

EMPLOYEE CODE OF CONDUCT

Approving Body	Trust
Date of Last Review	November 2023
Statutory (Y/N)	Y
Responsible Officer	BMAT CEO for and on behalf of the Trust

I. INTRODUCTION - PURPOSE AND SCOPE

1. The BMAT Staff Code of Conduct has been drafted in line with:
 - a. 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', which states that *"All staff members should be aware of systems within their school or college which support safeguarding and these should be explained to them as part of staff induction. This should include...the staff behaviour policy (sometimes called a code of conduct)"*
 - b. The Teachers' Standards, which defines *"the behaviour and attitudes which settle required standard for conduct throughout a teacher's career"* [DfE].
2. The BMAT Staff Code of Conduct covers:
 - a. Section II - Summary of expectations.
 - b. Section III - Dress and appearance.
 - c. Section IV - Attendance and punctuality.
 - d. Section V - Safeguarding, welfare and health and safety.
 - e. Section VI - Staff/student relationships.
 - f. Section VII - Responsible use (ICT)
 - g. Section VIII - Conduct outside of the workplace.
 - h. Section IX - Equality and diversity.
 - i. Section X - Budgetary/financial responsibilities.
 - j. Section XI – Smoking and alcohol.
 - k. Section XII - Whistleblowing.
 - l. Section XIII - Teachers' Standards.
3. Purpose - BMAT is committed to achieving positive academic, social, emotional, economic and safeguarding outcomes for its students; and to the protection and welfare of its employees. In line with this commitment, this Code of Conduct:
 - a. Sets minimum standards of conduct for all BMAT employees to follow;
 - b. Helps to keep children safe by clarifying which behaviours constitute safe practice and which behaviours are to be avoided;
 - c. Assists adults working with children to work safely and responsibly and to monitor their own standards and practice;
 - d. Supports management staff in setting clear expectations of behaviour within their teams or departments;
 - e. Sends a clear message that disciplinary, capability and legal action may be taken in response to breaches of this Code, as appropriate.
 - f. Minimises the risk of misplaced or malicious allegations against adults who work with BMAT students;

- g. Helps to eliminate the incidence of positions of trust being misused; and
 - h. Helps to ensure that all adults working with BMAT students are competent, confident and safe to do so.
4. This Code should be read alongside the following BMAT policies, which are published on the websites of BMAT and its constituent schools:
- a. Disciplinary;
 - b. Capability; and
 - c. Safeguarding and Child Protection.
5. Scope - this Code applies to:
- a. All BMAT employees, regardless of length of service and including those on probation;
 - b. Agency workers and self-employed contractors, although breaches by these groups will not be managed through the [BMAT Disciplinary Policy or BMAT Capability Policy](#).
6. Consequences: Breaches of this Code and the policies and procedures referred to therein may result in disciplinary, capability or legal action, as appropriate.
7. Monitoring and Review:
- a. This Code does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and it may be amended at any time;
 - b. As a minimum, this Code will be reviewed by the BMAT Trust Executive every three years.

II. SUMMARY OF EXPECTATIONS.

8. All BMAT employees must familiarise themselves with the contents of this Code, including the policies and procedures referred to therein, and with [Parts 1 and 5 of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'](#).
9. This Code is not exhaustive in defining acceptable and unacceptable standards of conduct. Employees should use their professional judgement to adhere to the underlying principles and speak to a colleague if they are unsure about what conduct is acceptable or unacceptable.
10. This Code should be provided to all new BMAT employees during their induction, together with the [BMAT Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy](#). BMAT employees should be required to confirm that they have read and understood its contents and that they agree to act in compliance

BMAT employees are expected to:

1. Work within the scope of their contract of employment and to go above and beyond the expectations contained therein when reasonably required to do so.
2. Demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct, inside and outside of work.
3. Attend work in a condition which enables them to carry out their duties safely and effectively.
4. Act as role models to BMAT students and lead by example.
5. Act with honesty and integrity in their dealings with BMAT, students, parents or carers, colleagues, manager(s) and leadership i.e. not to:
 - a. Deceive or attempt to deceive by withholding information, tampering with information or giving false information;
 - b. Destroy, damage or alter any records or documents without proper authorisation;
 - c. Misrepresent BMAT in their dealings with others or make any statement on behalf of BMAT which they are not authorised to make;
 - d. Commit any act of misconduct or act in breach of their terms of employment.
6. Treat students with dignity, building relationships rooted in professionalism and mutual respect; and always observe proper professional boundaries.
7. Carry out the reasonable instructions of supervisors, managers and senior staff.
8. Ensure the welfare and safety of BMAT students and never engage in activity that would compromise this fundamental obligation or lead the reasonable person to suspect that it had been compromised.
9. Follow the principles set out in this Code and the policies and procedures referred to therein.

III. DRESS AND APPEARANCE

11. BMAT employees are required to lead by example. How they present themselves is an important part of this requirement.
12. Notwithstanding the religious neutrality of BMAT as an organisation, it is important that BMAT employees respect the diversity of the BMAT community, which includes staff, students, parents or carers and the local community. BMAT employees are required to take reasonable steps to ensure that the way in which they present themselves does not make other members of the BMAT community feel uncomfortable.
13. When in front of students, BMAT employees are required not to:
 - a. Wear clothes that are revealing, ripped/torn or branded with logos/writing (with the

- exception of sports logos for PE teachers);
 - b. Allow tattoos and piercings (other than single earlobe piercings) to be seen.
 - c. Have hair that is dyed an obviously unnatural colour (e.g. pink or blue);
 - d. Chew gum;
 - e. Use inappropriate language; and
 - f. Eat or drink in corridors.
14. BMAT employees are required wear their lanyards at all times, to comply with safeguarding requirements and maintain security on site.
15. BMAT employees are expected to be professionally dressed whenever they are at work, subject to the requirements of their role (e.g. due to the requirements of their role, caretakers and PE teachers are permitted to dress differently to other employees). This usually means business dress for all members of teaching staff, support staff and administrative staff. For example:
- a. Appropriate: Full smart trousers, skirts at or below knee length, shirts with a tie or one button undone and smart dark shoes.
 - b. Inappropriate: Tops with spaghetti straps, revealing necklines or sheer fabric, jeans, shorts or combat pants, flip flops or trainers.
16. If a BMAT employee is inappropriately dressed, they should be informed discretely and politely by their manager or a senior member of BMAT staff and advised how to avoid a repeat occurrence. An intentional failure to follow this advice may result in disciplinary action.

IV. ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY

17. BMAT employees are responsible for their own health, attendance and punctuality at work; and are required to strive for 100% attendance and punctuality, including INSET days.
18. Notwithstanding this, BMAT will offer support and advice where health, welfare or other issues contribute to levels of absence. BMAT appreciates that employees may be absent or late due to sickness, compassionate grounds, parental obligations and circumstances outside of their control (e.g. TfL strikes and domestic emergencies).
19. Teaching staff are expected to arrive on BMAT premises for 8:20am, except for the day when they attend briefing at 8.15am, and to be on time to every lesson and to ensure that their lessons finish on time so that student punctuality is learned and maintained. Teaching staff are expected to stay on BMAT premises until 3.20 unless there are meetings or other events (directed time).
20. Support staff are required to arrive to work in accordance with the working hours set out in their contract of employment, and to be flexible if a reasonable request is made for an early

start or late finish, as appropriate.

21. Colleagues must sign in and out if they are leaving / returning to the campus during the school day. Signing in and out kiosks are located at the lower and upper site Receptions
22. Unplanned absences:
 - a. On the first day of an unplanned absence, employees must telephone the Cover Manager before 7.00am to report their absence and provide any cover work to the appropriate person.
 - b. Employees must state the reason for the absence and the estimated length of absence.
 - c. Employees must repeat this step for every day of an unplanned absence (i.e. unless a return to work date has been agreed).
23. Planned absences:
 - a. One weeks' notice is required, unless otherwise agreed.
 - b. Employees must submit a leave of absence request form to the appropriate person(s), as set out in the [Special, Compassionate and Unpaid Leave Policy](#).
24. Holidays are to be taken outside of term-time for teachers and members of central or support staff who only work term-time; or in line with leave entitlements for members of BMAT staff who work through school holiday periods.
25. More information on attendance and punctuality may be found in individual contracts of employment and leave related BMAT policies and procedures.

V. SAFEGUARDING, WELFARE AND HEALTH AND SAFETY.

26. All BMAT employees have a duty of care to safeguard all BMAT students, to promote their welfare and to protect them from harm.
27. To fulfil this duty, all BMAT employees are required to:
 - c. Be aware of the signs of abuse, neglect or harm and take effective action if those signs are identified;
 - d. Always act in the child's best interests;
 - e. Work and be seen to work openly and transparently;
 - f. Read and ensure that they fully understand [Parts One and 5 of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'](#) [DfE, 2018], as required by law;
 - g. Read and ensure that they fully understand the [BMAT Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy](#);
 - h. Comply with the above documents and this Code at all times; and
 - i. Cooperate with colleagues and external agencies, as appropriate.
28. BMAT employees are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should avoid any

- conduct which would lead the reasonable person to question their motive or intent.
29. All BMAT employees undergo safeguarding training every year; members of staff with leadership responsibility on matters of safeguarding and child protection must undergo more specific training, as set out in the [BMAT Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy](#).
 30. BMAT accepts its responsibility for providing a safe and healthy environment for all staff, students and visitors. All BMAT employees are responsible for ensuring the health and safety of themselves and others who are affected by their actions. First aid should only be administered by trained members of staff.
 31. Further guidance on safeguarding and health and safety may be found in the following BMAT policies, which are available on the [BMAT website](#):
 - a. Safeguarding and Child Protection;
 - b. Health and Safety;
 - c. First-Aid;
 - d. Supporting Students with Medical Needs.

VI. EMPLOYEE AND STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS

32. All BMAT employees are in a position of trust: professional boundaries must be maintained at all times, and power and trust must not be misused or abused.
33. BMAT's ethos is to offer professional, education focused mentorship and not to imply a special, informal or personal friendship with any student of any age, ability, culture or leaning.
34. All BMAT employees are expected to appreciate the importance of not just having appropriate relationships with students but being perceived as such by all members of the BMAT community and by "the reasonable person"

General guidance

- Work in an open environment where possible. Employees in a one to one meeting with a student should keep the door open where possible or ensure that there is easy visual and physical access.
- Maintain a professional distance with students and do not allow students to become overly familiar (verbally, physically or otherwise).
- Avoid confrontation with students and always try to diffuse the situation. Do not shout or humiliate students; be firm and calm.
- Criticise behaviour rather than students themselves.
- Respond to questions about sensitive topics on the curriculum carefully and considerately.
- Only communicate with students from a BMAT email account or BMAT telephone when necessary; and never from a personal mobile phone or social media account.

Physical Contact with Students

- BMAT employees will inevitably come into accidental physical contact with students (e.g. on busy corridors).
- Intentional physical contact with students should be avoided, unless it is in line with the guidance in the [BMAT Student Behaviour Policy](#), which covers searching, screening and using reasonable force.
- Possible exceptions are to be determined by professional judgement. For example, handshakes at awards ceremonies or events are appropriate.

Infatuations

- The maintenance of professional boundaries should go some way to avoiding student infatuations.
- If a student becomes infatuated with a BMAT employee, this must be reported to the appropriate director of achievement and progress or a member of SLT as soon as reasonably practicable.
- The director of achievement and progress or member of SLT will record the concern in writing and decide whether or not it is serious enough to report to the school principal and/or BMAT CEO. If there is evidence that the infatuation is romantic, then it should be reported to a school principal and/or to the BMAT CEO.
- Parents/carers and external agencies should be informed and involved, as appropriate.

Communicating with students outside the classroom

- Avoid social contact with students, particularly outside of school hours.
- Do not give out or exchange personal contact details; it is only appropriate to access and use student contact details for agreed purposes and through agreed means (e.g. SIMS).
- Only communicate with students from their BMAT email account or from a BMAT telephone when necessary; do not communicate with students via mobile phones or social media – see Section VII of this Code.
- Do not establish or seek to establish social contact with students for the purpose of securing a friendship or any non-professional relationship.
- There may be occasions when there is social contact between BMAT employees and students (e.g. where a parent and teacher are part of the same social circle). These contacts will be easily recognised and openly acknowledged. Nevertheless, there must be awareness on the part of those working with students that some social contact can be misconstrued. BMAT employees should use their professional judgement in these situations and to report to their performance manager any contact that they have had with a student outside of school, that could be misinterpreted.
- It is an offence to have a sexual relationship with any student up to the age of 18 and will be seen as gross misconduct resulting in summary dismissal and police involvement. Even though technically legal beyond 18, such a relationship will be treated as a serious breach of professional trust and gross misconduct.
- Private tutoring of BMAT students must not be carried out on the premises and BMAT employees should not privately tutor BMAT students unless they have written permission to do so from their school principal and/or the BMAT CEO.
- Never photograph or film students using their personal devices – see Section VII of this Code.
- If, in exceptional circumstances, BMAT employees are required to drive a student in their car, they must ensure that their insurance covers them for business use, obtain parental permission in written form if possible, take more than one person unless there is an emergency, keep conversation professional and seat students in the back of the car where possible.
- BMAT employees must not visit the home of a student unless pre-arranged and unless the appropriate school principal or the BMAT CEO, and designated safeguarding lead, have been informed. The appointment must be logged the by the designated safeguarding lead.
- No student should ever be invited into the home of a BMAT employee.

Confidentiality and Data Protection

- BMAT employees, particularly those with access to SIMS and those with pastoral responsibilities, are privy to confidential data that is protected under the Data Protection Act 2018.
- Members of staff must ensure that they have read and understood the [BMAT Data Protection Policy](#). Student data should only be accessed or disclosed if doing so is permitted by relevant BMAT policies and the underlying legislation or guidance. See the [BMAT Data Protection Policy](#), [Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy](#), [Preventing Extremism Policy](#) and [Student Behaviour Policy](#).
- BMAT employees must never use confidential or personal information about a student for their advantage; or to intimidate, humiliate, or embarrass a student.
- Students should not be discussed by BMAT employees in front of other students.

Rewards, Sanctions and Favouritism

- All students have a right to be treated with respect and dignity, even in those circumstances where they display difficult or challenging behaviour. BMAT employees must not use any form of degrading treatment to punish students.
- Student rewards and sanctions must stem from an agreed policy for reinforcing positive behaviour and managing poor behaviour. This ensures consistency, transparency, clarity of expectation and guards BMAT employees against allegations of favouritism or inappropriateness.
- BMAT employees should refer to:
 - The [BMAT Student Behaviour Policy](#);
 - The [BMAT Equality and Diversity Policy](#) ; and
 - Behaviour management initiatives/policies developed by departments, directors of achievement and progress and senior members of staff.
- BMAT employees should ensure that the motivation behind the giving of rewards is clear to all students in order to avoid any misunderstandings of intent.
- BMAT employees must not give students gifts personally; any appropriate gifts should come from BMAT as an organisation or one of its constituent schools

Gifts and Hospitality - See the [BMAT Finance Policy](#).

- Students and their parents/carers may give gifts as a token of appreciation. This Code is not designed to stop that practice. BMAT employees may accept gifts from students and their parents/carers provided that they are small tokens of appreciation, which comply with the relevant section of the BMAT Finance Policy.
- School Principals and the BMAT Chief Operating Officer should be made aware of any student who is giving gifts on a regular basis, or any student or parent/carer who expects something in return for a gift.

VII. RESPONSIBLE TECHNOLOGY USE

More guidance may be found in the following BMAT policies, which are available on the [BMAT website](#):

- Safeguarding and Child Protection;
- CCTV; and
- Data Protection.

“BMAT employees must practise safe and responsible online behaviours; communication with students, by whatever method, must take place within clear and explicit professional boundaries.”

General guidance

- The appropriate use of technology by students is an important part of the [BMAT Student Behaviour Policy](#), so all BMAT employees should lead by example.
- Personal mobile devices should be switched off or silent at all times, and only used during personal or non-contact time (unless there is an emergency).
- Personal mobile devices may only be used for business reasons (e.g. to take records of attendance, achievement and misconduct) if this has been agreed across BMAT or within one of its constituent schools.
- BMAT employees must not access any inappropriate material on the BMAT network or on BMAT premises.
- BMAT employees must not share any personal information with students; and must ensure that all communications are transparent and open to scrutiny.
- BMAT employees must ensure that students are not exposed to any unsuitable material, that any media shown to students is age appropriate and that appropriate action is taken if any BMAT student is found to have accessed or shared inappropriate material during school hours and/or with other BMAT students.

Inappropriate use of technology by BMAT employees:

- Disciplinary and/or legal action may be taken against BMAT employees who fail to use technology appropriately and in line with this Code.
- Minor and/or reckless failures to comply will typically be dealt with informally by managers. The employee in breach will normally be asked to issue an apology and an undertaking to BMAT, students or parents/carers.
- Repeated, serious and/or intentional failures to comply will be formally investigated and may result in disciplinary action, including dismissal, and referral to the police and/or social services.

CCTV footage must be accessed and retained in accordance with the [BMAT CCTV Policy](#).

Contact with the media:

- BMAT employees must seek permission from their school principal or the BMAT CEO to communicate with the media on behalf of BMAT.
- Members of staff must not post content to social media under or in association with the name of BMAT without authorisation from their school principal or the BMAT CEO.

BMAT email accounts

- BMAT employees are required to keep their BMAT email accounts secure and will be prompted to change passwords regularly.
- Emails are likely to include personal data and sensitive personal data belonging to students, parents/carers, colleagues and others. All BMAT employees are required to understand the [BMAT Data Protection Policy](#) and to follow it when using their BMAT email accounts. Any data breaches or data protection related queries must be reported to the BMAT Data Protection Officer.
- BMAT email accounts should only be used for BMAT business. Access away from BMAT premises and/or on personal devices must be secure and appropriate.
- BMAT email accounts should be checked regularly and emails should be deleted if they are not needed and in line with the [BMAT Data Protection Policy](#) and Retention Schedule. “Out of office” replies should be sent as appropriate e.g. during periods of leave.
- Any use of BMAT email accounts for illegal, threatening, offensive, obscene, pornographic or other inappropriate purposes may result in disciplinary and/or legal action.
- The receipt of spam emails, fraudulent emails, inappropriate emails and emails containing viruses should be reported to IT Staff and/or to the BMAT Data Protection Officer.
- To ensure a healthy work-life balance and wellbeing for BMAT employees, emails should only be sent from BMAT email accounts within normal working hours. BMAT employees are not expected to respond to emails outside these hours unless there is a clear need to do so (e.g. an urgent safeguarding concern or other emergency). Even in these cases, BMAT employees are not required to check their work email accounts outside of normal working hours, and it is expected that those who need to be contacted in emergencies (e.g. designated safeguarding leads) will be reachable by phone if necessary.
- BMAT employees will not be sanctioned for sending emails to colleagues outside of normal working hours, though they are expected not to. However, they may be sanctioned if they attempt to insist that any such emails are read or responded to outside normal working hours, depending on the circumstances.

VIII. CONDUCT OUTSIDE OF WORK

35. Unlike some forms of employment, working for BMAT means that an employee’s conduct outside of work could have an impact on their role. Unlawful behaviour, at or outside of work may lead to disciplinary action, including dismissal.
36. However, being investigated by the police, receiving a caution or being charged will not automatically put employment is at risk.
37. Employees must:
 - a. Uphold the law at work;
 - b. Never commit a crime away from work which could damage public confidence in them or BMAT or which makes them unsuitable for their role.
 - c. Inform their school principal and/or the BMAT CEO as soon as possible if they are questioned by the police, charged with, or convicted of, any crime whilst they are employed at BMAT (this includes outside of their working hours). BMAT will consider whether this

damages public confidence in BMAT or makes the employee unsuitable to perform their role.

38. If a visitor is found in the possession or under the influence of illegal substances/drugs on BMAT premises: the incident will be reported to the police immediately and the individual will be issued with a ban from BMAT premises.
39. If a BMAT employee is found in the possession or under the influence of illegal drugs on BMAT premises, s/he will be escorted as soon as possible from BMAT premises, the matter will be reported to the appropriate school principal and/or the BMAT CEO, and recorded in writing, within 24 hours. The matter will be reported to the police as soon as practicable. In line with the BMAT [Disciplinary Policy and Procedure](#), the matter will be treated as gross misconduct.
40. BMAT employees must not engage in conduct outside work which could seriously damage the reputation and standing of BMAT, the employee's own reputation or the reputation of other members of the BMAT community.
41. BMAT employees should be aware that any conduct that could impact their ability or suitability to perform their role, or BMAT's reputation, will be addressed under the [BMAT Disciplinary Policy and Procedure](#). This includes the use of social media (see Section VII of this Code).
42. BMAT employees who are in a relationship with a colleague, parent/carer, or any other person associated with BMAT must inform their school principal and/or the BMAT CEO, and ensure that this does not create a conflict of interest or affect their professional judgement or performance in any way.

IX. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY.

43. BMAT employees must treat students, colleagues, parents/carers and members of the public with dignity and respect; and must not make discriminatory comments on the basis of gender, disability, appearance, sexuality, age, race, religion or belief, gender reassignment and marital or civil partnership status.
44. All members of BMAT staff are required to understand, avoid and act against any form of discrimination and bullying against members of the BMAT community.
45. More guidance on BMAT's expectations regarding equality and diversity may be found in the following BMAT policies and procedures, which are available on the [BMAT website](#):
 - a. Equality and Diversity;
 - b. Dignity at Work;
 - c. Student Behaviour;
 - d. SEND

X. BUDGETARY/FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

46. BMAT employees with budget responsibility must familiarise themselves with their duties and responsibilities, as set out in the [BMAT Finance Policy](#).
47. All members of BMAT staff should read the [BMAT Finance Policy](#); and pay particular attention to content on the register of interests, gifts and hospitality, charging and remissions and risk management (anti-fraud, corruption and bribery).

XI. SMOKING AND ALCOHOL

48. All BMAT premises are non-smoking at all times. This applies to BMAT employees, visitors, agency workers and contractors.
49. These groups must not consume alcohol on BMAT premises during the school day or at an unauthorised event/function outside of the school day.
50. Being under the influence of alcohol on BMAT premises during the school day will be treated as gross misconduct.
51. If any member of these groups is found to be under the influence of alcohol during the school day, they will be escorted off BMAT premises and the incident will be reported as soon as possible to a member of SLT. Within 24 hours, the incident will be recorded in writing and the school principal and/or BMAT CEO will be informed.

XII. WHISTLEBLOWING

52. Whistle blowing is the mechanism by which employees can voice their concerns in good faith and without fear of repercussion.
53. BMAT has a clear and accessible [Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure](#); members of staff should familiarise themselves with its contents and report any genuine whistleblowing concerns in accordance with its provisions.

XIII. TEACHERS' STANDARDS

54. BMAT requires all members of its teaching staff to comply with the [Teachers' Standards](#), which defines "*the behaviour and attitudes which settle required standard for conduct throughout a teacher's career*" [DfE].

STAFF DECLARATION

This Code should be signed by all BMAT employees and should be provided to all new members of BMAT staff during their induction, together with:

- The BMAT Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedure; and
- Part One and Part Five of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' ; and

- The Teachers' Standards (for teaching staff).

By signing below, I confirm that I have read and understood the terms of this Conduct as well as the terms of the documents, policies and procedures referred to therein. In addition, as a BMAT employee, I confirm that I will act in accordance with this Code and the documents, policies and procedures referred to therein, at all times.

I accept that my failure to do so may result in disciplinary or capability action being taken against me; and that in the event of an extreme breach of this Code or the documents, policies and procedures referred to therein, legal action may be taken against me.

Name:

Signed:

Dated: