



# Staff Code of Conduct

## **Staff Code of Conduct Policy**

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## **Staff Code of Conduct**

### **1. Introduction**

The Constellation Trust values and respects all members of the community. By creating this policy we aim to ensure our schools are environments where everyone is safe, happy and treated with respect. We recognise that staff are the Trust's most important asset and we are committed to developing appropriate, positive relationships with all those whom our work brings us into contact with. We value diversity and treat all around us with the dignity and respect they deserve. Colleagues are expected to work in co-operation and collaboration, within an ethos of mutual trust. The purpose of this Code is to assist staff in carrying out their job by making clear the standards of behaviour the Trust requires them to meet. It incorporates the existing laws, regulations and conditions of service that all staff should be most aware of in their work for the Trust.

- 1.1 All employees and volunteers must be committed to promoting the safety, welfare and interests of students as paramount. Staff are expected to place the well-being, development and progress of young people at the heart of their professional practice.
- 1.2 The public is entitled to expect the highest standards of conduct from all the Trust's employees. To serve the Trust, staff should implement its policies and perform their duties with integrity, honesty, impartiality and objectivity.
- 1.3 Staff must have regard for the ethos and values of the school and must not do, or say anything which may bring the school or the governing body into disrepute. Care should be taken by staff to avoid any conflict of interest between activities undertaken outside schools, and responsibilities within school. Staff have an individual responsibility to maintain their personal reputation and that of the school, both during and outside school hours.

### **2. Scope**

- 2.1 The Code applies to all employees of the Trust. The Code also applies to Contractors, agency staff, volunteers and those on student/work experience placement working on behalf of the Trust.

### **3. Legislation and guidance**

- 3.1 In line with the statutory safeguarding guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', the Staff Code of Conduct covers acceptable use of technologies, staff/student relationships and communications, including the use of social media. Staff should read the Code in conjunction with professional standards,

requirements and guidance regarding standards of conduct in particular areas of work and other Trust and Academy policies including those listed below.

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Single Equalities Scheme Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Acceptable Use of ICT Policy
- Disciplinary Procedures Policy
- Behaviour Policy

**This list is not exhaustive and staff should familiarise themselves with any relevant guidance which may be provided in relation to their particular area of work.** If situations arise that are not covered by this Code, staff will be expected to use their professional judgement as is reasonable in the circumstances. Staff will be expected to act in the best interests of the Trust and its students.

#### **4. Accountability**

- 4.1 Staff must act in accordance with the principles set out in this Code. Staff who fail to comply with the Code's provisions, may be subject to disciplinary action as set out under the staff disciplinary procedures.

#### **5. Maintenance of Standards**

- 5.1 Staff should inform their line manager/ Head Teacher if they identify any deficiency in the service provided by the Trust resulting from breaches of this Code. Under this Code staff should make disclosures about possible malpractice to:
- a) The line manager.
  - b) Where (a) is inappropriate, the Head Teacher or Senior Leader.
  - c) Where (a) and (b) are inappropriate, staff should approach the Executive Head/CEO of the Constellation Trust and the Chair of the Local Governing Body.
  - d) Where the disclosure relates to potential harm/abuse of a child, staff should contact the Safeguarding Lead or the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).
  - e) If the concern is regarding financial regularities or fraud then staff should report this to the Executive Head/CEO or the Chair of Governors.

## 6. General Obligations

6.1 Staff have an influential position in the Trust and will act as role models for students by consistently demonstrating high standards of behaviour. They will:

- Maintain high standards in their attendance and punctuality
- Refrain from using inappropriate or offensive language in school
- Treat students and others with dignity and respect
- Show tolerance and respect for the rights of others
- Uphold the 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 students, nor exploit students' vulnerability in such a way that might lead them to break the law
- Understand and adhere to the relevant statutory frameworks
- Not smoke on school premises as it is against the law. Staff are requested not to smoke in the area surrounding the school
- Staff should not eat or drink (apart from water) in classrooms during lesson times or on corridors. Staff should not carry hot drinks along corridors unless in a sealed or insulated drinks container. No hot drinks should be taken on to the playground. Staff, including those on duty should not take hot food out of the dining hall/**designated area**, unless in a sealed container. Staff on duty who do not have the opportunity to eat in the dining room or other area away from the corridors should eat in their duty area only
- All staff must access their emails at least once per day. This is a key method of communication within the Academy

## 7. Honesty and Integrity

7.1 Staff must maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their role. This includes handling money, claiming expenses and using school property and facilities.

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

- 7.3 Staff should treat all students, colleagues, parents/carers and visitors with respect and professional courtesy.
- 7.4 Staff should maintain professional boundaries and avoid behaviour which may lead any reasonable adult to question your behaviour, motivations or intentions.

## **8. Attendance and punctuality**

- 8.1 Staff are expected to strive for 100% attendance and punctuality including INSET days.
- 8.2 All staff are expected to attend staff briefings
- 8.3 All teaching staff should arrive punctually in accordance with the time mandated by the individual school each morning. Support staff should arrive in sufficient time to begin work as agreed with their line manager.
- 8.4 Staff who are unable to get to schools due to sickness must notify the school at a reasonable time determined by each school which will allow for cover arrangements to be put in place via the electronic system or, by telephoning and leaving a message with the appropriate person in the school. Similarly staff who are going to be late due to traffic should contact the school as soon as possible.
- 8.5 All staff are required to sign in and out of the building at all times to ensure a comprehensive record is available in the event of an emergency. Any member of staff entering and leaving the Academy should swipe in and out using their ID card/fob. If, for any reason, you have forgotten to bring it with you, you must let the Reception staff know immediately and they will sign you in electronically.
- 8.6 All visitors will need to be accompanied in school by a member of staff. Visitors will be issued with a visitor lanyard. All staff must appropriately enquire regarding unknown adults who are on site without a lanyard or a badge.
- 8.7 In severe weather conditions, staff must make every reasonable effort to get to school if they can safely do so. Information on any aspect of school closure will be communicated to staff through mobile phone text and via the school website.

## **9. Dress and appearance**

- 9.1 Staff will dress in a professional, appropriate manner. As an aid to teaching and learning, appropriate dress can be viewed as 'dressing for success'. As such determining a professional dress code helps to:

- Maintain respect
- Establish credibility
- Establish oneself as a figure of authority

9.2 Staff should ensure they are dressed decently, safely and appropriately for the tasks they undertake e.g. PE kit and trainers should be worn for PE sessions. Outfits should not be overly revealing, distract, cause embarrassment or give rise to misunderstanding. Tattoos should be covered up and body piercing jewellery (with the exception of ear piercings) should be removed. The requirement that staff should conceal their tattoos will be at the discretion of the Head of School. Clothes will not display any offensive or political slogans. Staff are individually accountable for their general presentation, appearance and personal hygiene and have a responsibility to consider how their appearance may be perceived by others.

9.3 Staff should adhere to the following guidelines:

#### Male staff

- Business suit – conservative style and colour, shirt and tie
- Dress trousers (not jeans, shorts or combat style trousers) – business shirt and tie
- Shirt tucked in
- Sensible, clean black or brown shoes (not trainers or flip flops)
- Sensible personal grooming

#### Female staff

- Business suit, conservative style and colour, appropriate blouse or top
- Smart dress/skirt, conservative top – skirt not above knee length
- Smart trousers (not jeans, shorts, leggings or combat style trousers)
- Sensible comfortable shoes (not trainers or flip flops)
- Sensible personal grooming

9.3.1 Variations on the above can take place providing that any changes are agreed by the Head Teacher of the school concerned.

9.3.2 Staff are expected to wear uniform that is provided by the Trust

## 10. Safeguarding

10.1 The Constellation Trust has a commitment to safeguarding young people in

line with 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'. Staff have a duty to safeguard students from harm and to report any concerns they have. This includes physical, emotional and sexual abuse or neglect.

- 10.2 Staff will familiarise themselves with the Safeguarding Policy and procedures including the Prevent initiative and ensure they are aware of processes to follow if they have concerns about a child.
- 10.3 All staff including visiting professionals, supply staff and volunteers must ensure they are aware of the safeguarding procedures.
- 10.4 Clear safeguarding procedures are shared with all individuals and regular updates are given regarding procedures, responsibilities and actions.
- 10.5 All staff will be asked to complete an enhanced Disclosure Barring Service check. Any employee who fails to disclose past or current information that involves criminal acts (other than minor driving offences) at the time of employment or during employment, may leave themselves in a vulnerable position that could result in disciplinary action including dismissal.
- 10.6 The Safeguarding Policy and procedures are available on the website.

## **11. Duty of care**

- 11.1 All staff have a duty of care to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children and young people they come into contact with. This means that staff:
  - should understand the responsibilities which are part of their role and be aware that sanctions will be applied if these provisions are breached
  - Always act in the best interest of the child
  - Treat all children equally and with respect regardless of culture, disability, gender, language, race, religion and/or sexual identity
  - Avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intention
  - Take responsibility for their own actions and behaviour
  - Complete CPD as requested by SLT and HR by the deadlines provided

## **12. Confidentiality**

- 12.1 Members of staff may have access to confidential information about students in order to undertake their everyday responsibilities. In some circumstances staff may be given additional highly sensitive or private information.



- 12.2 Staff should never use confidential or personal information about a student or their family for their own or others' advantage.
- 12.3 Information should never be used to intimidate, humiliate or embarrass the student.
- 12.4 Confidential information about a student should never be used casually in Conversation, or shared with any person other than on a need to know basis.
- 12.5 In circumstances where the student's identity does not need to be disclosed, the information should be used anonymously if needed.
- 12.6 Individual students should never be discussed by staff in front of other students.
- 12.7 There are some circumstances in which staff may be expected to share information about a student, for example when abuse is alleged or suspected. In such cases, staff have a duty to pass this information on without delay to a member of the safeguarding team.
- 12.8 If in doubt as to whether information about a student should be shared, guidance should be sought from the Designated Lead for Safeguarding.

### **13. Communication & Social Media**

- 13.1 Communication between students and staff should take place within clear and explicit professional boundaries. This includes the wider use of technology such as mobile phones, text messaging, digital cameras, videos, web-cams, websites, social networking sites, on line gaming, blogs etc. Staff must be aware that social contact, in certain situations, could be considered a safeguarding concern.
- 13.2 Staff should not share any personal information with a student, parents or carers. They should not request, or respond to any personal information from the student, other than that which might be appropriate as part of their professional role.
- 13.3 Social contact with students outside of school hours should be avoided. Personal home or mobile phone numbers; addresses or email addresses should not be given to students.
- 13.4 Staff's social media profiles should not be available to students and/or parents/carers. If staff have a personal profile on social media sites they should set their public profiles to private.

- 13.5 Staff will not publicly post images or content that could damage their own, the Academy's or the Trust's public and professional reputation and/or integrity.
- 13.6 Staff will ensure they do not post any images online that can identify children who are students at the school without their consent.
- 13.7 Contact with the media – only designated persons are entitled to communicate with the press, radio or television companies. Any enquiries from the media on work related matters should be referred to the Executive Head/CEO and Chair of Governors.

## **14. Staff/student relationships**

### **14.1 Professional boundaries**

- 14.1.1 Staff will observe proper boundaries with students that are appropriate to their professional position. They will act in a fair and transparent way that would not lead to anyone to reasonably assume they are not doing so. They will recognise the diversity of the students and treat each individual with equal respect for their dignity.
- 14.1.2 Staff are in a position of trust and the relationship with students is not one of equals. Professional boundaries should be maintained at all times and power and trust should not be misused.
- 14.1.3 An individual's behaviour, either in or out of the workplace should not compromise their position within the work setting, so it is important to exercise due care and attention when outside of the school environment. Whilst respecting the right of staff to a private life, staff must aim to avoid actions and comments which might undermine others' positive perception of the Academy, nor act in a way that would bring the school into disrepute. This covers relevant criminal offences such as violence or sexual misconduct as well as negative comments about the academy on social media.
- 14.1.4 Membership of organisations whose goals are in conflict with the values and equality policies of the school is not acceptable.
- 14.1.5 Staff should not make inappropriate remarks to a student (including email, text messages, verbally, phone or letter etc.)
- 14.1.6 Staff should not discuss a student's sexual relationships in inappropriate settings or contexts.

- 14.1.7 Staff should not discuss their own sexual relationships with or, in the presence of students.
- 14.1.8 Any sexual activity between a member of staff and a student (including verbal comments, letters, emails, phone contact and physical contact) may be regarded as a criminal offence and will always be a matter for disciplinary action.
- 14.1.9 Staff should ensure that the giving of gifts/awards or rewards is clear to all students in order to avoid any misunderstandings of intent.
- 14.1.10 Staff should not visit the home of a student unless prearranged and their line manager informed. No student should ever be invited into the home of a member of staff.

## **14.2 One to one**

- 14.2.1 Staff will ensure that one to one interactions with students;
- will take place in a public place that others can access
  - there is visual access and/or an open door
  - a colleague or line manager knows this is taking place

## **15. Use of Technology**

- 15.1 The Trust maintains the right to monitor emails and internet use on the school IT system via the Smooth wall and e-Safe system or their successor services.
- 15.2 In line with the Acceptable Use of Technology agreement (signed termly at first log-in), staff will not use technology in school to [view/share](#) 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.
- 15.3 Staff using school equipment either in or outside of school to access inappropriate or indecent material, including adult pornography, will be subject to disciplinary action.
- 15.4 Staff should ensure that any films or materials shown to students are age appropriate and are not subject to Performing Rights Payments/Royalties.
- 15.5 Staff mobile phones and personally owned devices will not be used in anyway during lessons or formal school times unless previously agreed by the Head Teacher

- 15.6 Staff must not give their private mobile numbers to students or their parents/carers and should not use personal mobile numbers to call students or parents/carers.
- 15.7 Staff should never store parents/carers or students telephone numbers on their mobile phone.
- 15.8 Staff should not use their mobile phone or other mobile device as a camera or video/audio recorder to record sound or images of students unless previously agreed with the students, parents/carers and line manager.
- 15.9 Staff should never send to, or accept from anyone, texts or images that could be viewed as inappropriate.
- 15.10 In exceptional circumstances, previously agreed with their line manager, staff who are using technology to deliver sessions to classes of students from their home should check on the latest guidance being provided by the Academy prior to arranging these with the students. The preferred secure platform is MS Teams, any change to this will be notified via an email to all staff. The staff member should ensure that:
- The platform they are using is as secure as possible
  - Prior to the sessions commencing, their line manager is informed about the date and time when the sessions are taking place, to which classes and which members of staff will be taking part
  - At least two members of staff are participating in the video call unless alternative arrangements have been agreed with the Head Teacher
  - The session is recorded
  - That no personal materials/items are on view during the session.
  - That the session is being conducted from an appropriate room in the staff member's home

## **16. Transporting students**

- 16.1 Staff should not travel alone with students unless in an emergency or where the child is at risk. In this instance the circumstances should be logged with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- 16.2 Wherever possible, it is advisable that transport is undertaken other than in private vehicles, with at least one adult additional to the driver acting as an escort. If staff are using their own vehicle it should be roadworthy and the appropriate licenses and insurances held.

16.3 Staff should not offer lifts to students outside of their normal working duties.

## **17. Trips and outings**

17.1 Staff organising external visits must ensure that all appropriate practices according to DfE guidance are followed. This may include, but is not limited to, undertaking risk assessments, external visit forms (e.g. Evolve) and compliance with statutory expectations

17.2 Staff/child ratios should be considered and where overnight stays are involved, the gender mix should be carefully organised.

17.2.1 On residential trips staff must not smoke or drink alcohol in front of students. If alcohol is consumed when off duty, staff must remain within the legal drink/drive limits at all times.

## **18. Leavers**

18.1 Staff who leave their position in a Trust school, should make arrangements to return their keys, laptop/iPad, Mifare cards and any other items belonging to the school. Individuals will be charged for items not returned.