



Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers

Applicable to:	✓	Astley Community High School
	✓	Seaton Sluice Middle School
	✓	Whytrig Middle School
Approval body:	Full Governing Body	

Status:

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Agreed to publish on school website	Yes

Review:

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Author	Creation Date	Version	Status
Business Manager (SH)	6 July 2016	0.1	Approved version based on NCC model policy (September 2013)
Changed by	Revision Date		
Business Manager (BW)	13 February 2018	0.2	Fully revised in line with updated NCC model policy (August 2017)
Business Manager (BW)	4 May 2018	1.0	Final approved version for distribution to staff
Business Manager (BW)	23 December 2019	1.1	Updated “HR Assistant” references to “HR Officer”
Business Director (BW)	15 July 2023	1.2	Fully rewritten in line with The Key model policy (June 2023)
Business Director (BW)	24 July 2023	2.0	Final approved version for distribution to staff

1 Aims, scope and principles

- 1.1 This policy aims to set and maintain standards of conduct that we expect all staff and volunteers (“staff”) to follow.
- 1.2 By creating this policy, we aim to ensure our federation is an environment where everyone is safe, happy and treated with respect.
- 1.3 Many of the principles in this code of conduct are based on the [Teachers’ Standards](#).
- 1.4 School staff have an influential position in the school and will act as role models for pupils by consistently demonstrating high standards of behaviour.
- 1.5 We expect that all teachers will act in accordance with the personal and professional behaviours set out in the Teachers’ Standards.
- 1.6 We expect all support staff to also act with personal and professional integrity, respecting the safety and wellbeing of others.
- 1.7 Our ethos is to know every child academically and pastorally as a complete young person; to treat everyone and everything with respect; and to strive for everyone to be as good as they can be and to be proud of doing well. All staff are required to do all they can to embody these principles.
- 1.8 Failure to follow this Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action being taken, as set out in the federation’s Disciplinary Policy.
- 1.9 It should be noted that this Code of Conduct is not exhaustive. If situations arise that are not covered by this code, staff will use their professional judgement and act in the best interests of the federation and its pupils.

2 Legislation and guidance

- 2.1 We are required to establish procedures for the regulation of staff conduct under regulation 7 of [The School Staffing \(England\) Regulations 2009](#).
- 2.2 In line with the statutory safeguarding guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#), we should have a staff code of conduct, which should cover low-level concerns, allegations against staff and whistle-blowing, as well as acceptable use of technologies (including the use of mobile devices), staff/pupil relationships and communications, including the use of social media.

3 General obligations

- 3.1 Staff set an example to pupils. They will:
 - maintain high standards in their attendance and punctuality
 - never use inappropriate or offensive language in school
 - treat pupils and others with dignity and respect
 - show tolerance and respect for the rights of others
 - 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
 - not express personal beliefs in a way that exploits pupils’ vulnerability or might lead them to break the law

- understand the statutory frameworks they must act within
- adhere to the Teachers' Standards

4 Safeguarding

- 4.1 Staff have a duty to safeguard pupils from harm, and to report any concerns they have. This includes physical, emotional and sexual abuse, and neglect.
- 4.2 Staff will familiarise themselves with the federation's Child Protection Policy and procedures, and the Prevent initiative, and ensure they are aware of the processes to follow if they have concerns about a child.
- 4.3 Our Child Protection Policy is available in hard copy on request, electronically on the Policies and Documents Google Shared Drive or on the federation's website. New staff will also be given copies on arrival.

Allegations That May Meet The Harm Threshold

- 4.4 This section applies to all cases in which it is alleged that anyone working in the federation, including a supply teacher, volunteer or contractor, has:
 - behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
 - possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
 - behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children
 - behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children - this includes behaviour taking place inside or outside of school
- 4.5 We will deal with any such allegation quickly and in a fair and consistent way that provides effective child protection while also supporting the individual who is the subject of the allegation.
- 4.6 A 'case manager' will lead any investigation. This will be the Executive Headteacher, or the Chair of Governors where the Executive Headteacher is the subject of the allegation.

Low-Level Concerns About Members of Staff

- 4.7 A low-level concern is a behaviour towards a child by a member of staff that does not meet the harm threshold, is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, and may be as simple as causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt'. For example, this may include:
 - being over-friendly with children
 - having favourites
 - taking photographs of children on a personal device
 - engaging in one-to-one activities where they can't easily be seen
 - humiliating pupils
- 4.8 Low-level concerns can include inappropriate conduct inside and outside of work.
- 4.9 All staff should share any low-level concerns they have using the reporting procedures set out in our Child Protection Policy. We also encourage staff to self-refer if they find themselves in a situation that could be misinterpreted. If staff

are not sure whether behaviour would be deemed a low-level concern, we encourage staff to report it.

- 4.10 All reports will be handled in a responsive, sensitive and proportionate way.
- 4.11 Unprofessional behaviour will be addressed, and the staff member supported to correct it, at an early stage.
- 4.12 This creates and embeds a culture of openness, trust and transparency in which our values and expected behaviour are constantly lived, monitored and reinforced by all staff, while minimising the risk of abuse.
- 4.13 Reporting and responding to low-level concerns is covered in more detail in our Child Protection Policy. This is available in hard copy on request, electronically on the Policies and Documents Google Shared Drive or on the federation's website,
- 4.14 Our procedures for dealing with allegations will be applied with common sense and judgement.

Whistleblowing

- 4.15 Whistleblowing reports wrongdoing that it is "in the public interest" to report. Examples linked to safeguarding include:
 - pupils' or staff members' health and safety being put in danger
 - failure to comply with a legal obligation or statutory requirement
 - attempts to cover up the above, or any other wrongdoing in the public interest
- 4.16 Staff are encouraged to report suspected wrongdoing as soon as possible. Their concerns will be taken seriously and investigated, and their confidentiality will be respected.
- 4.17 Staff should consider the examples above when deciding whether their concern is of a whistleblowing nature, including whether the incident(s) was/were illegal, breached statutory or federation procedures, put people in danger, or was an attempt to cover any such activity up.
- 4.18 Staff should report their concern to the Executive Headteacher. If the concern is about the Executive Headteacher, or it is believed they may be involved in the wrongdoing in some way, the staff member should report their concern to the Chair of Governors.
- 4.19 Concerns should be made in writing wherever possible. They should include names of those committing wrongdoing, dates, places and as much evidence and context as possible. Staff raising a concern should also include details of any personal interest in the matter.
- 4.20 The federation's full whistleblowing process is set out in our Whistleblowing Policy.

5 Staff-pupil relationships

- 5.1 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.

- 5.2 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 into the room
 - a colleague or line manager knows this is taking place
- 5.3 Staff should avoid contact with pupils outside of school hours if possible.
- 5.4 Personal contact details should not be exchanged between staff and pupils. This includes social media profiles.
- 5.5 While we are aware many pupils and their parents may wish to give gifts to staff (for example, at the end of the school year), gifts from staff to pupils are not acceptable.
- 5.6 If a staff member is concerned at any point that an interaction between themselves and a pupil may be misinterpreted, or if a staff member is concerned at any point about a fellow staff member and a pupil, this should be reported in line with the procedures set out in our Child Protection Policy.

6 Communication and social media

- 6.1 Federation staff social media profiles should not be available to pupils. If members of staff have a personal profile on social media sites, they should not use their full name, as pupils may be able to find them. Staff should consider using a first and middle name instead, and should set public profiles to private.
- 6.2 Staff should not attempt to contact pupils or their parents via social media, or any other means outside school, in order to develop any sort of relationship. Staff must not make any efforts to find pupils' or parents' social media profiles.
- 6.3 Staff must ensure that they do not post any images online that identify children who are pupils at the school without their consent.
- 6.4 Staff should be aware of the federation's Online Safety Policy.

7 Acceptable use of technology

- 7.1 Staff must not use technology in school or belonging to the federation to view material that is illegal, inappropriate or likely to be deemed offensive. This includes, but is not limited to, sending obscene emails, gambling and viewing pornography or other inappropriate content.
- 7.2 Staff should not use personal mobile phones and laptops, or federation equipment for personal use, in school hours or in front of pupils. They must also not use personal mobile phones or cameras to take pictures of pupils.
- 7.3 We have the right to monitor emails and internet use on the federation's ICT systems.
- 7.4 Further details can be found in the federation's ICT and Internet Acceptable Use Policy.

8 Confidentiality

- 8.1 In the course of their role, members of staff are often privy to sensitive and confidential information about the federation, our schools, staff, pupils and their parents.
- 8.2 This information should never be:
- disclosed to anyone unless required by law or with consent from the relevant party or parties
 - used to humiliate, embarrass or blackmail others
 - used for a purpose other than what it was collected and intended for
- 8.3 This does not overrule a member of staff's duty to report child protection concerns via the appropriate channels where they believe a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm, as detailed further in our Child Protection Policy.

9 Honesty and integrity

- 9.1 Staff should maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their role. This includes when dealing with pupils, handling money, claiming expenses and using federation property and facilities.
- 9.2 Staff will not accept bribes. Gifts that are worth more than £25 must be declared and recorded on the gifts and hospitality register.
- 9.3 Staff will ensure that all information given to the federation is correct. This should include:
- background information (including any past or current investigations/cautions related to conduct outside of school)
 - qualifications
 - professional experience
- 9.4 Where there are any updates to the information provided to the federation, the member of staff will advise the federation as soon as reasonably practicable. Consideration will then be given to the nature and circumstances of the matter and whether this may have an impact on the member of staff's employment.

10 Dress code

- 10.1 In their appearance as well as in their behaviour, staff should regard themselves as an ambassador for the federation and dress in clothing that is appropriate for their duties.
- 10.2 Although the federation does not have a formal dress code for staff, it is important to project a positive and professional image of the federation and its employees.
- 10.3 During term-time when students are in school, staff are expected to:
- not wear informal clothing such as jeans or shorts (except where the latter are worn by staff teaching PE or similar)
 - not wear overly revealing outfits or clothing which displays offensive or political slogans

- avoid unsuitable footwear for a school setting i.e. no open toes, flip-flops or excessively high heels
- remove piercings and cover tattoos that would otherwise be visible
- to not dye their hair unnatural colours e.g. pink or blue.

10.4 It is accepted that dress will be more casual, although still appropriate for a workplace, on training days and during school holidays.

11 Conduct outside of work

11.1 Staff will not act in a way that would bring the federation, our schools, or the teaching profession, into disrepute. This covers conduct including but not limited to relevant criminal offences, such as violence or sexual misconduct, as well as negative comments about the federation/schools on social media.

11.2 Staff should be aware that when wearing clothing or uniform outside of work which identifies the federation or schools (e.g. by a badge) and/or the identity of the employee (e.g. by name), then they will be regarded as representing the federation and standards of behaviour in accordance with this code will be expected.

12 Monitoring arrangements

12.1 This code of conduct will be reviewed annually, but can be revised as needed. It will be approved by the full governing body, who will ensure it is implemented effectively, and will ensure appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard children and deal with any concerns.