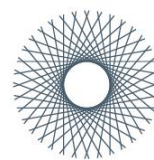


Code of Conduct policy (employees)



AGORA
LEARNING
PARTNERSHIP

STATUS:	Non statutory
DATE FIRST ISSUED:	September 2017
DATE LAST REVIEWED:	December 2023
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APPROVED BY:	Board of Trustees
APPROVAL DATE:	December 2023

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Code of Conduct is created to give clear guidance on the standards of behaviour all employees of the Agora Learning Partnership are expected to observe. Trust employees are role models and are in a unique position of influence and must adhere to behaviour that sets a good example to all the pupils/students within the Trust's academies. As a member of the Trust community, each employee has an individual responsibility to maintain their reputation and the reputation of the Trust and each of its academies, whether inside or outside working hours.
- 1.2 This Code of Conduct applies to all employees of the Trust. This Code of Conduct does not form part of any employee's contract of employment.
- 1.3 In addition to this Code of Conduct, all employees engaged to collaborate with Teachers' Terms and Conditions of Employment have a statutory obligation to adhere to the 'Teachers' Standards 2012' and in relation to this policy, Part 2 of the Teachers' Standards - Personal and Professional Conduct. All staff must complete Safeguarding training and adhere to Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE).
- 1.4 Employees are subject to adherence of all Trust policies and procedures which include adherence to the Education and Skills Funding Agency requirements.
- 1.5 It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to monitor, where practical, that employees are conforming to this Code and to ensure that employees are fully aware of its contents.

2 SETTING AN EXAMPLE

- 2.1 All staff who work in or for the academies within the Trust must set good examples of behaviour and conduct that can be imitated by pupils/students. Staff must therefore set examples and avoid using inappropriate or offensive language at all times.
- 2.2 All staff must, therefore, demonstrate high standards of conduct to encourage our pupils/students to do the same.
- 2.3 All staff must also avoid putting themselves at risk of allegations of abusive or unprofessional conduct.
- 2.4 This Code helps all staff to understand what behaviour is and is not acceptable, regard should also be given to the disciplinary rules set out in the Trust's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.
- 2.5 All staff are expected to familiarise themselves and comply with all Trust policies and procedures.
- 2.6 All staff have a responsibility to ensure that they act appropriately in terms of their behaviour, the views they express (in particular political views) and the use of school resources at all times and should not use school resources for party political purposes.

3 SAFEGUARDING PUPILS / STUDENTS

- 3.1 In accordance with 'Keeping children safe in education', all staff members have a responsibility to safeguard pupils and protect their welfare. Staff have a duty to safeguard pupils/students from physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse and neglect.
- 3.2 The duty to safeguard pupils/students includes the duty to report concerns about a pupil/student or colleague to the school's¹ Designated Senior Person (DSP) for Child Protection.

The school's DSP is (*Name*).....

The Trust's central team DSP is the Chief Executive Officer.

- 3.3 Staff are given personal copies of the school's Child Protection Policy and Whistleblowing Procedure, Staff must adhere to these policies and procedures.
- 3.4 Staff should treat children with respect and dignity and must not seriously demean or undermine pupils, their parents or carers, or colleagues.
- 3.5 Staff should not demonstrate behaviours that may be perceived as sarcasm, making jokes at the expense of students, embarrassing, or humiliating students, discriminating against or favouring students.
- 3.6 Staff must take reasonable care of pupils/students under their supervision with the aim of ensuring their safety and welfare.

¹ For 'school' read 'academy' where appropriate

4 RELATIONSHIPS WITH PUPILS

- 4.1 Staff must declare any relationships that they may have with students outside of school; this may include mutual membership of social groups, tutoring, or family connections. Staff should not assume that the school are aware of any such connections. A declaration form can be found in appendix 1 of this document.
- 4.2 Relationships with students must be professional at all times, physical relationships with students are not permitted and may lead to a criminal conviction.
- 4.3 Contact with students and parents must be via academy-authorised mechanisms. At no time should communication be made via personal telephone numbers, email addresses or personal accounts on social media platforms.
- 4.4 If contacted by a student by an inappropriate route, staff should report the contact to the headteacher immediately. In the case of a member of the Trust central team, staff should report the contact to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) immediately.
- 4.5 Staff are required to report concerns regarding any pupil, or other workers (which includes, visitors, volunteers, contractors etc,) to the Headteacher/DSL. If the concern is about the Headteacher this should be reported to the HR Manager and CEO.

5 PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS AT WORK

- 5.1 Where personal relationships occur between employees, it is the responsibility of both individuals to avoid any actual or potential conflicts of interest. Personal relationships may include business/commercial financial relationships, family relationships or romantic/sexual relationships. Employees who are uncertain about whether there is likely to be any risk of a potential conflict of interest emerging from a personal relationship at work, in the first instance should discuss the matter with their line manager (or Headteacher/CEO where the issue may involve the immediate line manager). Where the relationship is with the Headteacher, this should be made clear to the CEO, and where the relationship is with the CEO, this should be made clear to the Chair of the Trust Board or Chair of the HR Committee. The line manager, Headteacher, CEO or Trustee will treat these matters in confidence, and in consultation with the employees discuss ways in which potential conflicts of interest can be avoided.
- 5.2 In order to avoid any actual or potential conflict of interest, employees who are in a line management or supervisory role should not be involved in:
 - The Appraisal/Performance Review, promotion or discipline or any other management activity or process involving an employee with whom they have a declared personal relationship.
 - The authorisation of any financial payments/decisions relating to financial matters e.g., timesheets, fees payments, expense claims, salary changes or allocation of external funding for an employee with whom they have a declared personal relationship. However, if the person is the budget holder, then they should see the financial transaction but have additional independent authorisation.

- 5.3 Headteachers and Line Managers should not normally be involved in the recruitment, selection or appointment of any applicant with whom they have a personal relationship. Where a Headteacher or Line Manager is known to the applicant, the Headteacher or Line Manager must declare this to the HR Manager, and not be part of the recruitment process or panel, without prior agreement of the HR Manager.

Where it is not practical to remove an employee from the recruitment process, all panel members should be made aware of the personal relationship and every panel decision should be justified as fair and equitable, without bias or conflict of interest.

- 5.4 Where an offer of employment is going to be made to someone who is related or known to their line manager, prior agreement must be sought from the Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

6 RELATIONSHIPS WITH OFFENDERS

- 6.1 There is a duty to disclose all relationships which may create an enhanced risk to children – cohabitation with a person convicted of a serious offence, irrespective of whether the childcare disqualification by association regulations apply, could create potential for enhanced risk which when disclosed can be risk assessed against.
- 6.2 If the employee fails to declare they are in a relationship with an individual who has convictions for child abuse it could result in disciplinary action deemed as gross misconduct. The employer may not have raised a concern regarding their activity at work but their out of work relationship could call into question their integrity and could be considered as bringing the Trust into disrepute.

7 PUPIL / STUDENT DEVELOPMENT

- 7.1 Staff must comply with academy policies and procedures that support the well-being and development of pupils/students.
- 7.2 Staff must co-operate and collaborate with colleagues and with external agencies where necessary to support the development of pupils/students.
- 7.3 Staff must follow reasonable instructions that support the development of pupils/students.

8 HONESTY AND INTEGRITY

- 8.1 Staff must maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their work. This includes the handling and claiming of money and the use of school property and facilities.
- 8.2 All staff must comply with the Bribery Act 2010. A person may be guilty of an offence of bribery under this act if they offer, promise, or give financial advantage or other advantage to someone; or if they request, agree or accept, or receive a bribe from another person. If you believe that a person has failed to comply with the Bribery Act, you should refer to the Trust's Whistleblowing procedure. For further information see the Model Anti Bribery Policy for Schools available on the Grid http://www.thegrid.org.uk/info/model_policies/.

8.3 All staff must comply with the Trust's Gifts and Hospitality policy. Gifts from suppliers or associates of the school must be declared to the Headteacher, except for "one off" token gifts from students or parents. Personal gifts from individual members of staff to students are inappropriate and could be misinterpreted and may lead to disciplinary action. A record will be kept of all gifts received, in line with the procedures stated in the Gifts and Hospitality policy.

9 CONDUCT OUTSIDE WORK

9.1 Staff must not engage in conduct outside work, which could seriously damage the reputation and standing of the Trust or any of its academies or the employee's own reputation or the reputation of other members of the school community.

9.2 In particular Criminal offences that involve violence, possession or use of illegal drugs or sexual misconduct are likely to be regarded as unacceptable.

9.3 Staff may undertake work outside school, either paid or voluntary, if it does not conflict with the interests of the school, nor be to a level which may contravene the working time regulations or affect an individual's work performance in the school. Any such work must be disclosed to the headteacher or in the case of a central team member, to the CEO.

9.4 Forming inappropriate relationships or friendships with children or young people who are pupils or students under the age of 18 at another school/college will be viewed as inappropriate and impact upon the school's ability to trust the member of staff to maintain professional boundaries with pupils at the school. More information can be found in the DFE [Safer Working Practices Guidance](#)

10 USES OF ICT

10.1 Staff must exercise caution when using information technology and be aware of the risks to themselves and others. Regard should always be given to the academy's e-Safety and ICT Acceptable Use Policy at all times both inside and outside of work.

10.2 Staff must not engage in inappropriate use of social network sites which may bring themselves, the school, school community or employer into disrepute. Staff should ensure that they adopt suitably high security settings on any personal profiles they may have.

10.3 Staff should exercise caution in their use of all social media or any other web-based presence that they may have, including written content, videos or photographs, and views expressed either directly or by 'liking' certain pages or posts established by others. This may also include the use of dating websites where staff could encounter students either with their own profile or acting covertly.

10.4 Contact with students and parents should only be made via the use of the Trust or academy email accounts or telephone equipment when appropriate.

10.5 Photographs/stills or video footage of pupils/students should only be taken using academy equipment, for purposes authorised by the school. Any such use should always be transparent and only occur where parental consent has been given. The

resultant files from such recording or taking of photographs must be stored in accordance with the academy's procedures on academy equipment.

- 10.6 When using any form of ICT, including the internet, in school and outside school, for your own protection we advise that you:
- ensure all electronic communication with students, parents, carers, staff and others is compatible with your professional role and in line with Trust policies
 - do not talk about your professional role in any capacity when using social media such as Facebook, X and You Tube
 - do not put online any text, image, sound or video that could upset or offend any member of the whole Trust community or be incompatible with your professional role
 - use academy ICT systems and resources for all work-related business. This includes your work email address, academy mobile phone and academy video camera
 - do not disclose any passwords and ensure that personal data (such as data held on MIS software) is kept secure and used appropriately
 - only take images of students and/or staff for professional purposes, in accordance with academy policy and with the knowledge of a senior leader within the academy or Trust
 - do not browse, download, upload or distribute any material that could be considered offensive, illegal or discriminatory
 - ensure that your online activity, both in school and outside school, will not bring the school or professional role into disrepute
 - check your emails daily, as a minimum, on working days or the next day if one day is exceptionally busy
- 10.7 You have a duty to report any E-Safety incident which may impact on you, your professionalism, the academy, or the Trust.

11 CONFIDENTIALITY

- 11.1 Where staff have access to confidential information about pupils/students or their parents or carers, staff must not reveal such information except to those colleagues who have a professional role in relation to the pupil/student.
- 11.2 All staff are likely at some point to witness actions which need to be confidential. For example, where a pupil/student is bullied by another pupil/student (or by a member of staff), this needs to be reported and dealt with in accordance with the appropriate academy procedure. It must not be discussed outside the academy, including with the pupil's/student's parent or carer, nor with colleagues in the academy except with a senior member of staff with the appropriate authority to deal with the matter.
- 11.3 However, staff have an obligation to share with their manager or the academy's Designated Senior Person of any information which gives rise to concern about the safety or welfare of a pupil/student. Staff must never promise a pupil/student that they will not act on the information they have been told by the pupil/student.
- 11.4 All staff should follow the requirements of the Trust's Data Protection Policy regarding the use of personal and sensitive data.

- 11.5 Staff are not allowed to make any comment to the media about the school, its performance, governance, pupils or parents without written approval. Any media queries should be directed to the headteacher. Headteachers and Chairs of Academy Governing Boards should refer to the Trust's guidance on '*Communications across the Trust*' (June 2019) regarding contact with the media.

12 DRESS AND APPEARANCE

- 12.1 All staff must dress in a manner that is appropriate to a professional role and promoting a professional image.
- 12.2 Staff should dress in a manner that is not offensive, revealing or sexually provocative.
- 12.3 Staff should dress in a manner that is absent from political or other contentious slogans.

13 SMOKING, VAPING AND ALCOHOL

- 13.1 Staff must not smoke or use vaping devices in or around the school premises. Cigarettes and/or vaping can only take place during a designated break time, off site away from the school premises where children and parents cannot see you.
- 13.2 The Trust's funds **must not** be used to purchase alcohol for consumption, except where it is to be used in religious services.

14 COMPLIANCE

- 14.1 All staff must complete the form in appendix 2 to confirm they have read, understood, and agreed to comply with the code of conduct. This form should then be signed and dated.
- 14.2 Any breach of this Code will be dealt with under the disciplinary procedures, and may, subject to the seriousness of the breach, lead to a dismissal from the Trust.
- 14.3 Those staff in their probationary period may have their employment terminated by the Trust following the Probationary Policy and not the Disciplinary procedure.

APPENDIX 1

Relationships with students outside of work declaration

It is recognised that there may be circumstances whereby employees of the Trust or an individual academy are known to students outside of work. Examples include membership of sports clubs, family connections, or private tutoring.

Staff must declare any relationship outside of school that they may have with students.

Employee name	Student/Pupil name	Relationship

I can confirm that I am fully aware of the code of conduct relating to contact out of my work with students in line with this policy.

If I am tutoring a student outside of school, I am aware that the following must be adhered to:

- I emphasise to parents that this is done completely independently of the academy
- No monies come through the academy at any point, informally (e.g., via the child) or formally
- No private tutoring is to take place on academy or Trust premises

I confirm that if these circumstances change at any time, I will complete a new form to ensure the school are aware of any relationships.

Signed Date

Once completed, signed and dated please return this form to the headteacher.

APPENDIX 2

Confirmation of compliance

I hereby confirm that I have read, understood and agree to comply with the school's code of conduct.

Name

Position/Post Held.....

Signed

Date

Once completed, signed and dated, please return this form to the headteacher or in the case of central team members, the CEO.