



STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY

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Introduction

The Trust (the 'Trust') is a team of school leaders that aim to be Leading Edge and pioneering in their approach to education and well-being. We are a growing family of like-minded schools that offer a values based education to the communities we serve and welcome staff, workers, students, parents/carers and volunteers from all different ethnic groups and backgrounds.

The term 'Trust Community' includes all staff, trustees, governors, students, parents/carers, volunteers and visitors.

We are a values based Trust, which means all actions are guided by our six 'Es' as follows:

- **Ethical** – 'Doing the right thing'
- **Excellence** – 'Outstanding quality'
- **Equity** – 'Fairness and social justice'
- **Empathy** – 'Caring for others'
- **Evolution** – 'Continuous change'
- **Endurance** – 'Working hard and not giving up'

This policy is based on the value of being 'Ethical'

Related Policies

Dignity at Work Policy

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Inclusion policy

Disciplinary Procedures

Teachers' standards – available at www.gov.uk.

Policy Statement

All employees have personal, professional and legal responsibilities, including treating others with dignity and respect, acting honestly, using public funds and Trust equipment appropriately, adhering to health and safety guidelines and practicing equal opportunities at all times. These expectations are set out below and should be fully observed by all staff. In addition, as employees of a public funded organisation, staff are required to comply with the 'Seven Principles of Standards in Public Life', known as the "Nolan Principles" (Annex One).

This document is not a prescriptive guide to what employees should and should not do. It highlights the principal areas where employees need to be aware of their responsibilities when working within the Trust and is a framework for behaviour. Employees should ensure they are familiar with the specific policies that underpin these behaviours through reference to the documents highlighted in the 'Required Reading' throughout this policy. If these documents are not supplied at induction, the employee should ask the relevant Business Manager for copies.

Compliance with the Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct forms part of an employee's contract. Failure to comply with it and with the associated Academy policies ("Required Reading") may result in disciplinary action being

taken, and the Trust reserves the right to take legal action against employees where breaches of the Code warrant such action.

Policy Procedures

Professional behaviour and conduct

Treating other people with dignity and respect

All employees are expected to treat other colleagues, pupils and external contacts, such as parents, with dignity and respect.

All staff are required to comply with the Trust's Equality and Diversity Policy in respect of colleagues, students and other contacts such as parents. Unacceptable behaviour such as discrimination, bullying, harassment or intimidation will not be tolerated in any of our academies. This includes physical and verbal abuse, abuse of the position of seniority, use of inappropriate language or unprofessional behaviour with colleagues, pupils and parents.

Appropriate relationships with children

Trust employees are expected to act in an open and transparent way that would not lead any reasonable person to suspect their actions or intent. Employees of the Trust are in a position of trust and have a duty to protect young people from discrimination and harm and to maintain appropriate professional boundaries. It is equally important for staff to avoid behaviour that might be misinterpreted by others in order to protect both young people and themselves. Staff are required to read and understand the Trust's policies on safeguarding and child protection.

The Trust values good professional relationships between staff and pupils. These are heavily reliant on mutual trust and confidence and can be jeopardised when a member of staff enters into any relationship with a student that is deemed to be inappropriate. Inappropriate relationships can erode professionalism and result in an abuse of power.

Staff must not enter into any relationship or indulge in any behaviour with a pupil that is likely to bring the Academy into disrepute. In particular, sexual relationships with pupils are expressly prohibited and, if proven to be taking place, will be treated as gross misconduct.

The Trust strongly advises staff to avoid entering in to any relationship which is beyond that of the student / tutor relationship with current students.

Communication with young people

Communication with young people should take place within clear and explicit professional boundaries. This includes the wider use of technology such as mobile phones, text messaging, e-mails, digital cameras, web cams, personal websites and social networking sites. Accordingly:

- You should not give your personal contact details, including your mobile phone number, to a young person unless the need to do so is appropriate to your professional role and has been discussed with your manager.

Personal Living Space

No young person should be invited into the home of a member of staff unless reason for this has been firmly established with a senior manager at the relevant Academy and the parent/carer. Accordingly:

- You are responsible for being vigilant in maintaining your privacy and avoiding placing yourself in a vulnerable situation.

Note: Many students are children of members of staff and friends of children of members of staff. It is not necessary to inform senior managers of these students visiting the home as part

of any normal such relationship. However, it is important that a professional stance with regard to academy matters is maintained.

Relationships Between Members of Staff

Where relationships occur between members of staff, it is in their interests and that of the Trust to ensure they deal appropriately with potential conflicts of interest or possible disruption to working arrangements with colleagues or pupils. Broadly, members of staff should not engage in any behaviour which is likely to bring the Trust into disrepute or have a serious adverse effect on peer activities, student tuition, pastoral matters, or other aspects of working life.

Professional behaviour

Employees must not misuse or misrepresent their position, qualifications or experience or bring the reputation of their Academy into disrepute. Such behaviour may lead to disciplinary action. Professional misconduct of a more serious nature may lead to a referral to the Teacher Regulation Agency.

The issues listed below must be brought to the attention of any new teacher and all staff should be reminded of these issues. Staff should also take note the 'Required reading'. This will ensure that all staff involved in the provision of teaching and learning are clear about boundaries and expectations.

Language - staff should refrain from using inappropriate, foul and abusive language. This type of language used in an aggressive, insulting or offensive manner will lead to disciplinary action.

Avoid physical contact - even what is meant as a comforting gesture can be misconstrued.

Home telephone numbers – you should not give your home telephone number to pupils.

Favouritism – it is important to be seen to treat all pupils consistently and with equity. Avoid circumstances where it might appear that you are giving anyone undue attention. This does not mean that you cannot give extra time to a pupil where the situation merits it.

Tutorials and other one-to-one contact tutorials should always be on Trust premises or, in the case of offsite learners, at a venue that has been pre-agreed and notified to the line manager. Apart from the fact that staff could be laying themselves open to the possibility of false allegations, there are insurance issues to consider. Residential trips are an obvious exception to this and where they are concerned, you are advised to follow the same guidelines as those shown below for any one-to-one meetings.

- Make sure that a colleague knows when you are carrying out one-to-one sessions. A list of dates, times and names on the door of the room makes an obvious public statement.
- Where possible, carry out one-to-one sessions with the door open.
- If this is not appropriate, perhaps because the pupil is distressed, or the matter being discussed is confidential, it is especially important to make sure a colleague knows that the session is taking place and/or to put a notice on the door.
- Where you are having an "emergency" tutorial with a student and it may not be possible to notify a colleague, put a notice on the door indicating that a tutorial is taking place.

Staff Dress

It is important to dress professionally in ways that are appropriate to role and to tasks undertaken. Those who dress in a manner, which could be considered inappropriate, could render themselves vulnerable to criticisms or allegations. Accordingly:

- Your appearance and clothing should not be likely to be viewed as offensive, revealing, or sexually provocative.

- You should not wear clothing that is likely to distract, cause embarrassment or give rise to misunderstanding.
- You should not wear clothing that has overtly political or otherwise contentious slogans.

The above are open to interpretation and thus are at the CEO and/or Principal's discretion

Staff going off site

Staff must 'Sign in and out' in the book provided if it is necessary to leave the premises during the school day- This is a requirement in the event of a fire to ensure all staff are accounted for.

Smoking/Alcohol/Drugs

Alcohol may not be consumed during working hours. Staff and Trustees are not permitted to smoke/use e-cigarettes anywhere on any of the Trust's premises or grounds or within view of any academy. The Trust's guidelines are that staff should be role models to children and young people, so any smoking should be done outside the premises and completely out of sight of children. The Trust has a zero tolerance with the use of illegal drugs both in and out of school.

Criminal actions

Trust employees must inform the CEO and/or Principal (CEO if the employee is the Principal and Board of Trustees if the employee is the CEO) immediately if they are subject to a criminal conviction, caution, ban, police enquiry, investigation or pending prosecution. The Principal or CEO will discuss this with the employee in the context of their role and responsibilities in order to help safeguard children and other employees at the Academy.

Declaration of pecuniary or business interests

All employees and trustees are required to declare any interests where the group or organisation would be considered to be in conflict with the ethos of the Trust. Membership of a trade union or staff representative group would not need to be declared.

Employees should also consider carefully whether they need to declare to the Trust their relationship with any individual(s) where this might cause a conflict with Trust activities. For example, a relationship with a trustee, another staff member or a contractor who provides services to the Trust.

Failure to make a relevant declaration of interests is a very serious breach of trust and therefore if employees are in doubt about a declaration, they are advised to take advice from the relevant union.

All declarations, including nil returns, should be submitted in writing to the relevant Business Manager on an Academy Register of Business Interests (see Appendix 2).

Use of own private vehicles at work

Staff who use their own vehicles for journeys in connection with their work, as opposed to their regular commutes, need to be aware that this is classified as 'business use'. Failure to do so will result in insurance cover being invalidated. Mileage allowance claims will not be permitted without insurance cover for business use.

Employees are required to declare whether their vehicle is insured for 'Business use' on the Trust's Register of Business Interests (Appendix 2) and provide a copy of their certificate of insurance.

Probity of records and other documents

The deliberate falsification of documents is not acceptable. Where an employee falsifies records or other documents, including those held electronically, this will be regarded as a serious disciplinary matter and potentially a criminal offence.

Where an employee who has claimed any benefit, including housing benefit, either directly or indirectly and has failed to disclose their full earnings, this will be treated as gross misconduct and the employee may be dismissed and referred to the Police.

Financial inducements

Financial Regulations for the Trust

All Trust employees must comply with the Trust's Financial Regulations. Employees should familiarise themselves with the regulations and some of the principal employee requirements are summarised below.

Business Contacts

In this section, 'business contact' refers to any person, body or organisation with which the Trust is involved on a financial or charitable basis (including contractors; developers; consultants; regional or national charities). This also includes business contacts who are potential suppliers (e.g. they are tendering for future business).

Declaration of gifts

Any gifts that are received should be declared in writing to the Board of Trustees on the Register of Gifts and Hospitality (Appendix 3) with the exception of those items specifically identified below. This document shall remain available for inspection by the Trust's Compliance Committee.

Gifts or hospitality to an employee

Where a business contact offers a personal gift, personal payment or other incentive such as secondary employment to an employee, these should not be accepted and should be returned with a suitable official letter. Such offers should be declared to the Board of Trustees and recorded in the Register of Gifts and Hospitality by the Chief Operations Officer (COO).

If it is not possible to return gifts, the employee who deals with that supplier should declare the gift to the Board of Trustees who will keep a record of it and decide how it is to be used. Such gifts remain the property of the Trust and should be included in the Register of Gifts and Hospitality.

The only exceptions to these are:

- Low cost, functional items suitable for business use rather than personal.
- Use and displaying the supplier's logo e.g. diaries, calendars and pens. These items may be accepted and do not have to be included in the Register of Gifts and Hospitality by the relevant Business Manager.
- Gifts offered by parents or students to Trust staff to express their thanks, such as boxes of chocolates, however, only gifts with an individual value of £20 or less may be accepted. Such gifts do not have to be declared in writing to the Board of Trustees or be included in the Register of Gifts and Hospitality. For the avoidance of doubt employees must always refuse gifts of money.

Where hospitality in the form of meals and drinks is offered by a business contact, this is only acceptable where it forms part of a normal business meeting (for example, refreshments at training events or meals at evening meetings). Offers of hospitality to specific events, such as a dinner or sporting event, should only be accepted after authorisation from the CEO. These would normally only be approved where there is a clear and demonstrable benefit to the Trust and the hospitality would not expose the Trust to criticism that the business contact was exerting undue influence. These should be recorded in the Register of Gifts and Hospitality.

Visits by employees to exhibitions, demonstrations, conferences, business meals and social functions in connection with the Trust's business and authorised by the Trust, shall be at the Trust's expense.

Use of the Trust's contacts

Apart from participating in concessionary schemes arranged by trade unions or other such groups for their members, employees shall not use Trust business contacts for acquiring materials or services at trade/discount prices for non-Trust activities.

Required reading:

[Financial Regulations for Academies.](#)

Other employment

Employees are permitted to take up secondary employment outside of the Trust, as long as the activity does not constitute a conflict of interest, adversely affect their primary employment at the Trust or exceed the legal maximum working week of 48 hours as defined by the Working Time Regulations.

The secondary employment must be undertaken outside the working hours of the employee's normal post and employees are required to keep the CEO and/or Principal (CEO if the employee is the Principal and Board of Trustees if the employee is the CEO) informed of their employment at other organisations.

Required reading:

Academy's Health and Safety Policy.

Gifts and Hospitality policy

Health and safety

Employees must adhere to the Trust's Health and Safety policy, procedure and guidance and must ensure that they take every action to keep themselves and everyone in the Trust Community safe and well.

This includes taking immediate safety action in a potentially harmful situation (either at an Academy or off-site) by complying with statutory and Trust guidelines and collaborating with colleagues, agencies and the local authority.

The taking of illegal drugs during working hours is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. All employees are expected to attend work without being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs and without their performance being adversely impacted by the consumption of alcohol or illegal drugs.

If alcohol or drug usage impacts on an employee's working life, the Trust has the right to discuss the matter with the employee and take appropriate action, having considered factors such as the Trust's or Local Authority's reputation and public confidence.

Use of Trust premises, equipment and communication systems

Trust equipment and systems (telephone, email and computers) are available only for Trust-related activities and should not be used for the fulfillment of another job or for personal use. This is unless authorised by the CEO and or Principal (NB for the CEO this is the Chair of Trustees); in case of an emergency, or where used for brief periods outside of working hours.

This includes photocopy facilities, stationery and premises. It also applies to access provided for remote use (e.g. hand held portable devices etc.) and to staff working outside of Trust premises and using their own IT equipment.

Illegal, inappropriate or unacceptable use of Trust equipment or communication systems may result in disciplinary action and in serious cases could lead to an employee's dismissal. This list is not exhaustive and includes;

- creating, sending or forwarding any message that would reasonably be considered inappropriate or unacceptable
- committing or implying commitment to any contractual arrangements
- accessing, publication or circulation of illegal, offensive, unacceptable
- inappropriate or non work-related material
- any illegal activities
- posting confidential information about the Academy and/or other
- employees, children or parents
- gambling or gaming
- unauthorised use of Trust facilities (or employee's personal IT equipment), for personal use during employee's working time

Employees receiving inappropriate communication or material or who are unsure about whether something h/she proposes to do might breach this policy should seek advice from their Principal.

The Trust has the right to monitor e-mails, phone-calls, internet activity or document production, principally in order to avoid offensive or nuisance material and to protect systems from viruses, but also to ensure proper and effective use of systems. Communication systems may be accessed when the Trust suspects that the employee has been misusing systems or facilities, or for the investigation of suspected fraud or other irregularity.

Accredited Trade Union representatives can use Trust communication systems for the purposes of undertaking trade union duties and these will be treated as confidential.

Passwords should not be shared and access to computer systems must be kept confidential. Breach of this confidentiality may be subject to disciplinary action. Where appropriate the Trust should consider a system of proxy access.

Any Trust equipment that is used outside Trust premises, for example laptops, should be returned to the Academy when the employee leaves employment or upon request by the CEO and/or Principal.

Social networking websites

Trust employees must not access social networking websites for personal use (i.e. non job-related use) during work time.

Access to some journals, blogs and social networking sites is permitted during work time for the purposes of undertaking job related duties only. Trust employees must act in the best interests of the Trust and not disclose personal data or information about any individual including staff, young people or children. This includes images. Access may be withdrawn and disciplinary action taken if there is a breach of confidentiality or defamatory remarks are made about the Trust staff, young people or children.

The Trust respects an employee's private life. However, it must also ensure that confidentiality and its reputation are protected. Employees using social networking websites in their private life;

- must refrain from identifying themselves as working for the Trust, in a way which has, or may have, the effect of bringing the Trust into disrepute.
- must not identify other Trust employees, children or young people without their consent.

- must not make any defamatory remarks about the Trust, its employees, children or young people, or conduct themselves in a way that is detrimental to the Trust.
- disclose personal data or information about the Trust, employees, children or young people, that could breach the Data Protection Act 2018, for example, posting photographs or images of children or young people.
- must not allow pupils to access their personal social networking accounts and where they are contacted by a pupil, they should bring it to the CEO and/or Principal's attention.

Personal Websites and Blogs

Employees who wish to set up personal web forums, weblogs or 'blogs' must do so outside of work, not using Trust equipment and adhere to the points detailed in the paragraph above.

Confidentiality

All Trust employees and the Board of Trustees come into contact with a significant volume of data and information in relation to pupils, staff, Trust activities and many other matters. There is an obligation to read and to observe the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018.

Managing data

Under the Data Protection Act, staff are required to collect, maintain and dispose of sensitive or personal data in a responsible manner.

Disclosing data

Staff should not disclose sensitive information about the Trust, its employees or the local authority to other parties, for example, parents or colleagues. There are particular exceptions to this; for example, disclosure of suspected or alleged abuse of a pupil to Child Protection officers; discussion with a person accompanying or representing an employee in a formal meeting or disclosure under the Whistleblowing Procedure. All communication with the media must be directed through the CEO and/or Principal or their nominee.

There are circumstances in which staff are obliged to release pupil data, for example, parents seeking information about pupil progress or other colleagues in the Trust.

Staff should be aware that, from time to time, information about employees' salaries is matched with other public sector information (for example housing benefits) in order to prevent fraudulent claims.

Access to data

Everyone has the right to request access to data that is held about them and such requests should be made to the relevant Principal who will address the request in conjunction with the Trust's Data Protection Officer.

Copyright

Copyright legislation should be displayed next to photocopier machines and employees are required to adhere to the guidance provided about use of educational resources.

Reputation

Staff and Trustees must be careful to ensure that nothing they say or do brings the Trust into disrepute. Gossip in the communities can be very damaging. Staff should not gossip, or speak inappropriately, about any of the Trust's academies, pupils, parents, staff, trustees or governors, including discussing incidents.

The reputation of the Trust is very precious. It takes a long time to build and can be knocked down in a moment.

Appendix 1

The Seven Principles of Standards of Public Life

NOLAN PRINCIPLES

Introduction

The Committee on Standards in Public Life (The Nolan Committee) has set out seven principles of public life, which it believes should apply to all public service. The following are the seven principles of conduct that underpin the work of public authorities. The board is asked to adopt these principles as a basis for working practices across the Academy. All staff should recognise the importance of these principles and to uphold them at all times.

1. Selflessness:

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other benefits for themselves, their family or their friends.

2. Integrity:

Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

3. Objectivity:

In carrying out public business, holders of public office must take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, including making appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

4. Accountability:

Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

5. Openness:

Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands it, or there is a lawful reason for so doing.

6. Honesty:

Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

7. Leadership:

Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behavior or contravention of these principles.

Appendix 2

Declaration of Pecuniary or Business Interests

Declaration by a member of the Board of Trustees, Local Academy Committee or staff member involved in the contractual or procurement process

Complete the following details.

Name.....

Job Title.....

Statement

I have read the document entitled 'Register of Pecuniary or Business Interests (Disclosure of Interests) for governors and staff 'and I declare that neither I, my partner, nor a relative (including his/her spouse or someone treated as his/her spouse) have any pecuniary or business interest(s) which may conflict with my duties as a governor/employee of the school, except as listed below.

In the event that there are no interests to declare, please tick the box 'nothing to declare'.

I agree that in the event of any further interest(s) arising after making this declaration, I will declare to the governing body any such interest(s) and will complete and submit a new Declaration form.

1.

2.

3.

[Please continue on a separate sheet if necessary].

I have nothing to declare ☐

Signed.....Date.....

Print name.....

Register of Pecuniary or Business Interests (Disclosure of Interests)

Definitions per FRS 8 (Financial Reporting Standards)

Related Party:

A related party is a person or entity that is related to the entity that is preparing its financial statements (in this definition referred to as the 'reporting entity').

- a) A person or a close member of that person's family is related to a reporting entity if that person:
 - i) Has control or joint control over the reporting entity;
 - ii) Has significant influence over the reporting entity; or
 - iii) Is a member of the key management personnel of the reporting entity or of a parent of the reporting entity.
- (b) An entity is related to a reporting entity if any of the following conditions applies
 - (i) The entity and the reporting entity are members of the same group (which means that each parent, subsidiary and fellow subsidiary is related to the others).
 - (ii) One entity is an associate or joint venture of the other entity (or an associate or joint venture of a member of a group of which the other entity is a member).
 - (iii) Both entities are joint ventures of the same third party.
 - (iv) One entity is a joint venture of a third entity and the other entity is an associate of the third entity.
 - (v) The entity is a retirement benefit scheme for the benefit of employees of either the reporting entity or an entity related to the reporting entity. If the reporting entity is itself such a scheme, the sponsoring employers are also related to the reporting entity.
 - (vi) The entity is controlled or jointly controlled by a person identified in (a).
 - (vii) A person identified in (a)(i) has significant influence over the entity or is a member of the key management personnel of the entity (or of a parent of the entity).

Close family:

Close members of the family of a person are those family members, who may be expected to influence, or be influenced by, that person in their dealings with the entity and include:

- a) that person's children and spouse or domestic partner;
- b) children of that person's spouse or domestic partner; and
- c) dependents of that person or that person's spouse or domestic partner.

Control:

The ability to direct the financial and operating policies of an entity with a view to gaining economic benefits from its activities.

Key management personnel:

Those persons having authority and responsibility for planning, directing, and controlling the activities of the entity, directly or indirectly, including any director (whether executive or otherwise) of that entity.

Related party transaction:

The transfer of assets or liabilities or the performance of services by, to or for a related party irrespective of whether a price is charged.

Appendix 3

Declaration of Gift or Hospitality Form

SECTION ONE

Details of the offer – to be completed by the Staff Member receiving the offer.

Please tick box A or B to indicate that you have been offered and have either accepted or declined a gift or hospitality.

☐ I have been offered a gift / hospitality which I have declined

☐ I have been offered a gift / hospitality which I have accepted

Declaration Details

Date offer was made	
Name of firm or individual	
What is the relationship with the individual/organisation offering the gift/hospitality	
Nature of gift or hospitality	
Estimated value	

I believe my objectivity and independence in relation to the above external organisation has not been impaired in any way by the offer of gifts or hospitality.

Employees signature_____Date_____

Name_____

SECTION TWO:

Action authorised by the Board of Trustees

Record of action (delete as appropriate)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Acceptance authorised• Acceptance Not authorised• Agree action to decline <p>Please ensure the Staff Member who received the offer is aware of your decision</p>
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SIGNED

DATE

Chair of Trustees)_____

Completed forms should be sent to the relevant Business Manager and entered into the Gift and Hospitality Register

Appendix 4

Annual Declaration of Change

The purpose of this form is to maintain the accuracy of staff records, including SIMS and the Single Central Record.

Full Name: _____

Change of name:

Please provide a copy of evidence if you have changed your name in the past 12 months.

No change ☐ Marriage ☐ Deed poll ☐

New Name: _____

Address

Please tick if you have changed your address in the last 12 months. ☐

Current address: _____

_____ Postcode: _____

Car Details

Make: _____ Model: _____

Colour: _____

Please tick if you have changed your car in the last 12 months. ☐

Car Insurance

You are required to have a minimum of **Business class 1 car insurance** if you intend to use your car for work and claim mileage. Class 1 insurance should cover you if you occasionally drive your car short distances to business meeting or training events.

I **have** business car insurance. ☐

I **do not have** business car insurance. ☐

If you have business car insurance please provide a copy of your insurance certificate.

Signed.....Date.....

Completed forms to be returned to the relevant Academy's Business and HR Manager