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# Code of Conduct for Employees

## *Introduction*

Penk Valley Academy Trust is required to set out a Code of Conduct for all employees.

In addition to this document, all staff employed under 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.

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

## *Purpose, Scope and Principles*

By creating this policy, we aim to ensure our environment is a place where everyone is safe, happy and treated with respect.

Many of the principles in this code of conduct are based on the [Teachers' Standards](#).

School staff have an influential position in the school, and will act as role models for pupils by consistently demonstrating high standards of behaviour.

We expect that all teachers will act in accordance with the personal and professional behaviours set out in the Teachers' Standards.

We expect all support staff, members, trustees, school forum and volunteers to also act with personal and professional integrity, respecting the safety and wellbeing of others.

Please note that 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 students.

This Code of Conduct applies to **all** staff who are employed by the Trust.

## *Legislation and guidance*

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.

This policy also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

## *General Obligations*

Staff set an example to pupils. They will:

- Maintain high standards in their attendance and punctuality
- Never use inappropriate or offensive language in school
- Treat pupils and others with dignity and respect

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- 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
  - Comply with Trust policies, code of practice and legal and professional responsibilities
  - Co-operate and collaborate with colleagues and external agencies, to support the development of students.

### *Safeguarding*

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.

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 in the staff room and from the school office. New staff will also be given copies on arrival.

Staff are expected to attend regular briefings relating to Safeguarding and PREVENT, if they are unable to attend, they are expected to read up on the briefing given, and sign to confirm that they have done so.

All staff are provided with and must wear photo identification during working hours (unless prevented for a limited time due to health & safety reasons e.g. when using D&T equipment).

Staff working with children under the age of 8 must declare if they or anyone they live with are disqualified from working with children. Staff must notify the headteacher immediately of any changes relating to cautions, warnings, convictions, orders etc for themselves, or a member of their household, that may result in disqualification.

### *Staff/student relationships*

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.

If staff members and pupils must spend time on a one-to-one basis, staff will 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

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

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

While we are aware many pupils and their parents may wish to give gifts to staff, for example, at the end of the academic year, gifts from staff to pupils above the market value of £30 are not acceptable.

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 headteacher.

### ***Professional Conduct***

Staff are expected to work together to support the organisation in ensuring relationships are characterised by mutual and appropriate respect. Relationships between staff should be courteous, based on fairness, openness and respect. Where differences occur, they should be dealt with calmly, fairly, privately and in a professional manner. Staff behaving inappropriately will be dealt with under the disciplinary policy.

### ***Communication and social media***

The Trust will use email as its primary electronic communication tool. All staff are expected to log onto their personalised email account at least daily.

The Trust expect all staff to ensure their personal social media profiles are not available to pupils. If they have a personal profile on social media sites, we recommend they should not use their full name, as pupils may be able to find them. Staff should consider using a first and middle name instead, 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 should be aware of the Trust's On Line Safety 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 front of pupils, unless the staff member needs to do so because they are on duty. They will not use personal mobile phones or cameras to take pictures of pupils.

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

### ***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.

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This information will never be:

- Disclosed to anyone without the relevant authority
- Used to humiliate, embarrass or blackmail others
- 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 a child is at risk of harm.

All staff are trained on GDPR and are expected to ensure that they comply with this legislation. All sensitive data should be stored appropriately, disposed of in a timely manner - and cross shredded if required. All staff dealing with data should always ensure that papers are properly filed and that they are not left lying on desks when meetings are held. No staff should put unencrypted student data onto memory sticks.

### ***Honesty and integrity***

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.

Staff will not accept bribes. Gifts that are worth more than £30 must be declared and recorded on the gifts and hospitality register.

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

### ***Dress code***

Staff will dress in a professional, appropriate manner.

- Outfits will not be overly revealing, and we ask that tattoos are covered up.
- Clothes will not display any offensive or political slogans.
- Flip flops would be deemed as inappropriate footwear within any school setting.

### ***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.

### ***Monitoring arrangements***

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years, unless deemed necessary prior to this date.

### ***Links with other policies***

This Code of Conduct links with our policies on:

- Staff disciplinary procedures, which will be used if staff breach this code of conduct.
- Staff grievance procedures
- Safeguarding
- On line safety
- Whistleblowing

# Staff Code of Conduct