

Bedford High School

A Specialist Business and Enterprise College

To Care To Learn To Achieve



Staff Code of Conduct

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1	16/06/2021 26/04/2022	New Wigan LA policy Additions appropriate to school	Full document
2	19/04/2023	SPIRIT ethos Low level concerns	Page 2 Page 3



Working at Bedford High School Code of Conduct

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1. Introduction

Bedford High School expects all students to receive high quality teaching and learning in a positive and respectful environment. Bedford High School and the Governing Body are committed to maintaining high standards of conduct enabling the school to carry out its work both within the school and its community.

1.1 Aim

The code of conduct policy aims to give clear guidance on the standards expected by staff. It provides an overview of the policies that apply but also sets out the way we work at Bedford High School. School staff are role models who are in a unique position of influence and must set a good example to each other as well as pupils and students. By demonstrating positive behaviours, together we can ensure we maintain the good reputation of the school, and ourselves, whether inside or outside working hours.

1.2 Scope

The code of conduct applies to all staff and volunteers in the school, regardless of their position, role, or responsibility. This includes all teaching and support staff, Head teacher, volunteers including governors, casual workers, temporary and supply staff and student placements and apprentices.

1.3 Principles

The code of conduct is not exhaustive and cannot provide advice on all situations. Therefore, if staff are unsure of the right thing to do, they must ask the Head teacher or a senior member of school staff for advice. If this is not possible, staff are expected to exercise their professional judgement and act in the best interests of the students/students and the school.

1.4 Legislation and guidance

The principles in this code of conduct are based on the [Teachers' Standards](#) and [Headteacher's Standards](#) which set the minimum requirements for practice and conduct. In addition, Academy schools will also need to refer to the Trust's adopted Articles of Association. The Governing Board should refer to the approved Governing Board Code of Conduct.

2. Vision

Our School

Bedford High School was established in 1976 when it was formed by merging Leigh Boys' Grammar School and Manchester Road Secondary Modern School, which were located next to each other. The former grammar school buildings now form the U Block and the secondary modern buildings form the L Block.

Our School Values

To Care, To Learn, To Achieve.

Our School Vision

We relentlessly strive to help our students to discover, develop and demonstrate their potential. This is our core purpose. Our aim is for every 16-year-old student to leave us as a rounded individual, who feels excited about the opportunities the world has to offer and is equipped with the qualities, virtues, skills and knowledge to be happy and excel in life.

At Bedford High School we put staff first by developing, nurturing and retaining a high-quality workforce, where there is a high-quality teacher in every classroom delivering high quality lessons every hour, every day. There are many opportunities for staff across all departments to make an invaluable contribution to the success of the school, getting involved in different aspects of school life.

Our SPIRIT ethos

Strive, Perseverance, Integrity, Respect, Independence, Tolerance.

3. Responsibilities

3.1 Safeguarding

In line with the [‘Keeping Children Safe in Education’ legislation](#) (KCSIE) and the school’s Safeguarding policy, we all have a responsibility to create a learning environment that is safe, secure, and respected. We have a duty to safeguard students from harm, protect their welfare and report any concerns relating to physical, emotional, and sexual abuse or neglect immediately.

In our position of trust and influence, we must make sure we do not act in a way that may put students at risk of harm or lead others to question our actions. We must take reasonable care of students under our supervision with the aim of ensuring their safety and welfare.

If you have any concerns about a student, you must report it to the school’s Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for Child Protection, Mrs Rebecca Ramsden. In the absence of the DSL, contact the Deputy DSL Paul McCaffery or Bridget Moss or Sue Critchley, Safeguarding Officer. If none of the above are available please report your concerns to a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

Whilst you must treat information in a discreet and confidential manner and seek advice if you are in doubt, you should never promise confidentiality to a student. You should be aware of the procedure if a student discloses a potential safeguarding issue with you, in accordance with the school’s Safeguarding policy.

If you have concerns about a member of staff’s actions or intent that could lead to a student being put at risk of harm, you must report this in line with the Whistleblowing policy immediately. You can obtain copies of the Safeguarding and Whistleblowing policies from the school office.

In line with KCSIE schools must deal appropriately with low level concerns and the behaviour of all staff, volunteers and contractors. All staff should consistently model the school’s values;

To Care, To Learn, To Achieve

and our SPIRIT ethos;

Strive, Perseverance, Integrity, Respect, Independence and Tolerance.

What is a low-level concern?

A low-level concern is any concern that an adult has acted in a way that:

- Is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work

- Doesn't meet the threshold of harm or is not considered serious enough for the school to refer to the local authority.

Low level concerns are part of a spectrum of behaviour. This includes:

- Inadvertent or thoughtless behaviour
- Behaviour that might be considered inappropriate depending on the circumstances
- Behaviour which is intended to enable abuse

3.2 ID Badges

If you receive an ID badge for official purposes, you must not allow anyone else to use it. Your ID badge should always be displayed if you are on school premises and when other schools or external premises. You are also encouraged to be courageous and question anyone on school premises who isn't displaying an ID or visitor's badge. If you lose your ID, please report it to the Office as soon as possible. If you leave your employment with us, you are required to return your ID and any other security devices and school equipment you may have.

3.3 Relationships with students

One of the strongest factors in learning relates back to the relationship you have with your students. Establishing positive relationships is both important and valuable in the classroom. It is important that you always maintain professional boundaries and consider whether your actions are warranted, proportionate, safe, and necessary. You must ensure that you act in a fair and transparent way, treat all students as individuals and not show favouritism to anyone. You must only contact students via the school's established mechanisms.

In your position of trust, you must not develop personal or sexual relationships with students; this includes sexual remarks and discussing your own sexual relationships with, or in the presence of, students. Under the [Sexual Offences Act 2003](#), it is an offence for a person aged 18 or over to have a sexual relationship with a child under the age of 18 where that person is in a position of trust or respect to that child, even if the relationship is consensual.

3.4 Relationships with parents

You must inform a member of the Senior Leadership Team of any relationship with a parent where this extends beyond the usual parent professional relationship.

3.5 Relationships with colleagues

At Bedford High School, we strive to create and maintain a happy, healthy, and engaged workforce. We want you to work as a team, express your views courteously and respectfully and in an open way. We encourage you to develop effective working relationships with each other displaying appropriate behaviour, whilst treating everyone with fairness, dignity, and respect. You must ensure that Dignity at Work procedures are followed to ensure all colleagues feel respected and valued.

You are responsible for reporting situations to the Senior Leadership Team regarding relationships with students, parents, colleagues, governing boards, or anyone connected to the school community which may give rise to concern.

3.6 Social media and online safety

We recognise the continuing popularity of social media and the participation in such sites in a personal capacity. There are many benefits of social media, but there are also potential risks that cannot be ignored, and the Social Media policy has been developed with the aim of protecting the school and staff.

Your social media should not be available to students. If you have a personal profile on social networking sites, it is advisable that you do not use your full name, as students may be able to find you. Try using a first and a middle name instead, set your profile to private and adopt the highest security settings on any personal profiles you have. Staff should ensure only appropriate profile photos are visible. Staff should not accept any friend request from any current or past students under the age of 18.

You must not share your own or request a student's personal contact details, including home address, mobile number, or email address, unless in exceptional circumstances agreed in advance with the Head Teacher. This also encompasses attempts to contact students or their parents on social networking sites, or any other means outside of school including any effort to search for students or parent's social media profiles. Any contact with students should take place within appropriate professional boundaries, be transparent and for professional reasons.

You must also ensure not to post any images of any students online without consent.

3.7 Acceptable Use of IT

The school encourages the use of their IT systems and services for communicating with students, parents, and the wider community for business related purposes. The Acceptable Use of IT policy outlines what the school and governing body find acceptable, unacceptable, and forbidden in the use of their IT.

3.8 Honesty and integrity

As an employee of Bedford High School, you play a key role in maintaining high standards of honesty and integrity and maintaining our reputation. This includes the handling and claiming of money and the use of school property and facilities.

We take a no tolerance approach to fraud, bribery, or corruption. You must comply with the Bribery Act 2010 which states a person may be guilty of an offence of bribery if they offer, promise, or give financial 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, you should refer to the Whistleblowing procedure.

Disciplinary action may be taken if you are found to have committed fraud against the school, any local authority or national agency. Serious cases of fraud or corruption represent gross misconduct and could lead to dismissal.

You should familiarise yourself with the school's financial regulations and ensure that any significant gifts from students, parents, carers, suppliers, contractors or associates of the school are declared and recorded appropriately. This is with the exception of 'one off' token gifts from students or parents.

You must also ensure that all information given to the school in relation to your qualifications and professional experience is true and correct.

REFERENCE REQUESTS

All staff requests for a reference must be addressed to the Headteacher. Character references only can be provided by staff. Professional and job-related references will only be provided by the Headteacher or other member of the Senior Leadership Team in the school. In all cases where the reference has not been written by the Headteacher it must be countersigned by the Headteacher. For clarification a character reference is a personal reference that discusses the candidate's personality, an employment/professional/job reference discusses work performance, attendance, salary, suitability for the role, suitable skill set, any capability and/or disciplinary concerns and safeguarding.

3.9 Declaration of interest

You are required to identify and disclose any actual or potential personal, financial, business interest or close personal relationship which might reasonably be perceived as a conflict with the ethos of the school. If you are unsure whether an interest or personal relationship should be declared, please consult with a member of the Senior Leadership Team. You can do this with the support of your [Trade Union Representative](#). Failure to disclose is a breach of trust and may result in disciplinary action being taken which could potentially lead to dismissal. All declarations should be submitted in writing to the Head Teacher for inclusion on the school's Register of Business Interests.

3.10 Financial interests

For the purposes of this policy, a financial conflict is one where there is, or appears to be, opportunity for financial gain, financial gain for close relatives or friends, or where it may be reasonable for a third party to take the view that financial benefits may affect an individual's actions.

The term financial interest means anything of monetary value including, but not limited to, payments for services, equity interests, intellectual property rights or hospitality and gifts.

3.11 Non –financial interests

Non-financial interests can also come into conflict, or be perceived to come into conflict, with an individual's obligations or commitments to the school. These interests may include any benefit or advantage including, but not limited to, direct or indirect enhancement of an individual's career or gain for immediate family or someone with whom the individual has a close relationship.

Examples of situations that could give rise to non-financial conflicts of interests include:

- Pressure or temptation to accept gifts, inducements, or hospitality
- Participating in the appointment, hiring, promotion, supervision, or evaluation of a person with whom the individual has a close personal relationship
- Where a member of staff has or develops a close personal relationship with a colleague

Membership to a trade union or staff representative group does not need to be declared.

3.12 Being part of the team in work

By displaying the positive behaviours, we can create a school and workplace that we can all be proud of. As part of this, you are expected to behave appropriately, demonstrating the highest possible standards of personal and professional conduct and act with honesty and integrity. We should all treat each other, parents and students with dignity and respect.

Your standard of dress should be clean, appropriate for work and suitable for the nature of your duties, complying with health and safety regulations. Individual services may have their own smart dress code requirements. We are an inclusive school that respects the protected characteristics in the [Equality Act 2010](#) for age, disability, gender reassignment, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation and expect all of our staff to do the same. Further information of appropriate dress code is set out in the school's staff handbook.

3.13 Being part of the team outside of work

We understand that what you do outside of work is your own concern, however, you should avoid doing anything that damages your reputation, the reputation of the school or members of the school community. This includes posting negative comments or using inappropriate language on social media platforms.

In particular, criminal offences such as violence, sexual misconduct or the use of illegal drugs are likely to be regarded as unacceptable. Any charges you are facing must be disclosed as

soon as possible to the Head Teacher whether you feel it is relevant to your employment or not. You may undertake work outside school, either paid or voluntary, provided that it does not conflict with the interests of the school, affect your performance, or breach the working time regulations.

Criminal Charges, Cautions and Convictions

When applying for a job within this school, candidates must give details of any unspent convictions including date of convictions and sentence imposed. The appropriate safeguarding and criminal record checks will be carried out for all positions within this school. The suitability for employment of a person with a criminal record will vary dependent on the nature of the job, and the details and circumstances of the conviction.

In line with the expectation that all staff should act with integrity and honesty, all staff have an obligation to inform the school if they receive a caution or conviction while they are employed in the school, whether or not it occurred at work or is related to their job. This information should be provided within two weeks of being charged. This is to alert the school to the situation, so that appropriate action can be taken if it does affect employment, and also so that the school is made aware and can be prepared in the event that there is any publicity about the matter and so that any necessary support may be provided.

3.14 Attendance

Creating and maintaining a healthy and productive workforce is a key priority for our school. We are committed to supporting all staff through the sickness management process ensuring fairness and consistency alongside a range of health and wellbeing initiatives.

You are expected to attend work in line with your contract of employment and associated terms and conditions and follow the school's absence reporting procedure in the Sickness Management policy when you are absent from work due to illness or injury. If you have a routine medical or dental appointment, we ask that you arrange this outside of your working hours or during holidays where possible. Please refer to the school's Leave of Absence policy if you need time off for any other reason than personal illness.

3.15 Alcohol and substance misuse

We all have a responsibility to keep students and each other safe in school. Alcohol and substance misuse occurs in all occupational sectors, including education, and raises welfare and health and safety issues. You are in a position of trust and are required to take reasonable care of students who are under your supervision and are expected to maintain appropriate standards of professional conduct ensuring you report fit for work and can perform your duties.

We encourage you to confide in a member of the leadership team or someone you can trust if you have an alcohol or substance dependency. This will be treated sensitively and in confidence

and will enable us to support you through Occupational Health or the Employee Assistance Programme. Any staff in attendance on a school trip/school event where students are involved and/or present staff are prohibited from consuming alcohol.

3.16 Data protection and confidentiality

In accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018, keeping personal and sensitive data safe is a priority at Bedford High School. As a member of staff, you will have access to confidential information about the school, students, their parents/carers, or their siblings. Any information you obtain at work must not be disclosed, except to those colleagues who have a professional role in relation to the student or if the information highlights concern about their safety or welfare. Any confidential information must not be discussed outside of the school, including, where appropriate, with the student/student's parent or carer, nor with colleagues in the school except with a senior member of staff with the appropriate role and authority to deal with the matter. Each member of staff has an obligation to share with their manager or the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead any information which gives rise to concern about the safety and welfare of a student. Staff must never promise a student that they will not act on information that they are told by the student. You can find more information in the school's Data Protection policy and Safeguarding Policy.

As a staff member, you have the right to request access to data that is held about you. Requests will need to be made to the Head Teacher in accordance with the school's Data Protection policy.

3.17 Equality and diversity

We are committed to celebrating diversity and promoting equality throughout our school. We want it to be a place where students are supported to live healthy, fulfilling lives in thriving communities. We believe in treating everyone who works at Bedford High School equally and fairly as individuals and expect the same in return from our staff.

4. Information and support

If you are concerned about anything you see in school that you believe conflicts with the code of conduct or any other school policy, you must raise it with the Head Teacher or a member of the Senior Leadership Team. In addition, you can also contact your HR or [Trade Union representative](#) for further advice and guidance.

The school's policies provide you with advice and guidance that you need to further support you in your role. It's important that you read and understand these policies. The code of conduct references some school policies; however, these are not exhaustive, and copies of all policies can be obtained from the school office via the [Employment Handbook](#) on the Hub.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Each member of staff needs to be aware and recognise that failure to meet these standards of behaviour and conduct may result in disciplinary action, including dismissal.

Version Control Wigan Council

Version	Date	Author	Comments/Summary of Changes
V1	16/08/2021	Louise Higham	Creation
	26/04/2022	Claire Taylor	Additions appropriate to school
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