



# Staff Code of Conduct

**Signed:**

**Chair:** *R. Patrick*

**Executive Head:** *S. Stevenson*

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

All adults have personal and legal responsibilities. These include, treating others with dignity and respect, acting honestly, using public funds and trust/school equipment appropriately, adhering to health and safety guidelines and practising equal opportunities at all times. These expectations are set out below and should be fully observed by all adults at all levels.

This document highlights the principle areas where adults need to be aware of their responsibilities when working or volunteering within Bursley Academy and it is a framework for behaviour. Adults should ensure they are familiar with the specific policies that underpin these behaviours through reference to the documents highlighted throughout the code or available on the School Website. If these documents are not supplied at induction, the employee should ask their school for copies.

## 2.0 COMPLIANCE WITH THE CODE OF CONDUCT

Failure to comply with the code of conduct and with the associated school and/or Trust policies or procedures and required reading may result in disciplinary action being taken.

## 3.0 LEGAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 This policy has due regard to all legislation including, but not limited to, the following:

- The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- The Data Protection Act 2018
- The Education Act 2002
- The Children Act 1989
- The Working Time Regulations 1998 (as amended)
- Sexual Offences Act 2003

3.2 This policy also has due regard to statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE (2018) 'Keeping children safe in education'
- DfE (2018) 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'
- DfE (2018) 'Staffing and employment advice for schools'

3.3 This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies and documents:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Intimate Care Policy
- Staff Leave of Absence Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Use of Reasonable Force Policy
- E-safety Policy
- Acceptable Use Agreement
- Photography Policy



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- Technology Acceptable Use Agreement – Staff

## 4.0 SAFEGUARDING PUPILS.

4.1 In accordance with 'Keeping children safe in education', all staff members have a responsibility to safeguard pupils and protect their welfare.

4.2 All staff members have a responsibility to ensure that they provide a learning environment in which pupils feel safe, secure and respected.

4.3 To effectively safeguard pupils, staff members are required to follow the procedures outlined in this Staff Code of Conduct and the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy/protocols, ensuring that they do not act in a way that may put pupils at risk of harm, or lead others to question their actions.

4.4 In accordance with the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, staff members will be prepared to identify pupils who may be subject to, or at risk of, abuse and neglect, and will follow the necessary reporting and referral procedures.

4.5 Any staff member that has concerns about a staff member's actions or intent that may lead to a pupil being put at risk of harm will report this in line with the Whistleblowing Policy to the Executive Headteacher immediately so appropriate action can be taken.

4.6 If the concern is regarding the Executive Headteacher, staff will report this to the CEO.

4.7 All staff will partake in the appropriate safeguarding and child protection training; additionally, all staff will receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates but at least annually.

4.8 Staff will be aware that confidentiality will never be promised to a pupil – staff will understand the procedure for if a pupil discloses a potential safeguarding issue, in accordance with the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

## 5.0 APPEARANCE AND DRESS

5.1 Staff are the most important role models in the school and should dress with a sense of professionalism and pride that identifies staff as key people within the school community.

5.2 The governors of the school do not expect the staff to wear a uniform but do expect the staff to be smartly and appropriately dressed in school.

5.3 Clothing should be appropriate to the content of the school day e.g staff may wear PE kit on the days they are teaching PE.

5.4 To maintain high standards of safeguarding, all staff must wear their school identification badge at all times.

5.5 Staff should wear clothing which:-

- Is appropriate to their role;



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- Is not likely to be viewed as offensive, revealing, or sexually provocative;
- Does not distract, cause embarrassment or give rise to misunderstanding;
- Is absent of any political or otherwise contentious slogans;
- Is not considered to be discriminatory and is culturally sensitive;
- Does not place themselves or others at risk.

## 6.0 ATTENDANCE

The school expects that staff members will:

- 6.1 Attend work in accordance with their contract of employment and associated terms and conditions in relation to hours, days of work and holidays.
- 6.2 Make routine medical and dental appointments outside of their working hours or during holidays where possible.
- 6.3 Refer to the school's Staff Leave of Absence Policy if they need time off for any reason other than personal illness.
- 6.4 Follow the school's absence reporting procedure when they are absent from work due to illness or injury.

## 7.0 PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOUR AND CONDUCT

### 7.1 Treating other people with dignity and respect

All adults are expected to be friendly to visitors and treat other colleagues, pupils and external contacts, such as parents, with dignity and respect; acting as good role models for all.

Unacceptable behaviour such as discrimination, bullying, harassment or intimidation will not be tolerated in academies. This includes physical and verbal abuse and use of inappropriate language or unprofessional behaviour with colleagues, pupils and parents.

If there is something to discuss of a sensitive nature then adults are requested to ensure that this takes place in private, respecting confidentiality at all times when dealing with both colleagues and parents. Requests for a third party to be present are encouraged if adults feel that they may have a problem during a discussion.

### 7.2 Responsibility for the smooth running of the school

It is important to take responsibility for the smooth running of the school e.g.

- Reading noticeboards and the school diary;
- Inform the office and SLT of courses, visitors, meetings etc.;
- Distributing letters and messages in a timely manner;
- Adults are expected to use their initiative within the school ethos, offer support and request help and to consult their line manager for clarification when required.
- Planning, assessment files and children's books etc. must be readily available in class.
- Registers must be completed promptly at the start of the day and the start of the afternoon session, ensuring all absences are recorded according to the guidelines.
- Absence notes should be forwarded to the school office for retention.



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- Collect any monies, letters or reply slips and send them to the office before 9.15am.
- Money is not to be counted by classroom adults.

## 7.3 Communicating with parents

SLT must be alerted to any communication with parents that causes concern or is of a personal nature and could affect a child's emotional well-being.

When communicating with parents remember that all adults must be professional; please listen carefully; reassure parents that you will deal with any issues arising and always report back to parents having dealt with a matter or query. Messages received from parents will be passed on to classroom staff. Contact details for parents are available from your MIS system.

Letters, newsletters etc. must be sent home on the day that staff receive them from the office.

Staff must ensure that absent pupils receive the letter on return.

Urgent letters must be returned to the office for posting.

## 7.4 Meetings

All meetings/INSET are held to ensure the smooth running of the school with the ultimate aim to raise standards; therefore, all adults should contribute in a professional manner.

Adults will be informed of all meetings in advance unless in cases of emergency e.g. child protection.

Adults at adults' meetings have the following rights and must adhere to the following responsibilities.

### Rights

- For meetings to have a clear agenda/purpose and to keep to time.

### For adults:

- To be heard
- To be valued and respected
- To be supported
- To have the opportunity to actively contribute to meetings
- To have adequate time to read any materials
- To have the opportunity to visit other classrooms to share ideas and resources

### Responsibilities

- To be on time, fully prepared
- To turn off mobile phones
- To listen to others
- To respect the opinions of others
- To disagree without being disagreeable
- To support colleagues
- To share views openly and honestly during the meeting, not after
- To act professionally at all times
- To keep confidentiality within the meeting
- To keep on task



- To abide by democratic decisions, without complaining

## 7.5 Appropriate relationships with children

Adults are expected to act in an open and transparent way that would not lead any reasonable person to suspect their actions or intent. Adults in academies are in a position of trust and have a duty to protect young people from discrimination and harm and to maintain appropriate professional boundaries. It is equally important for adults to avoid behaviour that might be misinterpreted by others in order to protect both young people and themselves. Adults are required to read and understand school policies on safeguarding and child protection.

Adults, Parent Helpers, Students and Visitors to the school should be introduced to children by their formal title, not by their first name, unless previously agreed otherwise with the Senior Leadership Team. Adults should be addressed by their formal title whenever in earshot of children, parents or visitors to the school.

Adults should always maintain appropriate professional boundaries and avoid behaviour which might be misinterpreted by others. In addition, adults, parent helpers, students and visitors to the school should not divulge personal information about them or enter into discussions of a personal nature with children or in front of children. They should report and record any incident with this potential to the Senior Leadership Team.

## 7.6 Professional behaviour

Adults must not misuse or misrepresent their position, qualifications or experience or bring the reputation of the trust or school into disrepute. Such behaviour may lead to disciplinary action.

All adults working with children and young people have a responsibility to maintain public confidence in their ability to safeguard the welfare and best interests of children and young people. It is therefore expected that they will adopt high standards of personal conduct in order to maintain the confidence and respect of the public in general and all those with whom they work.

There may be times, for example, when an adult's behaviour or actions in their personal life come under scrutiny from local communities, the media or public authorities. This could be because their behaviour is considered to compromise their position in their workplace or indicate an unsuitability to work with children or young people. Misuse of drugs, alcohol or acts of violence would be examples of such behaviour.

Adults in contact with children and young people should therefore understand and be aware, that safe practice also involves using judgment and integrity about behaviours in places other than the work setting. The behaviour of an adult's partner or other family members may raise similar concerns and require careful consideration by an employer as to whether there may be a potential risk to children and young people in the workplace.

This means that adults should not:

- behave in a manner which would lead any reasonable person to question their suitability to work with children or act as a role model
- make, or encourage others to make, unprofessional personal comments which scapegoat, demean or humiliate, or which might be interpreted as such

This means that adults should:

- be aware that behaviour in their personal lives may impact upon their work with children and young people
- follow any codes of conduct deemed appropriate by their organisation



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- understand that the behaviour and actions of their partner (or other family members) may raise questions about their suitability to work with children and young people
- Act as role models and display school values and behaviours, for example by never using homophobic language
- Promote the well-being and safety of all pupils including Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) pupils.

## 7.8 Criminal Actions

School adults must inform the Executive Headteacher (Trust CEO if the employee is the Executive Headteacher) immediately if they, or anyone they cohabit with, are subject to a criminal conviction, caution, ban, police enquiry, investigation or pending prosecution. The Executive Headteacher or CEO will discuss this with the adult in the context of their role and responsibilities in order to help safeguard children and other adults at the school.

## 7.9 Wider Responsibilities

Adults must inform their Executive Headteacher immediately if they are involved with any child protection incidents or issues regarding their own children or those of others.

## 8.0 DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTERESTS

An employee is required to declare a pecuniary interest where a group or organisation would be considered to be in conflict with the ethos of the school/trust. Membership of a trade union or staff representative group would not need to be declared. Adults should also consider carefully whether they need to declare to the school /trust their relationship with any individual(s) where this might cause a conflict with school /trust activities. For example, a relationship with a Governor, another adult's member or a contractor who could provide services to the school.

Failure to make a relevant declaration of interests is a very serious breach of trust and therefore if adults are in doubt about a declaration, they are advised to take advice from trust staff or their school or union.

All declarations, including nil returns, should be submitted in writing annually.

## 9. PROBITY OF RECORDS AND OTHER DOCUMENTS

The deliberate falsification of documents is not acceptable. Where an employee falsifies records or other documents, including those held electronically, this will be regarded as a serious disciplinary matter and potentially a criminal offence.

## 10. FINANCIAL INDUCEMENTS

### 10.1 Financial Regulations for academies

All school adults must comply with the Trust's Financial Handbook. Adults should familiarise themselves with the regulations but some of the principle employee requirements are summarised below.

### 10.2 Business Contacts

In this section, "business contact" refers to any person, body or organisation with which the school is involved on a financial or charitable basis (including contractors; developers; consultants; regional or national charities). This also includes business contacts who are potential suppliers (e.g. they are tendering for future business).



## **10.3 Declaration of gifts/Gifts or hospitality to an employee**

**PLEASE REFER TO TRUST GIFT & HOSPITALITY POLICY**

## **10.6 School Meals**

Adults wishing to purchase school meals must ensure that they have paid for the meals in advance on parent pay, staff accounts are set up.

## **11.0 USE OF SCHOOL CONTACTS**

Apart from participating in concessionary schemes arranged by trade unions or other such groups for their members, adults shall not use school business contacts for acquiring materials or services at trade / discount prices for non-school activities.

## **12.0 OTHER EMPLOYMENT**

Adults are permitted to take up secondary employment outside the trust, as long as the activity does not constitute a conflict of interest, adversely affect their primary employment at their school or exceed the legal maximum working week of 48 hours as defined by the Working Time Regulations.

The secondary employment must be undertaken outside the working hours of the employee's normal post and adults are required to keep the Executive Headteacher informed of their employment at other organisations. Teachers who undertake exam marking may seek clarification about this point.

## **13.0 HEALTH & SAFETY**

Adults must adhere to the school's Health and Safety policy, procedure and guidance and must ensure that they take every action to keep themselves and everyone in the school environment safe and well.

This includes taking immediate safety action in a potentially harmful situation (either at school or off-site) by complying with statutory and school guidelines and collaborating with colleagues, agencies and the Trust. All adults working in academies have a responsibility to maintain a safe and efficient working environment. All areas of the school must be kept tidy throughout the day and all classrooms and other communal areas left tidy at the end of the day. Adults must insist that coats are hung up by children as they arrive and after break times and lunchtimes and that cloakrooms are kept tidy. The classroom should be accessible to the cleaning adults and left in a state that enables cleaning to take place. Adults must encourage pupils to be responsible for maintaining a safe, clean and happy school environment.

All adults are responsible for clearing away equipment either to classrooms, store cupboards, hall storage areas etc. at the end of each day. Leave all areas as you would like to find them.

Hot drinks must be in lidded mugs. Body spillages are to be cleaned away using a body spillage kit.

All adults in a school must display their name badge. Challenge people in a school who are not wearing either adults or visitor badges and report to the Senior Leadership Team if there are any concerns.

It is important that children are dismissed safely at the end of the school day. Adults must supervise children off the premises and ensure that children are collected by the correct adult. Ask children to stay with you until a recognised adult



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has come to collect them. Children not collected at the end of the day should remain with the class teacher and come to the office at 3.30pm. It is the teacher's duty to ensure that parents are contacted for any child who is late being collected.

### **14.0 USE OF ALCOHOL AND ILLEGAL DRUGS/SMOKING**

Staff will not smoke/vape on, or within the immediate radius of the school premises. Staff will not smoke whilst working with or supervising pupils off site, such as whilst on educational trips and visits.

The use of illegal drugs or alcohol during working hours is unacceptable and may lead to disciplinary action. All adults are expected to attend work without being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.

If alcohol or drug usage impacts on an employee's working life, the school has the right to discuss the matter with the employee and take appropriate action, having considered factors such as the school or Trust's reputation and public confidence. This may also lead to disciplinary action.

### **15.0 USE OF SCHOOL PREMISES, EQUIPMENT & COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS**

School /Trust equipment and systems (e.g. phone, email and computers) are available only for school related activities and should not be used for the fulfilment of another job or for personal use. This is unless authorised by the Executive Headteacher. Illegal, inappropriate or unacceptable use of school/Trust equipment or communication systems may result in disciplinary action and in serious cases could lead to an employee's dismissal.

This list is not exhaustive but includes;

- creating, sending or forwarding any message that would reasonably be considered inappropriate or unacceptable.
- committing or implying commitment to any contractual arrangements.
- access to or publication of illegal, offensive, unacceptable or inappropriate or non-work related material.
- any illegal activities.
- posting confidential information about the school and/or other adults, children or parents.
- gambling or gaming.
- unauthorized use of school facilities (or employee's personal IT equipment), for personal use during employee's working time.

Adults who are unsure if something he/she receives or proposes to do might breach this policy should seek advice from the Senior Leadership Team

The school has the right to monitor e-mails, phone-calls, internet activity or document production, principally in order to avoid offensive or nuisance material and to protect systems from viruses, but also to ensure proper and effective use of systems. Communication systems may be accessed when the school suspects that the employee has been misusing systems or facilities, or for the investigation of suspected fraud, child protection incidents or other irregularity.

Accredited Trade Union representatives can use school communication systems for the purposes of undertaking trade union duties and these will be treated as confidential.

Passwords should not be shared and access to computer systems must be kept confidential. Breach of this confidentiality may be subject to disciplinary action and adults are responsible for their own security. Any school /trust equipment that is used outside school premises, for example Macbooks/laptops, should be returned to the school when the employee leaves employment or upon request by the Executive Headteacher.



## 16.0 SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES AND SOCIAL CONTACT

### 16.1 Virtual Learning Platforms/TEAMS

Learning Platforms are now widely established and clear agreement by all parties about acceptable and responsible use is essential. Learning Platforms do allow for professional dialogue between a child / young person and an adult.

Communication between children and adults, by whatever method, should take place within clear and explicit professional boundaries. This includes the wider use of technology such as mobile phones text messaging, e-mails, digital cameras, videos, webcams, websites and blogs. Adults should not share any personal information with a child or young person. They should not request, or respond to, any personal information from the child/young person. Adults should ensure that all communications are transparent and open to scrutiny. In the event you need to make contact with a child / young person, you should obtain your line manager's agreement and record this on file. A log of any subsequent communication should be kept on file.

Adults should also be circumspect in their communications with children so as to avoid any possible misinterpretation of their motives or any behaviour, which could be construed as grooming. They should not give their personal contact details to children and young people including e-mail, home or mobile telephone numbers.

### 16.2 Social Networking & Email

In order to make best use of the many educational and social benefits of new technologies, children and young people need opportunities to use and explore the digital world, using multiple devices from multiple locations. They need to be protected when using these technologies and educated as to the possible risks they may put themselves in. It is now recognised that e-safety risks are posed more by behaviours and values than the technology itself. Adults working in this area must therefore ensure that they establish safe responsible and professional online behaviours. This means working to local and national guidelines on acceptable user policies. These detail the way in which new and emerging technologies may and may not be used and identify the sanctions for misuse.

E-mail or text communications between an adult and a young person outside agreed protocols may lead to disciplinary and/or criminal investigations. This also includes communications through internet-based web sites. In relation to Social Networking Sites, adults should not maintain 'e-relationships' with children and young people they work with or have previously worked with. Examples of sites include, but are not exclusive to, Facebook or Twitter. Adults are strongly advised, in their own interests, to take steps to ensure that their personal data is not accessible to anybody who does not have permission to access it. A number of these sites may be accessed by young people without the consent of parents. There is a facility with a 'Report Abuse' button on some of these sites, which allows children/ young people to report suspicious individuals or behaviours directly.

Internal e-mail systems should only be used in accordance with the organisation's E-Safety and Acceptable Use Policy.

Adults should:

- refrain from identifying themselves as working for the school /trust in a way which has, or may have, the effect of bringing the school into disrepute.
- not identify other school /trust adults, children or young people without their consent.
- not make any defamatory remarks about the school /trust, its adults, children or young people, or conduct them in a way that is detrimental to the school /trust.



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- not disclose personal data or information about the school /trust, adults, children or young people that could breach the Data Protection Act 1998, for example, posting photographs or images of children or young people.
- not allow pupils to access their personal social networking accounts and where they are contacted by a pupil they should bring it to the Senior Leadership Team's attention.
- ensure that personal social networking sites are set as private and pupils are never listed as approved contacts
- never use or access social networking sites of pupils.
- not give their personal contact details to children or young people, including their mobile telephone number
- only use equipment e.g. mobile phones, provided by organisation to communicate with children, making sure that parents have given permission for this form of communication to be used
- only make contact with children for professional reasons and in accordance with any organisation policy
- recognise that text messaging is rarely an appropriate response to a child in a crisis situation or at risk of harm. It should only be used as a last resort when other forms of communication are not possible
- not use internet or web-based communication channels to send personal messages to a child/young person

Adults who work with children and young people should not seek to have social contact with them or their families, unless the reason for this contact has been firmly established and agreed with senior leaders. If a parent seeks to establish social contact, the adult should exercise her/his professional judgment in making a response and should discuss the situation with their line manager. Adults should be aware that social contact with young people in certain situations could be misconstrued as grooming.

Where social contact is an integral part of work duties, e.g. pastoral work in the community, care should be taken to maintain appropriate personal and professional boundaries. This also applies to social contacts made through interests outside of work or through the adult's own family or personal networks.

It is recognised that some adults may support a parent who may be in particular difficulty. Care needs to be exercised in those situations where the parent comes to depend upon the adult for support outside their professional role. This situation should be discussed with a member of the senior leadership team and where necessary referrals made to the appropriate support agency.

This means that adults should:

- have no secret social contact with children and young people or their parents
- consider the appropriateness of the social contact according to their role and nature of their work
- always approve any planned social contact with children with senior colleagues
- be aware that the sending of personal communications such as birthday or faith cards should always be recorded and/or discussed with line manager.
- understand some communications may be called into question and need to be justified

The school understands that some staff members are also parents of pupils at the school and, therefore, may wish to contact other parents or have other parents as contacts on social media sites. When doing so, staff will exercise their professional judgement and will not contact family members on social media if this leads to a conflict of interest. Staff should refrain from talking about any aspect of school or work life with parents through personal social media where this could be construed as a conflict of interest or risk bringing the school into disrepute.



## **17.0 PERSONAL EQUIPMENT**

Handbags and other valuables (including mobile phones) must be locked away and not visible to children. Adults must not use their own personal equipment such as mobile phones or cameras to make recordings of pupils, parents or other adults. School property must not be photographed where such images may be used inappropriately.

## **18.0 CONFIDENTIALITY**

All adults at the school /trust and the Local Governing Committee come into contact with a significant volume of data and information in relation to pupils, adults, school and trust activities and many other matters. There is an obligation to read and to observe the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998.

### **18.1 MANAGING DATA**

Under the Data Protection Act, adults are required to collect, maintain and dispose of sensitive or personal data in a responsible manner.

The use of memory sticks or external storage devices is not required as all information can be accessed through online cloud storage. Passwords to school's devices and cloud-based storage solutions must not be shared.

### **18.2 DISCLOSING DATA**

Adults should not disclose sensitive information about the school, its adults or the Trust to other parties, for example, parents or colleagues. There are particular exceptions to this; for example, disclosure of suspected or alleged abuse of a pupil to Child Protection Officers; discussion with a person accompanying or representing an employee in a formal meeting or disclosure under the Whistleblowing Procedure.

### **ALL COMMUNICATION WITH THE MEDIA MUST BE DIRECTED THROUGH THE CHAIR OF TRUSTEES OR THEIR NOMINEE.**

There are circumstances in which adults are obliged to release pupil data, for example, parents seeking information about pupil progress or other colleagues in the school.

### **18.3 ACCESS TO DATA**

Everyone has the right to request access to data that is held about them, and such requests should be made to the Executive Headteacher who will address the request in conjunction with the Data Protection Officer.

## **19.0 COPYRIGHT**

Copyright legislation should be displayed next to photocopier machines and adults are required to adhere to the guidance provided about use of educational resources.