

Code of Conduct Policy

December 2021

PARTNERSHIPS | OPPORTUNITY | INTEGRITY | EQUITY | EXCELLENCE | PEOPLE-CENTRED

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1 Purpose

- 1.1 The aim of this Code of Conduct is to set out the standards of conduct expected of all staff, agency workers and self-employed contractors. This should be read in conjunction with our disciplinary policy (for staff employed by the Trust), Teachers Standards, and the statutory guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education.
- 1.2 This Code should make it clear to employees the expectations the Trust has of them. If any employee is ever unsure what the expectations are in any given circumstance, they should speak to their line manager or HR.
- 1.3 This Code does not form part of any employee's contract of employment, and it may be amended following appropriate negotiation and consultation with staff and recognised Trade Unions.

2 Scope

- 2.1 The Code applies to all employees regardless of length of service including support staff in their probationary period. Breaches of the Code may be managed through the disciplinary procedure for employees.
- 2.2 As recognisable figures in the local community the behaviour and conduct of staff of the Trust outside of work can impact on their employment. Therefore, staff should consider their conduct outside of work.

3 Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children

- 3.1 All employees are responsible for safeguarding children and promoting their welfare. All employees should be appropriately trained to help and assist in identifying children who may benefit from early help. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years.
- 3.2 All employees should be appropriately trained to understand the signs of abuse and neglect and know how to report this, including any actions that may be appropriate.
- 3.3 To do this, employees must have fully read and understood the statutory guidance on Keeping Children Safe in Education, child protection/safeguarding policies and must always follow the guidance and policies.
- 3.4 All employees must cooperate with colleagues and with external agencies where necessary.

4 Duty of care

Staff must:

- Understand the responsibilities, which are part of their employment or role, and be aware that

sanctions may be applied if these provisions are breached

- Always act, and be seen to act, in our students' best interests
- Avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and/or intentions
- Take responsibility for their own actions and behaviour

5 Health & Safety

All employees must ensure that they:

- Familiarise themselves with the Health and Safety statements produced by the Academy/Trust
- Read and understand the Academy/Trust's Health and Safety Policy
- Comply with Health and Safety Regulations or instructions and use any safety equipment and protective clothing which is supplied to you by the Academy/Trust
- Comply with any hygiene requirements
- Comply with any accident reporting requirements
- Never act in a way which might cause risk or damage to any other members of the Academy/Trust its community or visitors.

5.1 Employees are expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct. The following statements define the behaviour and attitudes which set the required standard for conduct at our Trust.

5.2 Employees should comply with any lawful or reasonable instructions issued by managers or governors.

5.3 Employees uphold public trust and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour:

- Treating students with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and always observing proper boundaries appropriate to their professional position
- Having regard for the need to safeguard students' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions
- Showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others
- Not undermining fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
- Ensuring that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways which exploit students' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law.

5.4 Employees should have regard for the ethos, policies, and practices of our Trust. Employees are expected to treat all colleagues with respect, dignity, fairness, and courtesy.

5.5 Staff should maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their work.

6 Tackling discrimination

6.1 Employees are trained to understand the types of discrimination and bullying that students and colleagues may be subject to. Employees are required to have read and understood our Equality and Diversity policy.

- 6.2 Employees should not ignore any form of discrimination. This includes inappropriate jokes and banter. Employees should positively promote equality and diversity and inclusion.

7 Professional boundaries and relationships

- 7.1 Employees are in a position of trust in relation to our students which means that the relationship between an employee and a student is not one of equals. It is a specific offence for a person aged 18 or over (e.g. teacher) 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.
- 7.2 Employees must ensure that they avoid behaviour which might be misinterpreted by others. This includes any type of communication that they may have with students.
- 7.3 Employees must not make sexual remarks to any student or discuss their own sexual relationships with, or in the presence of students. Employees must not discuss a student's sexual relationships in inappropriate settings or contexts. Any sexual behaviour by a member of staff towards any student is unacceptable and illegal.
- 7.4 Employees must ensure that professional boundaries are always maintained. This means that employees should not show favouritism to any student and should not allow students to engage in any type of behaviour that could be seen to be inappropriate. Students are not employees' friends and should not be treated as such.
- 7.5 Employees should be aware that it is not uncommon for students to become strongly attracted to a member of staff or to develop an infatuation. If any member of staff becomes aware of an infatuation, they should discuss it with the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Headteacher immediately so that they can receive support on the most appropriate way to manage the situation.

8 Confidentiality and data protection

- 8.1 Members of staff may have access to confidential information about students, colleagues or other matters relating to the Trust. This could include personal and sensitive data, for example information about a student's home life. Employees should never use or disclose this information inappropriately.
- 8.2 If an employee is ever in doubt about what information can or can't be disclosed, they should speak to the Headteacher or the DPO via hr@consilium-at.com
- 8.3 We will comply with the requirements of **Data Protection Legislation** (being (i) the General Data Protection Regulation ((EU) 2016/679) (unless and until the GDPR is no longer directly applicable in the UK) and any national implementing laws, regulations, and secondary legislation, as amended or updated from time to time, in the UK and then (ii) any successor legislation to the GDPR or the Data Protection Act 1998, including the Data Protection Act 2018). Employees are expected to comply with the Academy/Trust's systems as set out in our Data Protection Policy. If any employee becomes aware that data is at risk of compromise or loss or has been compromised or lost they must report it immediately to the Data Protection Officer, in order (where applicable) for relevant breaches to be reported to the Information Commissioners Office within 72 hours.

8.4 Employees must read and understand our Data Protection Policy and other relevant policies including in relation to criminal records information, recruitment and safer recruitment, internet, email and communications, information security.

9 Physical contact with students

9.1 There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate and proper for staff to have physical contact with students. Employees must ensure that they only do so in ways that are appropriate to their professional role and in response to the student's needs at the time. This should be of limited duration and appropriate to the age, stage of development, gender, and background of the student. Employees should always be able to explain why they have made physical contact with a student.

9.2 There may also be occasions where a student is in distress and needs comfort and reassurance which may include age-appropriate physical contact. If an employee is in this position then they should consider the way in which they offer comfort, ensuring that it is not open to misinterpretation and is always reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Headteacher.

9.3 Staff may legally physically intervene with students to prevent them from committing a crime, injuring themselves or others, causing damage to property, engaging in behaviour prejudicial to good order and to maintain good order and discipline. Physical force should never be used as a form of punishment.

9.4 Sexual contact, including grooming patterns of behaviour, with students is unlawful and unacceptable in all circumstances.

10 Behaviour management

10.1 Employees should not use any form of degrading or humiliating treatment to punish a student. Where students display difficult or challenging behaviour, employees should follow the Academy behaviour policy using strategies appropriate to the circumstance and situation.

11 Social contact with students

11.1 Employees should not establish or seek to establish social contact, via any channels (including social media), with students for the purposes of securing a friendship or to pursue or strengthen a relationship. Employees should use their work provided equipment only for communicating electronically with students. If there are any circumstances in which an employee has had to provide their personal contact details, including phone numbers, email address etc, to any student then they should report this to the Designation Safeguarding Lead.

11.2 The Trust's advice to staff is not to connect to students via social media or other communication channels unless this is for professional purposes and that the employee can demonstrate that this is the case.

11.3 Our Trust is part of our community and we recognise that, as members of the community, employees will come into contact with students outside of the Academy. We expect staff to use their

professional judgement in such situations and to report to the Designated Safeguarding Lead any contact that they have had with a student, outside of the Academy/Trust, that they are concerned about or that could be misinterpreted by others.

12 Photography, videos, and other images/media

Many educational activities involve recording images. These may be undertaken or displays, publicity, to celebrate achievement and to provide records of evidence of the activity. Under no circumstances should employees use their personal equipment to take images of students at or on behalf of the Academy/Trust.

13 Working one to one with students

13.1 There will be times where an employee is working one to one with a student and this is acceptable. Employees need to understand that this means that they may be more vulnerable to allegations being made against them. Therefore, it is important that employees:

- Avoid meeting on a one-to-one basis in secluded areas of the Academy
- Ensure that the door to the room is open or that there is visual access into the room
- Inform a colleague or line manager of the meeting, preferably beforehand
- Reports to their line manager if the student becomes distressed or angry.

14 Curriculum

14.1 Many areas of the curriculum can include or raise subject matter which is sexually explicit or of a political or sensitive nature. Care should be taken to ensure that resource materials cannot be misinterpreted and clearly relate to the learning outcomes identified by the lesson plan. This can be supported by developing ground rules with students to ensure sensitive topics can be discussed in a safe learning environment. The curriculum can sometimes include or lead to unplanned discussion about subject matter of a sexually explicit, political, or otherwise sensitive nature. Responding to children's questions requires careful judgement and employees should take guidance in these circumstances from the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

15 Dress and appearance

Working in our Trust employees are role models to our students and how they present themselves is important. Our expectation is that staff are decently, appropriately, and professionally dressed in work at all times.

16 Keeping within the law

16.1 Staff are expected to operate within the law.

16.2 Employees must ensure that they:

16.2.1 Uphold the law at work

- 16.2.2 Never commit a crime which could damage public confidence in them or the Trust, or which makes them unsuitable for the work they do.
- 16.2.3 Inform the Headteacher immediately if they are questioned by the police, charged with, or convicted of, any crime which could directly impact on their employment whilst they are employed at the Trust. The Headteacher will then need to consider whether this charge or conviction damages public confidence in the Trust or makes the employee unsuitable to carry out their duties (taking advice from HR).

17 Conduct outside of work and at work related functions

- 17.1 Unlike some other forms of employment, working at our Trust means that an employee's conduct outside of work could have an impact on their role.
- 17.2 Staff must not engage in conduct outside work which could seriously damage the reputation and standing of the Academy/Trust or the employee's own reputation or the reputation of other members of the Trust community.
- 17.3 We would expect employees to make us aware of any such situations that may have happened outside of the Academy/Trust which could have a direct impact on their ability to undertake their work.
- 17.4 Employees are required to demonstrate responsible behaviour at work-related functions and work-related social events that take place outside normal work hours.
- 17.5 Staff must not behave in a way outside of work that may impact on their suitability to work with children.

18 Agency Workers

- 18.1 In some circumstances the Trust/Academy will have to consider an allegation against an individual not directly employed by them, where its disciplinary procedures do not fully apply because agencies will have their own policies and procedures; for example, supply teachers or contracted staff provided by an employment agency or business. Whilst the Trust/Academy are not the employer of supply teachers, they should ensure allegations are dealt with properly. In no circumstances should the Trust/Academy decide to cease to use a supply teacher due to safeguarding concerns, without finding out the facts and liaising with the LADO to determine a suitable outcome.
- 18.2 The Trust/Academy should discuss with the supply agency whether it is appropriate to suspend the supply teacher or redeploy them whilst they carry out their investigation. Agencies should be fully involved and co-operate with any enquiries from the LADO, police and/or children's social care. The Trust/Academy will usually take the lead because agencies do not have direct access to children or other Trust/Academy staff to be able to collect the facts when an allegation is made, nor do they have all the relevant information required by the LADO as part of the referral process.
- 18.3 Supply teachers, whilst not employed by the Trust/Academy, are under the supervision, direction

and control of the Trust when working in the Trust/Academy. They should be advised to contact their trade union representative if they have one, or a colleague for support. The allegations management meeting which is often arranged by the LADO should address issues such as information sharing, to ensure that any previous concerns or allegations known to the agency or agencies are taken into account by the Trust/Academy during the investigation.

18.4 When using a supply agency, the Trust/Academy should inform the agency of its process for managing allegations but also take account of the agency's policies and their duty to refer to the DBS as personnel suppliers. This should include inviting the agency's human resource manager or equivalent to meetings and keeping them up to date with information about its policies.

18.5 We expect agency workers and agencies to cooperate with our investigations and with external agencies where applicable and the Academy/Trust will follow appropriate processes in line with the statutory guidance for Keeping Children Safe in Education.

19 Review

This Code of Conduct is reviewed, consulted on with JCNC and amended every two years by the Trust. We will monitor the application and outcomes of this code of conduct to ensure it is working effectively and engage with Trade Unions on this.

