



Code of Conduct for Staff Policy

Reviewing Member of Staff: Dominic Burke
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Linked Policies

Safeguarding
Child Protection
ICT Acceptable Use
Whistle Blowing
Allegations Against Staff
Disciplinary Procedure

Objective, Scope and Principles

- a) This Code of Conduct is designed to give clear guidance on the standards of behaviour all Trust employees are expected to observe. The Trust employees are role models and are in an important position of influence and must adhere to behaviour that sets a good example to all the pupils within the Trust's school. As a member of a school community, each employee has an individual responsibility to maintain his/her reputation and the reputation of the school and The Trust, whether inside or outside working hours.
- b) This Code of Conduct applies to all employees of The Balcarras Trust.
- c) In addition to this Code of Conduct, all employees engaged to work under Teachers' Terms and Conditions of Employment have a statutory obligation to adhere to the 'Teachers' Standards 2012' and in relation to this policy, Part 2 of the Teachers' Standards - Personal and Professional Conduct.
- d) We expect all support staff, governors and volunteers to act with personal and professional integrity, respecting the safety and wellbeing of others. Failure to follow the code of conduct may result in disciplinary action being taken, as set out in our staff disciplinary procedures.
- e) Please note that this code of conduct is not exhaustive. If situations arise that are not covered by this code, staff will use their professional judgement and act in the best interests of the school and its pupils.

1. Setting an Example

All staff who work in schools set examples of behaviour and conduct which can be copied by pupils/students. Therefore:

- a) Staff must avoid using inappropriate or offensive language at all times.
- b) Maintain high standards in their attendance and punctuality
- c) All staff must demonstrate high standards of conduct in order to encourage pupils to do the same.
- d) All staff must also avoid putting themselves at risk of allegations of abusive or unprofessional conduct.

This Code helps all staff to understand what behaviour is and is not acceptable. Regard should also be given to the disciplinary rules set out in The Trust's Disciplinary Procedure.

- e) All staff are expected to familiarise themselves and comply with all Trust and school policies and procedures. All policies can be found on the individual school's policy resource.

2. Safeguarding Pupils/Students

Safeguarding is an essential part of the school policies. All staff are required to read the Safeguarding Policy and the Child Protection Policy annually. Staff should also read the most up to date KCSIE (Keeping Children Safe in Education – Part 1) document.

3. Relationships with students

- a) Relationships with students must be professional at all times. Physical relationships with students are not permitted and may lead to a criminal conviction.
- b) Contact with students must be via school authorised mechanisms. At no time should personal telephone numbers, email addresses or communication routes via personal accounts on social media platforms be used to communicate with students.
- c) Staff should avoid contact with pupils outside of school hours if possible. Staff should not frequent pubs, bars or nightclubs where they will socialise with pupils, and must take care to not be in the company of pupils when partying or drinking alcohol.
- d) If contacted by a student by an inappropriate route, staff should report the contact promptly to the DSL or, if they are not available, to a senior member of staff.
- e) Staff should aim to support pupils with their learning and also pastorally support pupils to enable them to maximise their potential. However, staff must maintain a professional distance from pupils and ensure that relationships remain always at a professional level.
- f) Certain actions are clearly inappropriate and should not take place. These include, but are not limited to, the following:
- unwanted physical contact (e.g. hitting, slapping, kicking, pushing, pulling clothes, throwing objects) or the threat of the same (in general staff should avoid any contact with a student, especially when involved in disciplining a student)
 - sexual harassment (including romantic relationships between staff and learners in which the member of staff has authority over the learner's academic progress) or harassment based on age, gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, disability or sexual orientation
 - loss of personal civility including excessive shouting, personal attacks or insults, displays of temper (such as throwing objects)
 - discrimination of any form including in teaching and assessment based upon age, gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, disability, or sexual orientation
 - requests for others to perform inappropriate personal errands unrelated to the didactic, investigational, or clinical situation at hand
 - grading/evaluation on factors unrelated to performance, effort, or level of achievement

4. Pupil Development

- a) Staff must comply with Trust and school policies and procedures that support the well-being and development of pupils.
- b) Staff must co-operate and collaborate with colleagues and with external agencies where necessary to support the development of pupils.
- c) Staff must follow reasonable instructions that support the development of pupils.

5. Reporting Concerns

- a) Staff must report any concerns they have promptly to a member of the Senior Management Team. A concern can be about any aspect of the school's work.
- b) **Low level concerns** must be passed on promptly, and not ignored or assumed to have been dealt with by someone else. Any practice seen that raises concerns about health and safety, safeguarding, child protection or any other aspect of the work carried out at a school should be considered to a concern and should be reported to a member of the senior management team.
- c) **A low-level concern** is a behaviour towards a child by a member of staff that does not meet the harm threshold, is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, and may be as simple as causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt'. For example, this may include:
 - Being over-friendly with children
 - Having favourites
 - Taking photographs of children on a personal device
 - Engaging in 1-to-1 activities where they can't easily be seen
 - Humiliating pupils

Low-level concerns can include inappropriate conduct inside and outside of work.

- d) All staff should share any low-level concerns they have using the reporting procedures set out in our child protection and safeguarding policy. We also encourage staff to self-refer if they find themselves in a situation that could be misinterpreted. If staff are not sure whether behaviour would be deemed a low-level concern, we encourage staff to report it.
- e) All reports will be handled in a responsive, sensitive and proportionate way. Unprofessional behaviour will be addressed, and the staff member supported to correct it, at an early stage.
- f) This creates and embeds a culture of openness, trust and transparency in which our values and expected behaviour are constantly applied, monitored and reinforced by all staff, while minimising the risk of abuse.
- g) Our procedures for dealing with allegations will be applied with common sense and judgement, and be fully compliant with KCSIE part 4.
- h) If a member of staff is concerned about any aspect of the Trust's working, that staff member has a duty to report the concern to a senior member of staff. However, staff

must not discuss concerns with a person outside of the Trust (with the exception of the police, or a designated safeguarding officer) or not in a senior management role.

6. Whistle Blowing

Procedure and details of whistle blowing can be found in the Trust's whistle blowing policy.

7. Respect and Politeness

- a) All staff must treat their colleagues with respect and politeness. Conversations should be polite and supportive.
- b) Irrespective of a colleague's role in the school or level of pay, everyone is expected to be polite and courteous when speaking to a colleague. Staff must not gossip about colleagues behind their backs or discuss issues that may cause upset.
- c) When staff have differing viewpoints on a matter, or disagree with the way in which a colleague has handled a situation, staff are still required to be respectful and polite in conversation. If a member of staff feels that a colleague has handled a situation badly or disagrees strongly with a decision, then they should speak to a member of the senior management in a professional and open manner.
- d) Senior managers may need to, on occasion, discipline a colleague or point out a fault in a colleague's actions. The disciplinary policy will be followed. This will always be done professionally and with respect, while still conveying clearly the remedial action that is required to be taken.

8. Honesty and Integrity

- a) Staff must maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their work. This includes the handling and claiming of money and the use of school property and facilities.
- b) All staff must comply with the Bribery Act 2010. A person may be guilty of an offence of bribery under this act if they offer, promise or give financial advantage or other advantage to someone; or if they request, agree or accept, or receive a bribe from another person. If you believe that a person has failed to comply with the Bribery Act, you should refer to the Whistleblowing procedure.
- c) Gifts from suppliers or associates of The Trust must be declared to the Headteacher of the school. Where it is judged that a gift might possibly lead to bias or favour in procurement, that gift will be returned.
- d) Personal gifts from individual members of staff to students are inappropriate and could be misinterpreted and may lead to disciplinary action.
- e) Gifts from pupils or parents to individual staff members are considered acceptable, provided the total value is less than £25 and the gift is given openly and transparently. Gifts of greater value should always be declared to the Headteacher of the school, who

will make a judgement about suitability. Further guidance is detailed in the Balcarras Trust Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy, which can be found on the Trust website.

- f) Staff will ensure that all information given to the school is correct. This should include:
- Background information (including any past or current investigations/cautions/convictions related to conduct outside of school)
 - Qualifications
 - Professional experience
- g) Where there are any updates to the annual declaration provided to the school, the member of staff will advise the school as such as soon as reasonably practicable. Consideration will then be given to the nature and circumstances of the matter and whether this may have an impact on the member of staff's employment.

9. British Values

- a) All staff are required to uphold and promote British values, including **democracy**, the **rule of law**, individual **liberty**, and **mutual respect** and **tolerance** of those with different faiths and beliefs
- b) Staff must not promote beliefs or ideologies that are outside of the British values listed above or directly part of a department's scheme of work. Staff are not permitted to promote their own agenda with regard to sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, belief, race, drugs, political beliefs or unproven scientific hypotheses.
- c) Staff must not express personal beliefs in a way that exploits pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law.

10. Conduct outside of Work

- a) Staff must not engage in conduct outside work which could seriously damage the reputation and standing of The Trust or the school or the employee's own reputation or the reputation of other members of the school community.
- b) In particular, criminal offences that involve violence or possession or use of illegal drugs or sexual misconduct are likely to be regarded as unacceptable.
- c) Staff may undertake work outside school, either paid or voluntary, provided that it does not conflict with the interests of the school nor be to a level which may contravene the working time regulations or affect an individual's work performance in the school.

11. E-Safety and Internet Use

- a) All staff must read carefully The Trust's ICT Acceptable Use Policy, which can be found on the U: drive. Staff must follow all the requirements set out in this policy fully.

- b) School staff's social media profiles should not be available to pupils. If they have a personal profile on social media sites, they should not use their full name, as pupils may be able to find them. Staff should consider using a first and middle name instead, and set public profiles to **private**.
- c) Staff should not attempt to contact pupils or their parents via social media, or any other means outside school, in order to develop any sort of relationship.
- d) Before any images are posted online, staff must consult the "No Photographs" list of pupils, and ensure that none of the listed pupils have their images included in a posting.
- e) Staff will not use technology in school to view material that is illegal, inappropriate or likely to be deemed offensive. This includes, but is not limited to, sending obscene emails, gambling and viewing pornography or other inappropriate content.
- f) They will also not use personal mobile phones or cameras to take pictures of pupils. Staff will limit their use of personal phones in school time. Staff should not be using their personal phones while on duty, while in a lesson or while in front of children, except for exceptional and rare circumstances.
- g) We have the right to monitor emails and internet use on the school IT system.

12. Confidentiality

- a) Where staff have access to confidential information about pupils or their parents or carers, staff must not reveal such information except to those colleagues who have a professional role in relation to the pupil.
- b) All staff are likely at some point to witness actions which need to be confidential. For example, where a pupil is bullied by another pupil (or by a member of staff), this needs to be reported and dealt with in accordance with the appropriate school procedure. It must not be discussed outside the school, including with the pupil's parents or carers, nor with colleagues in the school except with a senior member of staff with the appropriate authority to deal with the matter.
- c) However, staff have an obligation to share with their line manager or the DSL / a senior member of staff any information which gives rise to concern about the safety or welfare of a pupil. Staff must never promise a pupil that they will not act on information that they are told by the pupil.

13. Dress and Appearance

- a) All staff must dress in a manner that is appropriate to a professional role and promoting a professional image.
- b) Staff of The Balcarras Trust are expected to be formal and conservative in their appearance. Flip-flops are not permitted.
- c) Staff should dress in a manner that is not offensive, revealing or sexually provocative.

d) Staff should dress in a manner that is absent from political or other contentious slogans.

14. Disciplinary Action

Staff should be aware that a failure to comply with this Code of Conduct could result in disciplinary action including, but not limited to, dismissal.