

POLICY/PROCEDURE: CODE OF CONDUCT

Approval required by:	Executive	Y	Governing Body	N
Senior Lead:	Vice Principal Corporate Services			
Responsible Manager:	Director of Human Resources			
Date approved:	November 2024			
Date to be reviewed:	November 2027			

Significant changes to policy

Inclusion of the college's values (October 2018).

Updated to reflect obligations when posting on social media (November 2020).

Updated to incorporate access to the Whistleblowing Policy (November 2022)

Impact of changes

Staff will have a further reference to the Whistleblowing Policy to raise concerns that are in the public interest to disclose (November 2022).

SCOPE AND PURPOSE

The Code of Conduct seeks to clarify the standards of behaviour expected of all employees who are employed by Barnsley College. The code seeks to promote consistency, and ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and obligations, not just to the college but also to our learners, partners and to the local communities that we serve. Equally the code details those specific obligations and responsibilities that are recognised and will be undertaken by the college.

The college seeks a partnership of agreed obligations, responsibilities and values that match the standards expected from a professional and dedicated workforce and a responsible employer. Directors, Managers and Governors have a particular responsibility to ensure that the college operates at the highest levels of behaviour. Employees are expected to conduct themselves at all times in accordance with the provisions of the code. The failure of any member of staff to do so may result in action being taken under the relevant procedure.

BACKGROUND**General**

Barnsley College fully endorses the following values:

- Integrity.
- Objectivity.
- Accountability.
- Openness.
- Honesty.
- Leadership.
- Responsibility.

This is in addition to the college's values, which are:

- Supportive.
- Caring.
- Respectful.
- Aspirational.
- Genuine.

The college seeks to incorporate these values in all aspects of its operations. The college recognises its obligations to learners, employees, partners, suppliers, other institutions and the wider community it serves.

The college will adhere to the principles of natural justice in all its dealings with individuals.

The college will seek to encourage a culture of openness in order that all matters appertaining to the running of the college can be discussed honestly and frankly with employees.

The college is committed to securing equality of opportunity for all employees.

The college recognises that all employees have the freedom to question received wisdom and to put forward new ideas and controversial opinions without fear of loss of employment, status or privilege or of any retaliatory action being taken against them for expressing such views.

The college will not deliberately give inadequate or misleading information on any of its services.

In all advertising and public communications the college will avoid untruths and misleading statements.

The college will deal with all complaints made to it fairly, openly and efficiently.

Employees

All employees will abide by the terms and conditions of their employment and conduct themselves in a professional, reasonable and responsible manner when undertaking their duties. Employees will comply fully with all lawful and reasonable instructions from their managers.

All employees will display integrity, honesty and impartiality in their duties. They will deal with colleagues, learners and all other individuals with respect, courtesy and politeness.

Where individuals are part of a group that has arrived at a consensus view/decision they should not seek to subsequently undermine that by their actions.

The college has no wish to introduce any specific dress code, believing that common sense should be the key arbiter in dealing with this issue. In view of the many arenas in which college employees operate and work, conformity of dress is neither practical, nor desired. As general guidance, employees should observe an appropriate conventional standard of dress whilst at work. Clothes and personal appearance should be clean, smart, and appropriate to both the duties undertaken by the individual when at work and to the usual standards of dress that would normally be expected by learners, partners, suppliers or members of the public. Employees should also be guided by any industry standards that would normally be expected within the areas they work in/teach to and the need not to dress in a way that could create potential disciplinary problems.

Where the college provides a staff uniform then this must be worn at all times as must any clothing supplied in order to comply with Health and Safety Standards.

Employees will, at all times, respect the dignity of their colleagues, learners and service users and not engage in any behaviour which may undermine good working relationships. In particular staff should not use any inappropriate language including swearing. Teaching staff may, on occasions, need to have recourse to actions necessary to exercise their legitimate authority in a classroom situation that would not be appropriate when dealing with colleagues, e.g. shouting.

Employees will respect all information deemed confidential.

Employees with responsibilities for learners at college (whatever the age of the learner) enjoy an unequal power relationship with them encapsulated within the legitimate authority of their role. As such they must neither encourage nor engage in any personal relationships with individual learners but maintain a professional and objective outlook. This means they must not contact students on personal phones or through social networking sites not authorised by the college and where the communication is not for legitimate purposes. Specific guidance on child protection issues is contained within the Safeguarding Policy.

Employees who are engaged in a personal relationship at work with a fellow employee should not engage in public displays of affection within the college. Any such relationship should be disclosed to the senior employee's Line Manager where they work within the same team. (If both parties wish to keep the relationship confidential to the manager, this will be observed). Employees must be aware that certain responsibilities may be reallocated as a result of the relationship e.g. appraisals, disciplinary/grievance hearings etc. to avoid potential conflicts.

Employees who engage in social media must ensure that any views that they express when they are identifying themselves as members of the college workforce do not bring the college into disrepute. Staff should ensure that they follow the college's Social Media, Content and File Sharing Policy and Acceptable Use of the Internet Policy.

Employees who feel that they have legitimate concerns about danger, fraud or other illegal or unethical conduct connected with the workplace, be it of the employer or of their fellow employees that would be in the public interest to disclose, should raise these in accordance with the college's Whistleblowing Policy.

Managers

In addition to their individual responsibilities as staff, Managers have additional managerial obligations. These responsibilities are the same irrespective of the number of staff managed or the seniority of the manager.

Managers will ensure clear and unambiguous reporting mechanisms are in place for them and their staff to communicate with each other. They will ensure that all staff who report to them have the opportunity to discuss matters frankly and in confidence. They will actively listen to staff's concerns and issues and be supportive in dealing with any issues arising.

Managers will ensure that confidential or sensitive information is handled properly and not misused.

Managers will respond to any staff issues with compassion, tact and discretion and report back to the appropriate individual as quickly as possible.

Managers will not abuse their seniority to influence, intimidate or place unreasonable pressure on staff who report to them.

Managers will not shout or use inappropriate language to their staff. To do so may be viewed as intimidation or bullying.

Managers will lead their teams by example and take a lead in the day to day mission and direction of their particular college area.

Managers will ensure that all safeguarding concerns, including low level concerns, are immediately reported to the Human Resources department and/or safeguarding team for advice and guidance.

Managers will ensure that all concerns raised by employees will be dealt with appropriately and, if necessary, in line with the college's Grievance Procedure or Whistleblowing Policy.

Governing Body

It is a condition of appointment that all Governors sign the college Code of Conduct for Governors. The Code indicates the standards of conduct and accountability which are expected of Governors to enable them to understand their legal and ethical duties and to assist them in carrying out those duties. The Code promotes effective, well informed and accountable college governance and is available for inspection via the Clerk to the Corporation.

Monitoring

It will be the responsibility of the SMT lead to monitor the effectiveness of this policy by:

- Assessing the nature and frequency of complaints or cases and identifying any patterns which need to be addressed.
- Monitoring individual complaints or cases to ensure that they are effectively resolved and that no victimisation occurs.

As part of the process, the Head of Human Resources will consult with the trade unions on changes to this Policy and Procedures.

While this policy is to be followed by all employees of the college, it does not form part of an employee's Contract of Employment.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

An EqIA is not required for this policy.

LINKED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- Disciplinary Procedure.
- Safeguarding Policy.
- Appraisal Policy.
- Capability Procedure.
- Grievance Procedure.
- Bullying and Harassment Policy.

- Single Equality Scheme.
- Control and Restrain Policy.
- Complaints Policy.
- Social Media, Content and File Sharing Policy.
- Acceptable Use of the Internet Policy.
- Whistleblowing Policy

LOCATION AND ACCESS TO THIS POLICY

This policy is available on the college's intranet.