Staff Code of Conduct

The British International School of Brussels

Ratified by BISB Board:	June 2024
Next review due by:	June 2026

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1. Aims, scope and principles

This policy aims to set and maintain standards of conduct that we expect all staff to follow.

By creating this policy, we aim to ensure our school is an environment where everyone is safe, happy and treated with respect.

School staff have an influential position in the school and will act as role models for pupils by consistently demonstrating high standards of behaviour.

We expect all support staff, governors and volunteers to also act with personal and professional integrity, respecting the safety and wellbeing of others.

Failure to follow the code of conduct may result in disciplinary action being taken, as set out in our staff disciplinary procedures.

Please note that this code of conduct is not exhaustive. If situations arise that are not covered by this code, staff will use their professional judgement and act in the best interests of the school and its pupils.

We treat everyone in our school community as an individual.

2. Relevant UK Practice

In line with the UK statutory safeguarding guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#), we should have a staff code of conduct, which should cover acceptable use of technologies (including the use of mobile devices), staff/pupil relationships and communications, including the use of social media.

3. General obligations

Staff set an example to pupils. They will:

> Maintain high standards in their attendance and punctuality

> Never use inappropriate or offensive language in school

> Treat pupils and others with dignity and respect

> Show tolerance and respect for the rights of others

> Not undermine fundamental human rights, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect.

4. Safeguarding

Staff have a duty to safeguard pupils from harm, and to report any concerns they have. This includes physical, emotional and sexual abuse, and neglect.

Staff will familiarise themselves with our child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures, and the Prevent initiative, and ensure they are aware of the processes to follow if they have concerns about a child.

Our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and procedures are available from the school office, as well as in the policies section of our school website and in our shared drive. New staff will also be given copies on arrival.

4.1 Low-level concerns about members of staff

A low-level concern is a behaviour towards a child by a member of staff that does not meet the harms threshold, is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, and may be as simple as causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt'. For example, this may include:

> Being over-friendly with children

> Having favourites

> Engaging in one-to-one activities where they can't easily be seen

> Using inappropriate language

Low-level concerns can include inappropriate conduct inside and outside of work.

All staff should share any low-level concerns they have using the reporting procedures set out in our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. We also encourage staff to self-refer if they find themselves in a situation that could be misinterpreted. If staff are not sure whether behaviour would be deemed a low-level concern, we encourage staff to report it.

All reports will be handled in a responsive, sensitive and proportionate way.

Unprofessional behaviour will be addressed, and the staff member supported to correct it, at an early stage.

This creates and embeds a culture of openness, trust and transparency in which our values and expected behaviour are constantly lived, monitored and reinforced by all staff, while minimising the risk of abuse.

Reporting and responding to low-level concerns is covered in more detail in our child protection and safeguarding policy.

5. Staff-pupil relationships

Staff will observe proper boundaries with pupils that are appropriate to their professional position. They will act in a fair and transparent way that would not lead anyone to reasonably assume they are not doing so.

If staff members and pupils must spend time on a one-to-one basis, staff will ensure that:

> This takes place in a public place that others can access

> Others can see into the room by means of a large accessible window or an open door

> A colleague or line manager knows this is taking place

Staff should avoid contact with pupils outside of school hours if possible.

Personal contact details should not be exchanged between staff, pupils and parents. This includes social media profiles.

While we are aware many pupils and their parents may wish to give gifts to staff, for example, at the end of the school year, individual gifts from staff to pupils are not appropriate.

If a staff member is concerned at any point that an interaction between themselves and a pupil may be misinterpreted, or if a staff member is concerned at any point about a fellow staff member and a pupil, this should be reported in line with the procedures set out in our safeguarding policy and the reporting of others may also take place using the guidelines in the BISB Whistle Blowing Policy.

6. Communication and social media

School staff's social media profiles should not be available to pupils. Staff should consider setting public profiles to private.

Staff should not attempt to contact pupils, parents, or ex-pupils under age 18 via social media, or any other means outside school, in order to develop any sort of relationship. They will not make any efforts to find pupils' or parents' social media profiles.

Staff will ensure that they do not post any images online that identify children who are pupils at the school without their consent. All parents are given a permission form to sign at the beginning of each academic year, staff will be informed if consent is not given.

Staff should be aware of the school's Online Safety Policy, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Whistle Blowing Policy.

7. Acceptable use of technology

Staff will not use technology in school to view material that is illegal, inappropriate or likely to be deemed offensive. This includes, but is not limited to, sending obscene emails, gambling and viewing pornography or other inappropriate content.

Staff will not use personal mobile phones and laptops, or school equipment for personal use in front of pupils. They may can access their personal devices during break times away from pupils.

During the school day staff can be contacted via the school office (027368981) in case of emergency.

The school has the right to monitor emails and internet use on the school IT system. Staff must only use the official school email for communication with parents and copy the school office.

See Use of Technology and Mobile Phone Use Policy.

8. Confidentiality

In the course of their role, members of staff are often privy to sensitive and confidential information about the school, staff, pupils and their parents.

This information should never be:

> Disclosed to anyone unless required by law or with consent from the relevant party or parties

> Used to humiliate, embarrass or blackmail others

> Used for a purpose other than what it was collected and intended for

This does not overrule staff's duty to report child protection concerns to the appropriate channel where staff believe a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm, as detailed further in our child protection and safeguarding policy.

9. Honesty and integrity

Staff should maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their role. This includes when dealing with pupils, handling money, claiming expenses and using school property and facilities.

Staff will ensure that all information given to the school is correct. This should include:

> Background information (including any past or current investigations/cautions related to conduct outside of school)

> Qualifications

> Professional experience

Where there are any updates to the information provided to the school, the member of staff will advise the school as such as soon as reasonably practicable. Consideration will then be given to the nature and circumstances of the matter and whether this may have an impact on the member of staff's employment.

Staff wishing to take up additional employment while working at BISB must first seek permission from the Headteacher to ensure there is no conflict of interest. The Headteacher has the right to refuse permission, if a conflict of interest arises.

For extra tutoring of children currently at the school written permission from the Headteacher is required.

10. Dress code

Staff will dress in a professional, appropriate manner.

Clothes will not display any offensive or political slogans.

11. Conduct outside of work

Staff will not act in a way that would bring the school, or the teaching profession, into disrepute. This covers conduct including but not limited to relevant criminal offences, such as violence or sexual misconduct, as well as negative comments about the school (directly or indirectly) on social media.

12. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed bi-annually, but can be revised as needed. It will be approved by the Headteacher and Board of Governors.

The Headteacher will ensure this code of conduct is implemented effectively and will ensure appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard children and deal with any concerns.

The Headteacher will inform the Governors if an incident occurs.

13. Links with other policies

This policy links with our policies on:

> Staff disciplinary procedures, which will be used if staff breach this code of conduct. It also sets out examples of what we will deem as misconduct and gross misconduct
> Safeguarding and Child Protection
> Online safety
> Whistleblowing
> Anti-bullying