



**Bengeworth**  
Multi Academy Trust

*Brilliant People • Better Schools • Bright Futures*

# GUIDANCE FOR EMPLOYEES

2023 – 2024

## WORKING AT BENGEWORTH MULTI ACADEMY TRUST INCLUDING CODE OF CONDUCT

**September 2023**

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# SECTION 1

## **Introduction**

Welcome to your post at Bengeworth Multi Academy Trust (MAT).

This guidance, together with your statement of employment particulars and letter of appointment, should provide you with most of the information you need relating to your employment; however please feel free to contact the Trust Business Manager or Head at your setting if you have any questions about your terms and conditions.

Your terms and conditions of employment are in accordance with the Multi Academy Trust's Pay Policy, which is available from the Multi Academy Trust's Business Manager.

As you work as an academy within a MAT, your employer is Bengeworth Multi-Academy Trust. The CEO has oversight, in addition to the Headteacher and Heads of School who have responsibility for the day-to-day management of each school within the MAT, including staffing matters. If there are any issues which the CEO or Head need to refer to the Trust Board during the course of your employment, you will be advised accordingly.

This document is to be read in conjunction with your individual setting's Staff Handbook and other policies and procedures in existence, which can be requested from the Head at your setting, as well as on your school's network and website.

## **Equality and diversity**

The Multi Academy Trust is committed to preventing and eliminating all forms of unjustifiable and unlawful discrimination, both as an employer and a provider of education, pursuing equality of opportunity for all. We undertake to ensure that everyone has fair access to employment with us and will take all possible steps to help our staff implement this commitment.

Every employee has a right to be treated with respect and dignity and if at any time you feel that you have been treated unfairly or harassed you should speak to your Line Manager or your Head, or the Chair of the school Governing Body if you cannot speak to the Head.

**Serious offences such as harassment will be treated as misconduct or gross misconduct.**

## SECTION 2 – WORKING AT BENGEWORTH MULTI ACADEMY TRUST

### **Safeguarding and the disclosure and barring service (DBS)**

Bengeworth Academy Trust are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and all staff are expected to share this commitment. You must familiarise yourself with all procedures relating to safeguarding and child protection. You will be required to complete safeguarding induction using an online provider, as well as attending any safeguarding training and updates provided by the school. Please speak to your Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for further information.

Educational establishments play an important part in the prevention of abuse and neglect, through their own policies and procedures for safeguarding children, creating and maintaining a safe environment, and through the curriculum. They promote resilience in children by helping them to stay safe from harm and encouraging them to talk to someone if they have worries or concerns. Staff members play a crucial role in this process in noticing indications of abuse or neglect and in reporting concerns to Children's Services Social Care. But in rare circumstances staff in educational establishments have been found to be responsible for child abuse. Given their daily contact with children in a variety of situations, staff are also vulnerable to accusations of abuse, leading to allegations from children, parents or other staff members. The following employee guidance refers directly to such allegations and how they should be dealt with:

Safer Working Practice for Staff working in Education Settings (October 2015)

A copy of this document can be obtained from your school's Designated Safeguarding Lead. You must familiarise yourself with the guidance in this leaflet.

In addition there is statutory guidance available which is relevant for all staff working with children: [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) (2018) and [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) (September 2023) which are both provided as paper copies at induction.

All staff and volunteers working in regulated activity must be given appropriate safeguarding training, which includes safer working practice and management of allegations, which should be updated every three years. An E-learning module is available to all new starters between whole-school training sessions and forms a mandatory part of induction.

Any staff member who has any concerns about a child's welfare should follow the school's procedures and must be aware of these processes and systems, including how to report their concerns so that children have the right help at the right time.

### **Disclosure and Barring Service**

All staff in Academies must have provided the school with a current DBS certificate (previously CRB) before taking up their post. Any convictions, cautions or other information on the disclosure will have been fully risk assessed and employees with convictions or cautions will only be permitted to take up post with the express authority of the CEO.

You must immediately inform your Head or the CEO if, during the course of your employment, you are subject to any allegations of a criminal nature, any criminal proceedings or convictions or

cautions in order that this risk assessment can be undertaken. Not all convictions will automatically exclude you from continuing in your role, however, failure to notify of any such occurrences may be viewed as a serious breach of conduct and be subject to disciplinary action, including dismissal.

## **What to do if you are sick**

Notification of Sickness Absence:

You need to **telephone** – not text:

**Kirsty Shaw** (for Bengeworth Academy's Burford Road absence) on 07747 604010

**Hayley Potter** (for Bengeworth Academy's King's Road absence) on 07766 104709

**Kevin Riley** (for Bretforton Village School's absence) on 07872 997106

between 7.00 and 7.30 am if you are unable to come to work, stating the reason.

You, or someone acting on your behalf, must notify the relevant person above of your absence from work during this time, or as soon as possible, the reason for it and the likely duration. If your absence is for more than one day, you should keep in regular contact with the your school to advise of your likely return date.

If you return to work before the eighth consecutive day of sickness absence, including weekends, you will need to complete a sickness record form (self-certification) and meet with a member of the Senior Leadership Team to discuss the absence on the first day you return to work. It is your responsibility to complete this form ready for the meeting. If you are absent for eight days or more you must provide a medical certificate from your GP to cover all periods of absence thereafter.

## **GP's 'Fit Notes'**

Since April 2010, the medical certification system allows a more proactive approach to managing a return to work. 'Fit Notes' allow for two options: the GP can either state that you are **not fit for work** or they can state that you **may be fit for work** taking into account advice on the note, such as amended duties, altered hours, workplace adaptations, etc. There is no longer a 'fit for work' option on the form.

## **On Return to Work**

You must ensure that your Head /Systems Administrator is aware that you have returned to work. It is current practice to meet with colleagues returning to work and to complete a sickness record form as detailed above.

## **Sickness Allowances**

Subject to the provisions of your conditions of service, you will be entitled to receive contractual sick pay on the following basis:

### **Teaching Staff – in accordance with the Burgundy Book (national arrangements)**

|                            |  |
|----------------------------|--|
| During 1st year of service | full pay for 25 working days and, after completing four months' service, half pay for 50 working days; |
|----------------------------|--|

|                                 |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| During 2nd year of service      | full pay for 50 working days and half pay for 50 working days;   |
| During 3rd year of service      | full pay for 75 working days and half pay for 75 working days;   |
| During 4th and successive years | full pay for 100 working days and half pay for 100 working days. |

#### **Support Staff - in accordance with the Green Book (national arrangements)**

|                                    |   |
|------------------------------------|---|
| During 1st year of service         | full pay for one month and, after completing four months' service, half pay for two months; |
| During 2nd year of service         | full pay for two months and half pay for two months;  |
| During 3rd year of service         | full pay for four months and half pay for four months;                                      |
| During 4th and 5th year of service | full pay for five months and half pay for five months.                                      |
| After 5 years' service             | full pay for six months and half pay for six months.  |

If you are not entitled to sick pay as described above, or if you are sick for a long period and your entitlement runs out, you will be informed of this at the time as part of the procedures in place.

If you are absent due to illness, the Multi Academy Trust has a right to seek further medical information, either through your medical practitioner or through referral to an Occupational Health practitioner, who may ask you to undergo a medical examination and may refuse to allow you to return to work without a satisfactory result of such a referral.

## **Working time and holidays**

### **Teachers**

Your working time is in accordance with the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document, and as directed by the Head and Senior Leadership Team.

You may not take holiday during term-time without prior written permission from the CEO or local Governing Body and this will only be granted in exceptional circumstances.

### **Support Staff working term-time only**

Your working time will be in accordance with your Contract of Employment and as directed by the Head or Line Manager. (Your salary includes an element of holiday pay pro rata to the annual leave entitlement of a full-time, full year employee.)

You may not take holiday during term-time without prior written permission from the CEO or local Governing Body and this will only be granted in exceptional circumstances.

### **Support Staff working 52 weeks**

Your working time will be in accordance with your Statement of Employment Particulars, and as directed by the Head or Line Manager.

Your annual leave entitlement is 25 days. An additional 5 days annual leave is granted after 5 years of service.

Part-time employees receive a pro-rata leave entitlement.

Requests for leave outside of term time must be made to the Head at your setting as far in advance as possible. You are required to take your annual leave during school holiday periods. Very exceptional requests may possibly be agreed, depending on individual circumstances.

The annual leave year runs from 1st April to 31st March. Your annual leave should be taken in the leave year to which it applies. However, there are provisions available for you to be able to automatically carry forward up to 5 days leave (pro rata for part-time employees) from one year to the next. Payments in lieu of leave not taken are not made.

## **Resignation**

If you wish to resign from your post you must give the following minimum notice in writing to your Head:

### **Teachers – in accordance with the Burgundy Book (national arrangements):**

To leave at the end of the Autumn term resignation must be received by 31st October

To leave at the end of the Spring term resignation must be received by 28th February

To leave at the end of the Summer term resignation must be received by 31st May.

### **Support Staff – in accordance with your individual contract of employment**

To leave at any time in the academic year, unless your individual contract states otherwise you are required to give a minimum of one month's notice. For salary grades SO1/2 two months, PO1 and above – three months.

## **Leave of absence – all staff**

You may in exceptional circumstances need to ask the Head for paid or unpaid leave of absence. There are arrangements covering time off for such things as jury service, maternity and paternity leave, etc. Please ensure that any required notice periods are adhered to and stay in informal contact with school staff during any period of absence, to ensure good communication between staff.

## **Travel and subsistence**

You may be entitled to travelling and subsistence expenses related to approved journeys. Details are available from the Multi Academy Trust's Business Manager.

## **Trade unions**

You have the right to be a member of any Trade Union or none if you wish. If you are a member you can take part in its activities at appropriate times and seek election to office or hold office in the union.

The unions currently recognised by the Multi Academy Trust are:

### **Teaching:**

National Education Union (Previously ATL and NUT)

National Association of Headteachers (NAHT)

National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers (NASUWT)

VOICE

The Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL)

**Support Staff:**

Unison

GMB

**Concerns / grievances**

If you have any issues about your employment which are causing you concern, you are advised to raise these directly with your Line Manager or Head in the first instance. However, you may also seek advice from your union or Children's Services Human Resources.

**Other policies and procedures**

Policies and procedures relating to your employment including: Managing Sickness Absence, Grievance and Harassment, Disciplinary, Whistleblowing, Capability, Appraisal, Redundancies, Retirement, etc. are available on request from the Business Manager.

**Pensions**

If you require information about your pension including contribution rates, benefit estimates or scheme details please contact the following:

**Teachers:**

The pension scheme for teachers is administered by Teachers' Pensions and many of your questions can be answered through accessing their website at [www.teacherspensions.co.uk](http://www.teacherspensions.co.uk) or telephoning 0845 6066166. You may also contact School Employee Services on 01905 766111.

**Support Staff:**

The Local Government Pension Scheme for this Academy is administered by Worcestershire County Council at County Hall. The Pensions Section can be contacted by telephoning the main County Hall switchboard on 01905 763763. General information about the Local Government Pension Scheme can be found on the website at [www.lgps.org.uk](http://www.lgps.org.uk)

**Useful sources of information**

Our Human Resources advice is provided by Liberata's Services Human Resources. The Duty Adviser number for all queries relating to employment is 01905 676500.

If you are a member of a Trade Union you can also contact your school or local representative for advice on employment matters.



## SECTION 3 – CODE OF CONDUCT

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# INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Code describes the standards of conduct and behaviour expected from our staff and any staff seconded or engaged from other organisations to undertake work in schools in this Multi Academy Trust. It also highlights some types of behaviour or conduct which might be considered incompatible with being an employee here. It is intended to help you by describing the standards expected of you and has been approved by the Governors following consultation with the appropriate Trade Unions. Please take time to read it and ensure your conduct meets these requirements. If you are at all uncertain about what is expected please seek further clarification from your Line Manager or the Head so that you do not unwittingly contravene this Code or otherwise act against the Multi Academy Trust's interests.
- 1.2 Contravening or failing to act within the spirit of the Code, or behaving in a manner which could bring the good name of the Multi Academy Trust into disrepute, whether or not within the workplace or working time, would be seen as a breach of discipline and could lead to action being taken against you under the appropriate procedure.
- 1.3 While workers who are not employees of this Multi Academy Trust are expected to comply with the spirit of the Code, any action that may be taken in response to a breach will depend on the precise nature of their working relationship with this Multi Academy Trust.
- 1.4 This code relates to all staff working for Bengeworth Multi Academy Trust. Teachers must be aware that there are also published *Teachers' Standards* (DfE 2011) and are advised to familiarise themselves with the requirements of these.

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- 2.1 As an employee of this Multi Academy Trust, you should put the well-being, development and progress of children and young people first. You should recognise that you are in a position to influence children and young people through your slightest actions, body language, comments or behaviour.
- 2.2 To the public you are a representative of the Multi Academy Trust. You are expected to maintain the highest standards of professional competence, knowledge, integrity, confidentiality, financial propriety and personal conduct. Contact with all members of the community, including parents and outside visitors, should be courteous, efficient and impartial to all groups and individuals. You must also familiarise yourself with, and adhere to other policies in place for the Multi Academy Trust, your individual school or related to your particular role and you should comply with all reasonable requirements or instructions from leaders at your setting and within the Trust.
- 2.3 It is not appropriate for you when working within your role as an employee to oppose the stated aims and policies of the Multi Academy Trust or your school, or to undermine the performance of its duties and responsibilities. It is important for all employees to present a unified image to the public.
- 2.4 You should ensure that your relationships with your fellow employees and with pupils are always conducted in a professional and courteous manner; you should not censure other colleagues or criticise their work in the hearing of a pupil or parent/carers.

- 2.5 It is not acceptable for you to publicly criticise or blame management, colleagues or the Multi Academy Trust through any medium including internet 'blogs', websites or social networking tools such as Facebook or Twitter. You must be aware that the laws governing defamation, breach of copyright, etc. apply equally to 'blogging' as to other forms of communications. Offensive, defamatory, discriminatory or otherwise inappropriate comments will not be tolerated and may constitute a disciplinary and/or criminal offence, as could the disclosure/publication of any confidential or personal information about the Multi Academy Trust, its staff, pupils or other members of the community. The Multi Academy Trust has its own policy on the safe use of social media which should be rigorously adhered to at all times. **Please see Appendix A.**
- 2.6 Any disagreement involving the interpretation or application of the Code as it applies to you should be discussed with your Head or your Line Manager in the first instance. However, if you feel the Code is being applied unreasonably you may be able to seek redress through the Grievance Procedure.

## PERSONAL INTERESTS

- 3.1 The interests of the Multi Academy Trust or the way you do your job must not be influenced by personal interests or those of relatives, friends or membership of external organisations or societies. There should be no grounds for suspicion that you are using your position with or knowledge of the Multi Academy Trust for personal gain or that you could be influenced by improper motives. If you belong to outside organisations, including voluntary organisations, there must be no conflict with your job or other Multi Academy Trust's interests. You should advise your Head in writing about anything which could give this impression.

**Mobile Phones:** Mobile phones should not be used during teaching hours. Emergency calls to you during teaching hours should be directed through the school office. Mobile phones may only be used in school when in offices or in the staff rooms during break times. Under no circumstances must mobile phones be used to take photographs of children.

- 3.2 For staff who have responsibility for placing orders and Multi Academy Trust/School expenditure, please see more detailed guidance in Section 20.

## PRIVATE WORK

- 4.1 Multi Academy Trust premises, equipment, working time or other resources must not be used to undertake private work.
- 4.2 The Multi Academy Trust needs to be aware if its employees undertake private work or voluntary activities in their own time to ensure that there is no conflict of interests with the Multi Academy Trust and to meet its obligations under Health and Safety legislation. Therefore, to protect yourself and the Multi Academy Trust from potential criticism you should not put yourself in a position where there is an actual or perceived conflict of interests. You should be aware that outside work or activity, whether or not you receive payment, could reduce your ability to safely and effectively carry out your employment with the Multi Academy Trust, e.g. through tiredness, and would be considered unacceptable.
- 4.3 You must advise your line manager before engaging in any other work especially if it could reasonably be seen to conflict with your employment with the Multi Academy Trust or lead to misunderstanding or criticism.

- 4.4 You must not undertake private work for any individual, organisation, department or establishment which otherwise would be undertaken as part of your normal duties. Any charge raised as a result of undertaking work within another school or other establishment whilst in your normal working hours should be paid to the Multi Academy Trust.
- 4.5 You must not undertake private work when on sick leave without the express knowledge and prior written approval of the Head and subject to appropriate medical advice.
- 4.6 You must not undertake private work for any school or establishment during a period of paid leave or suspension.

## EXPRESSING CONCERN ABOUT IRREGULARITIES AND TACKLING MALPRACTICE

- 5.1 If you feel there is something seriously wrong at work please tell an appropriate person (see paragraph 5.3) as a 'voice of concern'. It might be, for example, the conduct of another employee, the way a contractor is behaving, a work practice, something that is endangering the safety of pupils or staff. You might be the first to notice it and your intervention could stop things getting worse.
- 5.2 No matter how reticent you may feel, you should raise any serious concern e.g. a suspicion of fraud or corruption or reasonable belief that a child or adult's health, safety or well-being are in danger with your Head so that potentially serious problems or malpractice can be addressed without undue delay. If this is not appropriate, then you should contact either your school's Chair of Governors or Worcestershire Children's Services Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). If you do raise a genuine concern in good faith all reasonable steps will be taken to respect your confidence and protect you from possible reprisals (see Confidential Reporting (Whistleblowing) Policy).
- 5.3 The Multi Academy Trust takes this issue very seriously and will investigate and address any problems genuinely raised. However, any frivolous, malicious or mischievous use of the Confidential Reporting (Whistleblowing) Policy will be treated as a serious disciplinary matter.

## COPYRIGHT

- 6.1 You should be aware that 'intellectual property' such as software, ideas, documents, etc. created during your employment belongs to the Multi Academy Trust. All files, materials, the media upon which they are located and all software programmes or packages which are utilised or developed solely for or in connection with your job remain the property of the Multi Academy Trust.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

- 7.1 You may sometimes acquire information at work which has not been made public or is confidential. Examples include information about a pupil or family, a colleague, information on tenders or costs, the proceedings of confidential meetings.

- 7.2 You must ensure that sensitive and/or confidential information is properly secured and safeguarded at all times especially if being transported in paper or electronic formats and complies with GDPR regulations at all times. Particular care must be taken with information stored on portable electronic media such as laptops, mobile phones, iPads and memory devices which are often targeted for theft due to their high intrinsic value. Any breaches of data must be reported to the Data Protection Officer (DPO) immediately.
- 7.3 Confidential Information which comes into your possession must not be used for personal benefit or divulged to other parties except in the proper course of duty, for example to other professionals working with the same child. If you have any doubt whether or not disclosure is appropriate, you must check with the Head or Line Manager before releasing confidential information.
- 7.4 Some information can be extremely valuable in business and commerce and its publication loss or misuse could seriously disadvantage the Multi Academy Trust and its employees. Therefore, it is important that you do not, deliberately or inadvertently, pass on information, including software, during or after your employment with the Multi Academy Trust, to anyone who has no right to receive it. You must not discuss, disclose, publicise or use such information for your own or anyone else's personal interest or advantage.
- 7.5 You must decline any approaches or offers made asking for information which could be detrimental to, or help others to gain a contract, grant or any other advantage from the Multi Academy Trust and/or its employees, e.g. a potential contractor could offer a financial reward for information leading to the award of a major contract. Approaches or offers of this kind must be declared to your Head without delay.
- 7.6 You must not criticise - or link – your school or the Multi Academy Trust, its policies or staff in open media such as internet 'blogs', websites, social networking sites, etc. where it may be seen by parents, children or others in the community.

## CONTACT WITH THE MEDIA

- 8.1 Unless you are properly authorised to speak with, write or give interviews to the media you should refer any enquiries from the media on work related matters to the Head or CEO.

## INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND DATA PROTECTION

- 9.1 Everyone using computing equipment has a duty of care to use it according to prescribed arrangements, e.g. to avoid introducing computer viruses, to comply with the Data Protection Act, and to safeguard and ensure the security of information.
- 9.2 You must familiarise yourself with the Multi Academy Trust and individual school's ICT policies, including use of the internet. In particular, all use of the internet and email facilities must be authorised, legal, appropriate and in accordance with the provisions of the policies. Personal use of any facilities – including laptops – must be authorised and only undertaken at times deemed appropriate by your Head.

Users shall not use the internet or email for the following:

- to knowingly break the law
- to fail to comply with existing Multi Academy Trust policy
- to compromise the integrity of any network of system
- to access, display or transmit any kind of sexually explicit material or any offensive or discriminatory material of any kind
- to make unauthorised contact with outside bodies
- to download software or play games
- to bet or gamble
- to disclose private or confidential information.

Failure to comply with the policies in force or any unauthorised use of such facilities will be dealt with in accordance with relevant disciplinary procedure. Employees should also take account of policies on cyber bullying.

- 9.3 Employees should also be aware when they are using personal IT equipment for undertaking school related business that the same rules apply. Please refer to the ICT/Computing Leads for a copy of the full policy on appropriate use of IT.
- 9.4 You should not use social media in any way that might bring your professional status or your school into disrepute. You should not accept pupils, or past pupils as 'friends' or 'followers' and should not 'follow' or have any personal connections with pupils on any social media or other internet sites. (See Appendix A).

## GIFTS, INDUCEMENTS, HOSPITALITY AND SPONSORSHIP

- 10.1 You must not accept any commission, discount, allowance, direct or indirect profit, inducement, payment, perk or benefit in connection with any professional work undertaken, other than any fee recoverable on behalf of the Multi Academy Trust.
- 10.2 Minor gifts and hospitality are sometimes part of the normal courtesies of life: the parent of a pupil may offer a modest gift, especially at Christmas or as a token of appreciation, and in an office situation simple items such as diaries and calendars are often distributed as advertising matter. As a guideline, any gift or hospitality with a value of £25.00 or more is highly unlikely to be viewed as a 'token'. With the exception of these 'tokens' and any special schemes (e.g. travel or discount schemes) arranged by the Multi Academy Trust, all gifts, vouchers, fees, special discounts, rewards or preferential treatment must be refused. Collection of reward card points such as Nectar and Clubcard on a personal account in respect of school or council purchases is a benefit in kind which should be reported to HMRC and subjected to deduction of Income Tax. In situations where refusal is difficult or might offend you must inform your Head or your Line Manager who will decide on the appropriate action.
- 10.3 Where an outside organisation wishes to sponsor any activity or make a donation to the Multi Academy Trust or Trust school, the basic principles relating to personal interests and the acceptance of gifts or hospitality apply.

## USE OF MULTI ACADEMY TRUST'S RESOURCES AND EQUIPMENT

- 11.1 Facilities, equipment, vehicles, materials and other resources provided by the Multi Academy Trust for use in your work must not be used for any other purpose without permission or appropriate payment, e.g. photocopying, private telephone calls. Where provided in individual settings, mobile telephones are to be used exclusively for business use and must not be used to make private calls. In this context a call 'home' to advise that you have been unavoidably delayed because of work would not be considered a private call.

## OVERSEAS TRAVEL ON OFFICIAL BUSINESS

- 12.1 Any proposal to travel overseas on official business must be approved by the local Governing Body before the travel takes place.

## EQUALITY ISSUES

- 13.1 All members of the community, including pupils, families and other employees have a right to be treated fairly and with dignity. You must make yourself aware of and comply with the Multi Academy Trust's Equality and Diversity Policies and procedures.

## STANDARDS OF APPEARANCE

- 14.1 The Multi Academy Trust does not impose particular dress standards but all staff are expected to present a reasonable and professional appearance and dress appropriately to the circumstances within their working environment, bearing in mind that you are working with children. Tight fitting trousers, denim, coloured jeans/jeggings, low cut tops, short skirts/dresses, open-toed shoes and sandals, flip-flops, jelly shoes, high heeled stilettos or trainers (except for P.E.) are all deemed to be unacceptable. Where uniform or protective clothing is issued, it must be worn as required when at work or representing the Multi Academy Trust. When wearing uniform or other items which identify you as an employee of the Multi Academy Trust or individual setting, you must maintain appropriate standards of conduct whether or not on duty, e.g. when travelling to and from work. Tattoos should be covered wherever possible and should not be offensive in nature. For health and safety reasons, staff are advised to limit piercings, for example, wearing a single pair of stud ear rings or similar and these should be discreet. Staff should consider the environment in which they work and should take measures to ensure that any jewellery worn could not cause any injury to themselves or others, and that a professional appearance is maintained at all time.

## RELATIVES AND CLOSE PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS WITHIN THE WORKPLACE

- 15.1 In order to avoid any possible accusation of bias you should endeavour not be directly involved in the appointment, promotion, discipline or other employment decision relating to another employee to whom you are related or with whom you have a close personal relationship. If a situation arises in which you feel you may be in such a position, please seek the advice of your Head or your Line Manager in the first instance or Worcestershire Liberata's Human Resources.

- 15.2 If you work in close proximity with other employees or pupils to whom you are related or have a close personal connection you must maintain a strictly professional relationship at work. You should also be aware that if any relationship leads to disruption in the workplace, unacceptable conduct or performance or situations involving undue favouritism or detriment, action will be taken under the appropriate procedure which could lead to you being redeployed or your contract terminated.

## SMOKE-FREE ENVIRONMENT

- 16.1 All Multi Academy Trust buildings, workplaces and vehicles are smoke free areas. Since July 2007, it has been against the law to smoke in workplaces; failure to comply is now a criminal offence. This includes electronic cigarettes or 'Vapour' cigarettes.

## DRUGS AND ALCOHOL

- 17.1 Employees must not take drugs, alcohol or any other substances before work, during a break or at lunch time that is capable of causing their behaviour, judgement or performance at work to be affected. This is particularly important for employees who drive, operate machinery, have responsibility for children or vulnerable adults and who come into contact with members of the public and/or visitors. (N.B. It is equally inappropriate for those working in close proximity to children and vulnerable adults to have alcohol on their breath even though this may not amount to drunkenness.)

## HEALTH AND SAFETY

- 18.1 Unsafe working can endanger you, your colleagues and members of the public. You must familiarise yourself with the Multi Academy Trust's Health and Safety Policy, the adaptations for your individual setting and guidelines for your particular work. You must follow the rules, codes and safe practices they describe including reporting any accidents, incidents or near misses you have at work. For further information, please see your Head.

## CRIMINAL CHARGES, CAUTIONS AND CONVICTIONS

- 19.1 You must advise your Head immediately if you are charged with or cautioned or convicted of any criminal offence whilst you are an employee of the Multi Academy Trust. While such proceedings will not necessarily affect your employment, the CEO needs to be sure there are no implications for the Multi Academy Trust, your individual setting, its reputation, the safety of children or in relation to the role you undertake.
- 19.2 You must also advise your Head immediately if you have been arrested or appeared in court and released on bail in circumstances where bail conditions have been applied which could have consequences for your work e.g. you are constrained from having contact with children. If you are in any doubt about whether you should report bail conditions, especially where safeguarding could be an issue, you must discuss it with your Head so that any concerns can be addressed from the



outset. Failure to report such conditions would be considered as serious misconduct and could potentially lead to breach of bail.

## SPECIFIC STANDARDS FOR STAFF WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR EXPENDITURE

### Personal interests

- 20.1 The interests of the Multi Academy Trust must not be undermined by personal interests. The way you do your job must not be influenced by personal interests or those of relatives, friends or membership of external organisations or societies. There should be no grounds for suspicion that you are using your position with or knowledge of the Multi Academy Trust for personal gain or that you could be influenced by improper motives. If you belong to outside organisations, including voluntary organisations, there must be no conflict with your job.
- 20.2 All orders, contracts and grants must be awarded on merit following fair competition. No favour should be shown because of personal interests and no part of the community should be discriminated against.
- 20.3 You must advise your Head or Line Manager in writing about anything which could give the impression that you may be acting for personal gain, financial or otherwise, or in the interests of another person or organisation; or you are involved as an employee in matters which might reasonably be regarded as affecting the wellbeing or financial position of yourself, your spouse, partner, relative, a close friend or any person with whom you have a close association, e.g. if any of those persons
- hold an office or employment with
  - have any connection or influence with
  - have any financial interest in any company or organisation doing or seeking to do business with, or requesting grants or other funding from the Multi Academy Trust.
- 20.4 You should avoid being involved as an employee in matters which might reasonably be regarded as affecting the well-being or financial position of yourself (or the persons, companies or organisations referred to above) so significant that it is likely to prejudice your judgment of the Multi Academy Trust, your individual setting or the public interest.
- 20.5 You must advise your Line Manager of any personal dealings of a business or private nature with existing or potential suppliers, consultants or contractors who you know (or could reasonably be expected to know) to have dealings with the Multi Academy Trust.
- 20.6 If you engage or supervise contractors or consultants on behalf of the Multi Academy Trust or have any other official relationship with them you must advise your Line Manager, prior to any contractual relationship beginning or work being undertaken, if you have or intend to have any private or domestic relationship with them or any of their employees.

### Gifts, inducements, hospitality and sponsorship

- 20.7 See information in 10.2 regarding the acceptance of gifts. As a guideline, a gift with a value of more than £25 is unlikely to be seen as only a 'token', so needs to be referred to your Head or Line Manager. (see also Notes 1 and 2 below)
- 20.8 Offers of hospitality, even if of a seemingly minor nature, must be treated with particular caution as they can leave both individuals and the Multi Academy Trust open to all manner of allegations of impropriety. The timing of offers of hospitality, e.g. in relation to purchasing, the award of contracts, granting of applications or other decisions, should be considered equally to the generosity of the hospitality offered. Accepting hospitality must be justified in the public interest, e.g. when there is a genuine need to represent the Multi Academy Trust. You must inform your Head or Line Manager of an invitation or offer of hospitality before it is accepted.

### **Personal purchases**

- 20.9 You should be aware of possible conflicts of interest when you buy goods or use the services of firms which have dealings with the Multi Academy Trust and follow any Multi Academy Trust procedures relating to the disclosure of any such transactions. You should neither seek, because of your position, nor accept, because of an organisation's dealings with the Multi Academy Trust's, preferential rates, reductions or any other favourable treatment in the purchase of goods and services. This does not apply to generally available schemes or discount schemes arranged by the Multi Academy Trust for all staff.

### **Procurement of goods and services and disposal of property**

- 20.10 Procurement procedures must be strictly adhered to and you must not accept any inducement or preferential treatment if you are responsible for procuring goods or services for the Multi Academy Trust or your individual setting, or disposing of surplus property. (see also note 2 below)

## **CONDUCT AND PERFORMANCE**

- 21.1 Unacceptable behaviour and/or failure to maintain satisfactory standards of conduct or performance will lead to action being taken against you under the appropriate procedure. This includes specifically the failure to behave at all times in accordance with the Multi Academy Trust's stated values
- 21.2 You must ensure you understand the requirements of this Code of Conduct and any terms and conditions, rules, standards and requirements that apply to you and your job (see also note 2 below). Any of the examples of unacceptable behaviour listed below may be considered as misconduct or gross misconduct depending on the relevance to your role, your seniority, the seriousness of the act and particular circumstances. **Those underlined normally will be considered as gross misconduct.** The list is not exhaustive and other unacceptable behaviour not specifically listed nevertheless may be considered as misconduct or gross misconduct:
- a) any form of unjustifiable discrimination, harassment, threatening or bullying behaviour, e.g. on the grounds of race, sex/gender, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, age, religion or belief; whether or not the subject of current legislation;
  - b) any physical, emotional or sexual abuse of a child or other vulnerable person
  - c) possession, displaying, viewing or downloading of offensive materials, playing or downloading games, accessing 'unacceptable' websites, e.g. websites of a sexual nature, gambling, betting or gaming, in the workplace or via any portable device, e.g. laptop, mass

- storage, which is the property of the Multi Academy Trust and has been provided in connection with the postholder's work;
- d) undertaking private activities during working hours;
  - e) lack of punctuality, misuse of time and time recording, unauthorised absence from work
  - f) refusing to comply with reasonable orders and instructions;
  - g) deliberately causing damage to Multi Academy Trust property;
  - h) harming or endangering other persons or property, e.g. by contravening safety rules;
  - i) neglect of duty/lack of due care or diligence, disruptive behaviour, poor attitude;
  - j) fighting, threatening or actual violence towards, physical assault or abuse of another person whilst at work (NOTE: this does not include reasonable physical restraint necessarily carried out in the course of duty);
  - k) theft, unauthorised removal, misappropriation, improper or unauthorised use of Multi Academy Trust or other property, systems (including telephones, IT, email and internet), vehicles, equipment, name or other resources. This may include loss by failing to properly secure or safeguard;
  - l) failure to report criminal convictions, particularly those which may be relevant to the type of work undertaken, e.g. driving convictions where the work necessitates driving on school business, indecent assault where working with children or vulnerable adults;
  - m) fraudulent or misleading practices and/or omissions in connection with official duties, e.g. deliberately falsifying Multi Academy Trust documents, reports, etc.;
  - n) fraudulent or false claims for payment of salary, expenses and/or allowances, etc. or seeking financial gain by deception;
  - o) acts involving bribery or corruption;
  - p) any action for which it would be appropriate for the Multi Academy Trust as an employer to take legal proceedings (irrespective of whether such proceedings are taken)
  - q) sexual misconduct at work;
  - r) wilfully breaching any Multi Academy Trust or individual setting policy or procedure;
  - s) drunkenness, being unable to carry out duties through the influence of any substances including drugs, whether or not prescribed, and alcohol, or for any other avoidable reason. (N.B. It is equally inappropriate for those hosting visitors or working in close proximity to children and vulnerable adults to have alcohol on their breath even though this may not amount to drunkenness.);
  - t) possession, buying or selling of weapons, illegal substances or materials at work;
  - u) any breach of trust or security in respect of information or procedures;
  - v) obtaining or attempting to obtain access to any information (including information held or stored by electronic means) to which the employee is not entitled;
  - w) any action which may bring the good name of the Multi Academy Trust or individual setting into disrepute;
  - x) as an employee, public opposition to the stated aims and policies of the Multi Academy Trust, criticism or blame of Multi Academy Trust management or colleagues, through any medium including internet 'blogs', websites, social networking sites, etc.;
  - y) any action unconnected with work which brings in to question your suitability as an employee of the Multi Academy Trust;
  - z) failing to report serious misconduct, aiding or inciting another employee to undertake any of the above actions or other act of wrongdoing.

**Note 1:**

Personal interests as set out in paragraph 3 (e.g. in contracts/procurement), other potential conflicts of interest and any offer of gifts and/or hospitality as set out in paragraph 10 or paragraph 20, other than of a minor 'token' nature, are to be notified in writing to your Head.

**Note 2:**

Under the Bribery Act 2010 it is a criminal offence if a person fails to prevent bribery, bribes another person with the intention of obtaining or retaining a business or a business advantage, or receives a bribe, whether or not unwittingly.

## APPENDIX A

# BENGEWORTH ACADEMY MULTI ACADEMY TRUST

## Personal Social Media Guidance for All Staff

The widespread availability and use of social networking applications bring opportunities to communicate with various groups in new ways. Whilst recognising the benefits which using social media brings, this guidance sets out the principles designed to ensure that all staff members use social media responsibly so that the confidentiality of students, staff and the reputation of the school/Academy Trust are safeguarded.

Staff members must be conscious at all times of the need to keep their personal and professional lives separate when using social media. Taking charge of your digital reputation is important, as **unprofessional posts or images will lead to disciplinary action** and possible failure to gain employment in the future. Your professional reputation is valuable to your current and future career. Anything put online is potentially public and permanent.

This guidance applies to personal social media platforms such as networking sites (e.g. Facebook, googlechat), blogs, microblogs such as Twitter, chatrooms, forums, podcasts, open access, online encyclopaedias such as Wikipedia and content sharing sites such as flickr and YouTube. However, this list is not exhaustive and new on-line platforms are to be considered automatically covered.

Listed below are Bengeworth Multi Academy Trust's recommendations regarding use of Facebook, WhatsApp and other social media/networking sites:

- You should not identify yourself as a staff member of your school/Bengeworth Multi Academy Trust in your personal social media platforms. This is to prevent information on these sites from being linked with your school and the Multi Academy Trust and to safeguard the privacy of staff members. This does not include professional networking sites.
- You are strongly advised to ensure that you set up and regularly review the privacy levels of your personal sites as strictly as possible and to opt out of public listings on social networking sites to protect your own privacy. You should keep your passwords confidential, change them often and be careful what is posted online; it is not safe to reveal home addresses, telephone numbers and other personal information.
- You should avoid posting or sharing anything online that can be linked or connected to your individual school or the Multi Academy Trust in any way, whether this is positive or negative, unless this is on a professional social networking site (e.g. LinkedIn).
- You should think carefully about comments you post on friends' social media pages – if their profile is not set to private your posts will be visible to anyone.
- You should consider the information you have on your info page and your profile pictures. Including brief information and an unidentifiable picture, e.g. sunset, will assist in making your profile indistinctive.
- If you have professional and social 'friends' on Facebook, using the group list feature will ensure that you can distinguish what type of information you send to particular groups. **Make sure that you do not accept pupils (even those that have recently left the school) as 'friends'.**
- Unless you have a reason for doing so, such as being a member of staff and a parent, do not accept parents as 'friends'.
- If you are both a member of staff and a parent and therefore have parents of children in your child's class as friends, be careful to ensure that your messages and posts do not refer to school in any way.

- You should be careful what photographs you include on any social media site. Once these are uploaded, they are very difficult to remove and, using image editing software, they can be altered and merged with other more distasteful images.
- You should be aware of any spam or potential virus risks sent via rogue posts. It is advisable to check with anti-virus firms if you get any suspicious requests or posts.
- If you are unhappy with photos in which you are tagged, un-tag yourself or alternatively contact the friend and ask them to remove this content. Never be shy about asking others to take down or to make private content that identifies you that you are not comfortable with. Be thoughtful about content you post that relates to others, and respond positively to requests to take down or make content private.
- If you become aware of unpleasant comments or negative posts which refer to either yourself or other staff in the school, un-tag yourself, or politely ask the user to remove the post. If possible, It would also be advisable to encourage the user to share their concerns with the Head or Line Manager in order to resolve the issues raised.
- If you are alerted to any particularly negative or unscrupulous information about yourself, colleagues or your school on any social media site, inform the Head/Designated Safeguarding Lead/Deputies immediately. It is very important not to share this information with others who may not have seen the posts in order to avoid any further anxiety or hurt.
- When using Geo-location services on SNS, think about making your location visible to only your friends and ensure that you are happy with the friends in your list. The option for being 'checked into' a place by someone else can be disabled in your privacy settings, so you can keep control of your location information.

## **WhatsApp**

- All employees who are members of a WhatsApp or other social messaging group, created for the purposes of communicating work-related messages, should adhere to the same social rules of courtesy and respect that we would follow in conversation person-to-person in school. Any breach of this guidance should be reported to the appropriate Head or Senior Leader.
- Any person setting up a social group as an Administrator is responsible for the management of that WhatsApp group and should periodically check that the original purpose of the group is still valid and clear to the members of staff within it, ensuring that GDPR regulations and this Code of Conduct are adhered to.

**July 2023**



# Bengeworth

## Multi Academy Trust

*Brilliant People • Better Schools • Bright Futures*

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