TrustEd Schools Alliance KCSiE Code of Conduct for Staff Working in Schools 2025

*This document has been **shared with** Trust staff and School representatives of the following professional associations / trade unions representing Teachers, Headteachers and Support Staff:*

- *Association of School and College Leaders*
- *GMB*
- *National Association of Head Teachers (NAHT)*
- *National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers (NASUWT)*
- *National Education Union (NEU)*
- *Unison*

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Adopted by the Board of TrustEd Schools Alliance

Signed_____ Dated _____
Chair of Trust Board

Signed_____ Dated _____
CEO

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TrustEd Schools Alliance Professional Code of Conduct for Staff Working in Schools

1. Introduction

The Code of Conduct sets out the expectations of behaviour and is a statutory element of a formal induction program for all Trust staff.

This policy is an '**all staff'** policy. Reference to the term 'Headteacher' relate to Line Managers, Executive Reference to the Board of Trustees within this document refers to the TrustEd Schools Alliance and any relevant committees.

TrustEd Schools Alliance is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all pupils in its care and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

All School staff (whether employed, working on a casual basis, agency staff or volunteering) have professional and legal responsibilities to ensure their conduct meets expected standards. These include, but at not limited to, treating others with dignity and respect, acting honestly, using public funds and school equipment appropriately, always adhering to health and safety guidelines and safeguarding pupils at all times.

The law recognises that school staff act '**in loco parentis'** responsibility in respect of 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 pupils in their care/under their supervision.

The code of conduct sets out:

- the **minimum** required standards of behaviour that are required for any individual working in any capacity in any Trust site/school.

- the **principle areas** and **responsibilities** that any individual working in any capacity at the Trust/school needs to be aware of when working in school and the parameters of the framework for appropriate and safe behaviour.

It is impossible for the Code of Conduct to be able to address every variation of a situation or scenario that may present itself in the context of staff and volunteers and their conduct in role.

If in doubt, the Headteacher/Executive Headteacher/CEO, in association with Trust HR provider advice, should be consulted for advice, clarification and before taking any action.

The full suite of policies referenced in the Code of Conduct may be accessed via [e.g. the Trust's shared drive]

2. Roles and Responsibilities

It is essential that everybody working in the Trust understands their safeguarding responsibilities.

It is the responsibility of the Board of Trustees to monitor and review the effectiveness of the KCSiE policies and guidance and to be familiar with the statutory DfE guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' and its specific requirements related to safeguarding. The Board of Trustees should also be aware of the specific guidance contained in the Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults

who work with Children and Young people in Education Settings and its guidance for adults working in Schools to safeguard and promote pupil welfare.

The Trust and Local Governing Bodies **must** ensure that they are familiar with the content of **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE)** in line with expectations for all staff.

LGB and Trustees should ensure that those staff who work directly with children read at least **Part One of KCSiE 2025**. Staff are required to comply with this.

It is the responsibility of the CEO to ensure that structures are in place to support Headteachers in the effective implementation of this Code of Conduct. The CEO and Executive Officers will support Headteachers to monitor, and review standards of behaviour, the effectiveness of its policies and to be familiar with statutory guidance relating to safeguarding. Trust Leaders and Headteachers should be familiar with other specific policies and above statutory guidance that underpin expected behaviours, referred to throughout the Code of Conduct.

Teachers must also be mindful of the additional expectations placed on them by the **Teachers Standards**.

Employees, casual workers, agency staff and volunteers should ensure they are familiar with and comply with all Trust policies including safeguarding and the statutory guidance that underpin expected behaviours, referred to throughout the Code of Conduct.

By way of example, each school has a Child Protection Policy, in line with KCSIE, including Prevent duty. Other Policies with behavioural elements that also require compliance where relevant include: Allegations of Abuse; Equality Policy; Grievance Procedure; Harassment and Bullying Policy; Managing Attendance Policy; Special Leave Policy; Secondment Agreement; Capability and Conduct Procedures; Whistleblowing; Gifts and Hospitality Policy; and ECT Policy (note this list is subject to change and not comprehensive). Headteachers should ensure that Policies are available to Staff.

3. Scope

The Code of Conduct sets out the expectations of behaviour and is a statutory element of a formal induction program for all Trust staff.

The Code of Conduct refers to **all staff** including employees, casual workers and volunteers working in any Trust sites/schools.

Third-party contractors and **agency staff** are expected to follow the spirit of this code in their professional dealings with the provision of services to the Trust set out in any appropriate service level agreement and in legislation and guidance that governs our profession.

KCSiE 2025 (page 81) provides further information in relation to **contractors.**

4. Safeguarding Pupils

LGB and Trustees should ensure they facilitate a **whole Trust approach** to safeguarding. This means involving **everyone** in the Trust (all staff), and ensuring that safeguarding, and child protection underpin all relevant aspects of process and policy development.

Ultimately, all systems, processes and policies should operate with the best interests of the child at their core. All staff members have a responsibility to safeguard pupils and protect their welfare.

A formal definition of '**safeguarding and promoting welfare of children'** is set out in **Part one** of KCSiE 2025 (*page 7*)

The scope of the duties and responsibilities of staff in this regard are set out in KCSiE 2025, **Part one: Safeguarding information for all staff,** which should be issued to all staff **on at least an annual basis.**

Part one, along with copies of the polices set out in KCSiE 2025 (*para 11*) should be provided to all staff at induction.

Under KCSiE staff have a duty to report concerns about a pupil to the School's **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**. The School's Designated Lead will be confirmed to you.

The role of the DSL is set out in **Annex C** of KCSiE 2025 and all those who work with or come into contact with children on school site should be made aware of the who the DSL is and how to contact them.

All staff must take reasonable care of the pupils under their supervision with the aim of ensuring their safety and welfare. Staff must be familiar with the Trust's safeguarding and employment policies:

- Child Protection/ Safeguarding policies
- Whistleblowing procedures
- Online Safety
- Allegations of Abuse Against Staff
- Lower-Level Concerns
- Policy and Guidance for Educational Visits and Journeys
- Use of Reasonable Force Policy
- Substance and Misuse Policy
- Managing Attendance Policy – Sickness Absence
- Managing Attendance Policy – Special Leave
- Harassment and Bullying Policy
- Health & Safety at Work Act 1974
- Data Protection Act 2018

All staff will undertake appropriate safeguarding and child protection training on **at least an annual basis.**

Reporting Safeguarding Concerns

The statutory duty in relation to reporting concerns is set out in **Part one** of **KCSiE 2025**, which will be issued to all staff, annually.

All staff and volunteers should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the Trust's safeguarding provision and know that such concerns will be taken seriously by the senior leadership team.

The Trust has appropriate **whistleblowing procedures** in place for such concerns to be raised with the senior leadership team, with the provision for concerns to be escalated outside of the leadership team, where appropriate.

During formal induction to a Trust Central or School post, and from time to time, staff will be made aware of the Trust's processes and procedures in place to report and manage any safeguarding concern or allegation (no matter how small) about staff members (including supply staff, volunteers, and contractors).

Staff will ensure that they are familiar with the **Low-Level and Non-Safeguarding Concerns Policy.**

5. Pupil Development

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

6. Standards of behaviour outside work

All Trust Staff are expected to show the highest possible standard of behaviour to pupils in and out of School in their ability to safeguard the welfare and best interests of children. All staff have a responsibility to maintain and not to undermine public confidence in any way. Trust staff should comply with the relevant area in the Teachers Standards and adopt high standards of personal conduct in order to maintain the confidence and respect of the general public and those with whom they work

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.

There may be times where an individual's actions 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 Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) a bar from engaging in regulated activity, or action by another relevant regulatory body. The Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2018 set out 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.

KCSiE states that schools should make clear their expectation that staff should disclose any relationship or association (in the real world or online) that may impact on the school's ability to safeguard pupils. This applies to all staff in all schools, not just those in early or later years childcare.

All staff are expected to maintain professional boundaries and uphold the integrity of the school environment. Where a personal relationship exists or develops between colleagues – particularly where one party holds a position of authority or influence over the other – it must be disclosed to the headteacher (or designated senior leader) at the earliest opportunity.

This is to ensure that no actual or perceived conflict of interest arises, and that safeguarding, professional standards, and fair treatment are maintained. The disclosure will be treated sensitively and

confidentially, and appropriate steps will be taken to manage any implications for working arrangements.

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 School, provided that it does not conflict with the interests of the School/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/ Trust.

Staff will not engage in outside work which could seriously damage the reputation and standing of the school/Trust or the employee's own reputation, or the reputation of other members of the school/Trust community. The nature of the work cannot be seen to bring the school/Trust into disrepute, nor be at a level which may contravene the working time regulations or affect an individual's work performance. Staff should communicate any outside work with their Headteachers so that these matters can be discussed where relevant.

Staff should be alert to the fact that ID badges, lanyards and uniforms bearing a school logo, when worn in public, make them readily identifiable as a member of the school community.

7. Disclosure of social contact outside of the workplace

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 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.

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 etc).

If a pupil or parent seeks to establish social contact, or if this occurs coincidentally, the member of staff should exercise their professional judgement in that moment and then inform the Headteacher/ senior manager as soon as possible. This also applies to social contacts made through outside interests or the staff member's own family.

Staff should protect themselves from risk of a situation being misconstrued by seeking approval for any planned social contact with pupils or parents from senior colleagues. 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 pupils or parents unless agreed with senior leaders.

Some staff may, as part of their professional role, be required to support a parent or carer. 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.

8. Physical Contact with Pupils

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. The general principle of 'limited touch' (not frequent, not sustained, where necessary) should be adapted where appropriate to the individual requirements of each pupil. 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 particular concern about the need to provide this type of care and reassurance or feels that they may be compromised by physical contact that has happened 'in the moment', they should refer to the Headteacher and/or the DSL as soon as possible.

Staff should be aware that even well-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 or inappropriate. Any sexual behaviour by a member of staff with or towards a pupil is unacceptable. Staff should always be aware that they should be prepared to explain actions and accept that all physical contact be open to scrutiny. Activities such as 'horseplay', 'tickling' or 'fun fights' with pupils **must** never take place.

9. Other activities that require physical contact

In certain curriculum areas, such as PE, drama or music, staff may need to initiate some physical contact with children, for example, to demonstrate technique in the use of a piece of equipment, adjust posture, or support a child so they can perform an activity safely or prevent injury.

Physical contact should take place only when it is necessary in relation to a particular activity. It should take place in a safe and open environment i.e.; one easily observed by others and last for the minimum time necessary. The extent of the contact should be made clear and undertaken with the permission of the pupil.

Contact should be relevant to their age/understanding and adults should remain sensitive to any discomfort expressed verbally or non-verbally by the pupil. Guidance and protocols around safe and appropriate physical contact may be provided, for example, by sports' governing bodies, and should be understood and applied consistently.

Any incidents of physical contact that cause concern or fall outside of these protocols and guidance should be reported to a senior manager and parent or carer. It is good practice that all parties clearly understand at the outset, what physical contact is necessary and appropriate in undertaking specific activities. Keeping parents/carers and pupils informed of the extent and nature of any physical contact may also prevent allegations of misconduct or abuse arising.

10. The use of control and physical intervention

Primary Schools who are Early Years Providers must take all reasonable steps to ensure that corporal punishment is not given by any person who cares for or is in regular contact with a child, or by any

person living or working in the premises where care is provided. A person will not be taken to have used corporal punishment if the action was taken for reasons that include averting an immediate danger of personal injury to, or an immediate danger of death of, any person including the child.

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 should also be mindful of the significant impact that a physical intervention may have on a child with special educational needs or disabilities.

Under no circumstances should physical force be used as a form of punishment. The use of unwarranted or disproportionate physical force is likely to constitute a criminal offence.

Where the school judges that a child's behaviour presents a serious risk to themselves or others, they must always put in place a robust risk assessment which is reviewed regularly and, where relevant, a physical intervention plan. In all cases where physical intervention has taken place, it is expected practice to record the incident and subsequent actions, and report these to a manager and the child's parents.

Similarly, where it can be anticipated that physical intervention is likely to be required, a plan should be put in place which the pupil and parents/carers 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.

11. Behaviour Management

Corporal punishment and smacking are unlawful in all schools and education settings.

Staff should not use any form of degrading or humiliating treatment to punish a child. The use of sarcasm, demeaning or insensitive comments towards children is completely unacceptable. Staff should understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between peers, including peer on peer sexual violence and sexual harassment.

Downplaying certain behaviours, for example dismissing sexual harassment as "just banter", "just having a laugh", "part of growing up" or "boys being boys" can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, an unsafe environment for children and in worst case scenarios, a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.

Where pupils display difficult or challenging behaviour, adults should follow the school's or setting's **behaviour policy** using strategies appropriate to the circumstances and situation. Where a pupil has specific needs in respect of particularly challenging behaviour, a positive handling plan, including assessment of risk, should be drawn up and agreed by all parties, including, for example, a medical officer where appropriate.

School leaders should ensure that the **behaviour policy** includes clear guidance about the use of isolation and seclusion. The legislation on these strategies is complex and staff should take extreme care to avoid any practice that could be viewed as unlawful, a breach of the pupil's human rights and/or false imprisonment.

12. Intimate/Personal Care

All 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). Arrangements for intimate and personal care should be open and transparent and accompanied by robust recording systems. Care plans must be drawn up, negotiated and agreed with parents/carers and the school and recorded for all pupils who require intimate care on a regular basis, whilst ensuring that the health, safety, independence and welfare of children is promoted, and their dignity and privacy are respected.

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, this should normally be undertaken by one member of staff, however, staff should ensure that there is another appropriate adult in the vicinity and is aware of the task to be undertaken and that, wherever possible, they are visible and/or audible.

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 with regard to individual teaching and care plans for each child.

Intimate or personal care procedures should not involve more than one member of staff unless the pupil's intimate care plan specifies the reason for this. A signed record should be kept of all intimate and personal care tasks undertaken and, where these have been carried out in another room, should include times left and returned. However please note comments above about a second person being in the vicinity.

The views of parents, carers, and the pupil, regardless of their age and understanding, should be actively sought in formulating the plan and in the necessary regular reviews of these arrangements. Any changes to the intimate care plan should be made in writing and without delay, even if the change in arrangements is temporary, e.g., due to staff shortages, changes to staff rotas etc. Intimate and personal care should not be carried out by an adult that the child does not know.

Anyone undertaking intimate/personal care in an education setting is working in **regulated activity** and must have been checked against the relevant DBS barred list, even if the activity only happens once; this includes **volunteers.** Volunteers and visiting staff from other schools / agencies should not undertake care procedures without appropriate training.

Pupils are entitled to respect and privacy at all times and especially when in a state of undress, including, for example, when changing, toileting and showering. However, 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 children concerned and sensitive to the potential for embarrassment.

13. Transporting Pupils

In certain situations, e.g., out of School activities, staff or volunteers (where insurance permits) may agree to transport 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.

As for any other activity undertaken at work, the employer has a duty to carry out a **risk assessment** covering the health and safety of their staff and to manage any known risks.

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. These checks are designed to ensure passenger, driver, and vehicle safety. Please refer to Shropshire Councils Guidelines for Educational Visits and Journeys to ensure accurate records are kept.

Consideration must be given to the potential distraction of the driver and the supervision of the passengers. A judgement should be made about the likely behaviour and individual needs of the child/ren. If any of them may require close supervision, then another adult should travel in the vehicle so that the driver is not distracted or compromised.

Staff should not offer lifts to pupils unless the need for this has been agreed by a senior school leader or manager.

Staff should never offer to transport pupils outside of their normal working duties, other than in an emergency or where not doing so would mean the child may be at risk. In these circumstances the matter should be recorded and reported to both the DSL and the child's parent(s). The school's **health and safety policy** and/or **Guidelines for Educational Visits and Journeys** should set out the arrangements under which staff may use private vehicles to transport pupils.

A designated member of staff should be appointed to plan and provide oversight of all transport arrangements and respond to any concerns that may arise. Wherever possible and practicable, it is advisable that transport is undertaken other than in private vehicles and with at least one adult additional to the driver acting as an escort.

It is a **legal requirement** that all passengers wear seatbelts, and the driver should ensure that they do so. They should also be aware of and adhere to current legislation regarding the use of car seats / booster seats for younger children. Staff should ensure that their behaviour is safe and that the transport arrangements and the vehicle meet all legal requirements. They should ensure that the vehicle is roadworthy and appropriately insured and that the maximum carrying capacity is not exceeded.

14. Educational Visits and Before/After School Clubs

Staff should be familiar with the Trust & Shropshire Council's **POLICY AND GUIDANCE FOR EDUCATIONAL VISITS AND JOURNEYS (JANUARY 2023)** 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 or language code may be acceptable. However, staff will be expected to maintain professional behaviour and conduct and 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.

15. Photography, Videos and Creative Arts

Many School activities involve recording images including images of 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. See your School leaders for access to equipment if you are unsure.

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.

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 pupils for publicity purposes will require consent from parent/carer or the child themselves, if deemed old enough and able to make the decision for themselves. Images must not appear in a public place without such consent. A public place includes areas of the School where visitors have access.

16. IT and Social Media

Electronic communication opens up opportunities for learning but may also put pupils at risk through cyber-bullying, grooming or plagiarism amongst others. Staff should comply with the ~~School~~'s Trust's **Online-Safety Policy** and all relevant statutory guidance with regard to their acceptable online behaviour, their use of ICT equipment in School and acceptable levels of communication between pupils and adults to ensure there are clear and explicit professional boundaries are observed and adhered to.

Staff must not engage in inappropriate use of social networking sites including contacting pupils or their family members, accepting or inviting friend requests from pupils or their family members, or following pupils or their family members on social media.

Additionally, staff should be mindful that their personal views shared on social media may have a negative impact or discredit their employment with the School/Trust or may affect the reputation or standing of the School/Trust, or other members of the School community.

Staff should raise any concerns they have about the School/Trust with the Headteacher directly rather than on social media. Staff should refer to the Trust's **GDPR/ Data protection/Online Safety Policy** for specific guidance relating to their responsibilities surrounding social media. Staff will remain mindful of their use of social media and their web-based presence including written content, videos or photographs, and views expressed directly or indirectly which may bring themselves, the school, or the school/Trust community into disrepute.

Staff must raise any concerns they have about the school/Trust with the Headteacher/CEO directly, rather than on social media. Staff should refer to the school's **Online Safety Policy** for additional specific guidance relating to their responsibilities surrounding social media.

Under no circumstances should staff have their mobile phone or personal device on their desk or on display in the classroom unless School Policy directs staff otherwise (e.g. In the use of Go4Schools) Staff should refer to the Trust's E-Safety, Behaviour (or other relevant) policy for specific guidance relating to their responsibilities with regards to use of mobile phones/electronic devices. It should be noted that there are specific additional regulations in schools with nurseries, regarding use of mobile phones (see Safeguarding policy.

The DfE guidance, **Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges** , published in 2023 and updated in May 2024, sets out the school's requirement to have in place **effective monitoring strategies** that meet the safeguarding needs of their setting. The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) should take lead responsibility for any safeguarding and child protection matters that are picked up through monitoring.

Any deviation or breach of the Trust's policy, procedure and/or statutory guidance may bring into question an individual's suitability to work with children and young people and may result in disciplinary action being taken against them.

17. Honesty and Integrity

High levels of honesty and integrity are expected from all Trust staff at **all** times. This includes the handling and claiming of money and the access and use of School's premises, property and facilities, including 'out of hours' attendance on school site. Staff must be mindful that the School/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 agreed by approved by the Headteacher prior to being worked and being claimed for payment.

- **Access to school premises 'out of hours'**
  All attendance on any Trust school site that may be considered 'out of hours,' in so much as it is outside of the school day and/or not recognised or agreed by the Headteacher in advance, may present a cause for concern under health and safety legislation.

  A list of **Key Holders** will be maintained by the Headteacher and all out-of-hour attendance on school sites should be agreed in advance. Where prior agreement has not been possible and out-of-hour attendance on school sites is considered immediate and necessary, this must be notified to the Headteacher as soon as possible, via the school's agreed method of communication.

  Under no circumstances should any staff member who is absent from work due to ill health attend or access school without prior discussion and agreement with the Headteacher. Such attendance may constitute a breach of health and safety legislation.

  The Trust's **Managing Attendance Policy** clearly states that employees must contact their Headteacher/line manager prior to returning to work, where that employee states that they are now fit to return to work. This is to ensure that any appropriate support such as a phased return and/or reasonable adjustments are considered, in advance.

- **Use of School materials and equipment, including IT 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. This is included the use of school email addresses, Computers and software which may only be used in line with the Trust's IT security or relevant IT **Acceptable Use Policy** agreements.

  Under no circumstances must school/Trust email addresses, IT equipment and/or software be used for illegal, inappropriate, or unacceptable purposes.

  Employees receiving inappropriate communication or material, or who are unsure about whether something they propose to do might breach this policy, should seek advice from the Headteacher.

The Trust reserves the right to monitor emails, phone calls, internet activity or document production, principally in order to avoid offensive or nuisance material and to protect systems from viruses, but also to ensure proper and effective use of systems.

Communication systems may be accessed when the school suspects that an employee has been misusing systems or facilities, or for the investigation of suspected fraud or other irregularity.

Passwords should not be shared and access to computer systems must be kept confidential except on the express request of the Headteacher.

School/Trust equipment that is used outside the premises, e.g., laptops, will be returned to the school/Trust when the employee leaves employment, or immediately if requested to do so by the Headteacher/CEO.

- **Handling money**
  When handling money, receipts should be issued to the payee. Clear records of the money paid in or out of the School/Trust should be maintained, which are evidenced by receipts and invoices.

- **Disposal of School property**
  The School/Trust has a procedure for **selling or disposing surplus equipment**. If an employee wishes to acquire any item of equipment, they must inform their Headteacher/CEO. If the Headteacher/CEO wishes to acquire any item of property, they should inform the /Trustees.

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

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

- **Probity of records**
  The deliberate falsification of documents, such as references, academic qualifications, or legal documents, is unacceptable. Where a staff member falsifies records or other documents, including those held electronically, this will be regarded as a serious disciplinary matter and potentially a criminal offence.

18. Confidentiality & Data Protection

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

Where staff have access to confidential information about pupils, parents/carers or other staff, staff must not reveal or discuss this except to colleagues who have a professional role in relation to the pupil/parent or member of other staff. In circumstances where the identity of the 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 Designated Lead for Child Protection without delay.

The **Data Protection Act 2018** and General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare and protect the safety of children. A member of staff will therefore be expected to share information about a pupil, such as when abuse is alleged or suspected, to the DSL, without delay.

Additionally, confidential information relating to colleagues, events which occur within School or the 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/CEO.

Under the GDPR, 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 which could lead to dismissal without notice.

19. Health and Safety

Employers have duties towards their employees and others under **Health and Safety legislation** which requires them to take steps to provide a safe working environment for staff.

Legislation also imposes a duty on employees to take care of themselves and anyone else who may be affected by their actions or failings. An employer's Health and Safety duties and the adults' responsibilities towards children should not conflict.

Staff must act in accordance with the duty of care to ensure their own safety and welfare and that of pupils, colleagues, and visitors at all times.

In hazardous setting such as D&T workshops, science labs and sporting areas an awareness of extra precautions must be considered and followed by all appropriate staff.

The 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. Please refer to the School and Trust's Health and Safety Policies.

20. Dress and Appearance

Dress and appearance are a matter of personal choice and self-expression; however, the manner of dress and appearance must be of a professional nature appropriate to a staff member's role within the Trust, the activities they are involved with, the standards expected of pupils and health and safety requirements related to these.

Dress and appearance should not cause offence, be revealing, sexually provocative, distract or cause embarrassment or give rise to misunderstanding or be considered discriminatory. Standards should be broadly concordant with that required of pupil/students as outlined in the pupil/ student handbook.

Personal protective equipment must be worn where a risk assessment has indicated that it is appropriate. Safety wear must be provided and worn in hazardous activities and rooms. i.e. Covered footwear in D&T workshops.

21. Personal Living Accommodation

Staff should not invite pupils to their living accommodation unless the reason to do so has been agreed with the Headteacher and the pupil's parents/carers.

22. Awarding Contracts/Engaging Contractors and Suppliers

Orders and contracts must be awarded on merit, by fair competition against other tenders, and no special favor 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 favored.

Employees who engage or supervise contractors/suppliers 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/CEO.

Employees should also tell their Headteacher/CEO if they, or a close relative, have a large number of shares in a Company with which it is likely that the School/Trust will be dealing with, along with a note of the size/nature of 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 School/ Trust is doing business) or in a small company where an individual's shareholding represents 20% or more of the company's equity.

If an employee fails to disclose a private pecuniary interest in a contract with the School/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. Employees must be aware of the need for accountability and openness.

23. Gifts and Inducements

- **Gifts from parent/pupils, others & Hospitality**
  It is unacceptable for staff to accept regular gifts, hospitality or discounts or goods or services from parents, carers, pupils, actual or potential contractors. The maximum amounts permitted is confirmed as £30 as within the Trust's Gifts and Hospitality Policy.

  The giving of gifts or rewards for achievements of pupils by staff is also confirmed in the Trust's Gifts and Hospitality Policy.

- **Sponsorship**

  Where an outside organisation wishes to sponsor or is seeking to sponsor a School/Trust activity, whether by invitation, tender, negotiation or voluntarily, the basic conventions concerning acceptance of gifts or hospitality outlined confirmed in the Trust's Gifts and Hospitality Policy apply.

Employees 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, the employee must be able to prove that any such reward has not been corruptly obtained.

- **Personal purchases**
  Caution should be exercised when, for their personal use, staff buy goods or use the services of contractors/suppliers who 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 contractor/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 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 no such reward has not been obtained in this way.

- **Financial and contractual relationships between staff**
  Where staff enter into contractual and/or financial relationships with each other, such as where, for example, a private residential property is offered and accepted for rent between individuals, these should be discussed with the Headteacher/CEO to establish whether the arrangement constitutes a pecuniary interest and should be declared and/or registered.

  The Chair of Trustees should be consulted in such arrangements that involve the Headteacher/CEO/ Trust Executives and/or members of the Local Governing Body.

24. 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/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 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 one given on headed paper on behalf of the **School/Trust.**

As the legislation in respect of references is complex, the Headteacher may wish to seek the advice of the Trust's HR Advisor, in the event of query.

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 not necessarily those of the School/ Trust.

The use of official school/Trust email accounts, stationery, logos, and in particular headed note paper, for this purpose is forbidden.

25. Smoking, alcohol and other substances

It is not acceptable to attend work whilst under the influence of alcohol or any substance, including prescribed medicine, which may affect the ability to care for pupils or carry out duties. The taking of illegal drugs or alcohol during working hours is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Staff must abide by the conduct requirements of the **Substance and Misuse Policy** or similar.

Staff must not drink alcohol, smoke or vape on any Trust premises or whilst working with or supervising pupils off-site, such as when on educational visits and trips. Staff will abide by any **No Smoking/vaping** Policy or similar.

If alcohol, drug or other substance usage impacts on a staff member's performance, the school/Trust has the right to raise and discuss the matter with the employee and take appropriate action in accordance with the Trust's disciplinary procedures, including referral to the police.

26. Attendance at work

The Trust expects that staff will:

- Attend work in accordance with their contract of employment and associated terms and conditions in relation to hours, days of work and holidays.
- Make routine medical and dental appointments outside of their working hours or during holidays, where possible.
- Refer to the Trust's **Managing Attendance Policy** – **Special Leave** if they need time off for any reason other than personal illness.
- Follow the Trust's **Managing Attendance Policy – Sickness Absence** when they are absent from work due to illness or injury.
- Attend their full hours at work, obtaining the Headteacher's (or delegate's) permission to leave work, unless previously planned and authorised.

27. Positive Working Relationships

The Trust expects that all staff should work to:

- Staff to be aware of their duties under related policies such as Harassment & Bullying Policy and our duties in the Equality Act regarding discrimination and victimisation.
- Staff must maintain confidentiality regarding colleagues and pupils and not be drawn into gossip or inappropriate unnecessary discussions in line with policies such as KCSIE and conduct procedures.
- Maintain and promote positive, constructive relationships with all colleagues.
- Use courteous, respectful language and behaviours when referring to colleagues/peers (both verbally and/or in writing and/or on social media)
- The same courteous and respectful language and behaviours should be maintained towards Line Managers and Leaders and also towards those line managed / led. The same standards are expected of staff and leaders.

  NOTE: Staff should be aware that being a silent 'bystander' when others behave in a discourteous, disrespectful or offensive manner towards others, could be viewed as condoning the behaviour. Staff may instead choose to respond politely to disagree or remove themselves as suitable alternatives.

NOTE: Positive working relationships should be considered for all interactions (e.g. when undergoing performance management, or when consulting/being consulted or offering constructive criticism)

28. Compliance with the Code of Conduct/associated policy and procedure

It is impossible for the Code of Conduct to be able to address every variation of a situation or scenario that may present itself in the context of staff and volunteers and their conduct in role.

If in doubt, the Headteacher should be consulted for advice, clarification and before taking any action. In turn, the Headteacher may wish to seek the advice of the Trust's HR Advisor.

The Disciplinary Procedure may be enacted if there is any breach of the expected code of conduct practice which could result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. It is therefore very important that staff read and understand this **code of conduct**.

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 performance 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 pupils, the agreed procedure such as **Low-Level Concerns** or **Allegations of Abuse against Staff in Schools** should be followed.

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

This code cannot cover every problem which may occur. If in doubt, the Headteacher/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 should acknowledge their individual responsibilities to bring matters of concern to the attention of the senior management and/or external agencies. This is particularly important where the welfare of pupils may be at risk. The **Whistleblowing Policy** is available to employees who believe that inappropriate behavior has occurred.

The Capability Procedure supports the School/Trust in dealing 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.

In respect of the Equalities Act 2010; The School/Trust expects all staff to show consideration and respect to their colleagues, pupils, parents, carers, governors, Trustees, and members of the public and the local community and treat everyone with dignity and respect and not discriminate unlawfully against any person (e.g. In actions or language used.

The **protected characteristics** set out in legislation are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership

- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion and belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

The School/Trust will also not discriminate on the grounds of trade union membership or non-membership, part time or fixed term contract status, past unrelated convictions, or 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 employees 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.

29. Monitoring and Review

The Board of Trustees will monitor the outcomes and impact of this policy/procedure on an annual basis in conjunction with Trust School representatives.