



# Code of Conduct

## Review Summary

|               |                       |
|---------------|-----------------------|
| Adopted:      | <i>September 2019</i> |
| Review Cycle: | <i>Annually</i>       |
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## **Objective, Scope and Principles**

This Code of Conduct is designed to give clear guidance on the standards of behaviour all employees are expected to observe. Employees working in schools are role models, are in a position of influence and must demonstrate behaviour that sets a good example to all the pupils. As a member of a school community, every employee has an individual responsibility to maintain their reputation and the reputation of the school and the Trust, whether inside or outside working hours.

In adopting this policy, the Trust is committed to working towards creating a working environment in which all employees are treated fairly, with dignity and respect and where unacceptable behaviour will not be tolerated.

This Code of Conduct applies to all employees. This Code of Conduct does not form part of the contract of employment.

Casual and self-employed workers, agency staff and volunteers working in the school would also be expected to observe the standards of behaviour set out in this document.

In addition to this Code of Conduct, all employees engaged to work under Conditions of Service for Schools Teachers have a statutory obligation to adhere to the most recent 'Teachers' Standards' and in relation to this policy, Part 2 of the Teachers' Standards - Personal and Professional Conduct.

### **1. Compliance**

Employees must familiarise themselves and comply with all policies and procedures adopted by the Trust and within the school they are deployed to work within. Employees must complete their annual declaration to confirm they have read, understood and agreed to comply with the Code of Conduct.

### **2. Disciplinary Action**

Employees should be aware that a failure to comply with this Code of Conduct could result in disciplinary action including but not limited to summary dismissal.

### **3. Setting an Example**

3.1 This Code helps all employees to understand what behaviour is and is not acceptable. Regard should be given to the disciplinary rules set out in the Trust Disciplinary Policy.

3.2 Employees must not discriminate, harass or victimise someone because they have or are perceived to have a protected characteristic as defined by the Equality Act 2010 or are associated with someone who has a protected characteristic. Protected characteristics are:

- Age
- Gender Reassignment
- Pregnancy/ Maternity
- Sex
- Religion or Belief
- Disability
- Marriages / Civil Partnership
- Race
- Sexual Orientation

- 3.3 Employees must set good examples of behaviour and demonstrate high standards of conduct in order to encourage our pupils to do the same. Examples of standards expected of employees can be found in Appendix 1.
- 3.4 Employees must avoid using inappropriate or offensive language at all times.
- 3.5 Employees must avoid putting themselves at risk of allegations of abusive or unprofessional conduct.

#### **4. Safeguarding Pupils**

- 4.1 Employees have a duty to safeguard pupils from physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, verbal abuse and neglect and promote the welfare of Children.
- 4.2 The duty to safeguard pupils includes the duty to report concerns about a pupil or colleague to the school's Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) for Child Protection.
- 4.3 Employees must make themselves aware of the name of the school's current DSO. This information is available on notice boards in the staffroom and around the school.
- 4.4 Employees must take reasonable care of pupils under their supervision with the aim of ensuring their safety and welfare.
- 4.5 Employees must never promise a pupil that they will not act on information that they are told by the pupil.
- 4.6 Employees are provided with access to the School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Trust's Whistleblowing Procedure and must become familiar with these documents.
- 4.7 Employees are provided with access to a copy of the DfE Statutory Guidance Document 'Keeping children safe in education' and must read the document.
- 4.8 Employees are provided with access to a copy of the 'Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education Settings' and must read the document.

#### **5. Relationships with Pupils**

- 5.1 Employees must declare any relationships that they may have with pupils (including former pupils under 18) outside of school; this may include mutual membership of social groups, tutoring, or family connections/ relationships with parents. Employees should not assume that the School/Trust are aware of any such connections. A declaration form is available at Appendix 2a of this document for declaration of such relationships.
- 5.2 Where an employee is a parent/guardian of a pupil, the employee should use the form in Appendix 2b rather than form 2a.

- 5.3 Physical relationships with pupils, regardless of their age, are strictly forbidden and may lead to a criminal conviction. This may also apply to former pupils and advice must be sought from the Designated Safeguarding Lead before commencing any such relationship.
- 5.4 If a student or parents attempts to make contact with an employee through a non-professional source (personal social media account/telephone number/home address) the employee must not respond using their personal account(s) and this contact should be declared to the Headteacher using the schools procedures (for the Headteacher this should be the Chair of Governors and copied to the Chief Executive Officer).
- 5.5 Employees must only contact pupils via school authorised mechanisms. At no time should personal telephone numbers, email addresses or communication routes via personal accounts on social media platforms be used to communicate with pupils.
- 5.6 Employees must treat pupils with respect and dignity and must not demean or undermine them, their parents or carers, or work colleagues. Employees must not behave in a way that may be perceived as sarcastic, nor should they make jokes at the expense of pupils, embarrass or humiliate pupils, discriminate against or favour pupils.

## **6. Professional Relationships with Colleagues**

- 6.1 Employees must help create a positive working environment and behave in a manner which ensures and promotes acceptable behaviour. Examples of acceptable behaviour and unacceptable behaviour can be found in Appendix 1.
- 6.2 Employees must strive toward and promote harmonious and professional relationships with all colleagues. It is understood that, at times, differences of opinions can occur and at such times it is expected that employees will attempt to resolve matters informally in the first instance unless they feel unable to do so in which case they should refer the matter to their line manager.

## **7. Honesty and Integrity**

- 7.1 Employees must maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their work. This includes the handling and claiming of money and the use of school/Trust property and facilities.
- 7.2 Employees must comply with the Bribery Act 2010. A person may be guilty of an offence of bribery under this act if they offer, promise or give financial advantage or other advantage to someone; or if they request, agree or accept, or receive a bribe from another person. If you believe that a person has failed to comply with the Bribery Act, you should refer your concerns to the Trust Whistleblowing.
- 7.3 Gifts and hospitality can only be accepted when in accordance with the Trust's Gift and Hospitality Policy. Employees should not accept gifts or hospitality from suppliers or associates of the school/Trust, with the exception of 'one off' token gifts from parents. Personal gifts from employees to pupils are inappropriate and could be misinterpreted

and may lead to disciplinary action. A record will be kept of all gifts received in accordance with the policy.

- 7.4 Employees must make known to the Headteacher / Member of Executive Leadership Team all financial and non-financial interests that could bring them into conflict with the school's interests. This should also be registered with the Clerk to Trustees. Any enquiries should be sent to the Clerk to Trustees or Director of Finance
- 7.5 Where employees have any involvement in the procurement of services, all personal relationships with contractors, or potential contractors should be made known by the employee to the Headteacher / Member of Executive Leadership Team with responsibility for the contract. This should also be registered with the Clerk to Trustees.
- 7.6 Employees must not be involved in any recruitment process if they have a personal relationship with the applicant inside or outside of work.
- 7.7 Without fear of recrimination, employees can report any impropriety or breach of procedures using the process laid out within the Trust's Whistleblowing Policy.

## **8. Conduct Outside of Work**

- 8.1 Employees must not engage in conduct outside work which could damage the reputation and standing of the school/Trust or the employee's own reputation or the reputation of other members of the Trust community.
- 8.2 Criminal offences that involve violence or possession or use of illegal drugs or sexual misconduct will be regarded as unacceptable and dealt with under the Trust's Disciplinary Policy.
- 8.3 Behaviour or activities that have the potential to make employees unsuitable for the role they are employed to perform will be dealt with under the Disciplinary Policy.

## **9. Employment outside of School**

- 9.1 Employees may undertake work outside school, either paid or voluntary, provided that it does not conflict with the interests of the school/ Trust nor be to a level which may contravene the working time regulations or affect an individual's work performance in the school. In line with the Statement of Particulars, all teachers /support employees who are employed on or above Grade E must seek the consent of the Headteacher/ Member of Executive Leadership Team should they wish to take up employment outside the school/Trust.

## **10. Computer, Mobile Devices and Online Activities**

- 10.1 Employees must exercise caution when using information technology and be aware of the risks to themselves and others. All Employees should adhere to the requirements set out in the Computer, Mobile Device and Online Use Policy at all times both inside and outside of work.

- 10.2 Employees must not use equipment belonging to the school to access pornography; neither should personal equipment containing pornographic images or links to them be brought into the workplace or connected to the Trust network. Doing so will raise serious concerns about the suitability of the employee to continue to work in schools.
- 10.3 Employees must not engage in inappropriate use of social network sites which may bring themselves, the school, the school community, the Trust or employer into disrepute. Employees should ensure that they adopt suitably high security settings on any personal profiles they may have.
- 10.4 Employees must exercise caution in their use of all social media or any other web-based presence that they may have, including written content, videos or photographs, and views expressed either directly or by 'liking' certain pages or posts established by others. This may also include the use of dating websites where employees could encounter pupils either with their own profile or acting covertly.
- 10.5 Employees must not respond to negative comments posted online but bring this to the attention of the Headteacher.
- 10.6 Photographs/still images or video footage of pupils should only be taken using school equipment, for purposes authorised by the school and in accordance with GDPR regulations. The use of such material should always be transparent and only occur where parental consent has been given. The records should be stored and destroyed in accordance with the Data Protection Policy.
- 10.7 Staff must only contact parents and carers using school telephone numbers, email addresses and social networking sites that are set up for professional purposes and approved by their line manager. It is prohibited for staff to use their personal contact details to contact parents and carers.

## **11. Confidentiality**

- 11.1 Employees must adhere to the requirements of the Trust's Data Protection Policy.
- 11.2 Employees must not reveal confidential information about pupils or their parents or carers except to those colleagues who have a professional role in relation to the pupil and in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations 2018 and the Data Protection Act.
- 11.3 Employees are likely at some point to witness actions which need to be confidential. For example, where a pupil is bullied by another pupil (or by another employee), this needs to be reported and dealt with in accordance with the appropriate school procedure. It must not be discussed outside the school, including with the pupil's parent or carer, nor with colleagues in the school except with a senior member of staff with the appropriate authority to deal with the matter.
- 11.4 Where there is a genuine requirement to transfer data which is of a sensitive nature, appropriate systems should be utilised to ensure that the data is encrypted and only when essential, postal mail is sent securely using a special delivery service or equivalent.

11.5 Any breaches in the transfer of confidential information should be reported immediately to the Trust Data Protection Officer.

## **12. Dress and Appearance**

12.1 Employees must dress in a manner that is appropriate to a professional role and promotes a professional image and meets the requirements for Health and Safety. Employees must model to students that business wear is the appropriate dress and their attire should endorse the Academies uniform policy.

## **13. Car and Transport use**

13.1 When transporting pupils Employees must adhere to the relevant Trips and Visits Policy. Employees should ensure that any student is transported in the rear of the vehicle, wearing the appropriate seat belt.

13.2 Employees who utilise their vehicle for work must have:

- a valid MOT certificate in place and ensure that the vehicle is in a good roadworthy condition; and
- confirmation that the vehicle has the appropriate road tax and insurance.

13.3 Claims for mileage and allowances will processed in accordance with the Trust Expenses Policy.

## **14. Consultation**

14.1 This policy is provided following consultation with trade unions/professional associations and will apply to all employees.



## **Appendix 1**

### **Examples of Acceptable Behaviour**

People behave acceptably when they:

- Afford dignity, trust and respect for everyone and themselves;
- Have awareness of the effects of their behaviour on others and only make reasonable and manageable demands;
- Communicate honestly and openly, clearly stating what they need and expect of others;
- Provide and are receptive to honest feedback based on evidence; and
- Challenge discriminatory language and behaviour in an appropriate way.

### **Examples of Unacceptable Behaviour:**

- Using aggressive language, threatening, ridiculing, ignoring people or repeatedly shouting;
- Telephoning people at home unnecessarily (for example, demanding work when the person is absent due to sickness or ill health);
- Focusing only on weaknesses;
- Bringing up details of someone's private life inappropriately;
- Leaving impossibly long lists of tasks and making unreasonable demands;
- Criticising people or maliciously gossiping about them in their absence;
- Ridiculing or demeaning someone – picking on them or setting them up to fail;
- Comments or jokes, about distinctive peoples and nationalities;
- Frequent comments about aspects of physical appearance or using forms of address that are demeaning;
- Threatening or implying, without reason, that, as a colleague, you will cause the person to lose his/her job or fail to get a promotion or suffer some other form of career difficulty or financial disadvantage;
- Coercing someone to join the harassment/bullying of another person;
- Excluding or marginalising someone or refusing to engage with them appropriately.

This list is not exhaustive. It is simply a guide to help individuals consider their own and others behaviour and gain understanding of what behaviours are unacceptable in the workplace.

### **Standards Expected of Employees**

The standards expected of all employees include but are not limited to:

- maintaining standards of behaviour in keeping with the interests and standing of the Academy/Trust. This includes behaviour outside of working hours and in any form that is visible to the public, including social networking or any other electronic medium
- devoting full attention while at work to the duties of their position and in doing so acting with responsibility, good judgement and in good faith
- carrying out any reasonable instructions given by those with authority to do so
- not divulging to any unauthorised person or making personal use of confidential information connected with the Academy/Trust, either intentionally or through negligent behaviour
- observing the rules, regulations and instructions adopted by the Academy/Trust

- following appropriate safeguarding procedures
- participating fully in any investigation into alleged incidents and/or allegations including attending meetings as directed
- using electronic communications appropriately
- ensuring that information brought to light as a result of any investigation is treated with discretion
- carrying out their role consistently with any standards set by their appropriate professional body
- taking steps to address any unacceptable behaviour e.g. responding to guidance and advice
- treating colleagues and third parties with dignity and respect.

In addition to the above, the expectations of those employed in management roles are to:

- ensure the standards expected from all employees are role-modelled, monitored and managed effectively
- effectively manage all applicable statutory and non-statutory obligations
- appropriately manage all alleged incidents and/or allegations in accordance with Trust policies.

This list is not exhaustive.

**DECLARATION FORM – Relationship with Pupils**

It is recognised that there may be circumstances whereby employees are known to pupils outside of work. Examples include membership of sports clubs, family connections, or private tutoring.

Employees must declare any relationship outside of school that they may have with pupils.

| Employee’s Name | Pupil Name | Relationship |
|-----------------|------------|--------------|
|                 |            |              |
|                 |            |              |
|                 |            |              |

I can confirm that I am fully aware of the code of conduct relating to contact out of school with pupils in line with this policy.

If I am tutoring a pupil outside of school I am aware that the following must be adhered to:-

- I do not, at any point, teach the child in question as part of my daily timetable - this is a stipulation of such tutoring
- I emphasise to parents that this is done completely independently of the school
- No monies come through the school at any point, informally (e.g. via the child) or formally
- No private tutoring is to take place on the school premises

I confirm that if these circumstances change at any time I will complete a new form to ensure the school are aware of any relationships.

Signed .....

Date .....

**Once completed, signed and dated, please return this form to the Headteacher / Line Manager for Central Services**

**Appendix 2b**

**DECLARATION FORM – Employees with Parental Responsibilities for Pupils Educated within the Trust**

Employees must declare any relationship outside of school that they may have with pupils. It is also recognised that there may be circumstances whereby employees are known to pupils outside of work. Examples include membership of sports clubs, family connections, or private tutoring.

| Employee’s Name | Pupil (s) Name | Relationship to pupil | Which Academy is the Pupil enrolled? |
|-----------------|----------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|
|                 |                |                       |                                      |
|                 |                |                       |                                      |
|                 |                |                       |                                      |

I can confirm that I am fully aware of the code of conduct relating to contact out of school with pupils in line with this policy.

I confirm that where I am a parent or have parental responsibility for a child who attends a school within the Trust:

- I will maintain a professional division between myself as a parent and as a member of staff to ensure that all communication about my child is undertaken outside of my working hours or within my breaks. Communication can be either face to face, via email or telephone call.
- I will not take advantage of working at the school in order to communicate with my child’s teachers and if there is a need to do this, I will ensure I make an appointment outside of my working hours.
- I accept that I will only be contacted about my child during working hours in the case of an emergency and only where I am the named first contact for my child.
- I will not disclose information regarding students, employees or the Trust known to me as a result of my employment.
- I will maintain professional integrity during interactions with parents, students or members of the school community.

I confirm that if these circumstances change at any time I will complete a new form to ensure the school are aware of any relationships.

Signed .....

Date .....

**Once completed, signed and dated, please return this form to the Headteacher / Line Manager for Central Services**

## Policy History

| Policy Date     | Summary of change   | Contact                    | Version /<br>Implementat<br>ion<br>Date | Review<br>Date |
|-----------------|---|----------------------------|---|----------------|
|                 | Previous Devon Policy TUPEd   |                            |   |                |
| September<br>19 | Review of policy with updates to align the document in accordance with expectations<br>Add Parental form. Consulted with relevant Unions. | B Hargreaves<br>HR Manager | 29/04/2019                              |                |