

CODE OF CONDUCT

FINAL September 2024

Relevant Legislations

The Children's Act 1989
The Employment Rights Act 1996
The Employment Relations Act 1999
Regulation [GDPR] 2018)
Sexual Offences Act 2003
The Equality Act 2010
Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)
Keeping Children Safe in Education, (KCSiE 2024)
'Allegations Against Adults' 2016
Social Networking policy 2015
UNCRC 1990

Related Policies/Documents

Acceptable Usage Policy
Allegations against staff guidance
Anti-Bribery, Fraud and Corruption Policy
Appraisal and Capability Policy
Behaviour Policy
Disciplinary Policy
Resolution Policy
ECT Induction Process
Safeguarding Policy
Staff Well-Being & Attendance Policy
Visits and Activities Policy
Job Description
Teacher Standards
Professional Standards for Teaching Assistants
Other Professional Standards

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POSITION STATEMENT

This policy should be read alongside the following other school policies as highlighted above.

We pride ourselves on our core motto:

'Together we Belong, Believe, Become'

As a community of schools, we strive to achieve this through our relentless commitment to our values of **'Compassion, Aspiration, Respect, Dedication and Integrity'** for all our students, with the potential of every individual within our community valued.

- Create and foster a culture of **kindness and inclusivity** with high expectations and standards.
- Develop and retain high calibre professionals who relentlessly pursue the Ascend **vision**.
- Deliver unmissable education which inspires **limitless** horizons.
- Develop foundations that ensures Ascend Learning Trust is robust and resilient and able to provide a world class education for generations to come.

Ascend invites all its stakeholders – employees, volunteers, trustees, and governors to join forces and share this commitment. To work together and be accountable for our ethical standards.

WHAT IS THE CODE OF CONDUCT?

Many of the principles in this code of conduct are based on the professional standards and ensure employees can work in an environment which is healthy, safe and fair. Education employees have an influential position, they will act as role models for pupils and other colleagues by consistently demonstrating high standards of behaviour.

This Code of Conduct is designed to provide guidance about what is expected from you in your daily work. Always remember that while you are caring for other people's children, you are in a position of trust and your responsibilities to them and the organisation must be uppermost in your mind at all times.

The child's welfare is paramount (Children Act 1989). References to 'child' and children' refer to children and young people under the age of 18 years. However, the principles of the document apply to professional behaviours towards pupils, including those over the age of 18 years. 'Child' should therefore be read to mean 'any pupil' at the education establishment.

All colleagues should be familiar with the Code of Conduct. This document forms part of your contract of employment and you are required to comply with its contents.

The Code of Conduct guides and assists employees acting in good faith. If, in your decisions, actions or conduct you wilfully fail to comply with the standards outlined in the Code of Conduct, you will be guilty of misconduct and are likely to fall subject to disciplinary action, which could include dismissal.

In line with statutory safeguarding guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education, our code of conduct will cover acceptable use of technologies (including the use of mobile devices). It will also cover staff/pupil relationships and communications, including the use of social media.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. In relation to conduct the term 'allegation' means where it is alleged that a person who works with children has;

- Behaved in a way that has harmed or may have harmed a child;
- Possibly committed a criminal offense against or related to a child; or
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk to harm.
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

For this reason, it is important that you read the whole of this document and ask your line manager or the Designated Safeguarding Lead for clarification if there is anything in it that you do not understand and needs explaining.

Once you have signed and returned the acceptance section, it will be assumed that you understand its contents and agree to comply with your contract of employment and all the rules and policies that it refers to.

WHERE CAN YOU FIND DETAILS OF THE POLICIES AND STANDARDS THAT APPLY TO YOU?

The various sections of this document summarise the key policies and procedures in respect of behaviour and the ways in which you are required to work. All policies are available through your school's HR.

If you are affected by any of the policies contained in this document or you are in any doubt about how they apply to you, you should always refer to the detailed rules or the policies and procedures in full in any of the following ways:

1. You can ask for a paper copy from your line manager or supervisor

2. You can contact your school's HR/Office and either ask for it to be emailed to you or for a paper copy
3. You can find the information on the Trust website, in the policies section

WHO DOES THIS CODE APPLY TO?

The Code applies to all colleagues and anyone acting as an employee of Ascend Learning Trust. Inevitably, some of the issues covered will affect some colleagues more than others.

All staff are expected to know the name of the Designated Safeguarding Lead, be familiar with the Safeguarding Policy and other related policies and understand their responsibilities to safeguard and protect children and young people. All staff are responsible for keeping pupils safe and to protect them from abuse (sexual, physical and emotional) neglect and contextualised safeguarding concerns.

Pupils have the right to be treated with respect and dignity. Trusted adults are expected to take reasonable steps to ensure their safety and wellbeing. Failure to do so may be regarded as professional misconduct.

Although the Code does not directly apply to contractors, consultants or volunteers, the Trust's continued association with these individuals and/or their organisations requires them to observe and comply with the Code.

Breaches of the Code and standards set by the Trust may result in disciplinary action. If you are unsure about any aspect of the Code, please raise it with your line manager or Designated Safeguarding Lead at the earliest opportunity.

The Headteacher, CEO have a responsibility to ensure that:

- You are clear about what is expected of you
- You have a safe and healthy working environment
- You have a work environment that is free from discrimination, harassment or bullying
- They take reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment of employees
- You are offered relevant training and development opportunities
- You have the opportunity to choose to be represented by a trade union in appropriate circumstances
- You have read and understood all other statutory safeguarding documents.

WHAT CAN YOU EXPECT FROM ASCEND LEARNING TRUST?

We exist to provide education services to the public. These services are delivered by people - the Trust's employees. For us to work efficiently as a team, it is vital that you understand your

work and your responsibilities whilst at work. You also need to understand how your activities outside work may affect your ability to do your work during working hours.

So that you are clear about your responsibilities, we have various procedures and policies that affect all employees. Some of these originate from UK Law, others from European Law implemented by Central Government and others that are specific to us. There may also be very particular rules, requirements or codes that apply to your job or work area which you will have been told about before you start work.

Everyone has the right to be treated with dignity and respect at work. **Ascend Learning Trust**, in conjunction with the **Workers Protection Act** will publish an amendment to the Equality policy following the release of the Worker Protection Bill (October 2024). The updated policy will give definitions on sexual harassment and outline responsibilities for employees. Please also see Bullying and Harassment Guidance (October 2024).

What do we expect from you?

In summary, you are required to:

- Attend work in a condition where you are able to carry out your duties safely and effectively
- Act honestly
- Act with dignity and treat all others with dignity and respect
- Work in accordance with the terms and conditions of your contract of employment and job description
- Never use inappropriate or offensive language in school
- Treat pupils and others with dignity and respect
- Not express personal beliefs in a way that exploits pupils' vulnerability or might lead to them to break the law
- Not undermine British values, including democracy, the rule of the law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
- Understand and apply the rules, policies and procedures
- Be committed to delivering quality services
- Understand and act in accordance with the Trust's vision and values, policy and procedures
- Underpinning principles for those working in Education The welfare of the child is paramount
- Staff should understand their responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils
- Staff are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions
- Staff should work, and be seen to work, in an open and transparent way
- If staff witness or experience discrimination, harassment, violence or safeguarding concerns they must not ignore it, they must speak out by contacting HR or Headteacher/CEO

- Staff should acknowledge that deliberately invented/malicious allegations are extremely rare and that all concerns should be reported and recorded
- Staff should discuss and/or take advice promptly from their line manager if they have acted in a way which gives rise to concern
- Staff should apply the same professional standards regardless of culture, disability, language, race origin, religious belief and sexual orientation
- Staff should not consume or be under the influence of alcohol or any substance, including prescribed medication, which may affect their ability to care for children
- Staff should be aware that breaches in the law and other professional guidelines could result in disciplinary action being taken against them, criminal action and/or other proceedings including barring by the Disclosure & Barring service (DBS) from working in regulated activity, or for acts of serious misconduct prohibition from teaching by the TRA.

Staff should notify their employer (Headteacher or CEO) if they have any changes with their health or medication, this is to ensure we are able to offer the correct support which may include offering reasonable adjustments or an Occupational Health referral.

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

You are obliged to participate in relevant learning and development opportunities to develop the skills and knowledge necessary to perform your job and to enhance the delivery of services to our community.

You should seek feedback on your work performance and reasonably engage in any plans for improving your work performance through the performance management system.

RESOLUTION AND GRIEVANCES

If you have a concern or grievance in relation to certain aspects of your employment, then you can use the resolution procedure. This provides an opportunity for you to formally lodge a grievance that has not been resolved through informal means.

Any employee who submits a grievance in good faith will not suffer any adverse consequences as a result of submitting the grievance.

CONFIDENTIALITY

As part of their responsibilities, staff may be given highly sensitive or private information. The storing and processing of personal information about students is governed by the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018. Such information should be kept confidential and shared on a need-to-know basis only.

This means that staff should also adhere to the Acceptable Usage Policy and eSafety Policy when using computers.

LOW LEVEL CONCERNS

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

For example, this may include:

- Being over friendly with children
- Having favourites
- Taking photos on personal phones/devices
- Engaging in one-to-one activities where they cannot easily be seen
- Using inappropriate language

Low-level concerns can include inappropriate conduct inside and outside the workplace. All staff should share any low level concerns they have using the allegations against staff form.

Staff can also self-refer if they find themselves in a situation that could be misinterpreted. If staff are not sure whether behaviour would be deemed a low-level concern, we encourage them to report it.

All reports will be handled sensitively. All concerns should be addressed to your Headteacher. If your concerns are about the Headteacher you should report to The Head of Governance and Compliance.

POWER AND POSITIONS OF TRUST

As a result of their knowledge, position and/or the authority invested in their role, all those working with children in a school or educational setting are in a position of power or influence in relation to all pupils on the roll.

The relationship between a person working with a child/ren is one in which the adult has a position of power or influence. It is vital for adults to understand this power; that the relationship cannot be between equals and the responsibility they must exercise as a consequence.

The potential for exploitation and harm of vulnerable pupils means that adults have a responsibility to ensure that an unequal balance of power is not used for personal advantage or gratification.

Staff should always maintain professional boundaries, avoid behaviour which could be misinterpreted by other and report and record any such incident. Where a person aged 18 or over is in a position of trust with a child under 18, it is an offence for that person to engage in sexual activity or to cause or incite that child to engage in or to watch sexual activity.

All staff should also be aware of societal changes and how this might affect students. Being proactive and engaging in CPD on impact strategies is an expectation.

WORKPLACE BEHAVIOUR AND PERSONAL CONDUCT

All of us have a responsibility to maintain public confidence in our ability to safeguard the welfare and best interests of young people. We should therefore adopt high standards of professional and personal conduct in order to maintain confidence, our behaviour reflects those high expectations that society places upon our roles.

There are times where an individual's actions in their personal life come under scrutiny from the community, media or public authorities, including with regard to their own children, or children or adults in the community.

Staff should be aware that their behaviour in and outside of the work place could compromise their position within the work setting in relation to the protection of children, loss of trust and confidence, or bringing the employer into disrepute. You must be aware that your behaviour and those that you have a relationship or association may impact on your work with children.

We should treat colleagues, governors, students and parents with dignity and respect. The Trust seeks to place the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) at the centre of everything it does, including speaking and listening to students and adults in a Rights Respecting manner.

Offensive, abusive, belittling or threatening behaviour directed at an individual or group is unacceptable conduct. We must ensure that our conduct is not inappropriately discriminatory or harassing to others.

We should also ensure that our behaviour, both professionally and personally reflects those high expectations when on activities or trips away from the your place of work.

When dealing with aggressive or agitated people, we are committed to dealing with those people without aggression or bias.

The Trust is committed to equal opportunities and it is not acceptable to restrict access to training or promotional opportunities on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, marital status,

disability, race, colour, nationality or national origin, religion, age, address or union membership status. Reasonable adjustments should be made to enable a colleague or student with a disability to perform a task.

Colleagues must not engage in any behaviour of a sexual nature towards others that is unwelcome as it is unacceptable and unlawful conduct. For example, leers, suggestive notes or emails, innuendo or touching.

Ensure your behaviour and performance meets work place standards at any time that you are representing the Trust/School or are likely to be identified or associated with your role as a public official.

Make reasonable efforts to develop and maintain appropriate skills in valuing diversity.

Ways of Working

You should ensure your leadership and management style:

1. Is based on open, honest and thorough communication
2. Provides for optimum working conditions within the resources available to you
3. Supports positive performance management processes, including access to related learning and development opportunities for employees
4. Supports the right of employees to engage in open dialogue with you and to pursue relevant conflict and grievance management options when issues arise

MANAGERIAL ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

As a manager, you have a responsibility to set a good example for employees through your own behaviour and attitudes, especially in relation to upholding the ethical principles, obligations and standards as set in this Code of Conduct.

You should ensure that you understand your responsibilities under relevant financial, technological, information, human, knowledge/intellectual and physical asset management legislation, policies and procedures, maintaining the principles of accountability, continuous improvement, fairness, flexibility and equity in the work place.

You should ensure that employees understand performance standards expected from them and objectively assess their performance against these standards.

You must ensure that relevant legislation, delegations and policies and procedures are accessible to all employees in your work group.

You should ensure that all employees who report to you are familiar with the requirements and objectives of their job and have access to the information, training, supervision, feedback and work conditions needed to achieve them.

You should be honest and objective in reporting the skills and qualities of employees in testimonials; references and performance reports, ensuring your decisions can be substantiated against objective standards and indicators.

You are required to act promptly, thoroughly and fairly when responding to or investigating grievances and reports of breaches of the Code of Conduct.

To avoid any accusation of bias, you must not be involved in the appointment of any applicant if you are a relative or friend to them. Similarly, you must not be involved in decisions relating to discipline promotion or pay adjustments for any employee who is a relative, partner or friend. If you are in any doubt, you should discuss the matter with your line manager.

FOLLOWING INSTRUCTIONS

1. You are expected to follow all reasonable and lawful instructions related to your work given by a person with the authority to issue such instructions
2. You should accept that you may not personally agree with all decisions made by your line manager
3. You may refuse to comply with an instruction that appears to be unlawful and report the matter to an appropriate senior leader
4. You should tell the person giving an unreasonable instruction that the instruction is, in your view, unreasonable and allow them the opportunity to respond. In the interim, you are generally required to carry out the instruction unless:
 - There is a danger to a person's health and safety
 - A conflict of interest may exist
 - It does not comply with Trust policy and practice

Leaders must be able to justify their instructions and decisions in line with their delegations, authority and Trust policies and procedures and be open and respond promptly to constructive questions.

If you object to an instruction on genuine conscientious grounds, or if there may be a perceived conflict with a professional code of ethics, you should attempt to negotiate and resolve the matter with your line manager to achieve a mutually acceptable solution.

As a private citizen you have the right to communicate directly with a Member of Parliament on any issue affecting you as a private citizen.

WORKING SAFELY

Any activity that presents a significant risk to the health, safety or well-being of an employee or other person must have been subject to a written risk assessment. This is a tool which managers must use to determine the safest and best way of carrying out the work, including appropriate training, personal protective equipment etc. Appropriate safety controls should all be summarised on the risk assessment or safe system of work procedure and provided to the relevant employees.

Employees must follow the resulting safe system of work to ensure their safety and that of others is not put at risk. If these are not in place, speak to your line manager in the first instance or your Health and Safety Adviser.

For example, you must:

1. Comply with the instructions given for workplace health and safety at your place of work
2. Use personal protective equipment if the equipment is provided and you have been properly instructed to use it
3. Not wilfully or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided for workplace health and safety at the work place
4. Not wilfully place at risk the health and safety of any person at the workplace
5. Not wilfully injure yourself
6. Report to your line manager any workplace hazards that cannot be immediately rectified
7. Ensure that you comply in practice with any guidelines given for performing manual handling tasks
8. Take all reasonable steps to ensure that employees you supervise are following guidelines and have access to job-specific training

ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY (STAFF)

All staff are expected to strive for good attendance and punctuality, including TD Days and Directed Time events.

REPORTING ABSENCE (STAFF)

If you are unable to attend work for any reason which has not been prearranged, then you must ring the cover line and notify your line manager in accordance with the Staff Handbook.

USE OF MOBILE PHONE WHILST AT WORK (STAFF)

The use of mobile phones and other online devices such as smart watches or iPads whilst at work can cause a huge distraction, creating productivity, health and safety and even safeguarding issues. Colleagues are free to use their mobile phones during break and lunch times and before and after school or within the line of work. Any member of staff entering Early Years provision must leave all devices outside of the setting.

We also recognise that there may be times when colleagues need to be contacted during work hours and so colleagues can use their mobile phones in emergencies or where identified as a work related contact (e.g. for school trips). However, it is a disciplinary offence to be caught using a mobile phone during work hours where the use is of a personal or leisure based nature. Colleagues must be aware of this as formal action will be taken if necessary. Groups, such as 'Whatapp groups' should not be used as a professional means of communication. Staff should only use email or Teams for all correspondence relating to work/official communication.

SMOKING AND E-CIGARETTES

Smoking/vaping is not permitted anywhere on any School or Trust premises. Should you need to leave site you are expected to remain discrete, remove identification (such as ID badge) and remain out of view of school premises, pupils, parents and visitors. You must follow H&S guidance which includes signing in and out when you leave site, this must remain within your allocated breaks. If you are unsure about what breaks you are entitled to please see the Headteacher/CEO.

ALCOHOL AND DRUGS

You must not consume alcohol, use illicit drugs or other illegal substances while at work. You must also ensure that the use of any of them does not adversely affect the work performance and safety of yourself or others and does not bring the Trust into disrepute. Similarly, if you are taking legally prescribed or over-the-counter drugs, you must ensure that their use does not adversely affect your work performance and the safety of yourself and others. If you are a manager, you will need to consider the options available for assisting employees who are required to take legally prescribed drugs and whose level of performance has been impaired. In these circumstances, a risk assessment should be undertaken with the assistance of the Occupational Health Service. (See HR for advice). See Alcohol and Drugs guidance.

HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELL-BEING

All employees have a personal and legal responsibility under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 for themselves, colleagues and visitors to their work premises. These

responsibilities are identified in the Health & Safety, Well-Being Policy and Guidance. **In summary, the policy states that you must:**

- Look after the health and safety of yourself and others who may be affected by your actions or failure to carry out certain actions at work
- Co-operate with your line manager, attend training sessions and carry out reasonable instructions

Legislation also imposes a duty on employees to take care of themselves and anyone else who may be affected by their failing.

USE OF PERSONAL LIVING SPACE MAINTAINING PRIVACY AND PROFESSIONAL BOUNDARIES

We should not invite any student into our home unless the specific reason for this has been firmly established and agreed with parents/carers and Senior Leadership Team.

PROTECTING THE TRUST AND ITS EMPLOYEES

For example, you should not:

- Use your status, or position to obtain a transfer, promotion, advancement or appointment for yourself or another person or to improperly influence a selection process
- Falsify or improperly edit or destroy official records
- Seek to obtain a more favoured status for a funding application or for services to a particular stake holder
- Instruct an employee to do any of the above

OTHER EMPLOYMENT

In some instances, your contract of employment may prevent you from undertaking other employment without the written consent of the Headteacher or your line manager. If this is the case, it will be detailed specifically in your written statement of particulars (what you may refer to as your 'contract').

It is important that you ensure that any additional employment does not conflict with the interests of the Trust or affect your ability and credibility to do your job. You must also ensure that Trust time and/or resources are not utilised in connection with any approved private employment. If in doubt, the best thing to do is discuss the circumstances with HR or your line manager.

USE OF AUTHORITY

You should not use your official position, status, powers or authority to seek to improperly influence a decision or action.

You are expected to provide honest, impartial and comprehensive advice regardless of your personal assessment on a matter. If your personal views conflict with the performance of your official duties or you believe that you cannot act impartially, you should contact your line manager and attempt to resolve the conflict.

CONDUCT OUTSIDE OF WORKING TIME

Generally, what you do outside of work is your own concern, but you should avoid doing anything that might adversely affect the reputation of the Trust or bring the Trust into disrepute.

In your official capacity (as a Trust employee) or personal capacity, you must not allow your personal interests to conflict with your workplace requirements or use your position to improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person. If you are not sure whether or how this may affect you in your role, speak to HR or your line manager. If you act contrary to a caution provided by HR or your line manager, you may find yourself subject to disciplinary action.

All staff are required to undertake employment checks which include:

- References (for all staff and volunteers)
- Right to work in the UK (ID check ALL)
- Qualification checks
- Barred List check
- DBS check (for all staff and volunteers)
- Prohibited from Teaching/Barred from Managing (s128) checks (as relevant)
- Childcare Disqualification check (primary only)
- Online safety checks (for all staff and volunteers)
- Health checks (staff)

CRIMINAL CHARGES AND CONVICTIONS

The Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. We particularly welcome applications from underrepresented groups including ethnicity, gender, transgender, age, disability, sexual orientation or religion.

Please note any position that involves working with children requires declaration of ALL convictions/cautions regardless of whether these are deemed as spent and a DBS check will be carried out before any employment commences. If previous employment has included

working with children then at least one referee must be from this employment, regardless of whether this is the current or most recent employment. Any gaps in employment must be detailed and an explanation provided in the relevant section. The Trust follows the procedures held within the Keeping Children Safe in Education document and expects all its employees, visitors and volunteers to do the same. DBS checks are conducted on all applicants for the Trust. Once you are an employee, you must notify your employer (Headteacher or CEO) in writing if you are part of any police investigation or if you are charged with any offence or if you are convicted of any offence. The notice must be given immediately after you are informed/charged (ie. next working day).

If you are convicted of any offence the notification must be given immediately after you are convicted (ie. next working day). It should be noted that the term 'conviction' includes a finding of guilt, regardless of whether or not a conviction is recorded. Failure to notify your employer in either case will constitute grounds for disciplinary action.

POLITICAL, PROFESSIONAL AND TRADE UNION ACTIVITY

You should ensure that your right to engage in political or professional activities does not result in an actual or perceived conflict of interest with your official duties within the Trust. You should ensure that you are able, and be seen to be able, to remain unbiased in the performance of those duties.

If you are a member of a profession, you are expected to uphold the standards of performance and conduct set by the relevant professional association and this Code of Conduct. However, it is noted that there can be exceptions to this where there is legislative authority to do so. If you believe a conflict exists between your official role and the standards of your profession, you must raise your concerns with your line manager.

If you are a workplace representative of a trade union or professional association, you should ensure that when you make public comment, it is clear that comment is made on behalf of the union or association you represent and not the Trust or any of its schools.

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE AND CONFIDENTIALITY

As a Trust/School employee, you may obtain information that has not been made public and is still confidential. You must never disclose information given in confidence by anyone, or information acquired which you believe is of a confidential nature, without the consent of a person authorised to give it or unless you are required to by law. This includes sharing of information or making personal comment to press or media without the prior knowledge of the Headteacher, if in doubt always seek advice.

You must not prevent another person from gaining access to information to which that person is entitled by law. You must not disclose confidential information for your own

personal use or for use by anyone else known to you, or to the disadvantage or the discredit of the Trust or anyone else.

You must always observe the provisions of the Data Protection Act/GDPR regulations 2018, the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Trust's procedures for the release of personal information held about other employees or members of the public. Breach of confidentiality may be considered a disciplinary offence, which could result in dismissal. When you leave your employment with ALT, you must still respect the confidentiality of official information that may have been available to you in the course of your duties and not use this information for private, commercial or political gain.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

You must obtain permission from the Headteacher before publishing or disclosing any articles, processes or materials that you have produced as part of your employment. You must ensure that consultants and contractors engaged to provide a service for any school within the Trust are aware that this work is the intellectual property of the Trust.

Intellectual property is a legal term that refers to the rights and obligations received and granted, including copyright. Ownership of intellectual property is determined by considering the circumstances in which it was conceived and developed. The Trust owns material made by, or under its direction material you produce in the course of your work, unless otherwise explicitly provided for in your contract of employment.

SECURITY

You must visibly display your identification badge at all times while you are on Trust/school premises. All employees are required to challenge anyone without either an Employee ID or Visitor's badge and to follow ('tailgate') you into any secure area of the premises.

If you have a visitor coming to see you at the Trust/school premises you must inform the receptionist and follow visitor arrangements in relation to safeguarding. If in doubt, see your Headteacher.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Public comment in this section includes public speaking engagements, comments on radio and television, letters to newspaper and expressing views in books, journals or notices if it is expected that the comments will spread to the community at large.

When making authorised public comment in an official capacity, you must:

- Ensure it is part of your official role
- Not misrepresent the facts concerning Government or Trust policy or administration
- Comply with the confidential information provisions of the General Data Protection Regulation (2018)
- Respect the confidentiality of information that has not been approved for release

In your capacity as a private citizen, you have the same rights as any other member of the public to openly discuss or comment on community and social issues.

However, there are some circumstances where you may still need to take care in making such comments. For example, a situation could arise when public comment, although made in a private capacity, may appear to be an official comment on behalf of the Trust.

In such circumstances you should indicate clearly that your comment is made in a private capacity and does not represent the official view of the Trust. This can include comments made via social media.

It is your responsibility to take all reasonable steps to ensure that any comment will be understood as representing your personal views as a private citizen. If you are a workplace representative of a trade union or professional association, you should ensure that when you make public comment, it is clear that comment is made on behalf of the union or association you represent and not the Trust.

If you are in any doubt, contact your line manager or the Headteacher.

INTERNAL AUDIT AND RISK MANAGEMENT

An effective internal audit function and risk management framework are important mechanisms for the Trust to ensure effective internal control, good financial systems and management of risk. All employees have a responsibility to contribute to this work and, where an agreed action plan makes you personally responsible for progressing a particular action, it is your responsibility to ensure that it is undertaken within the agreed timescale.

GIFTS, REWARDS AND FAVOURITISM

All staff should carefully consider all circumstances related to accepting and giving gifts and whether the gift should be recorded by the Trust. It is unacceptable to receive gifts on a regular basis or of any significant value.

All staff should carefully consider the risks associated with the receiving of gifts as it can be misinterpreted as favouritism or bias or bribery. For example, treat all pupils equally – never build ‘special’ relationships or confer favour on particular students.

All staff should not give gifts to students as the gesture could be perceived to be either a bribe or in order to groom a young person. Should you be placed in a position where refusal of a gift would cause offence it is suggested that consideration be given to passing the gift to the office for charity.

Adults should exercise care when selecting children for specific activities, jobs or privileges in order to avoid the perception of favouritism or injustice. Similarly, care should be exercised when pupils are excluded from an activity. Methods of selection and exclusion should always be subject to clear, fair, agreed criteria.

DRESS AND APPEARANCE

A person's dress and appearance are matters of personal choice and self-expressions and some individuals will wish to exercise their own cultural customs. However, staff should select a manner of dress and appearance appropriate to their professional role and which may be necessarily different to that adopted in their personal life. Staff should ensure they are dressed decently, safely and appropriately for the tasks they undertake.

Please see Staff Dress Code Policy for clarification or speak to your line manager.

COMMUNICATION WITH YOUNG PEOPLE (INCLUDING THE USE OF TECHNOLOGY)

The Trust expects all staff and volunteers working with young people to have a responsibility to maintain public confidence in their ability to safeguard the welfare and best interests of students and young people. Communication with students should be transparent and open to scrutiny and explanation as to be anything else could lead to accusations of 'grooming'.

It is therefore expected that you will understand and be aware that this involves using judgement and integrity about behaviours in places other than the work setting, such as online behaviour.

You are expected to:

- Not put personal information onto social networking sites such as addresses or personal phone numbers
- Never share your personal data, including addresses or personal phone numbers, social networking addresses or personal email addresses with students
- Review your social networking sites and settings, determining that there is nothing that could bring your professional status into disrepute or allow yourself to be examined publicly
- Never make a 'friend' of a student, including those in Sixth Form
- Never access students' sites unless in discussion with the DSL, this includes seeking social contact with students
- Consider confidentiality at all times

- Give due regard to the potential of defamation of character. Making allegations against students, parents, colleagues or anyone connected with ALT could lead to formal action
- Comply with the requirements of equalities legislation
- Not post derogatory comments about the Trust or linked agencies that may risk bringing the Trust into disrepute

Please read the Acceptable Usage Policy for further information.

USE OF SOCIAL NETWORKING SERVICES

In schools we will block/filter access to social networking services unless a specific use is approved.

All Staff will not establish contact with students and parents on social networking services, unless the purpose is for professional purposes through the officially recognised Facebook or Twitter Accounts.

If a pupil or parent seeks to establish social contact, or if it occurs coincidentally, the member of staff should exercise his/her professional judgement. Please discuss with the Headteacher if you are unsure.

There is extensive advice and guidance found in the e-Safety and Acceptable Usage Policies.

INFATUATIONS

All staff should always consider the risks involved and the potential for students to demonstrate behaviour towards them that could be perceived as highly inappropriate. Staff should never place themselves in a compromising situation with students or parents and if unsure about the nature of a working relationship or meeting, always seek advice and ensure that another member of staff is present.

Any member of staff who receives a report, overhears something, or otherwise notices any sign, however small or seemingly insignificant, that a young person has become or may be becoming infatuated with either themselves or a colleague, should report it immediately to their head teacher or most senior manager.

SOCIAL CONTACT

Staff are in a position of trust and the relationship with students is not one of equals.

Professional boundaries should be maintained at all times. Social contact with students should be avoided, most particularly outside of working hours. Home, email addresses or home, mobile numbers should not be exchanged. Care should be taken in physical contact

with students. Any sexual activity between an adult and a young person (including verbal, letters, emails, phone or physical contact) may be regarded as a criminal offence and will always be a matter for disciplinary action.

PHYSICAL CONTACT

Not all children feel comfortable about physical contact, adults should seek permission before initiating contact. Staff must be aware that any physical contact may be misconstrued and should seek guidance in the Trust Positive Handling Policy.

Physical contact should never be secretive, and or for the gratification of the adult, or represent a misuse of authority. If a member of staff believes that an action by them or a colleague could be misinterpreted, or if an action is observed which is possibly abusive, the incident and circumstances should be immediately reported to the manager and recorded (forms in the Positive Handling Policy).

STAFF/STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS AND SEXUAL CONTACT

Any sexual contact between an adult and a young person is unacceptable. It is an offence for a member of staff in a position of trust to engage in sexual activity with a pupil. Any sexual activity (including verbal, letters, email, phone or physical contact) could be regarded as a criminal offence and will always be a matter for disciplinary action. Pupils are protected under the same laws as adults in relation to the non-consensual sexual behaviour.

The Sexual Offences Act 2003, states that it is an offence for a person aged 18 or over (e.g. teacher, youth worker) 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. A situation where a person is in a position of trust could arise where the child is in full-time education and the person looks after children under 18 in the same establishment as the child, even if s/he does not teach the child. There are occasions when adults embark on a course of behaviour known as grooming where the purpose is to gain the trust of the child, manipulate the relationship so sexual abuse can take place. All staff will undertake appropriate training so they are fully aware of those behaviours that may constitute grooming and their responsibility to always report to a senior manager any concerns about the behaviour of a colleague.

BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT

All Students have a right to be treated with respect and dignity even in those circumstances where they display difficult or challenging behaviour. The Trust promotes Rights Respecting language and a student's right to be listened to should be considered in behaviour management.

Please refer to the Behaviour Policy for additional guidance and support.

APPROPRIATE USE OF LANGUAGE

We must behave in a mature, respectful, safe, fair and considered manner at all times. This includes using appropriate language around or within the earshot of students and parents. Behave in a mature, respectful, safe, fair and considered manner. For example, you must ensure that you are not sarcastic and do not make remarks or jokes to pupils of a personal, sexual, racist, discriminatory, intimidating or otherwise offensive nature.

STUDENTS IN DISTRESS

We should use our professional judgement to comfort or reassure a student in an age appropriate way whilst maintaining clear professional boundaries. Do seek the advice of other colleagues, particularly those who may know the student's context well.

Please refer to the Behaviour Policy and the Safeguarding Policy for additional guidance and support.

FIRST AID AND ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION

Appropriate training will be provided before an individual takes on a role which may require administering first aid or medication. Staff should not administer any medication to students without this training.

Health Care Plans will be provided as and when they are required.

The permission of parents must be gained when administering first aid. Parents must also be informed of any actions and follow-up actions. All actions must be recorded and this can be done via the Lead First Aider/Administrative Support as relevant in each school.

1:1 SITUATIONS

Where there is a need for an adult (member of staff, agent etc) to be alone with a student, certain procedures and explicit safeguards must be in place. If possible, ensure that another colleague is aware of your location and the context surrounding the situation and if possible, that they are nearby or in the same room. Ensure that you record any discussions in writing, if required. Ensure that the door to the room you are in is open, if this is not possible then locate yourself where you are both visible through the door/ window.

HOME VISITS / LONE WORKING SITUATIONS

All work with students and parents/carers should, whenever possible, be undertaken at the place of work. There are, however, occasions where it is necessary to arrange a home visit. All staff must ensure that they are aware of the procedures for home visits and seek advice from the Designated Safeguarding Lead before doing so.

VISITS AND ACTIVITIES

All staff must ensure that they are aware of the Visits and Activities Policy and the requirements for the completion of all documentation including Risk Assessments that are required to be carried out and signed by the Trips/Activities Leader, then authorised and counter signed by the Deputy Headteacher.

Staff who do not follow the procedures will not be given authorisation.

TRANSPORTING STUDENTS

There may be times when you need to transport students to or from the school site or another destination.

All staff must ensure that they:

- Have parent's/carers permission
- Check the insurances and that their own vehicle is appropriately maintained for the purpose of the journey
- Check the ratio of adults/students
- Ensure that all passengers wear seat belts
- Have gained permission and authorisation for transporting student outside normal working duties
- Know the procedures in an emergency situation

PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEO

There will be times when students may need to be photographed or filmed. Permission is sought from all parents/carers upon their child's admission. If there are any caveats or parents/carers have refused permission for their child to be photographed or filmed, this information will be inputted on SIMS.

There is extensive advice on the eSafety/GDPR and Acceptable Usage Policies located on the Trust website. In-line with the Online Safety Policy no images or recording should be made on personal devices.

ACCESS TO INAPPROPRIATE IMAGES AND INTERNET USAGE

Staff should take extreme care to ensure that children and young people are not exposed, through any medium, to inappropriate indecent images. There are no circumstances that will justify adults; making, downloading, possessing or distributing indecent images.

Accessing these images, whether using the settings or personal equipment, on or off the premises or making personal equipment on or off the premises or making, storing or disseminating such material is illegal. Adults should not use equipment belonging to the Trust to access any kind of pornography. Neither should these images be brought into the workplace.

Where indecent images of children or other unsuitable material are found, the Headteacher/CEO must be immediately informed; they will in turn alert the Police and the designated officer(s) from the Local Authority as a matter of urgency.

Please refer to the Safeguarding Policy, the e-Safety Policy and the Acceptable Usage Policy for further guidance and advice.

SHARING CONCERNS AND RECORDING INCIDENTS

If you have any concerns about a student's welfare, ensure that you have communicated this to the appropriate member of staff (Tutor, Year Lead / Head of Year, Designated Safeguarding Lead at the Academy or Headteacher).

If the allegation concerns the Headteacher, the Chair of the Trust Board or CEO must be alerted instead.

REPORTING BREACHES OF THE CODE AND WHISTLEBLOWING

Disclosures might be about:

1. Official misconduct
2. Incorrect administration
3. Negligent or improper management affecting public funds

Please refer to the Whistleblowing Policy.

If you are concerned about any practice you see in the workplace which you think conflicts with the Code of Conduct, you should obtain advice from your line manager, department head, trade union representative, or any other appropriate person.

APPENDIX 1 - A QUICK GUIDE TO MAKING AN ETHICAL DECISION

Not every ethical dilemma can be detailed in the Code of Conduct. This is because every situation is different. To help you assess a situation, a useful rule is - when in doubt, talk about it. You can talk with your line manager, a colleague, trade union representative or an adviser from HR. It is important to analyse all the relevant facts and circumstances before deciding what the ethical thing to do is.

What is the Problem?

Describe the Situation

1. What is happening and who is involved?
2. Who is affected?
3. What are the job expectations?
4. What are the actual or foreseeable consequences and impact?
5. What guidance is there in legislation and the Code of Conduct?
6. Which policy or procedure applies?
7. Why do I feel uncomfortable with this?

Is it an Ethical Problem?

Apply the Code of Conduct

1. What ethics obligations and standards apply?
2. Would the public see the proposed conduct, decision or advice as fair, honest and appropriate?
3. Is the public's confidence in the Trust at risk?
4. Are the values of natural justice, accountability and reasonableness met?
5. Has the duty of care been compromised?
6. Are my personal and professional beliefs and values compromised?

What Action Should be Taken? Identify

Options

1. Do I have the power or authority to deal with the issue?
2. Who else should I talk to?
3. What options are available that meet the relevant ethics principles?
4. What is consistent with current policy and practice?
5. What are the pros and cons of each option?
6. How would the public view these options?
7. What feels right to me as a professional public official?

What is the Most Ethical Option? Choose a Course of action

1. Is the decision fair and equitable as outlined in the ethics principles?
2. Does it provide a reasonable balance between competing interests and values?
3. Is it consistent with relevant legislation, policy and practice?
4. Can the decision be justified to members and the public?
5. Can the decision be easily explained?
6. Is it easy to document the key issues and explain the reasons for the decision?
7. Do I feel comfortable?

What Changes May Need to Occur? Follow up

1. Is this ethical issue an isolated event or does it represent a wider issue?
2. Who needs to be advised and how?
3. What do I need to do to prevent the situation occurring again?

Potential Situations and Examples Of Behaviour :

A man/woman has acted inappropriately towards me what should I do?

Take action immediately, protect yourself by leaving the situation/room and promptly inform your line manager or HR/Office Manager. You can also report this using the Whistleblowing procedures.

In a classroom an electric cable looks to be showing wires which I have not noticed before and I am concerned.

Take action immediately, protect yourself and anyone around. Report immediately to your line manager, Office Manager or site team.

A parent offers me a free meal in their restaurant as a thank you for supporting their child. You feel uncomfortable with this offer.

Take action, politely thank them but inform them that following the Code of Conduct you cannot accept gifts of this nature. Inform your line manager/Office Manager. Employees must not accept gifts in exchange to influence decisions or actions.

A friend has a child in the school, they ask me for information.

Take action, explain to them that you are bound by confidentiality, you must never use the information you have to yours or others advantage. We are bound by this confidentiality during and after our employment.

I have been copied into an email about another employee which includes their personal health information.

Take action, this data is confidential and sensitive. If you are not entitled to view it you must immediately delete the email and inform the sender in a separate email of their mistake. You must also inform your Data Protection lead who will take the required measures.

I have been contacted by a local newspaper for a comment about an article that they want to post relating to the school I work at.

Take action, report this to your line manager/Headteacher/CEO and inform the media company that you will not be able to comment.