

## **Bourne Education Trust Code of Conduct**

Throughout this document, the term 'staff' refers to anyone directly or indirectly employed by or working in a voluntary capacity in the Bourne Education Trust or in any of its schools.

### **1. Rationale**

- 1.1.** This Code of Conduct sets out the standards of conduct expected of all staff and is designed to protect the integrity and safety of all members of the school community. We believe that individuals are entitled to learn, teach or work in a safe, non-threatening and supportive environment in which self-esteem is enhanced. We believe that all staff of the school should act in a professional manner and that the conduct and behaviour of our staff will reflect that we are role models for our pupils.
- 1.2.** You have a duty to keep pupils safe and to protect them from sexual, physical and emotional harm. By working in a school you are bound by legislation which protects all pupils. Therefore, you must read and accept the School's procedures for:
  - managing allegations against staff, volunteers or other adults working with pupils: and
  - reporting suspected or disclosed child abuse as set out in the trust's Safeguarding Policies.
- 1.3.** We believe that every effort possible must be made to ensure that all individuals, (which includes pupils and staff) are valued and have the opportunity to develop their full potential within a context of mutual respect, justice and fairness. Behaviour which is racist, sexist, discriminatory or harassing is unacceptable.
- 1.4.** This code is designed to encapsulate a spirit of professionalism and may not cover every eventuality. There may be times when professional judgements are made in situations not covered by this document. It is expected that in these circumstances staff will always advise their Line Manager of the justification for any such action taken or proposed.
- 1.5.** In this document, reference to 'pupils' means any pupils in the care of the school.
- 1.6.** This code should be read in conjunction with other documents and by signing this document you are agreeing to the terms in these linked documents and/or policies. The key policies are as follows:
  - Safeguarding
  - Fraud and anti-corruption
  - Declaration of interests
  - Data Protection
  - Record of gifts and hospitality received
  - E-safety

- Whistleblowing
  - Equality
  - Health and Safety
  - Part 2 of the Teacher's Standards (Personal and Professional Conduct)
- 1.7** You are also asked to familiarise yourself with all other documentation contained within the school's Policy Folder. All staff are expected to:
- know the contents and meaning of this code and of the associated policies;
  - follow the advice and instruction set out in the code and associated policies;
  - ask their Line Manager for clarification if they have any concerns or questions.
- 1.8** Staff whose conduct or practice deviates from this code may bring into question their suitability to work with pupils and / or may be dealt with under the School's Disciplinary Procedure.

## **The Code of Conduct**

The school has the following expectations of all members of staff:

### **2. Professional Conduct**

- 2.1** You should wear your staff identification badge at all times.
- 2.2** You are expected to adopt high standards of personal conduct in order to maintain the confidence and respect of the public in general and all those with whom you work.
- 2.3** It is expected that you will act as a role model in your behaviour at school. Your behaviour may come under scrutiny if it is considered to compromise your position in the workplace or to be an indicator of unsuitability to work with pupils.
- 2.4** You must never report for work while under the influence of alcohol or drugs nor should you smoke (including the use of e-cigarettes and vaping devices) on the school premises at any time. For this purpose, the term 'drugs' is used to describe both illegal drugs and other psychoactive (mind-altering) substances which may or may not be illegal.
- 2.5** You are required to wear smart professional dress at school, unless it is an INSET day, non-uniform day or other casual occasion. Technicians are able to wear more informal but appropriate attire as they wear protective clothing over their own clothes. Birkenstock-style shoes, flip flops or trainers are generally not considered to be professional. Facial and tongue piercings and extremes of appearance are not acceptable. Tattoos should not be visible.
- 2.6** You are not permitted to tutor, coach for sports or undertake any activity for private payment with any pupils on roll, or any pupils preparing for your own school's examinations.

- 2.7** Significant issues (for example, issues that raise concerns about the safety, welfare or progress of pupils) discussed at meetings and or during phone calls should be recorded according to school practice.
  - 2.8** Only trained first aid staff are permitted to administer first aid. Staff will not need to administer medication, however, if agreed with a Line Manager and the parents/carers, supervision of the taking of medication is permitted but this must be recorded.
  - 2.9** You must comply with the Gifts and Hospitality policy. A copy of the policy is held in the school's Policy Folder. In general, you may accept gifts of nominal value up to the value of approximately £25.
  - 2.10** You are required to comply with the terms of the Fraud and Anti-corruption policy. A copy of the policy is held in the school's Policy Folder. If you have any concerns regarding fraud or corruption, these should be raised through your Line Manager or a member of SLT.
  - 2.11** The Whistleblowing Policy sets out the framework for raising concerns confidentially. A copy of the policy is held in the School's Policy Folder.
  - 2.12** If you have an influence on expenditure decisions, you must conduct yourself in a manner that avoids any impression that you have used your decision making influence to your personal advantage. If you have any interests that are capable of causing conflicts, the Trading with Connected Parties Policy sets out the framework and you are required to register any conflicts in advance, in compliance with the Declarations of Interest policy. A copy of the policy is held in the School's Policy Folder.
  - 2.13** As a member of staff, in any public appearance you may be associated with the school. Therefore, if you are asked or decide to take on a public or media role, you should speak to the Head Teacher beforehand and you may need to sign a Declaration of Interest. Public roles include standing as a councillor or as a governor of another school. Media roles include being asked to write an article or paper for a newspaper, publication or internet or to speak or appear on TV or the radio.
- 3. Professional relationships with pupils at work**
- 3.1** You must seek to develop positive and respectful relationships between yourself and all pupils in the school. This includes the use of professional language and appropriate terms of address at all times.
  - 3.2** You should remember that a relationship between a member of staff and a pupil must always be professional and cannot be a relationship of equals. You should always maintain appropriate professional boundaries and remember that you act 'in loco parentis'.
  - 3.3** You must not criticise, abuse or speak disparagingly of a pupil's background, gender, heritage group, religion or disability.
  - 3.4** If you become aware that a pupil is developing an infatuation with you or another member of staff, you should discuss this at the earliest opportunity with your Line Manager and/or

Designated Safeguarding Lead so that appropriate action can be taken to avoid any hurt, distress or embarrassment.

- 3.5** You must maintain a professional distance between yourself and the pupils you work with. You must not seek to befriend a pupil who attends the school either on the school premises or elsewhere.
- 3.6** You must avoid touching or seeking to touch pupils unless it is used for reasonable restraint, for the purpose of protection or a gesture of congratulation. It is appropriate for staff to touch a pupil if it is to maintain their safety or the safety of another person. In secondary schools, any such physical contact must be recorded in CPOMS after discussion with the line manager and/or DSL. In Primary schools a touch policy must be in place that will illustrate 'appropriate touch'. Reference must be made in the touch policy to the Surrey guidance 'Touch and the use of restrictive physical intervention when working with children and young people.' Any physical touch or intervention that falls outside a Primary school's touch policy must be recorded on CPOMS.
- 3.7** Staff working with distressed pupils may need to comfort them on occasion and that may involve physical contact. Staff should use their professional judgement in these circumstances, and any physical contact must be recorded in CPOMS after discussion with their Line Manager and/or DSL, unless this is covered by a touch policy (Primary schools only).
- 3.8** Staff who work in certain settings for example sports, drama or outdoor activities may have to initiate some physical contact with pupils. Such activities should be carried out in accordance with existing codes of conduct, best practice and regulations, including the completion of a safeguarding risk assessment carried out by the individual and DSL.
- 3.9** All pupils have the right to be treated with respect and dignity even in those circumstances where they display difficult or challenging behaviour. You should not use any form of degrading treatment to punish a pupil. Sanctions or rewards should be used as part of the school's behaviour management policy.
- 3.10** Pupils are entitled to respect and privacy at all times, especially when changing their clothes. There are occasions when there will be a need for an appropriate level of supervision. This should be age appropriate and sensitive to the potential for embarrassment.
- 3.11** One to one work with pupils is extremely valuable, however, you should take precautions to ensure that your activities and motives cannot be misconstrued in any way e.g. by keeping your door open, sitting with a desk between you where possible or ensuring that you and the pupil are visible to 'passing traffic' through classroom windows.
- 3.12** You should not share any personal information with pupils, including telephone numbers, addresses, personal email or social networking details. In specific circumstances e.g. an international trip, particular arrangements for keeping in contact may be made but these will be managed through the trip leader.

#### **4. Safeguarding and safety of pupils**

- 4.1** Before you start work at the school, you will be required to undergo an enhanced DBS check and any infringements which have involved the police force or the courts will appear with no time limitation. You will also be required to complete a Staff Disqualification Declaration in accordance with the requirements of 'Disqualification by Association'. During your employment you are responsible for informing the Head Teacher of any circumstances which may affect a DBS clearance giving the school details of any arrest, criminal conviction or caution made against you, or a significant other, by the police. It may be that you are also asked to declare any such changes to your record from time to time.
- 4.2** You are expected to pass on to the DSL or Head Teacher anything which impacts on the school's ability to keep a pupil safe from harm and well supported.
- 4.3** If you are party to any information compromising the health and safety of a pupil or fellow member of staff you must pass this on immediately to the DSL or Head Teacher and follow the procedures set out in the school's Safeguarding Policy.
- 4.4** You should not invite pupils with whom you work, into your home (there may, however, be exceptions to this, for example if your own child is a friend of a pupil at the school. You must advise your Line Manager and/or DSL of this if you anticipate that a pupil from the school may visit your home).
- 4.5** You should not make any home visits unless there are exceptional circumstances which have been discussed and agreed with the DSL or the Head Teacher.
- 4.6** You should not seek to have social contact with the pupil that you work with or their families. As paragraph 4.4 above, if the pupil is known to you personally, you must advise your Line Manager and/or DSL if you anticipate that you may have social contact with the pupil and/or their family.
- 4.7** You should not transport pupils in your own vehicle unless it is an exceptional or emergency situation. In pre-arranged circumstances, groups of pupils may be transported to and from school or to educational environments; they should not be given lifts home. Such circumstances should always be recorded and an attempt to contact parents should be made.
- 4.8** It is a criminal offence to engage in sexual contact or activity with or in the presence of a pupil or to cause or incite that pupil to engage in or watch sexual activity. Sexual contact is defined as including non-contact activities such as causing children to engage in or watch sexual activity or pornographic material or grooming. "Grooming" is where the sole purpose is to gain the trust of the pupil and to manipulate that relationship so that an abusive relationship can form. You should be aware that consistently conferring inappropriate special attention might be construed as "grooming" and such behaviour will give rise to concerns about your actions.

#### **5. ICT / E-safety**

- 5.1** You should follow the school's current e-safety policies and guidance as issued by the school.

- 5.2** There are no circumstances which will justify staff possessing indecent images of pupils. This will be viewed as a significant threat to pupils and will be considered as gross misconduct, reportable to the Police.
- 5.3** Always check websites in advance before giving web addresses to pupils.
- 5.4** You should check the content of all electronic communication and ensure that it is addressed to an appropriate person, thereby ensuring that professional distance is maintained.
- 5.5** Communication between pupils and staff should take place within clear and professional boundaries so as to avoid any possible misinterpretation of your motives or behaviour which could be construed as grooming or favouritism by the pupils, their family, other staff or members of the public. This includes the use of mobile phones, text messaging, emails, digital cameras, videos, webcams, websites, blogs, applications (apps) and social networking sites. Whilst emails are useful, please use them with care. Only use school email and ensure that all your email communication is professional, transparent and open to scrutiny. You need to be aware that remote checking of the email system is in place at the School, and any form of communication, including emails, may be required by the relevant authorities in an investigation, or for a Subject Access Request under the GDPR.
- 5.6** Photos of pupils can only be taken if permission has been granted by the headteacher, and after parental consent has been obtained. Pupils aged between 13 and 16 must also give their consent if they have the capacity to do so. Any potential publication of pictures of pupils should ensure their privacy, dignity and security at all times. Still or moving images of pupils must only be taken on school-owned devices; personal devices must never be used.
- 5.7** You must not use equipment belonging to the school to access pornography or any other material which is illegal or inappropriate to the school environment and any equipment containing such material, whoever owns it, must not be brought on to school premises. This is likely to be considered as gross misconduct, and if illegal materials are involved, the Police would be informed.
- 5.8** Staff are not permitted to access social media websites from the school's computers or other devices at any time unless authorised to do so by a member of SLT. They may, however, use their own computers or other devices while they are in the school to access social media websites outside of school session times, but excessive use of social media which could be considered to interfere with productivity will be considered a disciplinary matter.
- 5.9** The school appreciates that staff will make use of social media in a personal capacity but they must be aware that if they are recognised from their profile as being associated with the school then certain opinions expressed could be considered to damage the reputation of the school, so a statement such as "the opinions expressed here do not necessarily reflect those of my employer" should be clearly stated and it is advisable to omit any references mentioning the school by name or the person by job title. Opinions should, in any case, follow the guidelines above to not bring the school into disrepute, breach confidentiality, breach copyrights or bully, harass or discriminate in any way.

- 5.10** When using social media in a personal capacity, staff should:
- never share work log-in details or passwords
  - never make 'friends' of pupils on roll at this or any other school as this could potentially be construed as grooming
  - never make 'friends' of parents/guardians as this could lead to discussions regarding the child taking place outside of an appropriate setting
  - never accept invitations to become a 'friend' of pupils
  - keep personal phone numbers private
  - not give personal email addresses to pupils or parents
  - restrict access on their social media sites and pages.
- 5.11** Any use of social media made in a professional capacity must not:
- Bring the school into disrepute
  - Breach confidentiality
  - Breach copyrights of any kind
  - Bully, harass or be discriminatory in any way
  - Be defamatory or derogatory
- 5.13** Those working with pupils should maintain appropriate boundaries and manage personal information effectively so that it cannot be misused by third parties for "cyberbullying" for example or possibly identity theft. Prior to joining the school new employees should check any information they have placed on social media sites and remove any statements that might cause embarrassment or offence.

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**Agreement to Code of Conduct \* :**

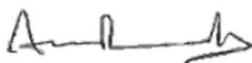
By signing the School's Code of Conduct, you agree to abide by the standards set out in the Code and in the linked policies.

You understand and agree that it is your responsibility to inform the school of the details of any arrest, criminal conviction or caution made against you or a significant other by the police at any time.

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**Signed on behalf of the board:**

**CEO:**



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**I have read and agree to abide by this Code of Conduct. I agree to inform the school of:**

- a) **the details of any arrest, criminal conviction or caution made against me, or a significant other, by the police at any time; and**

- b) the details of any interests under the Declaration of Interest Policy; and
- c) the details of any gifts/hospitality under the Gifts and Hospitality Policy.

Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*\* Please sign both copies of the Agreement to the Code of Conduct – you should return one signed copy.*

Date Reviewed: June 2018



## **BET Code of Conduct: Appendix A**

### **Amendments & Addenda Applicable During Coronavirus (Covid 19) Period of Partial School Closures**

This amendment is for the period of partial school closures imposed by the Government during the Coronavirus (Covid 19) outbreak. Any amendments listed should not in any way override or diminish an individual's duty to safeguard children and to act in an appropriate and professional manner at all times.

Where no exceptions and amendments are stated below then it should be understood that the expectations set out in the main body of this policy still wholly apply.

#### **Rationale**

**1.6** Working from home and/or on personal devices has taken on a greater significance during these times of isolation and the amended BET Staff Information, Communication & Technology (ICT) Policy is now to be considered a key policy. A copy of this policy will be sent to all staff members and Governors.

#### **Professional Conduct**

**2.1** Wearing a staff identification badge is not required when working from home.

**2.3** When acting in your capacity as an employee of Bourne Education Trust, either in the workplace or when working from home you are expected to act as a role model and failure to do so may result in disciplinary action.

#### **Addendum**

Staff should be aware that their behaviour, either in or out of the workplace, could compromise their position within the work setting in relation to the protection of children, loss of trust and confidence, or bringing the employer into disrepute. Such behaviour may also result in prohibition from teaching by the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) a bar from engaging in regulated activity, or action by another relevant regulatory body.

**2.5** When working from home staff should ensure they are dressed decently, safely and appropriately for the tasks they undertake. When using video conferencing of any kind those who dress or appear in a manner which could be viewed as offensive or inappropriate will render themselves vulnerable to criticism or allegation.

#### **ICT / E-safety**

**5.4** When sending any form of email to parents and/or pupils you must BCC all email addresses in order to ensure compliance with the GDPR element of the Data Protection Act 2018.

#### **Addenda**

Staff may have access to special category personal data about pupils and their families which must be kept confidential at all times and only shared when legally permissible to do so and in the interest of the child. Records should only be shared with those who have a legitimate professional need to see them.

Staff should never use confidential or personal information about a pupil or her/his family for their own, or others advantage (including that of partners, friends, relatives or other organisations). Information must never be used to intimidate, humiliate, or embarrass the child.

Confidential information should never be used casually in conversation or shared with any person other than on a need-to-know basis. In circumstances where the pupil's identity does not need to be disclosed the information should be used anonymously.

Communication with children both in the 'real' world and through web based and telecommunication interactions should take place within explicit professional boundaries. This includes the use of computers, tablets, phones, texts, e-mails, instant messages, social media such as Facebook and Twitter, chat-rooms, forums, blogs, websites, gaming sites, digital cameras, videos, web-cams and other hand-held devices. (Given the ever-changing world of technology it should be noted that this list gives examples only and is not exhaustive.)

**Date of next review: July 2021**