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# **Diocese of Bristol Academies Trust**

# **Code of Conduct for Staff**

**Date Adopted:** 4<sup>th</sup> June 2015

**Date Reviewed:**

**History of most recent Policy changes (must be completed)**

Date	Page	Change	Origin of Change e.g. TU request, Change in legislation

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## 1) Preamble

- a) **The Trust is an organisation with a Christian foundation. The ethos, values and relationships of the Trust, and its associated academies, are central to witnessing to the value of the foundation.**
- b) From this point onwards wherever Local Board is used in this document it should be read as the Local Board or DBAT, (dependent on the earned autonomy in the scheme of delegation) and wherever Head teacher is used it should read Head teacher or Principal as appropriate.
- c) *NB – This policy is also applicable, where required, for centrally employed DBAT staff. For this purpose, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of DBAT will replace the role of the Headteacher/Principal, and the Main Board will replace Local Board.*

## 2) Introduction

- a) This Code of Conduct sets out the obligations and professional standards of conduct required of all employees.
- b) The Code complies with employment legislation, the Trust's Constitution and the Local Government Act 1972.
- c) All members of the public, in dealing with employees of the Trust and its academies, are entitled to expect the highest standards of conduct from all employees. In performing their duties, employees must act with integrity, honesty, impartiality and objectivity.
- d) All employees have personal and legal responsibilities, including; treating others with dignity and respect; acting honestly, using public funds and academy 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, including the Headteacher/Principal and Senior Management teams.
- e) This document is not a prescriptive guide to what employees should and should not do. It highlights the principal areas where employees need to be aware of their responsibilities when working in the academy and for the Trust, and is a framework for behaviour.
- f) Employees should ensure they are familiar with the specific policies that underpin these behaviours through reference to the documents highlighted in the "Required Reading" throughout the code. If these documents are not supplied at induction, the employee should ask the academy for copies.

### 3) Compliance with the Code of Conduct

- a) The Code of Conduct forms part of an employee's contract. Failure to comply with it and with the associated academy/DBAT policies ("Required Reading") may be treated as a conduct issue, which could result in disciplinary action being taken. Any disciplinary action will be taken in accordance with the Disciplinary Procedure.
- b) Every employee must comply with relevant legislation, namely the Equality Act 2010, the Human Rights Act 1998, Data Protection Act 2004 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000. All individuals and organisations have a right to be treated with fairness and equity and for their personal information to be managed appropriately at all times.

### 4) Professional behaviour and conduct

- a) Treating other people with dignity and respect
- b) All employees are expected to treat other colleagues, pupils and external contacts, such as parents, with dignity and respect. Staff are required to comply with the academy's/Trust's equality policies in respect of colleagues, students and other contacts such as parents. Unacceptable behaviour such as discrimination, bullying, harassment or intimidation will not be tolerated. This includes physical and verbal abuse and use of inappropriate language or unprofessional behaviour with colleagues, pupils and parents, and through social media.
- c) Required Reading
  - Use of Social Media Policy
- d) Appropriate relationships with children
  - i) Academy/Trust employees are expected to act in an open and transparent way that would not lead any reasonable person to suspect their actions or intent.
  - ii) Employees in schools are in a position of trust and have a duty to protect young people from discrimination and harm and to maintain appropriate professional boundaries. It is equally important for staff to avoid behaviour that might be misinterpreted by others in order to protect both young people and themselves. Staff are required to read and understand academy policies on child protection, as well as relevant DfE guidance documents.

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e) Professional behaviour

- i) Employees must not misuse or misrepresent their position, qualifications or experience or bring the reputation of the academy into disrepute. Such behaviour may lead to disciplinary action.

f) Criminal actions

- i) Academy employees must inform the Headteacher/Principal (Local Board if the employee is the Headteacher/Principal) immediately if they are subject to a criminal conviction, caution, ban, police enquiry, investigation or pending prosecution.
- ii) Academy employees must also inform the Headteacher/principal (local Board Chair if the employee is the Headteacher/Principal) immediately if anyone in their household is subject to a criminal conviction, caution, ban, policy inquiry or pending prosecution with regard to a violent or sexual offence against children or adults.
- iii) The Headteacher/Principal or Local Board will discuss this with the employee in the context of their role and responsibilities in order to help safeguard children and other employees at the academy.

**5) Required reading:**

- Academy Child Protection Policy and Procedure.
- DfE document: 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'

**6) Declaration of interests**

- a) An employee is required to declare whether any group or organisation they are associated with would be considered to be in conflict with the ethos of the academy/Trust. Membership of a trade union or staff representative group would not need to be declared. Employees should also consider carefully whether they need to declare to the academy/trust their relationship with any individual(s) where this might cause a conflict with academy/trust activities. For example, a relationship with a Governor, another staff member, or a contractor who provides services to the academy.
- b) Failure to make a relevant declaration of interests is a very serious breach of trust and therefore if employees are in doubt about a declaration, they are advised to take advice from their academy or union. All declarations, including nil returns, should be submitted in writing to the Headteacher on an academy Register of Business Interests (Appendix One).

## 7) Probity of records and other documents

- a) The deliberate falsification of documents is not acceptable. Where an employee falsifies records or other documents, including those held electronically, this will be regarded as a serious disciplinary matter and potentially a criminal offence.
- b) Where an employee has claimed any benefit, including housing benefit, either directly or indirectly and has failed to disclose their full earnings, this will be treated as gross misconduct and the employee may be dismissed following application of appropriate procedures, and referred to the Police.

## 8) Financial inducements

- a) Financial Regulations for schools
  - i) All academy employees must comply with the academy's and DBAT's Financial Regulations. Employees should familiarise themselves with the regulations but some of the principal employee requirements are summarised below.
- b) Business Contacts
  - i) In this section, "business contact" refers to any person, body or organisation with which the academy is involved on a financial or charitable basis (including contractors; developers; consultants; regional or national charities). This also includes business contacts who are potential suppliers (e.g. they are tendering for future business).
  - ii) All employees should be clear about their contractual obligations and should not take any additional employment, or take up any position in an organisation, which conflicts with the academy's or trust's interests, or their role within the academy/trust.
  - iii) It is the employee's responsibility to raise any potential conflicts with their Headteacher/Principal/manager when undertaking work outside of their normal position (voluntary or paid).
- c) Declaration of gifts
  - i) Any gifts that are received should be declared in writing to the Local Board on the Register of Gifts and Hospitality (Appendix 2) with the exception of those items specifically identified in sections 6.4 below. This document shall remain available for inspection by the auditors.
  - ii) Employees must be aware that it is a serious criminal offence for them to corruptly receive or give any gift, loan, fee, reward or advantage for doing or not

doing anything, or showing favour, or disfavour, to any person or body in their official capacity.

d) Gifts or hospitality to an employee

- i) Where a business contact offers a significant personal gift, personal payment or other incentive such as secondary employment to an employee, these should not be accepted and should be returned with a suitable official letter. Such offers should be declared to the Local Board and recorded in the Register of Gifts and Hospitality.
- ii) If it is not possible to return gifts then the employee who deals with that supplier should declare the gift to the Local Board who will keep a record of it and decide how it is to be used. Such gifts remain the property of the school and should be included in the Register of Gifts and Hospitality.
- iii) The only exceptions to these are:
  - Low cost, functional items suitable for business use rather than personal use and displaying the supplier's logo e.g. diaries, calendars and pens. These items may be accepted and do not have to be included in the Register of Gifts and Hospitality.
  - Gifts offered by parents or students to school staff to express their thanks, such as boxes of chocolates, however, only gifts with an individual value of £25 or less may be accepted. Such gifts do not have to be declared in writing to the Local Board or be included in the Register of Gifts and Hospitality. For the avoidance of doubt employees must always refuse gifts of money.

e) Required Reading

- DBAT Anti-bribery Policy

## 9) Other employment

- a) Employees are permitted to take up secondary employment outside the academy, as long as the activity does not constitute a conflict of interest, adversely affect their primary employment at the academy, or exceed the legal maximum working week of 48 hours as defined by the Working Time Regulations.
- b) The secondary employment must be undertaken outside the working hours of the employee's normal post and employees are required to keep the Headteacher/Principal (Local Board if the employee is the Headteacher/Principal) informed of their employment at other organisations.



## 10) Health and safety

- a) Employees must adhere to the academy's Health and Safety policy, procedure and guidance and must ensure that they take every action to keep themselves and everyone in the academy environment safe and well.
- b) This includes taking immediate safety action in a potentially harmful situation (either at academy or off-site) by complying with statutory and academy guidelines and collaborating with colleagues and other agencies.
- c) Required reading:
  - Academy Health and Safety Policy

## 11) Use of alcohol and illegal drugs

- a) The taking of illegal drugs during working hours is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. All employees are expected to attend work without being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs and without their performance being adversely impacted by the consumption of alcohol or illegal drugs.
- b) If alcohol or drug usage impacts on an employee's working life, the academy has the right to discuss the matter with the employee and take appropriate action, having considered factors such as the academy or trust's reputation and public confidence.

## 12) Confidentiality and Data Protection

- a) All employees at the academy/school and the Local Board come into contact with a significant volume of data and information in relation to pupils, staff, academy activities and many other matters. Under the Data Protection Act 1998, staff are required to collect, maintain and dispose of sensitive or personal data in a responsible manner.
- b) Staff should not disclose sensitive information about the academy, its employees or the Trust to other parties, for example parents or colleagues. There are particular exceptions to this, for example disclosure of suspected or alleged abuse of a pupil to Child Protection officers; discussion with a person accompanying or representing an employee in a formal meeting, or disclosure under the Whistleblowing Procedure. All communication with the media must be directed through the Headteacher/Principal or their nominee.
- c) There are circumstances in which staff are obliged to release pupil data, for example, parents seeking information about pupil progress or other colleagues in the academy.

- d) Staff should not discuss confidential matters relating to their work, academy or the Trust in public or social settings.
- e) Required reading:
  - Data Protection Guide
  - Whistleblowing Procedure
  - Social Media policy

**CODE OF CONDUCT FOR DIOCESE OF BRISTOL ACADEMIES TRUST EMPLOYEES**

APPENDIX 1: REGISTER OF BUSINESS INTERESTS FORM

**Staff Declaration Form**

I wish to declare the following information in accordance with the Diocese of Bristol Academies Trust’s requirements that a Register of Business Interests should be maintained.

Name: .....

Post: .....

Signature: .....Date: .....

***Please provide full details of your declaration below, including a nil return.***

<b>Declaration of relationships or contracting arrangements</b>	
<b>Relationships or links with businesses (or any activity which could cause potential conflict) in which you are involved/interested</b>	<b>State whether the interest is direct or indirect, and the nature of the interest.</b>

APPENDIX 2: REGISTER OF GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY

**Governors and Staff declaration form**

I wish to declare the following information in accordance with the Diocese of Bristol Academies Trust’s requirements that a Register of Gifts and Hospitality should be maintained.

Name: .....

Post: .....

Signature: .....Date: .....

*Please provide full details of your declaration below, including a nil return.*

Declaration of Gifts and Hospitality		
Date gift received	From Whom	Gift or Hospitality

APPENDIX 3: EMPLOYEE DECLARATION:

I declare that I have read and understood the DBAT Code of Conduct for Staff and the associated "Required Reading".

Name.....

Date .....

Signature .....