionalism;
- treat children, colleagues, parents and carers, and visitors with dignity and respect;
- promote equality, inclusion and the rights of others, and never discriminate, harass or victimise;
- model the school's values of Respect, Independence, Aspiration, Resilience, Empathy and Kindness, and Creativity;
- maintain high standards of attendance, punctuality, reliability and professional presentation;
- follow lawful and reasonable instructions, school policies and agreed procedures;
- raise concerns promptly and never ignore conduct that may place a child or adult at risk;
- ensure personal beliefs are not expressed in ways that exploit children's vulnerability or undermine their rights.

Teachers

Teachers must also meet the expectations in the Department for Education Teachers' Standards, including the standards relating to personal and professional conduct.

3. Safeguarding and child protection

All staff must read Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026: Part One in full and complete safeguarding training and updates required by the school. Adults must know the school's safeguarding procedures and the identity of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Deputy DSL.

- Designated Safeguarding Lead / Headteacher: Mr Andrew Buttery
- Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead: Mrs Emma Johnson

Any concern about a child's welfare must be acted upon immediately and reported in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures. Adults must not promise confidentiality to a child and must record concerns accurately, factually and promptly.

4. Concerns or allegations about adults

Any safeguarding concern or allegation about an adult working in or on behalf of the school, however small it may appear, must be shared through the school's safeguarding procedures. This includes concerns about supply staff, volunteers, contractors and governors.

- Concerns or allegations that may meet the harm threshold must be reported to the Headteacher without delay.
- If the concern or allegation relates to the Headteacher, it must be reported to the Chair of Governors, Rev Ron Smith.
- Low-level concerns must also be shared promptly with the Headteacher, or with the Chair of Governors where the concern relates to the Headteacher.
- Adults must not investigate concerns themselves, question children beyond what is necessary to clarify what is being said, or discuss the matter with people who do not need to know.

The purpose of reporting low-level concerns is to maintain a culture of openness, trust and transparency, identify inappropriate or concerning behaviour early and protect children and adults.

5. Whistleblowing

All adults have a responsibility to raise concerns about poor or unsafe safeguarding practice. Concerns should normally be raised through the school's Whistleblowing Policy. No adult should feel unable to report a genuine concern because of seniority, loyalty or fear of repercussions.

6. Professional boundaries and relationships with children

Relationships with children must always remain professional. Adults must understand that their position places them in a relationship of trust and must never use that position to intimidate, humiliate, favour, exploit or form an inappropriate relationship with a child.

- Use respectful, age-appropriate language. Sarcasm, sexualised comments, discriminatory remarks, humiliating language and inappropriate jokes are unacceptable.
- Do not create or encourage exclusive or 'special' relationships with individual children.
- Do not exchange personal contact details with pupils or communicate with them through personal email accounts, messaging services, gaming platforms or social media.
- Do not arrange to meet pupils socially outside school or establish private online connections with current pupils.
- Gifts to or from pupils should only be of nominal value and consistent with school arrangements. Any gift that could be interpreted as favouritism or create an obligation must not be accepted or given.
- Any indication that a pupil has developed an infatuation or inappropriate attachment towards an adult must be reported promptly to the Headteacher and managed transparently.

7. One-to-one working

One-to-one work may be necessary and beneficial. It should be planned and conducted in a way that protects both the child and the adult.

- Where possible, use a room or area that is visible to others, or keep doors open where this is appropriate.
- Ensure another adult knows where the session is taking place when circumstances could otherwise create unnecessary risk.
- Do not cover vision panels or deliberately place yourself and a child beyond appropriate oversight.
- Report and record any incident during one-to-one work that could be misinterpreted or give rise to concern.

8. Physical contact, behaviour and use of reasonable force

Physical contact with pupils should be appropriate, proportionate and related to the child's needs, safety, care or education. Adults must be sensitive to individual circumstances, including age, SEND, communication needs, cultural background and previous experiences.

- Never use physical contact as punishment or to intimidate, humiliate or cause pain.
- Do not poke, push, grab or otherwise make unnecessary physical contact to secure compliance.
- Where physical intervention or reasonable force is necessary to prevent injury, serious damage or another significant risk, staff must act in accordance with law, school policy and their training.
- Any significant physical intervention must be reported and recorded in line with school procedures.

If a member of staff feels that their emotions or behaviour may become difficult to manage in a situation, they must seek support from a senior colleague immediately.

9. Toilets, changing and intimate or personal care

Adults must respect children's dignity and privacy while ensuring appropriate safeguarding and supervision.

- Do not enter pupils' toilets or changing areas unnecessarily.
- Where entry is necessary for supervision, safety or care, announce your presence where appropriate and maintain professional boundaries.
- Personal or intimate care must only be provided in accordance with the child's needs, agreed plans and school procedures.
- Children should be encouraged to carry out tasks independently wherever they are able to do so.
- Any concern arising during intimate or personal care must be reported promptly.

10. Digital communication, social media and online conduct

Professional standards apply online as well as in person. Adults must consider how their online activity could affect public confidence, professional relationships or the safeguarding of children.

- Do not communicate privately with pupils through personal accounts or devices.

- Do not accept or initiate social media connections with current pupils.
- Do not post confidential information, images of pupils, or material that could bring the school or profession into disrepute.
- Use school-approved systems for professional communication and follow the school's data protection and online safety requirements.
- Ensure that personal social media privacy settings are appropriately managed, while recognising that privacy settings do not remove professional responsibilities.

11. Mobile phones, photography, video and audio

Personal devices must be used responsibly and in accordance with school procedures. Adults must not use personal devices to photograph, film or record pupils.

- Photography, filming or audio recording of pupils must have a clear educational or school purpose and use school-approved equipment or systems.
- Before publishing images, staff must follow the school's consent and data protection arrangements.
- Images must never be taken in circumstances that compromise a child's dignity or privacy.
- Personal mobile phone use must not interfere with supervision, teaching, safeguarding or professional duties.

12. Confidentiality, information sharing and data protection

Adults may have access to sensitive and confidential information about children, families, colleagues and the school. Such information must only be accessed, used, stored or shared for legitimate professional purposes.

- Do not discuss confidential matters in public places or with people who do not need to know.
- Store records and devices securely and follow school data protection procedures.
- Safeguarding information must be shared when necessary to protect a child; data protection law does not prevent appropriate safeguarding information sharing.
- Concerns and records must be factual, accurate, timely and handled through the school's agreed systems.

13. Transport, home visits and off-site activity

- Do not transport a pupil alone in a private vehicle unless this is necessary, authorised and consistent with school procedures, appropriate insurance and parental arrangements.
- Home visits must only take place where they are a necessary part of the adult's role and have been agreed through school procedures.
- Off-site activities, educational visits and clubs must follow the school's risk assessment, safeguarding, supervision and communication arrangements.

14. Alcohol, drugs, medication and smoking/vaping

Adults must never be under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs or any substance that impairs their ability to care for children or carry out their duties safely. Smoking and vaping are not permitted on the school site. Medication must be stored and used responsibly so that it does not create a risk to pupils.

15. Dress, language and presentation

Adults should dress in a manner that is appropriate to their role, safe for the activities being undertaken and consistent with a professional school environment. Clothing, badges, symbols or language that could reasonably be considered offensive, discriminatory, intimidating or inappropriate must not be worn/used.

16. Health, safety and site security

All adults must take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others. Staff must follow school procedures for visitors, site access, emergencies, accidents, hazards and security. Identification or visitor badges must be worn where required, and concerns about unauthorised access or unsafe practice must be reported immediately.

17. Responding to difficult or unsafe situations

Physical threats or aggressive behaviour

- Remain calm, seek assistance and follow the school's procedures for managing aggressive or threatening behaviour.
- Do not respond with threatening, provocative or retaliatory behaviour.
- Report incidents to the Headteacher and complete any required record.

Fights or serious conflict between pupils

- Act promptly to safeguard pupils and summon assistance where possible.
- Use verbal intervention and de-escalation first where circumstances allow.
- Physical intervention should only be used where lawful, necessary and proportionate, and in accordance with school policy and training.
- Report and record significant incidents.

A pupil leaving a supervised area

Staff should follow the school's agreed procedures, maintain appropriate supervision of other pupils and seek assistance. Adults should not use unsafe physical obstruction or restraint merely to secure compliance.

18. Breaches of this Code

A breach of this Code may lead to action under the school's disciplinary, safeguarding or capability procedures, depending on the circumstances. Some conduct may also require referral to the Local

Authority Designated Officer, Disclosure and Barring Service, Teaching Regulation Agency, police or other relevant body.

Where an adult is unsure whether an action is appropriate, they should seek advice from the Headteacher or DSL before acting wherever circumstances permit.

19. Key guidance

This Code has been updated with regard to current national guidance, including:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, Department for Education;
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026, Department for Education;
- Teachers' Standards, Department for Education;
- Guidance for Safer Working Practice for those working with children and young people in education settings, Safer Recruitment Consortium;
- Current school policies and City of York safeguarding procedures.

20. Staff acknowledgement

All staff are expected to read, understand and follow this Code of Conduct. Questions about its application should be raised with the Headteacher.