



THE DWASTRE

Education Trust

Policy Name: Code of Conduct

Author:

HR Committee

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Publish on Trust website:

Yes

Publish on Academy websites:

Yes

Signed:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Gary O'Kall.", is enclosed in a thin blue rectangular border.

Chair of Directors



Code of Conduct

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Aims, scope and principles

This policy aims to set and maintain standards of conduct that we expect all adults to follow. The policy applies to:

- Trust Members, Directors, and local governors
- all teaching and other staff (whether paid or unpaid, employed or self-employed and whether or not employed directly by the Trust)
- external contractors providing services to pupils on behalf of the Trust
- trainee teachers and other trainees/apprentices
- volunteers
- any other individuals who work for or provide services on behalf of or for the Trust to include but not limited to all those detailed in the single central record (as amended).

Thedwastre Education Trust aims to ensure our schools are an environment where everyone is safe, happy and treated with respect. School staff have an influential position in the school, and must act as role models for pupils by consistently demonstrating high standards of behavior in line with this Code of Conduct.



- 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, Members, Directors, Governors and volunteers to also act with personal and professional integrity, respecting the safety and wellbeing of others.
- Church Schools expect all staff to act in a way that supports the Christian ethos and spiritual life of the school.

Failure to follow the Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action being taken, as set out in our Disciplinary Policy and Procedures.

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 the Trust and its pupils.

Employees are expected to uphold the following principles:

- **Selflessness:** your decisions must be taken in terms of the values and mission of the Trust/ School and not in order to gain financial or other material benefits
- **Integrity:** you must not place yourself in a situation where your position is compromised.
- **Objectivity:** all decisions must be made on merit alone
- **Accountability:** you must accept accountability for your decisions and actions
- **Openness:** you should be as open as possible about your decisions and actions
- **Honesty:** you should declare any private interests relating to your duties and take lawful steps to resolve any conflicts to ensure that public interest is protected
- **Leadership:** you must support and promote these principles by example
- **Conduct:** you must avoid bringing the Trust / School into disrepute (e.g. by the use of social networks or the internet)
- **Respect:** you must treat others with respect

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, staff/pupil relationships and communications, including the use of social media. This policy also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

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 where applicable

All Adults as appropriate to the role and/or job description of the individual, must:



- place the well-being and learning of pupils at the centre of their professional practice
- have high expectations for all pupils, be committed to addressing underachievement, and work to help pupils progress regardless of their background and personal circumstances
- treat pupils fairly and with respect, take their knowledge, views, opinions and feelings seriously, and value diversity and individuality
- model the characteristics they are trying to inspire in pupils, including enthusiasm for learning, a spirit of enquiry, honesty, tolerance, social responsibility, patience, and a genuine concern for other people
- respond sensitively to the differences in the home backgrounds and circumstances of pupils, recognising the key role that parents and carers play in pupils' education
- seek to work in partnership with parents and carers, respecting their views and promoting understanding and co-operation to support the young person's learning and well-being in and out of school
- reflect on their own practice, develop their skills, knowledge and expertise, and adapt appropriately to learn with and from colleagues
- ensure that the same professional standards are always applied regardless of culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity

Safeguarding

All 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 must familiarise themselves with our 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 safeguarding policy and procedures are available to all staff, parents and visitors and published on our school and Trust websites. All staff and volunteers will be inducted to ensure they have a thorough understanding of our safeguarding policies and procedures with regular (at least annual) updates.

In addition to behaviours outlined elsewhere in this Code and, the types of abuse and neglect set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education DfE, the following is a non-exhaustive list of some further behaviours which would be a cause for concern:

An Adult who:

- Allows a pupil/young person to be treated badly; pretends not to know it is happening
- Gossips/shares information inappropriately
- Demonstrates inappropriate discriminatory behaviour and/or uses inappropriate language
- Dresses in a way which is inappropriate for the job role
- Does not treat pupils fairly - demonstrates favouritism
- Demonstrates a lack of understanding about personal and professional boundaries
- Uses his/her position of trust to intimidate, threaten, coerce or undermine
- Appears to have an inappropriate social relationship with a pupil or pupils
- Appears to have special or different relationships with a pupil or pupils
- Seems to seek out unnecessary opportunities to be alone with a pupil

Any behaviour in breach of this Code of Conduct by employees may result in action under our Disciplinary Procedure. Such behaviour may constitute gross misconduct and, as such, may result in summary dismissal. The Board of Directors will take a strict approach to serious breaches of this Code.

An employee who fails to bring a matter of concern to the attention of senior management and/or the relevant agencies is likely to be subject to disciplinary action.



Staff/pupil relationships

Staff must 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 in to 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 (other than small gestures to a whole class for example) are not acceptable.

If a staff member is concerned at any point that an interaction between themselves and a pupil may be misinterpreted, this should be reported to their line manager or the headteacher immediately.

Staff/parent/carers relationships

It is acknowledged that Adults may have genuine friendships and social contact with parents or carers of pupils, independent of the professional relationship. Adults should, however, inform senior management of the following:

- any relationship with a parent/carers where this extends beyond the usual parent/carers/professional relationship;
- any regular social contact they have with a pupil or parent/carers, which could give rise to concern; and
- any requests or arrangements where parents/carers wish to use their services outside of the workplace e.g. babysitting, tutoring.

Adults should always seek approval for any planned social contact with pupils or parents/carers with senior colleagues, for example when it is part of a reward scheme. If a parent/carers seeks to establish social contact, or if this occurs coincidentally, the Adult should exercise his or her professional judgment and should ensure that all communications are transparent and open to scrutiny.

Some employees may, as part of their professional role, be required to support a parent or carers. If that person comes to depend upon the employee or seeks support outside of their professional role this should be discussed with senior management and where necessary referrals made to the appropriate support agency.



Staff relationships

It is understood that sometimes staff, Governors, Directors and Members form close relationships which sometimes extend beyond professional relationships or friendships. Where this is the case it is important that such relationships are declared using the Declaration of Interest form and through discussion with your Headteacher or CEO as necessary to seek advice on managing this relationship. Where there is a line management responsibility for the other person or a position of influence, it is especially important that this is declared at an early stage to avoid any potential conflict of interest or accusations of favoritism etc.

Criminal Charges and Convictions

The Trust requires all applicants to disclose criminal convictions, whether committed in the UK or elsewhere.

Employees must:

- Notify the Trust in writing if charged with any criminal offence or if convicted of any criminal offence; this includes cautions.
- If charged with an offence, advise the Trust as the employer immediately after being charged (i.e. next working day).

It should be noted that the term 'conviction' includes a finding of guilt, regardless of whether or not a conviction is recorded. Failure to notify the Trust in either case will constitute grounds for disciplinary action.

Communication and social media

Communication between pupils and Adults, by whatever method, should take place within clear and explicit professional boundaries. This includes the wider use of technology such as mobile phones, tablets, text messages, emails, instant messages, websites, social media such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, chat-rooms, forums, blogs, apps such as Whatsapp, gaming sites, digital cameras, videos, web-cams and other hand held devices.

- School staff's 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 attempt to contact 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 parents/carer's written consent.
- Staff will adhere to the school's e-safety policy and Acceptable Use Policies.

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.

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



Mobile Phones

Personal Mobiles - employees are not permitted to make/receive calls/texts during work time where children are present. (This excludes break times as long as the call is made away from children and only when an employee is not on duty.).

Employees should ensure that personal mobiles are silent at all times whilst in classrooms with children and in staffrooms including during staff meetings or training. They should not be left on display and should be kept in a secure place away from pupils.

Staff are not permitted to use recording equipment on their mobile phones. (Please read Acceptable Use policy).

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 without the relevant authority
- 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 is at risk of harm.

Examples of breach of confidence include but not limited to:

- Ill-considered gossip whether with colleagues or outsiders which may be misconstrued and re-quoted
- Exploitation of confidential information for personal gain
- Premature and/or unauthorised disclosure to other parties of policy proposals, with the object of generating adverse publicity e.g. to the press or other interest groups.

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. Employees must:

- Ensure that public funds are used in a responsible and lawful manner
- Strive to ensure value for money to the Trust and to avoid legal challenge to the Trust
- Ensure compliance with the Academies Financial Handbook and Financial Regulations Manual.

The acceptance of gifts and/or hospitality by employees must be treated with extreme caution. No offer of a gift or inducement, whether made at specific occasions (e.g. at Christmas) or casually, should be accepted when the gift is made by, or indirectly by, a person, firm or organisation which, to the knowledge of the employee, has or seeks to do business of any kind with an Academy or the Trust, or to have an interest in its decisions. Gifts to individuals from individuals or companies with a value of more than £25 must be declared and recorded on the gifts and hospitality register within each school.

The receipt of minor articles, often by way of trade advertisements, which will be used on an Academy's or Trust's business (e.g. diaries, calendars, office requisites, etc., which are customarily distributed at Christmas and, occasionally, at other times) is acceptable.

If employees are in any doubt, they should seek guidance from the Headteacher or CEO before accepting any gifts or hospitality offered.



Employees should also refrain from making any gifts to external organisations or to the employees of organisations which provide services to an Academy/Trust or which are potential providers of such services.

Staff must not accept bribes.

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

Dress code

A person's dress and appearance are matters of personal choice, self-expression, religious and cultural customs. However, adults must maintain an appropriate standard of dress and personal appearance at work which promotes a positive and professional image. Clothing and footwear must be safe and clean and take account of health and safety considerations.

Adults must ensure they are dressed in ways which are appropriate to their role and not likely to be viewed as offensive, revealing or sexually provocative and specifically should not distract, cause embarrassment or give rise to misunderstanding, should be religious and culturally sensitive and free of any political or otherwise contentious slogans, and not considered to be discriminatory.

Adults who dress or appear in a manner which may be considered as inappropriate could render themselves vulnerable to criticism or, where the Adult is an employee, allegations of misconduct that may lead to action under our Disciplinary Procedure.

When teaching PE, teachers, support staff and coaches must wear suitable and appropriate clothing and footwear.

Conduct outside of work

Staff will not act in a way that would bring the school/Trust, or the teaching profession into disrepute. This covers relevant criminal offences, such as violence or sexual misconduct, as well as negative comments about the school on social media.

Fitness for work

The Trust accepts that alcohol is legally and freely available. Employees must:

- Ensure that the use of alcohol out of work does not adversely affect work performance, or the health, safety or welfare of the individual or others and does not damage the Trust's image and reputation.
- Not consume or be under the influence of alcohol, use illicit drugs or other illegal substances while at work.
- Ensure that the use of any of them out of work does not adversely affect the work performance and safety of the employee or others, and does not bring the Trust into disrepute.
- Seek the advice of your doctor, if taking medication, to ensure that such medication will not impede the employee's ability to do the job (e.g. operate machinery).
- Inform the headteacher of any situations where a risk to him/herself or others may arise because of this.
- Headteachers must consider the options available for assisting employees who are required to take legally prescribed drugs and whose levels of performance has been impaired. In these circumstances, a risk assessment should be undertaken.



Health and Safety

Employees have a duty to take reasonable care of themselves and to cooperate with management under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. These responsibilities are identified in the Trust's Health and Safety Policy.

Employees are required to act at all times in accordance with this policy and generally to act in such a way to ensure their own safety and that of others.

Any action which potentially puts at risk the health and/or safety of the employee or others will be viewed seriously and may result in disciplinary action.

Links with other policies

This policy links with our policies on:

- Staff disciplinary procedures, which will be used if staff breach this code of conduct. It also sets out examples of what we deem as misconduct and gross misconduct
- Staff grievance procedures
- Safeguarding Policy
- Gifts and Hospitality Policy
- E-safety
- Acceptable Use (of IT) Policy

Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be monitored by the Chief Executive and reviewed every three years, but can be revised as needed. It will be ratified by the Board of Directors.