

Beech Lodge

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR SCHOOL STAFF

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Last updated	August 2024
Review Due	August 2025
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CODE OF CONDUCT FOR SCHOOL STAFF

1 INTRODUCTION

The Proprietor is required to set out a Code of Conduct for all school employees. The following code is based on a code widely used throughout other educational establishments in both the maintained and non-maintained independent sectors.

Employees should be aware that a failure to comply with the following Code of Conduct could result in disciplinary action including dismissal.

2 PURPOSE, SCOPE AND PRINCIPLES

A Code of Conduct is designed to give clear guidance on the standards of behaviour all school staff are expected to observe, and the school should notify staff of this code and the expectations therein. School staff are role models and are in a unique position of influence and must adhere to behaviour that sets a good example to all the pupils within the school. As a member of a school community, each employee has an individual responsibility to maintain their reputation and the reputation of the school, whether inside or outside working hours.

This Code of Conduct applies to:

- all staff who are employed by the school, including the Headteacher;
- all staff in bases that are attached to the school.

The Code of Conduct applies to:

- peripatetic staff employed by the school as well as those staff who have full-time contracts

The Code of Conduct does not apply to:

- employees of external contractors and providers of services (*BCA Staff*).

(Such staff are covered by the relevant Code of Conduct of their employing body)

3 SETTING AN EXAMPLE

3.1 All staff who work in schools set examples of behaviour and conduct which can be copied by pupils. Staff must therefore avoid using inappropriate or offensive language.

3.2 All staff must, therefore, demonstrate high standards of conduct in order to encourage our pupils to do the same.

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- 3.3 All staff must also avoid putting themselves at risk of allegations of abusive or unprofessional conduct.
- 3.4 This Code helps all staff to understand what behaviour is and is not acceptable.
- 3.5 See Appendix 1 for further information.

4 SAFEGUARDING PUPILS

- 4.1 Staff have a duty to safeguard pupils from:
- physical abuse
 - sexual abuse
 - emotional abuse
 - neglect
- 4.2 The duty to safeguard pupils includes the duty to report concerns about a pupil to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for Child Protection.
- 4.3 The school's DSL is Louise Nicholls.
- 4.4 Staff are provided with personal copies of the school's Child Protection Policy and Whistleblowing Procedure and staff must be familiar with these documents.
- 4.5 Staff must not seriously demean or undermine pupils, their parents or carers, or colleagues.
- 4.6 Staff must take reasonable care of pupils under their supervision with the aim of ensuring their safety and welfare.

5 PUPIL DEVELOPMENT

- 5.1 Staff must comply with school policies and procedures that support the well-being and development of pupils.
- 5.2 Staff must co-operate and collaborate with colleagues and with external agencies where necessary to support the development of pupils.
- 5.3 Staff must follow reasonable instructions that support the development of pupils.

6. ONLINE LESSONS

- 6.1 Staff code of conduct for online lessons (including therapies) is referenced in the [Covid Annex to the Child Protection Policy](#).

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7 HONESTY AND INTEGRITY

- 7.1 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.
- 7.2 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.
- 7.3 Gifts from suppliers or associates of the school must be declared to the Headteacher, with the exception of "one off" token gifts from students or parents. Personal gifts from individual members of staff to students are inappropriate and could be misinterpreted.

8 CONDUCT OUTSIDE WORK

- 8.1 Staff must not engage in conduct outside work which could seriously damage the reputation and standing of the school or the employee's own reputation or the reputation of other members of the school community.
- 8.2 In particular, criminal offences that involve violence or possession or use of illegal drugs or sexual misconduct are likely to be regarded as unacceptable.
- 8.3 Staff must exercise caution when using information technology and be aware of the risks to themselves and others.
- 8.4 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.
- 8.5 Staff must not engage in inappropriate use of social network sites which may bring themselves, the school, school community or employer into disrepute.

9 CONFIDENTIALITY

- 9.1 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.
- 9.2 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 parent or carer, nor with colleagues in the school except with a senior member of staff with the appropriate role and authority to deal with the matter.

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- 9.3 However, staff have an obligation to share with their manager or the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead 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.

10 Low level concerns about members of staff

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

A low level concern is also behaviour towards a staff member or out of school hours that 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:

Socialising with parents of the school where there is no pre-existing friendship prior to the child or staff member joining the staff at Beech Lodge, undeclared staff relationships in which there is a power imbalance or where it is affecting the smooth running of the school.

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

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.

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.

This creates and embeds a culture of openness, trust and transparency in which our values and expected behaviour are constantly lived, monitored and reinforced by all staff, while minimising the risk of abuse.

11 DISCIPLINARY ACTION

- 11.1 All staff need to recognise that failure to meet these standards of behaviour and conduct may result in disciplinary action, including dismissal.

APPENDIX 1

Expected Behaviour and Teacher's Standards

Your behaviour and professional conduct must set a good example to all pupils within Beech Lodge School. Each employee has a responsibility to uphold our core values and reputation as an excellent educational establishment, both inside and outside of your normal working hours.

You have a contract and job description for the work for which you are employed, and you are provided with the Staff Handbook which provides you with general information about some of the work rules, work environment, and policies under which the School operates, and to ensure that you do not conduct yourself in a way that is detrimental to the School or brings the School into disrepute.

As a minimum, we ask you to have due regard to the following:

- Demonstrate high standards of conduct in order to encourage our pupils to do the same; children respond very well to the positive modelling by teachers of behaviours to be encouraged. You are asked to adhere to the school's prohibition on smoking including e-cigarettes on its premises, and where alcohol is available to adults at school events when children are present, be restrained in your use of same.
- Avoid using inappropriate or offensive language at all times whilst in the presence of our pupils and your colleagues. You will avoid shouting, making use of sarcasm and never intend to humiliate a child in your care.
- Follow reasonable management instructions.
- Avoid putting yourself at risk of allegations of abuse or unprofessional conduct. Be very careful in making physical contact with a child, either for instruction or for pupil management. For reasons of instruction, such as physical education, contact may be inevitable, because you are supporting a gymnast for example, where you should work within the subject association's professional guidelines. On occasion, physical contact will be required for control, for reasons of H&S or pupil direction. Such force as used should be reasonable in the circumstances and for appropriate purpose.
- If you are involved in a pupil management incident requiring physical restraint of a child, do make sure that the nature of the physical restraint used is written down My Concern. Any physical restraint is only permissible when a child is in imminent danger of inflicting an injury on himself/herself or on another, and then only as a last resort when all efforts to diffuse the situation have failed. Another member of staff should, if possible, be present to act as a witness. All incidents of the use of physical restraint should be recorded in writing, where possible using My Concern and reported immediately to the Headteacher as Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or the deputy DSL who will decide what to do next. Irrespective of the setting, parents will be informed of any physical restraint used on their child the same day or as soon as reasonably practicable. The Proprietor will treat failure to inform parents of use of physical restraint within this timescale extremely seriously.

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- There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate and proper for staff to have physical contact with pupils, but it is crucial that they only do so in ways appropriate to their professional role. Staff should, therefore, use their professional judgement at all times. Staff should not have unnecessary physical contact with pupils and should be alert to the fact that minor forms of friendly physical contact can be misconstrued by pupils or onlookers. A member of staff can never take the place of a parent in providing physical comfort and should be cautious of any demonstration of affection. Physical contact should never be secretive, or of the gratification of the adult, or represent a misuse of authority. If a member of staff believes that an action could be misinterpreted, the incident and circumstances should be recorded as soon as possible, the DSL informed and, if appropriate, a copy placed on the pupil's file.
- Not seriously demean or undermine pupils, their parents/carers or colleagues.
- Take reasonable care of pupils/students under your supervision with the aim of ensuring their safety and welfare at all times. We have specific support guidelines should you be required to provide overnight supervision, either for trips or examinations.
- If you suspect that a child has possession of 'prohibited items' on them, such as a knife or fireworks, please accompany the child and refer the matter to the Headteacher or authorised deputy. The Headteacher and authorised staff can use such force as is reasonable given the circumstances to conduct a search for the following "prohibited items": knives and weapons
 - alcohol
 - illegal drugs
 - stolen items
 - tobacco and cigarette papers, vapes
 - fireworks
 - pornographic images
 - any article that has been or is likely to be used to commit an offence, cause personal injury or damage to property. Further DfE guidance on the use of reasonable force can be found online at https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/444051/Use_of_reasonable_force_advice_Reviewed_July_2015.pdf
- Sports teaching staff, with responsibility for children and young people have a general duty of care towards them, however there are no specific legal requirements regarding the use of changing facilities. The NSPCC Child Protection in Sport unit (CPSU) provides these guidelines; See <https://thecpsu.org.uk/> to support individuals and organisations to consider issues relevant to their particular context; and to develop and implement policies and procedures that provide a safe environment for children and young people. Supervision of children whilst changing should involve a minimum of two adults, and as appropriate, adults entering changing rooms should announce their arrival prior to entry to those within.
- You are not required to pay home visits to pupils' homes for any purpose, or to staff homes as part of your professional duties, and any such visits planned must only be carried out with the explicit

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permission of the Headteacher. School visits of this kind will usually involve at least two staff, one of whom is appropriately trained as a DSL. Such visits are usually for reasons of welfare and support, and will always be diarised and documented in writing by the visitors for the benefit of the school.

- Under no circumstances are adult staff, visitors or volunteers to enter/establish an inappropriate relationship with a student within the school, irrespective of age. Teaching, Administrative and Support staff are in a position of trust with all of our children, whatever their age, and breaking that trust is forbidden by law. Your conversation with children needs to use appropriate language and be contained within appropriate boundaries. If you suspect a child or other adult is becoming unreasonably attentive to you, please notify the Headteacher immediately and seek appropriate support.
- We have very strict limitations around the use of staff cars, and where such use is authorised, the school carries appropriate insurance cover for the carriage of pupils. It is inadvisable for a teacher to give a lift in a car to a pupil alone. Wherever possible and practicable it is advisable that transport is undertaken with at least one adult additional to the driver acting as an escort. If there are exceptional circumstances that make unaccompanied transportation of pupils unavoidable, the journey should be made known to the Headteacher.
- Do not use Social Media such as Facebook, Instagram and Twitter for inappropriate contact/direct messaging with children, and liking their pages etc. is not permitted. In short, professional staff should not use any form of social media for private contact with children. Please keep your own Social Media identity as locked down as possible, so that children and parents at school cannot find out inappropriate information about you and your family.
- Social media contact with parents is not appropriate. If you are friends with a parents prior to joining the school, please advise the Headteacher and make the parent aware of the school's position regarding staff/ parent contact.
- Take particular care not to expose children to inappropriate images online
- In order to raise awareness of issues around social media, all new members of staff attend induction training in staying safe on-line, and in addition attend update training as appropriate to the age and stage of the pupils for which they have responsibilities.
- Have due regard for all elements of our Safeguarding policy, including:
 - Appendix 1 - on Child Sexual Exploitation, including Female Genital mutilation, where staff have a statutory duty to report where pupils are risk as well as when they suspect it may have occurred.

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- Have due regard for all elements of our Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation Policy:
 - ‘Prevent’; Teaching staff have a duty to uphold the teaching of fundamental British Values, and support PSHE documentation exists to support staff in this duty. Under no circumstances are staff to invite extremists speakers into the school, nor are pupils permitted to invite such speakers directly.
- If you suspect that colleagues or children seem at risk, please raise your concerns with your line manager, Headteacher, DSL, Proprietor or indeed directly with RBWM Children’s social care. We believe it is essential to support whistleblowing procedures, and a culture that enables issues about safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children to be addressed. Please refer to the school Whistleblowing Policy.
- You should record the details of any incident/concern as soon as possible in writing, using My Concern.

Whilst setting out these expected standards, please be advised that we cannot (and do not wish to) be entirely prescriptive about expected behaviour. However, we believe that the adherence to the above general principles will ensure that our work environment remains both professional and inclusive.



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