



Code of Conduct Policy

Statutory

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Role Responsible: Exec Head



Contents Page

Page No	Topic
1	Introduction; General Obligations
2	Safeguarding and Safer Working Practices; Allegations Against Staff; Low Level Concerns about Members of Staff
3	Whistle Blowing; Staff Pupil Relationships
4	Communication and Social Media; Acceptable Use of Technology
5	Public Duty and Private Interest; Conduct outside of work; Confidentiality and Information Disclosure; Relationships at work
6	Staff Dress Code; Other Employment; Financial Inducements, Gifts, Hospitality and Sponsorship
7	Disciplinary Action; Further Information

1. Introduction

The public is entitled to have trust and confidence in the integrity of Humberstone Infant and Junior Academies, their staff (including supply staff, volunteers, trainees and contractors) Trustees and volunteers. The conduct of all staff must therefore be of the highest standard. This Code of Conduct has been prepared to help employees and volunteers understand their responsibilities and the expectations of their conduct, by providing a framework of guidelines.

This Policy has been written with reference to Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 and the Guidance for Safer Working Practice for those working with children and young people in education settings February 2022.

2. General Obligations

Adults working within Humberstone Infant Academy and Humberstone Junior Academy must all act with utmost good faith with regard to the business of the Academies, and do all in their power to promote the Academies interests and not do anything which may adversely affect the Academy or Trust reputation.

In accordance with the Equality Policy employees must ensure that they do not discriminate in recruitment and employment practices or in the delivery of services or the curriculum. They must also ensure that in their dealings with the local community, all

members of the public are treated with respect and fairness and in keeping with the Trust values at all times. Serious misconduct and/or criminal offences committed during or outside of working hours which bring employees or the school into disrepute will be the subject of disciplinary action which could lead to dismissal.

Staff are expected to set an example to pupils. They will:

- Maintain high standards in their own attendance and punctuality
- Act as good role models in their conduct, appearance and relationships
- Never use inappropriate or offensive/derogatory language in school
- Treat pupils, colleagues and all others with dignity and respect
- 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
- 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
- Uphold the values and ethos of the Trust at all times

3. Safeguarding and Safer Working Practices

Staff have a duty to safeguard pupils from harm, and to report any concerns they have. Staff will receive annual Safeguarding training and are expected to familiarise themselves with our Safeguarding Policy and procedures, and Safer Working Practice Guidance, and ensure they are aware of the processes to follow if they have concerns about a child.

4. Allegations Against Staff

This section applies to all cases in which it is alleged that anyone working in the school, including a supply teacher, trainee, volunteer or contractor, has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child and/or
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, and/or
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children, and/or
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children – this includes behaviour that takes place inside or outside of school

We will deal with any such allegation quickly and in a fair and consistent way in keeping with the **Managing Allegations of Abuse Policy**, providing effective child protection while also supporting the individual who is the subject of the allegation.

Low-level concerns about members of staff

A low-level concern is behaviour from a member of staff that does not meet the harm threshold, but is inconsistent with the staff Code of Conduct, and may be as simple as causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' or behaviour which is professionally inappropriate. For example, this may include:

Being over-friendly with children/having favourites/taking photographs of children on a personal device/engaging in 1-to-1 activities where they can't easily be seen/shouting at or humiliating pupils, unnecessary or over familiar physical contact with a child.

Low-level concerns can also include inappropriate conduct inside and outside of work or online, which could impact on the reputation of the academy and the trust and confidence of the public.

All staff should share any low-level concerns they have using the reporting procedures set out in our Safeguarding Policy and Managing Allegations of Abuse Policy. We also encourage staff to self-refer if they find themselves in a situation that could be misinterpreted or where they become aware that their conduct would be in breach of this policy. If staff are not sure whether behaviour would be deemed a low-level concern, we encourage staff to seek guidance from a member of SLT.

Staff should self-refer to their line manager if they are arrested and/or charged with a criminal offence so that appropriate advice can be taken from the LADO and a risk assessment can be undertaken. Staff are also advised to inform their line manager if they have contact with the police when not charged or arrested. This is so that appropriate advice and support can be given.

All reports will be handled in a responsive, sensitive and proportionate way. Unprofessional behaviour will be addressed quickly, 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 detail in the Managing **Allegations of Abuse Policy**.

5. Whistle-blowing

Whistle-blowing reports wrongdoing that it is "in the public interest" to report. Examples linked to safeguarding could include:

- Pupils' or staff's health and safety being put in danger
- Failure to comply with a legal obligation or statutory requirement
- Attempts to cover up the above, or any other wrongdoing in the public interest

Staff are encouraged to report suspected wrongdoing as soon as possible. Their concerns will be taken seriously and investigated, and their confidentiality will be respected.

Staff should report their concern directly to the Executive Headteacher. If the concern is about the Executive headteacher or it is believed they may be involved in the wrongdoing in some way, the staff member should report their concern to the Chair of the MAT Board - Kate Smith. For detailed whistle-blowing processes, please refer to our whistle-blowing policy.

6. Staff Pupil 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 and that a colleague or line manager knows this is taking place. Staff should avoid contact with pupils outside of school hours if possible unless this is for agreed professional reasons. Where this is the case, for example a teacher who is coaching a sports team or other extra-curricular activity where a pupil takes part, or is in a relationship with the parent of a pupil, SLT should be informed immediately so that any measures needed to safeguard the member of staff or pupil can be put in place.

Personal contact details should not ever be exchanged between staff and pupils. This includes social media profiles and other electronic means of communication.

If a staff member is concerned at any point that an interaction between themselves and a pupil may be misinterpreted, or if 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 the **Safeguarding policy**.

7. Communication and Social Media

School staff's social media profiles should not be available to pupils. If they have a personal profile on social media sites, they should not use their full name, as pupils may be able to find them. It is the responsibility of all staff to set any public profiles to private and not to accept friend requests from pupils or parents.

Staff should not attempt to contact pupils or their parents via social media, personal emails, private message apps or any other means outside school, in order to develop any sort of relationship or to discuss school related matters. They will not make any efforts to find pupils' or parents' social media profiles. Staff should not respond to contact requests made through social media or their personal email addresses and should report the matter immediately to SLT

Staff will ensure that they do not post any images online that identify children who are pupils at the school without their prior consent. Staff will ensure that any images they post of themselves or others online do not breach the law, bring the Trust's reputation into disrepute or cause reasonable question over their suitability to work with children. Staff should not post photos of school children or school activities and events on their personal social media platforms.

8. Acceptable Use of Technology

Staff will not use technology in school, including the school WIFI, 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 their personal devices or school resources to access inappropriate materials online whilst on the school site or engaged in a professional capacity, e.g. on a school trip or residential, during a meeting, preparing for the day.

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 cameras to take pictures of pupils without consent or for inappropriate reasons. Mobile phones should be put away out of pupil sight whilst staff are teaching or working with children. This is to ensure professional boundaries are maintained and remove the possibility of accusations of impropriety.

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

Staff will be asked to sign the Acceptable Use of Technology Policy and should be aware of the Online Safety Policy and the Social Media Policy

9. Public Duty and Private Interest

Off-duty hours are an employee / volunteer's own personal concern. It is important, however, that people do not put themselves in a position where their duty to the Academy and their private interests come into conflict.

Employees and volunteers are expected to abide by the policies of the school. They must take care to ensure that their own personal or political opinions do not interfere with the provisions of balanced professional advice or their duty to carry out those policies. Examples include the public expression of discriminatory language and views, extremist views and or language, sharing of indecent images online, incitement of violence, or negative comments about the Trust and its employees.

10. 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 conduct including but not limited to relevant criminal offences, such as violence or sexual misconduct, or any criminal offense that would deem the employee unsuitable in their role. This also includes negative comments about the school on social media and the posting of images where conduct is sexually explicit or obviously references to the misuse of drugs and alcohol.

Any member of staff who is arrested and/or subject to further police action must inform their line manager immediately upon their return to work.

11. Confidentiality and Information Disclosure

Adults working at Odyssey Educational Trust must conform to the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), which came into force in May 2018, and must take all reasonable steps to ensure that the loss, destruction, inaccuracy or disclosure of information does not occur as a result of their actions. This includes information relating to school business and pupil data.

- Members of staff / volunteers must not disclose or discuss personal or financial information about any other member of staff to any unauthorised person, external organisation or agency without the express consent of the individual concerned or that of the Executive Headteacher.

- Members of staff / volunteers must not use information obtained in the course of their duties to the detriment of the school or for personal gain or benefit; nor should they impart this information to others who might use it in such a way. This includes for the benefit of their own personal gain or business gain.

- Confidential information belonging to the school must not be disclosed to any person not authorised to receive it.

12. Relationships at Work

All staff have a duty to behave in a professional and courteous manner with colleagues, children, parents and visitors at all times.

Relationships between staff and parents should maintain appropriate professional boundaries at all times and staff should not involve themselves with parents in a social capacity outside of work. The academy is aware that some employees, in particular, those who are parents of children at the academy, or those who live in the community will already have established social relationships with parents. Employees should be mindful to maintain appropriate boundaries and confidentiality at all times and not conduct themselves in a way which could bring the academy into disrepute or compromise the boundaries of confidentiality.

Employees must notify the Executive Headteacher if they enter into a personal relationship with another member of staff or member of the school community or if they are aware that a colleague has done so.

13. Staff Dress Code

To dress professionally shows pride, effort, respect for oneself and one's profession. Adults in school are role models for children and other staff and therefore, they have a responsibility to model appropriate dress and appearance. The image that we project as professionals is associated with how we present ourselves; the image of the academy in the community is related to how all adults in the school dress. It is therefore important to dress appropriately when acting in a professional capacity.

Adults should be neat, clean, smart and tidy, wearing clothes, including shoes, which are commensurate with their post in the school. The staff dress code is smart rather than casual. This is not a policy meant to detail every eventuality, it is up to individual staff to decide whether their appearance is appropriate guided by the principles above. However, denim, and revealing clothes, such as short skirts, crop tops or low-cut tops, should be avoided. Tattoos should also be covered and facial piercings should be discrete or covered. Extreme haircuts, including unnatural colours, are not permitted. For health and safety reasons jewellery should be kept to a minimum and be appropriate to the role. Shoe wear should be smart and safe. Trainers and flip flops are not permitted.

All employees should wear their ID badges at all times for reasons of security and safeguarding. Odyssey Educational Trust is committed to promoting diversity and will therefore respect individual preference in terms of customs, culture, religion and tradition.

14. Other Employment

- Employees are not allowed to set up a business or accept employment with a business engaged in work which is in direct competition with the school or to use school resources, contacts, time or relationships with staff, parents or pupils in order to further that business
- If employees / volunteers do have another job it must not conflict with the school's interest or bring the School into disrepute or be in conflict with the behaviours and attitudes detailed in the Code of Conduct.
- If employees / volunteers have another job with another organisation they must not act as a messenger, go between or arbitrator between that organisation and the school.

Formal channels of communication must be maintained.

- Employees' / volunteers' working commitments to another employer or self employment must not interfere with their work for the school; they must be able to work for the school at the contracted/arranged times rested, refreshed and ready for their working day.

15. Financial Inducements, Gifts, Hospitality and Sponsorship

Employees / volunteers must not seek or receive preferential rates by virtue of their dealings on behalf of the school. Offers of hospitality, including visits to exhibitions, business meals, social functions, etc should only be accepted if there is a genuine need to represent the school in an official capacity. Where an external organisation wishes to sponsor or is sought to sponsor a school activity, the above rule applies. Particular care must be taken when dealing with contractors or potential contractors.

16. Disciplinary Action

Any breach of this Code of Conduct will be the subject of disciplinary action which could result in dismissal.

Further Information

This Code of Conduct cannot cover every eventuality. Its purpose is to alert employees / volunteers to some of the matters about which queries are received. It does not replace the general requirements of the law, common sense and good conduct. If employees / volunteers are uncertain about what to do in a particular situation or require further information or guidance on the appropriate course of action to take in any situation they must contact the Executive Head teacher or Heads of School for advice before they take any action.