

Employee Code of Conduct

All Salford Academy Trust Staff



1. Introduction

1.1 Salford Academy Trust is operating in an ever-changing and sensitive environment where expectations about quality and standards are high and where accountability is in the spotlight. More than ever before, we are required to work to the highest standards of conduct and monitor our performance to ensure these standards are maintained.

1.2 Salford Academy Trust seeks to provide a safe and supportive environment, which secures the well-being and very best outcomes for pupils in their care. This document clarifies what is expected in terms of professional behaviour.

1.3 Pupils and parents are entitled to expect the highest standards of conduct from everyone who works for Salford Academy Trust. The Employee Code of Conduct sets out the standards of behaviour the Salford Academy Trust expects of its employees.

1.4 If you supervise/line manage other employees you must make sure that they know about and understand the code. If you supervise people who are not employees of the Salford Academy Trust i.e. agency workers you must make them aware of the code, and make it clear that they are under a duty to follow it. If the people that you supervise/manage behave in ways that are inconsistent with the code, you must take action. Failure to adhere to the Code of Conduct will result in disciplinary action being taken, as set out in the Disciplinary Policy. Line Managers who fail to take the appropriate action will be dealt with in line with the Disciplinary Policy and may potentially result in dismissal.

1.5 Salford Academy Trust staff have an influential position in our schools, and are expected to act as role models for pupils and parents by consistently demonstrating high standards of behaviour.

1.6 We expect all support staff, governors and volunteers to also act with personal and professional integrity, respecting the safety and wellbeing of others.

1.7 In addition to this code, anyone employed under teachers' terms and conditions of employment has a statutory obligation to adhere to the 'Teachers' Standards 2012'. The relevant extract 'part 2 – personal and professional conduct' is contained at appendix 1. The code of Conduct is also in line with 'Keeping Children Safe in Education" document.

1.8 Failure to follow the code of conduct may result in disciplinary action being taken, as set out in our staff disciplinary procedures and may potentially result in dismissal.

1.9 This code does not form part of the contract of employment and can be amended at any time.

1.10 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 its pupils.

2. Core Principles

2.1 The welfare of pupils is paramount.

2.2 Employees are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions.

2.3 Employees should work, and be seen to work in an open and transparent way.

2.4 Employees should discuss and/or take advice promptly from their line manager or another senior member of staff over any incident, which may give rise to concern.

2.5 Records should be made of any such incident and of decisions made/further actions agreed.

2.6 All employees should know the name of their designated person for child protection to be familiar with child protection arrangements and understand their responsibilities to safeguard children.

2.7 Employees should be aware that breaches of criminal law and other professional guidelines could result in criminal or disciplinary action being taken against them.

3. Setting an example

3.1 All employees who work in schools set examples of behaviour and conduct which can be copied by pupils. Employees must therefore avoid using inappropriate and/or offensive language at all times.

3.2 Employees must act as role models, demonstrating high standards of conduct in order to encourage pupils to do the same. Employees should be aware of and adhere to the school's rules in respect of behaviour such as use of mobile phones, eating/drinking in corridors and classrooms, chewing gum etc.

3.3 Employees must avoid putting themselves at risk of allegations of abusive or unprofessional conduct.

3.4 Employees should ensure that their clothing and appearance promotes a positive and professional image and is in line with the school's dress code.

3.5 Staff set an example to pupils. They will:

- Maintain high standards in their attendance and punctuality
- Act as role models, demonstrating high standards of conduct in order to encourage pupils to do the same.
- Adhere to the Academy rules in respect of behaviour such as use of mobile phones, eating/drinking in corridors and classrooms, chewing gum etc.
- Ensure that clothing and appearance promotes a positive and professional image and is in line with the Academy's dress code.
- 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
- Avoid putting themselves at risk of allegations of abusive or unprofessional conduct.

4. Appointments and other employment matters

4.1 All employees involved in staff appointments and/or tendering processes should ensure that these are made on the basis of merit.

4.2 Employees need to take care that they do not accept any gift that may be construed as a bribe by others or lead the giver to expect preferential treatment. It is acceptable to receive small tokens of appreciation from parents or pupils at Christmas or the end of term. However, if the gift is high value or the employee is concerned that it may be construed as a bribe then it should be reported to the Principal.

4.3 Employees must not be directly involved in any staff appointment or decisions relating to discipline, pay, promotion or pay adjustments for any individual who is a relative or with whom they

have a close personal relationship. In this event they must inform their Principal as soon as they become aware of the application or matter in question.

4.4 Any external work that employees undertake must not bring the school into disrepute or conflict with the school's interests.

5. Safeguarding

5.1 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.

5.2 Staff will 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 for download from the Academy networks and from the school office. New staff will also be given copies on arrival.

6. Behaviour management and use of reasonable force

6.1 All employees are expected to adhere to the individual Academy's Behaviour Management Policy.

6.2 The use of physical intervention should be avoided wherever possible and should only ever be used in line with the guidance issued within the Academy's Behaviour Management Policy.

6.3 Under no circumstances should physical force or intervention be used as a form of punishment. The use of unwarranted physical force is likely to constitute a criminal offence.

If required, risk assessments should be carried out and individual care plans should be in place in consultation with parents/carers and where appropriate, pupils.

6.4 In all cases where physical intervention is employed, the incident and subsequent actions must be recorded. This includes written and signed accounts from all those involved (including the pupil). Parents/carers must be informed of the incident on the same day.

6.5 Training will be provided to employees in respect of behaviour management and the use of physical intervention.

7. Sexual contact

7.1 Any sexual contact between an employee and a pupil is both inappropriate and illegal. This does not just refer to physical contact but also to non-contact activities such as causing children to engage in or watch sexual activity or the production of pornographic material.

7.2 Employees must not pursue sexual relationships with children and young people either in or out of the Academy.

7.3 Employees should avoid any kind of behaviour which could be construed as 'grooming' a pupil such as singling out pupils for special attention and buying gifts for pupils. If there is any doubt about how a certain behaviour/action may be construed, then employees should speak to the Principal beforehand.

7.4 Employees must avoid any form of communication with a pupil which could be interpreted as sexually suggestive or provocative i.e. verbal comments, letters, notes, email, texts and physical contact. This includes making sexual remarks about or to pupils and discussing personal sexual relationships within their presence.

8. Social Contact

8.1 Employees should not seek to have social contact with pupils or their parents/carers unless the reason for this contact has been firmly established with a senior manager/Principal.

8.2 If a pupil or parent attempts to establish social contact or if this occurs coincidentally then the employee should exercise their professional judgement in making a response and must make their manager and the parent of the pupil aware of the situation

8.3 Where the nature of the employee's role involves work in the community, care should be taken to maintain appropriate personal and professional boundaries.

9. Physical contact

9.1 There will be circumstances where physical contact between staff and pupils is entirely appropriate, for example as an integral part of some lessons such as PE, drama and music or when a distressed pupil needs comfort and reassurance. Staff should use their professional judgement at all times about the appropriateness of physical contact with pupils and where feasible, seek the child's permission before initiating contact.

9.2 Physical contact should only be initiated for the minimum time necessary; it should be appropriate to the age and stage of the pupil and appropriate to the employee's role and the needs of the child.

9.3 Physical contact should never be secretive, or for the gratification of the adult or represent a misuse of authority.

9.4 If an employee thinks that an incident of physical contact may have been misinterpreted, they must report this immediately to the Principal.

10. Personal care

10.1 Pupils are entitled to respect and privacy at all times and especially when changing clothes, washing/showering or undertaking any form of personal care. Supervision may be required to safeguard young people or satisfy health and safety considerations. This should be appropriate to the needs and age of the pupils concerned.

10.2 Employees must not have any physical contact with pupils when they are in a state of undress, change in the same room as pupils or shower or bathe with them.

10.3 Employees should announce their intention to enter rooms where pupils are changing and avoid any visually intrusive behaviour whilst in the room.

11. Intimate Care

11.1 A care plan should be agreed and drawn up with parents for all pupils who require intimate care on a regular basis. The views of the pupil should be actively sought where possible when drawing up a care plan. Depending on their age, maturity and ability, pupils should be encouraged to act as independently as possible. This plan should be reviewed regularly.

11.2 Where any changes to the agreed plan are required, consultation should take place with senior staff and parents/carers.

11.3 A record should be made of any variations from the agreed plan and the justification for this and this must be shared with the pupil's parents/carers.

11.4 When assistance is required, employees should ensure that another appropriate adult is in

the vicinity and is aware of the task being undertaken.

12. First Aid and medication

12.1 Employees should be suitably trained and qualified before administering first aid and/or any agreed medication. The Academy has trained and named individuals to undertake first aid.

12.2 Where possible, employees should ensure that another adult is aware of the action being taken. Arrangements will be in place to ensure that parental consent is obtained for the administration of first aid. Parents/carers should always be informed when first aid has been administered and a record made.

In circumstances where pupils need medication regularly, a health care plan should be in place to ensure the safety and protection of the pupil and the adults working with them.

13. Personal living space

No pupil should be in or invited into the home of an employee unless the reason for this has been firmly established and agreed with parents/carers and the Principal. If there are exceptional circumstances (e.g. familial connections or friendships between the employee's children and the pupil) then the Principal and the pupil's parent/carer must be made aware and the employee should avoid being alone with the pupil at home.

14. Pupils in distress

14.1 There may be occasions when a distressed pupil needs comfort and reassurance. Employees should remain self-aware at all times, ensuring that their contact is non-threatening, intrusive or subject to misinterpretation.

14.2 Where a situation gives rise to concern, employees should always tell a colleague when and how they offered comfort to a distressed pupil and make a record of the incident. If an employee is unsure about how to offer comfort to a distressed pupil, then they should seek advice from a senior staff member.

15. Transporting Children

Where possible and practicable, it is advisable that private vehicles are not used for transport, and there should be at least one additional adult to the driver acting as an escort, in line with Safer Working Practices. If private vehicles are being used, the Principal should be aware and the vehicle must be roadworthy. At all times the driver must ensure that they have appropriate insurance and that maximum capacities are not exceeded in vehicles.

16. Alcohol, tobacco and drug use

16.1 Employees are not allowed to consume alcoholic drinks on school premises.

16.2 On school trips employees who have supervision duties are not allowed to consume alcohol at all. However, if the duty rota created at the time of the trip risk register shows that the employee is not on supervision duties employees may consume alcohol in accordance with legal driving allowances.

16.3 Smoking, including vaping is forbidden within Academy grounds.

16.4 It is the School's policy that taking, possessing or dealing in illegal drugs is forbidden. The definition of a drug is "a substance people take to change the way they feel, think or behave".

17. Personal interest

17.1 Employees must declare to the Principal any financial interests which could conflict with the school's interests.

17.2 All relationships of a business or private nature with external contractors, or potential contractors should be made known to the Principal.

17.3 In the case of the Principal, any financial interests or relationships of a business or private nature must be declared to the CEO of Salford Academy Trust.

18. Confidentiality and Information disclosure

18.1 Information obtained in the course of employment should not be used to the detriment of the school, for personal gain or benefit or passed on to others who might use it in such a way.

18.2 Employees must take all reasonable steps to ensure that the loss, destruction, inaccuracy or disclosure of information does not occur as a result of their actions, including information relating to school business and pupil data. The storing and processing of personal information about children and young people is governed by the Data Protection Act 1998/GDPR and the school will give clear guidance to employees about their responsibilities under this legislation.

18.3 There are circumstances where employees are expected to share information about a child, for example, when child protection issues arise. In such cases employees have a duty to pass information on without delay in line with school policy/local procedures. If employees are in doubt about whether to share information or keep it confidential they should seek guidance from a senior manager or person with designated child protection responsibilities or Data Protection Officer.

18.4 Whilst employees who work with children and young people need to be aware of the need to listen to and support them, they must not make promises to keep secrets, neither should they request this of a child or young person under any circumstances.

19. Use of school facilities, resources and time

19.1 The school's property and facilities (e.g. stationery, computers, photocopiers, and mobile phones) may only be used for school business unless permission for their private use has been granted.

19.2 Employees must ensure that they use school funds entrusted to them in a responsible and lawful manner.

19.3 Only duties relating to their employment at the school should be undertaken during work time unless the express permission of the Principal is sought.

20. Duty of trust and care

20.1 All employees have a duty to keep young people safe and to protect them from sexual, physical and emotional harm. This is exercised through the development of respectful and caring relationships between adults and children and young people and also through the behaviour of the adult, which at all times should demonstrate integrity, maturity and good judgement.

20.2 Employees must, at all times, act in accordance with the trust that the public is entitled to place in them as an employee of the school. Employees are expected to be ready and able, at the agreed times, to carry out their job. Politeness and courtesy should be expressed to the public and to internal and external clients at all times. Customer care and courtesy must be maintained with appropriate professional boundaries.

20.3 All members of the local community, clients and employees have a right to be treated fairly and equally and with dignity and respect. Employees should be aware that their behaviour may inadvertently intimidate or offend other employees, parents, pupils or members of the public.

20.4 The school is opposed to and will not tolerate all forms of discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and bullying and has procedures in place to deal with complaints of this nature.

21. Whistleblowing

21.1 Employees have a duty, without fear of recrimination, to report suspicions or knowledge of any wrong-doing they become aware of, for example:

- activities which they believe to be illegal, improper, unethical or otherwise inconsistent with the code
- anything which involves, or they think involves, irregularities with money or other property of the school
- school employees, or other individuals, being involved in potentially fraudulent or corrupt activities, or theft.

21.2 Employees must report any alleged impropriety or breach of procedure to the Principal so that the matter may be investigated immediately. If any suspected wrongdoing involves the Principal, then reports should be made to the CEO of Salford Academy Trust.

22. Conduct outside of work

22.1 Employees must not engage in conduct outside of work which could damage the reputation of the school or the employee's own reputation or the reputation of other members of the school community. Refer to appendix 1, extract from school teacher's standards.

22.2 Any employee facing criminal charges must notify their Principal as soon as possible whether they feel the matter is relevant to their employment or not.

23. Communication and social media (including the use of technology)

23.1 Employees must not give their personal contact details (including their mobile telephone number, home address and e-mail address) to pupils unless there are exceptional circumstances and the Principal has granted permission. They should not request any personal information from a pupil.

23.2 Communication with pupils must at all times take place within appropriate professional boundaries and must be transparent and open to scrutiny. Contact should only be made for appropriate professional reasons.

23.3 'Communication' refers also to the wider use of technology, including mobile phones, text messaging, instant messaging, e-mails, digital cameras, videos, web-cams, websites, social networking sites, online gaming and blogs.

23.4 Staff should be aware of their own Academy e-safety policy.

24. Social media and internet usage

24.1 Employees should not post any comments on social media or the internet that could potentially be defamatory to the Academy reputation. Comments must not disclose confidential information relating to the school, its pupils, governors or employees.

24.2 Bullying, harassment and victimisation of employees, pupils or other persons affiliated with the school through online means will not be tolerated and will be subject to disciplinary action.

24.3 Photos and/or personal details of pupils must not be uploaded to any employee's personal social media account or any other social media account.

24.4 Employees must not allow current or recent pupils access to their social media accounts, including adding them as 'friends'. It is the employee's responsibility to ensure that their accounts/passwords are secure and any potential breach should be reported to the Principal immediately.

24.5 It is advised that employees do not identify themselves with the school on their personal social media accounts. If they do identify themselves as an employee of the school, then they must behave appropriately and in line with the Academy values.

24.6 It is advised that employees make all social media profiles 'private' so that pupils and parents do not have access to their personal details and images. Employees should be aware that they leave themselves open to a charge of professional misconduct if inappropriate images of them are made available on a public profile

24.7 It is advised that employees exercise caution and do not accept friend requests from parents other than where close personal or familial relationships already exist.

24.8 Accessing, marketing and storing child pornography or indecent images of children is illegal and will invariably lead to a criminal conviction and the individual being barred from working with children and young people.

24.9 Under no circumstances should employees in schools use school equipment to access inappropriate images on the internet or access any other site which could call into question their suitability to work with children. The same rule applies to the use of the school's equipment by members of staff at home e.g. laptops and tablets. Equipment containing such images or links must not be brought in to the work place.

24.10 If an employee becomes aware that they are in an online game with a pupil, they should cease the game immediately. Under no circumstances should employees seek out pupils or share tags/ID's with them to play online games.

24.11 Salford Academy Trust reserves the right to monitor emails and internet use on the school IT system.

25. Extra-curricular activities (including school trips, out of school clubs and overnight supervision)

25.1 Where activities take place off the school site or out of normal school hours, an additional appropriate adult should be present unless otherwise agreed with senior staff.

25.2 Parental consent must always be obtained for the activity.

25.3 Employees should ensure that their behaviour remains professional at all times during such activities and stays within clearly defined professional boundaries. Employees are expected at all times to adhere to this code and to the Teachers Standards.

25.4 Where activities include overnight stays, careful consideration needs to be given to sleeping arrangements and pupils, adults and parents should be informed of these prior to the trip.

25.5 When on residential school trips, it is not permitted for staff attending the trip to consume alcohol or drugs. Such incidents will be dealt with in line with the Disciplinary Policy and may result in dismissal.

26. Sharing concerns and recording incidents

26.1 All employees should be aware of the school's child protection procedures and procedures for dealing with allegations against members of staff. Employees who are subject to allegations are advised to contact their professional association.

26.2 In the event of any allegation being made, information should be clearly and promptly recorded and reported to a senior manager without delay.

26.3 In cases where a pupil develops an infatuation, there is a high risk of words or actions being misinterpreted and for allegations to be made against employees. Employees should report to a senior manager any concerns that a pupil may be infatuated with them.

27. Staff/pupil relationships

27.1 Staff will 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.

27.2 Staff working in one to one situations with pupils are more vulnerable to allegations and therefore should plan and conduct such meetings accordingly. Every attempt should be made to ensure that the safety and security needs of both employees and pupils are met. If staff spend time on a one to one basis, they must 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
- They report to a senior member of staff, any situation where a pupil becomes distressed or angry during a one to one meeting

Staff should avoid contact with pupils outside of school hours if possible.

27.3 Personal contact details should not be exchanged between staff and pupils. This includes social media profiles.

27.4 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 are unacceptable.

27.5 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 Principal.

28. Honesty and integrity

28.1 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.

28.2 All staff involved in staff appointments and/or tendering processes should ensure that these are made on the basis of merit.

28.3 Employees must not be directly involved in any staff appointment or decisions relating to discipline, pay, promotion or pay adjustments for any individual who is a relative or with whom they have a close personal relationship. In this event they must inform the Principal as soon as they become aware of the application or matter in question.

28.4 Staff will not accept bribes. It is acceptable for staff to receive small tokens of appreciation from parents or pupils at Christmas or the end of term. Gifts that are worth more than £30.00 must be declared and recorded on the gifts and hospitality register that is held in the office. If an

employee is concerned that a gift may be construed as a bribe, then it should be reported to the Principal.

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

29. Policy Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed annually, but can be revised as needed. It will be ratified by each Academy Local Governing Body.

Appendix 1 – extract from Teachers’ Standards

Part Two: Personal and professional conduct

A teacher is expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct. The following statements define the behaviour and attitudes which set the required standard for conduct throughout a teacher’s career.

Teachers uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside Academy, by:

- treating pupils with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to a teacher’s professional position
- having regard for the need to safeguard pupils’ well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions
- showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others
- not undermining fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
- ensuring that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways which exploit pupils’ vulnerability or might lead them to break the law.

Teachers must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the Academy in which they teach, and maintain high standards in their own attendance and punctuality.

Teachers must have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities.

Appendix 2 – supplementary policies and guidance

- Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who Work with Children and Young People (<http://www.saferrecruitmentconsortium.org/GSWP%20Oct%202015.pdf>)
- Managing allegations (<http://www.partnersinsalford.org/sscb/safeppractice.htm>)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>)
- Use of Reasonable Force in Academies (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/use-of-reasonable-force-in-schools>)