

Maiden Erlegh Trust
STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT



MAIDEN ERLEGH
TRUST

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Policy Statement

The Trust expects the highest standards of personal and professional conduct from all employees.

As such the Trust requires all employees to act in a manner which reflects the value and ethos of the Trust. Employees must ensure that their behaviour and actions are consistent with their position as a role model to pupils / students and are compatible with working with young people and in a Trust setting.

Employees must act with integrity, honesty and demonstrate ethical and respectful working practices towards pupils / students, colleagues, parents/ carers and other members of the Trust community.

All employees have a responsibility to observe appropriate professional boundaries and act at all times in a manner which safeguards and promotes the welfare of pupils / students.

Employees must disclose any relevant information which may impact on their job role or suitability to work with young people or in a Trust setting.

The Trust requires employees to adhere to all Trust policies and observe the highest standards of business / financial practice. Each employee has an individual responsibility to act in a manner which upholds the Trust's interests and protects its reputation.

Employees are accountable for their actions and conduct and should seek advice from their line manager / Headteacher if they are not sure of the appropriate action to take.

Employees should be aware that a failure to comply with the following Code of Conduct could result in disciplinary action including dismissal.

This policy explains the Trust's expectations with regards to the conduct of employees in the following areas:

- Professional conduct
- Safeguarding Pupils / Students
- Use of ICT & Social Media
- Business conduct

Scope

This Policy applies to all current employees of Maiden Erlegh Trust, and all volunteers / supply and agency workers engaged by the Trust.

Throughout this Code, management roles will be referred to as the 'appropriate manager' and will mean:

| Staff member | Appropriate Manager |
|------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| All staff | Line Manager, Headteacher or other nominated manager |
| Headteacher | Chair of the School Advisory Board |
| Shared Services staff | Line Manager |
| Director of Education or CEO | Chair of Board of Trustees |

Where the appropriate manager is not available, the employee should not delay raising or reporting any concerns and should contact the next most appropriate person.

Responsibilities of the Trust

- Explain the provisions of the Code of Conduct to employees and signpost employees to other relevant policies, documents, and guidelines,
- Provide additional advice and guidance to employees in relation to queries they may have regarding the application of the code of conduct,
- Coach, support and provide feedback to employees on their performance in relation to the required standards of conduct,
- Take appropriate action at the earliest opportunity to address breaches of the expected standards of conduct.

Responsibilities of the Employee

- To read, understand and comply with the Code of Conduct at all times,
- To use this code, alongside other relevant Trust policies and professional codes, to guide them in their role,
- To seek guidance from the appropriate manager as set out in the Scope section of this Code if they are unclear about the conduct or actions expected of them,
- To alert the appropriate manager at the earliest opportunity if they are aware that they have conducted themselves in a way which may have breached the expected standards of conduct.

Reference to Other Sources of Information and Key Regulations

This Code of Conduct is not exhaustive and does not replace the general requirements of the law, common sense and good conduct.

The Code of Conduct should be read in conjunction with a number of associated policies relating to conduct which are set out in Appendix 2 to this document.

In addition to this policy, all staff employed under Teachers' Terms and Conditions of Employment have a statutory obligation to adhere to the provisions of the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document, the latest 'Teachers' Standards 2012' and in relation to this policy, Part 2 of the Teachers' Standards - Personal and Professional Conduct. Whilst this is a contractual requirement of teaching posts only, the Trust expects all employees to reflect these expectations in their conduct.

Part 2 of the Teachers' Standards is available online and can be found online via <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teachers-standards>

All employees must ensure they have read, understood and comply with the current version of Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education, hereafter referred to as the current version or by the title only. Further guidance regarding Safeguarding is in Part C of this document.

In line with Keeping Children Safe in Education, incidents outside of school that could indicate there was harm or a risk of harm to children, a criminal offence against or related to a child, indicates the employee may pose a risk of harm, or indicates that they may not be suitable to work with children will be taken seriously and handled under the Trust's disciplinary procedure where necessary.

Staff must also have due regard to other professional codes, policies and guidance which may be relevant to their specific role.

Professional Conduct

General

Employees are expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct and are required to work in a diligent and conscientious manner.

Employees are expected to work to the requirements of their job and are required to respect managerial authority and follow reasonable instructions.

Employees must conduct themselves in a manner which reflects the values and ethos of the Trust and adhere to Trust policies and procedures at all times.

Employees should ensure they work their contracted hours and are expected to maintain a high level of attendance and punctuality.

Honesty and Integrity

Employees must maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their work.

Employees should not behave in a manner which would call into question their motivation or intentions.

During the course of their work employees should ensure they do not:

- Provide false / misleading information,
- Destroy or alter information / records without proper authorization,
- Withhold information or conceal matters which they could reasonably be expected to have disclosed,
- Misrepresent the Trust or their position,
- Accept or offer any form of bribe / inducement or engage in any other corrupt working practice.

Should an employee become aware of any conduct on the part of a colleague which raises concerns regarding health and safety, safeguarding or criminal activity – they have a duty to disclose this to the appropriate manager.

Allegations concerning fraudulent, dishonest, or corrupt practices or the falsification or withholding of information may be addressed as a disciplinary matter.

Setting an Example

Trust staff are role models and must adhere to behaviour that sets a good example to all the pupils/students within the Trust and is appropriate in a Trust setting.

This includes:

- Refraining from abusive or potentially offensive / discriminatory language or actions,
- Demonstrating tolerance and respect towards others,
- Observing boundaries appropriate to a Trust setting,

- Ensuring any topics of conversation with pupils/students are suitable to the Trust setting / curriculum,
- Refraining from allowing personal / political opinions to impact on the discharge of duties and/or unduly influence pupils /students,
- Maintaining high standards of personal presentation, attendance, and punctuality.

Should employees be in doubt about the appropriateness of their behaviour they should seek guidance from the appropriate manager. Breaches of expected behaviour may be considered under disciplinary procedures.

Confidentiality

Employees may have access to confidential or sensitive information about pupils /students, colleagues or the business and operation of the Trust as part of their job role.

Such information must not be disclosed, through any channel including social media, to any person who is not entitled to have access to this or legitimately needs it for work purposes.

Specifically, all employees must:

- Work in accordance with the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation (2018) and associated legislation,
- Observe the Trust's procedures for the release of information to other agencies and members of the public,
- Not use or share confidential information inappropriately or for personal gain,
- Not speak inappropriately about the Trust community, pupils, parents, staff, or Local Advisory Board including discussing incidents, operational or employment matters with parents / members of the public,
- Ensure all confidential data is kept secure and password protected.

Should employees be in doubt about the appropriateness of sharing information they should seek guidance from the appropriate manager.

Working Relationships & Relationships with other Stakeholders / Community

The Trust expects employees to maintain positive and professional working relationships and colleagues, pupils, parents, and other stakeholders should be treated with dignity and respect.

Employees should be polite, respectful and courteous in their interactions with colleagues, parents / pupils and other stakeholders / members of the Trust community.

Behaviour which constitutes bullying and harassment, intimidation, sexual harassment, victimisation, or discrimination will not be tolerated and may be addressed via the Trust's disciplinary policy. This includes physical and verbal abuse and use of inappropriate language or unprofessional behaviour with colleagues, pupils/students, and parents.

Where an individual is employed in a school in which their child is a pupil, they must ensure that appropriate professional boundaries are maintained.

Employees should treat all members of the Trust community and stakeholders in a fair and equitable way and not behave in a manner which may demean, distress, offend or discriminate against others.

Employees should ensure that policies relating to equality issues are complied with.

Employees should be aware of the Trust's Complaints Procedure and address any concerns from parents / pupils and other stakeholders in accordance with this document.

Sexual Harassment

The Trust is required to take 'reasonable steps' to prevent sexual harassment of employees.

- Sexual harassment is unwanted behaviour of a sexual nature that violates someone's dignity and/or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for someone
- These effects may have been intended or unintentional.

Sexual harassment will not be tolerated anywhere in the Trust, all staff have a responsibility to desist from such behaviour and, if a victim of it or a witness of it, to report it.

Examples of unacceptable behaviour include:

- making sexual remarks about someone's body, clothing or appearance
- asking questions about someone's sex life
- telling sexually offensive jokes
- making sexual comments or jokes about someone's sexual orientation or gender reassignment
- displaying or sharing pornographic or sexual images, or other sexual content
- touching someone against their will, for example hugging them
- sexual assault or rape

Further information can be found in the Trust's Prevention of Sexual Harassment in the Workplace Policy.

Conduct Outside of the Workplace

Employees must not engage in conduct outside of work which has the potential to:

- Affect or is likely to affect the suitability of the Employee to undertake their job role or work with children/young people or in a Trust setting,
- Impact on the operation or reputation or standing of the Trust,
- Impact on the operation or reputation of the Trust's relationship with its staff, parents, pupils, or other stakeholders,
- Seriously undermine the trust and confidence that the Trust has in the employee to undertake their job role or work with children/young people or in a Trust setting,
- In relation to students this can include conduct that could be considered inappropriate after a student has left the school. For example, in the pursuit of a romantic relationship or using their position to procure goods or services at a preferential rate.

The above actions may be the subject of disciplinary action which could lead to dismissal.

Duty to Disclose

Employees have a duty to immediately disclose to the appropriate manager prior to the start of their employment, at the start of their employment or during the course of their employment, any change in their circumstances or any information which may affect or is likely to affect the suitability of the Employee to undertake their job role or work with children/ young people or in a Trust setting.

This includes, but is not restricted to:

- The employee being subject to any police investigation / enquiry, arrest, ban, charge, caution, reprimand, warning, fine or pending prosecution or criminal conviction. This includes any actions committed overseas which would be subject to a police investigation or formal action if such actions had been committed in any part of the United Kingdom,
- The employee being subject to any referral, made to, or any investigation, proceedings, or prohibition order being undertaken by the Teaching Regulation Agency, General Teaching Council for Scotland, or the Education Workforce Council in Wales,
- The employee being subject to the inclusion on the DBS Children's Barred List and any change in DBS status during employment, or any referral, made to, or any, investigation or proceedings being undertaken by the DBS,
- The employee being subject to any referral, made to, or any investigation, proceedings, or prohibition order being undertaken by any other regulatory or professional authorities or actions of other agencies relating to child protection and/or safeguarding concerns,
- The employee being subject to any orders made in relation to the care of children, the refusal or cancellation of registration relating to childcare, or children's homes, or being prohibited from private fostering,
- The employee being subject to any 'live' disciplinary process, formal sanction or any other relevant information arising from a previous or current secondary employment / voluntary work which may impact on the employee's suitability to undertake their role or work with children/young people or in a Trust setting. This includes substantiated safeguarding allegations,

This list is not exhaustive. Should an employee be unclear about whether it is appropriate to disclose a matter they are encouraged to seek guidance from the appropriate manager at the earliest opportunity.

Employees must also report any current or historical information in the public domain, or which is likely to come into the public domain which may be of relevance to their job role or their suitability to work with children/young people or in a Trust setting or matters which may be subject to adverse media attention or have a detrimental impact on the reputation of the Trust.

Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009

In the case of individuals who work with, or manage the education of, early years pupils (reception age or younger) during Trust hours, and children up to the age of eight in relation to activities outside of the school day (for example breakfast or after school club employees), the following legislative provisions also apply.

In addition, in accordance with the Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009 (Section 75 of the Childcare Act 2006) an employee should immediately disclose to the appropriate manager if they:

- Are disqualified from providing childcare provision or being involved in the management of such provision, including where any application for an Ofsted waiver from disqualification has been made, regardless of whether such an application was successful,

Such employees also have a duty to ensure that they are fully aware of their obligations and will be asked by the Trust to confirm that they understand and comply with these provisions. An employee must disclose immediately to the appropriate manager if they meet any of the criteria for disqualification.

Further guidance relating to employees' obligations under the Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009 including details of the relevant offences which may result in disqualification by association and which must be disclosed to the Trust is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/disqualification-under-the-childcare-act-2006/disqualification-under-the-childcare-act-2006>

Employees should seek clarification from the appropriate manager if they are unclear whether they are required to disclose certain information under this provision.

In all cases disclosures will be handled sensitively and discreetly, and in accordance with the relevant data protection principles and the data protection act. Such disclosures may result in a suspension from duties while an investigation or risk assessment takes place. The appropriate manager will discuss this with the employee in the context of their role and responsibilities in order to help safeguard children and other employees at the Trust.

Any failure to disclose any information required in the course of employment or any other information that may have a bearing on an individual's suitability to carry out their job role or work with children/young people or in a Trust setting may be the subject of disciplinary action which could lead to dismissal.

Secondary Employment

Employees should ensure that their activities outside of work do not conflict with their duty to the Trust.

Employees must discuss with their appropriate manager **and obtain their consent** before taking up additional paid / unpaid employment or engaging in any other business.

Requests will not be unreasonably refused providing that:

- It does not affect or is unlikely to affect the suitability of the employee to undertake their job role or work with children/young people or in a Trust setting,
- It does not conflict with the interests of the Trust or have the potential to bring the Trust into disrepute,
- There is no detrimental impact on an employee's work performance or their own or others health and safety.
- Privileged or confidential information is not shared,
- Work is undertaken outside of the Trust and of contracted hours of work,
- The activity is not in direct competition with those of the Trust.

It is an employee's responsibility to monitor the hours they work and ensure they are rested and refreshed to be able to carry out their role. An average working week of 48 hours across all

employments should not normally be exceeded unless the employee has elected to opt out of the Working Time Regulations.

Dress and Presentation

All employees must ensure their dress, personal appearance and personal hygiene is appropriate to the professional nature of their role in the Trust and promotes a professional image.

Dress, including footwear, should be appropriate to the activities an employee is engaged in, the setting in which they work, and any related health and safety requirements.

Suitable protective equipment must be worn where provided and appropriate. Uniforms must be worn where provided.

Employees must wear their identity badges at all times.

Employees must not dress in a manner that is potentially offensive, revealing or sexually provocative.

Wherever possible, tattoos and body piercings should not be exposed (except earrings).

The Trust recognises the diversity of cultures and religions of its employees and will take a sensitive approach where this affects dress and uniform requirements. Sikh employees may wear the Kirpan as part of the Five Ks only if it has been agreed with the headteacher.

Any employee in doubt about appropriate dress and footwear should discuss what is acceptable with their line manager.

Smoking and the use of drugs and alcohol

The Trust is a no-smoking environment across all sites, and this includes e-cigarettes. Smoking and the use of e-cigarettes or “vaping” is not allowed on any Trust premises or during working time. Staff must refrain from smoking immediately outside of the entrances to any Trust site or building.

Where designated smoking areas are provided, smoking and vaping must be confined to these areas.

Employees must not consume / use alcohol, illicit drugs or other illegal substances in the workplace, or be under the influence of such substances whilst at work.

Employees must ensure that any use of alcohol / other substances outside of work does not adversely affect their work performance, attendance, conduct, working relationships, health and safety of themselves and others or damage the Trust’s image and reputation.

Health and Safety at Work

All employees must, by law, take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that of others in the workplace.

Employees are required to comply with the Trust’s Health and Safety policy and agreed procedures at all times.

This includes:

- Avoiding risk of injury or danger to yourself or others,
- Correctly using any protective clothing and equipment supplied,

- Complying with hygiene requirements,
- Reporting, at the earliest opportunity, any hazards, defects, accidents, or incidents to the headteacher or other designated person,
- Not interfering with, or misusing, anything provided for health, safety, or welfare,
- Informing the trust of any medical condition or medication which has been prescribed which may have an impact on health and safety in the workplace.

Managers should also be aware of and comply with any additional health and safety obligations associated with their role.

Please also refer to the Trust's Health and Safety Policy

Contact with the Media

All enquiries from the media should be directed to the Trust's Head of Marketing and Communications.

Employees must not make contact with or comment to the media about matters relating to the Trust themselves unless agreed otherwise. All communications to the media must have had prior approval from the Chief Executive Officer or Chief Financial and Operations Officer of the Trust.

Should an employee speak directly to the media about non-Trust matters, care should be taken to ensure that it is clear that any opinions expressed are personal and that the individual is not acting on behalf of / representing the Trust.

Any contact with the media in a personal capacity should be compatible with the employee's role and their position working with children / young people or in a Trust setting and must not negatively impact on the reputation of the Trust.

Whistleblowing

Employees may raise concerns about any aspect of the operation of the Trust which is not directly related to their own employment through the Whistleblowing Policy.

Employees raising a concern with reasonable grounds for doing so will not be subject to discrimination, harassment, or victimisation.

Please also refer to the Trust's Whistleblowing Policy

Misconduct

Failure to follow the Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action, including dismissal. Employees should ensure they are familiar with the types of conduct which may be regarded as a breach of Trust rules.

Examples of behaviours which are likely to be regarded to constitute misconduct are set out in the Trust's Disciplinary Procedure. Allegations of misconduct will be managed in accordance with the Disciplinary Procedure.

Please also refer to the Trust's Disciplinary Policy

Safeguarding Pupils / Students

General Obligations

All employees have a responsibility to:

- Safeguard pupils / students from physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse and neglect,
- Promote the welfare of pupils / students and provide a safe environment in which children can learn,
- Identify children who may be in need of extra help or who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm,
- Report as soon as possible and without delay any concerns regarding child protection / safeguarding to the appropriate manager / Designated Safeguarding Lead).

All employees who work directly with children must have read, understood, and ensure they comply with Keeping Children Safe in Education (Part one) and Annex B.

Those employees who do not work directly with children must have read, understood, and ensure they comply with either Part one or Annex A (a condensed version of Part one) of this guidance.

All employees must have read, understood and comply with:

- The Trust Safeguarding Policy
- The Trust Behaviour Management Policy
- Employees with staff management responsibilities must ensure they comply with the Trust's Procedure for Dealing with Allegations Against Employees and Adults Working or Volunteering in Schools and Part 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education and Safeguarding Procedures covering safeguarding concerns or allegations made about staff.

Reporting of low-level concerns

Maiden Erlegh Trust seeks to create and embed a culture of openness, trust, and transparency. It also seeks to protect and safeguard pupils, students, and staff.

All employees have a duty to report to the Headteacher any low-level concerns about the conduct of staff, supply teachers/casual workers, volunteers, and contractors in the school. The person making the report is not required to make a judgement on the seriousness, or not, of the matter being referred.

Low-level concerns:

- Relate to behaviours, words or deeds which do not involve serious harm,
- They may also include behaviour, words or deeds which may be construed as a low-level concern,
- Wouldn't apparently merit referral to the LADO or meet the allegation threshold,
- Might be behaviour inconsistent with the trust's code of conduct,

- Causes a sense of unease or a nagging doubt.

Concerns may arise in a number of ways, including but not limited to suspicion, complaint or disclosure made by a child, parent or other adult from within or outside of the Trust, or through vetting checks carried out before or during employment/work in the Trust.

Low-level concerns can relate to conduct outside of work.

Any report made will be confidential, it should be made as quickly as possible and include details of those involved, time and date of the reported incident, details of the incident, and the name of the person making the report.

In reporting these issues, the Headteacher can then take a view about how best to proceed which may involve a discussion with the DSL, and may lead to, for example, reviewing training and guidance provision.

For this reason, colleagues are also encouraged to self-refer.

Employees must attend and comply with any training as required by the Trust associated with the safeguarding of pupils / students.

Appropriate relationships with students

Employees must maintain appropriate professional boundaries with pupils / students.

Employees are expected to act in an open and transparent way that would not lead any reasonable person to suspect their actions or intent. In order to protect both children and themselves, employees should also avoid behaviour that might be misinterpreted by others.

Employees should be aware of the provisions of The Sexual Offences Act 2003 which includes provisions covering the abuse of a position of trust. This covers all school staff because they are recognised by the legislation as being in a position of trust to young people in the school setting, and in summary covers intentionally touching a young person in a sexual way or in a way that could be construed as sexual or inappropriate in any way.

Allegations Against Members of Staff and Volunteers

All employees have a duty to report to the Headteacher/ DSL at the earliest opportunity the conduct of a colleague which may place a child at risk.

Where the concerns relate to the Headteacher these should be reported to the Chair of the School Advisory Board.

Where the concerns relate to shared services staff, these should be reported to the Line Manager, Chief Operations Officer or Chief Financial Officer.

If the concerns relate to CEO or Director of Education, the Chair of the Board of Trustees must be informed.

Failure to report such concerns may be regarded as a disciplinary matter.

The relevant policies are the Safeguarding Procedures for Managing Allegations Against Staff, the Child Protection Policy and the Disciplinary Policy.

Other Safeguarding Considerations

Prevent Duty

Trusts have a duty to protect children / young people from radicalisation and extremism.

All staff have a responsibility to report any concerns about pupils / students who may be 'at risk' to the headteacher / designated staff member.

Female Genital Mutilation

Teachers have a legal duty to report to the police where they discover an act of Female Genital Mutilation appears to have been carried out on a pupil / student.

All Staff have a responsibility to discuss any concerns with the headteacher / designated staff member.

Please refer to Part 1 and Annex A of the current Keeping Children Safe in Education for further guidance.

ICT and Social Media

General Obligations

Employees should ensure that they have read, understand and comply with the Trust's ICT Acceptable Use Procedures at all times.

Whilst at work or using a work device all employees must:

- Ensure all electronic communication with pupils / students, parents / carers, colleagues, and other stakeholders is compatible with their professional role, appropriate boundaries and in line with Trust policies.
- Not to use work IT equipment to browse, create, transmit, display, publish or forward any material / images which is illegal, sexually explicit, obscene or could offend, harass, or upset others or anything which could bring an employee's professional role or the Trust into disrepute.
- Not to use personal IT equipment to browse, create, transmit, display, publish or forward any materials / images which are illegal or could offend or harass others or anything which could bring an employee's professional role or the Trust into disrepute.
- Ensure that ICT system security is respected, and password protocols are observed – including the use of strong passwords and encryption.
- Not install personal software on Trust equipment or make unauthorised copies of Trust registered software.

Limited use of Trust internet, email and ICT equipment for personal purposes is permitted, provided this is within the scope of the Trust's ICT Acceptable Use Policy and does not impact on an individual's job role.

Employees should not use work equipment, software or systems to share information about any personal issues or disputes they have with the Trust.

Employees should seek guidance from the appropriate Manager if they are unclear about the conduct or actions expected of them.

Breaches of expected use of ICT may be considered under the disciplinary procedure.

Use of Social Media

Employees must ensure that their online presence / profile (personal or work related) is compatible with their professional role.

All Employees should:

- Ensure appropriate privacy settings are applied when using social media sites,
- Refrain from sharing confidential / privileged information, discussing incidents, operational or employment matters or making critical / negative comments about the Trust / pupils / parents or colleagues on such forums,
- Not browse, create, transmit, display, publish or forward any material / images which is illegal, could offend or harass or anything which could bring an employee's professional role or the Trust into disrepute,
- Never share / post images of pupils,
- Not post images of work colleagues without permission,
- Not access or update social media sites using Trust devices / during working time (unless Trust approved for work purposes).

Employees should not make contact with students / pupils or parents via social media accounts or have these individuals as social media 'friends' / 'contacts'. It is also recommended that employees do not have ex- pupils or their families as social media 'friends'.

Employees should seek guidance from the appropriate manager if they are unclear about the conduct or actions expected of them.

Use of Personal Mobile Phones / Devices

Employees are not permitted to make / receive personal calls / texts, send / receive emails, or access internet / social media during work time where children are present.

Employees should ensure that mobile devices are silent at all times whilst in the classroom or where children are present. Mobile devices should not be left on display.

Employees should not use their personal equipment (mobile phones / cameras / tablets) to take photos or make recordings of pupils / students. The only exception is if this is for school-related use only, including approved sharing on social media, with appropriate permissions in place. In such cases all imagery must be deleted from the device after use and not transferred to any other personal device owned by the employee or by anyone else.

Monitoring of Usage

Emails, documents or browsing history on Trust systems should not be considered to be private and may be monitored and recorded to ensure the safety of pupils / students, GDPR compliance, and to ensure compliance with this Code of Conduct. This monitoring will be proportionate and will take place in accordance with data protection / privacy legislation.

The Trust may address concerns regarding unauthorised, unacceptable, or inappropriate use of ICT systems / devices or social media as a disciplinary matter.

Please also refer to the Trust's Acceptable Use of Digital Technology Procedures.

Business Conduct

Use of Financial Resources

The Trust requires employees to observe the highest standards of business / financial practice.

Employees should ensure that Trust / public funds with which they are entrusted are used in a responsible and lawful manner.

Employees must comply with the Trust's stipulated financial regulations and any other relevant policies / audit requirements.

Appropriate authorisation should be sought for any expenditure and audit trail / suitable records kept.

Trust monies, credit cards and credit accounts should not be used for personal purposes.

The use of personal credit cards / accounts to purchase goods and services on behalf of the Trust should be avoided unless prior agreement from the Chief Financial and Operations Officer is obtained.

All expense claims for travel and subsistence should be appropriately authorised and accompanied by receipts / proof of purchase and should comply with the provisions set out in the Trusts Expenses Policy.

Personal loyalty cards should not be used when making purchases on behalf of the Trust.

Please also refer to the Trust's Finance Procedures Manual.

Personal Use of Equipment and Resources

Employees may not make personal use of the Trust's property, materials or facilities unless authorised to do so by the Headteacher or appropriate manager.

Declaration of Interests

The Trust recognises that employees may wish to take an active role in the local community and undertake additional personal / business activities outside of work.

In the majority of instances such activities will have no impact on their role in the Trust. However, on occasion there may be a potential conflict of interest.

Employees should therefore declare annually to the appropriate manager any financial or non-financial interests which may conflict with those of the Trust. Employees should also declare membership of any professional bodies / organisations which may conflict with their Trust role.

Should employees be in doubt about whether a conflict of interest may exist they should seek guidance from the appropriate manager.

Contracting out of Services

Employees should follow agreed Trust protocols for the award of contracts to external providers.

Employees should adhere to Trust rules regarding the separation of roles in the procurement / tendering process.

In particular care should be taken to ensure competition between prospective contractors is fair and open and that all competing parties are treated equally.

Employees should ensure that preferential treatment is not shown to current / former employees or partners, close relatives or friends / associates in the award of contracts.

Employees must not accept any form of financial or other inducement which may be offered by a potential contractor. All such approaches should be reported to the Headteacher/ COO.

Confidential information relating to the tendering process must not be disclosed to any unauthorised party or organisation.

Gifts and Hospitality

Employees must not act in a way which might compromise the Trust's integrity by accepting a gift or hospitality in circumstances where it could influence, or be seen to influence, that person's actions or decisions.

A gift will include any goods or services which you are given for free, at a personally discounted rate or on terms not generally available to the public.

Hospitality is the offer of food or drink, accommodation, entertainment or access to events on terms not generally available to the public.

Employees, which for the purposes of this section includes SLAB and Trust members, volunteers and any other individual acting on behalf of the school, should not accept significant gifts or offers of hospitality from parents / carers, pupils / students, actual or potential contractors or outside suppliers which could compromise the individual or the Trust.

Employees should notify the appropriate manager should they receive any unsolicited gifts and return the item with a polite refusal letter to the sender. A record should be kept of all gifts which are received.

Employees can accept small tokens of appreciation which have no substantial financial value (less than £25) such as presents from pupils / students at the end of term, these do not have to be declared. Any gift accepted on behalf of the school must be passed to the appropriate manager, who will decide whether it is appropriate to accept it.

Employees may only accept an offer of hospitality if there is a genuine need to do so in order to represent the Trust in the community. Employees should discuss any invitations with the appropriate manager.

As a general guide, if the gift or offer of hospitality appears to come with an expectation of something in return, or in any way feels uncomfortable, it should be politely rejected.

Where the Trust receives sponsorship of a Trust activity / event, care should be taken to ensure that this does not infer that the sponsor will receive preferential treatment in any future contracting / tendering process. An employee or their partner, family member or friend must not benefit from the sponsorship.

Appointments

An employee should not be involved in a recruitment process or promotion decision where one of the applicants is a relative, partner or close friend, or where a referral payment could be made in the case of a new appointment.

Political Activity

Employees may engage in political activity outside of work – however they should not allow personal / political views to interfere with their duties. Any activity should be compatible with the employee’s responsibility as a role model to pupils / students.

Where an employee is involved in political activity outside of work – care must be taken to ensure that it is clear that any opinions expressed are personal and that the individual is not acting on behalf of / representing the Trust.

Intellectual Property

Any intellectual property created by an employee during the course of their employment will be considered the property of the Trust, unless specific permission is granted to the employee to have ownership of such materials.

APPENDIX 1

Code of conduct – confirmation of compliance

Please sign the declaration below and return this to HR

I hereby confirm that I have read, understood, and agree to comply with the provisions of the Trust's code of conduct.

Should I have any queries about any aspect of the code, or I am unclear of the Trust's expectations I will discuss these with the Headteacher, my Line Manager, or appropriate manager as appropriate at the earliest opportunity.

Name: _____ Job Title: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

(It is recommended that employees should re-read this policy on an annual basis to ensure they are familiar with any changes which have been made)

APPENDIX 2

List of relevant policies/procedures

Other relevant documents to be read in conjunction with the code of conduct:

- Disciplinary Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Finance Procedures Manual
- Health and Safety Policy
- ICT Acceptable Use Procedures
- Procedures for Managing Allegations Against Staff
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Sexual Harassment Policy