**BHA Code of Practice and key processes**

# The purpose of the Code of Practice

This code is a statement of the ethical values and principles that underpin good volunteering in schools and provides guidance about what is expected of BHA school speakers. The code therefore sets out the basis for safe, effective, and compassionate work in schools. It provides reassurance to schools about the professionalism of the service by confirming that all our school speakers have been appropriately trained through the British Humanist Association training for school speakers.

As a volunteer you are not considered a member of BHA staff as defined in most kinds of employment legislation. However, you are representing the organisation, and that requires certain commitments from you. It is important that school speakers recognise that conversations about beliefs, values, and moral dilemmas can be sensitive and carry the potential for causing offence. It is therefore essential that school speakers follow the Code of Practice to avoid accusations of misconduct.

Any complaint made against a school speaker will be assessed using the Code of Practice as a basis for judging the legitimacy of the complaint.

**The Code of Practice**

1. I will treat all staff and students with courtesy and respect.
2. I will respect the guidance we receive from the school on its aims, ethos, and policies.
3. I will plan our involvement to fit with the area of study which the students are learning about and am happy to discuss all details of the visit with teachers in advance.
4. I seek to use engaging, cooperative, and active teaching methods where possible and I will communicate at appropriate levels for the age group(s) concerned.
5. I will make clear to students who I am and who I represent.
6. I believe that children and young people should be informed about all significant religions and beliefs, including non-religious approaches to life.
7. I am willing to share my own experiences, beliefs, and insights, but will not try to impose them on others. I respect the rights of students and adults in the school to hold beliefs and values which may be different from my own, and I will not seek to undermine those in any way.
8. The purpose of my involvement with schools is to provide information about the humanist philosophy and approach to morality, and to support teachers to enable children and young people to ask questions and discuss these matters.
9. I am happy to work together with people of all religions and beliefs, and will be pleased to participate in joint approaches to ‘Religious Education’, or any other appropriate setting or subject.

**BHA Values:**

In all our diverse work, we strive to embody our values by:

* engaging in dialogue and debate rationally, intelligently and with attention to evidence;
* recognising the dignity of individuals and treating them with fairness and respect;
* respecting and promoting freedom, democracy, human rights, and the rule of law;
* cooperating with others for the common good, including with those of different beliefs;
* celebrating human achievement, progress and potential.

**Key Processes**

As well as signing up to the Code of Practice, School Speakers will need to agree to carry out a number of processes to fulfil the requirements of the role.

Following these processes, help us to maintain a high-quality, professional service. The data and feedback gathered also helps the BHA to target publicity for the programme appropriately and to improve the service, and it supports our campaigns and public affairs work. Good communication also helps us to support schools speakers effectively, and allows us to recognise all the great work our school speakers are doing.

**School speakers agree to:**

**Essential:**

* Be a member of the British Humanist Association
* Publicise the BHA’s online ‘Request a school speaker’ booking form as the way new schools can request a school speaker: [humanism.org.uk/education/teachers/request-volunteer-school](https://humanism.org.uk/education/teachers/request-volunteer-school/)
* Ensure the BHA is aware of all school visits by completing the Google form at [goo.gl/forms/d73gF3T0Tv](http://goo.gl/forms/d73gF3T0Tv) if a school has not filled out the ‘Request a school speaker’ booking form
* Inform schools and the BHA if they need to cancel or change the date of a visit
* Keep the school speakers coordinator informed of any requests they are unable to carry out and any suggestions they might have of alternative speakers
* Not pass on requests to non-accredited BHA School speakers
* Inform the school speakers coordinator when a school visit has been completed, cancelled, or rearranged for a different date
* Report any complaints to the appropriate person according to the complaints procedure
* Commit to CPD (see the school speaker handbook for further information)

**Desirable:**

* Join the School Speakers Facebook Group and the school speakers section of the BHA’s Group Hub
* Support other school speakers and share resources and experiences
* Make a contribution to the development of the School Speakers Progamme (e.g. by assisting with promotion, training, mentoring, CPD)

**The BHA agree to:**

* Provide training and offer CPD to school speakers
* Ensure that school speakers are given accurate and relevant information before making a visit to a school
* Offer school speakers access to the school speakers Facebook page and the school speakers area of the groups hub
* Make available a wide range of resources through [understandinghumanism.org.uk](http://understandinghumanism.org.uk/)
* Return feedback from schools to school speakers
* Maintain good communication with school speakers by replying to enquiries and informing them about changes to requests

If either the BHA or the school speaker feels that this agreement is not being maintained, a phone call will be arranged for further discussion. If you have any grievances you wish to raise then please contact: Luke Donnellan, Head of Education, on luke@humanism.org.uk.

Please type your name on the form below and return it to us electronically.

You do not need to print and sign this form. We do not need a hard copy.

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| I agree to adhere to the school speakers code of practice and the key processes:Name:Date: | Signed on behalf of the British Humanist Association by:Luke Donnellan, Head of Education |