

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 The purpose of this document is to make all staff employed by Brook Learning Trust (BLT) 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 and, in cases of serious or persistent breach, to suspension or dismissal. The guidance offered is supportive and explanatory rather than proscriptive.

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.

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 the Disciplinary Procedure
- 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 BLT's and the Academy's policies and procedures (which are published to all staff and identified as part of the induction process for all incoming members of staff). Requests for the review of any of these policies and/or procedures should be directed to the appropriate member of the management.
- 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 and confirmed in their Contract of Employment. The 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 Staff are expected to discharge their duties and responsibilities at all times with honesty and integrity.
- 5.12 Positions of authority must never be abused. Staff must declare all relevant business interests.
- 5.13 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.
- 5.14 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.
- 5.15 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 / s h e 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.
- 5.16 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.
- 5.17 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 copyright of, for example, textbooks written by members of its staff can in some circumstances be claimed by the Trust.
- 5.18 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 would be liable for dismissal.

- 5.19 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.

- 5.20 The additional following points are brought to the attention of all members of staff:

- Smoking 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 Digital Communications Policy and will comply with the terms of the associated document, the BLT Information Systems: Acceptable Use Policy, compliance with which will be confirmed by signature.

- 5.21 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 will be reviewed by the HR Manager every two years and ratified by the BLT Board in May

This review by HR & Trust Executive June 2017

Summary of amendments to this iteration: Clause 4.21 - change of policy name
Amendments to reflect current terminology

Ratified by BLT Audit & Risk Committee June 2017

Next review May 2019

Next ratification May 2019