

Code of Conduct for School Staff

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Introduction

The Bolton Impact Trust is a multi-academy trust made up of several alternative provisions and a special school. We think that our Trust is a very special place where we respect individuality, diversity and difference. We believe in positive regard for all and we actively promote the key principles of warmth, respect and harmony.

We are a Trust who are proud of our core beliefs and values:

We believe everyone can achieve.

We inspire a love of learning

We transform potential into long-lasting success.

At the Bolton Impact Trust we seek to provide a safe and supportive environment which secures the wellbeing and very best outcomes for our pupils and the staff in our care. We recognise that our teaching and support staff are our most important assets and we wish to support them fully to thrive both personally and professionally. We recognise that there is a correlation between the wellbeing of staff and the wellbeing of pupils, and as such, we wish to create a whole trust approach for staff and pupils in respect to wellbeing.

This code of conduct applies to all employees at the Bolton Impact Trust and should clarify what is expected in terms of professional behaviour and standards that we expect all employees to follow.

Although the code does not directly apply to contractors, consultants, agency staff or volunteers, the school's continued association with these individuals requires them to observe and comply with the code.

The code of conduct is supported by a number of other individual policies which outline your obligations and provide guidance on standards of behaviour. These include, but are not limited to, the Disciplinary and Dismissal policy, Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy, Acceptable Use of ICT Policy, Safer Recruitment Disclosure and Barring and the Whistleblowing policy. These policies can be found on the trust website.

Please note that this document is not exhaustive. The Code does not attempt to provide an exhaustive list of what to do in every aspect of your work, but represents a broad framework within which staff are expected to conduct themselves.

Breaches of the code and standards set by the trust and its academies will ordinarily result in disciplinary action being taken. Please raise any queries about the content of the policy with your academy lead as soon as possible to avoid any doubt.

In line with the Education Act 2002, the Trust Board and Local Governing Bodies of Bolton Impact Trust have a duty to exercise their function with a view to safeguarding and promoting welfare of children.

This obligation is further outlined within the statutory guidance, 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' September 2022 (to which all schools must have regard) which stipulates the role that school staff must play in safeguarding pupils. Furthermore, in line with this statutory guidance, schools should have a staff behaviour policy or code of conduct, which should be provided to all staff.

In order to adhere to these obligations and to ensure that safeguarding children is at the focus of Bolton Impact Trust and its academies this code of conduct has been compiled.

Objective, Scope and Purpose

The code of conduct establishes the clear standards of behaviour that are expected of all academy staff, and clearly enables staff to understand what is and is not acceptable.

The purpose of this code of conduct is:-

- to ensure that staff to act as role models within their professional capacity;
- to ensure that staff maintain their own professional reputation;
- maintain the reputation of the trust and its academies and;
- to ensure that conduct and behaviour of all staff both safeguards and sets the example for pupils and students.

Staff should understand the responsibilities and behaviours that are a fundamental part of their role in school. This code of conduct cannot be exhaustive. In addition to the actions and behaviours identified within this code of conduct, staff should ensure they continuously exercise their professional judgement in work and their personal life and avoid any conduct which may be in contravention with their professional role and responsibilities, and/or the ethos of the trust and its academies.

Legislation and Guidance

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.

This policy also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

School staff work within the public sector, delivering public education, and are consequently accountable for the ethical and high quality delivery of this public service. Therefore, in addition to this policy, staff are expected to adhere to the 7 principles of public life (the Nolan principles 1995), established by the Committee on Standards in Public Life; selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.

General Obligations

All staff are to set an example to pupils. They will:

- Attend work in a condition where you are able to carry out your duties safely and effectively
- Act honestly and with dignity, and always treat others with dignity and respect
- Never use inappropriate or offensive language in school
- 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
- Understand the statutory frameworks they must act within
- Work in accordance with the terms and conditions of your contract of employment
- Ensure all policies and requirements in your role are followed, including the requirement for data protection and sensitivity around confidential information.
- Adhere to the Teachers' Standards
- Adhere to the Teaching Assistant Standards 2016

SAFEGUARDING

This code of conduct must be viewed in conjunction with the school's Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy as well as Part One of Keeping Children Safe in Education. 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.

The duty to safeguard students includes the duty to report concerns about a student's welfare as per the school's policy, and to report any concerns about other staff member's safeguarding practices.

All employees will familiarise themselves with our 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. New employees will also be given copies on arrival.

STAFF / PUPIL RELATIONSHIPS

All staff 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.

If staff members 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

All staff should avoid contact with pupils outside of school hours if possible.

Personal contact details including social media profiles should not be exchanged between staff and pupils, and pupils should only be contacted by staff via the school's approved mechanisms. If staff are contacted by students/pupils via an inappropriate route, they must report this to their line manager or Academy Lead immediately.

Staff social media profiles should not be available to pupils, and strict security settings must be in place on any social media profiles. Staff must not contact or seek to contact pupils, parents, or any other school stakeholder via social media. Staff will follow the Trust's Social Media Policy and refer to section 7 below, "Acceptable use of technology and social media."

All staff must comply with the Bribery Act 2010. A person may be guilty of an offence of bribery under this act if they offer, promise, or give financial advantage or other advantage to someone; or if they request, agree, or accept, or receive a bribe from another person. If you believe that a person has failed to comply with the Bribery Act, this should be reported in accordance with the Trust's Whistleblowing procedure. 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 a staff member 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 the Academy Lead.

Acceptable use of Technology and Social Media

This should be read in conjunction with the Trust's social media and Acceptable use of ICT policy. Staff must use school IT equipment responsibly and for professional purposes only,

this includes use of school email and mobile phone, if applicable. Staff will not use school technology 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. Staff must follow all school procedures for appropriately accessing and using school IT equipment.

Staff 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.

Staff must be aware of the trust's social media policy. They must act as responsible users of social media and be aware that they are accountable for any information or views expressed on social media or other internet sites. This includes views expressed directly and through affiliation, such as 'liking' a post or page. Staff must not engage in any internet or social media usage that may bring the school, trust or any school stakeholder into disrepute, or that questions their professionalism or suitability to work with children.

We have the right to monitor emails and internet use on the school IT system.

CONFIDENTIALITY

In the course of their role, members of staff are often privy to sensitive and confidential information about the academy, trust, staff, pupils, and their parents.

This information will never be:

- Disclosed to anyone without the relevant authority
- Used to humiliate, embarrass, or blackmail others
- Used for a purpose other than what it was collected and intended for
- Removed from the school premises without the express consent of a member of the senior leadership team in writing
- If you are authorised to take documentation or equipment off site then you must ensure you keep such items secure at all times and follow the trust's Data Protection policy.

This does not overrule staff's duty to report child protection concerns to the appropriate channel where staff believe a child is at risk of harm.

SECURITY

This section should be read in conjunction with the trust's Data Protection and Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy. Staff must visibly display their identification badge at all times while on school site. All staff are required to challenge anyone on site without either an Employee ID badge or a visitor's badge. You must not allow any individual not displaying an ID Badge to follow you or 'tailgate' you into any area of the school site. If you forget your ID Badge, you must report this to reception to use a temporary replacement. If you lose your ID Badge, you must report this to your line manager as soon as possible so a replacement can be sought. You must accompany at all times any visitors who have not been DBS checked.

HONESTY AND INTEGRITY

Staff should maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their role. This includes when dealing with pupils, handling money, claiming expenses, requesting leave of absence, and using school property and facilities.

Staff will ensure that all information given to the school or trust about their qualifications and professional experience is correct.

If a conflict of interest occurs which may threaten the integrity of your employment relationship with your academy or the trust, you must resolve the conflict in favour of your duties at school. You must advise your manager in writing of any personal or immediate interests that may give rise to a conflict of interest within your official duties.

In line with Keeping Children Safe in Education and in conjunction with the trust's Safer Recruitment, Disclosure and Barring Policy, staff within school must notify the Academy Lead in writing of any changes to their DBS and must do so the next day following any arrest, caution, charge, or conviction of any offence. This includes being questioned under caution without charge. Central Team staff must notify the Director of Academy Operations

DRESS CODE

Staff will dress in a professional, appropriate manner, taking into consideration the workplace health and safety requirements of your role.

Outfits will not be overly revealing, and staff must not present themselves in a manner that may offend, including the display of any offensive or political slogans. Further details regarding staff dress can be found in the staff handbook.

CONDUCT OUTSIDE OF WORK

Staff will not act in a way that would bring the school, or the teaching profession into disrepute. This covers relevant criminal offences, such as violence or sexual misconduct, as well as negative comments about the school or trust on social media.

HEALTH, SAFETY, AND WELLBEING

The trust and its academies recognises and accepts its responsibility for providing a safe and healthy environment for all staff, students, and visitors who attend our premises. You are responsible for ensuring the health and safety of yourself and others who may be affected by your actions.

It is essential that all staff feel valued, have the opportunity to express their views, and are supported to manage their workload within a culture that supports a healthy work-life balance. To do this, the Senior Leadership Team will:

- provide personal and professional development
- provide a non-judgemental and confidential support system and ensure that there are effective methods of communication throughout each school and the trust at every level
- monitor and reduce the workload of members of staff where possible
- support staff with consistent pupil behaviour management strategies

- listen to the views of members of staff and provide a range of opportunities for involving staff in school decision making processes
- ensure that the efforts and successes of staff are acknowledged and celebrated
- ensure supervision / appraisal meetings for all staff, which include opportunity for staff to discuss their aspirations, career intentions, and well-being
- apply flexible working and leave of absence policies, where possible, to enable staff to combine the demands of family life, work, personal life, and health.

Staff members will:

- treat one another with empathy, respect, and kindness
- take care of their own health and safety and wellbeing at work, communicate with key staff where they need support
- commit to the ethos of staff wellbeing and keep in mind the workload and wellbeing of colleagues
- contribute to the ethos and social aspects of school life where possible to build morale
- develop and respect shared areas where possible so that there is space to relax, as well as appropriate work spaces, this includes respecting colleagues time if they are on rest or lunch breaks

EQUALITY

The trust and its academies holds its obligations in line with the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty with utmost importance. The trust and individual academy equality objectives can be located on the trust website.

OTHER EMPLOYMENT

Staff are permitted to undertake additional paid or voluntary work outside of school. This is providing that the work does not:

- conflict with the interest, ethos, or reputation of the academy or the trust
- take place during contracted working hours or school hours
- have an adverse effect on your role at school, including an individual's work performance and attendance
- use academy or trust resources
- contravene the working time regulations.

Staff must notify the Academy Lead prior to commencement of this work or declare the additional work at the time of appointment to their role at academy/trust. Members of the central team must inform the Director of Academy Operations.

MANAGERIAL ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

All staff in managerial or leadership roles in the academies or the trust, including teaching staff leading their class are expected to set the very best example they can, and make sure that they are aligning their behaviour and approach fully to the trust's ethos and values.

As a manager, you have a responsibility to set a good example for employees through your own behaviour and attitudes, especially in relation to upholding the trust's ethos and values, as well as the obligations and standards as set out in this Code of Conduct.

You should ensure that you understand your responsibilities under all relevant policies, including safeguarding, teaching and learning, and behaviour policies.

You should ensure that your leadership style:

- is at all times in accordance with the trust's ethos and values
- is based on open, honest, and thorough communication, always with a priority toward upholding equality and diversity expectations as set out in the Equality Act 2010, and within this code.
- supports positive performance management processes, as well as the right of employees to engage in open dialogue, and to pursue relevant conflict and grievance management options when issues arise

FOLLOWING REASONABLE MANAGEMENT REQUESTS

Staff are obliged to follow all reasonable and lawful requests related to their work given by a person with the authority to issue such requests. Staff should accept that they may not personally agree with all decisions made by their manager or senior leader.

Staff are expected to carry out instructions unless:

- They appear to be unlawful
- There is a danger to your health and safety, or the health and safety of others
- A conflict of interest may exist
- Or there is a likelihood that the instruction would constitute a criminal offence, or breach relevant policies such as the safeguarding policy.

Any instruction given that appears to fall into one of the above categories should be reported to a senior, and the individual giving the instruction should be informed of the decision not to carry it out and allow them the opportunity to respond.

PUBLICATIONS AND DEALING WITH THE PRESS

If staff are approached by the media in relation to any academy or trust issues, this must be escalated to the Director of Academy Operations or Chief Executive Officer immediately. Staff must not provide any statements or comments to the media without authorisation from the Director of Academy Operations or Chief Executive Officer to do so.

Appendix 1 – Staff Confirmation Sheet

The Trust Board and Local Governing Bodies requires all staff to read, understand and abide by the Code of Conduct.

If there are any aspects of the Code of Conduct that you do not understand, please contact your line manager or the Academy Lead to discuss this further.

I, (PRINT NAME) confirm that I have read and understand the trust’s code of conduct

Signature.....

Date

Please return this page to your office supervisor. This information will be retained on your personnel file.