



# GREENWOOD ACADEMIES TRUST

## Staff Code of Conduct

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## **1. Introduction**

1.1 The 'Statutory policies for schools' guidance states that all governing bodies and proprietors of schools must have procedures for addressing staff conduct issues. The statutory guidance for schools and colleges on safeguarding children and safer recruitment contained in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' says that governing bodies and proprietors should have a staff behaviour policy. These documents are sometimes referred to as Codes of Conduct; this is the intent of this document. It has been consulted on with trade unions.

1.2 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 2012' and in relation to this policy, Part 2 of the Teachers' Standards - Personal and Professional Conduct.

There is also non-statutory advice available, such as the 'National Standards for Excellence for Headteachers' document by the Department for Education.

1.3 Everyone who comes into contact with children has a role to play in safeguarding them therefore all have a statutory obligation to comply with the Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, September 2016). In relation to safeguarding of children and child protection arrangements, this Code of Conduct has broader implications, which includes staff engaged within a child setting through third parties or employment agencies.

1.4 Reference to this Code will be made in all contracts of employment, and is available on the GAT Policy Hub. In addition, the induction programme for all newly appointed staff, volunteers and all persons coming to work on Trust premises, for example agency staff, contractors will reinforce the principles of this Code of Conduct.

1.5 Employees should be aware that a failure to comply with the following Code of Conduct could result in disciplinary action being taken, up to and including dismissal.

1.6 It is the responsibility of each employee to read and understand this Code of Conduct and the expectations it places on them in their role. If any of the provisions contained within this Code of Conduct, related codes of practice or any other policies are not fully understood employees must, in their own interests, seek clarification from their Principal or line manager.

## **2. Purpose**

2.1 A Code of Conduct is designed to give clear guidance on the standards of behaviour all employees are expected to observe. Staff working in our academies are in a unique position of influence and must adhere to behaviour that role models and sets a good example to all the young people within the academy. Each employee has an individual responsibility to maintain their reputation, and the reputation of the Academy/Trust, whether inside or outside working hours.

2.2 This Code of Conduct is not exhaustive in defining acceptable and unacceptable standards, but is written to assist staff and it is important that they take advice and guidance if necessary. In adhering to the principles underpinning this document, the Principal may have a degree of discretion in order to meet the needs of the local

context and community. Where these discretions are used, they will be documented locally and staff made aware.

- 2.3 The underlying purpose is to ensure that the Trust provides a high quality service to its students and stakeholders in accordance with the Mission Statement and to promote public confidence in the integrity of the organisation.

### **3. Scope**

This Code of Conduct applies to all employees, volunteers and all persons coming to work on Trust premises, including, for example, agency staff and contractors, and all must comply with the provisions of this Code and the Academy/Trust's policies and procedures.

The Code of Conduct does not apply to employees of external contractors and providers of services (e.g. contract cleaners, social workers). Such staff are covered by the relevant Code of Conduct of their employing body.

### **4. Standards of Personal Behaviour**

#### **4.1 Equality of opportunity**

The Trust seeks to promote inclusivity and values diversity. It also seeks to ensure that the work environment for its employees is supportive, and one where individual respect is shown to all. All members of staff and students, regardless of their gender, race, ethnic background, culture, (dis)ability, sexual orientation, age, religion, socio-economic status or any other factor will be supported and encouraged to perform to their potential.

For further information, see the Equal Opportunities Policy on the GAT Policy Hub.

#### **4.2 Harassment and bullying**

To secure an environment in which students and employees are able to flourish and to achieve their full potential, the Trust is committed to ensuring that everyone is able to work and to participate without fear of harassment, bullying or intimidation. Everyone in the Trust has a part to play by ensuring that their own behaviour, whether intentional or unintentional, does not constitute harassment. The Trust will take action against inappropriate behaviour which shows lack of respect for others or which leads people to feel threatened.

For further information, see the Disciplinary Procedure on the GAT Policy Hub.

#### **4.3 Health and safety**

The Trust places a high priority on providing a safe working and learning environment and will act positively to minimise the incidence of all workplace risks as required by the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and other associated legislation.

Employees must take care of their personal hygiene, safety and welfare, and that of other persons who may be affected by their actions. All employees must comply with the requirements of the Trust's Health and Safety policy and relevant legislation and regulations, and also ensure that students and visitors do likewise.

Fire: Employees must familiarise themselves with the fire precautions, procedures and drill routines. They must regard practice fire drills or building evacuations in a positive manner, and ensure they are perceived by students as an essential precaution to prevent risk of injury or fatality.

Fire Action Notices are posted next to each call point. Secondary Academies have a notice showing evacuation routes posted in all reception areas and habitable rooms e.g. classrooms, offices, prep rooms, staff rooms that do not have an immediate external exit. Primary Academies have them in reception areas and any habitable room that does not have an immediate external exit. Where they are in place, they must not be obscured.

For further information, see the Health and Safety Statement of Intent and Policy on the GAT Policy Hub.

#### **4.4 Security**

In the interests of security, employees must carry their ID pass whilst in Trust premises and produce it on request. There may be very rare occasion when it is necessary to search the outer clothing, bags, lockers and vehicles etc. of employees whilst on site. The Trust reserves the right to conduct this search and the employee may have a colleague in attendance whilst it takes place.

#### **4.5 Smoking**

To assist with compliance with the Health Act 2006 and to protect all employees, service users, customers and visitors from exposure to second hand smoke, smoking is banned everywhere on the Trust's grounds and in the Trust's buildings.

As an educational establishment, the Trust does not promote smoking, including electronic cigarettes, during working hours. All employees of the Trust are required to act as role models to students and therefore must not smoke in front of them. We expect employees to discourage smoking by children.

Employees who do smoke should refrain from smoking in areas close to the Trust's grounds where they may be in view of students, this includes outside the boundary of the site after working hours.

Employees are also reminded that it is a criminal offence for employees to smoke in smoke-free areas, with a fixed penalty of £50 or prosecution and a fine of up to £200.

#### **4.6 Alcohol and Substance Abuse**

The Trust prohibits the drinking of alcohol by employees and contractors in the workplace or on Trust business, except for reasonable drinking of alcohol for very special occasions, with the prior permission of the Chief Executive, Education Director or Principal, when **no** students are present.

Staff leading or participating in trips with students are not permitted to consume alcohol for the duration of the trip to ensure they are always in a case of readiness should there be an emergency. Staff must not consume or be under the influence of any alcohol when driving a vehicle on behalf of the Trust.

The consumption of alcohol and any illegal drugs, or any prescription drugs that have not been prescribed for the user, during the Academy day, including lunchtimes, whether on Academy sites or not, is not conducive to good working practices. If an employee is found to have been using these substances during the Academy day they will be sent home and may face disciplinary action.

The Trust expressly prohibits the use of any illegal drugs or any prescription drugs that have not been prescribed for the user. It is a criminal offence to be in possession of, use or distribute an illicit substance. If any such incidents take place on Trust premises or at an approved social function, they will be regarded as serious, be investigated by the Trust and may lead to disciplinary action and possible reporting to the Police.

#### **4.7 Chewing Gum**

Chewing gum is banned from Academy sites for students, therefore, employees are requested not to chew gum whilst teaching or talking to colleagues, students or parents.

#### **4.8 Gambling**

Gambling activities must not be conducted on school premises; Principal or Director discretion may be used in relation to small raffles for charitable purposes, national lottery syndicates, occasional sweepstakes etc.

#### **4.9 Dress Code**

The Trust does not operate a formal dress code for its employees, other than for those who are provided with a uniform and/or protective clothing. However, employees must ensure that their dress and footwear is appropriate for the situation in which they are working and that they present a professional image and one that reflects sensitivity to customer perceptions. This may reflect their ethnicity and lifestyle, but should not be provocative or cause offence to those with whom they have contact.

Employees who are required to wear a uniform must ensure that they do so during working hours unless advised otherwise by their manager. Uniforms must always be clean and worn in a presentable fashion. The uniforms issued must not be altered in any way without the Trust's permission.

Where uniforms are issued by the Trust, they remain the property of the Trust. Employees must take responsibility to ensure that good care is taken of them, and return any uniforms issued on the termination of employment.

Employees involved in practical activities will be provided with appropriate work wear to protect their own clothes from damage, known as Person Protective Equipment (PPE). Where employees are provided with PPE this must be worn as required by law, by Trust rules, by any risk assessment or by their manager. Failure to wear PPE as provided is a breach of Health and Safety regulations and employees may be subject to disciplinary action.

Where an employee's appearance is, in the Principal's or Director's view, unacceptable, the employee will be required to return home to change. In these

circumstances, the employee will not be paid for the duration of their absence from work and may result in disciplinary action.

#### **4.10 Continuing Professional Development (CPD)**

The Trust is committed to providing employees with high quality CPD. Appropriate and agreed support that is based upon personal objectives, development needs and on the objectives of the Academy Development Plan will be provided by the Trust. Periodically, employees will be required to attend certain training activities.

#### **4.11 Conflict of Interest**

The Trust does not seek to preclude employees unreasonably from undertaking additional employment but you are required to devote your full time, attention and abilities to your duties during your working hours and to act in the best interests of the Academy/Trust at all times. If you do seek to carry out a secondary employment, you must seek the written consent of the Principal/Director, and after consideration this may be declined if it is viewed to interfere with the performance of your duties or conflict with the interests of the Academy/Trust.

#### **4.12 Related parties**

The Trust does not concern itself with the private lives of its staff unless they affect its effective operation or its reputation.

Employees who are relatives or who have a close personal relationship should not normally have a supervisory, assessing or authorising relationship with each other. Employees must inform their line manager if they have a close personal relationship with another employee or a client or customer of the Academy/Trust which could be considered by colleagues, students or others, as impacting on the way they conduct themselves at work. Further information can be found in the Conflict of Interest Policy.

#### **4.13 Conduct Outside of Work**

The Trust does not seek to dictate how employees conduct themselves in their personal lives outside work. However, unlawful, anti-social or other conduct by employees which may jeopardise the Academy/Trust's reputation or position may be dealt with through the disciplinary procedure. In particular, an employee accused of a criminal offence is expected to inform their line manager at the earliest opportunity and failure to do so may be dealt with through the disciplinary procedure.

### **5. Business Practices**

#### **5.1 Integrity**

Employees should display the highest possible standards of professional behaviour that is required in an educational establishment and must, therefore, avoid using inappropriate or offensive language at all times.

The Trust expects employees to follow all reasonable rules and instructions given by those supervising or managing their activities and/or work areas.

Employees should seek to co-operate with their colleagues, providing support, help and guidance as required by them and their line manager, and enable effective communication throughout the Academy/Trust.



## **5.2 Accountability**

All employees are accountable to The Trust for their actions.

They must also respect and adhere to the management structure of The Trust and their Academy/workplace setting, ensuring that management roles and decisions are not ignored or undermined.

Managers have a responsibility to hold employees accountable for agreed actions and to themselves be accountable to the employees they manage.

## **5.3 Political Views**

Employees should retain professional independent objectivity and not promote dogma or political bias to others in their working activities. Teachers must ensure partisan political views are not promoted in teaching of any subject. Where party/political issues are brought to the attention of students, the teacher will offer a balanced presentation of opposing views.

## **5.4 Trust Property**

Employees are responsible for any property belonging to the Trust that is under their control or in their possession and must take proper care of any such items. Any deliberate or negligent failure to take proper care of Trust property may be viewed as misconduct and could lead to disciplinary action, under our Acceptable Use Policy and Disciplinary Procedure.

## **5.5 Anti Bribery and Corruption**

All employees must comply with the Bribery Act 2010. The Trust will not tolerate any form of bribery by, or of, its employees, agents or consultants or any person or body acting on its behalf. A person may be guilty of an offence of bribery under this act if they offer, promise or give financial advantage or other advantage to someone; or if they request, agree or accept, or receive a bribe from another person.

Gifts from suppliers or associates of the Academy/Trust must be declared to the Principal, with the exception of "one off" token gifts from students or parents. Personal gifts from individual members of staff to students are inappropriate and could be misinterpreted.

For further information, see the Anti Bribery and Corruption Policy on the GAT Policy Hub.

## **5.6 Copyright**

All employees shall observe copyright laws on computer software, audio-visual and printed material.

## **5.7 Data Protection**

It is the responsibility of all employees to ensure the Trust's compliance with The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

For further information, see the Data Protection Policy on the GAT Policy Hub.

## **5.8 Media**

The Principal is authorised to speak or send any communication on behalf of the Academy to members of the press or broadcast media. This is to avoid any embarrassment or unfair pressure being exerted on Trust staff. This authorisation may be extended by the Principal to other SLT members. The Principal may delegate the local promotional activities to other appropriate staff in the academy. For Central Team staff this is managed and coordinated through the Operations Directorate.

## **5.9 Use of Technology, Mobile Phones and Social Media**

Social media, professional networking sites, instant communications, blog sites, and personal web sites are all useful technologies and the Trust recognises this. Everyone has the right to express themselves and communicate online in many ways.

Staff should not engage in inappropriate use of social media sites, either inside or outside of working hours, which may bring themselves, the academy or The Trust into disrepute. Staff should not have contact with any pupil through social media (unless the students are family members) and should exercise caution when posting photographs and/or comments so that professional standards are maintained and staff do not compromise themselves, the Academy or The Trust. All employees need to use good judgment on what material is presented online. For further information, see the Social Media Policy on the GAT Policy Hub.

The Trust's personal data, Intellectual property or commercially sensitive information is strictly forbidden from any online discourse except through mechanisms managed internally by the Trust's own systems.

The Trust provides internet and email facilities for work-related activities only, and any misuse may lead to disciplinary action. Staff members are permitted reasonable personal use of the internet during lunch breaks.

Mobile phones are permitted in the Academies and workplace settings; however, excessive use of mobile phones for personal communication should be avoided.

For further information, see the ICT Acceptable User Policy on the GAT Policy Hub.

## **6. Education Setting**

### **6.1 An individual's responsibilities**

Everyone in the education service shares an objective to help keep children and young people safe. All staff play an important part in safeguarding children from abuse and neglect by early identification of children who may be vulnerable or at risk of harm, and by educating children about managing risks and improving their resilience through the curriculum. All staff have three main areas of responsibility:

- Understanding procedures and protocols for promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children.
- Providing a safe environment in which children and young people can learn.
- Identifying children and young people who are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, and taking appropriate action with the aim of making sure they are kept safe both at home and in the Academy.

The overriding principle of these policies is that the welfare of the child is paramount.

## **6.2 Relationships with Pupils**

Employees must exercise discretion when dealing with students. It is inadvisable to be alone in an office or classroom with any pupil, irrespective of gender. Employees must also understand that they **must not** promise confidentiality in discussions with students. If students disclose information that might require intervention by outside agencies, employees **MUST, BY LAW**, pass this information to the DSL or a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

With recent legislation, employees must understand that any personal relationship, including contact via social networking sites, with a pupil could be regarded as an abuse of their position of trust and could ultimately lead to dismissal. Personal relationships with students are inappropriate and **would not** be countenanced by the Trust's management or Trustees.

## **6.3 Injuries and Care of Pupils**

All injuries/accidents must be reported to the main office of that Academy site immediately and an accident form (kept in the relevant main office) completed. If you consider that a pupil is unwell and can no longer remain in lesson/on site, they should be sent with a note to the main office. Under no circumstances are staff allowed to give students painkillers or any other medicine(s).

## **7. Procedures**

### **7.1 Raising matters of concern**

Employees have a right and a duty to raise concerns which they may have about breaches of the law or propriety by the Academy/Trust. This should normally be through their line manager but in circumstances where this is not appropriate they may approach the People Directorate in confidence. No individual who expresses their views in good faith and in line with this guidance will be penalised for doing so.

For further information, see the Whistleblowing Policy on the GAT Policy Hub.

### **7.2 Non-Compliance**

Any infringement of the guidelines contained in this Code of Conduct by an employee may result in appropriate disciplinary action, which will be dealt with in accordance with the disciplinary procedure.

If any employee is in any doubt with regard to the guidelines contained in this Code of Conduct, and how they apply in any particular situation, then please consult with the Principal/Director as soon as possible. It is re-emphasised that this Code is intended to be a help and to enable fairness and equity between all staff.

## **8. Maintaining this Policy**

This policy and other associated policies and procedures are reviewed every two years or sooner, if required, due to a change in legislation. Trust policies and procedures are approved by Trustees and are subject to Trade Union consultation.