

Brighter Futures Learning Partnership Trust

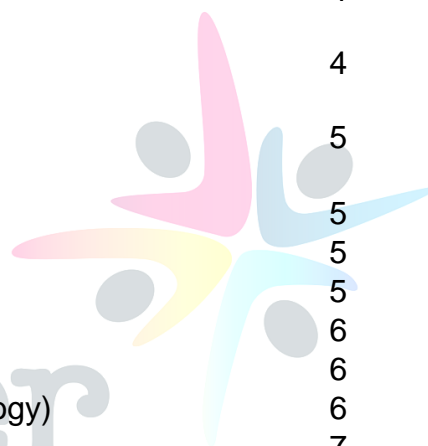


CODE OF CONDUCT FOR WORKING WITH CHILDREN POLICY VERSION 1.0

Status	Non-statutory
Responsible committee/Individual	Trust Board
Author	CEO
Target Audience	All stakeholders
Date Policy Agreed	February 2020
Review Date	January 2023

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CODE OF CONDUCT FOR WORKING WITH CHILDREN

1. Aims, scope and principles

This guidance document describes the standards of conduct and practice that the Brighter Futures Learning Partnership Trust (The Trust) employees and volunteers should follow when working with children. It is designed to complement other advice or codes of conduct produced by employers or national bodies, not to replace or take priority over them.

By creating this policy, we aim to ensure our Trust provides an environment where everyone is safe, happy and treated with respect. Whilst this policy covers a wide range of situations, it is recognised that it cannot cover every eventuality, however the principles contained within it must apply in every circumstance.

Many of the principles in this code of conduct are based on the Teachers' Standards and therefore, this policy should be read in conjunction with these standards.

School staff have an influential position in school, and, will act as role models for students/pupils by consistently demonstrating high standards of behaviour and dress. We expect that all teachers will act in accordance with the personal and professional behaviours set out in the Teacher Standards. We expect all support staff, governors and volunteers to also act with personal and professional integrity, respecting the safety and well-being of others.

2. Legislation and Guidance

In line with statutory safeguarding guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', we should have a staff code of conduct which covers acceptable use of technologies, staff/student/pupil relationships and communication, including the use of social media. This policy is linked to each school's safeguarding, e-safety, acceptable use of technology policies.

This policy also links to the Trust's Funding Agreement and the Articles of Association.

3. General Obligations

All adults who have contact with children and young people, in their work, have a legal and moral duty to keep them safe, protecting them from sexual, physical and/or emotional harm. The duty that rests on an individual is to ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure the welfare of a child or young person is paramount.

Staff will, therefore:

- Keep children safe by clarifying which behaviours constitute safe practice and which behaviours should be avoided;
- Assist adults working with children to work safely and responsibly and to monitor their own standards and practice;
- Support managers in setting clear expectations of behaviour and/or codes of practice relevant to the services being provided;
- Give a clear message that unlawful or unsafe behaviour is unacceptable and that, where appropriate, disciplinary or legal action will be taken;
- Support safer recruitment practice;
- Minimise the risk of misplaced or malicious allegations made against adults who work with children;
- Reduce the incidence of positions of trust being abused or misused.

It is important that staff are role models for students/pupils. They will:

- Maintain high standards in their attendance and punctuality;
- Never use inappropriate or offensive language in school;
- Show tolerance and respect for the rights of others;
- Not undermine fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs;
- Express personal beliefs in a way that will not overly influence students/pupils, and will not exploit students'/pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law;
- Understand the statutory frameworks they must act within.

Failure to follow the code of conduct may result in disciplinary action being taken, as set out in the Trust's disciplinary procedures.

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 always in the best interest of the Trust and its students/pupils.

4. Safeguarding

Staff have a duty to safeguard students/pupils from harm, and to report any concerns they have. This includes physical, emotional and sexual abuse, or neglect.

Staff will familiarise themselves with their school's safeguarding policy and procedures and the Prevent initiative, ensuring they are aware of the processes to follow if they have concerns about a child.

Safeguarding policies and procedures **are available in each staff room and** from the school admin office. New staff will also be given copies on arrival to the Trust as part of the induction process.

5. Reporting incidents

Staff should report any safeguarding concerns about another colleague's behaviour to their Headteacher. If there are safeguarding concerns about the Headteacher or another member of the Trust, these should be reported to the CEO. If there are safeguarding concerns about the CEO, these should be reported to the Chair of the Trust by emailing Mrs Keogan, the Executive Personal Assistant to the CEO (keoganc@hungerhillsschool.com).

In cases where there is an allegation or risk of harm to a child this must be reported to the Child Protection Officer in school.

6. Diversity

At all times consideration needs to be given to the diverse needs of workers and children. Aspects of gender, culture or religion may be relevant when considering the nature of allegations or appropriateness of communications or physical interventions.

7. The Trust's Commitment

The Trust will ensure:

- Appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures are in place in all areas that undertake work with children, that they are continually monitored and reviewed and made easily accessible to all workers;
- Workers are treated fairly and reasonably in all circumstances and if subject to an allegation will be supported and the principles of natural justice applied;
- The safe practice of workers is continually promoted through supervision and training;
- Workers have readily available access to senior management or other emergency contact person;

- Guidance is readily available to both adults and children;
- A culture of openness and support is fostered;
- Readily known systems are in place for situations and concerns, from either party, to be raised and recorded and for their outcomes to be analysed in order to review procedures and working practices;
- A clear E-Safety policy is in place;
- A clear and easily accessible Whistle Blowing policy is in place which is available on the Trust website and in each school's office.

8. Personal Conduct

Confidentiality

Workers must:

- Ensure that private and sensitive information should only be shared with appropriate adults;
- Not use information to intimidate, humiliate or embarrass the child;
- Be aware of the need to listen and support children whilst understanding the importance of not promising to keep secrets;
- Never request a child keeps secrets.

Making a professional judgement

Workers must:

- Act professionally and always in the best interests of the child;
- Discuss any concerns or threats with a senior manager;
- Be aware of their position of trust and ensure an unequal balance of power is not used for their own or others personal advantage or gratification;
- Not use their position to intimidate, bully, humiliate, threaten, coerce or undermine children;
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries and avoid behaviour which might be misinterpreted by others;
- Not promote relationships which create a personal friendship or are of a sexual nature, or which may become so;
- Ensure that policies referring to social networking, confidentiality and health and safety are applied.

Personal/living space

Workers must:

- Not invite a child into their home or any home or domestic setting frequented by them, unless the reason for this has been firmly established and agreed

with parents and senior managers or the home has been designated as a work place e.g. childminders, foster carers;

- Be vigilant in maintaining their own privacy and mindful of the need to avoid placing themselves in vulnerable situations;
- Not ask children to undertake personal jobs or errands;
- Maintain professional boundaries.

Gifts, rewards and favouritism

Workers must:

- Follow the school's policy on the giving and receiving of gifts;
- Only give gifts to an individual child as part of an agreed reward system;
- Ensure that when operating reward systems, methods and criteria for selection of children for awards are fair and transparent.

Infatuations

Workers must:

- Deal with infatuations sensitively and appropriately to maintain the dignity and safety of all concerned and report to their line manager;
- Make sure their own behaviour is beyond reproach.

Communication (including the use of technology)

Workers must:

- Ensure communication takes place within clear and explicit professional boundaries; this includes the wider use of technology such as mobile phones, text messaging, e-mails, digital cameras, videos, web-cams, websites and blogs;
- Not share any personal information with a child including personal contact details;
- Not request, or respond to, any personal information from a child, other than that which may be appropriate as part of their professional role;
- Not give their personal contact details to children, including their mobile number, home phone or personal e-mail address, unless the need to do so is agreed with senior management and parents;
- Only use personal equipment e.g. mobile phones, when parents/carers have given permission;
- Only make contact with children for professional reasons and in accordance with school policy;
- Use internal e-mail systems in accordance with the each school's policy.

Social Contact

Workers must:

- Not have social contact with children unless the reason for this has been firmly established and agreed with parents;
- Alert senior management of any social contact that has occurred which may raise concern;
- Report and record any situation which may place a child at risk or may compromise the school or their own professional standing.

Sexual Contact

Workers must:

- Not engage in sexual activity with or in the presence of a child, or cause or incite a child to engage in or watch sexual activity, to do so would be considered a criminal offence;
- Not have any form of communication which could be interpreted as sexually suggestive or provocative or make sexual remarks to, or about a child either verbally, written or electronically;
- Not discuss their own sexual relationships with or in the presence of children;
- Ensure relationships take place within boundaries of respect and professionalism;
- Ensure language, attitudes and demeanour do not give rise to comment or speculation;
- Be aware that consistently conferring appropriate special attention and favour upon a child might be construed as part of a grooming process, and as such will give rise to concerns about behaviour.

Physical Contact

Workers must:

- Be aware that even well intentioned physical contact may be misconstrued by the child, an observer or by anyone to whom this action is described;
- Only have physical contact with a child when it is necessary and in ways which are appropriate to their professional or agreed role and responsibilities, never touch a child in a way which may be considered indecent;
- Be aware of the child's reactions or feelings and, as far as possible, only use a level of contact which is acceptable to the child and for the minimum time necessary;
- Not assume that when a child is distressed they seek physical comfort;

- Always encourage children, where possible to undertake self-care tasks independently;
- Be aware of cultural or religious views about touching and sensitive to issues of gender;
- Where there is regular physical contact needed, the nature of this must be agreed with the parent as part of a formally agreed plan;
- Where a child initiates inappropriate physical contact, you must sensitively deter them and help them understand the importance of personal boundaries. This must be reported immediately to the Child Protection Officer.

Behaviour Management

Workers must:

- Not use any form of degrading treatment to punish a child;
- Not use demeaning or insensitive comments;
- Use humour with care;
- Ensure any sanctions and rewards are part of an agreed behaviour management policy;
- Try to defuse situations before they escalate;
- Never use corporal punishment;
- Follow the behaviour policy and only use physical intervention as a last resort, when other behaviour management strategies have failed and where there is a risk of physical injury or serious damage to property;
- When, using physical intervention, use the minimum force necessary and always report and document the incident;
- Be mindful of other factors which may be impacting on a child's behaviour, e.g. bullying, changes in home circumstances;

Note: the use of unwarranted physical force is likely to constitute a criminal offence.

Personal/Intimate Care

Workers must:

- Respect children's privacy at all times;
- Avoid any physical contact when children are in a state of undress, other than as part of an agreed care plan;
- Not change in the same place as children;
- Not shower or bathe with children;
- Not assist with any personal care task which a child can undertake themselves.

Staff Dress and Appearance

Workers must:

- Present a professional image of the school;
- Model appropriate dress as an example to learners and visitors;
- Not wear excessively revealing clothes;
- Not wear anything which is likely to bring the school into disrepute, e.g. potentially offensive badges, logos or motifs, political slogans.

First Aid and the administration of medicine

Workers must:

- Be suitably trained and qualified before administering first aid and/or any agreed medication;
- Ensure arrangements are in place to obtain parental consent for the administration of medication;
- Adhere to each school's policy;
- Explain to the child what is happening;
- Ensure parents are kept informed as appropriate.

One to one situations/home visits

Workers must:

- Ensure that, when lone working is an integral part of their role, full and appropriate risk assessments are in place;
- Avoid meetings with a child in secluded areas;
- Always inform colleagues and/or parents about one to one contact beforehand, assessing the need to have them present or close by;
- Avoid the use of engaged or equivalent signs, where ever possible, these create an opportunity for secrecy or the interpretation of secrecy;
- Carefully consider the need of the child when in a one to one situation and always report any situation where the child becomes distressed or angry towards you;
- Agree the purpose for any home visit with the line manager unless it is an acknowledged and integral part of your role;
- Be alert to the possible consequences of being in a one to one situation when little or no information is available about the child.

Transporting

Workers must:

- Ensure requirements around seat belts and car seats are adhered to;
- Not offer lifts outside normal working duties unless this has been agreed with parents;
- Ensure they are fit to drive and free from any drugs, alcohol or medicine that is likely to impair judgement or ability to drive;
- Ensure that there are proper procedures in place for vehicle, passenger and driver safety, including appropriate insurance;
- Ensure that any impromptu or emergency lifts are recorded and can be justified if questioned.

Trips and outings

Workers must:

- Recognise that they are in a position of trust and ensure that their behaviour remains professional at all times and stays clearly within defined boundaries;
- Ensure staff/child ratios and gender mix are appropriate;
- Always have another adult present in out of school activities, unless otherwise agreed with a senior manager;
- Ensure risk assessments are undertaken;
- Have parental consent to the activity;
- Not share bedrooms with children unless in exceptional circumstances where parents have given agreement and there are two members of staff present at all times;
- Ensure that the trips/visits' policies are followed;
- Not act in any way that will bring the Trust or the teaching profession into disrepute. This covers relevant criminal offences, such as violence, sexual misconduct, inappropriate use of alcohol as well as any negative comments about any of the schools in the Trust.

Photography and Videos

Workers must:

- Be clear about the purpose of any activity involving photography and what will happen to the images when the activity is concluded;
- Be able to justify the reason for having images of children in their possession;
- Avoid making images in one to one situations or situations that may be construed as harmful or which show a single child with no surrounding context;

- Immediately report any concerns if any inappropriate or intrusive images are found;
- Have parental consent to take, display and/or distribute any images of children;
- Not use images that may cause distress or offence.

Access to inappropriate images and internet usage

Workers must:

- Not access, make or store indecent images of children on the internet or other devices including personal equipment, to do so would be illegal and lead to a criminal investigation;
- Follow the school's guidance on the use of IT equipment;
- Ensure that children are not exposed to unsuitable material through ICT;
- Ensure that any materials shown to children are age appropriate;
- Immediately report any concerns, if any inappropriate or intrusive images are found, to the Child Protection Officer and the E-safety co-ordinators.

Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed every **3 years** but can be revised as needed in line with any changing legislation. It will be ratified by the Trust Board.

Policy Agreed: February 2020

Signed CEO of BFLPT – Helen-Redford-Hernandez:

H. Redford-Hernandez

Brighter Futures
Learning Partnership Trust

Date: 6 February 2020

Signed – Chair of BFLPT – Marus Isman-Egal:

Marcus Isman-Egal

Date: 6 February 2020

Policy to be reviewed : January 2023

Created: February 2020 (Version 1)

Revised:

