



**South Manchester
Learning Trust**

Personal Growth | Academic Excellence

Trust Wide Policy Staff Code of Conduct

Date of Board Approval: 20 February 2019

1 INTRODUCTION

The Trust Board is required to set out a Code of Conduct for all South Manchester Learning Trust employees. In addition to this policy, all staff employed under The Teachers' Terms and Conditions of Employment have a statutory obligation to adhere to the 'Teachers' Standards 2012' and in relation to this policy, Part 2 of the Teachers' Standards - Personal and Professional Conduct. This code of conduct is not exhaustive and does not replace the general requirements of the law, common sense and good conduct.

This document helps **all** staff to understand what behaviour is and is not acceptable. Employees should be aware that a failure to comply with the following Code of Conduct could result in disciplinary action including dismissal. Please refer to the disciplinary procedure for more information.

This document;

- sets out minimum standards of behaviour for employees
- provides guidelines to help maintain and improve standards
- aims to protect the reputation of both employees and the school
- aims to protect the rights and interests of children and young people involved with the school.

This code of conduct should be read in conjunction with a number of policies and schemes relating to conduct which are set out at the end of this document.

It is the responsibility of all employees of South Manchester Learning Trust to:

- read this policy
- ensure they understand it
- ask if there are any points that are unclear
- use this code of conduct, alongside other school policies, to guide them in their role.

2 PURPOSE, SCOPE AND PRINCIPLES

A Code of Conduct is designed to give clear guidance on the standards of behaviour all employees of South Manchester Learning Trust are expected to observe. School staff are role models in a unique position of influence and must adhere to behaviour that sets a good example to all the students within the school. As a member of a school community, each employee has an individual responsibility to promote the interests of South Manchester Learning Trust and maintain their reputation and the reputation of the school, whether inside or outside working hours.

This Code of Conduct applies to all staff who are employed by South Manchester Learning Trust.

3 SETTING AN EXAMPLE

- 3.1 All staff who work in schools set examples of behaviour and conduct which can be copied by students. All staff must, therefore, demonstrate high standards of conduct in order to encourage our students to do the same.

- 3.2 Staff must avoid using inappropriate or offensive language at all times.
- 3.3 Staff must ensure that all emails, school documentation and reports are written using an appropriate, professional tone.
- 3.4 All staff are expected to dress in professional business wear which is not likely to be viewed as offensive or too revealing. Further details can be found in the Staff Handbook.
- 3.5 Employees should also ensure that their dress is appropriate to the professional nature of their role at the school, the activities they are involved in and any health and safety requirements related to these. Suitable personal protective equipment will be issued and must be worn where a risk assessment indicates it is appropriate.
- 3.6 All staff must avoid putting themselves at risk of allegations of unprofessional conduct and/or abusive behaviour. Further details can be found in "Guidance for Safer Working Practice..."
- 3.7 Employees are accountable for their actions and should ask the Headteacher for advice if they are not sure of the appropriate action to take.

4 SAFEGUARDING STUDENTS

- 4.1 Staff have a duty to safeguard students from:
 - physical abuse
 - sexual abuse
 - emotional abuse
 - neglect.
- 4.2 The duty to safeguard students includes the duty to report concerns about a student to the individual school's Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- 4.3 Staff should be familiar with the name of the DSL for the school(s) in which they work.
- 4.4 Staff are provided with access to the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy annually and Whistleblowing Procedure and KCSIE (Part 1) on induction. Staff must sign annually to confirm that they are fully familiar with these documents.
- 4.5 It is an offence under section 16 of The Sexual Offences Act 2003 for a person aged 18 or over to have a sexual relationship with a child under 18 where that person is in a position of trust in respect of that child, even if the relationship is consensual.
- 4.6 Staff must take appropriate care of students under their supervision with the aim of ensuring their safety and welfare.

- 4.7 A register is a legal document. Staff must therefore ensure that they take registers promptly and accurately, following the school's agreed procedures to report a student unexpectedly missing from a classroom without reason.

5 STUDENT DEVELOPMENT

- 5.1 Staff must comply with school policies and procedures that support the well-being of students.
- 5.2 Staff must co-operate and collaborate with colleagues and with external agencies where necessary to support the development of students.

6 HONESTY AND INTEGRITY

- 6.1 Staff must maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their work. This includes the handling and claiming of money, administration of examinations and the use of school property and facilities.
- 6.2 All staff must 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 schools Whistleblowing procedure.
- 6.3 Gifts from suppliers or associates of the school must be declared to the Headteacher, with the exception of "one off" token gifts from students or parents, (as a guide, gifts worth more than £20 should be declared). Personal gifts from individual members of staff to students are inappropriate and could be misinterpreted.

7 GENERAL POINTS

- 7.1 Staff should display the highest possible standards of professional behaviour that is required in an educational establishment as set out in Part 2 of the Teachers' Standards - Personal and Professional Conduct.
- 7.2 Staff should seek to co-operate with their colleagues, providing support, help and guidance as required by them and their line manager, and enable effective communication throughout the school.
- 7.3 Staff should not use their position in the school for private advantage or gain. Conflicts of interest may occur if a decision of the school could affect an employee, or their close friends or relatives, either positively or negatively. Interests could include involvement with businesses which have existing or proposed contracts with the school.

- 7.4 Staff should avoid words and deeds that might bring the school into disrepute or might undermine colleagues in the perception of others.
- 7.5 Staff may hold their own personal and political views but should retain professional independent objectivity and not promote dogma or religious or political bias to others in their working activities.
- 7.6 Staff must obtain permission from the Headteacher and follow the school's procedures before taking students off the school premises.
- 7.7 Staff must obtain permission from the Headteacher or Designated Safeguarding Lead before arranging for any visitors to come into the school.
- 7.8 Staff must obtain permission from the Headteacher or Head of Department and use the school finance procedures before incurring any expenditure on behalf of the School.
- 7.9 Staff should attend their place of work punctually. In any situation which causes unavoidable lateness, colleagues should follow the procedures for informing school, as stipulated in the staff handbook.
- 7.10 Any approaches from the media in relation to school related issues, that are not celebrating achievement, must be directed to the Headteacher for an authorised response.

8 CONDUCT OUTSIDE SCHOOL

- 8.1 All teaching and support staff should inform the Headteacher before engaging in any other business or accepting additional employment.
- 8.2 Staff must not engage in conduct outside work which could seriously damage the reputation and standing of the South Manchester Learning Trust, the school in which they work, the employee's own reputation or the reputation of other members of the school community.
- 8.3 In particular, criminal offences that involve violence, possession or use of illegal drugs or sexual misconduct are likely to be regarded as unacceptable.
- 8.4 Staff may undertake work outside school, either paid or voluntary, providing it does not conflict with the interests of the school or be at a level which may contravene the working time regulations or affect an individual's work performance.
- 8.5 Any additional employment should not conflict with the school's interests, the role the employee fulfils for the school, or have the potential to bring the school into disrepute.
- 8.6 Employees may not set up a business, or accept a job with a business, which is in direct competition with the school. Employees should check with the Headteacher where further clarification is required.

- 8.7 If an employee works for another organisation they may not act as a messenger between that organisation and the school. Formal channels of communication must be maintained.
- 8.8 Any secondary employment must not be carried out during an employee's contracted school working hours, nor whilst on standby for official call out purposes, unless such employment can be undertaken from their home.

9 USE OF ICT AND SOCIAL MEDIA

- 9.1 Staff must sign and agree to abide to the ICT and Social Media Policy.
- 9.2 Staff must exercise caution when using information technology and be aware of the risks to themselves and others.
- 9.3 Staff must not engage in inappropriate use of social network sites which may bring themselves, the school or South Manchester Learning Trust into disrepute.
- 9.4 Staff must ensure that if a social networking site is used, details are not shared with students and privacy settings are set at maximum.
- 9.5 Staff must not give their personal contact details to students, including their mobile telephone number and details of any blogs or personal websites

10 CONFIDENTIALITY

- 10.1 Where staff have access to confidential information about students or their parents or carers, staff must not reveal such information except to those colleagues who have a professional role in relation to the student.
- 10.2 Staff have an obligation to share with the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead any information which gives rise to concern about the safety or welfare of a student. Staff must **never** promise a student that they will not act on information that they are told by the student.
- 10.3 Employees must take all reasonable steps to ensure that the loss, destruction, inaccurate, or improper disclosure of information does not occur as a result of their actions. This includes information relating to school business and pupil data.
- 10.4 Employees must not disclose personal or financial information about any other member of staff without the express consent of that individual, or without authorisation from the Headteacher.
- 10.5 Confidential information, belonging to the school, should not be disclosed to any person not authorised to receive it.

- 10.6 Employees must not use any information obtained in the course of their employment to cause damage to the school, or for personal gain, or benefit. Nor should they pass information on to others who may use it in such a way.
- 10.7 Employees should also be aware that under Section 13 of the Education Act 2011, it is a criminal offence to disclose the identity of a teacher who is the subject of an allegation of a criminal offence made by or on behalf of a pupil, until a teacher is charged with that offence. This includes disclosing any information that could make that person identifiable. Further clarification is available from the Headteacher if required.

11 TIME, FACILITIES AND PUBLICATIONS

- 11.1 Employees must spend all of their contracted hours working for the school.
- 11.2 Employees may not make personal use of the school's property or facilities (stationery, photocopiers, car parks etc) unless authorised to do so by the Headteacher. Computers and software may only be used in line with the ICT and Social Networking Policy.
- 11.3 Employees may only use the school's telephones to make or receive private calls in exceptional circumstances, and with the permission of the Headteacher. In addition they should not use their personal mobile phone to make or receive personal calls during pupil contact time in the classroom, other than in an emergency, or with the prior permission of the Headteacher.
- 11.4 Any public funds entrusted to an employee must be used in a responsible and lawful manner.
- 11.5 Employees who want to publish any material which they have written in connection with their duties or in which they describe themselves as holding a position within the school must first gain the consent of the Headteacher.
- 11.6 If, in the course of their work, an employee creates a copyright work (for example, procedures for a manual, or a software programme), a patentable invention, or design capable of registration, this would become the property of the school and, if appropriate, they would be required to cooperate in the registration formalities.
- 11.7 Employees may retain fees for any external work delivered on behalf of the school for which a personal fee is payable, for example, delivering a lecture, with the prior agreement of the Headteacher.

12 EQUALITY

- 12.1 South Manchester Learning Trust is firmly committed to the principles of equality and diversity and has a positive duty to promote these within the community it serves.

- 12.2 Employees must treat colleagues, pupils, parents, carers, governors and members of the public and the local community with respect and must not discriminate against any person.
- 12.3 Employees involved in making recruitment decisions should ensure that their decisions are based only on the ability of the candidate to undertake the duties of the post. If any applicant is a close personal friend, or relative, this should be declared prior to the recruitment process.
- 12.4 Employees should not be solely involved in any decisions relating to discipline, pay or promotion of close personal friends or relatives.

13 DISCIPLINARY ACTION

- 13.1 All staff need to recognise that failure to meet these standards of behaviour and conduct may result in disciplinary action, including dismissal.
- 13.2 All employees should conduct themselves in a professional manner at work. Serious misconduct and/or criminal offences committed during, or outside of, working hours which bring them or the school into disrepute may be the subject of disciplinary action which could lead to dismissal.
- 13.3 It is essential that employees inform the Headteacher of any police investigation, charge, caution, reprimand, fine or conviction immediately. All such disclosures will be handled in confidence but this may result in a suspension from duties while an investigation takes place.