

STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT

Learning Academies Trust

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LEARNING
ACADEMIES TRUST

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CHANGES

Policy date	Summary of change	Author	Version	Review date
16/03/2023	Policy has been created.	Amy Bosworth HR Business Partner	1.0	16/03/2024

1. AIMS, SCOPE AND PRINCIPLES

This policy aims to set and maintain standards of conduct that we expect all staff to follow.

By creating this policy, we aim to ensure our school is an environment where everyone is safe, happy and treated with respect.

Many of the principles in this code of conduct are based on the [Teachers' Standards](#).

School staff have an influential position in the school and will act as role models for pupils by consistently demonstrating high standards of behaviour.

We expect that all teachers will act in accordance with the personal and professional behaviours set out in the Teachers' Standards.

We expect all support staff, governors and volunteers to also act with personal and professional integrity, respecting the safety and wellbeing of others.

The Trust is committed to providing outstanding educational experiences for each pupil. We are determined to raise aspirations, opportunities and the standards of learning for all pupils.

Failure to follow the code of conduct may result in disciplinary action being taken, as set out in our staff disciplinary policy.

Please note 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 school and its pupils.

2. LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

In line with the statutory safeguarding guidance '[Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)', we should have a staff code of conduct, which should cover acceptable use of technologies (including the use of mobile devices), staff/pupil relationships and communications, including the use of social media.

This policy also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

3. GENERAL OBLIGATIONS

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
- Express personal beliefs in a way that will not overly influence pupils, and will not exploit 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

Staff have a duty to safeguard pupils from harm, and to report any concerns they have. This includes physical, emotional and sexual abuse, or neglect.

Staff will familiarise themselves with our [Child Protection and Safeguarding policy](#) and procedures and the Prevent initiative, and ensure they are aware of the processes to follow if they have concerns about a child.

Our Child Protection and safeguarding policy and procedures are available on Learning Academies Trust's website, this will also be available in all of our schools and on each school website. New staff will also be signposted to copies upon joining.

4.1 Low-level concerns about members of staff

A low-level concern is a behaviour towards a child by a member of staff that does not meet the harms 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
- Using inappropriate language

Low-level concerns can include inappropriate conduct inside and outside of work.

All staff should share any low-level concerns they have using the reporting procedures set out in our child protection and safeguarding 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.

All reports will be handled in a responsive way.

Unprofessional behaviour will be addressed, and the staff member supported to correct it, at an early stage.

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.

Reporting and responding to low-level concerns is covered in more detail in our child protection and safeguarding policy available on the policies section of the Trust and each school's website.

5. STAFF AND PUPIL RELATIONSHIPS

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.

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

Staff should avoid contact with pupils outside of school hours if possible.

Personal contact details should not be exchanged between staff and pupils. This includes social media profiles.

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 acceptable as a token gesture for the whole class or in accordance with school policy, for example prizes linked to attendance.

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 and safeguarding policy

6. COMMUNICATION AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Learning Academies Trust employees' social media profiles should not be available to pupils. If they 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 set public profiles to private.

Staff should not initiate contact to pupils or their parents via social media, or any other means outside school, in order to develop any sort of relationship. They will not make any efforts to find pupils' or parents' social media profiles.

Staff will ensure that they do not post any images online that identify children who are pupils at the school without their consent.

Staff should be aware of the school's e-safety policy and follow the schools' Staff use of social media policy.

7. ACCEPTABLE USE OF TECHNOLOGY

Staff will not use technology in school 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.

Staff will not use personal mobile phones (unless in designated zones) and laptops, or school equipment for personal use, in school hours or in front of pupils. They will also not use personal mobile phones or cameras to take pictures of pupils.

During remote learning, if there is a need to video lessons or take live lessons staff members will adhere to expectations of professional conduct, linked to communication, dress code and behaviours with the pupils at all times.

We have the right to monitor emails and internet use on the school IT system.

8. CONFIDENTIALITY

In the course of their role, members of staff are often privy to sensitive and confidential information about the school, staff, pupils and their parents.

This information will 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

This does not overrule staff's duty to report child protection concerns to the appropriate channel where staff believe a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm, as detailed further in our child protection and safeguarding policy.

9. HONESTY AND INTEGRITY

Staff should maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their role. This includes when dealing with pupils, handling money, claiming expenses and using school property and facilities.

Staff will not accept bribes. Gifts that are worth more than £25 must be declared and recorded on the gifts and hospitality register.

Staff will ensure that all information given to the school about their qualifications and professional experience is correct.

Staff will ensure that all information given to the school is correct. This should include:

- Background information (including any past or current investigations/cautions related to conduct outside of school)
- Qualifications
- Professional experience

Where there are any updates to the information provided to the school, the member of staff will advise the school 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

Staff will dress in a professional, appropriate manner.

Outfits will not be overly revealing and will align with the expectations of the Trust.

Clothes will not display any offensive or political slogans.

11. CONDUCT OUTSIDE OF WORK

Staff will not act in a way that would bring the Trust, school, 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 Trust, school on social media.

12. MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS

This policy will be reviewed annually but can be revised as needed. It will be ratified by the full Trust board. Our Headteachers will ensure this code of conduct is implemented effectively and will ensure appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard children and deal with any concerns.

13. LINKS WITH OTHER POLICIES

This policy links with the Trust's policies on:

- Disciplinary policy, which will be used if staff breach this code of conduct. It also sets out examples of what we will deem as misconduct and gross misconduct
- Grievance policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding
- Gifts and hospitality
- E-safety
- Remote Learning
- Schools' Staff use of social media
- Whistleblowing