

Brook Learning Trust

Staff Code of Conduct



1 Introduction

At Brook Learning Trust we bring together our unique academies in our belief in the power of education to change lives and communities. It is our steadfast purpose to challenge and defy the barriers that constrain the educational progress of any child. We set high aims for aspiration and secure collective responsibility for all our children's achievements. Our work is underpinned by the values of Integrity, Respect, Courage, Optimism, Excellence and Accountability.

2 Purpose

2.1 Brook Learning Trust (BLT) undertakes to promote positive relationships and is committed to providing a working and teaching environment where all are treated with dignity, fairness and respect. The purpose of this document is to make all staff aware of the Trust's expectations, as an employer, of the standards of behaviour and conduct of each of its members of staff. Wherever possible, specific advice is given but, in general, employees are expected to conduct themselves at all times in such a way that no discredit could be brought upon BLT and its academies.

2.2 It is important that staff familiarise themselves with these expectations and, where there is doubt, speak to the Principal for further guidance. Failure to comply with the standards can lead to disciplinary action.

3 Applicability

3.1 This procedure applies to all BLT employees, whether on permanent or fixed term contracts. It also applies to agency workers, contractors or volunteers. Prior to working on Trust premises each new team member will need to read and sign BLT's Staff Code of Conduct.

4 Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 Line Managers are responsible for:

4.1.1 Ensuring that employees are aware of the expected standards of conduct and of any local rules or regulations specific to their job and/or the site at which they work including management instructions

4.1.2 Managing the conduct of employees in accordance with this policy and any other relevant academy or Trust policies and procedures.

4.2 Employees are responsible for:

4.2.1 Adhering to the expected standards of conduct and any local rules or regulations specific to their job and/or the site at which they work including management instructions.

5 The Code

Preamble

BLT expects its members of staff to behave at all times with dignity and professionalism. This code is not exhaustive: each situation will be dealt with separately and with due consideration.

5.1 Staff are expected to implement and adhere to all BLT and academy policies and procedures (which are published to all staff and identified as part of the induction process for all incoming members of staff). BLT and individual academy policies can be accessed via the links below:

<https://www.brooklearningtrust.org.uk/trustpolicies>

<https://www.highwealdacademy.kent.sch.uk/policies>

<https://www.hayesbrook.kent.sch.uk/policies>

<https://www.theebbsfleetacademy.kent.sch.uk/page/?title=Policies+and+documents&pid=14>

Policies are regularly updated and all staff are expected to be aware of policy changes.

- 5.2 Staff are expected in all circumstances to be punctual and to carry out their duties.
- 5.3 Staff are expected to support the aspirations of BLT at all times, both in and out of school. Before appointment, prospective employees are given every opportunity to investigate the Trust and the relevant academy and come to a decision as to whether the environment is right for them. Once appointed, BLT expects all its staff members actively to promote the vision of BLT.
- 5.4 Staff are expected to commit themselves to the wider life of the academy at which they are employed.
- 5.5 Staff should:
 - 5.5.1 Use their expertise and enthusiasm for the benefit of students
 - 5.5.2 Support all pupils, of whatever ability, to do their best and have high personal aspirations. The Trust's academies are teaching and learning communities which exist to educate and inspire young people and enrich their lives by enabling them to experience as wide a range of learning opportunities as possible
 - 5.5.3 Promote learning at every level both inside and outside the classroom
 - 5.5.4 Be committed to promoting the safety and well-being of all students in their care
 - 5.5.5 Adhere to the highest possible standards in their professional and personal work-related relationships at school and in the community
 - 5.5.6 Comply with any local academy policies and/or procedures, such as a dress code
 - 5.5.7 Be friendly, welcoming, helpful, polite, respectful and courteous to students, parents/guardians, work colleagues, members of the Academy Council, visitors, etc.
- 5.6 In all their interactions with students, staff are expected to differentiate between the actions of the individual and the individual him/herself, treating all students respectfully as individuals.
- 5.7 Staff should never attempt to humiliate a student, or a fellow member of staff, either privately or publicly.
- 5.8 Inappropriate language must not be used. All language which could be construed as being of a sexual nature should be avoided.
- 5.9 Male Staff should be referred to as Mr or Sir and Female Staff as Miss or Ms (or Mrs, where applicable, when using a surname).
- 5.10 Staff are expected to be conversant with the conditions of service under which they are employed. Individual staff members are responsible for ensuring that they are aware of the specific requirements of their post, outlined in their Job Description. The employment contract is signed by the member of staff in acknowledgement of acceptance of the conditions of service. Staff should be aware of current and relevant legislation (such as the Health & Safety at Work and the Equality Acts) and the school policies which ensure compliance with same.
- 5.11 Teaching staff should be fully aware of and comply with the Teaching Standards. These can be accessed below:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/665522/Teachers_standard_information.pdf

- 5.12 Staff are expected to discharge their duties and responsibilities at all times with honesty and integrity.
- 5.13 Positions of authority must never be abused. Staff must declare all relevant business interests.
- 5.14 Academy equipment is to be treated with due care and respect. If staff wish to borrow equipment for personal use they must first gain permission from the Line Manager to whose department the equipment is inventoried. Equipment taken out of school without authorisation which is subsequently lost or broken must be replaced at the borrower's own expense. Staff who take equipment out of school without following the procedures are laying themselves open to accusations of improper conduct. Improper conduct can lead to disciplinary action and ultimately to dismissal. Breakages should always be reported immediately to the Inventory Holder.
- 5.15 Permission must be obtained from the Principal to undertake additional employment. BLT expects all its staff to fulfil their obligations to the students, and reserves the right to make a judgement as to whether undertaking additional work would be prejudicial to that outcome and/or bring the school into disrepute. A discussion with the Principal before seeking additional employment should always precede the attempt to find an additional job/post. If, on appointment, an incoming member of staff already has a further post, this should be declared at the interview.
- 5.16 The Principal is to be informed in advance of a decision to apply for a post elsewhere. BLT recognises that every individual has a right to seek employment as and when he / she deems appropriate. However, since the Principal will generally be asked for an employment reference, it is both courteous and sensible for the application to have been discussed in advance. Staff who have been interviewed for another post are asked to inform the Principal of the outcome directly it is known.
- 5.17 Staff must declare and pay for any private telephone, photocopying, faxing and postage made using school resources. Mobile telephones should not be used for personal matters during work hours. Emergency calls can be made from school land lines.
- 5.18 The Trust's advice via an appropriate member of the senior leadership team should be sought on any matter regarding patent copyright and the acceptance of gifts. Staff should be aware that intellectual property rights of, for example, textbooks written by members of its staff, can in some circumstances be claimed by the Trust.
- 5.19 A member of staff must notify the Principal of any criminal charges or convictions they incur while in BLT's employment. The Principal and Academy Councillors will decide whether this constitutes unprofessional conduct and whether there has been a breakdown in the bond of trust necessary between employer and employee. In such cases, dismissal may be appropriate. Each case will be considered independently and on its merits. However, it is likely that the Principal and Academy Councillors would view as professional misconduct any conviction for possession of prohibited drugs, sexual misconduct, theft, misappropriation of school funds or equipment, violent conduct and disorderly conduct in a public place. It would follow that the member of staff concerned face disciplinary action of which dismissal is a potential outcome.
- 5.20 BLT expects that employees at all levels will adopt the highest standards of propriety and accountability in matters pertaining to finance. All staff must act responsibly and in good faith, and use their best efforts to prevent misuse or misappropriation of funds and other BLT

property, employing the provisions of the Whistleblowing Policy where appropriate.

Staff with a budget management or finance responsibility are expected to conduct their financial responsibilities within the BLT framework of control which is defined in the Finance Policy and Procedures document. Budget managers are reminded of this responsibility in the Resource Accountability Statement which they sign up to annually when budgets are issued.

All members of staff, Trustees, Academy Councillors and lay members of BLT committees are responsible for disclosing any personal, financial or beneficial interest in any transaction with respect to BLT.

- 5.21 A member of staff must notify the Trust, via the Executive Support Officer, if they are approached by the media. They should take details about the enquiry and should not engage in conversation with journalists. If a member of staff notices filming, photographing and/ or recording outside the academy they should contact the Executive Support Officer and the Head of Academy Administration immediately.

Staff should not engage with the media on behalf of the Trust or the academies without written consent from the Principal (or the CEO for Principals and central Trust staff or the Chair of the Board for the CEO). A list of examples of such activity for which consent is required is below. This list is not exhaustive:

- Writing to the media directly or in conjunction with others
- Writing or contributing towards media articles
- Producing or featuring in multimedia footage for any purposes about the Trust, the academies and its activities
- Posting to social media platforms (for more information, see BLT e-Safety & Information Systems Acceptable Use Policy)

If an employee is invited to present at a conference or write an article by virtue of their connection with the Trust, prior written permission must be sought from the Principal (or the CEO for Principals and central Trust staff or the Chair of the Board for the CEO).

Employees should be mindful when conducting any of the above activities that they do not represent the Trust as a spokesperson.

If unsure about dealing with the media and media enquiries employees should contact the Trust's Executive Support Officer.

- 5.22 The additional following points are brought to the attention of all members of staff:
- Smoking and the use of e-cigarettes on all Trust sites is totally prohibited
 - The use, possession, distribution and/or sale of drugs is totally prohibited and constitutes gross misconduct
 - Staff are prohibited from working whilst under the influence of non-prescribed drugs or alcohol. It is a potentially dismissible offence for any member of staff to fail to meet his/her contractual obligations due to alcohol or substance abuse. Staff must bring to the attention of their Line Manager any medication or illness which may affect their work performance or behaviour
 - The Principal has the final say as to what BLT deems to be an appropriate professional standard of appearance, including clothing and hair styles. In general terms, male staff are expected to wear collars, ties and jackets and female staff should be dressed for work in a professional environment
 - Internet access and use of personal computer equipment to access the internet from Trust sites: staff will familiarise themselves with the BLT E-safety and Information Systems Acceptable Use Policy, compliance with which will be confirmed by signature

- Staff will be aware of the Trust's Data Protection Policy and Privacy Notice and commit to following the Trust's General Data Protection Regulation guidance, including the reporting of data breaches.

5.23 All members of staff are to bring to the attention of their Line Managers, on an 'in confidence' basis, any matter, whether personal or professional, which may be in conflict with either the letter or spirit of these guidelines.

POLICY REVIEW AND RATIFICATION

This document is reviewed every two years and ratified by the BLT Board in May

This review by HR Manager & Trust Executive May 2019

Summary of amendments to this iteration:	Policy links GDPR reference Media engagement
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Ratified by BLT Board May 2019

Next review May 2021