



Staff Code of Conduct Policy

Prepared by: Burlington House School

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1. Introduction

Burlington House School is owned and operated by Cavendish Education.

In all Burlington House School policies, the words “Burlington House School” refer to both Burlington House Bishops Avenue Campus and Burlington House Sixth Form Campus unless stated otherwise.

This policy is one of a series of school policies that, taken together, are designed to form a comprehensive statement of the school’s aspiration to provide an outstanding education for each of its students and of the mechanisms and procedures in place to achieve this. Accordingly, this policy should be read alongside these policies. In particular, it should be read in conjunction with the policies covering equality and diversity, Health and Safety, safeguarding and child protection.

All of these policies have been written, not simply to meet statutory and other requirements, but to enable and evidence the work that the whole school is undertaking to ensure the implementation of its core values: that all children can achieve.

While this current policy document may be referred to elsewhere in Burlington House School’s documentation, including particulars of employment, it is non-contractual.

In the school’s policies, unless the specific context requires otherwise, the word “parent” is used in terms of Section 576 of the [Education Act 1996](#), which states that a ‘parent’, in relation to a child or young person, includes any person who is not a biological parent but who has parental responsibility, or who has care of the child. Department for Education guidance [Understanding and dealing with issues relating to parental responsibility updated August 2023](#), considers a ‘parent’ to include:

- all biological parents, whether they are married or not
- any person who, although not a biological parent, has parental responsibility for a child or young person – this could be an adoptive parent, a step-parent, guardian or other relative
- any person who, although not a biological parent and does not have parental responsibility, has care of a child or young person

A person typically has care of a child or young person if they are the person with whom the child lives, either full or part-time, and who looks after the child, irrespective of what their biological or legal relationship is with the child.

The school contracts the services of third-party organisations to ensure regulatory compliance and implement best practices for:

- HR and Employment Law
- Health & Safety Guidance
- DBS Check processing
- Mandatory Safeguarding, Health & Safety, and other relevant training
- Data protection and GDPR guidance
- Specialist insurance cover

Where this policy refers to ‘employees’, the term refers to any individual who is classified as an employee or a worker, working with and on behalf of the school (including volunteers and contractors).

The school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff, volunteers, pupils and visitors to share this commitment.

All outcomes generated by this document must take account of and seek to contribute to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people at Burlington House School.

The policy documents of Burlington House School are revised and published periodically in good faith. They are inevitably subject to revision. On occasions, a significant revision, although promulgated in school separately, may have to take effect between the republication of a set of policy documents. Care should therefore be taken to ensure, by consultation with the Senior Leadership Team, that the details of any policy document are still effectively current at a particular moment.

2. GUIDANCE

The “Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings” document

As commended by the most recent version of *Keeping Children Safe in Education* and endorsed by the Department for Education, Burlington House School adopts the whole text of [Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings \(February 2022\)](#) as material that is part of and effective within this *Staff Code of Conduct*.

3. THE TEACHER STANDARDS

As relevant and appropriate, Burlington House School adopts the whole text of the government guidance, [Teachers’ Standards \(December 2021\)](#), as material that is part of and effective within this *Staff Code of Conduct*.

4. BREACHES OF THE STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT

Investigations of alleged breaches of this Code and consequential actions are dealt with under the school’s Staff Disciplinary Policy.

If an employee is in any doubt whether they may be in breach of this Code, they should seek advice from their Headteacher.

5. STANDARDS

Implementation and reporting

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 Directors 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. If appropriate, staff may make use of the school’s Whistleblowing Policy.

6. DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION

Certain types of information must be available to employees, directors, inspectors, auditors, government departments, service users and the public, eg, on school performance, staff performance and budgetary matters.

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.

Only employees specifically authorised by the Headteacher to do so may talk to the Press or make public statements on behalf of the school. Generally, an employee (including the Headteacher) who is approached, directly or indirectly, by the Press should seek the advice of the Headteacher, who may decide to deal with the matter on the school's behalf.

If an employee considers that the non-disclosure of certain information is contrary to the wider public interest, they should advise their Headteacher of the information and the issues concerned.

7. POLITICAL NEUTRALITY / ACTIVITY

Employees are subject to the relevant passages in the government guidance [Political impartiality in schools](#), and to the internal Cavendish Education guidance [Use of Social Media](#).

Employees' attention is drawn in particular to the guidance on [Political impartiality in schools](#):

- *Schools should focus on the needs of their pupils when deciding how to teach about controversial subjects. They should also be mindful of their responsibility to promote respect and tolerance, including actively promoting fundamental British values such as democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance for those of different faiths and beliefs. ...*
- *When teaching about sensitive political issues relating to discrimination, teachers should still be mindful to avoid promoting partisan political views or presenting contested theories as fact. A distinction should be drawn between the shared principle that discrimination and prejudice are wrong, and partisan political views that go beyond this or advocate political reform*

Employees must not allow their own personal or political opinions to interfere with their work, and must exercise careful judgement if asked to (or if finding themselves minded to) express personal or political opinions in the course of their work or in a context that may reflect on or otherwise be connected to the school or to Cavendish Education.

8. RELATIONSHIPS

Employees are subject to the school's Personal Relationships Policy.

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.

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 or treated more or less favourably.

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.

9. APPOINTMENT AND OTHER EMPLOYMENT MATTERS

The Headteacher and other employees involved in staff appointments must ensure that these are made on the basis of merit. 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 concerned can be removed from the appointment process.

When applicants complete the application form, they are asked to declare any relationship they have with an employee of the school or a Cavendish Education employee. A failure to make such a declaration is liable to disciplinary action if the applicant is appointed and the failure subsequently comes to light.

The Headteacher 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.

The school does not allow 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, the school will put in place a risk assessment which has been submitted to Cavendish Education for authorisation.

10. OUTSIDE COMMITMENTS

Employees' off-duty hours are their personal concern, but they must not subordinate their professional duty to their private interests or knowingly put themselves in a position where professional duty and private interests conflict.

The school would not wish to preclude employees unreasonably from undertaking additional work unless that work:

- conflicts with or detrimentally affects the interests of the school; or
- in any way weakens public confidence in the conduct of the school's business or that of Cavendish Education; or
- in any other way adversely affects their ability to undertake or perform their work

Should this be the case, their conduct will be dealt with under the school's Staff Disciplinary Policy.

Employees must not, therefore, engage in any other business or take up any other additional appointment without first having gained written permission from the Headteacher or, in the case of the Headteacher, from the Cavendish Education Chief Executive Officer.

If an employee is given permission to take up additional employment or engage in any other business, no outside work of any sort should be undertaken in the school workplace or during school working hours. Use of school facilities for this (e.g. telephones, photocopying, etc) is forbidden.

Any agreement which allows an employee to undertake additional work may be withdrawn if it is determined that work performance is suffering as a result of the additional work being undertaken.

11. PERSONAL INTERESTS

Employees must declare in writing to their Headteacher (or, in the case of the Headteacher, to the Cavendish Education Chief Executive Officer) any non-financial interests that they consider could bring about conflict with the school's interests.

Employees must likewise declare any financial interests which could conflict with the school's interests or the interests of Cavendish Education. Advice should be sought if the employee considers there is any element of doubt as to whether the interest should be declared or not.

Employees must likewise declare membership of any organisation which has secrecy about its rules or membership, or conduct.

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 Cavendish Education Chief Executive Officer. The test is whether the interest and the relationship is such that it might reasonably be considered that the employee would be influenced by the interest and might not therefore always be acting professionally and 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.

In the event of any of the above circumstances, the Headteacher (or the Cavendish Education Chief Executive Officer) will determine and record on the employee's staff file any appropriate action(s) to be taken to avoid a conflict of interest arising.

12. EQUALITY ISSUES

Employees have an obligation to ensure that school policies relating to equality issues are complied with, as well as the requirements of the law.

13. LOW LEVEL CONCERNS

The term 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant. A low-level concern is any concern, no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt', that an adult working in or on behalf of the school or college may have acted in a way that:

- is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work, and
- does not meet the harm threshold or is otherwise not serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:

- being overly friendly with children
- having favourites
- taking photographs of children on their mobile phones, contrary to school policy
- engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door, or
- humiliating children.

Such behaviour can exist on a wide spectrum, from the inadvertent or thoughtless, or behaviour that may look to be inappropriate, but might not be in specific circumstances, through to that which is ultimately intended to enable abuse.

Low-level concerns may arise in several ways and from a number of sources. For example: suspicion; complaint; or disclosure made by a child, parent or other adult within or outside of the organisation; or as a result of vetting checks undertaken.

It is crucial that all low-level concerns are shared responsibly with the right person and recorded and dealt with appropriately. Ensuring they are dealt with effectively should also protect those working in or on behalf of schools and colleges from becoming the subject of potential false low-level concerns or misunderstandings.

Creating a culture where staff feel confident to report low-level concerns helps to:

- Identify concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour early
- Minimise the risk of abuse
- Protect staff from false allegations or misunderstandings
- Ensure that all adults working with children maintain appropriate professional boundaries

Staff must adhere to the school's policy on reporting and the recording of low-level concerns.

14. REVIEW OF IMPLEMENTATION

The implementation of this Policy is reviewed annually by the school's Senior Leadership Team.

The school may submit to Cavendish Education proposals for amendments to this Policy.

Contact Information

For any questions or concerns regarding this policy, please contact **the HR Manager** via office@burlingtonhouseschool.com

Monitoring, Approval & Policy Review

This Policy has been reviewed and approved by:

Policy Approver(s)	Burlington House School – Senior Leadership Team Responsible Person(s) Maria Mar, HR Manager
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Revision History

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