



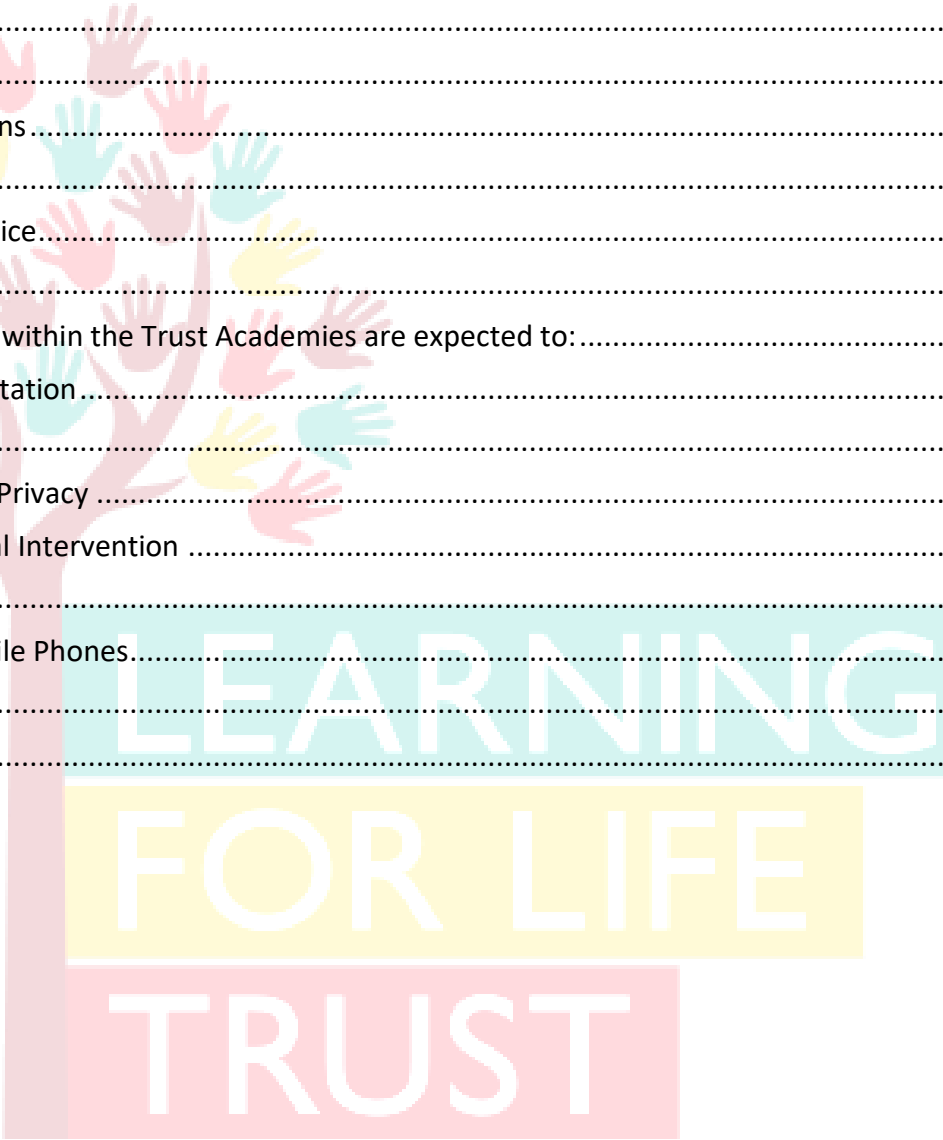
LEARNING  
FOR LIFE  
TRUST

# Staff Code of Conduct

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Contents

Introduction ..... 3
Definitions ..... 3
Making Professional Judgements ..... 4
General Standards and Expectations ..... 4
Dress Code ..... 4
Attendance and Punctuality ..... 4
Absence ..... 4
Management and Staff Relations ..... 5
Relationships with Pupils ..... 5
Principles of Professional Practice ..... 5
Confidentiality ..... 6
Staff and other adults working within the Trust Academies are expected to: ..... 6
Propriety, Behaviour and Reputation ..... 7
Social Contact ..... 8
Physical Contact and Personal Privacy ..... 9
The Use of Control and Physical Intervention ..... 9
Transporting Pupils ..... 10
Photography, Videos and Mobile Phones ..... 10
Whistle-blowing ..... 11
Keeping within the Law ..... 12



## Introduction

This Code of Conduct is designed to give clear guidance on the standards of behaviour all Trust employees and other adults working with children in our schools are expected to observe. Trust employees are role models and are in a unique position of influence and must adhere to behaviour that sets a good example to all the pupils within the school.

As a member of a school community, each employee has an individual responsibility to maintain their reputation and the reputation of the school/trust, whether inside or outside working hours. The Code of Conduct will also assist staff to monitor their own standards and practice and reduce the risk of allegations being made against them.

It is recognised that not all people who work with children at this school/trust are paid or contracted employees. The principles and guidance outlined in this document still apply and should be followed by any person whose work brings them into contact with children including volunteers. This Code of Conduct does not form any part of any employee's contract of employment.

In addition to this Code of Conduct, all employees engaged to work under Teachers' Terms and Conditions of Employment have a statutory obligation to adhere to the 'Teachers' Standards 2012' and in relation to this Code of Conduct, Part 2 of the Teachers' Standards- Personal and Professional Conduct.

All staff have a responsibility to be aware of systems and practices in school which support safeguarding and these are outlined as part of the induction process for all staff and regular volunteers.

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

Achieving these aims is not always straightforward, as much relies on child and staff interactions where tensions and misunderstandings can occur. This document aims to reduce the risks of these.

Unacceptable behaviour by adults in this school will not be tolerated, and where appropriate, legal or disciplinary action is likely to follow such behaviour. Once adopted, this document may be referred to in any disciplinary proceedings following unacceptable actions by staff or other adults.

## Definitions

References made to 'child' and 'children' refer to children and young people under the age of 18 years. For the purposes of this document, 'Child' should be read to mean **any pupil** at the setting/within the Trust.

References made to employees, adults and staff refer to all those who work with pupils in this Trust, in either a paid or unpaid capacity. This will include, for example, volunteers and those who are not directly employed by the Trust e.g. Local Authority staff, sports coaches, independent supply staff and agency staff.

Wherever the term 'parent' is used, this includes any person with parental authority of the child concerned, e.g. carers, legal guardians etc.

The term 'allegation' means where it is alleged that a person who works with children has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may harmed a child;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or in relation to a child; or

- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children.

## Making Professional Judgements

This Code of Conduct does not provide an exhaustive list of what is, or is not, appropriate behaviour for staff. It does however, highlight behaviour, which is illegal, inappropriate or inadvisable. There will be rare occasions and circumstances in which staff have to make decisions or take action in the best interest of a pupil which could contravene this Code of Conduct or where no specific guidance exists. Individuals are expected to make judgements about their behaviour in order to secure the best interests and welfare of the children in their charge and, in doing so, will be seen to be acting reasonably. These judgements must be recorded and shared with a manager at the earliest opportunity.

Adults should always consider whether their actions are warranted, proportionate, safe and applied equitably.

Where no specific guidance exists, staff and other adults are expected to:

- discuss the concerns that informed their action, or their proposed action, with their line manager or, where appropriate, the DSL. This will help to ensure that the safest practices are employed to reduce the risk of actions being misinterpreted;
- always discuss any misunderstanding, accidents or threats with the Academy Head teacher or DSL;
- always record discussions and actions taken with their justifications;
- record any areas of disagreement, and, if necessary, refer to another agency/LA/Ofsted/TRA/other Regulatory Body.

## General Standards and Expectations

### Dress Code

It is important that all staff dress in a smart and professional manner, which is appropriate for the kinds of activities undertaken and with due regard to health and safety issues. Staff are role models to pupils and also to those who choose to undertake training in our setting and should therefore demonstrate the professional nature of our work and appearance. Those who dress or appear in a manner which could render themselves vulnerable to criticism or allegations of misconduct.

### Attendance and Punctuality

Be on site and available for work no later than 8.20am, and leave no earlier than 3.45pm (**unless specified as such in your contract**).

### Absence

In the event of absence, inform the nominated academy staff member (Fairfield: Mr. J. Gale) no later than 7.15am if you are unable to attend work so as to allow sufficient time for a colleague to cover your responsibilities.

Inform the nominated staff member by 3.30pm if you are unavailable for work for a second day each consecutive day thereafter to allow for cover to be established.

Expectations are that:

- staff attend work in accordance with your contract of employment and associated terms and conditions in relation to hours, days of work and holidays
- wherever possible, you make routine medical and dental appointments outside of working hours or during holidays, except in the case of emergencies or to attend ante-natal appointments. In any event time should be agreed with the Head teacher or Deputy Headteacher.

- Any requests for special leave must be agreed with the Academy Head teacher.

## Management and Staff Relations

An atmosphere of mutual confidence, trust and respect between managers and staff is essential to achieving the aims and targets of the school and in providing a high quality teaching and learning environment. As a member of staff, the governors will expect that staff will:

- promote the school and Trust in a positive manner;
- work reliably and in accordance with the Trust/school's policies and procedures;
- carry out reasonable instructions given by line managers or the Head teacher or Deputy Head teacher;
- recognise their important role as part of a team and the positive impact of the team in achieving overall benefits for pupils.

As a manager:

- support and assist staff to carry out their duties effectively;
- provide feedback and advice to strive for excellence and high standards;
- ensure compliance with safe working practices;
- provide a safe and healthy working environment;
- provide a working environment free from discrimination and harassment.

## Relationships with Pupils

Staff are expected to:

- encourage the highest possible level of achievement for our pupils;
- value and respect all pupils equally regardless of gender, ethnicity, religion, belief, disability, special educational needs;
- treat all pupils in a polite, positive, respectful and considerate manner;
- act in accordance with the Trust's Safeguarding Policies;
- implement the planning for positive behaviour policy and set appropriate professional boundaries that promote self-discipline and self-esteem.

## Principles of Professional Practice

Staff are expected to:

- place the well-being and learning of pupils at the centre of their professional practice;
- seek to work in partnership with parents and carers, respecting their views and promoting understanding and co-operation to support pupil learning and well-being in and out of school;
- model those characteristics staff seek to instil in pupils, including enthusiasm for learning, a spirit of enquiry, honesty, tolerance, social responsibility, patience and a genuine concern for others;
- be able to reflect on own practice, develop own skills, knowledge and expertise and adapt appropriately to learn with and from colleagues both within and external to the school;
- have high expectations for all pupils, be committed to addressing underachievement and work to help pupils progress (narrowing the gap) regardless of their background or personal circumstances;
- all staff should adhere to the E-Safety Policy in relation to social networking sites and must refrain from discussing any matters relating to the school.

## Confidentiality

The storing and processing of personal information is governed by the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). The Academy Governors have a Data Protection Policy which contains details on confidentiality.

Staff who have access to confidential information about pupils and their families must keep this confidential at all times and only share this when legally permissible to do so and in the best interest of the child. Records should only be shared with those who have a legitimate professional need to see them.

Staff must never use confidential or personal information about a pupil or their family for their own, or other's advantage (including that of partners, friends, relatives or other organisations). Information must never be used to intimidate, humiliate or embarrass the child. Confidential information must never be used casually in conversation or shared with any person other than on a need to know basis. In circumstances where the pupil's identity does not need to be disclosed, the information will be used anonymously.

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 responsibility to pass information on without delay, but only to those with designated safeguarding responsibilities.

If a child (or their parent) makes a disclosure regarding abuse or neglect, the member of staff will follow the school's child protection procedures. The adult must not promise confidentiality to a child or parent, but should give reassurance that the information will be treated sensitively.

If a member is in any doubt about whether to share information or keep it confidential he/she should seek guidance from the DSL. Any media or legal enquiries will be passed to a senior manager.

### Staff and other adults working within the Trust Academies are expected to:

- know the name of the Designated Safeguarding Lead for the Academy (Fairfield – Mr J Gale);
- know how to access/be familiar with the Cumbria Safeguarding Children Board (SCB) procedures and guidance;
- treat information they receive about pupils and families in a discreet and confidential manner;
- seek advice from a senior member of staff (DSL) if they are in any doubt about sharing information they hold or which has been requested of them;
- be clear about when information can/must be shared and in what circumstances;
- know the procedures for responding to allegations against staff and to whom any concerns or allegations should be reported- Mr C Steele;
- know the procedures for responding to allegations made against the Head teacher- (Chair of Governors);
- ensure that where personal information is recorded using modern technologies that systems and devices are kept secure in accordance with the school Online/E Safety Policy and staff Acceptable Use Agreement.

## Propriety, Behaviour and Reputation

All staff have a responsibility to maintain public confidence in their ability to safeguard the welfare and best interests of pupils. High standards of personal conduct should be adopted in order to maintain the respect of pupils, colleagues and the public in general.

Staff must not engage in conduct outside work which could seriously damage the reputation and standing of the school or the employee's own reputation or the reputation of other members of the school community. In particular, criminal offences that involve violence or possession or use of illegal substances or sexual misconduct are likely to be regarded as unacceptable.

There may be times when an individual's actions or relationships/associations in their personal life come under scrutiny from the community, the media or public authorities, including with regard to their own children, or children or adults in the community. Staff should be aware that their behaviour, either in or out of the workplace, could compromise their position within the work setting in relation to the protection of children, loss of trust and confidence, or bringing the employer into disrepute. Such behaviour may also result in prohibition from teaching by the TRA, a bar from engaging in regulated activity, or action by another relevant regulatory body.

The Childcare (Disqualification) and Childcare (Early Years provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlements) (Amendments) Regulations 2018 set out the grounds for disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 where the person meets certain criteria set out in the Regulations. A disqualified person is prohibited from providing relevant early or later years, childcare as defined in the Childcare Act 2006 or being directly concerned in the management of such childcare. Schools and private childcare settings are also prohibited from employing a disqualified person in respect of relevant early or later years' childcare.

Although the legislation mainly applies to primary schools and those settings with early years pupils, Trustees, Governors and senior leaders recognise that we must endeavour to ensure that we create a culture and environment where staff feel comfortable, where it is appropriate, to discuss matters outside of work, which may have implications for the safeguarding of children in the workplace. These discussions can also help with the management of children's safety, providing information that will help them consider whether there are measures that need to be put in place to safeguard children (e.g. by putting arrangements in place to stop or restrict a person known to or living with a member of staff coming into school where a potential risk to children has been identified).

### **Staff and other adults in this Trust must not:**

- behave in a manner which would lead any reasonable person to question their suitability to work with children or to act as an appropriate role model;
- make, or encourage others to make sexual remarks to, or about, a pupil;
- use inappropriate language to, or in the presence of, pupils;
- discuss their personal or sexual relationships with, or in the presence of, pupils;
- make, or encourage others to make unprofessional personal comments which scapegoat, demean or humiliate, or might be interpreted as such;
- post activity online, either in or out of school, which would bring the school/Trust or professional role into disrepute;

### **In addition to the above, staff are expected to:**

- be aware that behaviour by themselves, those with whom they share a household, or others in their personal lives (including online), may impact on their work with children. Staff who have concerns about this are encouraged to discuss their concerns with the DSL or other senior leader in the first instance;



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

All adults working in school who have contact with pupils are in a position of trust. Staff are expected to be fully cognisant with the safeguarding policies of the school and undertake a minimum of level 1 safeguarding training and undertake the annual refresher course.

A relationship between a member of staff, a volunteer or a governor and a pupil cannot be a relationship of equals. There is potential for exploitation and harm of pupils and all adults have a responsibility to ensure that the unequal balance of power is not used for personal advantage or gratification.

There are occasions when pupils or parents wish to pass small tokens of appreciation to staff e.g. at Christmas or end of year, and this is acceptable. However, it is unacceptable to receive gifts on a regular basis of any significant value.

Personal gifts must not be given to pupils. This could be misinterpreted as a gesture to bribe or to single out an individual. Any reward to a pupil must be in line with the school's behaviour policy.

## Social Contact

It is acknowledged that staff may have genuine friendships and social contact with parents of 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 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.

It is also important to recognise that social contact may provide opportunities for other types of grooming such as for the purpose of sexual exploitation or radicalisation.

Staff should recognise that some types of social contact with pupils or their families could be perceived as harmful or exerting inappropriate influence on children, and may bring the setting into disrepute (e.g. attending a political protest, circulating propaganda).

If a pupil or parent seeks to establish social contact, or if this occurs coincidentally, the member of staff should exercise his/her professional judgement. This also applies to social contacts made through outside interests or the staff member's own family.

Some staff may, as part of their professional role, be required to support a parent. If that person comes to depend upon the staff member or seeks support outside of their professional role this should be discussed with senior management and where necessary referrals made to the appropriate support agency.

### **Staff and other adults in this Trust are expected to:**

- always approve any planned social contact with pupils or parents with senior colleagues, for example, when it is part of a reward scheme;
- advise senior management of any regular social contact they have with a pupil which could give rise to concern;
- refrain from sending personal communication to pupils or parents unless agreed with senior managers;
- ensure that where senior staff have agreed to an exchange of mobile phone numbers, for example for safety purposes on educational visits, the numbers **MUST** be deleted as soon as possible following the activity for which the agreement was gained;
- inform senior management of any relationship with a parent where this extends beyond the usual parent/professional relationship;



- ensure that they report to senior staff immediately any unwelcome written or visual communications from pupils, parents or others;
- inform senior management of any requests or arrangements where parents wish to use their services outside of the workplace e.g. babysitting, tutoring, etc.

## Physical Contact and Personal Privacy

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

Physical contact which occurs regularly with a pupil should be subject to agreed and open school policies e.g. Intimate Care Plans, Health Care Plans, Behaviour Management Plans.

### Staff and other adults in this Trust are expected to:

- be aware that even well-intentioned physical contact may be misconstrued by the pupil, and observer or any person to whom this action is described;
- never touch a pupil in a way which may be considered indecent;
- always be prepared to explain actions and accept that all physical contact is open to scrutiny;
- never indulge in horseplay or fun fights;
- always allow/encourage pupils, where able, to undertake self-care tasks independently;
- ensure the way they offer comfort to a distressed pupil is age appropriate;
- always tell a colleague when and how they offered comfort to a distressed pupil;
- establish the preferences of pupils;
- consider alternatives, where it is anticipated that a pupil might misinterpret or be uncomfortable with physical contact;
- always explain to the pupil the reason why contact is necessary and what form that contact will take;
- report and record situations which may give rise to concern;
- be aware of cultural or religious views about touching and be sensitive to issue of gender;

## The Use of Control and Physical Intervention

The law and guidance for schools states that adults may reasonably intervene to prevent a child 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.

Great care must be exercised in order that adults do not physically intervene in a manner which could be considered unlawful.

Staff are regularly acquainted with the Behaviour Policy and procedures. Where required, staff are trained in appropriate physical intervention techniques.

Under no circumstances will physical force be used as a form of physical punishment. The use of unwarranted or disproportionate physical force is likely to constitute a criminal offence. Where we judge that a child's behaviour presents a serious risk/threat to staff or others, we will put in place a robust risk assessment in the form of a

Behaviour Management Plan (BMP) which will be reviewed regularly. Where relevant this BMP will include a physical intervention plan.

In all cases where physical intervention has taken place, a record will be made of the incident and subsequent actions. We have a physical intervention recording system in place which all staff have access to. The Head teacher/other senior manager will regularly review the records.

Similarly, where it can be anticipated that physical intervention is likely to be required, a BMP will be put in place which both the pupil (where he/she has the skills and ability to understand the Plan) and parents are aware of and, have agreed to. Parental consent does not permit settings to use unlawful physical intervention or deprive a pupil of their liberty.

#### **Staff and other adults in this school are expected to:**

- adhere to the school's physical intervention procedures;
- always seek to defuse situations and avoid the use of physical intervention wherever possible;
- where physical intervention is necessary, only use minimum force and for the shortest time needed.

### **Transporting Pupils**

Wherever possible transport arrangements should be made in advance by a designated member of staff. Transport by a member of staff must meet the requirements outlined within the health and safety policy.

#### **Staff and other adults in this Trust are expected to:**

- plan and agree arrangements with all parties in advance (parent/carer consent required);
- respond 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 medication which is likely to impair judgement and/or ability to drive;
- ensure that if they need to be alone with a pupil that this is for the minimum time;
- be aware that the safety and welfare of the pupil is their responsibility until this is safely passed over to a parent;
- report the nature of the journey, the route and the expected time of arrival in accordance with agreed procedures;
- 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 the School procedures and national guidance for Educational visits.
- Ensure that appropriate insurance is in place and evidence is provided (See H&S Policy)
- Follow the procedures for the use of the school-owned transport (see local arrangements in line with H&S policy)

### **Photography, Videos and Mobile Phones**

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 1988 affects the use of photography. All staff are expected to check the school database to ascertain whether or not parental consent has been given for children to be the subject of images.

Staff need to be aware of the potential for images to be misused and pupils who have been abused in this way may feel threatened by the use of photography.

Staff mobile phones should be switched off/be on silent during teaching sessions, unless special consent has been issued by the Head teacher or Deputy Head teacher. Mobile phones with cameras should not be used to record pupil images or make recordings. Only school equipment should be used to capture pupil images (see the e-Safety Policy).

**Staff and other adults in our school are expected to:**

- adhere to the school's procedures on the 'Use of Images';
- only publish images of pupils where they and their parent have given explicit written consent to do so;
- only take images where the pupil is happy for them to do so;
- only retain images where there is a clear and agreed purpose for doing so;
- store images in an appropriate secure place in the school;
- ensure that the Head teacher or other senior member of staff is aware that the photography/image equipment is being used and for what purpose;
- be able to justify images of pupils in their possession;
- avoid making images in one-to-one situations;

**Staff and other adults must not:**

- take images of pupils for their personal use;
- take images of any individual in the school, unless they have permission to do so;
- display or distribute images of pupils unless they are sure that they have parental consent to do so (and, where appropriate, consent from the child);
- take images of children using personal equipment unless it is agreed by a senior manager;
- take images of children in a state of undress or semi-undress;
- take images of children which could be considered as indecent or sexual.

## Whistle-blowing

Most problems or concerns within the workplace can usually be easily resolved, often informally. Sometimes however it is necessary to follow the Trust's Grievance Procedure. Very occasionally more serious issues may arise that cause suspicion and the implementation of the Whistle-blowing policy.

The Whistle-blowing policy is a mechanism which enables staff to raise concerns in the proper manner and identify malpractice at an early stage. Staff concerns should be shared with a senior member of staff where any of the following examples are evident:

- allowing a pupil to be treated badly; pretends not to know it is happening;
- gossips/shares information appropriately (including on social networking sites);
- demonstrates inappropriate discriminatory behaviour and/or uses inappropriate language;
- dresses in way appropriate to the job role;
- does not treat pupils fairly/demonstrates favouritism;
- demonstrates a lack of understanding about personal professional boundaries;
- uses their position of trust to intimidate, threaten, coerce or undermine;
- appears to have an inappropriate social relationship with a pupil/s;
- appears to have a special or different relationship with a pupil/s;

- seeks to have unnecessary opportunities to be alone with a pupil.

### Keeping within the Law

Staff are expected to operate within the law. Unlawful or criminal behaviour, at work or outside work, may lead to disciplinary action, including a dismissal.

