

**TATWORTH PRIMARY SCHOOL**  
**EXPECTATIONS OF STAFF - EMPLOYEE CODE OF CONDUCT**

Reviewed and Ratified by the Audit Finance and Personnel Committee: 15 March 2018  
Date of Next Review: March 2019

### **Policy Statement**

The Code of Conduct is a statement of Tatworth Academy's (the Academy) values and describes both the way it wishes to carry out its business and the standards of conduct it expects from its employees and individuals contracted as workers for the Academy.

The code applies to all individuals operating on behalf of the Academy whether as an employee or working for the Academy in any other capacity.

### **Policy Context**

The Academy aims to be an employer of choice and expects all employees to conduct themselves in a way that reflects its vision and values.

The Academy is committed to raising standards. By abiding by the Code of Conduct and following the Academy vision and values and behaving in a manner that reflects these values, the Academy aims to create a better place for all to work and study.

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.

### **Tatworth's Values**

These values guide the way we behave whilst at work, they guide the way we work together, how we do our jobs and how we recruit, select and develop our employees.

The Academy expects employees to behave in a manner that is consistent with these values and this is encouraged and reinforced through the Academy's performance management process.

While the code sets out the standards of behaviour expected of employees, the following questions may help employees to decide whether what they are doing (or intend to do) is acceptable:

- Is anyone's life, health or safety endangered by their action?
- Does their action "feel" right? Could they successfully justify their action to their manager, student, colleague or friend?
- Would their actions put the schools reputation into disrepute?
- Is their action legal, honest and does it comply with Academy policy, statutory requirements and approved practice?
- Does their action appear reasonable? Would they be able to justify it to the local media?
- Would they be compromised if their manager, fellow workers, or friends knew their action?

This code is intended to bring employees' attention to key areas of conduct. However, the code is backed up by more detailed policies such as Health and Safety, Equality Information and Objectives, and Child Protection. It should also be read in conjunction with the Academy's Staff Discipline and Grievance Policy, Capability Policy and Staff Handbook.

Many of the rules set out below may seem obvious and would apply in any type of employment; for example, the requirement to follow reasonable instructions. Others, however, are related specifically to the nature of our organisation and may only be relevant to particular groups of employees.

By their nature, these rules are not exhaustive but they set out the principles to be observed which, if breached, may lead to disciplinary action. From time to time issues may arise which are not specifically covered within this code, but which may lead to disciplinary action if they are felt to represent unacceptable conduct.

Even though not mentioned in the rules, criminal or statutory offences committed while at work may result in disciplinary action, including summary dismissal.

The Academy may also be obliged to involve the police. Such offences committed away from work may be dealt with under the disciplinary procedure if they are considered relevant to the suitability for the work the person is employed to do. Employees must notify the Academy of any conviction by a court as soon as practicable. Failure to do this may be taken into account in disciplinary proceedings.

If an employee colludes with anyone else in the breaking of any of these rules they may also be liable to disciplinary action.

### **Rules and Standards of Behaviour**

The rules that follow set out examples of standards of behaviour expected of employees. It should be noted that this list is not exhaustive.

Breaches of the Employee Code of Conduct will be dealt with in accordance with the Academy's Disciplinary procedure.

The disciplinary action to be taken in any individual case will always depend on the particular facts. However, breach of any rule may lead to dismissal or summary dismissal (dismissal without notice for gross misconduct) dependent on the seriousness of the misconduct.

### **Health and Safety**

Employees should always observe any Academy health and safety rules and guidance.

Employees should never:

- Breach the Academy health and safety policies
- Act in a manner likely to endanger themselves, fellow workers, members of the public, the Academy's property or that of a third party.
- Ignore anything that has the potential to cause harm. It should be immediately brought to the attention of the line manager
- Misuse any item provided for health and safety purposes
- Smoke or use electronic cigarettes or vaping equipment anywhere on the school premises. This includes in vehicles.

## **Drug, alcohol and substance misuse.**

The Academy prohibits the drinking of alcohol by employees, workers, (and contractors) in the workplace or on Academy business other than reasonable drinking of alcohol in connection with approved social functions. The Academy regards drinking to an 'unreasonable level' as any of the following situations:

- In the opinion of management, the individual's performance is impaired.
- In the opinion of management, the individual's behaviour may cause embarrassment, distress or offence to others.
- The individual continues to drink when instructed to stop by a manager.

The Academy will take all reasonable steps to prevent employees (and contractors) carrying out work-related activities if they are considered to be unfit/unsafe to undertake the work as a result of alcohol consumption or substance abuse.

The Academy 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 Academy premises, in Academy vehicles or at a Academy related function, they will be regarded as serious, will be investigated by the Academy, and may lead to disciplinary action and potential dismissal and possible reporting to the Police.

## **No employee or other person under the Academy's control shall, in connection with any work-related activity:**

- Be under the influence of alcohol or drugs (except prescribed medication) whilst at work.
- Misuse and be under the adverse influence of substances whilst at work
- Attempt to sell or give drugs or alcohol to any other employee, student or other person on the Academy premises, or whilst conducting Academy business.
- Be in possession of controlled drugs contrary to the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 (as amended)
- Operate machinery under the influence of drugs or alcohol. (There may be an exception for prescription drugs, provided they do not have an impact on performance whilst operating machinery).
- Fail to inform line manager if taking prescription drugs or over the counter medication which may affect the ability to perform duties normally
- Drive vehicles whilst on Academy business whilst under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol.
- Fail to follow instructions in relation to health and safety procedures for use and storage of solvents.

## **Attendance at work**

Employees should attend for work at all agreed times and should obtain authorisation for any absence.

### **Employees should:**

- Observe any designated hours of work.
- Always observe the Academy's requirements on the notification of absence by reason of sickness. Outlined in the Academy's Timekeeping and Sickness Absence Policy.
- Never work elsewhere when absent from the Academy without line manager's authorisation. Examples of absence include sickness, suspension and leave related to work and families.
- Comply with the Academy's leave policies which are set out in the Staff Handbook.
- Never leave work during designated/ agreed working hours without permission.

## **Professional Conduct**

The Academy expects employees to behave in a professional manner at all times; to be honest, act with integrity and give respect and consideration to others and to comply with professional codes of practice.

### **Employees should always:**

- Be honest
- Follow all reasonable and lawful instructions.
- Conduct themselves in a manner that does not bring the Academy's name into disrepute.
- Act in a manner that is not abusive towards another person, this includes indirect abuse for example where abusive comments are made to others out of the hearing of the target.
- Treat everyone with respect and not undermine them, bully or harass them or act towards them in a manner which is discriminatory
- Adhere to professional requirements to attend relevant training and submit monitoring information in relation to employees and students where relevant
- Advise their line manager if their professional status has been removed by the professional body or they are subject to any disciplinary investigation and/or disciplinary action by the professional body.
- Take reasonable care of students under their supervision and follow the required Academy guidelines
- Comply with all relevant statutory provisions.
- Cooperate with management in complying with the Academy's policies and procedures
- Comply with the requirements of statutory bodies relating to the examination, assessment and evaluation of student achievement and attainment.
- Comply with the Codes of Conduct of professional bodies to which they may belong
- Not bring members of family, dependants or other visitors onto Academy premises whilst conducting normal working duties without prior permission

### **And must not:**

- Post, distribute or display inappropriate literature at any of the Academy's premises or other premises whilst on Academy business.
- Behave in a violent manner or threaten violence towards another person
- Make false allegations against another person or the Academy
- Behave in an insubordinate or inappropriate manner
- Behave in a persistent careless and/or negligent manner.
- Behave in a manner that is likely to disrupt working relationships.

## **Safeguarding Children**

All employees, workers, learners and volunteers and anyone operating on behalf of the Academy or visiting the Academy have the right to feel safe at Academy or while carrying out activities in relation to the Academy. No one should be hurt or abuse anyone in anyway.

### **Employees must always:**

- Respect other people's right to safety
- Not hurt or abuse others; and not threaten to hurt or abuse them.
- Comply with the Academy pre and post-employment vetting procedures,

- Advise their manager if they are under investigation by the Police or other authority in connection with allegations of abuse
- Advise the nominated officer if you are aware or have any suspicions that anyone is abusing another person
- Comply with Academy procedure on Child Protection and Prevent.

## **Relationships with Pupils/Students**

### **Employees must:**

- Maintain professional boundaries with students appropriate to their position and must always consider whether their actions are warranted, proportionate, safe and applied equitably
- Act in an open and transparent way that would not lead any reasonable person to question their actions or intent
- Think carefully about their conduct so that misinterpretations are minimised
- Be mindful of section 16 of The Sexual Offences Act 2003

### **Employees must not:**

- Establish or seek to establish social contact with students for the purpose of securing a friendship or to pursue or strengthen a relationship. If a young person seeks to establish social contact you should exercise your professional judgement in making a response and be aware that such social contact could be misconstrued
- Develop personal or sexual relationships with students and should not engage in any sexual activity with a student
- Make sexual remarks to a student, discuss their own sexual relationships with, or in the presence of, students or discuss a pupil's sexual relationships in an inappropriate setting or context

Contact with students, and parents, should be through everyday normal classroom contact. Personal phone numbers, email addresses or communication routes via all social media platforms should not be used and staff should not share their home address with students or their parents. If contacted via an inappropriate route the member of staff must inform the Headteacher immediately.

Employees must not accept friend invitations or become friends with any student of the Academy on any social media platform. Employees should also refrain from following the Twitter or other similar social media accounts of students or their parents.

Staff will ensure that they do not post any images online that identify children who are pupils at the school without appropriate consent.

### **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.

Staff will not use personal mobile phones and laptops, or school equipment for personal use, in school hours or in front of pupils. They will also not use personal mobile phones or cameras to take pictures of pupils.

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

## **Communication and 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.

Confidentiality should be maintained in accordance with statutory and Academy regulations and procedures

### **Employees should:**

- Always comply with the Academy's Data Protection and Freedom of Information policies and procedures with regard to the retention, disposal security and disclosure of personal data.
- Never search confidential files to which access has not been granted

### **Employees should not:**

- Disclose sensitive and confidential information to anyone without the relevant authority
- Use sensitive and confidential information to humiliate, embarrass or blackmail others
- Use sensitive and confidential information 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.

## **Regulatory issues and Use and Security of Resources**

Employees are expected to act with honesty and integrity to safeguard the stewardship of resources for which the Academy is responsible. Employees should always comply with regulations that are applicable to the Academy and its business.

### **Employees should always:**

- Ensure that they comply with the rules and principles of any regulatory bodies and/or relevant statute applicable to the duties they perform.
- Comply with the Academy's financial regulations
- Ensure that they account promptly and accurately for all monies handled in the performance of their duties. If an employee discovers any discrepancy or loss they must declare it to their line manager without delay.
- Note: Any attempt to conceal any discrepancy will only heighten the suspicion of dishonesty later. The Academy may report any such losses and thefts to the Police.
- Declare any conviction for a criminal offence or caution in relation to an offence (except those which are "protected" as defined in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (Amendment) (England and Wales) Order 2013).

### **Employees should:**

- Never wilfully damage or abuse the property of students, fellow workers or the Academy, or the property of outside agencies whilst conducting Academy business.
- Never access, view or distribute material of a pornographic nature
- Never make a financial claim in connection with work or services that have not been undertaken in connection with authorised Academy business
- Never remove any Academy property from the Academy's premises unless approved by your manager.
- Never remove, or be in unauthorised possession of, any property or facilities belonging to the Academy or to any employee, student or visitor to the Academy.

- Always use Academy systems (e.g. computers, internet) in accordance with the Academy's policies.
- Take all reasonable measures to ensure, so far as it is practical, the safety and security of Academy property, including premises, vehicles, equipment and cash.

### **Equality and Diversity**

The Academy seeks to achieve an environment in which all are included and in which discrimination is not tolerated. The Academy is committed to promoting equality of opportunity regardless of gender, gender reassignment, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief or age. Everyone should be treated with respect and dignity and establish a culture where diversity is valued.

#### **Employees should always:**

- Observe the Academy's Equalities Information and Objectives

#### **Gaining Employment/Promotion/Transfer**

- Employees or potential employees must comply with the Academy's recruitment and Selection procedures

#### **When applying for a job / transfer / promotion employees should not:**

- Make false statements to the Academy or withhold relevant information. Any breach could result in disciplinary action which may be taken against an employee at any time and also the removal of the offer of employment.
- Fail to comply with Academy's recruitment and selection policies and procedures

#### **Employment of family**

The Academy does not believe it is good practice, either for the individuals or the Academy, for close relatives to be employed in the same Department, particularly where one reports to the other.

Relationships covered by the term 'relative' include immediate family, i.e. spouse, partner, civil partner, parents, children, siblings, in laws, uncles, aunts, nieces and nephews.

It is possible for relatives to be appointed within the same Department but this should be discussed fully with the Academy before action, and should only be in cases where there will be no direct working relationship between the individuals.

#### **Employees should not:**

- Be involved in the selection process where they are related in any way to an applicant or have a personal relationship outside work with them.
- Be involved in decisions relating to discipline, promotion, pay or adjustments for any employee who is a relative, partner or close friend.

#### **Conflicts of interest:**

Conflicts of interest should be avoided at all times. Any issues of conflict or potential conflict should be raised with the line manager at the first possible opportunity.

### **Employees should:**

- Act in the best interests of the Academy at all times.
- Not work for other employers while employed by the Academy if there is any possibility of a conflict of interest.

### **Examples of a personal interest that should be declared are:**

- A directorship, a large shareholding, promise of future employment or the employment of a close relative or friend in a position of influence in an organisation which may compete or do business with the Academy.
- Receipt of compensation (except remuneration from the Academy) for services provided to any person or organisation on behalf of the Academy.
- Outside activities that adversely affect job performance, either through excessive demands on working time or through conflicting commitments.
- Activities that involve the unauthorised use of the Academy's time, equipment or information which could adversely affect the Academy's reputation or relations with others or could otherwise conflict with the interests of the Academy.

### **Gifts, entertainment and hospitality**

Employees should always act with integrity and not allow themselves to be put into a situation which does not allow them to act with honesty and integrity and/ or in the best interest of the Academy

### **Employees should not:**

- Allow themselves to be influenced in making a business decision as a consequence of accepting gifts or hospitality as detailed in the Financial Regulations.

For further information, please see the Academy's Gifts and Hospitality Policy.

### **Reporting misconduct**

#### **Employees are expected to:**

- Report violations or suspected violations of law or the standards set out in this Code of Conduct. In these situations you should contact your line manager.
- Comply with the Academy's Confidential Reporting Code (Whistleblowing) Policy in the event of concerns or evidence of malpractice in connection with the Academy.

*Note: Any information provided by employees will be kept confidential in accordance with the Confidential Reporting Code, unless otherwise required by law and may be made without concern of retribution.*

- Report all/any suspicions of fraud or theft to their line manager.

### **Conduct outside of work**

Staff will not act in a way that would bring the school, 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.

### **Ceasing to be employed by the school**

- The requirements relating to confidentiality will continue to apply after a member of staff's contract is terminated. On leaving, staff will return any confidential documents to the school and delete any electronic files.



- School based email accounts will be closed and folders on any personal electronic devices must be deleted.

### **Links with other policies**

This policy links with our policies on:

- Staff grievance and disciplinary procedures, which will be used if staff breach this code of conduct. It also sets out examples of what we will deem as misconduct and gross misconduct
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Gifts and hospitality

### **Further Guidance**

Employees requiring further clarification on this document should contact The Headteacher.