



BELLE VUE

GIRLS' ACADEMY

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Staff Code of Conduct

Reviewed by	Approved by	Date of Approval	Next Review Date
DA	LGB	October 23	October 24

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The aim of the Staff Code of Conduct is to set out the standards of conduct expected of all Academy employees and to provide further information for employees. The Code of Conduct should be read in conjunction with our Safeguarding & Child Protection policy (including acceptable use of technology), Disciplinary policy, Teachers' Standards and the statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education.
- 1.2 Employees should note that this Code is not exhaustive in defining acceptable and unacceptable standards of conduct and employees must use common sense in adhering to the underpinning principles. If any employee is uncertain about expectations in any given circumstance, they should speak to their line manager and / or Headteacher.
- 1.3 This Code of Conduct does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and it may be amended at any time.

2. Scope

- 2.1 The Code applies to all employees regardless of length of service, including those in their probationary period. It also applies to agency workers and self-employed contractors although, unlike employees, breaches of the Code will not be managed through the disciplinary procedure.
- 2.2 As recognisable figures in the local community, the behaviour and conduct of Belle Vue Girls' Academy employees outside work can impact on their employment. Therefore, conduct outside work may be treated as a disciplinary matter if it is considered that it is relevant to the employee's employment.

3 Duty of care

Staff must:

- Understand the responsibilities, which are part of their employment or role, and be aware that sanctions will be applied if these provisions are breached
- Always act, and be seen to act, in our students' best interests
- Avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and/or intentions
- Take responsibility for their own actions and behaviour

4 Health & Safety

All employees must ensure that they:

- Read and understand the Health and Safety Policy
- Comply with Health and Safety Regulations or instructions and use any safety equipment and protective clothing which is supplied to you by the Academy
- Comply with any hygiene requirements
- Comply with any accident reporting requirements

- Never act in a way which might cause risk or damage to any other members of the Academy, community, or visitors.

5 Honesty and personal integrity

5.1 Employees are expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct. They must at all times be guided by and uphold the Nolan Principles:

- **Selflessness.** Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.
- **Integrity.** Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.
- **Objectivity.** Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.
- **Accountability.** Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.
- **Openness.** Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.
- **Honesty.** Holders of public office should be truthful.
- **Leadership.** Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

5.2 Employees must comply with any lawful or reasonable instructions issued by managers or governors.

5.3 Employees uphold public trust in our organisation and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside the Academy. In addition to the Nolan Principles they must:

- Treat students with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and always observing proper boundaries appropriate to their professional position
- Have regard for the need to safeguard students' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions Show tolerance of and respect for the rights of others
- Not undermining fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
- Ensure personal beliefs are not expressed in ways which exploit students' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law.

5.4 Employees must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies, and practices of our academy and maintain high standards in their own attendance and punctuality. Employees must treat all colleagues with respect, dignity, fairness and courtesy at all times.

- 5.5 As the Nolan Principles state, employees must demonstrate honesty and integrity in their work. This includes the handling and claiming of money and the use of property and facilities.

6 Tackling discrimination

- 6.1 Employees are required to understand the types of discrimination and bullying that students and colleagues may be subject to. Employees are required to have read and understood our equality information and objectives
- 7.2 Employees must not ignore any form of discrimination. This includes inappropriate jokes and 'banter'. Employees must positively always promote equality and diversity and inclusion.

7. Professional boundaries and relationships

- 7.1 Employees are in a position of trust in relation to our students which means that the relationship between an employee and a student is not one of equals. It is a specific offence for a person aged 18 or over (e.g. teacher, youth worker) to have a sexual relationship with a child under 18 where that person is in a position of trust in respect of that child, even if the relationship is consensual.
- 7.2 Employees must ensure that they avoid behaviour which might be misinterpreted by others. This includes any type of communication that they may have with students.
- 7.3 Employees must not make sexual remarks to any student or discuss their own sexual relationships with, or in the presence of students. Employees must not discuss a student's sexual relationships in inappropriate settings or contexts. Any sexual behaviour by a member of staff towards any student is unacceptable and illegal.
- 7.4 Employees must ensure that professional boundaries are maintained at all times. This means that employees should not show favouritism to any student and should not allow students to engage in any type of behaviour that could be seen to be inappropriate. Students are not employees' friends and should not be treated as such.
- 7.5 Employees should be aware that it is not uncommon for students to become strongly attracted to a member of staff or to develop an infatuation. If any member of staff becomes aware of an infatuation, they should discuss it with their line manager and the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately so that they can receive support on the most appropriate way to manage the situation.
- 7.6 For employees who are in a relationship with a colleague, parent or carer, or any other person associated with the academy, we expect that they identify this to the Head and ensure that this does not create a conflict of interest or affect their professional judgement or responsibilities in any way.
- 7.7 Members of staff will not use technology to view material that is illegal, inappropriate, or likely to be deemed offensive. This includes sending obscene emails, gambling, and viewing pornography or other inappropriate content. Please refer to the E-Safety policy to consider what is and is not appropriate on a work device.

8. Confidentiality and data protection

- 8.1 Members of staff may have access to confidential information about students, colleagues or other matters relating to the Academy. This could include personal and sensitive data, for example information about a student's home life. Employees should never use this information to their own personal advantage, or to humiliate, intimidate or embarrass others. Employees should never disclose this information unless this is in the proper circumstances and with the proper authority.
- 8.2 If an employee is ever in doubt about what information can or cannot be disclosed, they should speak to their line manager, the Headteacher or Academy Business Leader.
- 8.3 Data breaches must be immediately reported to the Data Protection Coordinator, Matthew Hill.
- 8.4 Employees must read and understand the BDAT GDPR policy.

9. Social contact with students

- 9.1 Employees should not establish or seek to establish social contact, via any channels (including social media), with students for the purposes of securing a friendship or to pursue or strengthen a relationship. Employees should use their work provided equipment only for communicating electronically with students. If there are any circumstances in which an employee has had to provide their personal contact details, including phone numbers, email address etc, to any student then they should report this to the Headteacher.
- 9.2 The advice to staff is not to connect to students via social media or other communication channels unless this is for professional purposes and that the employee can demonstrate that this is the case.
- 9.3 Our schools are part of our community, and we recognise that our employees will encounter students outside of the work from time to time. We expect staff to use their professional judgement in such situations and to report to the Headteacher any contact that they have had with a student, outside of school, that they are concerned about or that could be misinterpreted by others.

10. Photography, videos, and other images/media

Many educational activities involve recording images. These may be undertaken for displays, publicity, to celebrate achievement and to provide records of evidence of the activity. Under no circumstances should employees use their personal equipment to take images of students at or on behalf of the academy.

11. Working one to one with students

11.1 There will be times where an employee is working one to one with a student and this may be acceptable. Employees need to understand that this means that they may be more vulnerable to allegations being made against them. Therefore, it is important that employees:

- Avoid meeting on a one-to-one basis in secluded areas
- Ensure that the door to the room is open or that there is visual access into the room
- Inform a colleague or line manager of the meeting, preferably beforehand
- Ensure Peri lessons or tuition is timetabled and known to parents
- Report to their line manager if the student becomes distressed or angry.

12. Curriculum

12.1 Many areas of the curriculum can include or raise subject matter which is of a sensitive nature. Care should be taken to ensure that resource materials cannot be misinterpreted and that they clearly relate to the learning outcomes identified by the lesson plan. This can be supported by developing ground rules with students to ensure sensitive topics can be discussed in a safe learning environment.

12.2 The curriculum can sometimes include or lead to unplanned discussion about subject matter of a sensitive nature. Responding to children's questions requires careful judgement and employees should take guidance in these circumstances from the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

13. Dress and appearance

13.1 General guidelines

- All employees are expected to maintain professional standards of dress and personal appearance at work.
- We do not permit the wearing of clothing that has offensive logos or writing, is revealing, ripped or torn.
- Lanyards must be worn at all times.
- Where particular clothing is required for health, safety, hygiene and/or uniform purposes, it must be worn.

13.2 If an employee is unsure whether an item of clothing is appropriate, they should not wear it to work. Employees can speak to their line manager for guidance. Where we identify that an employee is wearing clothing that we do not find acceptable, employees will be informed of the necessary correction to make.

13.3 Staff accompanying students on trips and visits should maintain professional standards of dress and appearance as set out above, but a more casual style of clothing may be acceptable depending on the activities involved. Staff participating in 'fancy-dress' and 'dress-down' days must maintain acceptable professional standards, as set out above.

14. Gifts and hospitality

It is traditional for students and their parents or carers to give gifts as a small token of appreciation or as a thank you to members of staff at certain times throughout the academic year. Staff may accept gifts from students and their parents or carers if they meet the expectations laid out in the BDAT Gifts and Hospitality policy. Staff should make the Headteacher aware of any student who is giving them gifts on a regular basis, or any student or parent or carer who expects something in return for a gift, as this would not be acceptable.

15. Keeping within the law

15.1 Staff are expected to operate within the law. Unlawful or criminal behaviour, at work or outside work, may lead to disciplinary action, including dismissal, being taken. However, being investigated by the police, receiving a caution, or being charged will not automatically mean that an employee's employment is at risk.

15.2.1 Employees must ensure that they uphold the law at work, and they must never commit a crime away from work which could damage public confidence in them or the Academy, or which makes them unsuitable for the work they do. This includes, for example:

- submitting false or fraudulent claims to public bodies (for example, income support, housing or other benefit claims)
- breaching copyright on computer software or published documents
- sexual offences which will render them unfit to work with children or vulnerable adults
- crimes of dishonesty which render them unfit to hold a position of trust.

15.3 Employees must write and/or tell the Headteacher immediately if they are questioned by the police, charged with, or convicted of, any crime whilst they are employed by The Trust (this includes outside of their working hours).

16 Conduct outside of work and at work related functions

16.1 Unlike some other forms of employment, working at BVGA means that an employee's conduct outside of work could have an impact on their role.

16.2 Staff must not engage in conduct outside work which could seriously damage the reputation and standing of our organisation or the employee's own reputation or the reputation of other members of our community. Employees should be aware that any conduct that we become aware of that could impact on their role or affect our reputation will be addressed under our disciplinary procedure.

16.3 We therefore expect employees to make us aware immediately of any such situations that have happened outside of the work.

16.4 Employees are required to demonstrate responsible behaviour at work-related functions and work-related social events that take place outside normal work hours and to act in a way that will not have a detrimental effect on our reputation.

- 16.5 Employees must be mindful of their digital footprint, including communication with colleagues that could lead to a question over their suitability to work with children (see Keeping Children Safe in Education).
- 16.6 Alcohol may be consumed at organised off site events, but this is a private agreement between the member of staff and the vendor. Behaviour at events must not bring the Academy into disrepute. The Academy is not allowed to purchase alcohol. Where a large event is planned by a Academy, consideration should be given to inclusivity and all staff must be invited. Staff only events for small groups of staff must not be funded by the school.
- 16.7 Alcohol is not permitted for staff or visitors to drink on Academy premises under any circumstances.
- 16.8 Staff must not behave in a way outside work that may impact on their suitability to work with children. This includes behaviour which does not directly involve a child/children. Should we become aware of any such incident or behaviour, we may treat the issue as a safeguarding matter and manage it in accordance with the Keeping Children Safe in Education statutory guidance document. Employees should be aware that any behaviour that we consider may impact on an employee's suitability to work with children will be addressed under our disciplinary procedure and may lead to a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and the Teaching Regulation Agency (where appropriate).
- 16.9 We therefore expect employees to make us aware immediately of any such situations that have happened outside of work.

17 Agency workers

- 17.1 We will investigate allegations made against agency workers with the cooperation of the agency. Whilst we may decide to cease using the services of an agency worker, this will not prevent us from investigating allegations and liaising with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) to determine a suitable outcome. We expect agency workers and agencies to cooperate with our investigations and with external agencies where applicable.
- 17.2 We will discuss with the agency whether it may be appropriate for them to consider suspending an agency worker, or whether we are prepared to redeploy an agency worker during an investigation.