Ethos Academy Trust

Code of Conduct Policy

November 2022

ETHOS
ACADEMY TRUST

Nurturing inclusive learning communities

1	Summary	**Code of Conduct Policy**				
2	**Responsible person**	P&C Lead				
3	**Accountable ELT member**	Lesley Conway - P&C Lead				
4	**Applies to**	☒All Staff ☐Support Staff ☐Teaching Staff				
5	**Trustees and/or individuals who have overseen development of this policy**	P&C Lead				
6	**Headteachers/Service Heads who were consulted and have given approval (if applicable)**	n/a				
8	**Ratifying committee(s) and date of final approval**	Trust Board				
9	**Version number**	1.6				
10	**Available on**	Every	☒Y ☐N	Trust Website		☐Y☒N
				Academy Website		☐Y☒N
				Staff Portal		☐Y☒N
11	**Related documents (if applicable)**	Links with other policies – outlined on Page 6				
12	**Disseminated to**	☐Trustees ☒All Staff ☐Support Staff ☐Teaching Staff				
13	**Date of implementation (when shared)**	15.11.2022				
14	**Date of next formal review**	**November 2023**				
15	**Consulted with Recognised Trade Unions**	☐Y ☒N				

Date	Version	Action	Summary of changes
Oct 2022			Minor amends

Contents

INTRODUCTION

The Board of Trustees are required to set out a Code of Conduct for all Trust employees, in line with the statutory guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education. By creating this policy, we aim to ensure our Trust and Academies are environments where everyone is safe, happy and treated with respect.

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.

Employees should be aware that a failure to comply with the following Code of Conduct could result in disciplinary action including dismissal.

PURPOSE, SCOPE AND PRINCIPLES

A Code of Conduct is designed to give clear guidance on the standards of behaviour all Academy staff are expected to observe, and Academies should notify all staff of this Code and the expectations therein. Trust staff are role models and are in a unique position of influence and must adhere to behaviour that sets a good example to all the pupils within the Academies. As a member of a Trust community, each employee has an individual responsibility to maintain their reputation and the reputation of the Trust whether inside or outside working hours.

The code of Conduct applies to:

- All staff who are employed by the Trust, including the CEO/Headteachers;
- All staff in other settings (mainstream support) that are attached to the Trust

SETTING AN EXAMPLE

All staff must demonstrate high standards of conduct in order to encourage our pupils/students to do the same. They will:

- Maintain high standards in attendance and punctuality
- Not use inappropriate or offensive language
- Treat pupils and others with dignity and respect
- Not undermine fundamental British Values
- Show tolerance and respect for the rights of others
- Not express personal beliefs in a way that exploits pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law
- Understand the statutory frameworks they must act within
- Avoid putting themselves at risk of allegations of abusive or unprofessional conduct.

SAFEGUARDING PUPILS/STUDENTS

- All staff have a duty to safeguard pupils/students from:
  - Physical abuse
  - Sexual abuse
  - Emotional abuse
  - Neglect

- Staff are required to familiarise themselves with the Trust Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy the Prevent initiative and also to ensure that they are aware of the processes that they need to follow if they have concerns about a child. Policies are available to all staff on Every Compliance.
- The duty to safeguarding pupils/students includes the duty to report concerns about a pupil/student to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for Child Protection.
- Staff must not seriously demand or undermine pupils, their parents or carers, or colleagues.
- Staff must take reasonable care of pupils/students under their supervision with the aim of ensuring their safety and welfare.

LOW LEVEL CONCERNS ABOUT STAFF

A low-level concern is behaviour towards a child by a member of staff that does not meet the harms threshold, is inconsistent with the staff Code of Conduct, and may be as simple as causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt'. For example:

- Being over-friendly with children
- Having favourites
- Taking photographs of children on a personal device
- Engaging in one-to-one activities where they can't easily be seen
- Using inappropriate language

- Low-level concerns can include inappropriate conduct inside and outside of work.
- All staff should share any low-level concerns that have using the reporting procedures set out in our child protection and safeguarding policy. We also encourage staff to self-refer if they find themselves in a situation that could be misinterpreted. If staff are not sure whether behaviour would be deemed a low-level concern, we encourage staff to report it.
- All reports will be handled in a responsive, sensitive and proportionate way.
- Unprofessional behaviour will be addressed and the staff member supported to correct it, at an early stage.
- This creates and embeds a culture of openness, trust and transparency in which our values and expected behaviour are constantly lived, monitored and reinforced by all staff, while minimising the risk of abuse.
- Reporting and responding to low-level concerns is covered in more details in our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. This is available on Every compliance.

PUPIL/STUDENT DEVELOPMENT

- All staff must comply with trust policies and procedures that support the well-being and development of pupils/students.
- Staff must co-operate and collaborate with colleagues and with external agencies where necessary to support the development of pupils/students.
- Staff must follow reasonable instructions that support the development of pupils/students.

STAFF AND PUPIL RELATIONSHIPS

- Staff are required to 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.

- If a staff member is concerned at any point that an interaction between themselves and a pupil may be misinterpreted, or is a staff member is concerned at any point about a fellow staff member and a pupil, this should be reported in line with the procedures set out in our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- Personal contact details should not be exchanged between staff and pupils. This includes social media profiles.

Further details in relation to this are included in the Safer Working Practice Policy on Every compliance.

COMMUNICATION AND SOCIAL MEDIA

- Trust staff's social media profiles should not be available to pupils. If they have a personal profile on social media sites, they should consider not using their full names and set public profiles to private.
- Staff should not attempt to contact pupils or their parents via social media, or any other means outside school, in order to develop any sort of relationship. They will not make any efforts to find pupils' or parents' social media profiles.
- Staff will ensure that they do not post any images online that identify children who are pupils at the school without their consent.
- Staff are required to adhere to the Trust Social media Policy and Safer Working Practice Policy.

ACCEPTABLE 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 camera to take pictures of pupils.

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

Staff are required to adhere to the Electronic Communications Guidance, Acceptable User Agreement, Safer Working Practice and Social media Policy.

HONESTY AND INTEGRITY

- Staff must maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their work. This includes dealing with pupils, the handling and claiming of money and the use of the trust property and facilities.
- All staff my comply with the Bribery Act 2010. 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. If you believe that a person has failed to comply with the Bribery Act, you should refer to the Trust Whistleblowing Policy.
- Gifts from suppliers or associates of the trust must be declared to the CEO/Headteacher 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. You should refer to the Trust Gifts and Hospitality Policy.
- Staff will ensure that all information given to the Trust is correct. This should include:
  - Background information (including any past or current investigations/cautions related to conduct outside of school)

- o Qualifications
- o Professional experience
- Where there are any updates to the information provided to the Trust, the member of staff will advise the school as such as soon as reasonably practicable. Consideration will then be given to the nature and circumstances of the matter and whether this may have an impact on the member of staff's employment.

CONDUCT OUTSIDE WORK

- Staff must not engage in conduct outside work which could seriously damage the reputation and standing of the Trust or the employee's own reputation or the reputation of other members of the Trust or teaching community.
- This covers but is not limited to:
  - o Criminal offences that involve violence of possession or use of illegal drugs or sexual misconduct are likely to be regarded as unacceptable;
  - o Conduct on social media and when using information technology.
- Staff may undertake work outside the trust, either paid or voluntary, provided that it does not conflict with the interests of the trust nor be to a level which may contravene the working time regulations or affect the individual's work performance.

CONFIDENTIALITY

- Where staff have access to confidential information about pupils/students or their parents or carers, or staff, this information should never be:
- o Disclosed to anyone unless required by law or with consent from the relevant party or parties
- o Used to humiliate, embarrass or blackmail others
- o Used 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 that a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm, as detailed on the Trust Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

- All staff need to recognise that failure to meet these standards of behaviour and conduct may result in disciplinary action, including dismissal.

MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS

This policy will be reviewed annually, but can be revised as needed. It will be approved by the Board of Trustees.

The Board of Trustees will ensure this Code of Conduct is implemented effectively, and will ensure appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard children and deal with any concerns.

LINKS WITH OTHER POLICIES

This policy links with our policies on:

- Staff 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.
- Staff grievance procedures
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Gifts and Hospitality Policy
- Social Media Policy
- Safer Working Practice Policy
- Electronic Communications Guidance
- Acceptable Use Agreement