



Lord Lawson of
Beamish Academy

LORD LAWSON OF BEAMISH ACADEMY

STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY

Originator: Alex Rayner

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Introduction

This code of conduct is designed to give guidance on expected standards and behaviours for all staff employed within Lord Lawson of Beamish (the Academy). This code applies to all staff employed by the Academy, as well as directors, governors and volunteers.

It is not possible to provide a complete list of what is, or is not, acceptable behaviour and conduct in all circumstances. There may be times when staff may have to make decisions in the best interests and welfare of the Academy and the pupils and students in their charge where no guidance exists. In such circumstances, the member of staff must ensure that a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) is made aware of such actions as soon as possible.

Our Standards

The Academy expects the work, conduct and integrity of all staff, including volunteers and governors, to be of the highest standards, since these directly affect:

- The learning and development of pupils and students
- The success of the Academy
- Public confidence in the Academy

Personal Standards

Staff must treat pupils, colleagues and others who engage with the Academy with respect and courtesy. Staff are employed in a position of influence, and it is recognised that such behaviour and standards set an example to the pupils and students who attend the academy. Teaching staff are professionally bound by the National Teachers' Standards, and are required to demonstrate their awareness of these through their day to day work in the Academy.

As a point of reference, the 'Personal and Professional Conduct' section of the Teachers' Standards states that:

"A teacher is expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of professional conduct. The following statements define the behaviour and attitude that set the required standard for conduct throughout a teacher's career:

- *teachers uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour within and outside school by:*
- *treating pupils with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to a teacher's professional position*
- *having regard for the need to safeguard a pupil's well-being in accordance with statutory provisions*



- *showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others*
- *not undermining fundamental British values of democracy, rule of law, individual liberty and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs*
- *ensuring that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways which exploit pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law*

Teachers must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they teach and maintain high standards in their own attendance and punctuality.

Teachers must have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities”.

Staff should demonstrate high standards in order to encourage pupils and students to do the same.

Staff should also avoid putting themselves at risk of allegations of abuse or unprofessional conduct.

Staff have contractual obligations with regard to fulfilling their duties. In the exceptional circumstance of this not being possible, agreement must be sought from a member of the Leadership Team in advance. This includes attending Academy activities such as parents' evenings, briefing, meetings, Academy events, etc., as appropriate.

Dress Code

It is the Academy's policy to maintain an image of professionalism. An individual's dress and appearance, in addition to their conduct and behaviour, should reflect this. It is recognised that individuals may express their individuality through dress and appearance; however, staff should ensure that they dress safely and appropriately for the role they undertake.

The Academy does not wish staff to find themselves in a position of vulnerability, or be subjected to criticism, because of their dress and appearance. Where this happens, staff could find themselves subject to disciplinary action.

Honesty, Integrity, Impartiality and Objectivity

There are occasions when children, parents or carers wish to pass small tokens of appreciation to staff, for example at Christmas, or as a 'thank you', and this is acceptable. Gifts which cannot reasonably be considered as small tokens should be politely declined or declared to the academy. A record of such gifts should be kept to avoid any allegations of impropriety. Money should never be accepted as a gift. For the avoidance of embarrassment, the Academy has decided that any gift which has or



is perceived to have a monetary value of £25 or more, must be declared. Although it is not a requirement, staff are recommended to declare gifts under this amount.

It is important that staff declare any interests they may have in outside organisations, where the organisation comes into contact with the academy, for example in providing a service or tendering for work.

Staff should not be involved in the appointment or any other decisions relating to the employment of any family member, except where there is prior agreement of the Principal or the Chair of the Governing Body.

Declarations, or queries over the appropriateness of making a declaration should be made to the Chair of the Governing Body.

Safeguarding

General

Staff have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils and students. This includes:

- Protecting children from maltreatment, including all forms of abuse. This includes a duty to report concerns and pass on any disclosures made.
- Preventing the impairment of children's health or development.
- Ensuring children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care.
- Enabling children to have optimum life chances and to enter adulthood successfully.

The Academy's Safeguarding Child Protection Policy details this further and includes the procedures to be followed.

An Individual's responsibilities

Everyone in the Academy shares the objective to keep pupils and students safe. All staff play an important part in safeguarding children from abuse and neglect by early identification of children who may be vulnerable or at risk of harm and by educating children, about managing risks and improving their resilience through the curriculum.

All staff have three main responsibilities :

- Understanding procedures and protocols for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children.
- Providing a safe environment in which pupils and students can learn.



- Identifying pupils and students who are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, and taking appropriate action with the aim of making sure they are kept safe, both at home and in the academy.

Staff are provided with copies of the Academy's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, and are expected to be familiar with its contents. In support of this, the Academy will provide regular up-date training for staff.

A Safe Environment

Staff must take reasonable care of pupils and students under their supervision with the aim of ensuring their health and safety. Any concerns must be reported to the appropriate Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy.

Staff should avoid putting themselves in a position of physical vulnerability or danger at work. Staff should therefore refrain from restraining students (including physically preventing them from leaving a room or a part of the school's premises), unless, in their professional judgement, the student and/or their behaviour poses a credible risk to the student themselves; to other students, members of staff or members of the public; or to school or private property. In circumstances where restraint is unavoidable, staff should seek immediate assistance from senior staff who are suitably trained in team-teach restraint techniques.

Employment Checks

Staff are required to have a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check at the commencement of their employment, and every three years, as part of the employment checks undertaken to confirm their suitability to work in the academy. Staff are required to notify the academy if any events occur which may cause a change in their DBS status. They must not wait until the recheck is due.

Additionally, the academy will take up references for all new staff. Although the academy usually seeks two references, it reserves the right to seek additional references from any previous employer, where it is considered appropriate to do so.

Conduct Outside of Work

Staff must not engage in conduct outside work which could seriously damage the reputation and standing of the academy or the employee's own reputation, or the reputation of other members of the academy community.

Events which are organised by the academy, as well as those events which are considered as 'nights out' at the end of term, for example, should be considered as extensions of the workplace. As such, the expectations around personal and professional behaviour remain relevant.



Staff may undertake work outside school, either paid or voluntary, provided it does not conflict with the interests of the academy or affect the performance of their duties. Staff are reminded to consider if additional work contravenes the working time regulations.

Information technology should be used with caution and staff should be aware of the risks to themselves and others. Where this concerns 'social media', consideration should be given to who may have access to information or pictures posted and whether it may bring the individual or the academy into disrepute. As a general principle, academy business should not be displayed or discussed via social media.

Confidentiality

Where staff have access to confidential information about pupils and students, their parents and carers, or colleagues within the academy, they must not disclose such information to anyone who is not entitled, in the course of their employment, to such information. In relation to pupils and students, this may be where another person has a professional role and responsibility to undertake.

All staff are likely to witness events and actions which need to be dealt with confidentially. This may include, for example, bullying or inappropriate behaviour. This must still be reported and dealt with in line with the appropriate academy procedure. It must not be discussed outside the Academy with anyone except with a senior member of staff with the appropriate authority to deal with the matter.

Staff have an obligation to share any information which may give rise to a concern about the safety or welfare of a pupil or student. This should be with an appropriate senior manager or the relevant designated person.

Staff must never promise a student that they will not pass on or act on information they are told by them.

Whistleblowing

The Academy wishes to support any individual who may be aware of some serious wrongdoing in work, to do with unlawful conduct, financial malpractice, or danger to the public or the environment. For clarity, we have two Whistleblowing policies: Whistleblowing – Financial Irregularity, and Whistleblowing – Allegations of Abuse.

These policies provide examples of what wrongdoing may be included, and guidance for making such a disclosure. Staff are also given training relating to reporting low-level concerns.



Disciplinary Action

All staff need to recognise that failure to meet these standards of behaviour and conduct may result in disciplinary action. In such cases, the Academy's Disciplinary Procedure policy will be followed.