

Inspire Partnership Multi Academy Trust

Staff Code of Conduct Policy



Policy Review Date – September 2021

Date of Next Review – August 2024

Personnel Responsible – Chief Operating Officer

Introduction

Our relationship between staff and pupils is based around each individual schools' ethos, with mutual respect being of paramount importance. This code has been formulated in order to maintain this balance.

All schools within the Trust will foster a culture of the highest professional standards. This guidance is provided to all staff so they know what is expected of them and all are treated fairly. For most staff, this Code of Conduct will serve only to confirm what is already their practice.

Many of the principles in this code of conduct are based on the Teacher Standards. Should staff have any doubts about the advice contained in this document they should consult with their Headteacher.

Note: for ease of reading, this Code of Conduct uses the term '*staff*' throughout. Where this generic term is used, in practice, this means all school staff, governors, volunteers, agency staff, contractors and all other adults working with children.

The Code of Conduct seeks to establish a set of core principles which underpin the concept of public service and which are applicable to anybody who works with children, regardless of the precise nature of the job they do. Respect is at the heart of all we do.

It sets out guidance to all members of staff and other adults working with children :

- The professional standards expected.
- A summary of responsibilities in order to protect and promote the welfare of children and young people.
- Safer working practices.

All staff have a duty to keep pupils and themselves safe and to protect them from physical and emotional harm. This duty is, in part, exercised through the development of respectful, caring and professional relationships between adults and pupils and behaviour by adults that demonstrate integrity, maturity and good judgment. Following this Code of Conduct will help to safeguard staff from being maliciously, falsely or mistakenly suspected or accused of professional misconduct in relation to pupils.

Staff must feel able to raise issues of concern and everybody must fully recognise the duty to do so particularly in terms of child protection. A member of staff who, in good faith, "whistleblows" or makes a public interest disclosure will have the protection of the relevant legislation (see Whistleblowing Policy).

This Code of Conduct cannot provide a complete checklist of what is, or is not, appropriate behaviour for staff. However, it does highlight behaviour that is illegal, inappropriate or inadvisable in relation to pupils. There will be occasions and circumstances in which staff have to make decisions or take action in the best interests of the pupil where no specific guidance has been given.

Adults are expected to make responsible and informed judgments about their own behaviour in order to secure the best interests and welfare of the children in their charge.

This Code of Conduct must be covered in the school's induction arrangements for all new staff, governors, volunteers and agency staff. In addition, each school within the MAT may provide supplementary guidance to support this policy.

Staff should be aware that breaches of the law and other professional guidelines could result in sanctions being taken against them and any breaches of this policy may result in referral to the disciplinary policy.

Any staff wishing to raise a concern, problem or complaint arising out of his/her employment should refer to the grievance policy.

Principles of Professional Practice

Staff set an example to pupils. They will :

- Place the well-being and learning of pupils at the centre of their professional practice.
- Have high expectations for all pupils, be committed to addressing underachievement and work to help pupils progress regardless of their background and personal circumstances.
- Treat pupils fairly and with respect, take their knowledge, views, opinion and feelings seriously and value diversity and individually.
- Model the characteristics they are trying to inspire in pupils, including attendance, punctuality, enthusiasm for learning, a spirit of enquiry, honesty, tolerance, social responsibility, patience and a genuine concern for other people.
- Not undermine fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.
- Respond sensitively to the differences in the home backgrounds and circumstances of pupils, recognizing the key role that parents and carers play in pupils' education.
- Seek to work in partnership with parents and carers, respecting their views and promoting understanding and cooperation to support the children's learning and wellbeing in and out of school.
- Reflect on their own practice, develop their skills, knowledge and expertise, and adapt appropriately to learn with and from colleagues.

All staff must:

- Treat others with respect.
- Not discriminate unlawfully against any person.

- Adhere to the Equality & Diversity Policy and treat others equally regardless of ability, gender, age, race or position in school.
- Treat other members of staff and colleagues of the school professionally and courteously at all times.

Honesty, Integrity, Impartiality and Objectivity

Staff are subject to national and local terms and conditions of employment, which are tailored to their particular job. All staff will be expected to comply with written or oral instructions, about the way in which they tackle their duties and conduct themselves.

All staff, governors, volunteers, agency staff and contractors should be made aware of the school's policy for accepting gifts including arrangements for the declaration of gifts received and given (see IMPAT Acceptance of Gifts & Hospitality Policy).

There are occasions when children or parents wish to pass small tokens of appreciation to staff, for example, 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 (above a value of £50).

Cash should never be accepted as a gift. Any reward given to a pupil must be in accordance with agreed practice within the school.

Accountability

All staff are accountable to the school in which they work for their actions. They must also respect and adhere to the leadership structure of the school, ensuring that management roles and decisions are not ignored or undermined.

Leaders have a responsibility to hold staff accountable for agreed actions and to themselves be accountable to the staff they line manage.

Personal Interests

An employee must not in their official or personal capacity allow personal interests to conflict with the school's requirements, bring the reputation of the school into disrepute, or use their position improperly to confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person.

Registration of Interests

All staff must comply with any requirements of the school to register or declare interests and declare hospitality, benefits or gifts received as a consequence of their employment (see IMPAT Acceptance of Gifts & Hospitality Policy).

Appointment of Staff

Staff must not be involved in the appointment of, or any other decision relating to the discipline, promotion, pay or conditions of another employee, or prospective employee, who is a relative, friend or partner.

In this paragraph: 'Relative' means a spouse, partner, parent, parent-in-law, son, daughter, step-son, step-daughter, child of a partner, brother, sister, grandparent, grandchild, uncle, aunt, nephew, niece, or the spouse or partner of any of the preceding persons.

'Partner' means a member of a couple who live together or who have a very close personal relationship.

Duty of Trust

All staff must, at all times, act in accordance with the trust that the school is entitled to place them in. In like manner, the school is expected to act in accordance with the trust that the employee is entitled to place on the school.

Trade Union Membership

The Trust supports and believes in the principle of solving employment relations problems by discussion and agreement. Staff are free to join a trade union that represents them on the appropriate consultative body.

Contact with Parents and the General Public

There is a general expectation of the school that staff will:

- Be polite to members of the public at all times.
- Give/provide their name when speaking or writing to parents/carers and other members of the public or school community when speaking or writing on behalf of the school.
- Ensure that any information provided in relation to the school is accurate.
- Ensure that any information provided to third parties is in line with the Data Protection Act (2018) and the school Data Protection Policy.
- Respect confidential information provided to them in the course of their work.
- Avoid doing anything which could make the public doubt the motives, integrity of the member of staff of the school or bring the school into disrepute.

- Ensure that the significant concerns or complaints expressed to them by parents, carers or the general public are passed on to the leadership of the school (see Complaints Procedure).

Confidentiality

Members of staff may have access to confidential information about pupils in order to undertake their responsibilities. In some circumstances the information may be highly sensitive. Confidential or personal information about a pupil or their family must never be disclosed to anyone other than on a need to know basis. In circumstances where a pupil's identity does not need to be disclosed the information should be used anonymously. Information must never be used to intimidate, humiliate, or embarrass the pupil.

There are some circumstances in which a member of staff may be expected to share information about a pupil, for example when abuse is alleged or suspected. In such cases, individuals have a duty to pass information on without delay to those with designated student protection responsibilities. Failure, in these circumstances, to pass on information will result in disciplinary action.

Confidential information about pupils must be held securely. Confidential information about pupils must not be held off the school site other than on security protected school equipment. Information must only be stored for the length of time as legally required. If a member of staff is in doubt about the storage or sharing of information s/he must seek guidance from the Headteacher.

Propriety, Behaviour, Reputation and Appearance

All staff have a responsibility to maintain public confidence in their ability to safeguard the welfare and best interests of the pupils. They should adopt high standards of personal conduct in order to maintain the confidence and respect of their peers, pupils and the public in general. An individual's behaviour, either in or out of the workplace, should not compromise her/his position within the work setting or bring the school into disrepute.

All staff are expected to dress professionally and clothes should be smart, modest and appropriate for the tasks they undertake. Those who dress or appear in a manner which could be considered as inappropriate could render themselves vulnerable to criticism or allegations of misconduct.

Outfits will not be revealing, and, where possible, tattoos should be covered.

Clothes will not display any offensive or political slogans.

Footwear should be smart and comfortable and not create any health and safety implications; staff are advised not to wear any open-toed shoes or sandals. These are worn at staff's own risk and the trust will take no responsibility for any injuries

caused by wearing open toed shoes or sandals. Flip Flops are not permitted under any circumstances.

Any Protective Personal Equipment (PPE) provided must be worn as appropriate to the role.

Personal property of a sexual explicit nature such as books, magazines, DVDs or such material on any electronic media must not be brought onto or stored on the school premises.

Social networking sites and blogging are extremely popular. Staff must not post material which damages the reputation of the school or the profession, or which causes concern about their suitability to work with children and young people.

Those who post material which could be considered as inappropriate could render themselves vulnerable to criticism or allegations of misconduct (see Staff ICT Acceptable Use Policy).

All schools within the Trust prohibit the involvement of staff from any form of social networking with pupils. If there is any doubt about whether communication with pupils is appropriate, advice should be sought from the Headteacher.

Sexual Contact with Children and Young People and Abuse of Trust

Any sexual behaviour, whether by a member of staff, with or towards a child or young person, is illegal. Children and young people are protected by the same laws as adults in relation to non-consensual sexual behaviour. They are additionally protected by specific legal provisions regardless of whether there is consent or not.

Social Contact and Social Networking

Staff in the schools must not establish social contact with pupils. This includes social networking sites, but not limited to, for example such as Twitter, Facebook and blogging. Even if a pupil seeks to establish social contact, or if this occurs coincidentally, the member of staff should not respond.

Staff should ensure that the privacy protection facility is used and they should not use their work email address or account to access these sites. If staff have a personal profile, they should consider not using their full name but consider using a first and middle name instead. The workplace should not be named on networking sites.

Staff must not give their personal details such as home/mobile phone number; home or email address to pupils/parents. This includes social media profiles.

Use of mobile phones by staff

Personal mobile phones

Staff (including volunteers, contractors and anyone else otherwise engaged by the school) are not permitted to make or receive calls, or send texts, or use their mobile phones while children are present. Use of personal mobile phones must be restricted to non-contact time, and to areas of the school where pupils are not present (the staff room).

There may be circumstances in which it's appropriate for a member of staff to have use of their phone during contact time. For instance:

- For emergency contact by their child, or their child's school
- In the case of acutely ill dependents or family members

The headteacher will decide on a case-by-basis whether to allow for special arrangements.

Using personal mobiles for work purposes

In some circumstances, it may be appropriate for staff to use personal mobile phones for work. Such circumstances may include, but aren't limited to:

- Emergency evacuations
- Supervising off-site trips
- Supervising residential visits

When attending an off-site visits or residential visits, staff must use the academy pastoral mobile phone; further information can be found in the educational visits policy.

In an emergency situation ie to contact emergency services or an emergency evacuation staff are given permission to use their personal mobile phones. In these circumstances, staff will:

- Use their mobile phones in an appropriate and professional manner, in line with the staff code of conduct
- Not use their phones to take photographs or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else which could identify a pupil
- Refrain from using their phones to contact parents. If necessary, contact must be made via the school office

Work phones

Some members of staff are provided with a mobile phone by the school for work purposes.

Only authorised staff are permitted to use school phones, and access to the phone must not be provided to anyone without authorisation.

Staff must:

- Only use phone functions for work purposes, including making/receiving calls, sending/receiving emails or other communications, or using the internet
- Ensure that communication or conduct linked to the device is appropriate and professional at all times, in line with the staff code of conduct.

Physical Contact and Personal Privacy

There needs to be an appropriate level of supervision in order to safeguard pupils, satisfy health and safety considerations and ensure that bullying or teasing does not occur. This supervision should be appropriate to the needs and age of the pupils concerned and sensitive to the potential for embarrassment.

Staff with a job description which includes intimate care duties will have appropriate training and written guidance. No other member of staff should be involved in intimate care duties except in an emergency.

Behaviour Management and Physical Intervention

In serious situations where physical contact should become necessary, staff should seek to intervene in a low level capacity to resolve the matter with the intention of keeping pupils safe. Any sort of physical punishment is unlawful in all schools. Staff must not use any form of degrading treatment to punish a pupil. The use of sarcasm, demeaning or insensitive comments towards pupils is not acceptable in any situation. Shouting aggressively or hectoring is not acceptable in any situation. Deliberately intimidating students/learners by overwhelming physical presence is not acceptable in any situation.

The circumstances in which staff can physically intervene with a pupil are covered by the 1996 Education Act. Staff may legitimately intervene to prevent a pupil from committing a criminal offence, injuring themselves or others, causing damage to property, engaging in behaviour prejudicial to good order and to maintain good order and discipline. Staff must be familiar with the school's behaviour management policy and adhere to this at all times.

Staff should have regard to the health and safety of themselves and others. Under no circumstances should physical force be used as a form of punishment. The use of unwarranted physical force is likely to constitute a criminal offence. If restraint is at any point used, the member of staff must ensure a full report is compiled.

The schools within the MAT have trained first aiders. Staff must have had the appropriate training before administering first aid or medication except in an emergency.

One to One Situations with Pupils

Staff will observe proper boundaries with pupils that are appropriate to their professional position. They will act in a fair and transparent way that would not lead anyone to reasonably assume they are not doing so.

Staff working in one to one situations with pupils are more vulnerable to allegations. Staff must recognise this possibility and plan and conduct accordingly.

If staff members and pupils must spend time on a one-to-one basis, staff will ensure that:

- This takes place in a public place that others can access
- Others can see in to the room
- A colleague or line manager knows this is taking place

Staff should avoid contact alone with pupils, if possible.

If a staff member is concerned at any point that an interaction between themselves and a pupil may be misinterpreted, this should be reported to the Headteacher.

Transporting Pupils

Staff should not regularly transport pupils in their own vehicles. In some cases where alternative transport is unavailable, authorisation must be obtained from their parent/guardian and the Headteacher or other senior colleague with delegated authority. We advise that where possible, staff are not alone with a pupil and that the pupil travels in a rear passenger seat. Adults should ensure that their behaviour is safe and that the transport arrangements and the vehicle meet all legal requirements. They must ensure that the vehicle is roadworthy and appropriately insured and that the maximum capacity is not exceeded.

Educational Visits and After-School Activity

Staff should take particular care when supervising pupils in the less formal atmosphere of an educational visit, particularly in a residential setting, or after-school activity. Staff remain in a position of trust and the same standards of conduct apply. The schools have a policy on Educational Visits which forms part of this Code of Conduct.

Photography, Videos and other Creative Arts

Many school activities involve recording images. These may be undertaken as part of the curriculum, extra school activities, for publicity, or to celebrate achievement. The Data Protection Act 2018 affects the use of photography. An image of a child is personal data and it is, therefore, a requirement under the Act that consent is

obtained from the parent of a child for any images made such as those used by school websites, productions or other purposes.

Using images of pupils for publicity purposes will require the age-appropriate consent of the individual concerned and their legal guardians. Images must not be displayed on websites/social media in publications or in a public place without such consent. The definition of a public place includes areas where visitors to the school have access. Consent should be recorded and it is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to provide this information.

When using a photograph/videos the following guidance must be followed:

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

Acceptable Use of Technology and Electronic Communication

The Schools have a separate policy on internet use, electronic communication and security which forms part of this Code of Conduct.

Under no circumstances should adults in the school access inappropriate images, view material that is illegal, inappropriate or likely to be deemed as offensive. This includes, but is not limited to, sending obscene emails, gambling and viewing inappropriate content - this could lead to disciplinary sanctions and may be a criminal offence. Accessing indecent images of children on the internet, and making, storing or disseminating such material, is illegal and is likely to lead to criminal prosecution and may result in barring from work with children and young people.

The trust retains the right to monitor emails and internet use on the school's IT system.

Sharing Concerns and Recording Incidents

All staff must be vigilant and share concerns and report incidents. Whistle blowing is the mechanism by which staff can voice their concerns, made in good faith, without fear of repercussion. The following “Red Flag Behaviours” give indications of the kind of situations which should be shared with the Headteacher or Chair of Governors. An adult who:

- Allows a pupil to be treated badly; pretends not to know it is happening.
- Gossips/shares information inappropriately.
- Demonstrates inappropriate discriminatory behaviour and/or uses inappropriate language.
- Dresses in a way which is inappropriate for the job role.
- Does not treat pupils fairly – demonstrates favouritism.
- Demonstrates a lack of understanding about personal and professional boundaries.
- Uses his/her position of trust to intimidate, threaten, coerce or undermine.
- Appears to have an inappropriate, special or different relationship with a pupil or pupils.
- Seems to seek out unnecessary opportunities to be alone with a pupil.

Child Safeguarding Competencies are necessary for staff and volunteers who work with Children and Young People

Emotional Awareness

- Aware of the range of emotions in self and others.
- Demonstrates empathy for the concerns of others.
- Listens to and understands directly and indirectly expressed feelings.
- Encourages others to express themselves openly.
- Manages strong emotions and responds constructively to the source of problems.
- Listens to personal comments without becoming defensive.
- In highly stressful situations, keeps own feelings in check, takes constructive action and calms others down.
- Has a range of mechanisms for dealing with stress, can recognise when to use them and does so.
- Shows respect for others’ feelings, views and circumstances.



Working within Professional Boundaries

- Demonstrates professional curiosity.
- Accepts responsibility and accountability for own work and can define the responsibilities of others.
- Recognises the limits of own authority within the role.
- Seeks and uses professional support appropriately.
- Understands the principle of confidentiality.

Ability to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people

- Appreciates the significance of safeguarding and interprets this accurately for all individual pupils whatever their life circumstances.
- Has a good understanding of the safeguarding agenda, including prevent.
- Can demonstrate an ability to contribute towards a safe environment.
- Is up-to-date with legislation and current events.
- Can demonstrate how s/he has promoted 'best practice'.
- Shows a personal commitment to safeguarding children.

Staff should also refer to the relevant school **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**.

Signature CEO :	
Signature Chair of Trust Board :	
Date :	06/10/2021