Staff Code of Conduct Policy

1.0 Aims, scope and principles

1.1 This policy aims to set and maintain standards of conduct that we expect all staff to follow. By creating this policy, we aim to ensure our Trust is an environment where everyone is safe, happy and treated with respect.

1.2 Many of the principles in this code of conduct are based on the professional standards for Headteachers, Teachers and Support Staff.

1.3 Our staff have an influential position in the Trust, schools and settings, and will act as role models for pupils and our communities, by consistently demonstrating high standards of behaviour.

1.4 We expect that all staff will act in accordance with the personal and professional behaviours set out in the relevant Professional Standards.

1.5 We expect all staff, those engaged in governance and volunteers, to also act with personal and professional integrity, respecting the safety and wellbeing of others. Paying attention to Nolan Principles in Public Life, Academy Handbook, and other mandatory or advisory guidance in force at the time.

1.6 Failure to follow the code of conduct may result in disciplinary action being taken.

1.7 Please note that this code of conduct is not exhaustive. If situations arise that are not covered by this code, staff will use their professional judgement and act in the best interests of the Trust and its pupils.

1.8 Where the term staff is used throughout this policy, this applies to all paid and unpaid, direct or indirect employed staff, volunteers and those engaged in governance.

2.0 Legislation and guidance

2.1 In line with the statutory safeguarding guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education and Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings, we should have a staff code of conduct, which should cover low-level concerns, allegations against staff and whistle-blowing, as well as acceptable use of technologies (including the use of mobile devices), staff/pupil relationships and communications, including the use of social media.

2.2 This policy also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

3.0 Links with other policies and guidance

Safeguarding policy
Whistleblowing policy
Disciplinary policy
Dress and Appearance policy
Conflict of interest policy
Online Safety Policy
Working Time Regulations 1998

4.0 General obligations

4.1 Staff set an example to pupils. They will:

- Maintain high standards in their attendance and punctuality
- Never use inappropriate or offensive language at work, school or setting
- Treat pupils and others with dignity and respect
- Show tolerance and respect for the rights of others
- Not undermine fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
- Not express personal beliefs in a way that exploits pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law

Understand the statutory frameworks they must act within

- Adhere to the Head Teacher Standards, Teachers' Standards, Teaching Assistant Standards and/or other professional standards in relation to their role.

5.0 Safeguarding

Staff have a duty to safeguard pupils from harm, and to report any concerns they have. This includes physical, emotional and sexual abuse, and neglect.

Staff will familiarise themselves with our child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures, and the Prevent initiative, and ensure they are aware of the processes to follow if they have concerns about a child.

Our child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures are available. on the Trust Website. New staff will be signposted to this on arrival.

5.1 Allegations that may meet the harm threshold

This section is based on 'Section 1: Allegations that may meet the harm threshold' in part 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

This section applies to all cases in which it is alleged that anyone working in the school, including a supply teacher, volunteer or contractor, has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child, and/or
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, and/or
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children, and/or
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children – this includes behaviour taking place inside or outside of school
- We will deal with any such allegation quickly and in a fair and consistent way that provides effective child protection while also supporting the individual who is the subject of the allegation.
- A 'case manager' will lead any investigation. This will be the Academy Head, or the CEO where the Academy Head is the subject of the allegation.

5.2 Low-level concerns about members of staff

A low-level concern is a behaviour towards a child by a member of staff that does not meet the harm threshold, is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, and may be as simple as causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt'. For example, this may include:

- Being over-friendly with children
- Having favourites
- Taking photographs of children on a personal device

- Engaging in 1-to-1 activities where they can't easily be seen
- Humiliating pupils

Low-level concerns can include inappropriate conduct inside and outside of work.

All staff should share any low-level concerns they have using the reporting procedures set out in our child protection and safeguarding policy. We also encourage staff to self-refer if they find themselves in a situation that could be misinterpreted. If staff are not sure whether behaviour would be deemed a low-level concern, we encourage staff to report it.

All reports will be handled in a responsive, sensitive and proportionate way. Unprofessional behaviour will be addressed, and the staff member supported to correct it, at an early stage.

This creates and embeds a culture of openness, trust and transparency in which our values and expected behaviour are constantly lived, monitored and reinforced by all staff, while minimising the risk of abuse.

Reporting and responding to low-level concerns is covered in more detail in our Safeguarding and child protection and policy

Our procedures for dealing with allegations will be applied with common sense and judgement.

5.3 Whistle-blowing

Whistle-blowing reports wrongdoing that it is "in the public interest" to report. Examples linked to safeguarding include:

- Pupils' or staff's health and safety being put in danger
- Failure to comply with a legal obligation or statutory requirement
- Attempts to cover up the above, or any other wrongdoing in the public interest

Staff are encouraged to report suspected wrongdoing as soon as possible. Their concerns will be taken seriously and investigated, and their confidentiality will be respected.

Staff should consider the examples above when deciding whether their concern is of a whistle- blowing nature. Consider whether the incident(s) was illegal, breached statutory or school procedures, put people in danger or was an attempt to cover any such activity up.

Staff should report their concern to the Academy Head. If the concern is about the Academy Head, or it is believed they may be involved in the wrongdoing in some way, the staff member should report their concern to CEO. Should the concern relate to the CEO the Chair of the Board of Trustees should be notified.

Concerns should be made in writing wherever possible. They should include names of those committing wrongdoing, dates, places and as much evidence and context as possible. Staff raising a concern should also include details of any personal interest in the matter.

For our school's detailed whistle-blowing process, please refer to our whistle-blowing policy.

6.0 Staff-pupil relationships

6.1 Staff will observe proper boundaries with pupils that are appropriate to their professional position. They will act in a fair and transparent way that would not lead anyone to reasonably assume they are not doing so.

6.2 If staff members and pupils must spend time on a one-to-one basis, staff will ensure that:

- This takes place in a public place that others can access
- Others can see into the room
- A colleague or line manager knows this is taking place

6.3 Staff should avoid contact with pupils outside of school hours if possible.

Staff that are employed to respite, foster, or counsel, pupils or who are related to, or have a personal connection to a pupil, must declare this on their pecuniary interest forms.

Staff that respite, foster, or counsel, any pupil, or are related to a pupil or have personal connection with a pupil are not permitted to work in the same class.

Staff that have employment contracts with any other organisation where they may have access to pupils and or family members must also declare this on their pecuniary interest forms.

Staff and trusted adults that have volunteer roles outside of the school setting (scouts, guides, or other clubs and societies for example) must declare this on their pecuniary interest form.

6.4 Personal contact details should not be exchanged between staff and pupils. This includes social media profiles.

6.5 While we are aware many pupils and their parents may wish to give gifts to staff, for example, at the end of the school year, gifts from staff to individual pupils are not appropriate. It is noted that while not a requirement or encouragement, some staff may choose to offer a gift to all pupils within their class at a milestone event i.e. moving onto a new school. Any gifts that fall outside this guidance, should be carefully considered, discussed and agreed with the relevant line manager.

6.6 If a staff member is concerned at any point that an interaction between themselves and a pupil may be misinterpreted, or if a staff member is concerned at any point about a fellow staff member and a pupil, this should be reported in line with the procedures set out in our child protection and safeguarding policy.

7.0 Communication and social media

7.1 Staff social media profiles should not be available to pupils. If they have a personal profile on social media sites, they should consider not using their full name, as pupils may be able to find them. Staff may wish to consider using a first and middle name instead and set public profiles to private.

7.2 Staff should not attempt to contact pupils or their parents via social media, or any other means outside school, in order to develop any sort of relationship. They will not make any efforts to find pupils' or parents' social media profiles.

7.3 Staff will ensure that they do not post any images online that identify children who are pupils at the school without their consent.

7.4 Staff should be aware of the school's online safety policy.

8.0 Acceptable use of technology

8.1 Staff will not use technology in school to view material that is illegal, inappropriate or likely to be deemed offensive. This includes, but is not limited to, sending obscene emails, gambling and viewing pornography or other inappropriate content.

8.2 Staff will not use personal mobile phones and laptops, or school equipment for personal use, in school hours or in front of pupils. They will also not use personal mobile phones or cameras to take pictures of pupils.

8.3 We have the right to monitor emails and internet use on the school IT system. We use an industry standard filtering and monitoring system.

9.0 Confidentiality

9.1 In the course of their role, members of staff are often privy to sensitive and confidential information about the school, staff, pupils and their parents.

This information should never be:

- Disclosed to anyone unless required by law or with consent from the relevant party or parties
- Used to humiliate, embarrass or blackmail others
- Used for a purpose other than what it was collected and intended for

9.2 This does not overrule staff's duty to report child protection concerns to the appropriate channel where staff believe a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm, as detailed further in our child protection and safeguarding policy. Or in the interests of the public good using the Whistle blowing policy.

10.0 Honesty and integrity

10.1 Staff should maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their role. This includes dealing with pupils, handling money, claiming expenses and using school property and facilities.

10.2 Staff will not accept bribes. Gifts that are worth more than £25 must be declared and recorded on the gifts and hospitality register.

10.3 Staff will ensure that all information given to the Trust is correct. This should include:

- Background information (including any past or current investigations/cautions related to conduct outside of school)
- Qualifications
- Professional experience

10.4 Where there are any updates to the information provided to the Trust, the member of staff will advise the Trust as such as soon as reasonably practicable. Consideration will then be given to the nature and circumstances of the matter and whether this may have an impacton the member of staff's employment.

11.0 Dress code

11.1 Staff will dress in a professional, appropriate manner.

11.2 Outfits will not be overly revealing, and we ask that tattoos are covered up.

11.3 Refer to the Dress and Appearance Policy for further information.

12.0 Conduct outside of work

12.1 Staff will not act in a way that would bring the Trust, or the profession, into disrepute. This covers conduct including but not limited to relevant criminal offences, such as violence or sexual misconduct,

as well as negative comments about the school on social media.

13.0 Secondary Employment and Additional Work

13.1 Employees must obtain prior written approval from the Trust/School before undertaking any secondary employment, self-employment, voluntary work, or additional contractual work. Such work must comply with the Working Time Regulations 1998 / Working Time Directive requirements and must not conflict with the employee's duties, adversely affect attendance, performance or wellbeing, or bring the Trust/School into disrepute.

13.2 Employees must declare all additional work, including unpaid roles, and notify the Trust/School of any changes.

13.3 Employees must not undertake additional work during sickness absence where this is inconsistent with the reason for absence. The Trust/School reserves the right to refuse or withdraw approval where concerns arise.

Appendix 1
Code of Conduct Agreement

Members of Staff are expected to uphold the highest standards in personal and professional conduct, both when at work and out of work to uphold the integrity of the Trust and School's professional reputation. Any occurrence that can be proven to bring the Trust, your working establishment or the profession into disrepute, will be treated as a breach of contract, investigated fully and may result in disciplinary action.

Staff are reminded of the Nolan Committee's 7 principles of public life: -

- **Selflessness:** No financial gain or other material benefits for self/family
- **Integrity:** Independent of outside influence
- **Objectivity:** Decisions made on merit
- **Accountability:** Accountable for decisions/actions to the public
- **Openness**: Open about decisions and actions taken wherever possible
- **Honesty:** Declare private interests, resolve conflicts to protect public interest
- **Leadership:** Promote and support principles by leadership and example

All staff are made aware of the location of the policies and procedures as part of the Induction process; Locality Committee members are made aware of the location of the Scheme of Delegation and Induction process.

Staff further acknowledge and agree to comply with all Trust policies and procedures and those additional policies as published by the Trust and some that may be edited by our schools. Attention is drawn to the following core policies below, all of which are published on the Trust website. It is your responsibility to ensure that you read and understand them, as an employee or volunteer of the Consortium Trust.

- **Appraisal and Capability Policy**
- **Continued Professional Development Policy**
- **Conflict of Interest Policy**
- **Disciplinary Policy**
- **Dress and Appearance Policy**
- **Health & Safety**
- **Dignity in the workplace**
- **Online Safety Policy**
- **Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy**
- **Sickness & Absence Management Policy**
- **Staff Travel & Subsistence Policy**
- **Use of ICT, Mobile Phones, Devices, Images & Photography**
- **Whistleblowing Policy**
- **Staff Code of Conduct Policy**
- **Statutory duties in force at the time**
- **Professional Standards relevant to your role**

Name: _____ **Role:** _____

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Document Control

Changes History

Version	Date	Amended By	Details of Change
1	6/10/2022	Andrew Aalders-Dunthorne	New Policy
2	16/12/2022	Dawn Carman-Jones	Updated to reflect special schools and care outside core school hours
2.1	18/10/2023	Laura Rogers	Staff Code of Conduct agreement added as an appendix
2.2	13/11/2023	Kathy Lloyd	Signature request removed as document will be added as a task on line for all staff and LC members
3	18/09/2024	CEO	Scheduled review, clarified range of professional standards, removed broken links
4	26/8/2025	CEO	Annual review, no changes.
5	07/05/2026	E Frere-Smith	Annual review. Addition of reference to secondary employment. Links to relevant Trust policies and guidance.

Approval

This policy will be reviewed annually by Head of Service People or as required by changes in legislation.

At every review, this policy will be approved by the Trust Board Committee.

The policy was last approved by the Trust Board on 09/07/2026.

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