



MOSAIC
SCHOOLS LEARNING TRUST

STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT

All schools in Mosaic Schools Learning Trust are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Staff Responsible:	HR
Date of Review:	September 2024
Date of Next Review:	September 2026

VERSION CONTROL

Date	Change
September 2024	Mosaic Policy based on existing CSAT policy with Head teacher consultation across both Trusts.

Contents

1. Aims, scope and principles.....	3
2. Legislation and guidance.....	3
3. General obligations	4
4. Safeguarding	4
5. Professional Relationships	5
6. Secondary Employment including Private Tutoring.....	7
7. Communication and social media.....	7
8. Acceptable use of technology.....	8
9. Confidentiality.....	8
10. Honesty and integrity.....	8
11. Dress code.....	9
12. Transporting Pupils	9
13. Other Areas	9
14. Conduct outside of work	10
15. Enquiries from the Media	10
16 Monitoring arrangements.....	10
17. Links with other policies	10

1. Aims, scope and principles

This policy aims to set and maintain standards of conduct that we expect all staff employed by Mosaic Schools Learning Trust to follow.

This policy references other Trust or School policies. Links to these policies are available from the Trust or School website, the Headteacher or the School Office.

By creating this policy, we aim to ensure our schools are environments where everyone is safe, happy and treated equally with respect.

This Code of Conduct applies to:

- all staff who are employed by the Trust and its schools, including the CEO and Executive Head teachers and those that have TUPE transferred into the Trust;
- all staff in units, provisions or bases that are attached to the schools;
- all student teachers, trainee teaching assistants and apprentices on placement.

The Code of Conduct does not apply to:

- peripatetic staff who are centrally employed by outside agencies;
- school meals staff employed by external catering companies;
- employees of external contractors and providers of services (e.g. contract cleaners).

(Such staff are covered by the relevant Code of Conduct of their employing body)

School staff have an influential position within each 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 staff to also act with personal and professional integrity, respecting the safety and wellbeing of others.

Failure to follow the Code of Conduct will be investigated and may result in disciplinary action being taken, as set out in the Trust's disciplinary procedures.

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 pupils.

2. Legislation and guidance

In line with the current 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 agreements and Articles of Association.

3. General obligations

Staff set an example to pupils. They will:

- Maintain high standards in their attendance, dress, punctuality as well as a polite, friendly and courteous manner.
- Never use inappropriate or offensive language in school
- Treat both pupils and other adults 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 (including religious or political) 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 or other relevant professional standards.

4. Safeguarding

Staff have a paramount 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 Duty to Prevent legislation, and ensure they are aware of the processes to follow if they have concerns about a child.

Staff will participate in appropriate safeguarding and child protection training, which will include online safety; additionally, staff will receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates at least annually.

Staff have a duty to inform and report to the Headteacher (or in the case of the Headteacher, to their line manager) any circumstances in their personal lives that may impact on their work or present a reputational risk to the School or Trust. For example, personal involvement with Social Services in relation to their own children.

A staff member is expected to use their own professional judgement to determine if their personal circumstances warrant disclosing. For the avoidance of any doubt, if the member of staff is unsure if their circumstances warrant disclosing, they should make the disclosure to the Headteacher, Designated Safeguarding Lead or Executive Headteacher. Failure to disclose such information will be investigated and may be deemed a disciplinary offence and would be handled in accordance with the Trust's disciplinary procedure.

Our safeguarding policy and procedures are available in the staff room and from the school office. The Trust safeguarding overarching statement appears on the Trust website. New staff will also be given copies on arrival.

5. Professional Relationships

With Children:

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.

Staff will use physical contact as set out in their school's Positive Handling Policy with children in a careful, sensitive and respectful way, if required. However, any physical contact should be avoided when staff members are alone with individual children, except in emergency. We adopt the principle that parents want their children to be given a certain level of physical reassurance if distressed, hurt or otherwise in need. This is the case for all children, but may be appropriate more frequently for younger children.

Staff have a professional responsibility to inform their line Manager, Head Teacher or Designated Safeguarding Lead if they believe that a colleague is behaving in a way that compromises the safety or well-being of any child or group of children in line with the Trust's Whistleblowing Policy.

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 or
- in a room that others can see into and ideally when
- a colleague or line manager knows this is taking place.

Staff should avoid contact with pupils outside of school hours if possible. Personal contact details should not be exchanged between staff and pupils. This includes social media profiles.

With Parents:

Staff should seek to work in partnership with parents, using their understanding of their own child to help us to provide the best learning opportunities that we can. We recognise that parents' worries and concerns can be extremely emotive and we acknowledge that, at times, we will need to speak to parents when they are upset.

Staff should protect themselves by ensuring that they meet with parents in areas of the school that are visible and easily accessible to other staff members, whilst remembering to be sensitive to the confidential nature of some discussions. Staff must always make sure that colleagues know when and where they are meeting with parents.

Staff should not give out personal contact details to parents including social media profiles. Staff should make their line Manager or Head Teacher aware of any personal relationships or connections they have with parents. It is understood that on occasions Trust staff might make contact with parents by virtue of their own child's friendship groups or social arrangements. It is still essential however that appropriate professional boundaries are maintained.

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 not generally acceptable unless

agreed with the Head Teacher (for example, Easter eggs given to children attending an Easter celebration).

If a staff member is concerned at any point that an interaction between themselves and a pupil or parent may be misinterpreted, this should be reported to their line manager or the Head Teacher. Similarly, if a staff member is concerned about the behaviour of a child or parent towards them.

With other members of Staff:

Staff must act in a professional manner towards colleagues, irrespective of their relative position or status within the school or Trust hierarchy. Staff should address concerns openly and honestly with the person to whom the concern is addressed whenever possible, without publicly criticising anyone. All staff should be publicly supportive of colleagues, and deal with concerns or disagreements privately, with support if necessary.

All employees involved in appointments should ensure that these are made on the basis of merit. It may be unlawful for an employee to make an appointment that was based on anything other than the ability of the candidate to undertake the duties of the post. The school's recruitment and selection procedure must be strictly observed. In order to avoid any possible accusation of bias, employees should not be involved in an appointment where they are related to an applicant or have a close personal relationship or friendship outside work with that person.

Staff should make their line Manager or Headteacher aware of any personal relations with other staff members or Governors that might lead to a conflict of interests or cast doubt on the integrity of the school or Trust; especially where one or other of the parties holds a management or leadership role.

Similarly, employees should not be involved in decisions relating to discipline, grievance capability, promotion or pay adjustments for any employee who is a relative, partner, close friend etc.

With local community and service users:

Employees should always remember their responsibilities to the community they serve and ensure courteous, efficient and impartial service delivery to all groups and individuals within that community as defined by the policies of the Trust and Local Governing Body.

Relationships with contractors

All relationships of a business or private nature with external contractors, or potential contractors, must be made known to the Headteacher, Local Governing Body or line manager.

All employees who engage or supervise contractors or who have any other official relationship with contractors and have previously had or currently have a relationship in a private or domestic capacity with contractors, must also declare that relationship.

A Declaration of Interest pro-forma is available for such notification.

Orders and contracts must be awarded on merit, by fair competition against other tenderers and no special favour should be shown to businesses or consultancies run by, for example, friends, partners or relatives, in the tendering process.

If an employee is in doubt as to whether a relationship should be declared in relation to tendering or procurement, they should seek advice from the Trust Finance Controller. Related Parties should be declared as set out in the Academies Financial Handbook.

6. Secondary Employment

The Trust does not wish to preclude employees from undertaking work, either paid or voluntary. However, employees are required to devote their attention and abilities to their duties during their contractual working hours and to act in the best interests of the Trust. Staff should avoid engaging in business or employment that might conflict with the Trust's interests or be at a level that may contravene the Working Time Regulations.

In accordance with contracts of employment, staff who undertake secondary employment must declare this to the Trust by informing their line Manager. Line Managers, in collaboration with HR where necessary, will give consideration to how any secondary employment might impact a staff member's work with the Trust.

7. Communication and social media

School and Trust staff's social media profiles should not be available to pupils. If they have a personal profile on social media sites, we would recommend that staff 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.

Where there is a family relationship between an adult working within the school or Trust and a child attending the school, the social media sites used by staff members will be restricted to private accounts that do not have any link to other pupils attending the school. There should be no social media contact between any members of staff and a pupil that is not in their direct family.

Staff will ensure that they do not post any images online that identify children who are pupils at the school other than on School websites and with the pupils' consent.

Staff should understand the expectations set out in their school's e-safety policy, Trust's ICT Acceptable Use Policy.

8. 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 in front of pupils. They will also not use personal mobile phones or cameras to take pictures of pupils. Staff can use mobile phones during break or lunchtime but only in designated areas to be determined by the Head Teacher, where children are not present.

Other than for training/teaching events where consent has been obtained, staff will not make audio or video recordings of meetings. The covert recording of colleagues will be considered an act of misconduct. The Trust's Data Protection Policy must be followed both in detail and spirit.

The Trust has the right to monitor emails and internet use on the schools' IT systems.

9. 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.

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.

There is a Trust Staff Confidentiality Policy. All staff will be expected to sign this policy at appointment and periodically thereafter.

10. 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, or gifts that could be construed as bribes.

Staff are referred to the Trust Gifts and Hospitality Policy in relation to the Trust's approach to gifts from parents and pupils.

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

11. Dress code

Staff will dress in a professional, appropriate manner, exhibiting the importance of the job that we do. This includes:

- wearing professional, smart, practical clothes
- avoiding wearing clothes that could cause offence due to badges or emblems. Similarly Tattoos of that nature should be covered.
- jeans are generally not considered acceptable, unless participating in a trip, activity or visit that requires harder wearing clothes (e.g. residential trips, Forest School or some art activities)
- when leading physical activities and/or PE lessons (including Sports Day), changing into suitable clothing for that lesson (e.g. training shoes and tracksuit)
- not wearing excessive amounts of jewellery and understanding our own Health and Safety responsibilities
- Footwear must also be appropriate; shoes should have enclosed toes and be properly secured at the back. The Trust advises not to wear open toed shoes or flip flops for Health and Safety reasons.

12. Transporting pupils

When it is necessary to transport pupils off-site, staff will ensure that the transport arrangements of the vehicle meet all legal requirements, they have an appropriate licence and the vehicle is roadworthy, has a valid MOT certificate and is insured for the purpose.

Staff will gain consent from parents before transporting pupils and will be aware that the welfare of all pupils in the vehicle is their responsibility.

Other than in an emergency when it cannot be facilitated, two or more staff will be present in the vehicle to avoid any discrepancy regarding safeguarding concerns.

It is understood that on occasions Trust staff might transport pupils or parents of the Trust in their own cars by virtue of their own child's friendship groups or social arrangements. It is still essential however that appropriate professional boundaries are maintained and there is a demarcation between your work for the Trust and your role as a parent.

13. Other Areas

- Members of teaching staff arrive in school at least fifteen minutes before the start of the school day, as a part of their directed time
- Other staff members arrive in school in good time to begin their contracted hours
- If for any reason staff are delayed in the morning, it is their responsibility to ensure that the appropriate person in school is informed at the earliest opportunity
- Teachers are available after the end of the school day to meet with colleagues, parents and managers, as a part of their directed time
- Staff should support and use the systems in place for monitoring who is on site and understand that these systems are for the Health and Safety of all.

14. Conduct outside of work

Staff will not act in a way that would bring the Trust, 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 Trust or school on social media. Any breaches may be handled in accordance with the disciplinary procedure.

15. Enquiries from the Media

Staff should not speak to the press or respond to media enquiries on matters relating to the school or Trust. All media queries should be referred immediately to Trust's Chief Executive Officer without further comment being made.

16. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed every two years, but can be revised as needed. It will be ratified by Trustees.

17. 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
- Data Protection Policy
- E-safety
- ICT Acceptable Use Policy
- Whistleblowing
- Trust Gifts and Hospitality Policy
- Trust Staff Confidentiality Policy

Links to these policies are available from the Trust or School website, the Headteacher or the School Office.