

# Staff Code of Conduct

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## 1. Introduction

The Trust expects the highest standards of conduct from all our staff. This code sets out the minimum standards of behaviour which staff at the Trust will need to observe. It is intended to help staff understand their responsibilities and be clear about what is acceptable conduct and what is not.

Staff for the purposes of this Code of Conduct shall mean anyone who works for the Trust, including Trustees, employees, agency workers, volunteers and contractors. The breach of its terms may result in disciplinary action for an employee, the cessation of contractual relations with agency staff and contractors or, in the case of volunteers, the termination of the volunteering agreement.

The Staff Code of conduct and declaration will be issued annually at September INSET and will require all staff to sign and return the annual declaration as attached.

## 2. General Obligations of Trust Staff

If you are unsure what is expected of you, you must raise the matter with your Headteacher/Principal or Line Manager. This conversation should usually take place within a 1 – 1 meeting.

If you consider you need to declare anything for the record, then do not wait until your 1 – 1 meeting or appraisal, or for the Headteacher/Principal or Line Manager to ask you to do so – declare it immediately by speaking to your Headteacher/Principal or Line Manager.

Any breach of this code or related policies set out below may lead to disciplinary action and may in some instances constitute gross misconduct. The Trust reserves the right to take legal action against employees where breaches of this code are deemed to warrant such action. Staff are required to inform the Trust if arrested as soon as practically possible and without delay if the subject of a police investigation or receive any conviction, caution or reprimand. See also Section 12 'Criminal Charges and/or Convictions'.

The Trust expects all staff to deal with one another, the public, pupils and parents in a courteous and civil manner. Relationships between work colleagues should be supportive, cooperative and respectful. Staff should behave in a way that enhances the performance and wellbeing of others and the effectiveness of the Trust.

It is particularly important that staff are aware of and understand the following policies which form part of the annual declaration;

- The Teaching Standards if applicable
- Appraisal Policy
- Concern at work policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Safer Working Guidance
- Data Protection Policy
- IT Security Policy

- Health & Safety Policy

All Trust staff should also be aware of and comply with the financial procedures of the Trust. If in any doubt about financial regulations refer to the Headteacher/Line Manager or Finance Director.

Staff should understand the responsibilities that are an intrinsic part of their employment or role. They should make a professional judgement about their actions and behaviour and seek to avoid conduct, which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation or intentions.

If there is an incident where staff feel there may be a concern, they should discuss the circumstances that informed their action, or their proposed action with a senior colleague to ensure that the safest practices are employed and the risk of actions being misinterpreted reduced.

### **3. Equality Issues**

Staff must ensure that they know the statutory requirements of their job, and work within these at all times. Staff must also comply with all the policies and procedures of the Trust.

The Trust is committed to equal opportunities and pupils care. Staff are expected to act in a manner which reflects the Trust policies and values by treating all pupils, parents and colleagues courteously and with dignity at all times.

The Trust will not tolerate discriminatory behaviour, including bullying or harassment, which will be dealt with in accordance with the disciplinary procedure, and may be subject to criminal proceedings.

### **4. Employment Matters**

There is a requirement to declare any intimate relationship between:-

- Senior manager or a manager and employee who reports to them (or in any role that may be deemed to be a conflict of interest).
- Governors/Trustees and employees of the school
- Employees and existing or potential future suppliers of goods or services to the school/Trust.

Where a relationship involves the Principal/Headteacher, this declaration should be provided to the Chief Executive. Where a relationship involves the Chief Executive this should be reported to the Chair of Trustees.

In the case of the situations outlined above, there will be a risk assessment (which will be reviewed periodically) and there may be a requirement for either member of staff to move to another area of the organisation.

Please note that should an occasion arise in the future when a business or pecuniary interest might apply e.g. a close relative applies for a job in the school, the interest should be notified immediately to the Headteacher/ Principal/CE.

All Trust staff involved in appointments and/or a tendering process should ensure that:

- These are made on the basis of merit.
- They are not involved in an appointment or decisions relating to discipline, promotion or pay adjustments for any individual who is a relative or with whom they are in a close personal relationship.
- All relationships of a business or private nature with external contractors, or potential contractors should be made known to the Line Manager/Headteacher/Principal/CE at the earliest opportunity.

## **5. Public Duty and Private Interest**

It is important that members of staff do not put themselves in a position where their duty to the Trust and their private interest's conflict. Staff should not allow their own personal or political opinions to interfere with their work and the provision of a balanced and professional service, ensuring that they work to the professional standard required at all times.

## **6. Register of Business Interests**

A register of the personal and business interests of each Trustee, Governor and key management personnel is held with the Clerk to the Board and is available for inspection at each meeting of the Academy Governance Committees.

It is the responsibility of each Trustee, Governor and member of staff with significant financial responsibility to declare any personal and business interests they have which require inclusion in the register. Any Trustee, Governor or member of staff who has an interest in a business tendering for a contract, will not form part of the committee awarding the contract.

Responsibilities and the annual declaration form are detailed in the Finance Policy.

## **7. Other Employment/Private Work**

Any external work that Trust staff undertake must not bring the Trust into disrepute or conflict with the Trust's interest.

Any copyright created by a member of staff as a result of work within the school during their employment with the Trust becomes the property of the school.

Members of Trust staff should not set up a business or accept employment with a business that is engaged in work, which is in direct competition with Wellsway Multi Academy Trust.

Members of Wellsway Multi Academy Trust staff should not undertake private work in the school's time, or using the school's premises or equipment, without prior approval of the Headteacher/Principal/CE.

## **8. Use of Wellsway Multi Academy Trust Time and Facilities**

Trust property and facilities (e.g. stationery, computers, and photocopiers) may only be used for school business unless permission for their private use has been granted by the Headteacher and payment agreed.

## **9. Publication of Books/Articles**

If Trust staff wish to publish books, articles, letters, dissertations etc that they have written in connection with their duties and in which they describe themselves as holding an appointment with the Trust they must consult the Headteacher prior to any such agreement being made.

## **10. Criminal Charges and/or Convictions**

A member of staff must notify the Principal/Headteacher/CE of any criminal charges or convictions whilst they are in the employment of the Trust.

The Principal/Headteacher/CE and relevant board of Governors may then make a decision as to whether this constitutes unprofessional conduct and whether there has been a breakdown in the bond of trust necessary between employer and employee. In such cases, dismissal may be appropriate.

Each case will be considered independently and on its merits. It is likely that the Principal/Headteacher/CE and relevant board of Governors would view any conviction for possession of prohibited drugs, sexual misconduct, theft, misappropriation of school funds or equipment, violent conduct, disorderly conduct in a public place etc as gross misconduct, within the general heading of "professional misconduct" and therefore the member of staff concerned would be liable for dismissal.

## **11. Prohibited substances/use**

Smoking on all Wellsway Multi Academy sites is totally prohibited.

The use, possession or distribution or sale of drugs is totally prohibited and constitutes gross misconduct for which the penalty could be dismissal.

Staff are prohibited from working whilst under the influence of non-prescribed drugs or alcohol. It is potentially a dismissal offence for any member of staff failing to meet their contractual obligations due to alcohol or substance abuse. Staff must bring to the attention of their Line Manager any medication or illness which may affect their work performance or behaviour.

## **12. Dress Code**

As role models to pupils in our schools the Trust expects staff to dress in a professional manner which expresses both personal dignity and appropriate modesty. Staff should ensure they are dressed decently, safely and appropriately for the tasks they undertake and require the following dress code to apply to all staff:-

- Business dress – (including ties for men) unless role dictates otherwise
- Trust provided clothing such as polo shirts/outer wear PPE eg catering and site staff
- No denim unless participating on a trip/visit
- Clothing that is not likely to be viewed as offensive, revealing or sexually provocative eg tight clothing
- Clothing that does not distract, cause embarrassment or give rise to misunderstanding
- Clothing that is not considered to be discriminatory and culturally sensitive

- Visible tattoos are discouraged
- Discreet piercings are acceptable

Where there is a refusal to comply with the dress code this may result in disciplinary action.

Staff badges where issued must be worn at all times.

### **13. Staff Wellbeing**

All staff should take care of their physical and mental well-being

- All staff are encouraged to look after their physical and mental well-being. This includes maintaining a healthy work-life balance.
- The Trust takes staff wellbeing very seriously, and looks to provide and promote appropriate support and help that can be accessed.
- Staff needing support are encouraged to discuss issues and concerns with their line manager in the first instance, and thereafter with the Headteacher / director or Deputy Head.
- Support can be provided both internally (e.g. through the provision of a mentor), externally through the MyBenefits Platform
- Trades Unions also provide help, support and advice for their members.

### **14. General**

All members of staff and at all levels are to bring to the notice of their immediate Line Manager on an 'in confidence' basis any matter whether personal or professional which may be in conflict with either the letter or spirit of these guidelines.

# Annual Declaration

**The Staff Code of Conduct and annual declaration should be included each year in each school's September INSET days. All staff will be required to sign and return this declaration on an annual basis to the School's nominated Administrator by the end of September. Responses will be logged on a spreadsheet held at the school/workplace. It must also be shared with all agency workers, volunteers and contractors.**

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- Child Protection Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- IT Security Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- Safer Working Guidance

## **Declaration confirming you have read and understood this Code and all policies listed above**

I confirm that I have read the Wellsway Multi Academy Trust Staff Code of Conduct and all associated policies and understand that any behaviour contrary to the Code and its ethos could lead to appropriate legal or disciplinary action being taken.

Name ..... Date .....

Position ..... School .....