

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1. The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to provide a framework of standards and behaviour guidelines for safe professional practice and effective partnerships between the Trust, School Leaders, employees and parents / carers. It covers some of the most important issues relating to personal conduct but it is not intended to be exhaustive. The Code sets out the minimum standards that apply to all staff whether teacher or support staff (including volunteers), visitors or locums working with pupils on and off site. Following this Code will help to safeguard staff, governors and volunteers from being maliciously, falsely or mistakenly suspected or accused of misconduct in relation to pupils and the Required Professional Standards.
- 1.2. This document is in addition to and compliments the Professional Standards for Teachers and other professional staff as well as the Trust's and school's own policies and procedures, terms and conditions of employment and contracts.
- 1.3. All staff, governors and volunteers have a legal duty to keep pupils safe, promote their welfare and well-being and to protect them from sexual, physical and emotional harm. This duty is, in part, exercised through the development of respectful, caring and professional relationships between adults and pupils and behaviour by adults that demonstrate integrity, maturity and good judgment. (Children Act 1989, Education Act 2002, Education and Inspections Act 2006 and statutory guidance, "Keeping Children Safe in Education 2016").
- 1.4. Staff, governors and volunteers must feel able to raise issues of concern and everyone must fully recognise the duty to do so, particularly in terms of child protection. Adults have a duty to report any child protection or welfare concerns to the designated member of staff in school. Anyone who has concerns about something that is happening at work which they believe could be unlawful conduct, financial malpractice, a concern for the welfare or safeguarding of a child or be dangerous to the public or the environment, **must** bring this to the school's / Trust's attention. A member of staff who, in good faith, "whistleblows" or makes a public interest disclosure will have the protection of the relevant legislation.
- 1.5. Although this Code does not seek to provide an exhaustive list of what is, or is not, appropriate behaviour for staff, governors or volunteers, it does, however, highlight behaviour that is illegal, inappropriate or inadvisable in relation to the required professional standards. There will be occasions and circumstances in which staff, governors or volunteers have to make decisions or take action in the best interests of the pupil where no specific guidance has been given. Adults are expected to make responsible and informed judgments about their own behaviour in order to secure the best interests and welfare of the pupils for whom that individual is responsible.
- 1.6. Any member of staff who is found to have committed a breach of this Code will be subject to disciplinary action. Such behaviour may constitute gross misconduct and, as such, may result in summary dismissal. The governing body will take a strict approach to serious breaches of this Code,

## **2. Safeguarding**

- 2.1. Staff must be aware of the name of the designated person with responsibility for safeguarding pupils (and their deputy) and understand their responsibilities under the safeguarding / child protection policy. The Headteacher will maintain a list of designated delegates who may appropriately be referred to in the absence of the Headteacher. All staff have a responsibility to raise concerns about the inappropriate or worrying behaviour of a colleague: in good faith

and without fear of repercussions. Staff must accept responsibility for their own actions and behaviour and avoid any conduct that might lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions. They must make a record of any incident and promptly consult their line manager. All staff are obliged to support the Trust's / school's statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare and well-being of all pupils.

2.2. If allegations are made about the mistreatment of a pupil by a member of staff or volunteer, the Head Teacher will follow the procedures adopted by the Local Safeguarding Children Board, in consultation with relevant LA Designated Officers and the guidance set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE July 2016) and the statutory guidance within Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against Teachers and other Staff (DfE Oct 2012). If the allegation is made against the Head Teacher then, working with the Trust, the Chair of the Governing Body, will follow the above procedures. Allegations would include such matters as:

- behaving in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- possible commitment of a criminal offence against or related to a child; or
- behaviour towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children.

2.3. Staff and volunteers working in schools must understand that any breaches in the law or professional expectations might lead to criminal and/or disciplinary action and/or barring. Any caution, conviction or bind-over should be declared to the Head Teacher as soon as possible.

### **3. Expected Standards**

3.1. All staff, governors and volunteers, as appropriate to their role and/or job description, must:

- Place the well-being and learning of pupils at the centre of their professional practice.
- Have high expectations for all pupils, be committed to addressing underachievement, and work to help pupils progress regardless of their background and personal circumstances.
- Treat pupils fairly and with respect, take their knowledge, views, opinions and feelings seriously, and value diversity and individuality.
- Model the characteristics they are trying to inspire in pupils, including enthusiasm for learning, a spirit of enquiry, honesty, tolerance, social responsibility, patience, and a genuine concern for other people.
- Respond sensitively to the differences in the home backgrounds and circumstances of pupils, recognising the key role that parents and carers play in pupils' education.
- Seek to work in partnership with parents and carers, respecting their views and promoting understanding and co-operation to support the young person's learning and well-being in and out of school.
- Reflect on their own practice, develop their skills, knowledge and expertise, and adapt appropriately to learn with and from colleagues.
- The same standards should always be applied regardless of culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity.

3.2. All staff, governors and volunteers must be familiar with and act in accordance with "Keeping Children Safe in Education" (DfE Sept 2016).

3.3. Employees should not communicate to the public, press, television or any outside agency the contents of any documents relating to the school / Trust or the proceedings of any meeting that discusses confidential information unless required by law or authorised by an appropriate

manager to do so. The only exception is in the case of elected Trade Union officials acting in their official capacity. However, Trade Union representatives would be expected to raise any issues through the normal channels through the school and/or the Trust in the first instance.

- 3.4. Employees should not use any information obtained in the course of their employment for personal gain or benefit, nor should they pass it on to others who might use it in such a way before it has become public knowledge.
- 3.5. Teachers are additionally required to comply with the Teachers' Standards introduced on 1 September 2012 and any subsequent updates, in particular "Part 2: Personal and Professional Standards".

#### **4. Reporting Concerns and Recording Incidents**

4.1. All staff, governors and volunteers must report concerns and incidents in accordance with the school's Whistleblowing Policy and/or the Managing Allegations of Abuse Policy. The following is a non-exhaustive list of behaviours by an adult which would be a cause for concern:

- Allowing a pupil / young person to be treated badly and/or pretending not to know it is happening;
- Gossiping / sharing information inappropriately;
- Demonstrating inappropriate discriminatory behaviour and/or using inappropriate language;
- Dressing in a way which is inappropriate for the job role;
- Not treating pupils fairly / demonstrating favouritism;
- Demonstrating a lack of understanding about personal and professional boundaries;
- Using his/her position of trust to intimidate, threaten, coerce or undermine;
- Appearing to have an inappropriate social relationship with a pupil or pupils;
- Appearing to have special or different relationships with a pupil or pupils;
- Seeming to seek out unnecessary opportunities to be alone with a pupil;
- Being made aware of a possible act of female genital mutilation (FGM) and failing to report this to the police and to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead.

#### **5. Confidentiality**

- 5.1. As data controllers, all schools are subject to the Data Protection Act 1998. In addition, teachers owe a common law duty of care to safeguard the welfare of their pupils. This duty is acknowledged in the provisions governing disclosure of information about pupils.
- 5.2. Members of staff and governors may have access to confidential information about pupils in order to undertake their responsibilities. In some circumstances the information may be sensitive and/or confidential. Confidential or personal information about a pupil or his/her family must never be disclosed to anyone other than on a need to know basis. In circumstances where the pupil's identity does not need to be disclosed the information should be used anonymously. Information must never be used to intimidate, humiliate, or embarrass the pupil.
- 5.3. However, there are some circumstances in which a member of staff may be expected to share information about a pupil, for example when abuse is alleged or suspected. In such cases, individuals have a duty to pass on information that might suggest that a child is in need or at risk of significant harm, without delay to those with designated pupil protection responsibilities.

5.4. Confidential information about pupils must be held securely. Confidential information about pupils must not be held off the school site other than on security protected school equipment. Information must only be stored for the length of time necessary to discharge the task for which it is required.

5.5. If a member of staff is in any doubt about the storage or sharing of information s/he must seek guidance from a senior member of staff. Any media or legal enquiries must be passed to senior management.

## **6. Propriety and Behaviour**

6.1. All adults working with children have a responsibility to maintain public confidence in their ability to safeguard the welfare and best interests of pupils. They should adopt high standards of personal conduct in order to maintain the confidence and respect of their colleagues, pupils and the public in general. An individual's behaviour or actions, either in or out of the workplace, should not compromise his/her position within the work setting or bring the school into disrepute. The misuse of drugs, alcohol or acts of violence would be examples of such behaviour.

6.2. Personal property of a sexually explicit nature contained in, for example, books, magazines, CDs, DVDs or such material on any electronic media must not be brought onto or stored on the school premises or on any school equipment.

## **7. Appearance**

7.1. A person's dress and appearance are matters of personal choice and self-expression. Whilst the school values diversity staff, governors and volunteers must ensure they are dressed in ways which are neat, clean, modest and appropriate to their role and not likely to be viewed as offensive, revealing or sexually provocative so that confidence of service users is maintained. Specifically clothing should not distract, cause embarrassment or give rise to misunderstanding, should be culturally sensitive and free of any political or otherwise contentious slogans, and not considered to be discriminatory. Those who dress or appear in a manner which may be considered as inappropriate could render themselves vulnerable to criticism or allegations of misconduct.

## **8. Sexual Contact with Children and Young People and Abuse of Trust**

8.1. A relationship between an adult and a child or young person is not a relationship between equals. There is potential for exploitation and harm of vulnerable young people. At all times adults should maintain appropriate professional boundaries and avoid behaviour which might be misinterpreted by others. They should report any incident with this potential to the Headteacher or Designated Safeguarding Lead.

8.2. Adults within a school environment stand in 'loco parentis' to the children and young persons in their care. Any sexual behaviour or activity, whether homosexual or heterosexual, by a member of staff, governor or volunteer with or towards such a child or young person is illegal even if the young person is over the age of consent. Children and young people are protected by the same laws as adults in relation to non-consensual sexual behaviour. They are additionally protected by specific legal provisions regardless of whether there is consent or not. Where a person aged 18 or over is in a specified position of trust with a child or young person under 18 years, the Sexual Offences Act 2003 makes it an offence for that person to engage in sexual activity with or in the presence of that child or to cause or incite that child to engage in or watch sexual activity

- 8.3. Staff, governors and volunteers must not have any form of communication with a child or young person which could be interpreted as sexually suggestive or provocative eg verbal comments, letters, notes, texts, electronic mail, phone calls, social networking contact or physical contact. The adult should not make sexual remarks to, or about, a child or young person or discuss their own sexual relationships with or in the presence of pupils. Staff, governors and volunteers should take care that their language or conduct does not give rise to comment or speculation. Attitudes, demeanour and language all require care and thought.
- 8.4. Sexual behaviour includes non-contact activities, such as causing a child or young person to engage in or watch sexual activity or the production of indecent images of children. 'Working Together to Safeguard Children', defines sexual abuse as "forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening".
- 8.5. There are occasions when adults embark on a course of behaviour known as 'grooming' where the sole purpose is to gain the trust of a child or young person, and manipulate that relationship so that sexual abuse can take place. Staff, governors and volunteers should be aware that conferring special attention without good reason or favouring a pupil has the potential to be construed as being part of a 'grooming' process, which is a criminal offence.

## **9. Infatuations and Crushes**

- 9.1. A child or young person may develop an infatuation with an adult who works with them. A member of staff or volunteer, who becomes aware that a pupil may be infatuated with him/herself or a colleague, must report this without delay to a senior colleague so that appropriate action can be taken to avoid any hurt, distress or embarrassment. It is possible that the object of the pupil or parent's affections may not even be aware of this. The situation will be taken seriously and the adult should be careful to ensure that no encouragement of any kind is given to the pupil. It should also be recognised that careless and insensitive reactions may provoke false accusations.
- 9.2. Examples of situations which must be reported to the Headteacher are given below:
- Where a member of staff or volunteer is concerned that he or she might be developing a relationship with a pupil which could have the potential to represent an abuse of trust;
  - Where a member of staff or volunteer is concerned that a pupil is becoming attracted to him or her or that there is a developing attachment or dependency;
  - Where a member of staff or volunteer is concerned that actions or words have been misunderstood or misconstrued by a pupil such that an abuse of trust might be wrongly suspected by others;
  - Where a member of staff or volunteer is concerned about the apparent development of a relationship by another member of staff or volunteer, or receives information about such a relationship.

## **10. Physical Contact and Personal Privacy**

- 10.1. There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate and proper for staff to have physical contact with pupils, but it is crucial that they only do so in ways appropriate to their professional role. When physical contact is made with pupils this should be in response to their needs at the time, of limited duration and appropriate given their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity, culture and background. It is not possible to be specific about the appropriateness of each physical contact, since an action that is appropriate with one pupil in one set of circumstances may be inappropriate in another, or with a different pupil.

- 10.2. Physical contact should never be secretive or casual, or for the gratification of the adult, or represent a misuse of authority. If a member of staff or volunteer believes that an action could be misinterpreted, the incident and circumstances should be reported as soon as possible in the school's incident book, and, if appropriate, a copy placed on the pupil's file.
  - 10.3. Extra caution should be exercised where a child is known to have suffered previous abuse or neglect. Such experiences may sometimes make a child exceptionally needy and demanding of physical contact and staff should respond sensitively by deterring the child through helping them to understand the importance of personal boundaries. Any extreme attention-seeking or behaviour by pupils that makes staff feel uncomfortable should be reported to a line manager.
  - 10.4. Physical contact, which occurs regularly with a pupil or pupils, is likely to raise questions unless the justification for this is part of a formally agreed plan (for example in relation to pupils with SEN or physical disabilities). Any such contact should be the subject of an agreed and open school policy and subject to review. Where feasible, staff should seek the pupil's permission before initiating contact. Staff should listen, observe and take note of the pupil's reaction or feelings and – so far as is possible - use a level of contact which is acceptable to the pupil for the minimum time necessary.
  - 10.5. Some staff, for example those who teach PE and games or who provide music tuition, will on occasion have to initiate physical contact with pupils in order to demonstrate the use of a particular piece of equipment / instrument, to support a pupil so they can perform a task safely, or assist them with an exercise. This should be done with the pupil's agreement. Contact under these circumstances should be for the minimum time necessary to complete the activity and take place in an open environment. Staff should remain sensitive to any discomfort expressed verbally or non-verbally by the pupil.
  - 10.6. Pupils are entitled to respect and privacy when changing clothes or taking a shower. However, there needs to be an appropriate level of supervision in order to safeguard pupils, satisfy health and safety considerations and ensure that bullying or teasing does not occur. This supervision should be appropriate to the needs and age of the pupils concerned and sensitive to the potential for embarrassment.
  - 10.7. All adults should clearly understand the need to maintain appropriate boundaries in their contacts with pupils. Intimate relationships between children / young people and the adults who work with them will be regarded as a grave breach of trust. Allowing or encouraging a relationship to develop in a way which might lead to an inappropriate relationship is also unacceptable. Staff must understand that any breaches in the law or professional expectations might lead to criminal or disciplinary action and barring. Employees should make themselves aware of the safeguarding and behaviour management policies adopted by the school and Trust.
- 11. Pupils in Distress**
- 11.1. There may be occasions when a distressed pupil needs comfort and reassurance. This may include age-appropriate physical contact. Where a member of staff has a particular concern about the need to provide this type of care and reassurance s/he should seek further advice from a senior manager. Staff should remain self-aware at all times in order that their contact is not perceived as threatening, intrusive or subject to misinterpretation. Such incidents must always be recorded and shared with a line manager.
- 12. Behaviour Management and Physical Intervention**
- 12.1. All pupils have a right to be treated with respect and dignity. Corporal punishment is unlawful in all schools. Staff and volunteers must not use any form of degrading treatment to punish a

pupil. The use of sarcasm, demeaning or insensitive comments towards pupils is not acceptable in any situation. Deliberately intimidating pupils by shouting aggressively, hectoring or overbearing physical presence is not acceptable in any situation.

- 12.2. The school is committed to the use of positive behaviour management and under no circumstances should physical force be used as a form of punishment. The use of unwarranted physical force is likely to constitute a criminal offence. Staff will not use any form of threats, sarcasm or demeaning comments to deal with unacceptable behaviour. Physical intervention can only be justified in exceptional circumstances. Non-statutory guidance is available from the Department of Education website. See 'Guide for Heads and School Staff on behaviour and discipline (including reasonable force) for maintained schools' and 'Use of reasonable force -advice for Head Teachers, Staff and Governing Bodies for all Schools and Academies'.
- 12.3. Staff may legitimately intervene to prevent a pupil from committing a criminal offence, injuring themselves or others, causing damage to property, engaging in behaviour prejudicial to good order and to maintain good order and discipline. This must only be undertaken in accordance with the training and policy sanctioned by the Trust, Leadership Team and Governing Body. All incidents and physical interventions must be recorded and good practice advice states this should be reported to parents / carers. Staff should have regard to the health and safety of themselves and others.

### **13. First Aid**

- 13.1. All schools must have trained first aiders / appointed persons. Staff must have had the appropriate training before administering first aid or medication except in an emergency where the illness or injury is such that to delay assistance might cause harm to the child. Staff with a job description which includes intimate care duties will have appropriate training and written guidance. No other member of staff or volunteer should be involved in intimate care duties except in an emergency. Children who require any form of intimate care are entitled to privacy, dignity and safety. Pupils with ongoing health problems will be treated in accordance with any Medical Plan that has been agreed with the parent and the Health Authority and only by those who have been authorised to do so by the Head Teacher. Lone members of staff should not be placed in a position where they are expected to provide any form of intimate care without the safeguard of having another colleague in the same room or area.

### **14. One to One Situations and Meetings with Pupils**

- 14.1. One to one situations have the potential to make children / young persons more vulnerable to harm by those who seek to exploit their position of trust. Adults working in one to one settings with pupils may also be more vulnerable to unjust or unfounded allegations being made against them. Staff must recognise this possibility and plan and conduct such meetings accordingly. Every attempt should be made to ensure that the safety and security needs of both staff and pupils are met. Managers should undertake a risk assessment in relation to the specific nature and implications of one to one work for each worker and pupil. Where such a meeting is demonstrably unavoidable it is advisable to avoid remote or secluded areas of the school and to ensure that the door of the room is left open and/or visual / auditory contact with others is maintained. Where it is necessary to close doors for reasons of confidentiality, a colleague should be made aware of this and asked to remain vigilant. Any arrangements should be reviewed on a regular basis.
- 14.2. Pre-arranged meetings with pupils away from the school premises or on the school site when the school is not in session are not permitted unless prior written approval is obtained from their parent / guardian and the Headteacher or other senior colleague with delegated authority.

- 14.3. No child or young person should be in, or invited into, the home of an adult who works with them, unless the reason for this has been established and agreed with parents / carers and a senior manager / Headteacher beforehand.

## **15. Home Visits**

- 15.1. All work with pupils and parents should, wherever possible, be undertaken in the school or other recognised workplace. There are however occasions, in response to urgent or specific situations, where it is necessary to make one-off or regular home visits.
- 15.2. A risk assessment should include an evaluation of any known factors regarding the child / young person, parents and others living in the household. Following an assessment, appropriate risk management measures should be put in place before visits are agreed. Whenever possible, especially where little or no information is available, visits should not be made alone.

## **16. Transporting or accompanying pupils off-site**

- 16.1. In certain situations eg out of school activities, staff, governors or volunteers may agree to transport pupils. Transport arrangements should be made in advance by a designated member of staff. Wherever possible and practicable, transport should be provided other than in private vehicles with at least one adult additional to the driver acting as an escort.
- 16.2. Adults should ensure that their behaviour is safe and that the transport arrangements and the vehicle meet all legal requirements. They must ensure that the vehicle is roadworthy and appropriately insured and that the maximum capacity is not exceeded.
- 16.3. It is inappropriate for staff to offer lifts to a pupil outside their normal working duties, unless this has been brought to the attention of the line manager and has been agreed beforehand with parents / carers.
- 16.4. There may, however, be occasions where a pupil requires transport in an emergency situation or where not to give a lift may place a pupil at risk. Such circumstances must always be recorded and reported to a senior manager and parents / carers.

## **17. Educational Visits and After-School Activities**

- 17.1. Adults remain in a position of trust and need to ensure that their behaviour remains professional at all times and stays within clearly defined professional boundaries. Staff and volunteers should take particular care when supervising pupils in the less formal atmosphere of an educational visit, particularly in a residential setting, or after-school activity.
- 17.2. Where out of school activities include overnight stays, careful consideration needs to be given to sleeping arrangements. Children, young people, adults and parents should be informed of these prior to the start of the trip. In all circumstances, those organising trips and outings must pay careful attention to ensuring safe staff / child ratios and to the gender mix of staff especially on overnight stays. Please refer to the school's policy on educational visits.

## **18. Curriculum**

- 18.1. Many areas of the curriculum can include or raise subject matter which is sexually explicit, or of an otherwise 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 plan should highlight particular areas of risk and sensitivity.

18.2. The curriculum can sometimes include or lead to unplanned discussion about subject matter of a sexually explicit or otherwise sensitive nature. Responding to pupils' questions can require careful judgment and staff must take guidance in these circumstances from a senior member of staff. Staff and volunteers must not enter into or encourage inappropriate discussion about sexual activity or behaviour.

18.3. Please refer to the school's policy on sex and relationships education.

## **19. Photography, Videos and other Creative Arts**

19.1. Please refer to the school's guidance on the use of images and the consent forms therein.

19.2. Many school activities involve the taking or recording of images. This may be undertaken as part of the curriculum, extra school activities, for publicity, or to celebrate achievement. The Data Protection Act 1998 affects the use of photography. An image of a child is personal data and it is therefore a requirement under the Act that consent is obtained from the parent of a child before any images are made, such as those used for school web sites, notice boards, productions or other purposes.

19.3. Staff need to be aware of the potential for such images to be misused to create indecent images of children and/or for 'grooming' purposes. Careful consideration should be given as to how these activities are organised and undertaken. There should be an agreement as to whether the images will be destroyed or retained for further use, where these will be stored and who will have access to them.

19.4. Staff should remain sensitive to any pupil who appears uncomfortable and should recognise the potential for misinterpretation. It is also important to take into account the wishes of the child, remembering that some children do not wish to have their photograph taken.

19.5. Adults should only use equipment provided or authorised by the school to make / take images and should not use mobile telephones or any other similar devices to make / take images.

19.6. The following guidance must be followed:

- If a photograph is used, avoid naming the pupil.
- If the pupil is named, avoid using the photograph.
- Photographs / images must be securely stored and used only by those authorised to do so.
- Be clear about the purpose of the activity and about what will happen to the photographs / images when the lesson / activity is concluded.
- Ensure that a senior member of staff is aware that the photography / image equipment is being used and that this use is recorded in the lesson plan.
- Ensure that all photographs / images are available for scrutiny in order to screen for acceptability.
- Be able to justify the photographs / images made.
- Do not take photographs in one to one situations.
- Do not take, display or distribute photographs / images of pupils unless there is consent to do so.

## **20. Social Contact**

20.1. Staff, volunteers and governors should not share any personal information with pupils and should not request, or respond to, any personal information from the child / young person,

other than that which might be appropriate as part of their professional role. If a pupil seeks to establish social contact, or if this occurs coincidentally, the adult should exercise his/her professional judgment in making a response and should ensure that all communications are transparent and open to scrutiny.

- 20.2. Staff should not have any social relationships with any pupils under the age of 18, unless they are family members or close family friends and should advise the Headteacher. Unplanned contact should be reported to the Headteacher.

## **21. Social Networking**

- 21.1. Social media can include any website where comments and/or information can be shared and are considered to be in the public domain for example photo sharing and blogs, as well as the more well known social networking sites such as twitter and Facebook. The basic premise is to exercise common sense. Staff are personally responsible for what they communicate in social media and must bear in mind that what is published might be read by the school, pupils, colleagues, the general public, future employers and friends and family for a long time even when privacy settings are used or material is posted on a closed profile or group. Be mindful that what is published may be public for a long time.

- 21.2. In any circumstances:

- Be aware of safeguarding issues and materials which may adversely impact on children (and vulnerable adults). Challenge and report inappropriate use of media.
- Be accurate, fair, thorough and transparent
- Respect copyright and data protection laws as well as maintaining confidential information.
- Do not publish or report information or conversations that are accessed through your employment at the school without explicit permission. "Conversations" may be oral or e-mail exchanges.
- Do not use swear words or derogatory language.
- It is unacceptable to use social media in a manner that would generally be accepted as a hostile attempt to hurt, upset or embarrass another person, or groups of people, associated with the school.
- Never refer to third parties, suppliers or staff in a way that these individuals can be identified
- Never represent or reproduce the Trust logo or the school logo without authorisation
- Do not publish images relating to users of the school's services unless their prior consent has been given in writing

- 21.3. Communication between pupils and adults, by whatever method, should take place within clear and explicit professional boundaries. This includes the wider use of technology such as mobile phones, text messaging, emails, digital cameras, videos, web-cams, websites and blogs.

- 21.4. Staff and volunteers must not give their personal contact details such as home / mobile phone number; home or personal e-mail address or social networking details to pupils unless the need to do so is agreed in writing beforehand with senior management.

- 21.5. It is recommended that staff ensure that all possible privacy settings are activated to prevent pupils from making contact on personal profiles and to prevent students from accessing photo albums or other personal information which may appear on social networking sites.

- 21.6. Staff must not have any pupils or any ex-pupils under the age of 18 as friends on their social networking sites. Staff are advised not to have any online friendships with any young people under the age of 18, unless they are family members or close family friends. In this event staff are advised to notify their line manager. Staff are advised not to have online friendships with parents or carers of pupils, or members of the governing body / trustees. Where such on line friendships exist, staff must ensure that appropriate professional boundaries are maintained.
- 21.7. Staff must ensure that their on-line profiles are consistent with the professional image expected by and of the school and should not post material which may damage the reputation of the school or cause concern about their suitability to work with children and young people. Those who post material which may be considered as inappropriate could render themselves vulnerable to criticism or allegations of misconduct which may be dealt with under the school's disciplinary procedure. Even where it is made clear that the writer's views on such topics do not represent those of the school, such comments are inappropriate.
- 21.8. In your personal use of social media:
- Ensure that your online activities or expressed opinions do not interfere with or conflict with your job or your colleagues (for example many roles within schools are viewed as role models; views expressed should not conflict with this).
  - If you are identifiable as a school employee on social networks, ensure your profile and related content is consistent with how you should present yourself with colleagues and users of school services
  - Do not download or copy school materials without permission
  - If you publish content to a website not owned by the school, and it has something to do with work that you do as an employee of the school (eg, evident from your profile), use a disclaimer such as, "The views expressed here are my own and do not necessarily represent the views of my employer."
  - Maintain boundaries between your personal and professional lives, including customising your privacy settings and avoiding inappropriate personal information becoming visible to members of the group (please note that information can be passed on by individuals that have been allowed access to and any inappropriate views or content will be viewed as contravening the code of conduct)
- 21.9. Where actions in using social media are judged to contravene the school's Code of Conduct employees may face disciplinary action and potentially summary dismissal (dismissal without notice). This may include activities outside working hours. You should only use social media in your capacity as an employee of the school where this is an appropriate communication tool. This must be specifically endorsed by your Headteacher.
- 21.10. If you are not using social media to support you directly in your employed position, you should always access this in your personal time and not using school equipment.

## **22. Whistleblowing and Cyber-Bullying**

- 22.1. Any matter that concerns child protection should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. If staff have reason to believe that a pupil has been subjected to Female Genital Mutilation, this must be reported to the **police first** and then the DSL.
- 22.2. Staff who have concerns about any alleged abuse or inappropriate use of ICT resources, virtual learning environments, camera / recording equipment, telephony, social networking sites, email or internet facilities or inappropriate communications, whether by pupils, parents,

carers or staff, or others should alert the Head teacher. Where a concern relates to the Headteacher, this should be reported to Chair of Governors.

22.3. Cyber-bullying can be experienced by staff as well as pupils. Staff should notify the Headteacher if they are subject to cyber-bullying. The school will endeavour to protect staff and stop any inappropriate conduct.

### **23. Acceptable Use of ICT Facilities and Usage Monitoring**

23.1. Employees are not normally permitted to use office equipment, eg computers, facsimile machines, photocopiers and the like, for personal use. Employees must not allow the school address to be used for personal mail deliveries without prior authorisation from the Head.

23.2. Users of the School's IT and the internet facilities must behave reasonably towards other users and the facilities and in public areas they must behave appropriately. Users who do not behave reasonably and appropriately may be subject to disciplinary action. Employees may use School internet facilities for occasional personal matters during their breaks, but must not access social media for personal purposes.

23.3. Employees are not permitted to make personal use of telephones and e-mail facilities during work time without the Head Teacher's prior approval unless there is an urgent need to contact someone in an emergency. The time spent should be kept to a minimum. Employees should also inform their family and friends only to contact them at work when it is necessary.

23.4. Staff may not use their personal mobile phones **or phone devices** during work time and should not take personal phones or other personal electronic equipment into the classroom.

23.5. Employees should use the Internet and electronic mail in exactly the same way as they would correspond to anyone on school headed notepaper and must remember that all electronic mail falls within the framework of the Data Protection legislation. Employees must not correspond on any aspect of School business, unless it falls within the employee's job description and should not be treated as a confidential means of communication.

23.6. Posting, creating, accessing, transmitting, downloading, uploading or storing any of the following material is likely to amount to gross misconduct and result in summary dismissal unless it is part of an authorised investigation. This list is not exhaustive:

- pornographic or sexually suggestive material or images of children or adults which may be construed as such in the circumstances (that is, writing, texting, pictures, films and video clips of a sexually explicit or arousing nature),
- any other type of offensive, obscene or discriminatory material or criminal material or material which is liable to cause distress or embarrassment to the Trust / school or others.

23.7. If pupils are found to have accessed such images, this should be reported to the Head Teacher.

23.8. It is strictly forbidden to download any software from or to load software onto the school's IT system except with the prior written authorisation of the Head Teacher.

23.9. The contents of the school's ICT resources and communications systems are the property of the school. Therefore, staff should have no expectation of privacy in any message, files, data, document, facsimile, telephone conversation, social media post, conversation or message, or any other kind of information or communications transmitted to, received or printed from, or stored or recorded on our electronic information and communications systems.

23.10. The school reserves the right without further notice to monitor, intercept and review, all usage of its IT resources and communications systems, including but not limited to telephone, e-mail, messaging, voicemail, CCTV, internet and social media postings and activities for the following purposes:

- to ensure that rules are being complied with
- to monitor whether the use of the e-mail system or the internet is legitimate and in accordance with this Code;
- to assist in the investigation of alleged wrongful acts; or
- to comply with any legal obligation.

23.11. Users consent to monitoring by acknowledgement of this Code and their usage of resources and systems. The school may store copies of data or communications for a period of time after they are created, and may delete such copies from time to time without notice. If necessary information will be handed to the police in connection with a criminal investigation.

## **24. Health and Safety**

24.1. The school places a high priority on providing a safe working and learning environment and will act positively to minimise the incidence of all workplace risks as required by the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and other associated legislation. All activities should be carried out with the highest regard for the health and safety of employees, students and visitors.

24.2. It is expected that all employees and volunteers will take responsibility for the Health & Safety of themselves, colleagues, students and any visitor in the school and when on external School activities. Also that they will ensure that they are fully aware of their own duties and responsibilities under the health and safety at work legislation and take reasonable care of their own health and safety.

24.3. Employees must inform their Manager if they have, or take up, additional employment, particularly where this means that their total number of hours worked exceed an average of 48 hours per week, or which could have a detrimental effect on their health and safety. A copy of the school's Health and Safety Policy is available from the School Office.

## **25. Political neutrality whilst at work**

25.1. Employees must ensure that they follow every lawful expressed policy of the Trust and school and do not allow personal or political opinions to interfere with their work duties.

## **26. Appointment and other employment matters**

26.1. All employees involved in recruitment should ensure that appointments are made on the basis of merit. It would be unlawful for an employee to make an appointment that was based on anything other than the ability of the candidate to undertake the duties of the post. The school's recruitment and selection procedure must be strictly observed. In order to avoid any possible accusation of bias, employees should not be involved in an appointment where they are related to an applicant or have a close personal relationship outside work with him or her.

26.2. Staff should make the Head Teacher / Trust aware of any personal relations with other staff members or Governors that might lead to a conflict of interests or cast doubt on the integrity of the school / service; especially where one or other of the parties holds a management or leadership role.

- 26.3. Similarly, employees should not be involved in decisions relating to discipline, capability, promotion or pay adjustments for any employee who is a relative, partner, close friend etc.

## **27. Equality issues**

- 27.1. All employees should ensure that they are aware of the School's policies relating to equality issues and managing diversity and that all such policies are complied with fully, both in letter and spirit.
- 27.2. It is a personal responsibility of all employees to take all necessary steps to ensure that they do not discriminate against members of the wider school community or other employees on the grounds of race, colour, ethnic and national origins, sex, marital status, domestic circumstances, sexual orientation, disability, age, class, ethical beliefs, or trade union activity / membership. Employees must also do whatever is reasonable and appropriate to promote equality of opportunity in whatever way and whenever they can.

## **28. Financial Regulations and Resources**

- 28.1. The School receives a substantial income from public sources. It is essential that the School maintains the highest standards of conduct in financial matters and seeks to maintain high standards of integrity and ethical behaviour. Financial procedures and regulations are in place and employees are expected to ensure that decision making is open and fair and complies with these.
- 28.2. The CfBT Schools Trust financial handbook and School Finance Policy create a framework of financial controls within which the staff of the School must operate. These regulations are designed to protect the school, Trust and individual members of staff. Failure to comply with these regulations may lead to the loss of assets, significant delays in payments to employees and suppliers, and additional work for colleagues, as well as potential for disciplinary procedures.
- 28.3. Employees must ensure that they use funds entrusted to them in a responsible and lawful manner. They should strive to ensure value for money to the local community and to avoid legal challenge to the school / Trust. All employees, volunteers and governors should ensure that they have an appropriate awareness of the school's / Trust's financial regulations and that their actions fully comply with those regulations.

## **29. Outside commitments**

- 29.1. Employees' off-duty hours are their own personal concern. However, employees should be clear about their contractual obligations and should not take up any outside activities or employment, whether paid or unpaid, or behave in such a way that may bring the reputation of the school into disrepute outside working hours, particularly if they live and work in the local community. Off duty activities should not expose them to a significant health risk.
- 29.2. No member of staff will enter into extra or private tuition, or childcare arrangements with parents without the permission of the Head Teacher.
- 29.3. The school will not prevent an employee from undertaking additional employment providing it does not conflict with the interests of, or in any way weaken public confidence in the Trust or school and does not in any way affect performance of their duties and responsibilities whilst they are at work, or where their current position could confer advantage to their private interest / personal gain. If there is a conflict the manager can ask for an employee to discontinue with the conflicting private business interests.

### **30. Personal interests**

- 30.1. An employee's life away from work is their personal concern. Employees should not however, subordinate their work to their private interests or put themselves in a position where their job, or the Trust's or school's interests and their own personal interests conflict. This includes behaviour which, because of the nature of employment / activity, would undermine the Trust's or school's confidence or trust in the employee.
- 30.2. An example of such behaviour relates to school employees facing criminal charges. The school requires all employees to notify their Headteacher without delay of any criminal investigation, charge or caution imposed upon them, with the exception of minor driving offences if their job does not include the use of a car. These rules apply whether incurred on or off duty.
- 30.3. All staff, governors and volunteers must declare to the Headteacher any financial or non-financial interests that it could reasonably be considered may bring about a conflict with the school's interests.
- 30.4. All staff, governors and volunteers are required to declare membership of any organisation not open to the public without formal membership and commitment of allegiance and which has secrecy about rules or membership or conduct.
- 30.5. Employees are also required to declare an interest if it comes to their attention that they have a connection or potential connection with any business or organisation (including voluntary bodies) which deals with the Trust or school.

### **31. Gifts**

- 31.1. It is against the law for public servants to take bribes. If an allegation is made, under the Prevention of Corruption Act 1916 an employee is deemed to have received the reward, etc, corruptly. It is for the employee to demonstrate that any such rewards have not been corruptly obtained. Staff, governors and volunteers need to take care that they do not accept any gift that might be construed by others as a bribe, or lead the giver to expect preferential treatment. There are occasions when pupils or parents wish to pass small tokens of appreciation to staff eg at Christmas or as a thank-you and this is acceptable. However, it is unacceptable to receive gifts on a regular basis or of any significant value. Teachers must inform their Head Teacher, if the value of the token is likely to exceed £10.00.
- 31.2. Personal gifts must not be given to pupils. This could be misinterpreted as a gesture either to bribe, or single out the young person. It might be perceived that a 'favour' of some kind is expected in return. Any reward given to a pupil should be consistent with the school's behaviour or rewards policy, recorded, and not based on favouritism.
- 31.3. Employees should not accept significant personal gifts from contractors and external suppliers, although the school / Trust do permit employees to keep items of token value such as pens, diaries, etc. In all cases, advice should be sought from the Head Teacher or Trust.

### **32. Hospitality**

- 32.1. Employees should only accept offers of hospitality if there is a genuine need to impart information or represent the school / Trust in the community. Offers to attend purely social, entertainment or sporting functions should be accepted only when these are part of the life of the community or where the school / Trust should be seen to be represented. All such offers of hospitality should be properly authorised and recorded by the relevant manager. Each Head Teacher will set up and maintain a register of hospitality. When receiving authorised hospitality, employees should be particularly sensitive as to its timing in relation to decisions

which the School / Trust may be taking that affect, or may affect, those providing the hospitality.

32.2. Acceptance by employees of hospitality through attendance at relevant conferences and courses is acceptable where it is clear the hospitality is corporate rather than personal, where the Head Teacher / Trust gives consent in advance and where the Head Teacher / Trust is satisfied that any purchasing decisions are not compromised. Where visits to inspect equipment, etc, are required, employees should ensure that the school meets the cost of such visits to avoid jeopardising the integrity of subsequent purchasing decisions.

32.3. When hospitality has to be declined, those making the offer should be courteously but firmly informed of the procedures and standards operating within the school / Trust.

### **33. Sponsorship**

33.1. Where an outside organisation wishes to sponsor or is seeking to sponsor a school activity, whether by invitation, tender, negotiation or voluntarily, the basic conventions concerning acceptance of gifts or hospitality apply. Particular care must be taken when dealing with contractors or potential contractors.

33.2. Where the school wishes to sponsor an event or service neither employees nor their partners, spouses nor relatives may benefit from such sponsorship in a direct way without there being full prior disclosure to the Head Teacher / Trust of any such interest. Similarly, where the school, through sponsorship, grant aid, financial or other means, gives support in the community, employees should ensure that impartial advice is given and that there is no conflict of interest involved.

### **34. Relationships with the school community and service users**

34.1. Employees should always remember their responsibilities to the community they serve, including colleagues, and ensure courteous, efficient and impartial service delivery to all groups and individuals within that community ensuring that discriminatory practices are avoided at all times.

### **35. Relationships with contractors**

35.1. All relationships of a business or private nature with external contractors, or potential contractors, must be made known to the Head Teacher and/or Trust and properly recorded (a note on the staff member's file). All employees who engage or supervise contractors or who have any other official relationship with contractors and have previously had or currently have a relationship in a private or domestic capacity with contractors, must also declare that relationship.

35.2. Orders and contracts must be awarded on merit, by fair competition against other tenderers and no special favour should be shown to businesses or consultancies run by, for example, friends, partners or relatives, in the tendering process.

### **36. Separation of roles during tendering**

36.1. Employees involved in the tendering process and dealing with contractors should be clear on the separation of client and contractor roles within the school. Head Teachers or Senior managers who have both a client and contractor responsibility must be aware of the need for accountability and openness. Employees must exercise fairness and impartiality when dealing with all customers, suppliers, other contractors and sub-contractors and potential contractors and sub-contractors.

- 36.2. Employees who are privy to confidential information on tenders or costs for either internal or external contractors, should not disclose that information to any unauthorised party or organisation.
- 36.3. Employees should ensure that no special favour is shown to current or recent former employees or their partners, close relatives or associates in awarding contracts to businesses or consultancies run by them or employing them in a senior or relevant managerial capacity.

**Abbey Woods Academy Code of Conduct**

	<b>Conduct</b>	<b>Expectations</b>
1.	Introduction	Outlines framework of expectations and legal duties
2.	Safeguarding	Record any concerns and promptly consult the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
3.	Expected Standards	High standards of conduct both within and outside work.
4.	Reporting Concerns and Recording Incidents	Example areas of concern and duty to report and record
5.	Confidentiality	Only share if part of safeguarding procedures or under some other law.
6.	Propriety and Behaviour	Act to maintain good image of the school at all times
7.	Appearance	Neat, clean and modest at all times.
8.	Sexual Contact / Abuse of Trust	Avoid sexual behaviour and activity with pupils at all times
9.	Infatuations and Crushes	Respond to individual sensitively and immediately report to Head Teacher.
10.	Physical contact and personal privacy	Limited and proportionate, in line with safeguarding and behaviour management policies.
11.	Pupils in distress	Staff to remain self-aware at all times and ensure contact with the pupil is not open to misunderstanding
12.	Behaviour management and physical intervention	Only as appropriate and within school policy; must be reported
13.	First Aid	Only by suitably trained and accredited staff except in an emergency. Intimate care to respect dignity and privacy and not to be conducted by Lone individuals.
14.	One to one situations and meetings with pupils	Not in isolated places, colleague to be informed and to be vigilant.
15.	Home visits	Only after risk assessment, with permission of Head Teacher and never one-to-one.
16.	Transporting or accompanying pupils off-site	Only in an emergency and have business use motor insurance in place. Additional adult chaperone if possible.
17.	Education visits and After-School Activities	Within clear professional boundaries.
18.	Curriculum	To abide by the School's policy on sex and relationships education
19.	Photography, videos and other creative arts	Get permission first and ensure images or films are stored appropriately.
20.	Social contact	Not with pupils and parents / carers, existing relationships or unplanned contact should be reported to the Headteacher.
21.	Social networking	Not with pupils and parents / carers, existing relationships or unplanned contact should be reported to the Headteacher. Guidance on protocols.
22.	Whistleblowing and Cyber-Bullying	Report unprofessional conduct of other adults according to the Whistleblowing policy.
23.	Acceptable use of ICT facilities and usage monitoring	Limitations on private use of school equipment and school's right to monitor activity / contents.
24.	Health and Safety	Employees should ensure they are fully aware of their responsibilities, including additional posts held.

25.	Political neutrality	Must not allow personal or political opinions to influence work.
26.	Appointment and other employment matters.	Employees involved in making recruitment decisions should do so on the basis of merit. Any relationships should be disclosed.
27.	Equality issues	Employees should not discriminate and should promote equal opportunities for all.
28.	Financial regulations and resources	Ensure value for money in line with the Trust's / school's financial regulations.
29.	Outside commitments	Employees should not take up any outside activities, paid or unpaid, that conflicts, reacts detrimentally to or has the potential to conflict with the school's / Trust's interests. Employees should not take up an external activity that exposes them to a significant health risk without written consent.
30.	Personal interests	Employees must declare any conflicts of interests and memberships of any organisation not open to the public.
31.	Gifts	Should only be tokens, accepted occasionally and Headteacher notified if over £10. No gifts to pupils.
32.	Hospitality	Only when part of the life of the community or where the school / Trust should be seen to be represented. Must be recorded.
33.	Sponsorship – giving and receiving	Must be reported and not directly benefit any individual within the school or associate of individual.
34.	Relationships with the school community and service users.	Remain courteous, efficient and impartial in service delivery.
35.	Relationships with contractors.	Relationships must be declared.
36.	Separation of roles during tendering.	Employees involved in the tendering process should be clear on the separation of client and contractor roles within the school.

**Declaration by employee / volunteer / governor:**

I have read and understood the school's Code of Conduct and agree to abide by its contents. I understand that compliance is a requirement of my ongoing employment and/or involvement with the school.

**Signed:** .....

**Name:** .....

**Job title:** .....

**Date:** .....