



Support
Tenacity
Responsibility
Innovation
Voice
Equity

Code of Conduct

Date or Review	September 2023
Next Review Date	September 2024
CEO	Sam Coy
Chair of the Trust	Sarah Richards
Signed	Signed Copy held centrally
Date	30/06/2025

CODE OF CONDUCT

INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Code of Conduct applies to all employees of the Trust including agency workers. The code is intended to guide and assist all those working within the Trust to understand and comply with the Trust's expectations in terms of their standard of conduct and behaviour. All employees are expected to adhere to the principles contained within this Code during the course of their work or when representing the school.
- 1.2 We aim to provide a high-quality provision for all pupils, staff and any external companies with whom we may have business with, and promote public confidence in the integrity of the school.
- 1.3 All employees are expected to reflect high standards of behaviour both at work and in their private life and set a good example to pupils and others at all times. Employees should be mindful of their behaviour outside the school and the reflection this may have on themselves, the school and the profession.
- 1.4 All employees of Scholars Trust must ensure that they adhere to the relevant professional standards for their role.
- 1.5 Employees must also safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in their profession, as part of their professional duties and in line with relevant professional standards.
- 1.6 This Code complies with the requirements of relevant legislation, and reflects the other school and trust policies and procedures.
- 1.7 All employees must read this Code carefully (and alongside the school and trust policies and procedures) and seek advice and guidance on any matters that they do not fully understand.
- 1.8 Any breaches of this Code may result in a formal investigation being carried out under Scholars Trust Disciplinary or Grievance policy and may result in disciplinary action being taken against the employee.

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY IN THE WORKPLACE

- 2.1 All employees have a personal responsibility to promote equality and diversity within this school in respect of their colleagues, governors, pupils, pupil's parents and carers and the local community.
- 2.2 **Equality** - Employees will ensure that everyone is treated fairly and with respect regardless of their age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion/belief, sex, sexual orientation and marriage/civil partnership and pregnancy and maternity.
- 2.3 **Diversity** - Employees will recognise and value diversity of others within the workplace and understand how any differences can benefit others, our school, trust and the local community.

DIGNITY & RESPECT

- 3.1 All employees are expected to maintain a high standard of behaviour and personal conduct at all times to ensure that everyone in Scholars Trust, including governors, colleagues, pupils, parents and carers, are treated with dignity and respect.
- 3.2 A respectful workplace:
- welcomes all;
 - encourages employees to be the very best they can be;
 - promotes equality of opportunity and treatment of others;
 - respects diversity;
 - promotes employee health and wellbeing;
 - communicates expectations around behavior and personal conduct;
 - strives for improvement and transparency;
 - encourages open and honest communication between employees; and
 - ensures that all disputes at work are dealt with effectively under the relevant policies and procedures.
- 3.3 All employees must act with personal and professional integrity, respecting others by:
- never using inappropriate or offensive language in school;
 - acting in the best interests of the school and its ethos;
 - being honest and acting with integrity;
 - treating pupils and others with dignity and respect;
 - showing tolerance and respect for the rights and beliefs of others;
 - acting as a role model for pupils by consistently demonstrating high standards of behaviour;
 - 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;
 - not expressing personal beliefs in a way that will overly influence pupils, exploits pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law;
 - conforming with <https://resources.workable.com/equal-opportunity-company-policy> Equal Opportunities legislation in all aspects of their work.
- 3.4 Where an employee believes that they have been unfairly treated they may refer to Scholars Trust Grievance Policy.

SAFEGUARDING

This section should be read in conjunction with the “Guidance for Safer Working Practice for those Working with Children in Education Settings” and KCSIE.

4.1 Safer Working Practice

The Scholars Academy Trust adopts the Safer Recruitment Consortiums “Guidance for Safer Working Practice for those working with children and young people in education settings”. All staff are asked to read this guidance as part of their induction. The guidance is reviewed annually.

- 4.2 All employees, governors and volunteers have a duty to safeguard pupils to ensure they are not harmed or at risk of harm.

- 4.3 Any concerns about breaches of the KCSIE, unsafe practice or potential failures by the school or its employees **must be reported** to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)] immediately. Concerns in respect of the Headteacher should be raised with the CEO or Chair of Governors or Trust.
- 4.4 All employees will receive appropriate Safeguarding and Child Protection training. If for any reason an employee misses this training, alternative arrangements should be made as soon as possible. All employees will be expected to keep up to date with any changes made to the KCSIE document.
- 4.5 The documents at 4.1 **must** be read and understood and any queries should be directed to the SLT. Employees are asked to sign a copy of these documents to confirm that they have read and understood these and will agree to abide by them at all times during their employment. Further copies are available from the school office.
- 4.6 Each school has their own safeguarding leads and you will be made aware of them the safeguarding training and induction pack.
- 4.7 Local Authority Designated Officer contact details: 0116 305 4141.

DATA PROTECTION & CONFIDENTIALITY

This section should be read in conjunction Trust / school privacy statement

- 5.1 Employees are privy to confidential and sensitive information about the Trust / school, their colleagues, volunteers, pupils and their parents. The Data Protection Act states that anyone who is responsible for using personal data must follow strict data protection principles.
- 5.2 All employees must therefore ensure that any information collected is:
- used fairly, lawfully and transparently;
 - used for specified, explicit purposes;
 - used in a way that is proportionate, relevant and limited to only what is necessary;
 - accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date;
 - kept for no longer than is necessary;
 - handled in a way that ensures appropriate security, including protection against unlawful or unauthorised processing, access, loss, destruction or damage.
- 5.3 Employees must:
- not disclose, or use (directly or indirectly) any information (either about school business, employees, pupils, parents, or external agencies) they receive or allow others to do so whether during their employment or after their termination. Any such data must **only** be accessed by authorised users for legitimate purposes;
 - not use data held by the school for any purpose other than that for which it is intended;
 - ensure that all data is kept secure (e.g. locked away or protected by password) and that data on screens or within documents are not left within view of others;
 - not disclose or display information about logins or passwords for automated devices, or keycodes or similar for manual locks;

- ensure that when sharing personal or sensitive data external to the school, that it is done by secure methods taking care to minimise the risk of loss and making sure it reaches the intended recipient.

- 5.4 When an employee is in doubt about whether to share information or keep it confidential, they must seek guidance from the Head Teacher.
- 5.5 Employees must follow and comply with the school's privacy notice at all times. Failure to do so will be considered a serious breach.

DECLARATION OF INTEREST/CONFLICT

- 6.1 Scholars Trust understands and encourages employees to undertake activities outside of work and take an active role in their community. However, employees should avoid any activities that have the potential to cause a practical conflict with their employment, reputational harm to the school / trust or undermine the school's trust and confidence in them.
- 6.2 If a conflict, or potential conflict, arises during an employee's employment with the school this must be declared to the Headteacher. The Head Teacher will then consider whether it would be appropriate for the employee to continue with the activity. Where an employee fails to comply with instructions from the Headteacher this may be treated as a disciplinary matter (see Disciplinary Policy).
- 6.3 It is the responsibility of employees to declare any interests or conflicts. Failure to do so may be considered a disciplinary matter. Any concerns or queries regarding interests or potential interests should be discussed with an employee's line manager at the earliest opportunity. Please see policy on conflict of interest.

GIFTS & HOSPITALITY

- 7.1 Employees should not accept or give any significant gifts or offers of hospitality as this could be perceived as an act of bribery to influence decisions or be construed as favouritism, which could compromise the individual or the school or the Trust. The term "gift" can also include the procurement of services at a lower cost than that charged to the general public.
- 7.2 Employees should notify the Headteacher if they receive any gifts of substantial value or significance and, where possible, decline the offer politely and firmly. If in doubt employees should discuss the matter with the Head Teacher and refer to the gifts and hospitality policy
- 7.3 Any provision of hospitality that is seen as necessary to represent the school may be accepted with the approval of the Headteacher (or in the case of the Headteacher, the Chair of Governors or of the Trust).
- 7.4 Gifts of appreciation such as gifts at Christmas or "Thank You" gifts given at the end of a school term, which have no substantial financial value (e.g., less than £25) can be accepted and do not need to be declared to the Headteacher.

- 7.5 Under no circumstances should employees accept cash as a gift, even below £25, unless it is cash for donations to the school's charitable funds. Any such donations must be handled in line with the financial procedures.

MOBILE PHONES & HANDHELD DEVICES

- 8.1 Personal mobile telephones and handheld devices must not be used:
- during lesson times/when teaching is taking place;
 - when supervising pupils outside of the classroom (e.g. at break times/lunch times);
 - at any time when responsible for the health and safety of pupils, including whilst off school premises (e.g. on a school visit).

Each school will provide further clarity the use of phones within their school handbooks.

- 8.2 Employees must not:
- use their personal mobile phone or devices to contact pupils or their parent/carers;
 - use their personal mobile phone or devices to take photographs of pupils or retain personal information regarding the pupils at the school;
 - give out their personal phone numbers or contact details, including personal email addresses to pupils or their parent/guardians;
 - keep inappropriate or illegal content on the device.
- 8.3 Where there is a need to deviate from any of the above (e.g. in an emergency situation,) employees must inform the Headteacher immediately or as soon as practically possible.
- 8.4 The above points aim not only to protect pupils but also to protect employees from allegations of misconduct or inappropriate behaviour.
- 8.5 Employees bringing a personal mobile phone or hand-held device into school do so at their own risk. The school will not be held responsible or accept any liability for personal equipment that is lost or is stolen.

NOTIFICATIONS OF CONVICTIONS/CAUTIONS

- 9.1 Employees **must** disclose **any** cautions or convictions:
- prior to or on appointment;
 - at any other time during their employment. Where employees receive any new cautions or convictions during their employment at the school this must be disclosed to the Headteacher. Consideration will be given to how the caution or conviction impacts on an individual's role within school.
- 9.2 The above also applies to any driving convictions received by prospective and existing employees.
- 9.3 This school operates a re-checking process which will require all employees to undergo a further DBS check every 3 – 5 year. Failure to undergo any further checks when requested to do so may result in disciplinary action being taken which could lead to dismissal or may lead to SOSR dismissal.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE & DRESS CODE

10.1 It is important that all employees ensure that their dress and personal appearance is appropriate at all times. All employees must therefore:

- be responsible for their general presentation and personal appearance;
- be considerate of and promote a positive image of the school;
- ensure that clothing and any jewellery worn is appropriate to the role being undertaken (N.B. It is recognised that some roles will require employees to wear sports clothes, such as those involved in PE. For these individuals, appropriate sportswear and equipment should be worn and jewellery must be kept to a minimum to avoid injury);
- ensure that clothing and personal appearance is appropriate and will not cause embarrassment or offence to others. Clothes should be non-offensive and contain no provocative logos or remarks;
- ensure that clothing does not over-expose parts of the body (e.g. stomach or chest) or is transparent. Tight or revealing clothes including mini-skirts, low cut tops or low waistlines are not considered appropriate;
- dresses, skirts and tailored shorts should be of a reasonable length;
- ensure that footwear is suitable for the duties undertaken. Strapless sandals or flip-flops which do not provide necessary protection or are considered a health and safety risk should not be worn, unless there is a medical reason for doing so.

10.2 **Health & Safety:**

- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) must be worn as directed/instructed/trained or where a risk assessment indicates that it is necessary to control residual risks.

10.3 **Religion & Faith:**

- The school recognises the diversity of cultures and religions of its employees and will take a sensitive approach when this affects dress requirements.
- Employees of particular faiths or religions, which are required to wear specific types of clothing will be respected subject to where this may pose a hazard to the health and safety of anyone or where this impacts on teaching and learning.

10.4 **Hair:**

- Hair (including facial hair) should be neat and tidy at all times and hair should always be worn tied back when handling food or where there may be a health and safety risk.

10.5 **Tattoos:**

- Any visible tattoos should not be offensive to others. Where they are deemed to be offensive or are of an adult nature they should be covered appropriately.

10.6 The above list is not exhaustive in defining acceptable and unacceptable standards of dress and appearance and employees should use common sense in adhering to the principles listed above. The school reserves the right to highlight any inappropriate clothing and may require employees to address this matter if necessary.

- 10.7 There may be times when employees wish to support different charities, for example, Jeans for Genes Day and Christmas Jumper Day. This will be a school decision agreed by the Headteacher.
- 10.8 Failure to adhere to the school's standard of dress and appearance could constitute misconduct and may result in disciplinary action.

PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

- 11.1 It is recognised that there may be occasions where personal relationships exist amongst individuals at work. Where such employees are, or may be, working closely with colleagues with whom they have a personal relationship, they must:
- ensure that any such relationships do not adversely affect their employment or ability to carry out their role;
 - protect against bias/unfair advantage or prejudice, particularly where they have supervisory or managerial responsibility over another;
 - avoid situations where there is potential for conflict of interest;
 - ensure that situations do not develop where other employees feel unable to speak openly and honestly, or feel that a relationship is having an adverse impact on their own employment;
- 11.2 The reason for this is to protect all parties from any accusations of breaches of confidentiality or the abuse of authority or conflict of interest.
- 11.3 A **personal** relationship is defined as:
- A family relationship (e.g. grandparents, siblings, children and grandchildren (including in-laws and step children));
 - A sexual/romantic relationship (e.g. spouses or partners);
 - A business/commercial/financial relationship; or
 - Any other close personal friendship or relationship.
- NB. This is list not exhaustive.
- 11.4 An employee involved in any part of the recruitment process who has a personal relationship with an applicant should declare this from the outset. They should also not act as a referee for that person where possible. Such employees must not be involved in the following:
- Recruitment processes;
 - Decisions relating to pay in respect of that individual;
 - Decisions related to or the management of the employee's performance;
 - Any conduct issues that arise that may involve the employee.
- 11.5 Disclosure of a Personal Relationship

Employees must disclose in writing to the Headteacher any personal relationship which develops or ends during the course of employment. If an employee is in doubt as to whether their relationship should be disclosed they should seek advice from the Headteacher. In these circumstances, any disclosure will be treated fairly and confidentially.

PHOTOGRAPHS & RECORDING

- 12.1 Employees must only take photographs/videos of pupils and their colleagues for school purposes in accordance with the school's procedures.
- 12.2 Photographs taken for official school use may be covered by the Data Protection Act 2018 or the Keeping children safe in education (KCSIE) document, and pupils and employees should be advised of the reasons why any photographs or videos are being taken.
- 12.3 Where images of pupils or employees are used for publicity purposes, appropriate consent of the individual concerned, and their parents/carer must be obtained. Images must not be displayed on websites, in publications or in a public place without explicit consent.
- 12.4 Employees taking photos for school purposes must only do so using school equipment. Personal devices are not to be used at any time
- 12.5 Employees who are not clear on the use, collection or handling of data, including photography or recordings, must seek advice either from the Headteacher or the school's Data Protection Officer. Ignorance regarding Data Protection regulations cannot be used as an excuse for failing to comply with the requirements and will be treated as a serious issue.

PROTECTION OF SCHOOL PREMISES/PROPERTY & EQUIPMENT

- 13.1 Employees are responsible for the safe keeping and the appropriate use of the school premises, property and any equipment belonging to the school that is under their control or in their possession. This includes, but is not limited to:
- School owned documents;
 - School books, including text books, reference books etc;
 - Laptops/tablets;
 - Mobile phones/hand held devices;
 - Office equipment;
 - Keys;
 - Security passes;
 - Credit cards;
 - Any other property that may be given to individual employees.
- 13.2 Employees must:
- take good care of school property and equipment when used both on-site or outside of the school premises;
 - ensure that all property and equipment is maintained appropriately in accordance with the school policy;
 - take reasonable steps to ensure the security of school property at all times; this includes taking all steps to ensure that the property is not misplaced, lost or stolen, ensuring confidential information cannot be viewed, accessed or copied;
 - obtain written permission for use of school property or equipment where this is for non-work purposes, setting out the clear use, purpose and duration;
 - not use the school's property or equipment if intoxicated through alcohol consumption or drug taking;

- comply with Health and Safety obligations at all times;
- respect both the school premises and equipment;
- on the termination of their employment, return all school property.

SECONDARY EMPLOYMENT

- 14.1 Employees may take up additional employment, paid or unpaid, providing it will not create a conflict of interest, cause the school reputational harm or adversely affect an employee's ability to carry out their duties and responsibilities effectively and efficiently.
- 14.2 Paid or unpaid employment includes, but is not limited to:
- taking up employment with any employer on any type of contractual arrangement;
 - running your own business;
 - private tutoring;
 - holding directorships or trusteeships;
 - participating or having any other interest in organisations that may be a competitor or supplier to the school.
- 14.3 Prior permission must be sought from the Headteacher before taking up any additional employment. Carrying out public duties (e.g. jury service) does not count as additional employment.
- 14.4 Employees must not use any school property or facilities to support additional employment without prior permission from the Headteacher and any customer must be informed that the private nature of the work is not connected with the School.

SICKNESS ABSENCE: REPORTING PROCEDURES

- 15.1 It is essential that all employees comply with the procedure for notifying the school of any absence in accordance with the school's arrangements. The arrangements are identified within each school's handbooks
- 15.2 Once an employee has notified the school of their absence, the employee should maintain regular contact with the school.
- 15.3 Employees who are absent for:
- Less than 7 calendar days must complete a self-certification for their absence.
 - 7 calendar days or more must provide a valid Fit Note from their GP/Consultant.
- 15.4 Failure to follow the sickness reporting procedures may result in disciplinary action.

SMOKING & SUBSTANCE MISUSE

16.1 SMOKING

Smoking or vaping is not permitted anywhere on the school site or in the immediate vicinity. Appropriate signing out must take place when any employee leaves the premises. This is only permitted at lunch times, except where in the normal performance of duties.

1.4 ALCOHOL & SUBSTANCE USE

Employees:

- Must not be under the influence of alcohol or any substance which affects their ability to perform their duties, including driving, operating machinery and supervising pupils;
- Must never possess alcohol or illegal drugs or substances at work. Non-prescription drugs, such as ibuprofen or paracetamol and prescription drugs must be kept in an appropriate secure location away from pupils;
- Must advise their manager if they are prescribed any medication which may affect their performance or ability to carry out their duties;
- Must alert the school and seek professional help as soon as possible if they have alcohol or substance misuse problems and commit to a programme to achieve a successful recovery;
- Must report to the Head Teacher or member of the SLT when they suspect that someone is under the influence of or abusing alcohol or substances.

1.5 National support and advice can be obtained from organisations:

- Drinkline: A free and confidential helpline for anyone who is concerned about their own or someone else's drinking: 0800 917 8282.
- Smokefree: NHS stop smoking support: www.nhs.uk/smokefree.
- FRANK: Advice on what to do to help someone who's having a bad reaction to drugs: www.talktofrank.com/emergency-help.
- Local Authority Health and Wellbeing service.

SOCIAL MEDIA

For more information on the acceptable use of Social Media this section should be read in conjunction with the school's Social Media Policy and other IT Policies].

- 17.1 Social media is constantly evolving and employees are therefore reminded of their continued responsibility to keep up to date with relevant developments and review their privacy settings on a regular basis when using all social media. Personal profiles must not be accessible to pupils or parents and all employees must ensure that any content that is posted or shared is appropriate.
- 17.2 Employees are personally responsible for the content that they publish on social media sites, including "Likes" (on Facebook)/"re-tweets" (on Twitter), You Tube, Snapchat, Instagram, LinkedIn, Yammer, WhatsApp etc.
- 17.3 It is important when using Social media that all employees ensure that they do not bring the school into disrepute, by making potentially false, derogatory, offensive or defamatory comments, either directly or indirectly, about the school, colleagues, individuals, pupils or parents that could negatively impact on the school's reputation or cause embarrassment. This includes posting images or links to inappropriate content or using inappropriate language.
- 17.4 Employees must note the following (this list is not exhaustive):
- Assume that everything can be traced back to them personally as well as to the school, their colleagues, pupils and parents;

- Avoid any conflict of interest and ensure that personal social networking sites are set to private and pupils are never listed as approved contacts. An exception to this may be if the child is the employee's own child, relative, or family friend;
- Potentially false, derogatory, offensive or defamatory remarks (direct or indirect) regarding the school, employees, pupils, pupils' relatives, the school suppliers and/or partner organisations must not be posted on social media site;
- Employees must not represent their own views/opinions as being those of the school;
- Pupils must not be discussed on social media sites;
- Information must not be posted that would disclose the identity of pupils or could in any way be linked to a pupil. This includes photographs or videos of pupils or their homes;
- Employees must not divulge any information that is confidential to the school or a partner organisation;
- Employees must not post information on sites including photographs and videos that could bring the school or themselves into disrepute;
- Employees must not upload, post, forward or post a link to any pornographic material (that is, writing, pictures, films and video clips of a sexually explicit or arousing nature);
- When posting on social media sites employees must observe the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and the Human Rights Act 1998 and must not use any offensive, obscene, derogatory, discriminatory language which may also cause embarrassment to the school, employees, pupils, pupils' relatives, Council suppliers and partner organisations;
- Employees must never impersonate another person;
- Employees must not upload, forward or post a link which is likely to: create any liability for the school (whether criminal or civil), breach copyright law or other intellectual property rights, or which invades the privacy of any person;
- Employees must not engage or communicate with students or parents regarding any school matters via their own personal social media accounts. Only the use of school accounts is permitted for this, and only where there is good reason for doing so;
- Employees must not post content that may breach professional standards or the standard reasonably expected of an employee.

17.5 The school will take disciplinary action against employees for inappropriate use of social media, including use of social media conducted outside of working hours.

DISCIPLINARY MATTERS

18.1 Failure to adhere to any of the principles of this Code of Conduct may constitute grounds for disciplinary action and could result in summary dismissal. This includes:

- A personal breach of the Code;
- Failing to promptly report a suspected breach of the Code;
- Encouraging others to breach any part of the Code.

18.2 Employees who do not understand any of the principles contained within this Code of Conduct should seek advice and clarification from the Headteacher.