

Policy C3 Staff Code of Conduct

1. Statement of purpose

- 1.1 This Code of Conduct aims to provide guidance on the minimum expected standards of behaviour that all Trust staff and volunteers should observe. The Trust aims to create a culture which proactively prioritises the safeguarding and wellbeing of both pupils and staff and a working environment that facilitates the happiness and attainment of pupils: Staff have an individual responsibility to prioritise the safeguarding and wellbeing of both pupils and colleagues.
- 1.2 All staff, including those who work in our academies via a third party agreement (e.g. supply teachers), are expected to act with personal and professional integrity at all times, respecting the safety and wellbeing of others. Staff act as role models for pupils by consistently demonstrating high standards of behaviour. This also applies to Trustees, Local Board members and volunteers.
- 1.3 Many of the principles in this Code of Conduct are based on statutory obligations within the [Teachers' Standards](#). The Trust expects that all teachers will act in accordance with the personal and professional behaviours set out in the Teachers' Standards.
- 1.4 Please note that this Code of Conduct is not exhaustive. Other responsibilities expected of staff, managers and volunteers are set out in other [Trust policies](#), as appropriate. If situations arise that are not covered by this Code of Conduct, staff will use their professional judgement and act in the best interests of the academy or Professional services department, Trust and its pupils¹.
- 1.5 Failure to follow the Staff Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action being taken, as set out in our Staff Disciplinary policy. Sanctions include, but are not limited to, dismissal, i.e. civil or legal action may be taken if staff are found to bring the profession, academy/department, Trust or University of Brighton into disrepute, or if something is felt to have undermined confidence in their professional abilities.

2. Legislation and guidance

- 2.1 In line with the statutory safeguarding guidance (i.e. [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021](#)), the Trust is required to have a staff code of conduct or staff behaviour policy, which should cover acceptable use of technologies including use of mobile devices, staff/pupil relationships and communications, including the use of social media.
- 2.2 This policy also complies with the Trust' funding agreement and articles of association.

3. General obligations

- 3.1 Our staff are expected to model behaviours that set a positive example within our academy communities and demonstrate high standards of conduct in order to encourage pupils to do the same.

Staff should:

- Treat everyone with dignity and respect
- Show tolerance and respect for the rights of others

¹ The Trust recognises that staff will have legitimate relationships with pupils who are family members or members of family of close friends which will fall outside of the restrictions of this Code and such issues can be raised with line managers.

- Never use inappropriate or offensive language in their place of work
- Staff should not show bias or favouritism towards any pupils or staff, including applicants during staff recruitment processes
- Uphold 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 will overly influence pupils, exploit pupils' vulnerability or lead them to break the law
- Understand the statutory frameworks they must act within
- Familiarise themselves and comply with all Trust and, where applicable, academy policies and procedures
- Adhere to the Teachers' Standards as applicable
- Avoid putting themselves at risk of allegations of abuse or unprofessional conduct
- Inform the Principal/Head of Professional Services of any cautions, convictions or relevant orders accrued during their employment, and/or if they are charged with a criminal offence

4. Safeguarding

- 4.1 Staff are accountable for the way in which they: exercise authority; manage risk; use resources; and safeguard children. All staff have a responsibility to keep children safe and to protect them from abuse (sexual, physical, and emotional), neglect and safeguarding concerns. Children have a right to be safe and to be treated with respect and dignity. It follows that trusted adults are expected to take reasonable steps to ensure their safety and wellbeing. Failure to do so may be regarded as professional misconduct.
- 4.2 Academy based staff will familiarise themselves with their academy Child Protection and Safeguarding policy and procedures. They must know who the academy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and deputies are. The Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and procedures will be shared with all staff on induction and are available on the academy webpages. Regular training updates will also be shared with all staff. All staff are required to actively engage in professional development opportunities
- 4.3 All staff who have contact with pupils should read and demonstrate understanding of [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(KCSIE 2021\) Part 1 and Annex B](#). All staff who do not have contact with children (e.g. Professional Services departments) should read and demonstrate understanding of Annex A. DSLs, Deputy DSLs and Senior Leaders must further read and understand all additional sections of KCSIE 2021.
- 4.4 All staff must ensure that they are aware of the processes to follow if they have concerns about a child. Information will be available on team member noticeboards, academy websites and via electronic libraries. Staff working with children must maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff should always act in the best interests of the child. If staff have any concerns about a child's welfare, they should act on them immediately and raise concerns with the DSL (or deputy) in line with the Academy Child Protection Policy and Procedures.
- 4.5 All staff must fulfil the Prevent Duty to protect children from the risk of radicalisation. Prevent training should be undertaken every 2 years. All staff have a duty to report suspected Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) cases to the DSL. All staff must report known FGM acts to the police.
- 4.6 All staff should be aware that children can abuse other children (often referred to as peer-on-peer abuse). It can happen both inside and outside of school and online. It is essential that all staff recognise the indicators and signs of peer-on-peer abuse and know how to identify it and respond to

reports. Staff must challenge inappropriate behaviours between peers (whether children or adults); our Trust has a zero-tolerance approach to abuse. Sexual violence and sexual harassment are never accepted and will not be tolerated.

- 4.7 We have an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about adults working in or on behalf of an academy are dealt with appropriately to safeguard children. All allegations and lower-level concerns in relation to staff, supply teachers, contractor or volunteers must be reported to the Principal or Head of Department within the Professional Services Teams. Where applicable the DSL or Principal will raise concerns and seek further advice from the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) to agree a course of action.
- 4.9 In instances where safeguarding concerns raised through the Child Protection and Safeguarding policy and procedures have not been responded to through normal processes, staff should raise concerns through the [Whistleblowing Policy](#).
- 4.10 In addition to KCSIE 2021, all staff who have contact with children should read and demonstrate understanding of the following statutory guidance and advice:
- DfE: [Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges Sep 2021](#)
 - DfE: [Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education \(RSE\) and Health Education Jul 2020](#)

5. Staff/pupil relationships

- 5.1 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.
- 5.3 Any sexual behaviour by a member of staff with or towards a child is unacceptable. It is an offence under section 16 of The Sexual Offences Act 2003 for a member of staff in a position of trust to engage in sexual activity with a child under 18 years of age, even if the relationship is consensual. Sexual activity with a child will be a matter for criminal and/or disciplinary procedures.
- 5.4 Children are protected by the same laws as adults in relation to non-consensual sexual behaviour. They are additionally protected by specific legal provisions depending on their age and understanding. This includes the prohibition of sexual activity with children by adults in a position of trust even if that relationship is consensual.
- 5.5 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 in to the room
 - A colleague or line manager knows this is taking place
- 5.6 Staff should normally not have one-to-one contact with pupils outside of school hours / academy activities. It is recognised that this may occur through mutual membership of social groups; family connections; activities such as tutoring; or involvement as a volunteer (e.g. Scouts, Girlguiding, etc.). Staff should not assume the academy is aware of such connections and should declare any such relationships to their line manager or Principal.
- 5.7 Personal contact details should not be exchanged between staff and pupils. This includes social media profiles.
- 5.8 While the Trust is aware many pupils and their parents may wish to give gifts to staff, for example, at the end of the academic year, gifts from individual staff to individual pupils are not acceptable.

5.9 If a staff member is concerned at any point that an interaction between themselves and a pupil may be misinterpreted, this should be reported at the earliest opportunity to their line manager or the Principal.

6. Communication and media (including social media)

6.1 All staff members are expected to engage in social media in a positive, safe and responsible manner. Staff are advised not to publish specific and detailed private thoughts, concerns, pictures or messages on any social media services, especially content that may be considered threatening, hurtful or defamatory to others or reputationally damaging to the academy and/or Trust.

6.2 Staff should be aware that their online conduct on social media can have an impact on their professional role and reputation at work. Staff should not engage with local, regional or national media unless they have the prior approval of the Marketing and Communications department. Staff should direct any media enquiries to the Marketing and Communications Department at as soon as possible for effective media management.

6.3 All members of staff should safeguard themselves and their privacy when using social media sites. Advice will be provided to staff via staff training and by sharing appropriate guidance and resources on a regular basis.

6.4 All members of staff are encouraged to carefully consider the information, including text and images, they share and post online and to ensure that their social media use is compatible with their professional role and is in accordance with Trust policies and the wider professional and legal framework.

6.5 Information and content that staff have access to as part of their employment, including photos and personal information about pupils and their family, carers or colleagues will not be shared or discussed on social media sites.

6.6 Staff will notify their line manager immediately if they consider that any content shared on social media sites conflicts with their role.

6.7 Work email addresses and other official contact details will not be used for setting up non work-related activity, including social media accounts

6.8 Staff should be aware of, and follow, their academy's Online Safety, Social Media, Photography and Image Sharing policies and Remote Learning guidance.

7. Acceptable use of technology

7.1 Staff will not use technology in the academy 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.

7.2 Staff will not use personal mobile phones, smart watches and laptops, or academy equipment for personal use, during classroom / teaching contact time or in front of pupils. They will also not use personal mobile phones or cameras to take pictures of pupils.

7.3 The Trust has the right to monitor emails, Teams and internet use on the academy or Trust IT system.

7.4 Staff should be aware of, and follow, the ICT Acceptable Use policy.

7.5 Staff participating in online streaming of lessons or using video conferencing to contact pupils/students will follow guidance issued in their academy's Online Safety policy and Remote Learning guidance.

8. Confidentiality

- 8.1 In the course of their role, staff are often privy to sensitive and confidential information about the academy or Professional Services department, staff, pupils and their parents or carers which will be dealt with in accordance with the Data Protection policy. All staff are expected to complete training on the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).
- 8.2 This information will never be:
- Disclosed to anyone without the relevant authority
 - Used to humiliate, embarrass or blackmail others
 - Used for a purpose other than what it was collected and intended for
 - Shared with anyone other than those explicitly required to process the information
- 8.3 This does not override staff's duty to report child protection concerns to the appropriate channel where staff believe a child is at risk of harm in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding policy.
- 8.4 Staff are expected to refrain from placing confidential information in public view. Post-It notes with login details, or notes or documents containing any information on staff, students or third parties should only be kept in secure places.

9. Honesty and integrity

- 9.1 Staff should maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their role. This includes when dealing with pupils, handling money, claiming expenses and using trust property and facilities.
- 9.2 Staff will not accept bribes. Gifts that are worth more than £25 must be declared and recorded on the gifts and hospitality register.
- 9.3 Staff will ensure that all information given to the academy or Professional Services department about their qualifications and professional experience is correct.

10. Dress code

- 10.1 Staff will dress in a professional, appropriate manner.
- 10.2 Outfits will not be overly revealing. Inappropriate or offensive tattoos of any sort must not be visible.
- 10.3 Clothes will not display any offensive, discriminatory or political slogans.
- 10.4 Piercings must be safe and appropriate for the working environment.

11. Conduct outside of work

- 11.1 Staff will not act in a way that would bring our sponsor, the University of Brighton, the Trust, academy or Professional Services department, or the teaching profession into disrepute. This covers relevant criminal offences, such as violence or sexual misconduct, as well as negative comments about the University of Brighton, the Trust, academy or Professional Services department, or the teaching profession in the media (including social media).

12. Links with other policies

- 12.1 This policy links with our policies on:
- Staff Disciplinary
 - Staff Grievance

- Child Protection and Safeguarding (see academy website)
- Gifts and hospitality
- Online Safety (see academy website)
- Use of Social Media
- ICT Acceptable Use
- Whistleblowing
- Physical Contact
- Intimate Care
- Lone Working
- Photography and Image Sharing (see academy website)
- Remote Learning Guidance (see academy website)
- Data Protection

12. Policy status and review

Written by:	Head of Governance and Admissions Updated by Head of People (02.2021)
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Status:	V2 = Approved V2a = Approved V2b = Approved V3 = Approved V4 = Approved V5 =
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