

## SRS Code Of Conduct

### 1. Introduction

In performing their duties, Samuel Rhodes School employees must act with integrity, honesty, impartiality and objectivity. The public is entitled to expect the highest standards of conduct from all school employees. This Code is to be given to existing employees and new employees when they commence employment. If employees have any doubts or queries about what is acceptable conduct, or about anything else in this Code, they should raise these with their direct line manager, the School Business Manager or the Headteacher.

### 2. School Ethos/ Vision

#### LEARNING FOR LIFE

Samuel Rhodes School is a safe and creative learning environment where children can enjoy, learn and excel.

We support each other to play a positive role in a changing society and lead a fulfilled life.

#### SRS Values

SRS Values represents the core areas of 'Learning for Life' that enable our young people to succeed.

We believe that each area has importance in building our young people's ability to transition into adulthood and become valued members of society.



### INDEPENDENCE

- Engaging in the community and making informed choices
- Developing problem solving and risk assessment skills
- Always taking steps towards independent living



### AMBITION

- Supporting everyone to achieve their full potential
- Building the desire to achieve future goals
- Growing confidence and feel good about success



### SAFETY

- Feeling safe to make mistakes and learn from them
- Learning appropriate social skills in a secure environment
- Building knowledge of how to keep safe in the community and online



### EQUALITY

- Approaching diversity with tolerance & acceptance
- Celebrating uniqueness
- Growing an understanding of human rights



### RESPECT

- Developing healthy and meaningful friendships
- Feeling appreciation for self and others
- Speaking and listening to each other with kindness and patience



### RESILIENCE

- Taking on increasing challenge
- Developing emotional regulation skills
- Overcoming barriers to life and learning

### 3. The purpose of the Code and its status

The Code sets out the core values for acceptable standards of behaviour by employees and the consequences of any failure to meet the standards. It aims to ensure:

- employees are clear about the school's standards and expectations of them
- employees deal appropriately with difficult and/or potentially compromising situations
- employees recognise their individual, collective and corporate responsibility to promote and encourage high standards of conduct
- that the pupils and school community receive the best service
- that the school community is treated respectfully at all times
- improved management of the school and its services

March 2023

This Code cannot cover all of the school's expectations of its employees. The school could not possibly function without its employees' loyalty, honesty, competence, integrity, professionalism and simple common sense. All these are implicit in the Code.

Headteachers have a particular responsibility to make sure that employees are aware of the Code and its requirements, including its implications for their duties and that working arrangements, practices and policies support and are compatible with the Code.

The Code forms part of employees' contracts of employment and any breaches of the Code may result in action being taken under the relevant schools' procedures; for example, misconduct, criminal convictions, and competence.

In addition to this policy, all staff employed under Teachers' Terms and Conditions of Employment have a statutory obligation to adhere to the 'Teachers' Standards' and, in relation to this policy, Part 2 of the Teachers' Standards - Personal and Professional Conduct.

Employees are expected to comply with the Code in all aspects of their work and in their lives outside work insofar as they may compromise their employment by the school.

The Code does not place restrictions on employees' trade union activities, provided that these are reasonable, authorised by senior trade union branch officers, and are within the trade union facilities agreement.

The Code refers to a number of school policies and procedures in respect of behaviour and the ways in which employees are required to work. Employees should refer to these for greater details on matters referred to in the Code. School policies and procedures can be found on the staff SharePoint.

#### **4. Who is covered by the Code**

The Code applies to all employees of Samuel Rhodes School.

Headteachers have a particular role and responsibility for assisting employees to meet the school's standards and for taking action where standards are not met. Managers must take steps to ensure that they and all employees for whom they are responsible comply with the requirement of the Code.

The Code is addressed to school employees. However, the school also expects that anyone it engages or contracts to carry out any of its functions will abide by the spirit of the Code. These include:

- school governors

March 2023

- consultants and their employees
- contractors and their employees
- the Council's partners and their employees
- employees of other organisations who have been seconded to work for the school
- agency staff
- volunteers and individuals undertaking work placements or apprenticeships or similar roles

In the event that the Code is breached, consideration will be given to terminating, or seeking compensation under the contract or other arrangement between the consultant/contractor/outside organisation and the school, and/or referring the matter to the police or other relevant regulatory body, dependent on the circumstances.

The Code will apply to employees in education establishments where it has been adopted by the governing body.

## **5. Standards, service delivery and equality**

In addition to high levels of performance, a good image is vital for the school so that its residents and businesses can have confidence in the services provided.

As public servants, school employees have a particular responsibility to look after public resources and property and their conduct inside and outside work must never undermine the trust and confidence the public and the school need to have in them to carry out their work properly and conscientiously.

All employees who work in schools set examples of behaviour and conduct which can be copied by pupils. All employees must, therefore, demonstrate high standards of conduct in order to encourage our pupils to do the same.

Employees are the schools' "ambassadors". It is vital, therefore, that the public finds them polite, competent, professional, friendly, helpful and trustworthy.

### **5.1 High standards**

At all times employees are required to:

- give the highest possible standard of service to the school community and make service delivery their main priority
- do nothing inside or outside their working hours which could undermine public confidence in them as school employees and/or in the school
- work in the best interests of the school and the community it serves, in line with school policy

March 2023

- do nothing which results in the school (or any other public authority) being denied revenue to which it is entitled
- follow school policies and procedures, and meet laid down standards

## 5.2 Equality Issues

Samuel Rhodes school is an equal opportunities service provider and employer. **No form of discrimination is tolerated.** All school employees have a responsibility to promote and comply with the school's equal opportunities policies and practices and with the requirements of the law.

School employees are required to:

- make sure that the school's equality policies are complied with and carried out.
- treat all members of the community, parents, pupils and other employees fairly and equally regardless of their sex, race, colour, national or ethnic origin, sexuality, religion, age, disability or marital status
- assist all members of the community, parents and pupils so that they can benefit from the services on offer
- never display in the workplace, nor allow others to display, sexist or racist material, or material which would normally be considered offensive taking into account the school's equality policy.
- tell their line manager/coach or Headteacher about anything which may be discrimination, bullying and harassment or victimisation of themselves, colleagues, parents, pupils or members of the community

The Headteacher has a particular responsibility for making sure that:

- services are delivered in a manner which effectively meets the Council's/schools equality policies and that all groups within the community have equal access
- employees, pupils and parents can enjoy an environment which is free of any discrimination
- the Headteacher/Governor is informed about any incidents and/or complaints about discrimination, victimisation, or harassment

## 5.3 Attendance and Punctuality

Employees must report promptly at the appointed time at their designated workplaces, at the start of their working day and after any authorised breaks.

Employees who are prevented from reporting for work because of illness and/or injury must comply with the sickness notification/certification requirements detailed in their contracts of employment, school policy and/or as directed by their Headteacher.

March 2023

School employees must arrive in good time in order to start work promptly. Employees are expected to be punctual in relation to all appointments and engagements unless there are exceptional circumstances. Lateness for appointments with people who do not work for the school (e.g., parents) reflects badly on the school.

Employees who are going off-site for a significant period of time (i.e., more than 30 minutes, (other than their lunch break), during normal working hours, must ensure:

- that a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) is aware in line with the school's policy.
- swipe/sign out and swipe/sign in on return (where applicable)

Headteachers must:

- make sure that proper arrangements are in place for employees to record their start and finish times at work and their whereabouts including working from home or offsite.

#### 5.4 Criminal Convictions/ Charges/ Investigations

School employees must:

- show the original DBS certificate to the school before they take up post or as soon as practicable afterwards, including for DBS re-checks
- keep the Headteacher informed of progress if they are investigated and/or charged in connection with a criminal offence
- tell their Headteacher immediately if they are convicted of any criminal offence, bound over, or cautioned about activities inside or outside work, including road traffic offences

Employees are required to report any criminal activities by colleagues in the course of their employment.

#### 5.5 Behaviour at work

The way employees behave at work directly affects the service, colleagues, the workplace and the public's perception about the school.

Employees must always:

- Show respect for the school's community, public and colleagues and behave in a way which cannot reasonably cause offence
- exercise self-control, never behave in an aggressive and angry manner, nor use foul and abusive language.

## 5.6 Dress

Samuel Rhodes School has a strict and well-respected uniform for pupils. As part of the ethos of the school staff should present a positive and professional image to all our pupils at all times.

The manner in which employees present themselves at work directly affects the school's image, their colleagues, parents and the service and should be appropriate for the work they are carrying out for the school. Therefore, employees are required to:

- Be clean, tidy, presentable and professional at all times and comply with the requirements of the school in relation to appropriate dress for their service and work role
- always wear uniform or protective clothing if these have been issued, or made available for particular tasks, and make sure that these are clean and in good repair
- always have regard to the health and safety implications of what they wear e.g., wear protective clothing.

Employees may follow the traditions of their ethnic/cultural/religious background provided they are safe and appropriate to the job. This must be discussed with the Headteacher to make sure there are no health and safety or other implications. Advice should be sought from Schools HR.

The Headteacher/ line managers and middle / senior leaders must:

- Explain to all employees the importance of being dressed appropriately i.e., presenting a positive and professional image, as part of creating productive and aspirational work environment
- Meet with employees if s/he is not dressed in a way which presents a positive and professional image. If this is not resolved satisfactorily, then the school may use the disciplinary policy.

## 5.7 Name badges

Employees must always wear their name badges and lanyards at work (unless the Headteacher has specifically agreed that they may carry it instead).

## 5.8 Visitors

When arranging for visitors to come in school, employees must ensure:

- Their line manager, or the appropriate senior leader/Headteacher, is aware and gives approval. A member of the SLT will determine whether a DBS check is necessary depending on the nature of the visit.
- The visit appears on the staffroom whiteboard and/or is shared in briefing.
- The visitor adheres to the school dress code and other relevant protocols.
- Inventory system is completed with their name, the time of the visit, whom they are to meet
- They come and collect the visitor at reception when they arrive
- The visitors receive the relevant identity card and lanyard /ID sticker

March 2023

- They return the visitor to the reception area when they leave; Visitors must not be allowed to find their own way in school, and should display their visitors' badges at all times

If a visitor is seen unaccompanied in school without a badge, it is everyone's duty to challenge that person.

### 5.9 Driving

Employees who have to drive in the course of their work must:

- always drive courteously and according to the laws and rules of the road
- always make sure that vehicles are roadworthy, well-maintained, appropriately insured, taxed, and suitable for the purposes for which they are being used
- immediately advise the Headteacher if they are stopped by the police whilst driving, are involved in a road traffic accident or incurring a parking ticket in the course of their work duties
- advise their manager of any health issues which may affect their driving

### 5.10 Smoking

All employees are required to comply with the requirements of the law and with the school's no smoking policy if appropriate. The legislation makes it illegal to smoke in all public enclosed or substantially enclosed area and workplaces.

### 5.11 Alcohol, Drugs and Substance misuse

It is the school's policy that employees must not consume alcohol or take drugs (other than prescribed or over the counter drug) during working hours (including lunchtimes and other breaks) and must not work under the influence of either of these.

Employees should not present themselves at school or at work drunk or under the influence of alcohol or drugs such that their performance is diminished or otherwise unacceptable. This includes committing a drink or drug offence which could endanger anyone's safety or diminish confidence in the employee's suitability for continued employment.

Employees must consult their GPs for advice on the effects any legal medication may have on their ability to perform or conduct themselves at work, and advise the Headteacher accordingly.

Employees must inform the Headteacher if they have genuine reason to believe that a colleague may have an alcohol, drug or substance misuse problem.

March 2023

Employees who think that they may have an alcohol, drug or substance abuse problem, can speak to the Headteacher and seek support through the employee assistance programme or other support programme. Employees should also be advised to seek support through their trade union.

Employees must ensure that alcohol is not to be consumed or stored on the school premises unless under the authorisation of the Headteacher, for example for end of term social events.

### 5.12 Health and safety

All employees must:

- carry out their work in a safe and proper manner having regard at all times for their own health and safety and that of colleagues and the public
- be familiar with health and safety law, which is displayed in all workplaces, and the schools Health and Safety Policy.
- comply with the health and safety regulations relating to the particular task(s) they are carrying out
- complete the health and safety training applicable to their jobs

The Headteacher/manager must make sure that their employees work in a safe place, with safe methods, and must be familiar with the school's Health and Safety Policy and their responsibilities within it.

### 5.13 Personal financial affairs

All employees must:

- ensure they do not conduct their personal finances in a way which results in Islington Council, or another public body, being defrauded (this includes claiming Housing Benefit to which they are not entitled; failing to register for Council Tax; occupying Council property unlawfully)
- keep up to date with Council Tax, rent and service charges due to this and any other Council the Council will use any powers available to it to reclaim monies, including attachment of earnings once the relevant procedures for establishing monies to be reclaimed is complete.
- avoid being the subject of legal action which may bring the Council/school into disrepute and/or undermine the relationship of trust and confidence between the employee, the Council and the school.

Employees should note that:

- employment and payroll data held by the Council/school may be used to identify employees with debts to the Council/school, including rent, commercial rent, Council tax, leasehold service charges, Business Rates, Right-to-Buy Insurance, Housing Benefit etc.
- It is the employees' responsibility to check their pay slip and to report an overpayment or any other payment error to the school Business Manager or Headteacher. Failure to do so may potentially be treated as fraud.

## **6. Communication, internet and social media**

The school has email and internet policies and guidelines. Employees must read and sign up to these before they use email and the internet.

Employees' names, designations and service areas will be available to the public.

Communications may be intercepted where appropriate, in line with the school's policy. This may include monitoring (and recording) of telephones, the internet and email.

### **6.1 Internet, phone and safe computer use**

All employees must:

- Familiarise themselves with the school's e-mail and internet acceptable use policy
- Take all reasonable steps to prevent pupils having access to their details on social networking sites, such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat etc. (This list is not exhaustive)
- Not access Facebook or any other social networking pages of our pupils or accept pupils as 'Friends'
- Not make derogatory remarks about the school, management, colleagues, pupils, or other members of the school community, on social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat etc. (This list is not exhaustive)
- Always lock their computer if required to leave the computer unattended; Never leave a logged-on computer unattended. Never use a computer that is logged on as someone else
- Not allow pupils to have access to their mobile phone number or to their mobile phone.
- Not contact pupils via their mobile phone, but only through their parents' contact details.
- Not use their mobile phone in school other than in the staffroom or office spaces.
- Never give pupils their personal email address or contact pupils using their personal email.

It is not appropriate to use mobile phones in public areas of the school. They should only be used in the staff room and in designated staff work bases.

All staff have access to the school's server and ICT services. On logging in, all users agree to accept the school's "Acceptable Use" policy. It is important to remember that whatever activity the staff are using ICT for, staff are borrowing school equipment. The school will monitor usage and traffic across the system.

## **7. Child Protection and Pupil development**

It is the responsibility of all employees to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people. The school is committed to providing an environment where children can play, learn, develop and achieve and where they are safeguarded and are enabled to tell or communicate if they are being harmed in some

March 2023

way. The school is committed to ensuring that all staff are sensitive to issues of race, culture, gender and diversity ensuring these issues are never a barrier to sharing and reporting concerns about children.

All employees including, temporary and supply staff, volunteers and staff working on site employed by other services and agencies have a statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and must be aware of and fully conversant with the relevant school policies (Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy).

The Safeguarding and Child Protection policy, can be found at <https://www.samuelrhodes.islington.sch.uk> and in the staff SharePoint. Please ensure that you are familiar with the policy and know how to report any concerns.

In all instances where you have a concern about a child's well-being, no matter how trivial you may feel it may be, it is your duty to report this concern in line with the school's Child Protection policy. If you are unsure who to tell, then see your immediate line manager for guidance.

Employees must not give lifts to pupils in their car, unless authorised by the Headteacher or senior leadership team.

Employees must never leave pupils unattended in rooms. Always lock classrooms when you have left the room, and make sure you or an adult is the last to leave. If you discover an unlocked classroom or office, please check it is empty, lock it, and report it to the office.

Employees must only use staff toilets, and pupils must only use pupils' toilets. Adult visitors must only use the staff toilets, and child visitors must only use pupils' toilets. Disabled toilets are single cubicles and can be used by any disabled person.

Safeguarding and Child Protection training will be delivered as part of school Continuing Professional Development programme and on-going training to be developed to meet the needs of the school.

Employees must not demean or undermine pupils, their parents or carers, or colleagues.

Employees must take reasonable care of pupils under their supervision with the aim of ensuring their safety and welfare.

All the Senior Leadership Team are Designated Safeguarding Leads. The names of all Designated Safeguarding Leads can be found on the website, staff SharePoint, staffroom and reception area.

### 7.1 Pupil development

Employees must comply with school policies and procedures that support the well-being and development of pupils.

Employees must co-operate and collaborate with colleagues and with external agencies where necessary to support the development of pupils.

Employees must follow reasonable instructions that support the development of pupils.

### 7.2 Photography and filming

All employees must:

- not take school equipment, such as cameras, out of school without permission from the Headteacher/SLT, for example for a school trip.
- be clear about the purpose of the activity and about what will happen to the images when the activity is concluded
- be able to justify images of children in their possession
- avoid making images in one-to-one situations or which show a single child with no surrounding context
- ensure the child/young person understands why the images are being taken and has agreed to the activity and that they are appropriately dressed.
- only use equipment provided or authorised by the organization
- report any concerns about any inappropriate or intrusive photographs found
- always ensure they have parental permission to take and/or display photographs
- never display or distribute images of children unless parent/carer consent has been received
- never use images which may cause distress
- never use mobile telephones to take images of children
- never take images 'in secret', or take images in situations that may be construed as being secretive

### 7.3 Inappropriate teaching material / content

Employees must only show resources which are age appropriate. Employees showing films that are PG or above, must be checked beforehand to ensure that the section of the film that is being shown does not include any inappropriate scenes of a violent or sexual nature.

Employees must not allow pupils to act out / role play / discuss scenarios of a sexual nature or allow pupils to act out / role play scenes of a violent nature unless as part of a planned lesson and are checked beforehand. Professional judgement must be exercised to ensure the planned lesson, relevant teaching material and methods are age appropriate and checked with the relevant member of the school leadership team.

#### 7.4 Physical contact with pupils and use of “reasonable force”

In rare circumstances, employees may be required to use their professional judgement and exercise physical restraint on a pupil who is an immediate danger to him/herself or to others.

Employees are expected to be familiar with the school’s Behaviour Management policy Including Statement Of Behaviour which must be followed at all times. The policy, can be found at <https://www.samuelrhodes.islington.sch.uk> and in the staff SharePoint.

Physical restraint must not be used unless absolutely necessary. The types of force which are deemed by the DfE to be reasonable are:

- passive physical contact resulting from standing between two pupils
- active physical contact such as leading a pupil by the hand or arm; ushering a pupil away by placing a hand in the centre of his/her back; or, in more extreme circumstances, using appropriate restrictive holds.

Employees should not:

- bar doorways or corridors to stop a pupil leaving unless there is reason to believe the pupil is about to commit a dangerous act such as harm another pupil.
- act in temper (involve another staff member if you fear loss of control)
- Involve other pupils in the restraint
- Touch or hold the pupil in sexual areas
- Twist or force limbs back against a joint
- Bend fingers or pull hair
- Hold the pupil in a way which will restrict blood flow or breathing e.g., around the neck
- Slap, punch, kick or trip up the pupil

If employees have recourse to use physical restraint, they must report this immediately to the Senior Leadership Team, and the parent/carer. This must also be recorded in the positive intervention book.

#### 8. Relationships at work

People who work together often form personal friendships and, in some cases, romantic relationships. While personal friendships at work are generally to be encouraged, a romantic relationship between colleagues who work together can sometimes result in actual or potential difficulties. Where there is the possibility that such a relationship could interfere with an individual's objectivity when making decisions or behaviour at work, the matter becomes the rightful concern of the organisation and the steps outlined below must be taken.

Similar problems can arise if two employees who are related to one another work together, either in the same department or in positions requiring that they liaise and cooperate over work matters and the points below also applies to this circumstance.

### 8.1 Employees' relationships with Councillors and School Governors

Where relationships occur, the employee must bring it to the attention of the Headteacher/Chair of Governors personally and in confidence so that the implications for the Council/school can be discussed and action taken to avoid any difficulties it may present.

Employees must not contact school governors over the headteacher about personal employment issues. They should speak to their headteacher and go through established procedures such as appraisal, grievance and appeal procedures. Employees can also seek advice from their trade union.

This does not interfere with the employees' rights, if they are Islington residents, to correspond with their ward Councillors or constituency MPs on ward and constituency matters.

### 8.2 Managers' relationships with their staff member

Where such a relationship occurs, the manager/Headteacher must bring it to the attention of the Headteacher/Chair of Governors personally and in confidence so that the implications for the school can be discussed and action taken to avoid any difficulties it may present. This includes segregation of duties.

### 8.3 Relationships between an employee and their child/grandchild

Employees are expected to conduct themselves in a professional, sensitive and confidential manner at all times.

Where a relationship exists between an employee and their child/grandchild (whether a colleague or a child enrolled at the school), the employee must bring it to the attention of the Headteacher/Chair of Governors personally and in confidence so that the implications for the school can be discussed and action taken to avoid any difficulties it may present. This includes segregation of duties.

### 8.4 Conflicts of interest arising from any connection employees or their close relations may have with a contractor/partner

Managers must make sure that ethical standards are embedded in the schools' relationships with stakeholders, including outside bodies and partners. External suppliers and service providers are required to operate to public sector standards e.g., not offering or providing inappropriate gifts or hospitality to school employees or governors.

March 2023

Contracts must be awarded on merit, by fair competition against other tenderers in accordance with the school's procurement rules, and no special favour must be shown to businesses run by, for example, friends, partners and relatives.

Employees, who have responsibility for engaging or supervising contractors, or have any other official relationship with them, must declare any past or current relationships with them (including private, professional and/or domestic relationships) to the Headteacher or Chair of Governors.

Employees must notify their Headteacher or Chair of Governors of any relationship (business or private) they or a close relative may have, or may have had, with an external contractor or potential contractor, so that the implications for the school can be discussed and action taken to avoid any difficulties it may present.

#### **8.5 Conflicts of interest arising at School Governor meetings**

All school governor meeting agenda contain a standard item for governors, associates and any other person present to disclose any personal or business interests that they may have in any agenda item.

Employees must declare a financial or non-financial interest in an issue if they are advising or otherwise participating in debate (this does not negate the need to make a written notification in the school's register of pecuniary interests).

#### **8.6 Employees who are unsure whether or not to disclose information**

Employees must ask their headteacher/chair of governors for advice if there is any doubt as to whether or not information should be disclosed. Advice can also be sought from Schools HR and the trade union.

### **9. Selection and recruitment (including equal opportunities) and other employment matters**

Employees involved in the recruitment and appointment of employees, must ensure that appointments are made on the basis of merit. In order to avoid any accusation of bias, employees must not be involved in any selection process involving a prospective employee, to whom they are related or with whom they have a close personal relationship outside work.

All school appointments must be made on merit and in accordance with the schools' Safer Recruitment' Guidance.

#### **9.1 Providing references**

References given to other employers on behalf of the school must be signed by the headteacher, or other nominated senior manager, on school headed paper. Employees may give personal references, but these must never be on school stationery and must not imply that they are school references. Any personal reference must make it clear that it is provided on a personal basis.

## 10. Outside commitments and personal interests - Conflicts of interest between employees' activities outside and inside work

Employees must not allow their private interests or beliefs to conflict with their professional duty.

Employees off duty hours are their personal concern, but they must not allow private interests to interfere with their school duties or put themselves in a position where they may appear to conflict.

Employees must:

- inform the Headteacher or Chair of Governors of any financial and non-financial interest the employee may have, if they think that it might bring about some conflict with their work
- inform the headteacher or Chair of Governors of any out-of work activities which interfere with his or her ability to perform his or her professional duties, is not in the school's best interests, undermines public confidence in the school's affairs or might potentially bring the school into disrepute;
- report any family tie, or other relationship, with an organisation (or people who work for that organisation) if the employee, in any way, provides advice to governors or senior management on the management or funding of that organisation or is involved in the administration of the contract or other arrangement governing the school's relationship with the organisation.

### 10.1 Conduct outside of school hours - propriety and behaviour of staff

All school staff have a responsibility to maintain public confidence in their ability to safeguard the welfare and best interests of children and young people. Their conduct inside and outside work must never undermine the trust and confidence the public and the school need to have in them to carry out their work properly and conscientiously, they should be aware that behaviour in their personal lives may impact upon their work with children and young people.

This means that staff should not:

- Behave in a manner which would lead any reasonable person to question their suitability to work with children or act as a role model
- Make or encourage others to make, unprofessional personal comments which scapegoat, demean or humiliate, or which might be interpreted as such

The school has no immediate jurisdiction over the activities that staff undertake outside of school hours and off the premises. However, this advice is aimed at minimising the risk of accusations of unprofessional or unsafe conduct. In particular:

- Be aware of the content you post and access on social networking sites such as Facebook. Be aware that content you posted in the past can still be accessed by others and could compromise your integrity

March 2023

- be cautious when out socialising in the local area
- conduct yourself with dignity and propriety on public transport

School staff are seen as role models for young people, whether we are at work or not. We have a duty to maintain high levels of confidence from the school community about our ability to keep children safe and our ability to guide young people to make positive life choices.

## **11. Financial procedures and use of financial resources**

Appropriate employees must:

- Ensure that they use any public funds entrusted to them in a responsible and lawful manner
- always try to obtain value for money and avoid legal challenge to the school
- be conversant with and comply with the Council's Scheme of Delegation.

Headteachers must make sure that their employees are aware of and comply with the Schools' Financial Regulations. They must ensure that the financial procedures and practices for which they are responsible conform to the Council's regulations and are secure against theft and fraud.

Headteachers must ensure that employees working in a post which has been identified as one in which work routinely involves them in the decision-making process, for example, in respect of procurement by the school, must complete the standard declaration of interests form within 28 days of taking up their appointment. These employees should be asked to review and update their declaration of interest annually.

### **11.1 Best value, tendering, outsourcing, partnerships etc.**

Employees who are involved in tendering, outsourcing, partnerships, the awarding of contracts, dealing with contractors, etc. must:

- be aware of and follow the procurement rules set out in the relevant procedures
- be clear on the separation of client and service provider roles
- not disclose confidential information to any unauthorized party or organization
- exercise fairness and impartiality when dealing with potential service providers
- not participate in any employee/management buy-out of Council or school services without the written express approval of the Council/school or within two years of leaving employment of the Council/school
- not show special favour to current or former employees or their partners, friends, relatives, or associates in outsourcing to businesses run by them in a senior or relevant managerial capacity
- discuss any problems with their Headteacher or chair of Governors if they are unclear whether or not they may be compromised in relation to the awarding of contracts

## 12. School property

Employees must:

- only use school property, vehicles or other facilities for school purposes and according to instructions
- not remove school property, including laptops and phones, from school premises unless authorised to do so
- secure school property against theft/loss/damage; ensuring that valuable items such as keys, money, credit cards, mobiles, wallets, personal bags, laptops and other valuable items are looked after properly and never left unattended even for short periods
- report any theft/loss/damage of school property
- never hand school keys or swipe cards to pupils.
- return school keys, swipe cards and any loaned equipment to the admin team should they leave the employment of the school.

The loss or theft of any computer or confidential data must be reported immediately to the Data Protection Office (DPO) and the headteacher or School Business Manager.

The Headteacher must inform the Governing Body/Chief Internal Auditor of any theft of school property and s/he will advise on whether or not the police should be involved.

The school's property includes its "Intellectual property" which includes inventions, creative writings and drawings, including those created by an employee in the course of their duties.

The school does not accept responsibility for loss of or damage to personal property or school property in the care of an individual colleague. Cars, bicycles and other means of personal transport are parked or left on the campus at the owner's risk.

## 13. Gifts, rewards and sanctions

Although school staff may receive 'thank you' gifts from pupils at the end of the term, it is serious misconduct for employees to corruptly receive or give any gift, loan, fee, reward or advantage for doing, or not doing, anything in connection with their duties. This also applies to showing favour or disfavour. If it is alleged that an employee has corruptly accepted such a reward it will be for her/him to demonstrate that this is not the case.

Hospitality includes drinks, meals, entertainment, overnight accommodation, travel and holidays, but not a lift in a private or company car or in a taxi, or light refreshment in the course of duties.

The following rules apply to any gifts and hospitality, including those provided on a basis where employees reimburse all or any part of the costs.

March 2023

Employees must not accept or solicit from any member of the public or school community with whom the school has had, is having, or may in the future have any dealings:

- a) any gift (other than an inexpensive seasonal gift, such as a calendar or diary for use in the office); or
- b) any hospitality without the written authorisation of their Headteacher or Chair of Governors.

The Headteacher and Chair of Governors will not accept or authorise the acceptance of any such hospitality unless they are satisfied that the hospitality is not offered with any intention to corrupt, or could be seen to be intended to corrupt, and its acceptance is in the interests of the Council/school. As a general rule, participation in activities paid for by firms outside school working hours or whilst on leave is not considered to be commensurate with employment with the Council/school.

All employees must record any gift or hospitality they are offered or receive with a value of £25 or more or exceeding such other limits as notified from time to time. This includes any gift or hospitality that is declined or donated, for example to school fundraising events.

Staff should not solicit or accept **any gift, loan, fee, hospitality or other reward** which influences the way in which they carry out their duties. They should not influence or be influenced unfairly in the way they carry out their duties by ties of kinship or friendship, or by some other association or loyalty.

### 13.1 Rewards and sanction

Employees should use only the rewards and sanctions as outlined in the school's agreed Behaviour for Learning policy. For example, the following sanctions are not part of our agreed policy:

- Writing lines
- Standing in the corner of a room
- Standing outside the classroom

Employees should not give gifts to pupils. However, if pupils are on occasion rewarded with small prizes such as chocolate, the employee's line manager should be made aware of the reasons for the prize.

### 14. Sponsorship giving and receiving

Where an outside organisation wishes to sponsor a school activity, whether by invitation, tender, negotiation or voluntarily, the basic conventions concerning acceptance of gifts or hospitality apply. Particular care must be taken when dealing with contractors or potential contractors.

Where the school wishes to sponsor an event or service, no employee nor any partner, spouse or relative must benefit from such sponsorship, directly or indirectly, without there being full disclosure to Headteacher and Governors of any such interest. Similarly, where the school through sponsorship, grant aid, financial or

other means, gives support in the community, employees must ensure that impartial advice is given and there is no conflict of interest involved.

## **15. Confidentiality and disclosure of information**

Although the school aims to operate in an open and transparent way, some information held by the school is confidential or sensitive and therefore not appropriate to a wide audience and the school may be subject to statutory or common law obligations to keep it confidential. On the other hand, the school is also subject to obligations to release information in some circumstances, for example under the Freedom of Information Act.

### **15.1 Employees' responsibilities for confidential information**

The Headteacher must make sure that they have secure systems in their work place to safeguard confidential information and that employees maintain confidentiality at all times. They must also comply with the school's policies and practices under the prevailing data protection legislation in force from time to time.

Employees must:

- be aware of the implications of the data protection legislation on the use, maintenance, transfer and disclosure of personal information about employees and the public
- not disclose any confidential information (including intellectual property) to anyone outside the Council/school, and make sure that this information is kept securely this applies while working for the Council/school and after they leave
- not disclose confidential information to colleagues unless there is proper authority and must take all reasonable steps to protect and safeguard confidential documents etc. particularly if they need to be taken outside the usual workplace

### **15.2 Personal information about colleagues**

Employees must keep personal details and work records of other employees confidential, and must not reveal these to third parties without authority, or unless the permission of the employees concerned has been obtained, or where it is required by law.

### **15.3 Giving information to the media**

Under no circumstances should employees communicate directly with the media (e.g., national and local papers, press agencies, radio, television stations, professional journals) about their work, or matters concerning the Council/school, unless specifically authorised to do so by the Headteacher/Chair of governors. Employees must refer any approach by the media for an interview, an article and/or comment on Council/school affairs, to the Headteacher or Council's Communications Officers.

March 2023

Nothing in these paragraphs prevents senior trade union officials from contacting the media in relation to appropriate trade union activities.

**16. Malpractice/ fraud/ corruption/ whistleblowing (Public Interest Disclosure Act)**

Where an employee becomes aware of activities which the employee believes to be illegal, improper, unethical or otherwise inconsistent with this Code, the employee should report the matter under the School's Whistleblowing Policy. This policy sets out the protection available to employees who make disclosures and the protection available under the law.

Current version reviewed by: Mo Maker

Next review date: March 2024