

The Lotus Academy Trust



Supporting children to find opportunities in every difficulty

**The Damara School**



Specialist SEMH Independent School

# Staff code of conduct

**Approved by: Trust Board**

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## 1. Aims, scope and principles

This policy aims to set and maintain standards of conduct that we expect all staff to follow.

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

While many of the principles in this code of conduct are based on the [Teachers' Standards](#), it has been developed to apply to all staff working within the Trust

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 staff will act in accordance with the personal and professional behaviours set out in this Staff Code of Conduct

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

Failure to follow the code of conduct may result in disciplinary action being taken, as set out in our staff 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.

The term staff is used loosely and includes support staff, Trustees and volunteers.

## 2. 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 or commissioning agreement and articles of association.

## 3. General obligations

Staff set an example to pupils and others, including colleagues. They will:

- Maintain high standards in their attendance and punctuality
- Never use inappropriate or offensive language in school (in presence or against pupils and others including colleagues)
- Treat pupils and others with dignity and respect
- Show tolerance and respect for the rights of others
- Use positive, scripted language as taught
- Use the 'fresh start' and restorative approaches to behaviour management
- 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 others, and will not exploit pupils' and others' vulnerability that might lead them to break the law
- Understand the statutory frameworks they must act within
- Read and adhere to all policies and procedures within the school
- Adhere to the Staff Code of Conduct standards and expectations

#### **4. Safeguarding**

All staff must consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child. All staff:

- have a duty to safeguard pupils from harm, and to report any concerns they have. This includes physical, emotional, sexual abuse and/or neglect.
- Must be in a position to identify concerns early, provide help for children, promote children's welfare and prevent concerns from escalating
- have responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn
- should be prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years
- who has any concerns about a child's welfare should follow the processes set out in paragraphs 51-67 of KSCIE 2023. Staff should expect to support social workers and other agencies following any referral
- should be aware of systems within the school which support safeguarding

All staff must be aware of systems within our school which support safeguarding. This is also explained to new staff as part of new staff induction.

- child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures (in particular, Part One (or Annex A) of Keeping Children Safe in Education – KSCIE) and which should amongst other things also include the policy and procedures to deal with child-on-child abuse, FGM duty and the Prevent initiative. Copies of policies and a copy of Part one (or Annex A, if appropriate) of this document is provided to all staff at induction.
- behaviour policy (which includes measures to prevent bullying, including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying)
- this staff code of conduct and associated staff behaviour policies which include low-level concerns, allegations against staff and whistleblowing
- safeguarding response to children who are absent from education, particularly on repeat occasions and/or prolonged periods
- role of the designated safeguarding lead (including the identity of the designated safeguarding lead and any deputies).

Our safeguarding policy and procedures are available from the office and on the website. All staff will also be given copies at the start of the academic year and when updates are available.

## 5. Bullying and anti-discrimination

We will follow anti-discrimination law. This means staff must act to prevent discrimination, harassment and victimisation within the school.

It is also important for all staff to be aware of what the school means by bullying behaviour. Bullying is defined as the repetitive, intentional harming of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power.

While there may be no legal definition of "Bullying", it is usually defined as behaviour that is:

- It is deliberately hurtful either physically or emotionally
- It is repeated
- It is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves
- Often aimed at certain groups, for example because of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation

In the event that bullying behaviours are reported or observed; the member of staff who has that information should report it to the Assistant Headteacher or Chair of Trustees in the case of the Head of School, for follow up action.

In the event that there is a victim of bullying behaviour involving the staff, the Head of School should assess for any levels of distress and as appropriate take positive action to ensure the child/young person feels safe in the short term. In the case of the Head of School, it should be the Chair of Trustees.

## 6. Staff and pupil and staff and colleague relationships

Staff will observe proper boundaries with pupils and colleagues 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 into the room
- 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.

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 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 Head of School.

Maintaining positive relationships with pupils and colleagues is crucial in ensuring that all pupils and staff feel safe and comfortable when in school. All staff are expected to:

- Upload the Nolan principles of public life (selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership)
- Avoid any form of speech that may be construed by the listener as sexual, discriminatory or offensive in nature
- Avoid any form of speech that may be construed by the listener as derogatory, too familiar, sarcastic, belittling, upsetting, etc
- Respect the physical boundaries of the individual. The giving of 'side' hugs to pupils and colleagues are only allowed if permitted by both parties after request.

## 7. Low level concerns, allegations against staff and whistleblowing

The school has processes and procedures in place to manage any safeguarding concern or allegation (no matter how small) about staff members (including supply staff, volunteers, and contractors).

If staff have a safeguarding concern or an allegation of harming or posing a risk of harm to children is made about another member of staff (including supply staff, volunteers, and contractors), then:

- this should be referred to the Head of School
- where there is a concern/allegation about the Head of School, this should be referred to the chair of the Trust Board and
- in the event of a concern/allegation where there is a conflict of interest in reporting the matter to the head of school, this should be reported directly to the local authority designated officer(s) (LADOs). See details in Safeguarding and Child Protection policy and Low-level concerns policy

If staff have a safeguarding concern or an allegation about another member of staff (including supply staff, volunteers or contractors) that does not meet the harm threshold, then this should be recorded in CPOMs.

All staff and volunteers should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school's safeguarding provision and know that such concerns will be taken seriously by the senior leadership team.

Where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with the senior leadership team, or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, other whistleblowing channels are open to them (see Whistle blowing policy).

Staff can also call 0800 028 0285 – line is available from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, Monday to Friday and email: [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk).<sup>14</sup>

## 8. 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. 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 prior parental consent.

Staff should be aware of the school's e-safety and online safety policy.

## 9. 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 or in front of pupils. They will also not use personal mobile phones or cameras to take pictures of pupils.

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

## 10. 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.

## **11. 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 £25 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.

## **12. Dress code and Personal Hygiene**

Staff will dress in a professional, appropriate manner. Outfits will not be revealing and must be of appropriate length (shortest would be just above the knee). No denim to be worn. Ripped or torn clothing must not be worn. Vest tops and strappy tops are not to be worn. Tops must be minimum short sleeved (shoulders must be covered). Necklines must be high enough to cover the cleavage. Tattoos, where visible, must be covered up. Clothes will not display any offensive or political slogans. No open-back sandals or slippers to be worn.

If you are in any doubt, please speak to the senior leaders.

Staff must maintain the highest standards of personal hygiene.

## **13. 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.

## **14. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years but can be revised as needed. It will be ratified by the full board of trustees.

## **15. Links with other policies**

Staff are expected to read and understand all other Trust policies and procedures.

**Agreement**

I acknowledge receipt and agree to maintain the standards of conduct as detailed in the Staff Code of Conduct.

Employee name (print): .....

Address:

.....  
.....

Signature of Employee:.....

Date:.....

Signed by CEO/Chair of the Board..... on behalf of  
The Lotus Academy Trust Ltd

Date:.....