

# CODE OF CONDUCT FOR TEACHING AND SUPPORT STAFF

This policy was agreed by the SRET Board on: (and supersedes all previous policies relating to this area)	26/01/2022
Signed by:.....  <p style="text-align: right;"><b>(Chair of the SRET Board)</b></p>	
Implemented:	
Review date:	01/07/2023
Author:	Model Wiltshire Policy adopted in 2018 and reviewed by Jodie Hawkins on 13/01/2022

This model procedure where adopted will apply to both teaching and non-teaching staff working in Academies and has been agreed with the following recognised unions: ATL, NUT, NAHT, NASUWT, ASCL, Unison and GMB.

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## Statement of Intent

1. This policy aims to set and maintain standards of conduct that all staff will follow. By creating this policy, we aim to ensure our school is an environment where everyone is safe, happy and treated with respect.
2. Many of the principles in this code of conduct are based on the Teacher Standards and principles that have been agreed with staff during staff professional sessions over time. They:
  - Provide consistency in terms of expected conduct.
  - Set out standards of conduct which staff are expected to follow when within, or representing, the school and the Trust.
  - Ensure that the school provides a high-quality service and promotes confidence in the integrity of the school and the Trust to all coming into contact with it.
  - Define the required levels of professionalism to ensure the well-being of the school, its staff and those people we serve.
3. This code of conduct is not exhaustive and does not replace the general requirements of the law, common sense and good conduct.
4. This code of conduct should be read in conjunction with a number of policies and schemes relating to conduct which are set out at the end of this document.

## Who does it apply to?

5. This policy applies to:
  - Trustees and Governors.
  - All members of staff regardless of contract type or length of service.
  - Volunteers.
  - Agency Staff.

## Legislation

6. We are required to set out a staff code of conduct in line with statutory safeguarding guidance “Keeping Children Safe in Education”. It needs to cover acceptable use of technologies, staff/pupil relationships and communications, including the use of social media.

## What is my responsibility?

7. Academy employees need to:
  - Read this policy.
  - Ensure they understand it.
  - Ask if there are any points that are unclear.
  - Use this code of conduct, alongside other academy policies, to guide them in their role.
8. Breach of this code of conduct may lead to disciplinary action which could result in dismissal. Please refer to the disciplinary procedure for more information.

## Teaching staff responsibilities

9. Teaching staff must adhere to:

- The terms and conditions outlined in the school teachers pay and conditions document (STPCD). A copy of STPCD can be found for reference purposes in the Trust's HR office.
- The Teachers Standards as set out by the Department for Education. These cover both teaching standards and personal and professional conduct. Teacher's performance will be regularly reviewed against these professional standards.

### **What are the main points?**

10. The public is entitled to expect the highest standards of behaviour from academy employees.
11. Employees represent the academy and are trusted to act in a way which promotes the academy's interests and protects its reputation.
12. Employees are accountable for their actions and should ask the Head of School or the Executive Principal for advice if they are not sure of the appropriate action to take.

### **Staff Behaviour**

13. Staff should maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their role, fully supporting the values of the school and the Trust by:
  - Welcoming pupils, staff and visitors with a smile and a greeting, in line with creating a positive school culture.
  - Putting the pupils' learning, achievements and wellbeing first in all that we do.
  - Co-operating and liaising with colleagues, as appropriate, to ensure that the education pupils receive is high quality and cohesive.
  - Demonstrating a total commitment to the school values and ethos.
  - Demonstrating optimistic personal behaviour, positive relationships and attitudes towards students and staff.
  - Behaving in a professional manner under all circumstances, acting as positive role models for staff and students.
  - Acting in a respectful, courteous, friendly and open manner at all times.
  - Taking collective responsibility for making sure that all staff members feel valued and respected.
  - Playing our part in promoting effective communication, remembering it is a two-way process.
  - Ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to be listened to.
  - Working together as a team, demonstrating understanding and respect of differences.
  - Engaging positively in the formation of school policy, including discussion, debate and collaborative decision making.
  - Once decisions have been taken, to publicly support them and avoid criticising them behind the scenes.
  - Celebrating the achievements of all, looking for ways to help each other develop and progress.
  - Showing respect for the rights and opinions of others.
  - Staff should take care not to discuss issues of particularly sensitive matters within the community which could cause distress to staff, pupils or parents.
  - Showing respect for the organisation's property.
  - Maintaining the image of the organisation through standards of dress (refer to

Appendix 1), general courtesy, appropriate communication.

- Taking responsibility for the behaviour and conduct of pupils where appropriate to do so.
- Being fit for work (ie not adversely influenced by drugs, alcohol, etc).
- Being familiar with job requirements (eg proper preparation, use of suitable methods/systems, maintenance of appropriate/required records, etc), including keeping up-to-date with developments relevant to the job.
- Being familiar with organisational processes and procedures.
- Staff will not act in a way that would bring the school or the teaching profession into disrepute. This covers relevant criminal offences, such as violence or sexual misconduct, as well as negative comments about the school in any arena including social media.

### **Staff/pupil relationships**

14. It is an offence under section 16 of The Sexual Offences Act 2003 for a person aged 18 or over to have a sexual relationship with a child under 18 where that person is in a position of trust in respect of that child, even if the relationship is consensual.
15. Staff and volunteers must familiarise themselves with the safeguarding policy and procedures and any associated policies and procedures outlined in their contracts and in the induction programme.

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. This includes:

- Treating pupils with dignity and respect at all times.
- Not exchanging personal contact details.
- Not making online associations/friendships with current pupils via social networking sites.
- Not using texting/email facilities on either their mobile phone or any computer to communicate with current pupils or parents.
- Ensuring time spent one-to-one takes place in a place that others can see and gain access to.
- Ensuring a colleague or line manager knows that one-to-one time is taking place.
- Staff should avoid contact with pupils outside of working hours if possible unless employed on a sessional basis (childminding) or through social care (for example respite).
- If a staff member is concerned at any point that an interaction between themselves and a pupil may be misinterpreted, this should be reported to their line manager or the Head of School. Where this applies to Heads of School or Trust staff this should be reported to the Executive Principal and where it applies to the Executive Principal this should be reported to the Chair of Trustees.

## Confidentiality

16. Employees must take all reasonable steps to ensure that the loss, destruction, inaccuracy or improper disclosure of information does not occur as a result of their actions. This includes information relating to academy business and pupil data.
17. Employees shall maintain the appropriate levels of confidentiality with respect to pupils' records and other sensitive matters relating to pupils, staff and parents.
18. Employees must not disclose personal or financial information about any other member of staff or pupils without the express consent of that individual or authorisation from the Head of School or the Executive Principal.
19. Confidential information, belonging to the academy, should not be disclosed to any person not authorised to receive it.
20. Employees must not use any information obtained in the course of their employment to cause damage to the academy or for personal gain or benefit. Nor should they pass information on to others who may use it in such a way.
21. Employees should also be aware that under Section 13 Education Act 2011 that it is a criminal offence to disclose the identity of a teacher who is the subject of an allegation of a criminal offence made by or on behalf of a pupil until a teacher is charged with this offence. This includes disclosing any information that could make that person identifiable. Further details are available from the Head of School or the Executive Principal.

## Outside Commitments

22. Employees should ensure that their activities outside work do not conflict with their duty to the academy.
23. All teaching and support staff should inform their Head of School or the Executive Principal before engaging in any other business or accepting additional employment.
24. Any additional employment should not conflict with the academy's interests or have the potential to bring the academy into disrepute.
25. Employees may not set up a business, or accept a job with a business, which is in direct competition with the academy. Employees should check with the Head of School or the Executive Principal where further clarification is required.
26. If an employee works for another organisation they may not act as a messenger between that organisation and the academy. Formal channels of communication must be maintained.
27. Any secondary employment must not be carried out during an employee's contracted academy working hours, nor whilst on standby for official call out purposes unless such employment can be undertaken from their home.
28. It is an employee's responsibility to monitor the number of hours they work and to ensure that they are rested and refreshed and able to carry out their role. Employees should not exceed an average of 48 hours working time per week calculated over a 17 week period as detailed in the Working Time Regulations.

## Interests

29. Conflicts of interest may occur if a decision of the academy could affect an employee, or close friends and relatives, either positively or negatively.
30. Interests could include:

Involvement with businesses which have existing or proposed contracts with the academy.
31. Employees should ask themselves the question “Would a member of the public think that they or their family would benefit from the connection between their personal interest and their employment with the academy?”
32. If the answer is yes then they must declare their interest to the Head of School or the Executive Principal in writing.
33. Employees may hold their own personal and political views but must act professionally at work and not allow these views to interfere with their work.

### **Time, facilities and publications**

34. Employees must spend all of their contracted hours working for the academy.
35. Employees may not make personal use of the academy's property or facilities (stationery, photocopiers, car parks etc.) unless authorised to do so by the Headteacher/Head of School. Computers and software may only be used in line with the academy's computer (IT) security policy and e-mail/internet use code of practice.
36. Employees may only use the academy telephones to make or receive private calls in exceptional circumstances, and with the permission of their Head of School.
37. Any public funds entrusted to an employee must be used in a responsible and lawful manner.
38. Employees who want to publish any material which they have written in connection with their duties or in which they describe themselves as holding a position within the academy must first gain the consent of the Head of School or the Executive Principal.
39. If, in the course of their work, an employee creates a copyright work (for example a procedures manual or a software programme); patentable invention; design capable of registration; this would become the property of the academy and, if appropriate, they would be required to cooperate in the registration formalities.
40. Employees may retain fees for any lectures delivered with the agreement of the Head of School or the Executive Principal.

## **Equality**

41. The academy is firmly committed to the principles of equality and diversity and has a positive duty to promote these within the community it serves.
42. Employees must treat colleagues, pupils, parents, carers, governors and members of the public and the local community with respect and must not discriminate unlawfully against any person.
43. Employees involved in making appointments should ensure that decisions are based only on the ability of the candidate to undertake the duties of the post. If any applicant is a close personal friend or relative they should not be involved in the appointment process.
44. Employees should not be involved in any decisions relating to discipline, pay or promotion of close personal friends or relatives.

## **Dress and personal protective equipment**

45. Employees should ensure that their dress is appropriate to the professional nature of their role at the academy, the activities they are involved in and any health and safety requirements related to these. (Refer also to Appendix 1.)
46. Suitable personal protective equipment will be issued and must be worn where a risk assessment indicates it is appropriate.

## **Speaking to the media**

47. It is advisable for any approaches regarding academy related issues, from all press, radio or TV stations or specialist press to be directed to the Head of School or the Executive Principal where the issue is Trust related.

## **Misconduct**

48. All employees should conduct themselves in a professional manner at work. Serious misconduct and/or criminal offences committed during or outside of working hours which bring them or the academy into disrepute may be the subject of disciplinary action which could lead to dismissal.
49. It is essential that employees inform the Executive Principal /Head of Schools of any regulatory body investigation, police investigation, charge, caution, reprimand, fine or conviction immediately. All such disclosures will be handled in confidence but this may result in a suspension from duties while an investigation takes place.

## **Are there any exemptions?**

50. No – however some parts of the code of conduct will have more of an effect on senior, managerial and professional staff than others.
51. Many employees are responsible under their own professional codes of conduct. In cases where professional codes of conduct appear to conflict with the academy's own code, advice should be obtained from the Head of School or the Executive Principal where this applies to staff employed centrally by the Trust.

## **Head of School responsibilities:**

52. Provide additional advice and guidance on any points within the code of conduct.
53. Signpost employees to relevant policies, documents and guidelines.

### **Links with other policies**

54. This policy links with our school and Trust vision and our policies on:
  - Staff disciplinary
  - Staff grievance
  - Dignity at Work
  - Whistleblowing
  - Safeguarding and Child Protection
  - Behaviour
  - Intimate Care
  - E-Safety
  - Equality
  - Keeping Children Safe in Education
  - Gifts and Hospitality Policy
  - Payment and Reimbursement Policy
55. For further information or clarification employees should speak to their Head of School or the Executive Principal where staff are employed centrally by the Trust.

## Appendix 1

### Dress Code

We are all asked to wear presentable and suitable clothing to work. Please be aware that we have students in school between the ages of 4 to 19 years. Also you may be asked to work in any class without notice.

As you plan your work clothing please consider the way you in which you are dressed from 'head to toe' – is it suitable for working in our school with the many different activities you may be involved with, such as:

- Actively support a child who has behavioural challenges.
- Pushing a child in a wheelchair or helping a child into a standing frame.
- Taking part in a physical activity, for example outside play, PE or Forest School.
- Being involved in messy art, sensory based activities or playing on the floor.

Consider if you feel your clothing poses a risk and consider any changes you could make to reduce the risk to yourself or the child you are working with.

### Head

Earrings or other body piercings – are they at risk of being torn or cut?

Glasses – lenses or frames that are likely to be knocked off or broken?

Hair – is it easily grabbed, drop into work or onto the child's face?

### Neck

Necklaces, ties, scarves etc – Could they be broken? Could they be pulled and strangle you?

### Arms & hands

Rings, bracelets, watches, fingernails – could they scratch a child, or tear their skin?

### Torso

Clothing – Is it too tight or too loose?

Clothing – Is it too revealing?

Clothing – Is it too short?

Clothing – Could it get caught on items?

Clothing – Does it stop you moving fully?

Belts, zips – could they scratch a child, or tear their skin?

Body piercing - could they scratch a child, or tear their skin?

### Feet

Shoes - Do they restrict your ability to move quickly?

Shoes - Is there a risk of injuring yourself or others?

### Keys/ lanyards/ items in pockets

Does the manner you are carrying items pose a risk to yourself or others?

Could your lanyard release if pulled?

### Emotional Attachment

Would I be upset if my clothing or jewellery were damaged?

Would trying to protect my property compromise my ability to do a professional job?