



# **PONTEFRACT**

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## ACADEMIES TRUST

### **STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT, INCLUDING SAFE WORKING PRACTICE GUIDANCE**

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# 1. Introduction

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.01 The Ponterfract Academies Trust (“the Trust”) is committed to giving all employees the support and encouragement they need to raise aspirations, unlock potential and work to achieve excellence through encouraging a “can do” culture, across all areas of the Trust.
- 1.02 The Trust is committed to creating a positive working environment where all employees fully understand there is an expectation that all staff exercise the greatest care in their relationships with all stakeholders and conduct themselves with professionalism, openness and honesty.
- 1.03 A high standard of integrity and conduct is expected, and staff should avoid occasion for suspicion or the appearance of improper conduct.
- 1.04 All staff should seek to provide a safe and supportive environment which secures the well-being and very best outcomes for children and young people in their care.
- 1.05 Each academy will have its own internal procedures and practices, relevant to that setting. All staff should familiarise themselves with this information and specific expectations in their place of work.

## 1.1 PURPOSE

- 1.1.1 The Code sets out the standards of behaviour expected of all employees. This provides clear advice about what constitutes illegal behaviour and what might be considered as misconduct. The safer working practices outlined in this code provides practical advice to staff about which behaviours and actions constitute professional expectations and safe practice and which behaviours should be avoided. It seeks to ensure that the duty of care towards students and staff is promoted by raising awareness of illegal, unsafe and unwise behaviour. The guidance also outlines to staff professional behaviours that are expected during their day-to-day working lives. It is hoped that it will also assist staff to monitor their own standards and practice.
- 1.1.2 All staff should be aware that unlawful, unsafe or unprofessional behaviour will not be tolerated and that where appropriate, legal or disciplinary action is likely to follow.

## 1.2 SCOPE

- 1.2.1 The Staff Code of Conduct is for all employees, contractors and volunteers who work within and for the Trust. It applies to all employees employed within the Trust and for any other persons working on behalf of the Trust (e.g. agency staff, volunteers, contracted services).

# 1. Introduction

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1.2.2 Whilst every attempt has been made to cover a wide range of situations, it is recognised that any code cannot cover all eventualities. There may be times when professional judgements are made in situations not covered by this document, or which directly contravene the guidance given by their employer. It is expected that in these circumstances, staff will always advise their senior colleagues of any such action already taken or proposed.

## 1.3 RELATED POLICIES OR PROCEDURES

The Code of Conduct will be read in conjunction with any other codes of practice or policies that relate to employee conduct and / or workplace or system security policies and procedures. This includes:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Anti-Fraud Bribery and Corruption
- Conflicts Policy and Register of Business Interests
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Use of Electronic Equipment and Social Media
- Health and Safety Policy and Procedures
- Keeping Children Safe in Education

## 2. Roles and Responsibilities

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### 2.0 CEO AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR/HEADTEACHER/HEAD OF SCHOOL/SENIOR LEADER RESPONSIBILITIES

- 2.01 The CEO and Executive Director/ Executive Headteacher/Head of School are responsible for making the Code available to all employees and incorporating it into the induction of new employees.
- 2.02 The CEO and Executive Director/Executive Headteacher/Head of School are responsible for upholding the standards expected in this code and role modelling professional expectations.
- 2.03 Senior leaders are expected to appropriately challenge any staff who do not meet these standards.

### 2.1 EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES

- 2.1.1 **All staff** are accountable for the way in which they exercise authority; manage risk; use resources; and protect students from maltreatment and avoidable harm.
- 2.1.2 **All staff**, whether paid or voluntary, have a duty to keep young people safe and to protect them from harm. This means that adults should:
- Always act, and be seen to act, in the child's best interests.
  - Take responsibility for their own actions and behaviour.
  - Refer any situations that cause concern, including those which involve a colleague, family member or friend.
- 2.1.3 **All staff** have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn.
- 2.1.4 **All staff** have a responsibility to identify children who may be in need of extra help or who are suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm.
- 2.1.5 **All staff** have a responsibility to bring to the attention of a leader or manager their concerns regarding the professional conduct, or any inappropriate behaviours. The Trust's Whistleblowing Policy provides guidance as to how employees can raise concerns if they believe they are being required to act in a way, or are aware of an employee who is acting in a way, which is:
- illegal, improper or unethical
  - is in breach of a professional code
  - may involve possible maladministration, fraud or misuse of public funds
  - otherwise inconsistent with this code then they should refer to the Whistle Blowing Policy for details of procedures/actions to take.
- 2.1.6 **All staff** then have the responsibility to take appropriate action, working with other services as needed.

## 2. Roles and Responsibilities

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- 2.1.7 Staff can also contact the NSPCC Whistleblowing Advice Line (0800 028 0285) or email [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)
- 2.1.8 All employees have an individual responsibility to ensure that they understand the provisions of the Code and any related policies or procedures. Where an employee does not fully understand, they must in their own interests, seek clarification from their CEO/Executive Director/Executive Headteacher/Head of School or other appropriate leader.
- 2.1.9 Employees must at all times comply with the law, act within the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities and comply with this Code of Conduct.
- 2.1.10 Employees have a duty to inform management should they receive a caution or charge from the Police or any information which could impact on the safety or wellbeing of students, and/or the integrity of the Trust.

## 3. Professional Expectations

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### 3.0 PROFESSIONAL EXPECTATIONS

The Trust believes in a culture of honesty and openness, based on values such as fairness, trust and integrity. All employees will operate and undertake their duties in a professional manner. This area of the code explains some minimum professional standards.

### 3.1 CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

3.1.1 A conflict of interest is any situation where an employee's personal interests or loyalties could, or could be seen, to prevent the employee from making a decision in the best interests of the Trust or its schools. The Trust expects conflicts of interest to be identified at an early stage. This may include but is not limited to:

- Holding another public office;
- Being an employee, director, advisor or partner of another business or organisation;
- Pursuing a business opportunity;
- Being a member of a club, society or association;
- Having a professional or legal obligation to someone else;
- Having received a gift, hospitality, or other benefit from someone / an organisation;
- Holding or expressing strong political or personal views that may indicate prejudice or predetermination for or against a person or issue;
- Being a spouse, partner, relative or close friend of someone who has one of these interests.

3.1.2 Employees engaged in decisions where conflicts of interest may arise should declare this to their Head of School/Senior Manager at the earliest opportunity.

3.1.3 Certain employees may be required to complete a declaration of interests at periodic intervals or when changes to their interests occur, in accordance with the Trust Conflicts Policy and Register of Business Interests.

3.1.4 Employees should abide by the rules adopted by the Trust in relation to private interest and possible conflict with public duty; the disclosure of official information; and political activities. They should not misuse their official position or information acquired in their official duties to further their position or information acquired in their official duties to further their private interests or those of others.

## 3. Professional Expectations

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3.1.5 Where a personal relationship exists between employees, the employees concerned should declare this to their line manager if the relationship could be deemed as a conflict of interest, trust or breach of confidentiality. E.g. where a personal relationship exists between employees who are in a line management or supervisory relationship at work, then they must not be involved in any activity involving the other employee such as, but not limited to, recruitment and selection, performance management, pay and grading, disciplinary, capability, or grievance.

### 3.2 INTEGRITY

3.2.1 Staff should conduct themselves with integrity, impartiality and honesty. They should not deceive, or knowingly mislead, colleagues, members of the School Governance Committee, Trustees, Directors, the Department of Education, Ministers, Parliament or the public. Staff should offer the public the highest standards of conduct and service.

3.2.2 Staff should not use their position to receive, agree to accept or attempt to obtain any payment or other consideration for doing, or not doing, anything or showing favour, or disfavour to any person.

### 3.3 CONFIDENTIALITY AND DATA PROTECTION

3.3.1 All employees should be aware of their obligations under the General Data Protection Regulations (2018) and Freedom of Information Act (2000). In particular the restriction on sharing of information held in any of the Trust's information management systems on staff and students with external bodies. Guidance on this legislation can be obtained from the Data Protection Officer.

3.3.2 All staff owe a general duty of confidentiality to their employer under civil law. They are therefore required to protect official information held in confidence. The Official Secrets Act 1989 applies to any member of the public who has, or has had, official information in their possession. The act makes unlawful disclosure of certain limited categories of information (for example, information which may lead to the commission of crime) a criminal offence. Any breach of confidentiality may lead to disciplinary proceedings.

### 3.4 INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

3.4.1 All intellectual property (including, but not limited to, copyright, data rights, trade marks, patents and designs) created or conceived by you in connection with your employment (referred to as 'Intellectual Property') shall belong, at all times, to the Trust. At the Trust's request you will disclose, or keep, confidential Intellectual Property.



## 3. Professional Expectations

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### 3.4.2 The corresponding definitions are:

Intellectual Property Rights: patents, rights to inventions, copyright and related rights, moral rights, trade marks, business names and domain names, rights in get-up, goodwill and the right to sue for passing off, rights in designs, rights in computer software, database rights, rights to use, and protect the confidentiality of, confidential information (including know-how) and all other intellectual property rights, in each case whether registered or unregistered and including all applications and rights to apply for and be granted, renewals or extensions of, and rights to claim priority from, such rights and all similar or equivalent rights or forms of protection which subsist or will subsist now or in the future in any part of the world.

Invention: any invention, idea, discovery, development, improvement or innovation, whether or not patentable or capable of registration, and whether or not recorded in any medium.

### 3.5 COMMUNICATIONS WITH THE MEDIA

All media liaison relating to the Trust and school activities is handled by the Executive Director/Executive Headteacher/Head of School in liaison with the Chief Executive Officer. Employees should seek advice from the Chief Executive Officer/Executive Director/Executive Headteacher/Head of School before any media interviews or information (verbal or written) is given to the media.

### 3.6 ANTI-FRAUD, BRIBERY AND CORRUPTION

3.6.1 The expectation is that Trustees, Governors, and employees at all levels will adopt the highest standards of propriety and accountability and demonstrate that the Trust is acting in a transparent and honest manner.

3.6.2 Any Trustees/Governors and employees of the Trust who commits a fraudulent act against the Trust or is involved with bribery in the performance of their duties will be subjected to the Trust's procedures for dealing with complaints of misconduct against Trustees/Local Governors operated by the Trust's Audit and Risk Committee and may be reported to the Police. Please refer to the Trust's Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy.

### 3.7 GIFTS, HOSPITALITY AND DONATIONS

The expectation is that Trustees, Governors, and employees at all levels will adopt the highest standards of propriety and accountability and demonstrate that the Trust is acting in a transparent and honest manner. Please refer to Trust's Gifts and Hospitality Policy.

### 4.0 SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION

4.0.1 Employees working with our children and young people have a responsibility to

## 4. Safeguarding and Child Protection

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safeguard and promote the welfare of those children and young people during the course of their work. Any breach of policies and procedures meant to safeguard pupils, will be regarded as potential gross misconduct. This may lead to disciplinary action including the possibility of dismissal without notice.

- 4.0.2 All matters in respect of the Safeguarding and Child Protection should be dealt with in accordance with Trust Policy and Procedures and the appropriate Local Safeguarding Children Board's Child Protection Guidance and Procedures.
- 4.0.3 Employees will always ensure appropriate boundaries in terms of relationships with children and young people educated in the Trust. If an employee has difficulty enforcing or maintaining those appropriate boundaries because of actions or responses of the child / young person, the issue should be referred to the CEO (Executive Director/Executive Headteacher/Head of School central employees) or Executive Director/Executive Headteacher/Head of school (school-based employees) immediately to allow appropriate action to be taken and recorded.
- 4.0.4 Employees who witness any behaviour which they consider to be detrimental to the safety and welfare of children and young people within our Trust have a duty to report it in accordance with individual academy procedures, report the matter to a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or refer to the Trust's Whistleblowing Policy, where appropriate.
- 4.0.5 Under the terms of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, employees must disclose all convictions which are not "spent" both before commencement of, and during employment. Employees will disclose all convictions (including those "spent" under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974) when the employee is employed in a post covered by the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Orders 1975 and 1986. Failure to disclose such convictions and to comply with any of the above constitutes possible gross misconduct and may result in disciplinary action including the possibility of summary dismissal without notice.
- 4.0.6 All employees whose work involves driving will declare any motoring offences, health issues, or medication to the CEO (Executive Director/Executive Headteacher/Head of School or central Trust employees) or Executive Headteacher/Head of School (school-based employees). Where employees are in charge of a vehicle whilst engaged on Trust activities they will ensure that it is safe to drive and has the relevant valid insurance.
- 4.0.7 All employees will at all times observe and work in accordance with the Trust Health and Safety Policy, underpinning individual school policy and procedures, and in accordance with safe systems of work, regulations, codes.

## 5. Safeguarding and Safer Working Practice

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### 5.0 Safeguarding and safer working practice

- 5.0.1 The remainder of this document focuses on safeguarding and expectations around safe working practice.
- 5.0.2 All staff will attend local Child Protection basic level training where safeguarding practices will be shared in more detail. This will include the referral procedures, specific to their place of work.
- 5.0.3 This guidance links to local Child Protection and Safeguarding policies and procedures and takes into account the most recent Keeping Children Safe in Education statutory guidance (2016, updated September 2018).
- 5.0.4 All staff must receive Part one of Keeping Children Safe in Education and some identified staff will be required to read specific parts of the document, dependent on their role.

### 5.1 Safeguarding and safer working practice

- 5.1.1 This section of the code of conduct provides guidance for safe working practice and practical advice to staff about which behaviours and actions constitute safe practice and which behaviours should be avoided. It has been produced to help all staff/adults establish the safest possible learning and working environments. The aims are to safeguard young people and reduce the risk of staff being falsely accused of improper or unprofessional conduct.
- 5.1.2 This guidance seeks to ensure that the duty of care towards students and staff is promoted by raising awareness of illegal, unsafe and unwise behaviour. The guidance also outlines to staff professional behaviours that are expected during their day to day working lives.
- 5.1.3 This guidance does not replace or take priority over other advice, codes of conduct or child protection policies produced by the academy or other sources (including the Local Authority). It is intended to inform and assist the academy and individuals to develop and review their guidelines on safe working practices.
- 5.1.4 This guidance should be read in conjunction with other relevant Trust policies and procedures.

## 5. Safeguarding and Safer Working Practice

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### 5.2 Underpinning principles

- The welfare of the child is paramount (Children Act 1989).
- Staff are responsible for their own actions, attitudes 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.
- Staff should discuss and/or take advice promptly from their line manager or another senior member of staff over any incident, which may give rise to concern. Records should be made of any incidents and of decisions made/further actions agreed, in accordance with the academy's policy for keeping and maintaining records.
- Staff should have regards for equal opportunities.
- All staff should know the name of their designated person for child protection and be familiar with the child protection policy and procedures.
- Staff are responsible for reporting any breaches of this guidance, or concerns to a senior leader, Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a designated Child Protection Officer.
- Staff are responsible for seeking support, guidance or access to training if they are unsure of any aspect of their professional responsibilities.

It is recognised that the vast majority of adults who work with children act professionally and aim to provide a safe and supportive environment, which secures the well-being and very best outcomes for children and young people in their care.

### 5.3 Duty of Care

- 5.3.1 **All staff** are accountable for the way in which they exercise authority; manage risk; use resources; and protect students from maltreatment and avoidable harm.
- 5.3.2 **All staff**, whether paid or voluntary, have a duty to keep young people safe and to protect them from harm.
- 5.3.3 **All staff** have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn.
- 5.3.4 **All staff** have a responsibility to identify children who may be in need of extra help or who are suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm.
- 5.3.5 **All staff** then have the responsibility to take appropriate action, working with other services as needed.

## 5. Safeguarding and Safer Working Practice

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5.3.6 This means that adults should:

- Always act, and be seen to act, in the child's best interests.
- Take responsibility for their own actions and behaviour.
- Refer any situations that cause concern, including those which involve a colleague, family member or friend.

5.3.7 The Trust and parents have legitimate expectations about the nature of professional involvement in the lives of students. When individuals accept a role that involves working with children and young people, they need to understand and acknowledge the responsibilities and trust inherent in that role.

### 5.4 Exercise of professional judgment

This guidance cannot provide a complete checklist of what is, or is not, appropriate behaviour for staff. There will be occasions and circumstances in which staff have to make decisions or take action in the best interests of the child or young person which could contravene this guidance or where no guidance exists. Individuals are expected to make judgements about their behaviour in order to secure the best interests and welfare of children in their charge and in so doing, will be seen to be acting reasonably.

Where no specific guidance exists, staff should:

- Discuss the circumstances that informed their action, or their proposed action, with a senior leader or DSL. This will help to ensure that the safest practices are employed and reduce the risk of actions being misinterpreted.
- Always discuss any misunderstanding, accidents or threats with a senior leader or line manager.
- Always record discussions and actions taken with their justifications.
- Always alert a senior leader where students have tried to engage them in discussions of an inappropriate nature.

### 5.5 Power and Positions of Trust

As a result of their knowledge, position and/or the authority invested in their role, all adults working with children and young people in educational establishments are in positions of trust in relation to the young people in their care. A relationship between a member of staff and a student/young person cannot be a relationship between equals. There is potential for exploitation and harm of vulnerable young people and staff have a responsibility to ensure that an unequal balance of power is not used for personal advantage or gratification.

This means that adults should not:

- Use their position to gain access to information for their own advantage and/or a child's or family's detriment.
- Use their power to intimidate, threaten, coerce or undermine students.
- Use their status and standing to form or promote relationships with children, which are of a sexual nature or may become so.

## 5. Safeguarding and Safer Working Practice

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### 5.6 Sexual contact with young people

- 5.6.1 Any sexual behaviour by a member of staff with or towards a child or young person is both inappropriate and illegal. Under section 16 of The Sexual Offences Act 2004, which provides 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.
- 5.6.2 The sexual activity referred to does not just involve physical contact. Where a person aged 18 or over is in a position of trust with a child under 18, it is illegal for that adult to engage in sexual activity with, or in the presence of, a child, or to cause or incite a child to engage in, or watch, sexual activity. 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' re-defines sexual abuse as "forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening".
- 5.6.3 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 and manipulate that relationship so sexual abuse can take place. Staff should be aware that conferring special attention and favour upon a child might be construed as being part of a 'grooming' process, which is an offence.
- 5.6.4 This means that adults should:
- Not pursue sexual relationships with children and young people either in or out of the academy setting.
  - Avoid any form of communication with a child or young person which could be interpreted as sexually suggestive or provocative i.e. verbal comments, letters, notes, electronic mail, phone calls, texts, physical contact.
- 5.6.5 Please refer to the Child Protection and Safeguarding policies; however, this area of working practice is governed by statutory law.

### 5.7 Propriety and behaviour

- 5.7.1 All staff have a responsibility to maintain public confidence in their ability to safeguard the welfare and best interests of children and young people. They should adopt high standards of personal conduct in order to maintain the confidence and respect of their peers, students and the public in general.

## 5. Safeguarding and Safer Working Practice

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5.7.2 As a community employer, staff should be aware that their behaviour outside the work environment could compromise their professional position and lead staff, parents or other members of the community to question their ability to safeguard the welfare of students. This means that adults should not:

- Behave in a manner either in or out of the workplace which would lead any reasonable person to question their suitability to work with children or act as a role model.
- Make (or encourage others to make) unprofessional personal comments which demean, offend or humiliate, or might be interpreted as such.
- Make sexual remarks to a student (including e-mail, text messages, phone or letter).
- Discuss their own social life, sexual relationships or other inappropriate information on their personal life with, or in the presence of, students.
- Discuss a student's sexual relationships in inappropriate settings or contexts.
- Allow students to use their first name or nicknames.
- Take actions or use behaviours that allow students to believe that they are peers with a member of staff.

5.7.3 To support this employees should:

- Challenge students when they inappropriately refer to a member of staff.
- Challenge students who use nicknames or first names of staff, when addressing or referring to adults.
- Maintain professional boundaries with students.

5.7.4 Staff should also be aware of their responsibilities towards role modelling and maintaining a professional image in, and around, a school, including upholding the standards expected of students. This includes eating or using a mobile phone around the building, eating and drinking in classrooms and language and literacy standards. Please do not be offended if you are reminded of these of expectations.

### **5.8 Social contact**

5.8.1 Through working in a community academy, it is recognised that students and staff are known to each other socially, or through family links.

5.8.2 Staff should be aware of the professional boundaries that should be maintained with students.

5.8.3 Under no circumstances should staff seek to establish social contact with students for the purpose of securing, pursuing or strengthening a relationship. Even if a young person seeks to establish social contact, or if this occurs coincidentally, the member of staff should exercise her/his professional judgement in making a response and be aware that such social contact could be misconstrued as grooming.

## 5. Safeguarding and Safer Working Practice

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5.8.4 All contact with students or young people should be through appropriate channels at all times. All communication must be appropriate and professional. Any communication outside of agreed professional boundaries may be prone to misinterpretation and as a result could put both the employee and young person at risk.

**5.8.5 Staff should not give students their personal details such as home or mobile phone number, personal e-mail address or address information.**

5.8.6 Staff should not use unapproved methods to contact students, children or young people without the prior and explicit consent of a senior leader. Any member of staff found to be in contact with students or young people through any unapproved method, without prior consent, could be subject to disciplinary action. This also extends to the inappropriate use of school approved methods to communicate with students.

5.8.7 All staff should use the internal e-mail system to contact students. All messages should be appropriate, for educational purposes and role model appropriate use of e-mail communication and language.

This means that adults should:

- Always seek approval from a senior leader for any planned social contact with students (for example when it is part of a reward scheme or pastoral care programme).
- Advise senior leaders of any regular social contact they have with a student which may give rise to concern, including family members.
- Only contact students via academy agreed channels (academy mobile phone or e-mail address) is acceptable.
- Challenge students when they don't use their academy email address for submitting work or having other contact with staff.
- All e-mail contact should be business-like and professional.
- Report and record any situation, which they feel, might compromise the academy or their own professional standing.

### 5.9 Social networking

5.9.1 Social networking and its development has become an increasingly important feature of modern communication, including in developing educational practice, business links and organisational development.

5.9.2 The Trust views many aspects of social networking as positive opportunities; however, it is important to recognise the need for staff to act responsibly to ensure that clear expectations around standards and behaviour are maintained.



## 5. Safeguarding and Safer Working Practice

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5.9.3 The expectations around social contact extend to use of social networking sites. (I.e. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram). Members of staff must not have any contact with students on such sites and staff must not add students, children or young people as friends or respond to requests for friendship/links/contact from children if asked. If a member of staff suspects that an existing friend is a student, child or young person, they should take reasonable steps to check the identity of the individual and end the friendship.

5.9.4 The Trust understands that many employees will have social media/networking accounts and have provided more detailed information on expectations around social media in **Appendix A**. Employees who access a social media account as part of their role should refer to **Appendix C**.

### 5.10 Dress and appearance

5.10.1 All staff working for the Trust are expected to present a high standard of dress, appearance and hygiene. All staff should ensure that the Trust's professional image and reputation are maintained and that we project a professional image to parents, stakeholders, visitors and external agencies. Most importantly, we must ensure that positive role models are presented to students.

5.10.2 It is recognised that a person's dress and appearance are matters of personal choice and self-expression, however, staff should be aware that should their interpretation of the dress and appearance standards fall below expectation, then they may be given advice as to what is considered appropriate.

5.10.3 In all cases staff should be aware that if they dress, or appear, in a manner which could be considered as inappropriate, this could render themselves vulnerable to criticism or allegation, therefore any advice provided is intended to support individuals. A Dress Code is in place across all areas of the Trust. This is found in **Appendix B** of this code.

### 5.11 Identity badges

5.11.1 All staff and governors have photographic ID badges and appropriate lanyards. These badges must be worn at all times during the working day.

5.11.2 Anyone without an ID badge should be challenged and, where required, advice should be sought from a senior leader.

### 5.12 Visitors

5.12.1 All visitors will be required to sign in and out. There are different types of visitor badges, depending on the level of access the visitor has to students, the frequency of their visit and, if appropriate, vetting checks have been undertaken and recorded on the Single Central Record.

## 5. Safeguarding and Safer Working Practice

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5.12.2 Each academy has in place its own procedures for dealing with visitors. However, in general all staff should be aware that any visitors are the responsibility of the member of staff who they are meeting.

5.12.3 Each employee is expected to escort visitors from the Reception area around the academy/workplace and following the visit, return them to the Reception area, so they can sign out and return their badge. Generally, visitors should not be left unaccompanied when visiting an academy.

5.12.4 Please note arrangements for visitors are both a safeguarding and Health and Safety (fire evacuation) requirement. Please refer to the guidance that is relevant to your place of work.

### 5.13 Smoking and the consumption of alcohol

5.13.1 The Trust has a strict 'no alcohol' rule for any staff who are supervising students; this includes taking part in educational visits, reward trips, after school or residential trips. The 'no alcohol' rule extends to evening events, award ceremonies and events, such as the leavers celebrations (e.g. the Prom).

**5.13.2 Under no circumstances should staff involved in supervising or supporting an academy event consume alcohol.** This includes trips where students who are over 18 may be taking part.

5.13.3 There may be evening events where alcohol is served to guests, VIPs or as part of the price of a ticket (e.g. to a performance), however the decision on whether alcohol can be served lies with the CEO/Executive Director/Executive Headteacher/Head of School. Staff are not permitted to make a decision on the serving of alcohol.

5.13.4 Where there is a substantial reason to believe that an employee is under the influence of alcohol or drugs whilst on Trust premises, then this will be regarded as potential gross misconduct. If the employee has an underlying substance related problem this will be dealt with in accordance with the appropriate policy.

5.13.5 Smoking or use of electronic smoking devices (vaping) is prohibited in all buildings or grounds operated by the Trust. If employees find it necessary to smoke, they are actively required to do so away from the premises (and its boundaries) and out of the sight of students, visitors, parents and the public.

## 5. Safeguarding and Safer Working Practice

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### 5.14 Home visits

5.14.1 All work with pupils and parents should usually be undertaken in the academy/setting or other recognised workplace. There are however occasions, in response to an urgent, planned or specific situation or job role, where it is necessary to make one-off or regular home visits. It is essential that appropriate policies and related risk assessments are in place to safeguard both staff and pupils, who can be more vulnerable in these situations.

5.14.2 A risk assessment should be in place prior to any planned home visit taking place. The assessment should include an evaluation of any known factors regarding the pupil, parents/carers and any others living in the household. Consideration should be given to any circumstances which might render the staff member becoming more vulnerable to an allegation being made e.g. hostility, child protection concerns, complaints or grievances. Specific thought should be given to visits outside of 'office hours' or in remote or secluded locations.

5.14.3 Following the assessment, appropriate risk management measures should be put in place, before the visit is undertaken. In the unlikely event that little or no information is available, visits should not be made alone.

This means that staff should:

- Agree the purpose for any home visit with their manager within the remit of their role
- Adhere to agreed risk management strategies
- Avoid unannounced visits wherever possible
- Ensure there is visual access and/or an open door in one to one situations
- Always make detailed records including times of arrival and departure
- Ensure any behaviour or situation which gives rise to concern is discussed with their manager.

5.14.4 Where home visits are part of an individual's role, each academy should:

- Ensure that they have home visit and lone-working policies which all adults are made aware of. These should include arrangements for risk assessment and management.
- Ensure that all visits are justified and recorded
- Ensure that staff are not exposed to unacceptable risk and make clear to staff that, other than in an emergency, they should not enter a home if the parent/carer is absent
- Ensure that staff have access to a mobile telephone and an emergency contact

## 5. Safeguarding and Safer Working Practice

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### 5.15 Educational visits and after school clubs

5.15.1 Staff should take particular care when supervising students in the less formal atmosphere of a residential setting or after-school activity.

5.15.2 During activities that take place off an academy site or out of school hours, a more relaxed discipline or informal dress and language code may differ from those accepted in the usual academy day. However, staff remain in a position of trust and need to ensure that their behaviour cannot be interpreted as seeking to establish an inappropriate relationship or friendship.

5.15.3 Where out of school activities include overnight stays, careful consideration needs to be given to sleeping arrangements. Students, staff and parents should be informed of these prior to the start of the trip.

5.15.4 Health and Safety arrangements require members of staff to keep colleagues/employers aware of their whereabouts, especially when involved in an out of school activity. Staff must be aware of and follow guidance.

This means that adults should:

- Adhere to their academy's educational visits guidance
- Always have another adult present for out of school activities, unless otherwise agreed with senior academy staff.
- Undertake risk assessments.
- Have parental consent to the activity.
- Ensure that their behaviour remains professional at all times.
- Report any concerns or incidents that have occurred off-site or after academy hours to the DSL or another senior leader as soon as possible.
- Respect the 'no alcohol' rule.
- Never share beds with a child/pupil
- Never share bedrooms unless it involves a dormitory situation and the arrangements have been previously discussed with Head of School, parents and pupils
- Refer to local and national guidance for Educational visits, including exchange visits (both to the UK and abroad).

### 5.16 Physical contact

5.16.1 There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate and proper for staff to have physical contact with students, but it is crucial that they only do so in ways appropriate to their professional role.

5.16.2 A 'no touch' approach is impractical for most staff and may, in some circumstances, be inappropriate. When physical contact is made with students this should be in response to their needs at the time, of limited duration and appropriate given their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background. Appropriate physical contact may occur, most often with younger

## 5. Safeguarding and Safer Working Practice

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students. Staff should use their professional judgment at all times.

- 5.16.3 If a member of staff believes that an action could be misinterpreted, the incident and circumstances should be referred to the DSL, or Deputy DSL, as soon as possible and, if appropriate, a copy placed on the child's file.
- 5.16.4 Physical contact, which occurs regularly with an individual child or young person, is likely to raise questions unless the justification for this is part of a formally agreed plan (for example in P.E. or relation to students with SEN or physical disabilities). Any such contact should be the subject of an agreed and open academy policy and subject to review. Where feasible, staff should inform the child of their intentions before initiating contact. Staff should listen, observe and take note of the child's reaction or feelings and – so far as is possible – use a level of contact which is acceptable to the child for the minimum time necessary.
- 5.16.5 Extra caution may be required where it is known that a child has suffered previous abuse or neglect. In the child's view, physical contact might be associated with such experiences and lead to staff being vulnerable to allegations of abuse. It is recognised that many such children are extremely needy and seek out inappropriate physical contact. In such circumstances, staff should deter the child sensitively by helping them to understand the importance of personal boundaries.
- 5.16.6 The general culture of 'limited touch' should be adapted, where appropriate, to the individual requirements of each child. Children with special needs may require more physical contact to assist their everyday learning. The arrangements should be understood and agreed by all concerned, justified in terms of the child's needs, consistently applied and open to scrutiny.

This means that adults should:

- Be aware that even well intentioned physical contact may be misconstrued by the child, an observer or by anyone to whom this action is described.
- Never touch a child in a way which may be considered indecent.
- Always be prepared to explain actions and accept that all physical contact be open to scrutiny.
- Never indulge in horseplay, tickling or fun fights.

This means each academy will:

- Ensure systems are in place for recording serious incidents and how information about incidents and outcomes can be easily accessed by senior management.
- Provide staff, on a "need to know" basis, with relevant information about vulnerable students in their care.
- Make staff aware of the statutory guidance in respect of physical contact with students and meeting medical needs of children and young people in the academy.

- 5.16.7 Guidance can be found in the relevant 'Using reasonable force' guidance and

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the relevant Behaviour for Learning policy.

### 5.17 Physical Education and other activities that require physical contact

5.17.1 Some staff, for example, those who teach PE and games, or who offer music tuition will on occasions have to initiate physical contact with students in order to support a child, so they can perform a task safely, to demonstrate the use of a particular piece of equipment/instrument or assist them with an exercise. This should be done with the student's agreement and explained as part of the lesson plan.

5.17.2 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 child.

This means that adults should:

- Consider alternatives, where it is anticipated that a student might misinterpret any such contact, perhaps involving another member of staff, or a less vulnerable student in the demonstration.
- Be familiar with and follow recommended Department of Education guidance.
- Always explain to a student the reason why contact is necessary and what form that contact will take.

### 5.18 Showers and changing

5.18.1 Young people 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 young people, 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 young people concerned and sensitive to the potential for embarrassment.

5.18.2 Staff should ensure they follow agreed guidelines and be mindful of the needs of the students.

This means that adults should:

- Avoid any physical contact when children are in a state of undress.
- Avoid any visually intrusive behaviour and where there are changing rooms announce their intention of entering.
- Avoid remaining in the room unless student needs require it.

This means that adults should not:

- Change in the same place as children.
- Shower with children.

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### 5.19 Transporting students

- 5.19.1 In certain situations, e.g. out of school activities, staff or volunteers may agree to transport children as part of their work. As for any other activity undertaken at work, the employer has a duty to carry out a risk assessment covering the health and safety of their staff and to manage any known risks.
- 5.19.2 Staff should not offer lifts to pupils unless the need for this has been agreed by a manager. A designated member of staff should be appointed to plan and provide oversight of all transport arrangements and respond to any concerns that may arise.
- 5.19.3 Wherever possible and practicable it is advisable that transport is undertaken other than in private vehicles and with at least one adult additional to the driver acting as an escort.
- 5.19.4 It is a legal requirement that all passengers wear seatbelts and the driver should ensure that they do so. They should also be aware of and adhere to current legislation regarding the use of car seats for younger children.
- 5.19.5 Staff should ensure that their behaviour is safe and that the transport arrangements and the vehicle meet all legal requirements. They should ensure that the vehicle is roadworthy and appropriately insured and that the maximum carrying capacity is not exceeded.
- 5.19.6 Staff should never offer to transport pupils outside of their normal working duties, other than in an emergency or where not doing so would mean the child may be at risk. In these circumstances the matter should be recorded and reported to both their manager and the child's parent(s). The school's health and safety policy and/or educational visits policy should set out the arrangements under which staff may use private vehicles to transport pupils.

This means that adults should:

- Plan and agree arrangements with all parties in advance, responding sensitively and flexibly where any concerns arise.
- take into account any specific or additional needs of the pupil
- have an appropriate licence/permit for the vehicle
- ensure they are fit to drive and free from any drugs, alcohol or medicine which is likely to impair judgement and/ or ability to drive
- ensure that if they need to be alone with a pupil this is for the minimum time
- ensure that appropriate seat restraints are used on all journeys.
- be aware that the safety and welfare of the pupil is their responsibility until this is safely passed over to a parent/carer
- report the nature of the journey, the route and expected time of arrival in accordance with agreed procedures

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- ensure that their behaviour and all arrangements ensure vehicle, passenger and driver safety. This includes having proper and appropriate insurance for the type of vehicle being driven
- ensure that any impromptu or emergency arrangements of lifts are recorded and can be justified
- refer to Local and National guidance for Educational visits

5.19.7 Please refer to specific off-site or trips policies and procedures in place at your academy for further information.

### 5.20 Students in distress

There may be occasions when a distressed student needs comfort and reassurance. This may include age-appropriate physical contact. Staff should remain self-aware at all times in order that their contact is not threatening, intrusive or subject to misinterpretation. Where a member of staff has a particular concern about the need to provide this type of care they should seek further advice from a senior leader.

### 5.21 One-to-One situations

5.21.1 Staff working in one-to-one situations with children and young people may be more vulnerable to allegations. All staff should recognise this possibility and plan and conduct such meetings accordingly. Every attempt should be made to ensure the safety and security needs of both staff and students are met.

5.21.2 Each academy needs to consider these issues in drawing up its own policies and offer clear training and guidance for the use of any areas of the academy/workplace which place staff or children in vulnerable situations e.g. photographic darkrooms, counselling rooms, detentions. This applies to any other activities which involve one-to-one situations.

5.21.3 Academy leaders and managers should undertake some form of a risk assessment in relation to the nature and implications of one-to-one working. Any arrangements should be reviewed on a regular basis. It may be necessary to amend these to take account of particular student needs.

**5.21.4 Meetings with students away from the academy premises should not be permitted unless approval is obtained from their parent and the Head of School or other senior leaders with delegated authority.**

This means that adults should:

- Avoid meetings with students in remote, secluded areas of the site.
- Ensure there are visual access and/or an open door in one-to-one situations.
- Inform other staff of the meeting beforehand, assessing the need to have them present or close by.
- Avoid use of 'engaged' or equivalent signs wherever possible. Such signs may create an opportunity for secrecy or the impression of secrecy.



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- Always report any situation where a child becomes distressed or angry to a senior leader.
- Consider the needs and circumstances of the child/children involved.

### 5.22 Morning and after school duty

Some teaching and pastoral staff are required to supervise the entrance and bus stop areas to ensure that students enter the academy safely and wait safely for their transport home.

This means that adults should:

- Advise students to use the designated pelican crossings.
- Move on any waiting cars or vehicles near the entrance
- Keep the areas clear of traffic, wherever possible.
- At the bus area; wait with students, ensuring they wait on the pavement and behind the queue barriers.
- Where available, have a radio to ensure they can contact colleagues, in an emergency.

### 5.23 First aid and administration of medication

5.23.1 Each academy will have trained first aiders/appointed persons. Staff may volunteer to undertake this task, or it may be a contractual requirement. Staff should receive appropriate training before administering first aid or medication.

5.23.2 Students may need medication during academy hours. In circumstances where children need medication regularly a health care plan should be drawn up to ensure the safety and protection of students and staff. With the permission of parents, the children should be encouraged to administer the medication themselves. Medication should only be administered by appropriate staff.

5.23.3 If a member of staff is concerned or uncertain about the amount or type of medication being given to a student, this should be discussed with the Welfare Officer (or equivalent) at the earliest opportunity.

5.23.4 Please refer to the Health and safety policy and/or the Students with Medical Conditions policy and procedures.

### 5.24 Intimate Care

5.24.1 All children have a right to safety, privacy and dignity when contact of an intimate nature is required (for example assisting with toileting or removing wet/soiled clothing). A care plan should be drawn up and agreed with parents for all children who require intimate care on a regular basis.

## 5. Safeguarding and Safer Working Practice

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5.24.2 Children should be encouraged to act as independently as possible and to undertake as much of their own personal care as is practicable. When assistance may be required, staff should ensure that another appropriate adult is in the vicinity and is aware of the task to be undertaken.

5.24.3 Where students are in need of intimate care, advice on how this assistance should be provided should be sought from the academy's SENCo or Welfare Officer (or equivalent) and/or the relevant policy in place at their academy.

### 5.25 Curriculum

5.25.1 Some 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. The lesson plan should highlight particular areas of risk and sensitivity.

This means that adults should not:

- Enter into or encourage inappropriate or offensive discussion about sexual activity.

5.25.2 The curriculum can sometimes include or lead to unplanned discussion about subject matter of a sexually explicit or otherwise sensitive nature. Responding to students' questions can require careful judgement and staff may wish to take guidance in these circumstances from a senior member of staff.

5.25.3 Care should also be taken to abide by the governing body's required policy on sex and relationships education and the wishes of parents. Parents have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of any sex education provided (but not from the biological aspects of human growth and reproduction necessary under the science curriculum). Please refer to the senior leader responsible for the curriculum.

### 5.26 Photography, media and other creative arts

5.26.1 Many academy activities involve recording images. These may be undertaken as part of the curriculum, extra school activities, for publicity or to celebrate achievement.

5.26.2 Staff need to be aware of the potential for these aspects of teaching to be misused for pornographic or 'grooming' purposes. Careful consideration should be given as to how these activities are organised and undertaken. Particular regard needs to be given when they involve young or vulnerable students who may be unable to question why or how the activities are taking place.

5.26.3 Children who have been previously abused in this way may feel threatened by the use of photography or filming. Staff should remain sensitive to any children who appear uncomfortable and should recognise the potential for misinterpretation.

## 5. Safeguarding and Safer Working Practice

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5.26.4 Using images of children for publicity purposes requires the age - appropriate consent of the individual concerned and their legal guardians. Images should not be displayed on websites, in publications or in a public place without such consent. The definition of a public place includes areas where visitors to the academy have access.

This means that adults should:

- Be clear about the purpose of the activity and about what will happen to the photographs when the lesson/activity is concluded.
- Ensure that the appropriate senior leader is aware that photography/image equipment is being used and for what purpose.
- Ensure that all images are available for scrutiny in order to screen for acceptability.
- Be able to justify images of children in their possession.
- Avoid making images in one-to-one situations.

This means that adults must not; take, display or distribute images of children unless they have consent to do so.

5.26.5 It is recommended that when using a photograph, the following guidance should be followed:

- If the photograph is used, avoid naming the student.
- If the student is named, avoid using their photograph.
- The academy should establish whether the image will be retained for further use.
- Images should be securely stored and used only by those authorised to do so.

5.26.6 Please refer to the safeguarding policy, appropriate schemes of work or the Office/Administration Manager for consent information.

### 5.27 Infatuations

5.27.1 Staff need to be aware that it is not uncommon for students to be strongly attracted to a member of staff and/or develop a heterosexual or homosexual infatuation. All situations should be responded to sensitively to maintain the dignity of all concerned. Staff should also be aware that such circumstances always carry a high risk of words or actions being misinterpreted and for allegations to be made against staff.

5.27.2 This means that adults should report any indications (verbal, written or physical) that suggest a student may be infatuated to the DSL, Deputy DSL, a senior leader or other Designated Child Protection Officer.

5.27.3 A member of staff, who becomes aware that a student may be infatuated with themselves or a colleague, should discuss this at the earliest opportunity with a senior leader so that appropriate action can be taken. In this way, steps can

## 5. Safeguarding and Safer Working Practice

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be taken to avoid hurt and distress for all concerned.

### 5.28 Gifts

5.28.1 It is against the law for public servants (staff or Governors) to take bribes. Staff need to take care that they do not accept any gift that might be construed as a bribe by others or lead the giver to expect preferential treatment.

This means that adults should:

- Ensure that gifts received or given in situations which may be misconstrued or unlawful are declared.
- Generally, only give gifts to an individual young person as part of an agreed reward system.
- Where giving gifts other than as above, ensure that these are of insignificant value and given to all children equally.
- Staff should not give personal gifts to students, without the consent of a senior leader. This will avoid the gesture being misinterpreted as a gesture to bribe, or single out a young person.

5.28.2 There are occasions when children or parents wish to pass small tokens of appreciation to staff e.g. 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.

### 5.29 Internet Use

5.29.1 The Trust has clear policies about access to and the use of the internet and other forms of technology. Please refer to **APPENDIX C – Use of Trust technology**.

5.29.2 Staff and users should not share logins or password information with others. Under no circumstances, whilst using Trust IT equipment or resources, access inappropriate images. Accessing child pornography or indecent images of children on the internet and making, storing or disseminating such material is illegal and if proven will invariably lead to the individual being barred from work with children and young people.

5.29.3 Using Trust equipment to access inappropriate or indecent material, including adult pornography, will give cause for concern particularly if as a result, students might be exposed to inappropriate or indecent material and may lead to disciplinary action.

### 5.30 Sharing concerns and recording incidents

5.30.1 All staff should be aware of safeguarding and Child Protection policies and procedures, including procedures for dealing with allegations against staff. Staff who are the subject of allegations are advised to contact their professional association.

## 5. Safeguarding and Safer Working Practice

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This means that adults:

- Should be familiar with systems for reporting concerns in their workplace(s).
- Should take responsibility for reporting or recording any incident and passing on that information where they have concerns about any matter pertaining to the welfare of an individual in an academy or workplace.

5.30.2 In the event of an incident occurring, which may result in an action being misinterpreted and/or an allegation being made against a member of staff, the relevant information should be clearly and promptly recorded and reported to senior management.

5.30.3 Each academy has an effective, transparent and accessible system for recording and managing concerns raised by any individual in, or associated with, the academy.

5.30.4 Members of staff should feel able to discuss with their line manager any difficulties or problems that may affect their relationship with students so that appropriate support can be provided, or action can be taken.

5.30.5 Please refer to the safeguarding and Child Protection policies and procedures for further information or speak to the DSL.

# Appendix A – Dress Code

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## APPENDIX A – DRESS CODE

1.0 In all roles in the Trust staff are required to be role models to pupils and, as such, are required to set a good example. Pupils are expected to wear a smart uniform and this standard of dress is expected of all staff. To dress professionally shows pride, effort, and respect for yourself, your profession and our students.

2.0 All staff are required to dress in a smart, clean, well-groomed and business-like manner and maintain a good standard of personal hygiene whilst at work. This dress code is not exhaustive in defining acceptable standards of dress and appearance and it is recognised that staff are expected to dress according to their role.

3.0 The staff dress code is formal rather than casual and should there be uncertainty a member of Senior Leadership has the final word in determining whether dress or appearance is appropriate.

### 4.0 **General principles**

- Clothing should be clean and in a good state of repair.
- Clothing must be business attire, not casual wear. (Examples of casual wear are denim items, leggings and sportswear, none of these are acceptable).
- Where provided, staff should wear academy or Trust branded clothing (e.g. Site and PE staff).
- Hair (including facial hair for male staff) should be neat, tidy and well groomed.
- Unconventional or outrageous styles and/or unnatural hair colours are not acceptable.
- Jewellery must not be excessive, and where staff have piercings, only ear piercings should be visible. Nose studs may be worn for reasons of religious or cultural observance only.
- Body art, such as such as tattoos, should be covered up.
- The Trust recognises that religious or cultural dress is acceptable; examples include clerical collar, headscarves and turbans.

### 5.0 **Clothing**

- A business suit, smart jacket or blazer is preferred.
- Male staff are expected to wear shirts and ties.
- Tops must cover cleavage and décolleté and must be long enough to cover midriff (with no flesh showing in this area).
- Tops and blouses should be at least capped sleeves. Sleeveless or strapless tops are unacceptable, and underwear should not be able to be seen.

## Appendix A – Dress Code

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- Trousers maybe full length or  $\frac{3}{4}$  length. Shorts are considered to be casual wear, and only suitable for staff teaching PE.
- Skirts and dresses should be of an appropriate length (just above the knee length at the shortest, in line with the expectations of female students).
- Outdoor wear, such as coats or hats, should not be worn inside the building.
- Clothing (including pin badges) carrying unacceptable slogans or statements or overtly political statements should not be worn.
- For some settings, such as Early Years, less restrictive clothing is acceptable, but this should still reflect professionalism. Ideally this should be branded clothing.

### 6.0 Footwear

- Casual footwear, including casual sandals, flip flops or trainers (except for staff teaching PE) are not acceptable.
- Smart shoes or boots must be neat and fit for purpose (depending on role).
- Where heels are worn, this must be a sensible heel, such as a court shoe. Stiletto heels are not acceptable.

### 7.0 Uniforms and protective clothing

Where uniforms and/or protective clothing are provided staff must ensure that they wear their uniforms/clothing and names badges during working hours, unless otherwise advised by their manager.

Uniforms and protective clothing remain the property of the Trust and loss or damage must be reported as soon as possible.

### 8.0 INSET, School trips and school closure periods

As an exception to the formal business dress requirements, the dress code is relaxed on working days where pupils are not present. Unless otherwise advised a casual dress code can be adopted for INSET days and academy holidays.

Generally, a casual code of dress is also acceptable when supporting school trips. Where a dress code is required this will be advised by the trip leader (e.g. a seminar or public speaking event).

Staff are reminded that a level of professionalism and decency is always required.

## Appendix A – Dress Code

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### 9.0 **Medical issues**

Where there are medical issues which prevent any part of this code being followed, individuals should discuss these with their Manager in the first instance.



# Appendix B – Social Media/ Networking Expectations

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## APPENDIX B – SOCIAL MEDIA/ NETWORKING EXPECTATIONS

1.0 Social networking are websites which allow people to interact with each other in some way. Information, opinions, knowledge and interests can be shared. Examples of social networking sites include:

- Facebook
- Twitter
- LinkedIn
- Instagram

Other examples include blogs, message boards, photo/video sharing sites (such as WhatsApp) and micro blogging services. This list is not exhaustive and demonstrates the range of websites and forums where contact with others can be made.

2.0 Recent media and legal cases have shown where adults use these sites to gain access to young people, with the intention of causing harm, this has resulted in criminal prosecution, prohibitions on working with young people, or a dismissal from employment.

3.0 The Academy Trust wants to ensure that all staff minimise the risk of misplaced or malicious allegations caused by social media contact. Leaders also want to ensure that any employees are clear on the principles of acceptable social networking usage.

4.0 Below are a list of expectations for staff that use, or have, a social networking site(s):

- Accessing social networking sites during working hours is not permitted. Access is only permitted during agreed breaks.
- Accessing social networking sites in and around the academy is not permitted. Access is only permitted in the staff room or offices.
- Any contact with a student on a personal social networking page is prohibited. If an employee has an existing contact with a student, it is recommended this is ended once employment commences. These contacts will be easily recognised but it is highly recommended that a senior leader be made aware.
- All employees should review the security and confidentiality settings for their page/profile. The ICT team can advise where required.
- All employees are encouraged, once they have joined the Trust, to ensure that information available about them publicly is accurate and appropriate (e.g. photographs).
- Any offensive or derogatory personal views shared about the Trust, an academy, students or staff will be treated as unprofessional and bringing the organisation into disrepute.
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## Appendix B – Social Media/ Networking Expectations

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- Any personal views expressed that promote illegal or offensive behaviour should be avoided.
  - Any confidential information about the Trust, an academy, students or staff released (intentional or otherwise) will be treated as a breach of confidentiality.
  - Where an individual chooses to express their opinion on educational issues, caution should be exercised to ensure these comments do not conflict with these expectations.
  - Use of an academy e-mail address, contact number or logo is prohibited in personal posts.
  - Caution should be taken when making ‘friends’ or links with ex-students as many friendship groups include current and ex-students. Contact with ex-students could be construed as grooming or lead to allegations of improper conduct from when the student was attending the academy. In addition, personal information may inadvertently be shared with current students.
  - All employees have a responsibility to report any unsuitable or illegal material uncovered, relating to social networking activities of a colleague, co-worker or other known adult working with young people.
- 5.0 It is recognised that personal access to social networking sites outside the work environment is at the discretion of the individual however members of staff should consider their use of social networks as they take on the responsibilities of a professional, taking particular care to secure personal information and ensure their use of such networking sites is respectable and appropriate at all times.
- 6.0 Secure and suitable strength passwords should be devised, and security settings should be applied so access to your profile and the information contained is limited to those explicitly given access.
- 7.0 Staff must give careful consideration as to what information is published on personal profiles on social networking sites and other internet posting forums. For example, information which is confidential or could put others at risk should not be posted on such public domains, and careful consideration should be given whether to identify your employer, place or work or job role.
- 8.0 If the material you post or display is considered inappropriate or could be considered to bring the academy or your profession into disrepute, disciplinary action may be considered.

## Appendix C – Use of Trust Technology

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### APPENDIX C – USE OF TRUST TECHNOLOGY

- 1.0 The information stored and processed on the information technology systems operated by the Trust is of paramount importance in the day to day activities of the Trust. It is essential that data and systems are adequately secured against risks such as operator errors, theft, unauthorised access to or copying of programmes, use of unauthorised software on Trust machines and natural hazards such as fire, flood and power failures.
- 2.0 All employees will ensure that they comply with the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulations 2018 and the Computer Misuse Act 1990.
- 3.0 Employees will ensure at all times that no unauthorised person gains access to equipment or data, which is within their responsibilities. Individual passwords and login details will remain confidential. Employees will only release data or information if, and when, authorised to do so by their nominated manager. Employees will not be authorised to release data or information which is protected by law.
- 4.0 E-Communications usage is to be used for Trust activities only. The tone and content of e-communication messages will be appropriate in upholding the Trust's commitment to valuing diversity and promoting equality and dignity at work. Employees will remember at all times that e-communications have the same legal status as letters and therefore need wording with care, using professional language only.
- 5.0 E-Communications will **not** be used for:
- the undertaking of any personal business for monetary gain;
  - knowingly engaging in any activity which threatens the integrity or availability of the Trust's systems;
  - intentionally sending, receiving, accessing, downloading or posting any inappropriate material. This means material which is illegal, obscene, indecent, abusive, racist, sexist, libellous, in breach of copyright, defamatory, or otherwise inappropriate;
  - transmitting, receiving, copying or storing digital media (including software, music, video etc.) except for legitimate Trust business purposes in a way that complies with the copyright and licensing regulations;
  - disclosing sensitive information or personal data to unapproved persons or organisations;
  - attempting to breach security systems (hack) whether inside or outside the Trust;
  - originating or participating in chain letters or similar types of communications;
  - participating in chat rooms/forums unless this is work related or for professional development purposes;

## Appendix C – Use of Trust Technology

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- Use of social media unless it is a Trust/School site and the employee has authority to post on it;
  - playing computer games or similar entertainment
- 6.0 Employees will be responsible for taking reasonable steps to ensure that their social media postings continue to uphold the values and ethos of the Trust. Any postings which make offensive, defamatory, or inappropriate comments about the Trust, an individual school, its learners and/or their families, suppliers, Trustees, Governors, or volunteer may result in disciplinary action which could include dismissal.
- 7.0 The Trust may at any time monitor the use of its e-communication systems. Employees will not store personal data or images on any of the Trust systems and cannot expect any privacy of this data if they do so.