



Code of Conduct for Staff Working in the Trust

Member of Staff Responsible	HR Manager
Relevant guidance/advice/legal reference	DfE Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) Shropshire Council Local Authority
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This policy has been agreed by the following professional associations and Trade Unions representing Teachers, Headteachers and Support Staff:

- National Education Union
- National Associations of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers
- National Association of Head Teachers
- Unison
- GMB

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Code of Conduct for Staff Working in The Trust

1. Introduction

The vision for The 3-18 Education Trust is that every child is in a great school and as such its teachers and support staff set the highest standards for the educational provision and achievement across the Trust. With this, we expect all our staff to grow as professionals and to exercise professional conduct at all times.

The word 'professional' is used deliberately to remind staff that by working across the trust and/or in a school, your conduct is a reflection of you, your school and your profession. It is a profession we are rightly proud of, and we protect and enhance its reputation by our conduct as professionals within it.

The Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all students/pupils in its care and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

All Trust staff (whether employed, working on a casual basis, agency staff or volunteering) have personal, professional and legal responsibilities, including treating others with dignity and respect, acting honestly, using public funds and school equipment appropriately, adhering to health and safety guidelines and safeguarding students/pupils at all times. The law recognises that staff act in *loco parentis* in respect of students/pupils in their charge and must act in the role of replacement parent in the school context. Individuals are expected to make decisions or take action in the best interests and welfare of the students/pupils in their charge.

The code of conduct sets out:

- the minimum required standards of behaviour that are required for any individual working in any capacity in any of the Trust's Schools or offices
- the principal areas and responsibilities that any individual working in any capacity in any Trust school or offices need to be aware of when working in any Trust School or offices and the parameters of the framework for appropriate and safe behaviour
- the possible outcome of non-compliance with the code of conduct

2. Roles and Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the Trustees to monitor and review the effectiveness of its policies and to be familiar with the statutory safeguarding guidance.

It is the responsibility of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and the Headteacher within the Trust's schools to ensure that structures are in place to support the effective implementations of this code of conduct and to monitor standards of professional behaviour. The CEO and Headteacher should also be familiar with all policies including safeguarding and other statutory guidance that underpin expected behaviours, referred to throughout the code of conduct.

Employees, casual workers, agency staff, volunteers, work experience and interns should ensure they are familiar with all Trust policies including safeguarding and statutory guidance that underpin expected professional behaviours, referred to throughout the code of conduct, and should be made available by the Headteacher within each school.

3. Scope

This code of conduct refers to all staff including employees, casual workers, volunteers, work experience and interns. Contractors and agency staff will be expected to follow the spirit of this code in their professional dealings with the provision of services to the Trust.

4. General Principles (10 Expectations of Professional Conduct)

Staff and those working in the Trust will:

1. Show good manners, courtesy towards others and uphold the reputation of the Trust – this will reflect upon our pupils/students. Conduct relating to pupils/students, staff, those working in the Trust and partners in education is therefore expected to meet the role-model ethos of the Trust, and should be exemplary.
2. Form appropriate relationships with members of the school community based on mutual trust and respect, by treating pupils/students and staff with respect, dignity and equally. This includes exercising appropriate authority when students display challenging behaviour. Staff must always consider whether their actions are warranted, proportionate, safe and equitable in their application.
3. Ensure contact and communication with pupils/students takes place within clear and explicit professional boundaries.
4. Contribute to the learning and development of both pupils/students and staff by providing accurate and constructive comments when assessing performance.
5. Use appropriate channels to raise concerns about the behaviour, practice or welfare of others if it has a negative impact on any aspect of Trust community.
6. Have regard for the need to safeguard pupils/students well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions and local procedures.
7. Celebrate the diversity and challenge prejudice, in accordance with statutory provisions and local procedures, within our Trust community
8. Have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks which set out our professional duties and responsibilities.
9. Take responsibility for understanding and complying with national guidelines and legislation and Trust Policies relating to equality of opportunity, inclusion, and bullying and harassment.
10. Ensure that our conduct (at work or outside) and appearance at work whilst representing the Trust, reflects positively on the Trust and maintains the dignity of the Trust community. Be mindful that students have a uniform and they are required to follow and adhere to the expectations that a uniform brings. Staff must be mindful that, whilst in the employment of the Trust, all of our expectations apply, and this includes after school hours, weekends and holiday time.

5. Specific Principles

COVID 19 PRINCIPLES (Extra section inserted from September 2020)

All school staff should:

- Adhere to the requirements as identified in the school risk assessment and communications from your school, which may be subject to change following update government guidance.

5.1 Safeguarding Students/Pupils

All staff have a duty to safeguard students/pupils from all forms of:

- Abuse
- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse and
- Neglect

Safeguarding and promoting welfare of children is defined in Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) 2018 as: “protecting children from maltreatment; preventing impairment of children’s health or development; ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and taking action to enable children to have the best outcomes.”

Under KCSiE and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 staff have a duty to report concerns about a pupil to the Schools Designated Safeguarding Lead. Safeguarding responsibility applies to all who have contact with children. It must be child centered, concerns identified early and help provided to prevent concerns escalating.

The Schools Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) at the school will be confirmed to you and the School's DSL information is permanently and prominently displayed in the school office/reception area and staff room.

Staff must be familiar with the Trust's Child Protection Policy, Whistleblowing Policy and E-Safety Policy. All staff must take reasonable care of the students/pupils under their supervision with the aim of ensuring their safety and welfare.

Low-Level Concerns

All staff have a duty to also identify low-level concerns, which is any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' - that an adult working in or on behalf of the school or college may have acted in a way that:

- is inconsistent with this code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work; and;
- does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:

- being over friendly with children;
- having favourites;
- taking photographs of children on their mobile phone;
- engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door; or,
- using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language.

Such behaviour can exist on a wide spectrum, from the inadvertent or thoughtless, or behaviour that may look to be inappropriate, but might not be in specific circumstances, through to that which is ultimately intended to enable abuse.

It is crucial that a culture of openness and transparency is present within all schools across the Trust and any such concerns, including those which do not meet the harm threshold (the harm test is explained on the Disclosure and Barring service website on GOV.UK. Section 31(9) of the Children Act 1989 as amended by the Adoption and Children Act 2002) are shared responsibly and with the DSL, and recorded and dealt with appropriately. Ensuring they are dealt with effectively should also protect those working in or on behalf of schools and colleges from potential false allegations or misunderstandings.

5.2 Physical Contact

There are occasions where it is entirely appropriate and proper for staff to have physical contact with students/pupils, but it is crucial that they only do so in ways appropriate to their professional role. The general culture of 'limited touch' should be adapted where appropriate to the individual requirements of each pupil. Students/pupils with special needs may require more physical contact to assist with their everyday learning. The arrangements should be understood and agreed by all concerned, justified in terms of the pupil's needs, recorded, consistently applied and open to scrutiny.

There may be times when a distressed pupil needs comfort and reassurance. This may include age appropriate physical contact. Staff should remain self-aware at all times to ensure that their contact is not threatening, intrusive, or subject to misinterpretation. Where a member of staff has a concern about the need to provide this type of care and reassurance they should speak to the DSL.

Staff should be aware that even good intentioned physical contact may be misconstrued by the pupil, an observer or by anyone to whom this action is described. A pupil must never be touched in a way that may

be considered indecent. Any sexual behaviour by a member of staff with or towards a pupil is unacceptable. Horseplay, tickling or fun fights with students/pupils must never take place. Staff should always be aware that they should be prepared to explain actions and accept that all physical contact be open to scrutiny.

5.3 Disclosure of social contact

Staff may have genuine friendships and social contact with parents of students/pupils, independent of the professional relationship. Staff should, however, also be aware that professionals who sexually harm children often seek to establish relationships and contact outside of the workplace with both the child and their parents, in order to 'groom' the adult and the child and/or create opportunities for sexual abuse. Staff should protect themselves from risk of a situation being misconstrued by making the School's DSL aware of any social contact with students/pupils or their parents. Furthermore, they should advise senior leaders of any regular social contact they have with a pupil which could give rise to concern and refrain from sending personal communication to students/pupils or parents unless agreed with senior leaders.

5.4 Pupil Development

Staff must comply with policies and procedures which support the wellbeing and development of students/pupils. All staff have a responsibility to co-operate and collaborate with colleagues and external agencies where necessary to support the development of students/pupils. Reasonable instructions which support the development of students/pupils should be followed.

5.5 Intimate Care

All students/pupils have the 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 must be drawn up, negotiated and agreed with parents/carers and the school and recorded for all students/pupils who require intimate care on a regular basis.

Students/pupils should be encouraged to act as independently as possible and to undertake as much of their own personal care as is practicable. When assistance is required, staff should ensure that there is another adult in the vicinity and that they are aware of the task to be undertaken. Any deviations from the agreed care plan must be justified and recorded and the parent/carer informed.

Additional vulnerabilities that may arise from a physical disability or learning difficulty should be considered regarding individual Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP) for each child.

5.6 Transporting Students/Pupils

In certain situations, e.g. out of school activities, staff or volunteers may agree to transport students/pupils. A designated member of staff should have responsibility for planning and arranging all transport arrangements and to respond to any difficulties which may arise. The nature of the journey, route, and expected time of arrival should be discussed with the driver and recorded. The School's Educational Visits Coordinator (EVC) will sign off on all trips and travel arrangements to make sure they comply with all legislation and good practice.

Where possible and practical it is advisable that transport (ideally not in private vehicles) is provided and more than one adult is present. The designated member of staff should ensure that the vehicle is roadworthy, insured appropriately and ensure the maximum capacity is not exceeded and that the appropriate driving licence checks have been carried out. These checks are designed to ensure passenger, driver and vehicle safety. Each school will provide additional Guidelines for Educational Visits and Journeys to help ensure each school and the Trust with accurate record keeping.

5.7 Educational Visits, Residential Trips and Before/After School Clubs

Staff should be familiar with the school's guidelines on educational visits for detailed guidance on health and safety and safeguarding during visits.

During school activities that take place off the school site or out of school hours a more relaxed discipline or informal dress code may be acceptable. However, staff must 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. At least two members of staff should always be present, unless the Headteacher has agreed alternative arrangements. A risk assessment must be undertaken and parental consent must be given for their pupil to participate in the activity.

A responsible attitude to the consumption of alcohol by staff is a necessity. If staff are responsible for pupils/students i.e. on duty at a school trip or a residential or working with pupils/students out of hours e.g. school musical, then staff are not permitted to consume alcohol.

5.8 Photography, Videos and Creative Arts

Many school activities involve recording images including images of students/pupils. These may be undertaken as part of the curriculum, extra school activities, for publicity or to celebrate achievement. Images must only be taken on school equipment, never on personal equipment.

Staff must be aware of the potential for these to be misused for pornographic or 'grooming' purposes. Careful consideration should be given to how these activities are organised and undertaken.

Students/pupils who have previously been abused in this way may feel threatened by the use of photography or filming in a teaching environment. Staff should remain sensitive to any pupil who appears uncomfortable and should recognise the potential for misinterpretation.

Using images of students/pupils for publicity purposes will require consent from parent/carer. Images must not appear in a public place without such consent. A public place includes areas of the school where visitors have access. A list is shared with staff regarding photographic consent annually.

5.9 IT and Social Media

Electronic communication opens up opportunities for learning but may also put students/pupils at risk through cyber-bullying, grooming or plagiarism amongst others. Staff should comply with the Trust's E-safety Policy with regards to their acceptable online behaviour, their use of ICT equipment in school and acceptable levels of communication between students/pupils and adults to ensure there are clear and explicit professional boundaries.

Additionally, staff should be mindful that their personal views shared on social media may have a negative impact or discredit their employment with the Trust or may affect the reputation or standing of the Trust, or other members of the Trust community. Staff should raise any concerns with the Headteacher directly rather than on social media. Staff should refer to the Trusts' E-safety Policy for specific guidance relating to their responsibilities surrounding social media.

5.9.1 Under no circumstances should staff have their mobile phone or personal device on their desk or on display in the classroom, unless specific permission has been given by the Headteacher.

Staff should refer to the Trust's policy on acceptable use of electronic devices and E-Safety Policy for specific guidance relating to their responsibilities with regards to use of mobile phones/electronic devices.

Deviation from the above policies may bring into question their suitability to work with children and young people and may result in disciplinary action being taken against them.

5.9.2 Advice on e-mailing parents/carers

Staff should avoid using their own staff e-mail address when contacting parents/carers and whenever possible, should use the telephone or central email address. At the discretion of the individual member

of staff, they may choose to use their own staff email address, however, this should be carefully managed and they must consider that the use of their own staff email may open up further, sustained conversation that must be managed carefully. For example;

- Timing - sending and receiving e-mails in the evening or over the weekend may become an expectation, which is to be avoided as far as possible.
- Content - if you are intending to send images, or sharing challenging content, both of which may cause a reaction, please seek the advice of your line manager/SLT.

Using the telephone is preferable to e-mail. You may wish to write formally (e-mail is less formal, by definition). Such formality is increasingly rare and preserves a time-honoured professional distance. It also provides for further dialogue, but not via the instantaneous nature of e-mail. Should a member of staff receive content that they consider inappropriate, please refer this to a member of SLT.

Staff should never communicate to parents/carers with their personal phone number or email address.

5.9.3 Use of social media when absent from work on grounds of sickness

When absent from work through sickness, care must be given to the use of social media and the perception of this from other members of staff who continue to be at work. This is most notable for those members of staff for whom your absence may have a direct impact, for example increased workload.

When absent from work, if there is a clear discrepancy between the member of staff's ill health and what the image portrays, for example if they are signed off with a musculoskeletal disorder and their posts suggest they are out dancing or rock climbing, then the genuineness of absence will be investigated and could result in disciplinary action.

5.10 Honesty and Integrity

High levels of honesty and integrity are expected from all Trust staff. This includes the handling and claiming of money and the use of school property and facilities. Staff must be mindful that the Trust uses public money which must be spent considerately.

- **Contracted Hours of Work**
All hours which are contracted and paid must be worked effectively. Additional hours must be approved by the line manager prior to being worked and being claimed for payment.
- **Use of school materials and equipment**
Staff must not make personal use of materials and equipment provided for school use (such as stationery, photocopier, vehicles, etc.) unless authorised by the Headteacher. Computers and software may only be used in line with Trust's IT Policy.
- **Handling money**
When handling money, receipts should be issued to the payee. Clear records of the money paid in or out of the school should be maintained, which are evidenced by receipts and invoices.
- **Disposal of school property**
The Trust has a procedure for selling or disposing surplus equipment. If staff wish to acquire any item of equipment, they must inform their Headteacher. If the Headteacher wishes to acquire any item of property they should inform the CEO.

If as part of an individual's role they are required to deal with the disposal of surplus property, and they wish to acquire an item either for their own use or for any organisation or body in which they have an interest, they must inform their Headteacher or the CEO before the disposal procedure has started and they must have no further dealings in the disposal of that item.

It is essential that staff are not given, or seem to be given, any preferential treatment.

5.11 Attendance and Punctuality

Staff must be punctual for the start and end of the day, for meetings, lessons (start and end) and other arranged school events, if required to be present. Teaching staff are always encouraged within reason, to be on site beyond the hours included in the "1265 agreement". The guidelines for directed time are reviewed and published annually.

If the weather conditions are extreme, then staff are expected to make every reasonable effort to attend work. If staff are unable to attend but a decision is taken by the Headteacher to keep the school open this absence will be unpaid. Staff will be informed via a school communication about whether the school is open or closed.

In the event of a member of staff wishing to leave the school site during curriculum time, permission should be sought from the Headteacher, or in their absence, one of the SLT. In the event of a member of staff wishing to leave the school site during PPA time, the Headteacher or a member of SLT should be informed on every occasion. Staff must inform the school office of your departure for health and safety purposes on all occasions.

Any planned absence must be agreed with the Headteacher (who reserves the right to refuse permission or grant permission as unpaid leave) in line with the Special Leave Policy.

5.12 Confidentiality

In carrying out their roles, staff may acquire information which has not been made public, or is confidential.

Where staff have access to confidential information about students/pupils or parents/carers, staff must not reveal this except to colleagues who have a professional role in relation to the pupil. In circumstances where the identity of the students/pupils does not need to be disclosed the information should be used anonymously. Information should be treated in a discrete and confidential manner.

There are some circumstances when a member of staff will be expected to share information about a pupil, such as when abuse is alleged or suspected. The member of staff has a duty to pass this information on to the DSL without delay.

Additionally, confidential information relating to colleagues, events which occur within the School/Trust or the School/Trust in general, should not be passed to anyone not entitled to receive it, nor posted on any public forum, or social media sites.

If a member of staff is in any doubt whether to share information or keep it confidential guidance should be sought from a senior member of staff. Any media or legal queries should be passed to the Headteacher or CEO.

Under the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) 2018, the Trust must record any breaches of confidentiality and in certain cases report the breach to the Information Commissioner. Failure of Trust staff to observe the requirements of confidentiality and/or the Trust's Data Protection Policy may constitute gross misconduct and could lead to dismissal without notice.

5.13 Conduct Outside Work

All Trust staff are expected to show the highest possible standard of behaviour to students/pupils in and out of school. Care should be taken not to undermine public confidence in any way.

Although off duty hours are a personal concern, work and private interests must not conflict. Where this may occur a discussion with the Headteacher should take place to ensure the appropriate action is taken.

Staff must notify their Headteacher immediately of any police investigation, charge, caution or reprimand, fine or conviction. This information will be treated in confidence, but may result in suspension, investigation and disciplinary action, including dismissal. Criminal convictions that involve violence, possession or use of illegal drugs or sexual misconduct are likely to be viewed as unacceptable.

Staff may undertake paid or voluntary work outside of the Trust, provided that it does not conflict with the interests of the Trust or their performance at school. Activities including lectures, private tuition, publications or television/radio appearances should be notified to the Headteacher in advance if they relate to the activities of the School or Trust

5.14 Health and Safety

Staff must act in accordance with the duty of care to ensure their own safety and welfare and that of students/pupils, colleagues and visitors at all times. It is not acceptable to attend work whilst under the influence of alcohol or any substance, including prescribed medicine, which may affect their ability to care for students/pupils or carry out their duties.

All schools and offices within the Trust are non-smoking sites and staff and contractors are not permitted to smoke on site.

Each Trust School should have the required number of trained First Aiders and Fire Wardens. Accidents and near misses must always be reported in the Accident Reporting book – as a near miss may develop into a serious incident. Members of staff should refer to their school's Health and Safety Policy.

5.15 Dress and Appearance

Dress and appearance must be of a professional nature appropriate to the member of staff's role, the activities they are involved with and health and safety requirements related to these. The manner of dress and appearance should not cause offence, be revealing or sexually provocative, distract or cause embarrassment or give rise to misunderstanding or be considered discriminatory.

Personal protective equipment must be worn where a risk assessment has indicated that it is appropriate.

5.16 Relationships at Work

Any personal relationship between staff must not be reflected in their professional relationship at school or across the Trust. Utmost discretion is required between staff in this respect.

5.17 Staff who are Parents at the School

The decision, by any member of staff, to choose any of the schools in the Trust for their children brings a responsibility for the manner in which staff (who are parents) engage with the school. Staff must be mindful of expressing their opinion/asking questions of other staff about their son/daughter's achievement, progress, behaviour in school. To avoid any compromised situations, and wherever possible, it is hoped that the partner of the member of staff will communicate with the school about their children. Where this is not possible, staff must exercise caution when discussing their children with other staff. Staff who are parents should only approach other staff with opportunities for praise.

In particular, staff who are parents of students/pupils at the Trust should:

- Not use information gained only as a member of staff to influence any part of their dialogue with school
- Must act in a professional manner to their colleagues when decisions are taken about their children with which they disagree.

5.18 Personal Living Accommodation

Staff should never invite students/pupils to their living accommodation

5.19 Contractors and Suppliers

Orders and contracts must be awarded on merit, by fair competition against other tenders, and no special favour should be shown to businesses run by, for example, friends, partners or relatives in the tendering process. No part of the local community should be discriminated against or favoured.

Staff who engage contractors/suppliers, supervise contractors or have any other official relationship with contractors/suppliers and have previously had or currently have a relationship in a private or domestic capacity with contractors/suppliers should declare that relationship to the Headteacher or the CEO.

Staff should also tell their Headteacher or CEO if they, or a close relative, have a large number of shares in a Company with which it is likely that the school or Trust will be dealing and the investment recorded. This only applies where they have, or may reasonably be thought to have, a role on behalf of the School/Trust in selecting the source of supply or the quantity or specification of the goods or services of that company. It does not apply where they have invested some money in a relatively small number of shares (normally not exceeding a market value from time to time of £5,000 in a large company with which the Trust is doing business) (or in a small company where an individual's shareholding represents 20% or more of the company's equity).

If staff fail to disclose a private pecuniary interest in a contract with the School or Trust they may be committing a criminal offence.

Staff involved with the tendering process and dealing with contractors should be clear on the separation of client and contractor roles within the School/Trust. Staff must be aware of the need for accountability and openness.

5.20 Gifts and Inducements

- **Gifts from parents & students/pupils**

It is unacceptable for staff to receive gifts on a regular basis or to accept any gift of significant value (£30+) from parents and/or students/pupils. Such offer should be discussed with the Headteacher or CEO prior to acceptance. Small inexpensive items such as flowers or chocolates may be accepted however.

- **Gifts to students/pupils**

The giving of gifts or rewards to students/pupils by school staff should be part of an agreed policy or plan recorded and discussed with the Headteacher or CEO and the parent/carer of the pupil.

Staff should not accept significant personal gifts from contractors and/or outside suppliers, although insignificant items of token value, such as pens or diaries, are acceptable.

- **Hospitality**

Staff should only accept hospitality from students/pupils/parents or carers or actual or potential contractors/suppliers (e.g. visits, meals, sporting events) if there is a genuine reason to impart information or represent the school or Trust in the local community. Offers of hospitality should be authorised by the Headteacher or CEO and recorded before being accepted, even if staff choose to pay to attend the activity themselves. Refusal by staff to attend should also be recorded.

- **Sponsorship**

Where an outside organisation wishes to sponsor or is seeking to sponsor a School/Trust, whether by invitation, tender, negotiation or voluntarily, the basic conventions concerning acceptance of gifts or hospitality apply. Care must be taken when dealing with contractors/suppliers or potential contractors/suppliers.

Where the School/Trust wishes to sponsor an event or service, neither staff nor any relative or those in a close personal relationship must benefit from such sponsorship, either directly or indirectly, without there being full disclosure to the Headteacher or the CEO of any such interest. Similarly, where the School/Trust through sponsorship, grant aid, financial or other means, gives support in the community, staff should ensure that impartial advice is given and that there is no conflict of interest involved.

- **Personal Purchases**

Caution should be exercised when for their personal use staff buy goods or use the services of suppliers which they know have dealings with the School/Trust.

Staff should not accept prices or terms for such goods or services which they believe may have been reduced for them personally because of the supplier's dealings with the School/Trust, similarly, they should not seek such reductions.

Staff should be aware that it is a serious criminal offence to corruptly receive or give any gift, loan, fee, reward or advantage as an inducement to act in a certain way in their professional capacity. If an allegation is made, staff must be able to prove that any such reward has not been corruptly obtained.

5.21 Recruitment and Employment Decisions

Staff involved in appointments should ensure that their decisions are based on merit. To avoid any possible accusation of bias, staff should not be involved in an appointment where they are related to the applicant, or have a close personal relationship. Similarly, staff should not be involved with decisions relating to discipline, promotion, or pay adjustments for any relative or those in a close personal relationship. Members of staff who are relatives, or have a close personal relationship, should not normally have a supervisory, assessing or authorising relationship with each other, queries should be directed to the Headteacher or the CEO. If it is unavoidable, you must not use the relationship to influence or advance the interests of that member of staff.

Only the Headteacher, CEO or person with delegated responsibility may issue a reference for any member of staff, past or present, if the reference is to be an official work reference given on headed paper on behalf of the School/ Trust.

This does not preclude a member of staff giving a reference for any other member of staff, past or present, providing the reference makes it clear that the views are those of the author in a private capacity and are not related to their work at the School/Trust.

6 Compliance with the Code of Conduct

The **Disciplinary Procedure** may be enacted if there is any breach of the code of practice which could result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. It is therefore very important that staff read, understand and adhere to this code. The Disciplinary Procedure exists to deal with those situations where procedures and policies have not been followed or expectations of a standard of behaviour have not been met. It is designed, wherever possible, to encourage improved conduct informally, however where cases are more serious the formal process will be followed.

Where staff are accused of abuse, neglect, physical, emotional or sexual abuse of students/pupils, the Trust's 'Allegations of Abuse against Staff in the Trust' document should be followed.

Volunteers, contractors, casual and agency staff who breach the code may be requested to cease working at the Trust.

This code cannot cover every problem which may occur. If in doubt, the Headteacher or CEO should be consulted before taking action.

Whistleblowing is the mechanism for staff to voice their concerns, made in good faith, without fear of repercussion. Staff have a duty and responsibility to bring matters of concern to the attention of the senior leaders and/or external agencies. This is particularly important where the welfare of students/pupils may be at risk. The Whistleblowing Policy is available to staff who believe that inappropriate behaviour has occurred.

The Capability Procedure supports the Trust to deal with issues of capability and performance in a fair and consistent way and at the earliest possible stage, whilst the employee continues to carry out their role. This is achieved by making the employee aware of any performance which falls below the required standards and encouraging, supporting, providing training and giving them an opportunity to improve.

Equalities; The Trust expects all staff to show consideration and respect to their colleagues, students/pupils, parents, carers, governors and members of the public and the local community and treat everyone with dignity and respect and not discriminate unlawfully against any person. The protected characteristics are:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief,
- sex
- sexual orientation.

The Trust will also not discriminate on the grounds of trade union membership or non-membership, part time or fixed term contract status and past unrelated convictions, caring responsibilities and will also support social inclusion.

The workplace should be a fair, inclusive and safe environment where diversity is valued. The Equality Policy contains further information.

Harassment and Bullying; All staff have a duty to help create an environment at work where unlawful discrimination, victimisation, harassment and bullying in any form is considered unacceptable and will not be tolerated. The Harassment and Bullying Policy provides further information.

8. Monitoring and Review

The HR Manager, in conjunction with the CEO, will monitor the outcomes and impact of this policy/procedure on an annual basis.

This procedure will be reviewed no later than 1 year by the HR Manager, in consultation with Trade Unions.