



BELMONT SCHOOL
 (Additionally Resourced Mainstream School)

Staff Code of Conduct
SEPTEMBER 2023



<p>UNCRC Article 19 - Every child has the right to protection Global Goal 3 - Good Health and Well-being Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages Global Goal 10 - Reduced Inequalities Reduce inequality within and among countries.</p>	
Head Teacher	
Name	Mrs P Aggarwall
Chair of Governors	
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Date Ratified	10 th October 2023
Review Date	September 2024

SCHOOLS CODE OF CONDUCT FOR SCHOOL EMPLOYEES

Schools Code of Conduct for School Employees

- a) This code of Conduct is a Harrow Council Policy that been drawn up broadly in line with the Local Government Management Board's Model Code of Conduct, with variations to reflect the circumstances of schools and has been adopted by the Governing Body at Belmont School.
- b) The public is entitled to expect the highest standards of conduct from all employees who work in schools and that their conduct should never be influenced by improper motives.
- c) This Code has been formulated by the Council, following consultation with school Governors, Headteacher and employee representatives, to provide a set of standards of conduct, expected of school- funded employees at work and in respect of the link between their work and their private lives.
- d) This Code takes into account the requirements of the law and the provisions on official conduct in the appropriate national conditions of service.
- e) The Code applies to all school-funded employees and is of particular significance for employees involved in the procurement of goods and services.
- f) The Code will be made readily accessible in all schools and to all employees.
- g) Investigations of alleged breaches of this Code will be dealt with under the school's disciplinary code.
- h) If employees are in any doubt whether they may be in breach of this Code they should seek advice from their Headteacher, or in the case of the Headteacher from the Director of Education.

STANDARDS

Employees are expected to give the highest possible standard of service to pupils and parents, and where it is part of their duties, to provide appropriate advice to other employees and Governors with impartiality. Employees should bring to the attention of management any deficiency in the provision of service and must report any impropriety or breach of procedure.

DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION

- a) The law requires that certain types of information must be available to Governors, Members, auditors, government departments, service users and the public, e.g., on school performance and budgetary matters.
- b) Employees must not use any information obtained in the course of their employment for personal gain or benefit, nor shall they pass it on to others who might use it in such a way.
- c) Only employees authorised by their Headteacher to do so may talk to the Press or make public statements on behalf of their school. Generally, an employee (including a Headteacher) contacted by the Press should seek the advice of the Council's Press Office who may deal with the matter on the school's behalf if the school wishes. This is not intended to prevent employees from writing or talking to the media on behalf of a Trades Union.

- d) If employees consider that the non-disclosure of certain information is contrary to the wider public interest, they should advise their Headteacher, or the Chair of Governors of the information and the issues concerned.

POLITICAL NEUTRALITY/ACTIVITY

- a) Employees serve the Governing Body of their school within the overall framework of the Council.
- b) Some school funded non-teaching employees, who are normally those in more senior (M-grade) positions, are in politically restricted posts and by law are prevented from taking part in certain political activities outside their work. Employees who are in this position should have been told of this in writing and of the rules for claiming exemption, but any employee who is in any doubt about their position should contact their Headteacher. In any event, all teachers including the Headteacher are exempt from these restrictions.
- c) The political activities which are restricted for these non-teaching employees mainly cover the following areas:
1. Standing as a candidate for election to the House of Commons, European Parliament or a local authority (other than a Parish Council)
 2. Holding office in a political party at any level, except in limited roles concerned only with the internal membership of the party
 3. Canvassing at an election
 4. Speaking in public or publishing any written or artistic work which appears to be intended to affect public support for a political party
- d) If an employee is in any doubt about whether any activity is political activity and covered by these rules, they should seek advice from their Headteacher.
- e) It is important that all relevant employees are aware of their position in terms of political activity because any breaking of the statutory rules will be a breach of contract and liable for investigation under the disciplinary procedure.
- f) Employees, whether or not politically restricted, must not allow their own personal or political opinions to interfere with their work and must exercise careful judgement if asked to express personal opinions in the course of their work.

RELATIONSHIPS

a) Governors

Some employees are required to give advice to Governors as part of their job. Mutual respect between employees and Governors is essential to good local practice in schools; however close personal familiarity between employees and individual Governors can damage the relationship and prove embarrassing to other employees and should therefore be avoided. Any close relationship should be declared on the register of interests so that steps can be taken to avoid a conflict of interests.

b) The School, Local Community and Service Users

Employees must always remember their responsibilities to the school and the wider community that they serve by ensuring courteous, efficient and impartial service delivery to all groups and individuals within the school and the wider community.

c) Contractors

All relationships with contractors or potential contractors must be made known to the Headteacher. Orders and contracts must be awarded on merit, by fair competition against other tenders, and no favouritism should be shown to businesses run for example by friends, partners or relatives. No part of the community should be discriminated against.

Employees who engage or supervise contractors or who have an official relationship with contractors and have previously had or currently have a relationship in a private or domestic capacity with a contractor, must declare that relationship to the Headteacher.

APPOINTMENT AND OTHER EMPLOYMENT MATTERS

- a) Headteachers and other employees involved in appointments must ensure that these are made on the basis of merit. It would be unlawful for an employee to make an appointment which was based on anything other than the ability of the candidate to undertake the work. In order to avoid any possible accusation of bias, employees must not be involved in an appointment where they are related to an applicant or have a personal relationship outside of work with them. This should be declared so that the employee can be removed from the appointment process. It would be advisable to ask candidates to declare, on appointment, any relationship to a member of the Governing Body or senior member of staff of the school.
- b) Similarly, Headteachers and other employees must not be involved in decisions relating to discipline, promotion or pay adjustments for any employee who is a relative, partner or close friend.

There should not be a line management relationship between relatives, partners or close friends. If, in exceptional circumstances, a decision is made to go ahead with such a working arrangement, schools will need to be able to demonstrate, by way of documentation, that they have made an assessment of the risks involved if the appointment is made.

1.2.3 The Headteacher or Chair of Governors must endorse the decision.

(For further guidance on this area refer to the School's Employment of Relatives, Partners and Friends Policy).

OUTSIDE COMMITMENTS

- a) Employees' off-duty hours are their personal concern, but they must not subordinate their duty to their private interests or put themselves in a position where duty and private interests conflict.
- b) The Council would not wish to preclude employees unreasonably from undertaking additional work unless that work:
 - conflicts with or detrimentally affects the interests of the Council's or individual school's interests; or
 - in any way weakens public confidence in the conduct of the Council's or individual school's business; or
 - in any other way adversely affects their ability to undertake their work

Should this be the case, their conduct will be considered a breach of the Council's or school's disciplinary Code.

- c) Employees must not, therefore, engage in any other business or take up any other additional appointment without first having carefully considered and ruled out the possibility of an adverse effect on their work or the interests of the Council or their school. Where there is any doubt as to the implications, the nature of the proposed employment must be discussed with their Headteacher or the Director of Education.
- d) If an employee decides to take up additional employment or engage in any other business, no outside work of any sort should be undertaken in the workplace. Use of Council facilities for this, e.g., telephones, photocopying etc. is forbidden.

PERSONAL INTERESTS

- a) Employees must declare to their Headteacher, or in the case of the Headteacher to the Chair of Governors, any non-financial interests that they consider could bring about conflict with the school's interests in the school's Register of Interests (and as appropriate at any Governing Body meeting that they attend). The Headteacher (or the Chair of Governors if the interest is that of the Headteacher) should determine and record appropriate action(s) to take to avoid a conflict of interests arising on the entry in the Register of Interests. Membership of a Trades Union is exempted from this requirement.
- b) Employees must declare any financial interests which could conflict with the school's interests. It is most likely that a financial interest will arise from investments made in a company or from being a Director of a company which may contract with the school or an interest which arises from "outside" employment. Advice should be sought if the employee considers there is any element of doubt as to whether the interest should be declared or not.
- c) Employees must declare to their Headteacher, or in the case of the Headteacher to the Chair of Governors, membership of any organisation which is not open to the public without formal membership and commitment of allegiance and which has secrecy about its rules or membership or conduct e.g., freemasons.
- d) Employees who have an interest, financial or non-financial, should not involve themselves in any decision on allocation of school services or resources from which they, their friends or family might benefit and should ensure that the matter is referred immediately to their Headteacher, or in the event of the Headteacher to the Chair of Governors. The test is whether the interest and the relationship is such that a member of the public might reasonably consider that the employee would be influenced by the interest and might not therefore always be acting impartially on behalf of the school. The likelihood of the employee being able to influence a decision or otherwise influence the delivery of a service would also be a relevant factor to take into consideration.

EQUALITY ISSUES

Employees have an obligation to ensure that policies relating to equality issues as agreed by the school are complied with, as well, of course, the requirements of the law. Everyone in the school and its wider community have a right to be treated with fairness and equity.

SEPARATION OF ROLES DURING TENDERING

- a) Where employees are involved in letting contracts, or procuring goods or services, on behalf of the school, they must exercise fairness and impartiality when dealing with contractors, sub-contractors and suppliers.
- b) Such employees who are privy to confidential information on tenders or costs for either internal or external contractors must not disclose that information to any unauthorised party or organisation.
- c) Such employees must ensure that no special favour is shown to current or recent former employees or their partners, close relatives or associates in awarding contracts to businesses run by them or employing them in a senior or relevant managerial capacity.

CORRUPTION

It is a criminal offence for an employee to receive or give any gift, loan, fee, reward or advantage for doing or not doing anything or showing favour or disfavour to any person in their official capacity. It is for the employee to demonstrate that any such rewards have not been corruptly obtained.

Use of Financial Resources

Employees must ensure that they use public funds entrusted to them in a responsible and lawful manner, ensuring value for money to the school and its wider community and avoiding legal challenge to the school or the Council.

GIFTS & HOSPITALITY

- a) Employees should only accept offers of hospitality if there is a genuine need to impart information or represent the school in the community. Offers to attend purely social or sporting functions should be accepted only when these are part of the life of the community or where the school should be seen to be represented. They must be properly authorised and recorded.
- b) When hospitality has to be declined the person offering it should be courteously but firmly informed of the procedures and standards operating within the school.
- c) Employees must not accept significant personal gifts from pupils, parents, contractors and outside suppliers, other than insignificant tokens such as pens or diaries or small festive gifts.
- d) When considering whether or not to accept hospitality, employees must be sensitive to the timing of decisions and the letting of contracts for which the provider may be bidding. Employees must never accept hospitality from a contractor during a tendering period.
- e) Acceptance by employees of hospitality whilst in attendance at relevant conferences and courses is acceptable if it is clear that the hospitality is for the school rather than personal, if the school gives consent in advance and if the school is satisfied that any purchasing decisions are not compromised. Where visits to inspect equipment etc. are required, employees must ensure that the school meets the cost of such visits to avoid jeopardising the integrity of subsequent purchasing decisions.

- f) Employees must ensure that any hospitality or gift received is entered in the Gifts & Hospitality Register maintained by their school. (For further detail of the application of the procedure see the School's Gifts Policy and procedures).

SPONSORSHIP - GIVING AND RECEIVING

- a) Where an outside organisation wishes to sponsor or is sought to sponsor a school activity, whether by invitation, tender, negotiation or voluntarily the basic conventions concerning acceptance of gifts or hospitality apply. Particular care must be taken when dealing with contractors or potential contractors.
- b) Where the school wishes to sponsor an event or service neither an employee nor any partner, spouse or relative must benefit from such sponsorship in a direct way without there being full disclosure to the Headteacher of any such interest. Similarly, where the school through sponsorship, grant aid, financial or other means, gives support in the community, employees must ensure that impartial advice is given and that there is no conflict of interest involved.

Staff Code of Conduct at Belmont School

Belmont School's Vision

Development of the whole school learning community promotes personalised and independent learning throughout the learning journey for pupils and adults. Pupil voice informs all school development priorities – every child, every day make us Stronger Together.

Introduction

At Belmont School, we have read and understood and adopted Harrow's Code of Conduct. In addition, we believe in creating a whole school culture that is safe and inclusive. A Staff Code of Conduct is designed to give clear guidance on the standards of behaviour all staff are expected to observe. School staff are in a unique position of influence and must adhere to behaviour that models the highest possible standards for 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 of working hours.

The Code of Conduct is set out in two sections. First section pertains to anyone who has a leadership responsibility, and the second section outlines the Code of Conduct for ALL staff. Both sections have been developed with the school's vision in mind and underpins the school culture of developing a happy, friendly, secure and calm atmosphere that encourages a caring, respectful and trusting relationship between all pupils and adults.

Section 1

Leadership Code of Conduct

The following applies to all who have leadership responsibility and those who lead classes and/or intervention:

- **As leaders, we will be professional at all times.**
- **As leaders, we will act together to ensure that our decision-making has our pupils at the heart of all school priorities.**
- **As leaders, we will take ownership and be proactive. We will recognise success, challenge appropriately when needed to ensure our pupils thrive and celebrate achievements.**
- **As leaders, we demonstrate integrity, and transparency through open and honest communication.**

Section 2

Staff Code of Conduct

Our code of conduct is based on our values, the Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 and what we see as non-negotiable towards creating an inclusive and progressive learning culture that ensures the following:

- Safeguarding and protecting pupils as well as staff
- Explicitly share high expectations of performance and conduct for all stakeholders
- Minimise opportunities for all types of abuse
- All staff to have confidence to report concerns with full confidentiality
- Rapid response in identifying and reporting concerns: we always investigate and address issues
- Exercise appropriate rewards and sanctions in line with Pupil Rights and Human Rights
- Create and maintain at all times an ethos of mutual respect, openness and fairness

The Agreed Code of Conduct

1. All staff are expected to follow the school's published policies (statutory and non-statutory): including Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy; Low Level Concerns Policy; Behaviour for Success; Physical Intervention and Use of Reasonable Force; Antibullying; Equality Statement and the Enriching Wellbeing at Belmont School Policy in all interactions in school.

It is expected that all staff and regular visitors will read all statutory policies. Staff will be asked to electronically sign that they have read and understood procedures on our CPOMS system by the set deadline. If staff have any queries, it is your responsibility to speak to a member of the Senior Leadership Team and raise them.

Pupils and staff are expected to work together to build a school where relationships are characterised by mutual and appropriate respect. Praise and building on the positive should always come first. Where firmness/admonition is called for this should be exercised calmly, and staff should avoid shouting at pupils unless there is a Health and Safety risk. The school behaviour policy and associated documents establish expectations and approved sanctions. All new staff should be issued with a copy of these policies electronically as part of their induction to the school, and any behaviour concerns should be dealt with in line with them. Where a member of staff is having difficulties managing pupil behaviour, they should discuss this matter with the appropriate Senior Leader and follow the Mental Health Promotion at Belmont School document at the earliest opportunity.

2. All staff should be aware of what physical contact with pupils is appropriate.

Staff should only exercise physical intervention as a last resort to prevent injury (see Physical Intervention and Use of Reasonable Force Policy). Staff are allowed to comfort a child who is hurt/distressed in a manner appropriate to the age of the child. Adults should not initiate any physical contact unnecessarily, and there should be clear boundaries:

- Children should not be picked up. (Unless medically necessary or need physical intervention)
- Adults should avoid being in a room alone with a child where the door is closed. If you need to talk to a child, either leave a door open and position yourself within sight of the door or ask another adult to be present.

3. All staff are expected to treat each other with respect

Relationships between staff should be characterised by fairness, openness and respect. This means valuing all contributions, acknowledging difference, and working together to build a climate of continuous improvement. Politeness and respect are essential ingredients: where differences occur, they should be dealt with calmly and fairly following procedures set out in our Enriching Wellbeing at Belmont School Policy.

4. All staff should treat resources responsibly, and exercise due financial care

All staff have a responsibility to look after the resources of the school. This includes not wasting resources unnecessarily (including physical resources and those such as heat/electricity); following the principles of 'reduce, re-use, recycle' where appropriate; signing out for items taken from the school premises (school iPads and laptops) and following expectations for looking after these **anywhere**. All money handled should be clearly labelled and sent to the school office as soon as it is received.

5. Acceptable use of ICT Equipment and Online Platforms

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Online Safety, GDPR/Data Protection Policy and Safeguarding Policy. Staff, Governors and Visitors should read and sign the 'Acceptable Use Agreement' annually. Staff will be asked to electronically sign that they have read and understood procedures on our CPOMS system by the set deadline. Staff who are in contact with pupils should not use their mobile phones in school during their directed hours/paid hours of employment. Outside of these times, mobile phones should only be used in areas of the school where pupils are not present. Staff must not use their mobile phone as a camera in school. Any photograph/video must be taken using school equipment. Staff must only save images on school computers and delete them after use.

6. All staff are expected to behave professionally and exercise confidentiality

All staff are expected to behave thoughtfully and responsibly. Staff must be punctual and well-prepared and should carry out tasks to the best of their ability, taking pride in their work. All absence should be genuine. Staff are expected to dress appropriately; all staff must set a good example in what they wear, avoiding clothing that is overly casual. Staff should exercise due confidentiality towards matters that are either discussed or overheard. Staff will be professional when interacting with colleagues and external agencies and will not gossip or spread gossip that is harmful to the school, staff, pupils and their families. Staff must exercise caution when using information technology and be aware of the risk to themselves and others. **Staff must have no personal contact with former of pupils until they reach the age of eighteen, and they have not been a pupil at Belmont School for a minimum of seven years.** Staff must not engage in inappropriate use of social network sites which may bring themselves, the school, school community or employer into disrepute.

7. Conduct Outside of Work

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. Any such conduct could lead to dismissal. In particular, criminal offences that involve violence or possession or use of illegal drugs or sexual misconduct are likely to be regarded as unacceptable and could lead to dismissal. Staff must exercise caution when using information technology and be aware of the risks to themselves and others. Staff must not use social media e.g.,

Facebook/Twitter with pupils or former pupils unless the former pupil is aged at least eighteen and has not been a pupil at the school for over seven years. Staff must not engage in inappropriate use of social network sites which may bring themselves, the school, school community or employer into disrepute. Staff must only use their school email account or school learning platform account when communicating electronically with pupils, parents and colleagues. Staff may undertake work outside school, either paid or voluntary, provided that it does not conflict with the interests of the school and is not to a level which may contravene the working time regulations or affect an individual's work performance. All members of staff must declare any business interests outside of school that may be connected either to the supply of goods/services to the school or be rewarded through association with the school and complete the online Annual Declaration of Interest Form annually. Where families or pupils are known to staff members in a personal capacity, it is the responsibility of the staff member to ensure that a declaration is made to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or the Chair of Governors in the case of the DSL.

8. Confidentiality

Where staff have access to confidential information about pupils/students 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/student. All staff are likely at some point to witness actions which need to be confidential (e.g. where a pupil/student is bullied by another pupil/student/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 pupils, 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. However, staff have an obligation to share with their line manager or the Headteacher, any information which gives rise to concern about the safety or welfare of a pupil/student. Staff must never promise a pupil/student that they will not act on information that they are told by the pupil/student.

9. Staff should seek to establish a good and open relationship with parents

Staff should aim to create a welcoming and open relationship with parents. All parental concerns should be treated seriously and dealt with promptly.

10. All staff need to be aware of the policy and procedures for Child Protection

It is essential that all staff have regular training in Child Protection issues and know the procedures for dealing with and reporting concerns. All staff have a duty to look out for signs of physical, emotional or sexual abuse or neglect of pupils in the light of a child's behaviour. Staff must pass any concerns on to the Designated Teacher for Child Protection (the Headteacher), and in their absence the deputy. Avoid trying to involve yourself too closely with any issues: always pass concerns on.

11. All staff need to exploit the potential of the curriculum to develop a proactive approach to behaviour and child protection issues

Staff need to take a proactive approach towards both child protection and behaviour policies, through the creation of a positive classroom environment where all children are respected (RRS Class Charter), and through PSHE and circle time in particular. This includes not undermining fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. The expression of extremist views by staff will not be tolerated and should be reported to the Chair of governors or Headteacher, who will contact relevant authorities if necessary.

12. All staff need to be aware of how to record/report concerns (“Whistleblowing and Low Level Concerns Policy”)

Where staff have any concerns about another member of staff, these should be reported immediately to the Headteacher, following the procedures set out in the **Low Level Concerns Policy**. Where the concern is about the Headteacher, it should be reported directly to the Chair of Governors. All concerns will be investigated thoroughly and confidentially, and appropriate action taken.

13. All staff should take care of their own physical and mental wellbeing

All staff are encouraged to look after their own physical and mental wellbeing. This includes maintaining a healthy work-life balance. We take issues of stress very seriously and look to provide appropriate support and help in these cases. Staff must refer to and use the Enriching Wellbeing at Belmont School Policy to support signposting for self-directed help. When staff are feeling overwhelmed, they must speak to a Wellbeing Advocate or a member of the Extended Leadership team to discuss solutions that will support a healthy work-life balance.

14. All staff should have access to counselling and support

Staff needing support are encouraged to discuss issues and concerns with the Headteacher in confidence. Support can be provided both internally (e.g., through the provision of a mentor), or externally through the Occupational Health Service. Trades Unions also provide help, support and advice for their members, and membership of a trade unions is strongly encouraged.

Conclusion

All staff are expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct. By adhering to this code of conduct staff can be assured they are playing their part in safeguarding pupils and protecting themselves. It is our expectation that all staff will sign electronically to state that they have read and understood of this code of conduct.

A Staff Charter has been devised to strengthen our understanding and provide further clarity of expectations of how we as adults promote pupils’ rights and our own human rights.

Staff Charter

Everyone has a duty to ensure that we all value one another, the contribution we bring and the 100% effort that we give each and every day; sometimes in challenging circumstances.

