



BATH & WELLS Multi Academy Trust

'That they may have life, life in all its fullness' John 10:10

Code of Conduct; aspirations and expectations

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1. Purpose & Scope

- 1.1 The purpose of this code is to provide a clear framework within which employees and volunteers of the Bath & Wells Diocesan Academies Trust, trading as Bath & Wells Multi Academy Trust (hereafter referred to as the BWMAT) are expected to conduct themselves. The BWMAT strives to maintain a work environment for its employees and volunteers and a learning environment for its pupils/students in which honesty, integrity and respect for fellow staff, pupils/students of the BWMAT are constantly reflected in personal behaviour and standards of conduct. Throughout this policy both employees and volunteers will now be referred to as 'Staff.'
- 1.2 This Code of Conduct is additionally a requirement of the statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2016) and is a core component of the BWMAT's strategy to fulfil its statutory responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of all pupils/students. It is important that all adults working with children understand that the nature of their work and the responsibilities related to that work which places them in a position of trust. This Code provides clear advice on appropriate and safe behaviours for all adults working with children in paid or unpaid capacities in the BWMAT, and for teaching staff should be used in conjunction with the Teachers Standards document. The Teachers Standards are recognised by the BWMAT and are applicable to all teaching staff.
- 1.3 It is important that staff familiarise themselves with the expectations and where there is doubt, speak to their Line Manager for further guidance. Failure to comply with the standards set out in this policy may lead to disciplinary action, and in cases of serious or persistent breach, can lead to dismissal. The guidance offered is meant to be supportive and explanatory rather than an attempt to interfere either in the professional or personal lives of staff.
- 1.4 As part of their employment, all staff have personal and legal responsibilities, including treating others with dignity and respect; acting honestly, using funds and 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 staff working with the BWMAT.
- 1.5 The purpose of this document is to set out the BWMAT's values and expected behaviours of conduct from all staff. Each and every staff member is required to adopt and follow the BWMAT's value and behaviours at all times, failure to adhere will be managed in an appropriate manner. This code covers some of the most important issues relating to personal conduct, and gives a framework of standards and behaviour guidelines, but it is not intended to be exhaustive.

2. Underpinning Principles

- 2.1 The welfare of the child is paramount;
- 2.2 All staff should understand their responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils;
- 2.3 All staff are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions;
- 2.4 All staff should work, and be seen to work, in an open and transparent way;
- 2.5 Staff should discuss and/or take advice promptly from their line manager if they have acted in a way which may give rise to concern;
- 2.6 All staff should apply the same professional standards regardless of culture, disability, marital status, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and sexual orientation;
- 2.7 All staff should not consume or be under the influence of alcohol or any substance, including prescribed medication, which may affect their ability to care for children;
- 2.8 All staff should be aware that breaches of the law and other professional guidelines could result in disciplinary action being taken against them, criminal action and/or other proceedings including barring by the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) from working in regulated activity, or for acts of serious misconduct prohibition from teaching by the National College of Teaching & Leadership (NCTL);
- 2.9 All staff and managers should continually monitor and review practice to ensure this guidance is followed; and
- 2.10 Staff should be aware of and understand the Safeguarding Policy, arrangements for managing allegations against staff and whistle blowing procedure. All policies are available on the BWMATs website and are provided to staff on induction.

3. Our Aspirations

At the BWMAT everyone matters and to reflect this culture we ask that staff aspire to the following:

Staff will aspire to:
Promote an educational community based on love and inclusivity, providing a beacon of hope where all can flourish.
Foster, maintain and celebrate Christian distinctiveness in our schools.
Ensure that our schools are centres of excellence with a focus on the nurture and achievement of all their members.
Promote mutual support, encouragement and benefit between all our schools.
Develop a future and inspire aspirational thinking based on our educational heritage and to make use of the latest research in pedagogy and child development.
Recognise that, each child is a unique human being, worth the highest possible standards of education and care, and the closest attention to what will enable them to flourish.
Recognise and enable those who often remain invisible, through ethnic or cultural disadvantage, or through disability or poverty.

All staff are expected to support the aspirations of the BWMAT and be sensitive when out of the workplace. All staff, before appointment, are given every opportunity to investigate the BWMAT school and come to a decision as to whether the environment is right for them. Once appointed, the BWMAT expects that all staff will promote the values which permeate the vision of the BWMAT.

4. Working Together

Staff should:
Support all pupils of whatever ability to do their best and have high personal aspirations. Each school is a learning community which hopes to inspire young people and to enhance and enrich students' lives enabling them to experience as wide and as full a range of learning opportunities as possible. Staff will use their expertise for the benefit of the students.
Set examples in their personal and professional relationships, ensuring actions within their personal lives do not bring the School or MAT into disrepute.
Be committed to promoting the safety and well-being of all students.
Promote learning at every level both inside and outside the classroom.
Be friendly and welcoming, helpful, polite and courteous to everyone connected with the school: parents, other staff and students etc.
Be sympathetic to the Christian ethos of the BWMAT and its schools.
Keep children safe by clarifying which behaviours constitute safe practice and which behaviours should be avoided.
Work safely and responsibly and adhere to the BWMAT's standards policies and procedures.

5. Expectations of All Staff in Line with the Trust Values

All Staff Roles and Responsibilities

5.1 Line managers are responsible for:

5.1.1 Managing the conduct of staff in accordance with this policy and the disciplinary procedure; and

5.1.2 Ensuring that staff are aware of the expected standards of conduct, the disciplinary policy and procedure and any of the local policies and procedures specific to their job or area.

5.2 Staff are responsible for adhering to the set standards of conduct, the disciplinary rules and any local rules or regulations, including any reasonable management instructions.

6. Treating Other People with Dignity and Respect

6.1 All staff are expected to adhere to the BWMAT policies, procedures and guides. All staff are expected to treat pupils, other colleagues, parents and external contacts with dignity and respect and to comply with all relevant BWMAT policies. Unacceptable behaviour such as discrimination, bullying, harassment or intimidation will not be tolerated in the BWMAT. This includes physical and verbal abuse and use of inappropriate language or unprofessional behaviour with colleagues, pupils and

parents. All staff are expected to build relationships which are rooted in mutual respect and at all times, observe proper boundaries appropriate to a staff member's professional position.

- 6.2 All staff are expected to ensure that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways which exploit pupils' and colleagues' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law.
- 6.3 Staff are expected to be committed to the wider life of the BWMAT and its individual schools.
- 6.4 Staff should be conversant with the Conditions of Service under which they are employed. A contract is signed by all staff and individuals are responsible for ensuring that they are aware of the specific requirements of their post. When in doubt, staff should ask for clarification.
- 6.5 In terms of the students, staff are, when admonishing, expected to differentiate between the unacceptable actions of the child and the child itself, treating all students as individuals and with respect.
- 6.6 Staff should never humiliate a child either privately or publicly. Sarcasm should not be used and where practicable. Familiar or inappropriate language should not be used.
- 6.7 All staff should be referred to using their title. (For example Mr or Sir, Miss, Ms or Mrs when using a surname).
- 6.8 All language which could constitute or be construed as of a sexual nature should be avoided.
- 6.9 Meetings with staff, parents or pupils should not, where possible, be held in closed, locked areas or any location without external visibility. If appropriate or practical, it should be held in an open area and another member of staff should also be present.
- 6.10 Under the provisions contained in the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, the Trust undertakes to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the Health, Safety and Welfare at work of all staff. It is the duty of every staff to:
 - 6.10.1 Take reasonable care of themselves and others at work;
 - 6.10.2 Co-operate with the Trust, as far as it is necessary, to enable them to carry out their legal duties;
 - 6.10.3 Not intentionally or recklessly interfere with anything provided, including personal protective equipment, for Health, Safety of Welfare at work; and
 - 6.10.4 Staff should be aware of the requirements of current and relevant legislation such as the above alongside The Equality Act and the Health & Safety at Work Act. Staff need to ensure that they are up to date on these legal obligations. Copies of relevant information can be obtained on request.
- 6.11 Staff should carry out duties and responsibilities at all times with honesty and integrity. Authority or positions should never be used for personal gain or to enable colleagues or others to gain personally. Staff must declare if they are aware of any connections with any business or organisation that supply the MAT/School.

- 6.12 MAT 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 and to whom the Headteacher/SMT has delegated the authority to authorise loans. Any local school procedures for signing equipment in and out must be followed. Equipment taken out of school which has not been authorised and is subsequently lost or broken must be replaced at the borrower's own expense. Taking equipment out of school without following the procedures may be deemed "improper conduct". Which may lead to disciplinary action including dismissal. Breakages should always be reported immediately to the Inventory Holder.
- 6.13 Permission must be obtained from the Headteacher/SMT to undertake additional employment. The MAT expects all staff to fulfil their obligations to the students, and reserves the right to make a judgment as to whether undertaking additional work would be prejudicial to that outcome, or bring the school into disrepute. A discussion with the SMT before seeking additional employment should always precede the attempt to find an additional job/post. If on appointment a member of staff already has a further post, this should be declared at the interview.
- 6.14 The MAT recognises that every individual has a right to seek alternative employment as and when they deem appropriate. Since the school will generally be asked for a reference, it is both courteous and sensible for the application to have been discussed in advance with the Head Teacher. Head Teachers should be informed in advance of a reference is being sought. Staff who have been on interview are asked to inform the Head Teacher of the outcome as soon as possible.
- 6.15 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.
- 6.16 Advice should be sought from a member of the Schools SMT on any matter regarding the acceptance of gifts or money. Staff should be aware that "intellectual copyright"; for example, textbooks written by Staff, can, in some circumstances be claimed by the MAT and clarification of the MAT's position should be sought before sharing documents externally.
- 6.17 A member of staff must notify the Headteacher/SMT of any criminal charges or convictions whilst they are in the employment of the BWMAT. The Headteacher should seek advice and guidance from the BWMAT central team on the appropriate action to take when a member of staff discloses a criminal charge or conviction. Criminal charges or convictions may constitute unprofessional conduct and a potential breakdown in the bond of trust necessary between employer and employee. In such cases, employees may be subject to disciplinary action, including dismissal may be appropriate. Each case will be considered independently. It is likely that any conviction for possession of prohibited drugs, sexual misconduct, theft, misappropriation of school funds or equipment, violent conduct, disorderly conduct in a public place etc will be deemed as gross misconduct and therefore may result in disciplinary action including dismissal where appropriate.
- 6.18 All staff should select a manner of dress and appearance appropriate to their professional role and which may be necessarily different to that adopted in their personal life. All staff should ensure they are dressed decently, safely and appropriately for the tasks they undertake.

- 6.19 In summation, the BWMAT expects all Staff to behave at all times with dignity and professionalism. The Code is not exhaustive. Each situation will have to be dealt with separately and with due consideration.
- 6.20 All members of staff and at all levels are to bring to the notice of their immediate Line Manager 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.

7. The BWMAT Staff expectations

Smoking or vaping on BWMAT sites is totally prohibited.
In consideration of children and adults accessing schools, it is requested that smoking outside the premises is kept away from directly outside school gates.
The use, possession or distribution or sale of drugs is totally prohibited and constitutes gross misconduct for which may result in dismissal.
Staff are prohibited from working whilst under the influence of non-prescribed drugs or alcohol.. Staff must bring to the attention of their Line Manager any medication or illness which may affect their work performance or behaviour.
While the MAT accepts that Staff may access the internet for personal reasons, using the school system, access should not take place during working time. During non-contact time, before or after school etc the school system may be used but all staff should be aware that personal access to sites will be monitored and no site is to be accessed that would be considered inappropriate. Staff are asked to seek guidance from their Line Manager if in any doubt about the appropriateness of accessing a particular site.
Staff are expected to display appropriate personal standards of behaviour. i.e. respecting colleagues and management, and communicating and interacting in an appropriate manor with colleagues and management. Alongside representing the BWMAT in a positive way.
Further guidance on what the MAT considers misconduct/gross misconduct is set out in the Disciplinary policy.

8. Compliance with the Code of Conduct

- 8.1 Failure to comply with this Code of Conduct and with the associated BWMAT or school level policies may result in disciplinary action being taken where breaches of the Code warrant such action.
- 8.2 The Code should be provided for all staff (either electronically or by providing a paper copy) to read on commencement of work with the BWMAT. All staff should be given an opportunity to discuss the Code with a member of the leadership team and ask any questions in order to clarify understanding. They should then be asked to sign a declaration to confirm that they have read, understood and agree to comply with the Code.
- 8.3 All staff should keep themselves familiar with the content of the guidance and visit this regularly.

9. Responsibilities

- 9.1 All staff are accountable for the way in which they: exercise authority; manage risk; use resources; and safeguard children.
- 9.2 All staff have a responsibility to keep pupils safe and to protect them from abuse (sexual, physical, verbal, psychological and emotional), neglect and safeguarding concerns. Pupils have a right to be safe and to be treated with respect and dignity. It follows that trusted adults are expected to take reasonable steps to ensure their safety and well-being. Failure to do so may be regarded as professional misconduct.
- 9.3 The safeguarding culture of individual schools and of the MAT as a whole is, in part, exercised through the development of respectful, caring and professional relationships between adults and pupils and behaviour by the adult that demonstrates integrity, maturity and good judgement.

10. Making Professional Judgements

- 10.1 This policy cannot provide a complete checklist of what is, or is not, appropriate behaviour for staff. It does highlight however, behaviour which is illegal, inappropriate or inadvisable. There will be rare occasions and circumstances in which staff have to make decisions or take action in the best interest of a pupil which could contravene this guidance or where no guidance exists. Individuals are expected to make judgements about their behaviour in order to secure the best interests and welfare of the pupils in their charge and, in doing so, will be seen to be acting reasonably. These judgements should always be recorded and shared with a manager.
- 10.2 Adults should always consider whether their actions are warranted, proportionate, safe and applied equitably.

Further reading & associated policies:

www.saferecruitmentconsortium.org/GSWP%20Oct%202015.pdf

Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2016)
BWMAT Disciplinary policy
Health & Safety at Work
Teachers Standards
Social Media
Equality & Diversity

I declare that I have read the Staff Code of Conduct and the accompanying guidance and that I understand it. I have been given an opportunity to discuss it with my Headteacher/line manager and undertake to work in accordance with it and the points listed above.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____