



Constitution

1. Name

The name of the organisation will be The Bedford Borough Learning Exchange (BBLE).

2. Aims

- The mutual support and understanding of educational practitioners in Bedford Borough.
- The regular sharing of good and emergent practice.
- Consensus building and collaborative planning.
- The development of effective working partnerships across the system.
- Maximising the resources available to BBLE partner organisations.
- Engaging in systematic programmes of innovation and improvement to improve the quality of learning and drive up levels of achievement and improve individual life chances.

3. Membership

- All educational establishments in Bedford Borough are eligible members.
- Representatives from other organisations are members by invitation.
- The organisation will be funded through a subscription fee as set out section 9 which will be updated annually.
- Each subscribed member is entitled to one vote.
- An up to date list of all members will be kept by the BBLE Administrator.

4. Equal Opportunities

Bedford Borough Learning Exchange will not discriminate on the grounds of gender, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, sexuality, disability, religious or political belief, marital status or age.

5. Committee and Officers

The management of the BBLE will be undertaken by a Development Group, which will be elected every year in June. The term of office will be from 1st September to 31st August.

The Development Group will consist of:

- Chair (elected)
- Vice Chair (elected)
- The representative of each cluster of schools
- 1 representative from the Local Authority
- 1 representative from the University of Bedfordshire
- 1 representative from Bedford College
- 1 representative from The Harpur Trust
- 1 representative from each of the Teaching Schools
- Co-opted members as deemed appropriate

The chair, vice chair, co-ordinators and cluster representatives will be elected each June to enable them to start their term of office at the beginning of the academic year. If the cluster representative is unable to attend they should send a deputy to attend in their absence.

The BBLE Chair will chair both the Development Group meeting and the main meeting. The Administrator will be responsible for the agendas and minutes of meetings and their distribution.

6. Meetings

6.1 Annual General Meeting

The September BBLE meeting will act as the Annual General Meeting. All members will be notified at least one week before the date of the meeting, giving the venue date and time.

Nomination forms for election of officers will be sent out by the Administrator in June. In the event of there being more than one nominee for each position a postal election will take place.

The quorum for the September meeting will be 10% of the membership.

At the AGM (September meeting):

- A summary of the year's work will be presented
- The annual accounts will be presented
- Officers, Cluster Representatives and Development Group members will take office

6.2 Development Group Meetings

The Development Group will meet nine times a year. The Administrator will inform all Development Group members of the meeting at least 7 days before the meeting.

The Administrator will call a special meeting at the request of the majority of the Development Group giving a written request stating the reasons. The meeting will take place within 21 days of the request. The quorum for the Development Group will be eight members.

6.3 BBLE Meetings

BBLE meetings are open to all members and will be held six times a year. Meeting dates and times are set for the whole year by the June meeting and sent to all members. Meeting agendas will be available one week before each meeting giving the venue, date and time. The Administrator will notify members by email. All papers for the meeting will be put onto the website (members area).

Academy Trust organisations: It is the responsibility of the schools that are part of a Multi Academy Trust (MAT) to keep the MATs informed of BBLE progress as they see fit, as schools do now with Governing Bodies, rather than have them directly involved through the email chain and attending meetings.

7. Accountability

This Development Group is democratically accountable via annual election to all members of the BBLE, and its work is subject to regular scrutiny and review by the various BBLE forums (e.g. full, phase and cluster meetings). The Development Group will conduct itself according to the letter and the spirit of the seven principles of public life. (Taken from the report of the Committee on Standards of public life, the Nolan Committee 1996).

7.1 Principles

The work of the BBLE will be pursued in the letter and spirit of the seven principles of public life.*

- i **Selflessness**
BBLE members act solely in terms of the public interest.
- ii **Integrity**
BBLE members should avoid placing themselves under any financial or other obligations to outside individuals or organisations.
- iii **Objectivity**
In carrying out public business BBLE members should make choices based on merit.
- iv **Accountability**
BBLE members are accountable for the decisions and actions and should be available for appropriate scrutiny.
- v **Openness**
BBLE members should strive to be as open as possible about the decisions and actions that they take and only restrict information when the wider public interest demands it.
- vi **Honesty**
BBLE members have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public roles and to take clear steps to resolve any conflicts in a way that protects the public interest.
- vii **Leadership**
BBLE members should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

8. Rules of Procedure for all Meetings

Issues that arise at any meeting will be discussed openly and the meeting will seek to find general agreement. If a consensus cannot be reached a vote will be taken and a decision will be made by a simple majority of members present. If the number of votes cast on each side is equal, the chair of the meeting shall have an additional casting vote.

9. Finances

BBLE funds will be kept using two cost centres at Biddenham School. There will be one for income and one for expenditure. Up to date accounts will be available at Development Group meetings and at the AGM. The financial administration costs will be paid on a 'per transaction' basis.

Subscription Fee invoices will be sent out to all members in September/October. Fees will be £250 per person with the Teaching Schools joined to a full paying member will be a £100 admin fee.

10. Amendments to the Constitution

Any proposal to amend the constitution must be given to the Administrator in writing. The proposal must then be circulated with the notice of an appropriate meeting. Any proposal to amend the constitution will require a two thirds majority of those present.

11. Review of the Constitution

A review will take place at the March meeting of the BBLE Development Group each year.

12. Dissolution

If a meeting, by simple majority, decides that it is necessary to close down the BBLE a special general meeting may be called to do so. The sole business of the meeting will be to dissolve the BBLE. If it is agreed to dissolve the BBLE all remaining money and other assets, once outstanding debts have been paid, will be given to the Bedford Borough to be used to support schools.

This constitution was agreed and signed at the BBLE Development Meeting dated: 19th October 2017

Signed: Vanessa Coleman
BBLE Chair