

# Staff Code of Conduct



## **BRADGATE** Education Partnership

**Approved:** March 2019  
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**Responsible Officer:** Human Resources Manager



## **Trust Mission Statement**

Our mission is to create high quality educational opportunities for all children and young people across the partnership by developing a strong collaborative and co-operative model through which we encourage autonomy, share best practice, enhance the professional aspirations of our staff and ensure the safety and well-being of all pupils and staff.

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## Definitions

**‘Trust’** – Bradgate Education Partnership

**‘Worker’** – to be define as workers, volunteers, governors/trustees, 3<sup>rd</sup> party workers, any individual who is engaged to represent or work for the organisation

## Related Policies and Procedures and National Documents

- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- ICT Acceptable Use Policy
- Behaviour Policy (Student/Child)
- Finance Policy
- Bullying & Harassment Policy
- Equality & Diversity
- Health & Safety Policy
- Health & Wellbeing Policy
- Teacher Standards
- Head Teacher Standards

## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 Bradgate Education Partnership is committed to ensuring the highest standards of professional conduct which reflect the Trust's mission statement.
- 1.2 The Trust's Code of Conduct aims to enable the adults who work within our Trust to work in a professional, safe and supportive environment that provides role modelling to the children and students in our care.
- 1.3 All workers are expected to reflect high standards of behaviour that reflect the Trust's ethos and values both at work and in their private life that set a good example to our children and students and other stakeholders at all times.
- 1.4 Whilst the Trust recognise its workers and workers' rights to a private life, workers and workers within our Trust should be mindful of their behaviour outside the Trust and how this may impact their professional lives, the school they work within and the reputation of the Trust.

## **2.0 Scope & Principles**

- 2.1 This policy applies to all workers and individuals who undertake work for Bradgate Education Partnership this includes, Trustees, governors, volunteers, third party workers and trainees.
- 2.2 All workers have a duty to act as a professional role model to students and to keep them safe, promote their welfare and to protect them from sexual, physical and emotional harm.
- 2.3 All workers have a duty to ensure that they also provide and comply with a professional working environment that is conducive, safe and productive for colleagues.
- 2.4 This duty is, in part, exercised through the development of respectful, caring and professional relationships between adults and students and behaviour by adults which demonstrate; integrity, maturity and good judgement.
- 2.5 Following this Code will help to safeguard staff, Trustees, governors and volunteers from being maliciously, falsely or mistakenly suspected or accused of misconduct in relation to students and the required professional standards of conduct.
- 2.6 This document cannot provide an exhaustive list of what is, or is not, appropriate behaviour for workers. Workers are expected to make decisions or take action in the best interests of the children/students. Adults are expected to make responsible and informed judgements about their own behaviour in order to ensure their conduct is of the required professional standards and secures the best interests and welfare of the children/students and colleagues within the Trust.
- 2.7 The senior leaders involved in dealing with cases of allegations in breach of this Code of Conduct will seek appropriate HR advice from the HR Team.
- 2.8 Any member of staff who is found to have committed a breach of this Code of Conduct will be subject to disciplinary action in line with the Trust's Disciplinary Policy. Any Trustee, governor or worker found to have committed a breach of this Code will be subject to a review of the viability of their role. The Board of Trustees will take a strict approach to serious breaches of this Code.
- 2.9 This policy does not form part of any worker's contract of employment and it may be amended at any time following consultation with staff and recognised trade unions.

## **3.0 Expected Standards of Behaviour and Conduct**

- 3.1 It is expected that all workers create a respectful workplace that:
  - 3.1.1 Welcomes all;

- 3.1.2 Supports and encourages workers to be the very best they can be;
- 3.1.3 Promotes equality of opportunity and treatment of others;
- 3.1.4 Respects diversity;
- 3.1.5 Promotes worker health and wellbeing;
- 3.1.6 Communicates expectations around behaviour and personal conduct;
- 3.1.7 Strives for improvement and transparency;
- 3.1.8 Encourages open and honest communication;
- 3.1.9 Ensures that all disputes at work are dealt with professionally and effectively under the relevant policies and procedures.

3.2 In addition workers are expected to:

- 3.2.1 Ensure that they never use inappropriate or offensive language in the workplace;
- 3.2.2 Act in the best interests of the Trust and its ethos;
- 3.2.3 Treat children/students and others with dignity and respect;
- 3.2.4 Be tolerant and respect the rights and beliefs of others;
- 3.2.5 Act as a role model for children/students by consistently demonstrating high standards of behaviour;
- 3.2.6 Abide by and respect fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs;
- 3.2.7 Be mindful of expressing personal beliefs in a way that will overly influence children/students;

### 3.3 **Equality**

Workers will ensure that everyone is treated fairly and with respect regardless of their age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion/belief, sex, sexual orientation and marriage/civil partnership and pregnancy and maternity.

### 3.4 **Diversity**

Workers will recognise and value diversity of others within the work place and understand how any differences can benefit others, our Trust and the local community.

## 4.0 **Safeguarding & Reporting Concerns**

- 4.1 The Trust operates a zero-tolerance approach in relation to conduct which is not in line with the expectations of this policy and is committed to dealing with such conduct swiftly and appropriately.
- 4.2 Any Trust worker who believe they have witnessed or become aware of any alleged breaches of this code should alert their line manager, the below table outlines appropriate reporting mechanisms within the organisation:

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Concern about an Employee</b>                 | Report to the Head Teacher   |
| <b>Concern about a Head Teacher</b>              | Where the concern is about the Head Teacher this must be reported to the Director of Schools |
| <b>Concern about the Director of Schools</b>     | Where the concern is about the Director of Schools the concern must be reported to the CEO   |
| <b>Concern about the Chief Executive Officer</b> | Where there is a concern about the CEO this must be reported to the Chair of Trustees        |

- 4.3 It is expected that all breaches of this code are referred to the HR Manager for advice and discussion on how to deal with the potential breach
- 4.4 If a matter concerns child protection it should also be reported to the appropriate Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- 4.5 All workers of the Trust must be familiar and act in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE Statutory Guidance).
- 4.6 All adults working with or on behalf of children/students within the Trust have a responsibility to safeguard and promote their welfare. This includes a responsibility to be alert to possible abuse and to record and report concerns promptly.
- 4.7 All workers must co-operate and work with other services as and when required and assist in making decisions about individual children as appropriate.
- 4.8 Please refer to the Trust's Child Protection Policy and guidance for further information.
- 4.9 **Appendix 1** outlines the Local Authority Designated Officer process that Head Teachers and the Trust must adhere to when issues of a safeguarding nature arise. Appropriate levels of information sharing are key to safeguarding children.

## **5.0 Propriety**

- 5.1 All adults working with children have a responsibility to maintain public confidence in their ability to safeguard the welfare and best interests of children/students. They should adopt high standards of professional and personal conduct in order to maintain the confidence and respect of their colleagues, students and the public in general.
- 5.2 A worker's behaviour or actions, either in or out of the workplace, should not compromise their position within the work setting or bring the Trust into disrepute. The Trust reserves the right to determine types of behaviour that may bring the Trust into disrepute.

## **6.0 Data & Confidentiality**

- 6.1 The Trust is subject to legislation and statutory requirements in relation to the type of data which is processed and way in which it is handled, stored, shared and handled. Workers, Trustees, governors, volunteers and regular visitors may have access to confidential information about children/students or staff in order to undertake their responsibilities. In some circumstances the information may be sensitive and/or confidential. Data should be dealt with in accordance with the Trust's Data Protection Policy and the principles of the relevant data protection legislation.
- 6.2 Please refer to the Trust's Data Protection Policy for further guidance on how to handle information in line with data protection legislation.

## **7.0 Unacceptable Use of ICT Facilities and Monitoring**

- 7.1 All workers must ensure that they use ICT both inside and outside the workplace in a safe and responsible manner and in such a way that it does not bring the organisation into disrepute and/or damage public confidence in the Trust's ability to provide a safe and appropriate environment for students and colleagues. This includes the wider use of technology, including but not limited to, mobile devices and applications, text messaging, emails, digital cameras, videos, web-cams, websites and blogs. The Trust recognises there is a reasonable balance between responsible use and creative freedom of artistic and political expression.
- 7.2 With regards to use of personal mobile phones and tablet devices workers must not:

- 7.2.1 use their personal mobile phone or devices to contact pupils or their parent/carers;
  - 7.2.2 use their personal mobile phone or devices to take photographs of pupils or retain personal information regarding the children/students;
  - 7.2.3 give out their personal phone numbers or contact details, including personal email addresses and social media information to children/students or their parent/guardians;
  - 7.2.4 keep inappropriate or illegal content on the device.;
  - 7.2.5 bring into the Trust a mobile device that holds pornography of any nature on their device.
- 7.3 If there are any circumstances in which personal mobile devices or tablets need to be used in relation to our children/students then workers must seek permission from their Head Teacher.
- 7.4 Please refer to the Trust's ICT Acceptable Use Policy and guidance for further information.

## **8.0 Appearance & Dress Code**

- 8.1 A person's dress and appearance are matters of personal choice and self-expression. However, all workers at the Trust must ensure they are dressed in ways which are appropriate to their professional role and working environment.
- 8.2 A workers appearance and dress code should be professional and in line with the expectations the Trust has of children/students. Workers should role model for our children/students for appearance in the same way they should for behaviour.
- 8.3 Dress code and appearance of workers and representatives of the Trust must consider the promotion of a positive image within and when working outside of the Trust.
- 8.4 Dress and appearance must not be such that it is likely to be viewed as unprofessional, offensive, revealing or sexually provocative and specifically should not distract, cause embarrassment or give rise to misunderstanding.
- 8.5 Dress and appearance should be culturally sensitive and free of any political or otherwise contentious slogans, and not considered to be discriminatory.
- 8.6 Those who dress or appear in a manner which may be considered as inappropriate could render themselves vulnerable to criticism or allegations of misconduct.

## **9.0 Social Contact & Social Networking**

- 9.1 Workers are expected to take responsibility and keep up to date with relevant developments and review their privacy settings on a regular basis when using all social/gaming media. Personal profiles must not be accessible to children/students and/or parents/carers. The Trust will also acknowledge that there may be occasions where devices may be subject to hacking and the necessary investigations will be undertaken to resolve matters.
- 9.2 Workers are responsible for all content published from their personal social and gaming media platforms and should ensure that their online profiles and use of social and gaming media are consistent with their professional responsibilities and keep in mind the reputation of the Trust.
- 9.3 Workers should not post material which is related to their role at the Trust, damages the reputation of the Trust or which causes concern about their suitability to work with children and young people.
- 9.4 Workers must not connect with parents/carers via their social/gaming media accounts. If workers are approached by parents/carers to discuss matters related to their child or matters related to the school, this must be referred to the school in which it relates or through to the Trust.

9.5 Please refer to the Trust's ICT Acceptable Use Policy and guidance for further information.

## **10.0 Photography, Videos & Other Creative Arts**

10.1 Workers must only take, store and use photographs/videos on Trust devices of children/students and/or their colleagues for school purposes in accordance with the Trust's Data Protection Policy.

10.2 Where images of pupils/workers are used for publicity purposes, appropriate consent of the individual concerned and their parents/carers must be obtained. Images must not be displayed on websites, in publications or in a public place without explicit consent.

10.3 Please refer to the Trust's ICT Acceptable Use Policy and Data Protection Policy and guidance for further guidance and information.

## **11.0 Professional Boundaries & Sexual Contact with Children & Young People & Abuse of Trust**

11.1 All workers must maintain appropriate professional boundaries with students and young people. They should avoid behaviour which might be misinterpreted as inappropriate by others and should report any incident with this potential.

11.2 A relationship between an adult and a child or young person is not a relationship between equals. There is potential for exploitation and harm of vulnerable young people. Any sexual behaviour or activity by a worker of the Trust towards a child or young person is illegal. Sexual behaviour includes non-contact activities, such as causing a child or young person to engage in or watch sexual activity, the production and/or sharing of indecent images of children.

11.3 Workers must not have personal or sexual relationships with children/students, have any form of communication with a child or young person which could be interpreted as sexually suggestive or provocative, i.e verbal comments, letters, notes, texts, electronic mail, phone calls, social networking contact or physical contact. Attitudes, demeanour and language all require care and thought.

11.4 Workers should be aware that conferring special attention without good reason or favouring a child/student has the potential to be construed as being part of a 'grooming' process, which is a criminal offence.

11.5 A child or young person may develop an infatuation with an adult who works with them. A worker who becomes aware that a student may be infatuated with them or one of their colleagues, must report this without delay to a member of the Senior Leadership Team so that appropriate action can be taken to avoid any hurt, distress or embarrassment to the student and so that appropriate support and guidance can be offered to the worker. The situation will be taken seriously and the adult should be careful to ensure that no encouragement of any kind is given to the child/student. It should also be recognised that careless and insensitive reactions may provoke false accusations.

## **12.0 One-to-One Situations & Meetings with Students**

12.1 One-to-one situations have the potential to make children/young person more vulnerable to harm by those who seek to exploit their position of trust. Adults working in one-to-one settings with students may also be more vulnerable to unjust or unfounded allegations being made against them. Staff must recognise this possibility and plan and conduct such meetings accordingly.

12.2 Every attempt should be made to ensure that the safety and security needs of both staff and students are met. Where such a meeting is demonstrably unavoidable it is advisable to avoid remote or secluded areas of the work environment and to ensure that the door of the room is left open and/or visual/auditory contact with others is maintained. Any arrangements should be reviewed on a regular basis.

12.3 Pre-arranged meetings with students away from Trust premises are not permitted.

12.4 Pre-arranged meetings on Trust premises when the Trust is not in session will only be permitted with written approval is obtained from parents/guardians and the Head Teacher/Principal or senior colleague with delegated authority.

12.5 No child/student should be in or invited into, the home of Trust workers.

### **13.0 Physical Contact & Personal Privacy**

13.1 There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate and proper for staff to have physical contact with students, but it is crucial that they only do so in ways appropriate to their professional role. When physical contact is made with students this should be in response to their needs at the time, of limited duration and appropriate given their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity, culture and background. It is not possible to be specific about the appropriateness of each physical contact as all circumstances will be different and vast.

13.2 If a worker believes that an action could be misinterpreted, the incident and circumstances should be reported as soon as possible to the Senior Leadership Team and, if appropriate, a record placed on the child/student's file. Staff should seek further guidance from the Senior Leadership Team where necessary.

13.3 There may be occasions when a distressed student needs comfort and reassurance. This may include age-appropriate physical contact. Staff should remain self-aware at all times in order that their contact is not threatening, intrusive or subject to misinterpretation.

13.4 Staff with a job description which includes intimate care duties will have appropriate training and written guidance. No other member of staff or volunteer should be involved in intimate care duties except in an emergency.

13.5 Staff should remain sensitive to any discomfort expressed verbally or non-verbally by the student.

### **14.0 Behaviour Management & Physical Intervention**

14.1 All workers should familiarise themselves and follow their school's Behaviour Management Policy.

14.2 All students have a right to be treated with respect and dignity. Workers must not use any form of degrading treatment to punish a student. The use of sarcasm, demeaning or insensitive comments towards students is not acceptable in any situation. Deliberately intimidating students by shouting aggressively, hectoring or overbearing physical presence is not acceptable in any situation. Any sanctions or rewards used should be consistent with each academy's procedure.

14.3 Physical intervention can only be justified in exceptional circumstances. Staff may legitimately intervene to prevent a student from committing a criminal offence, injuring themselves or others, causing damage to property, engaging in behaviour prejudicial to good order and to maintain good order and discipline.

14.4 Staff should have regard to the health and safety of themselves and others. Under no circumstances should physical force be used as a form of punishment. The use of unwarranted physical force is likely to constitute a criminal offence. The Trust will provide training to relevant workers on the use of physical intervention.

### **15.0 Gifts**

15.1 It is against the law for public servants to accept bribes. Workers need to take care that they do not accept any gift that might be construed by others as a bribe, or lead the giver to expect preferential treatment. There are occasions when students or parents wish to pass small tokens of appreciation to staff, e.g. at Christmas or as a thank-you, and this is acceptable subject to the provisions of the

Trust's Finance Policy. However, it is unacceptable to receive gifts on a regular basis or of any significant value.

- 15.2 Personal gifts must not be given to children/students. This could be misinterpreted as a gesture either to bribe, or single out the child/student. It might be perceived that a 'favour' of some kind is expected in return. Any reward given to a student should be consistent with the School's Behaviour Management Policy, recorded, and not based on favouritism.

## **16.0 Finance**

- 16.1 Workers of the Trust will have financial responsibilities which must be exercised in accordance with the Trust's Finance Policy.
- 16.2 All staff are responsible for the security of Trust property, for avoiding loss or damage, for ensuring economy and efficiency in the use of resources and for conformity with the requirements of the academy's financial procedures.
- 16.3 Please refer to the Trust's Finance Policy and guidance for further information.

## **17.0 Bullying & Harassment**

- 17.1 Any form of bullying and harassment will not be tolerated within the workplace. All workers should feel safe and the working environment should be conducive to learning and in the best interests of the children/students the Trust serves.
- 17.2 Any allegations of bullying and harassment (including sexual harassment towards work colleagues) will be dealt with seriously.
- 17.3 Please refer to the Trust's Bullying & Harassment Policy and guidance for further information.

## **18.0 Health & Safety/Protection of School Premises**

- 18.1 All workers must familiarise themselves and comply with the Trust's Health & Safety Policy and associated documents.
- 18.2 Staff with a job description which includes specific responsibilities for Health & Safety will have appropriate training and written guidance and are expected to comply with the information they have received.
- 18.3 Workers must ensure the security of school premises as appropriate. Any breach of security for school property or premises will be taken seriously.
- 18.4 Please refer to the Trust's Health & Safety Policy and guidance for further information.

## **19.0 Smoking & Substance Misuse**

- 19.1 Smoking or vaping is not permitted anywhere on Trust premises or in the immediate vicinity.
- 19.2 Workers must:
- 19.2.1 Not be under the influence of alcohol or any substance which affects their ability to perform their duties, including driving, operating machinery and supervising children/students;
  - 19.2.2 Never consume alcohol at work;
  - 19.2.3 Ensure non-prescription/prescription drugs, such as ibuprofen or paracetamol must be kept in an appropriate secure location away from children/students;
  - 19.2.4 Must advise the Trust if they are prescribed any medication which may affect their performance or ability to carry out their duties;
  - 19.2.5 Must alert the School and seek professional help as soon as possible if they have alcohol or substance misuse problems and commit to a programme to achieve a successful recovery;

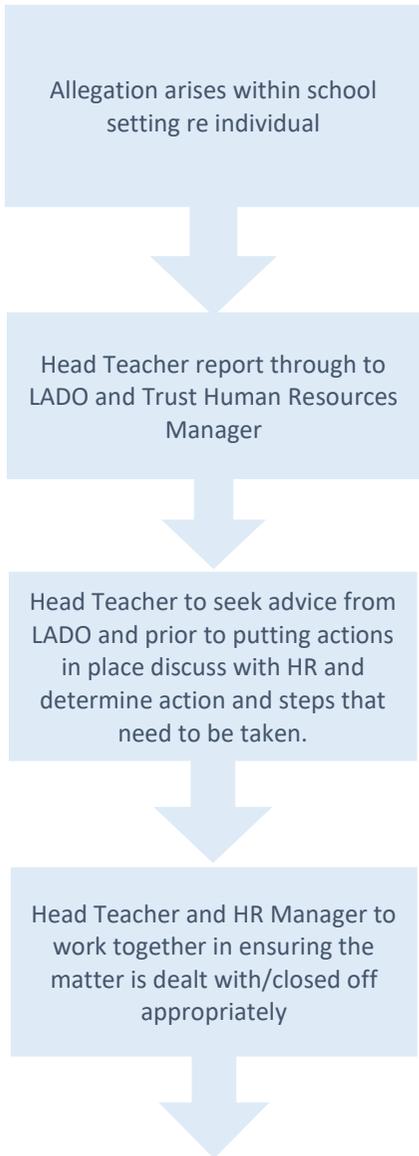
- 19.2.6 Must report to the Head teacher or member of the SLT when they suspect that someone is under the influence of or abusing alcohol or substances;
- 19.2.7 Never possess or use illegal drugs.

19.3 Please refer to the Trust's Health & Wellbeing Policy for further information.

**20.0 Notification of Cautions & Convictions**

- 20.1 Workers/prospective workers must disclose any cautions or convictions prior to or on appointment;
- 20.2 Workers must disclose at any time during their employment an arrest, new cautions and convictions to a member of the Senior Leadership Team.
- 20.3 The Trust will then give consideration as to how the arrest, caution or conviction impacts on a worker's role within Trust.
- 20.4 Workers who are aware of arrests/cautions/convictions of any colleague must disclose this to a member of the Senior Leadership Team.
- 20.5 The above also applies to any pending and confirmed driving convictions received by prospective and existing workers.

**Appendix 1  
BEP LADO Process**



- 1.0** This isn't only specific to employed paid staff, widens to, 3<sup>rd</sup> party, self-employed, volunteers, trainees (any other additional workforce that may be in school).
  - 2.0** If allegation is against Head Teacher reported through to Director of Primaries
  - 3.0** If allegation is against Director of Primaries reported through to CEO
  - 4.0** If allegation is against CEO reported through to Chair of the Board
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- 5.0** The Trust needs to work together on safeguarding, it is important that HR advice is taken in all circumstances where LADO involvement has been required.
  - 6.0** This is working together as a Trust under a co-ordinated system, the impact is not only single schools but wider schools within the Trust in the first instance.
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- 8.0** Head Teacher to discuss the matter with LADO (Mark Goddard) and take advice re safeguarding and next steps.
  - 9.0** HR Manager to also be referred to post LADO initial advice to determine how to move forwards in terms of supporting an employee/providing advice/taking disciplinary action
  - 10.0** BEP and LADO have close working relationship, central team must always be cited.
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- 11.0** HR Manager to work with Head Teacher within the school to implement LADO advice and determine any appropriate/necessary HR processes.
  - 12.0** Need to ensure as a Trust that consistent approaches are put in place from a safeguarding point of view in the best interests of the children
  - 13.0** Need to ensure that as a Trust and as one employer consistent approaches are put in place from an employment perspective also, expectation setting with individuals/lessons learned/casework follow up
  - 14.0** Need to determine whether there is any impact for our wider schools
  - 15.0** If a complex strategy meeting is required, then Head Teacher will need to be present with HR Manager

