



*Enabling all to flourish  
rooted in God's love*

# Trust Policy

## Staff Code Of Conduct

|                             |                                          |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| <b>Policy type</b>          | Trust wide                               |
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This policy is a mandatory policy for all DSAMAT Academies and must be implemented without any amendments

*Enabling all to flourish: Rooted in God's love*



## OUR POLICY STATEMENT

*‘Enabling all to flourish rooted in God’s love’*

JOHN 10:10

Our Trust’s mission is to ensure that all pupils are enabled to flourish; academically, socially, spiritually, physically and mentally, rooted in God’s Love. This belief is central to our vision and our work in service of our communities, pupils, staff and families and is rooted in our Christian Foundation. Our policies are underpinned by our Trust and Schools Christian Visions, serving a range of different contexts and school communities.

Our commitment to mutual flourishing within the school community is recognised within our policies and procedures and ensures that we are governed by principles that are guided by the central belief of prospering, thriving and growing for all. Our policies are based on the belief that equitable treatment for all pupils, staff and the wider community is essential for ensuring holistic flourishing for all. Each policy is developed collaboratively and draws upon and is informed by the National Church of England Vision and the Diocesan Board of Education Vision. Our policies are adapted to recognise the individuality of each school and its community.

Our policies provide clear expectations for all Trust colleagues and ensures a consistency of approach across our schools and that we are living out our Trust values of Hope, Nurture, Equality, Respect and Collaboration.

Each policy forms part of our Trust Governance and ensures that we are held to the highest standards as we carry out our duties.

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## 1. CODE OF CONDUCT

This Code of Conduct applies to all Trust employees (school based and in the central team) and is designed to give clear guidance on the standards of behaviour all employees are expected to observe.

## 2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 This Code sets out the principles relating to the manner, approach and behaviours that should be observed by all employees at the trust, in order to ensure conduct of the highest order and that pupils, parents, the community and colleagues have and maintain confidence and trust in the integrity of those working for the trust.
- 2.2 It is supported by all employment procedures, individual school protocols and school/trust handbook. The areas highlighted in this Code are not exhaustive, and employees should endeavour to be seen as setting the highest standards of conduct in a way that does not bring any disrepute on themselves as an employee or the school/trust.
- 2.3 All employees in the school/trust are undertaking a professional role, for those based in a school this includes supporting the education of young people. As such they are all role models and are expected to act accordingly. This includes relationships and communication with colleagues, the local community and the school/trust, adherence to the dress code as appropriate for the job, and activities in the community outside school.

The expected professional standard of manner, approach and behaviour applies to all written communication including, but not limited to:

- Emails
- Teams Chat, Google Chat or equivalent messages
- WhatsApp messages relating to work
- CPOMs entries
- Arbor communications and entries
- Dojo messages

- 2.4 All employees should ensure that their behaviour and performance meet work place standards at any time that the school/trust is being represented or is likely to be identified or associated with the role.

## 3. CONFIDENTIALITY

- 3.1 As data controllers, all schools are subject to the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018 ("Data Protection Legislation").
- 3.2 Adults may have access to special category personal data about pupils and their families, which must be kept confidential at all times and only shared when legally permissible to do so and in the interests of the child. Records should only be shared with those who have a legitimate professional need to see them.

## 4. RESPONSIBILITIES OF EMPLOYEES

- 4.1 Safeguarding is the responsibility of all employees and that understanding must underpin all considerations and conduct. Employees must attend the required statutory safeguarding as a minimum expectation and are obligated to report any concerns that they have through the appropriate procedures in their workplace.
- 4.2 It is the responsibility of all employees to ensure that they are not placed in a position which risks, or appears to risk, conflict between their private interests and their contractual duties.
- 4.3 It is for the employee to always be impartial and honest in the conduct of their official business and with their own dealings with the school/trust, and to notify the school/trust of any change in their circumstances/interests that may impact in any way upon their employment, within the school/trust.

Examples of situations may be:

- where the employee recommends a contractor for services without declaring any potential pecuniary interest
  - where an employee has been involved in some criminal conviction or arrest in relation to their private life/interests that may have a connection/bearing upon the job they undertake
  - where an employee has a close relationship with, or is known to associate with, an individual that has a criminal conviction that may have a connection/bearing upon the employee's job
- 4.3 Teachers are reminded that they must adhere to the Teachers' Standards.
- 4.4 It is also the responsibility of the Headteacher/Head of Service to monitor, where practical, that employees are conforming to this Code and to ensure that employees are fully aware of its contents.

## 5. GENERAL STANDARDS IN DEALING WITH PEOPLE

- 5.1 In the course of carrying out their duties, employees are required and expected to treat all people, with whom they have dealings, in a courteous, polite, unbiased and respectful manner. It is recognised that given certain circumstances, there will be occasions where dialogue may become strained. Employees should then bring the discussion to a close and seek support in accordance with the relevant procedure (e.g. Behaviour Policy, Grievance Procedure). Employees who are faced with abusive/violent/harassing situations are always advised, particularly where there is potential danger to themselves or others, to politely withdraw or disengage themselves from the situation and seek support.
- 5.2 Employees are required to maintain a good standard of dialogue and must refrain from using abusive, derogatory, offensive or socially unacceptable language in the course of their duties and dealings with all people, including pupils, parents, carers and colleagues. In addition, body language that may be construed as aggressive, threatening or offensive must be avoided at all times.

- 5.3 This Code must be read in conjunction with the school's/trust's **Disciplinary Procedure** that sets out standards that will be treated as misconduct and liable for action to be taken under that procedure.

## 6. RELATIONSHIPS WITH COLLEAGUES, PUPILS, PARENTS, CARERS GOVERNORS / TRUSTEES AND THIRD PARTIES

- 6.1 Employees are required to maintain professional relationships at all times.
- 6.2 The school/trust is committed to providing a respectful, inclusive and supportive working environment for everyone. All forms of discrimination and harassment, in particular sexual harassment will be taken seriously and will not be tolerated.
- 6.3 All employees within the school/trust have a responsibility:
- for ensuring that the school/trust is a safe environment.
  - to treat their colleagues, pupils, parents, carers, governors/trustees and any third parties with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to a professional position.
  - for the safeguarding of pupils' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions.
  - to maintain good relationships with pupils.
  - for showing tolerance of and respect for the rights and beliefs of others.
  - to ensure that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways which exploit pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law.
- 6.4 All employees are expected to follow the policy and procedures adopted by the school/trust.
- 6.5 Employees with a grievance against a work colleague, Headteacher/Head of Service or the trust must ensure they follow the trust's **Grievance Procedure**.

## 7. CHILD PROTECTION

- 7.1 There are two key aspects to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children:
- To take all reasonable measures to ensure that risks of harm to children's welfare are minimised, and
  - To take all appropriate actions to address concerns about the welfare of a child, or children, working to agreed local policies and procedures in full partnership with other local agencies, as soon as the issue comes to your attention.
- 7.2 Staff have a duty to report any child protection concerns to the DSL / DDSLs and any adult / staff misconduct to the Headteacher / Deputy Headteacher (or to the Director of Safeguarding / Education of Head of People if the headteacher is unavailable or the concern is about the Headteacher).

- 7.3 Where the concern is about a professional, employees must follow the Managing an Allegation of Abuse Procedure. Where the concern is about a child, employees and volunteers must follow the safeguarding policy. Failure by those working in the school/trust to report abuse, or suspected abuse, in accordance with this and other school child protection procedures, constitutes a breach of their 'duty of care'.
- 7.4 The school/trust has adopted a **Whistleblowing Procedure** which enables workers in the school/trust to report concerns that are in the public interest, including those relating to child protection issues, and those workers are protected, in certain circumstances, under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.
- 7.5 Failure to carry out duties in compliance with arrangements made by the trust, may result in the disciplinary procedure being invoked.

## 8. ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THOSE WORKERS, WORKING WITH CHILDREN

- 8.1 All adults, as appropriate to the role and / or job description of the individual, must:
- Place the well-being and learning of pupils at the centre of their professional practice
  - Have high expectations for all pupils, be committed to addressing underachievement, and work to help pupils progress regardless of their background and personal circumstances
  - Treat pupils fairly and with respect, take their knowledge, views, opinions and feelings seriously, and value diversity and individuality
  - Model the characteristics they are trying to inspire in pupils, including enthusiasm for learning, a spirit of enquiry, honesty, tolerance, social responsibility, patience, kindness and a genuine concern for other people
  - Respond sensitively to the differences in the home backgrounds and circumstances of pupils, recognising the key role that parents and carers play in pupils' education
  - Seek to work in partnership with parents and carers, respecting their views and promoting understanding and cooperation to support the young person's learning and wellbeing in and out of school
  - Reflect on their own practice, develop their skills, knowledge and expertise, and adapt appropriately to learn with and from colleagues

## 9. POSITION OF TRUST

- 9.1 A relationship of power and trust exists between all staff and pupils, their families or carers. Employees represent the powers and duties of the school/trust. They are placed in a position of trust to assist in the delivery of education to pupils who may be vulnerable. It is the responsibility of all staff to ensure they do not abuse or appear to abuse that position of trust in the way they conduct their relationships with service users, their families or carers. Relationships that are thought to be at risk of, or have already extended beyond, what may be considered professional are not acceptable.

- 9.2 The key characteristic of the professional relationship is that the sole objective is meeting the assessed needs of pupils within agreed school policies that prevail at any given time. At no point must the needs of the employee, unrelated to professional practice, take precedence. Emotional involvement or behaviour that is, or may be seen to be (by a reasonable person), primarily in an employee's interest, rather than meeting the assessed needs of pupils or service users, may be defined as extending beyond the professional role.
- 9.3 Unless there is sound reason to do so, and the action is taken with the express knowledge and approval of the Headteacher and the decision is officially recorded:
- an employee must not make personal arrangements to see pupils, service users, their carers or families outside directed or contracted hours
  - an employee must not take pupils, service users, their carers or families to their home
  - an employee must not give their telephone number or address to pupils, service users, their carers or families
  - an employee must not give their mobile telephone, laptop or other electrical appliance to a pupil, service user, their carer or family for them to use.
  - an employee must neither sell nor buy property from pupils, service users, their families or carers (the school will identify what this might reasonably include).
- 9.4 Some examples of specific behaviour that will not be allowed and which may lead to disciplinary action include:
- sexual contact (physical or online)
  - lending/borrowing money or property
  - witnessing wills or acting as a named executor
  - arranging extra help for a fee
  - giving or receiving gifts
- Whether motivated by a desire to support pupils, or less well intentioned or illegal motives, all such behaviour presents a risk to the professional relationship.
- 9.5 This position of trust also has consequences for actions and behaviours outside of working hours. Examples could be where an employee working with children:
- engages in activity or associates with individuals or people, whose current or past behaviours could raise doubts or concerns about an employee's own integrity or ability to be in a 'position of trust' with regard to children. This could have a direct consequence on their ability to continue in employment/role.
  - has a current relationship with an individual, or is known to associate with individuals, who have convictions for child abuse. The employer may not have raised any concern regarding their activity at work but their out of work relationships would call into question their position of trust and may be considered as bringing the school/trust into disrepute.
  - has communicated with children, in a manner that could be deemed to be inappropriate.
- 9.6 It is difficult to give the full list of potential conflicts of interest, but the simple test is to ask the question: "if this issue became public knowledge could it raise questions about my integrity and could it bring the school/trust into disrepute?"

If the answer is “yes” or “possibly” or “I’m not sure” the employee is obliged to raise it with the Headteacher/Head of Service so that this matter can be given further consideration

- 9.7 Power imbalances may also exist between senior and junior members of staff. Employees at all levels of the school/trust should be treated with respect and dignity. Managers and senior leaders should ensure they model respectful behaviour at all times. Where an abuse of power in relation to a junior colleague is found to have occurred, this will be taken into account in considering whether any disciplinary action is taken.

## 10. PREVENT

- 10.1 All workers are expected to have due regard for the statutory provision under the Prevent Duty, July 2015. Under the duty, workers must build pupils’ resilience to radicalisation by promoting fundamental British values and enabling pupils to challenge extremist views.
- 10.2 Workers in the school should report concerns regarding any pupil, or other workers (including volunteers, visitors etc.) who are demonstrating extremist views and/or behaviours or are suspected of becoming radicalised. Staff must report their concern, as per the Safeguarding Procedure, to the Headteacher/Designated Child Protection Officer, Head of Service or to the Director of Safeguarding or Head of People if the concern is about the Headteacher. Failure to do so may constitute a breach of the ‘duty of care’ and the employee may face disciplinary action.

## 11. SPECIFIC REPORTING DUTIES

- 11.1 If a member of staff believes that a child has endured female genital mutilation (FGM) they have a reporting duty to the police. The employee should seek the DSL’s assistance in this referral, or if it is made independently, alert the DSL that it has been done.
- 11.2 If a member of staff is given reason to suspect that child sexual abuse (CSA) may have happened at any time (including online) there is a mandatory reporting duty to both the police and social care. The duty is placed on the individual not the organisation, but individuals should seek the support of the DSL where possible or alert them if the report has been made independently. Failure to report will result in professional sanctions, including via DBS, and anyone who seeks to obstruct a referral for CSA will face criminal proceedings and up to 7 years in prison.

## 12. EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITIES

- 12.1 The school/trust, are committed to ensuring people receive equal treatment in all aspects of service delivery and employment activities. Employees, therefore, in all aspects of their work, must ensure that they treat no individual less favourably than any other. Colleagues, employees, pupils, parents, carers and third parties must be treated with dignity and respect.

- 12.2 Employees should make sure that they are familiar with the school's / trust's policy in respect of Equal Opportunities and in the policy and procedure for Harassment and Bullying for all employees, these must be read in conjunction with this Code.
- 12.3 Everyone should make reasonable efforts to develop and maintain appropriate skills in valuing diversity.

### **13. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST & WORK OUTSIDE THE SCHOOL**

- 13.1 All employees, no matter what level of pay, are advised not to engage in outside activities whether paid or unpaid that may conflict with their school work, or be detrimental to it. All employees are advised to seek permission from the Headteacher/Head of Service in relation to undertaking such activities, and it will be for the Headteacher/Head of Service to determine whether the interest of the school/trust is likely to be harmed.
- 13.2 It is difficult to give a definitive list of potential conflicts of interest, but the simple test is to ask the question; "If this issue became public knowledge could it raise questions about my integrity and could it bring the school/trust into disrepute?" If so, permission should be sought, if not permission will not be required.
- 13.3 Where the activity is paid the employee should ensure they notify the Headteacher/Head of Service so that the school/trust can meet its responsibilities regarding the Working Time Directive and Health & Safety and any other legal responsibilities. Once the Headteacher/Head of Service has considered the likely impact, if it is detrimental to the school/trust permission will not be given.

### **14. AWARDING CONTRACTS**

- 14.1 The school/trust wishes to ensure that in awarding contracts, fair and open competition prevails at all times. This means therefore that:
- No private, public or voluntary organisation or company which may bid for school/trust business should be given any advantage over its competitors, such as advance notice of the school's/trust's requirements. This applies to potential contractors, whether or not there is a relationship between them and the school/trust, such as a long running series of contracts.
  - Each new contract must be awarded on merit, taking into account the requirements of the school/trust and the ability of the contractor to fulfil them.
  - No special favour should be shown to current or former employees or their close relatives, friends or associates, or governors / trustees in awarding contracts to private or other businesses run by them or employing them in a senior or managerial capacity. Contracts may be awarded to such businesses where they are won in fair and open competition against other tenders or quotations, but scrupulous care must be taken to ensure that the selection process is conducted impartially, and that employees / governors / trustees who are known to have a relevant interest play no part in the selection.

- The school / trust will ensure that all invitations to potential contractors to tender for business include a notice, warning tenderers of the consequences of engaging in any corrupt practices involving employees of the school/trust.

- 14.2 Employees therefore should ensure that where they believe that there may be a potential conflict of interest in the selection of any contractor, that they should inform the Headteacher / Chief Executive Officer to determine / clarify the level of their involvement in the selection process.
- 14.3 Employees' attention is also drawn to the issue of influencing, or potentially attempting to influence, the decision as to whether a person who is related, or known to an employee, is offered a contract of employment with the school / trust. In the event that a relative applies for a post with the school / trust, the applicant must record their relationship as a part of the application form. Likewise, the employee is required to inform the Headteacher / Head of Service in writing of their relationship and should ensure that they do not take part in, or attempt to influence in any way, the selection recruitment process. Employees are advised, that where anyone who is "closely" known to them outside of work, applies for a post at the school / trust, that they should not become involved in any way with the selection process for that particular post.

## **15. HOSPITALITY AND THE ACCEPTANCE OF GIFTS**

- 15.1 The Local Government Act 1972 states that an employee shall not under colour of his office or employment accept any fee or reward other than their proper remuneration (i.e. salary / pay).
- 15.2 Recognising that the interest of the school / trust must remain paramount at all times and that employees should not use their official position for private gain, employees should not accept gifts, inducements or promotional offers for their personal use or that of colleagues. Casual gifts from pupils or offered by contractors or others, for example, at Christmas or the end of term time, which may not in any way be connected with the performance of duties so as to constitute an offence under the Prevention of Corruption Acts, need not necessarily be refused, but if there is any concern that the donor (for example a parent, supplier or contractor) may be trying to gain favour then they should be politely and firmly refused or employees should seek guidance from their Headteacher / Head of Service.
- 15.3 Employees should not, for personal gain or benefit, solicit, accept or request payment by way of money, goods, services, discounts or any other means from any school / trust agent, contractor, supplier, colleague or a member of the public. Nor should an employee accept or request payment from any pupil at the school, unless this arrangement is agreed by the Headteacher / Head of Service.
- 15.4 No employee is entitled to retain on a personal basis any goods, gifts, money or service discounts which are a normal purchase or promotional offer to the school. Where gifts are received which are the subject of a normal purchase or promotional offer, or where a gift is made and the donor refuses to take the gift back, these must be reported immediately to the Headteacher/Head of Service. The employee must ensure that these gifts have been recorded

as received in the appropriate “Gifts and Hospitality” register held within the school / trust. If any employee is unsure whether the acceptance of hospitality is likely not to be in the school’s / trust’s interest they should seek the advice of the Headteacher / Chief Executive Officer in the first instance.

- 15.5 Any employee who is approached by a firm offering inducements, or who believes that they have inadvertently committed the school / trust contractually for supplies and services that are not in the best interests of the school / trust, must immediately notify the Headteacher / CEO.
- 15.6 The school’s / trust’s budget must not be used for hospitality which is lavish, extravagant or exceeds modest proportions. The Board of Trustees has agreed parameters within which the Headteacher / Head of Service may take financial decisions. Any employee likely to incur such expenditure must seek the approval of the Headteacher / CFO first. Any expenditure outside the limit set by the CFO must be referred to the CEO.

## **16. COMMERCIAL CONFIDENTIALITY/GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATIONS 2018**

- 16.1 Employees must not make public, without the express agreement of the Headteacher / CEO as part of the normal processes of the school / trust, any internal information that they may be aware of as part of their employment with the school / trust, whether or not this is for personal gain, or the personal or financial gain of others. This is particularly important where it may prejudice the principle of a purchasing or contracting system based on fair competition. Employees are also bound by the General Data Protection Regulations 2018 in not releasing to a third party, other than for internal purposes as part of normal work requirements, any information held in respect of any employee or person who has dealings with the school/trust for any reason.

## **17. CRIMINAL OFFENCES**

- 17.1 In many instances the conviction of an employee for a criminal offence remains a matter between the individual and the Criminal Justice System. In respect of teachers such convictions may be notified to the Teaching Agency which, in turn, may notify the Employer. However, certain crimes or the fact that they have been committed by certain employees do have a direct or indirect impact on individuals’ employment with the school / trust which either constitutes a conflict of interest, or brings the school / trust into disrepute or renders continuing employment in the job unlawful.
- 17.2 Examples of crimes that are likely to fall into this category include:
  - any crime against school/trust or a Public Body e.g. Housing Benefit fraud, damage to the school / trust property, or abuse of, or assault upon any school / trust employee (whether or not they are undertaking their duties at the time)
  - any crime involving dishonesty / fraud
  - any crime or spent crime if the employee is working directly with, or has regular unsupervised contact with children or young people under 18 years of age (Note: disclosing all convictions does not necessarily mean action will be taken against the

employee, as it will need to be viewed against the relevance or otherwise for the employee to be considered suitable to continue to undertake the particular job).

- crimes of assault
- any crime that is deemed to bring the school/trust into disrepute

This list of examples is not exhaustive.

17.3 Employees **must** inform the Headteacher / Head of Service as soon as they receive a reprimand, warning, caution or are investigated, or arrested, or charged, or convicted of such crimes (on the next working day) and if arrested, must notify the Headteacher / Head of Service of the development and outcome of the case immediately e.g. on the next working day.

17.4 In addition, employees should always notify the Headteacher / Head of Service if there is any doubt as to whether or not they fall into such a category. In some circumstances, employees should notify their line manager if an immediate family member who resides at the same address is also investigated, arrested, charged or convicted. One example could be where an employee working with children has a current relationship with an individual or is known to associate with individuals who have convictions for child abuse. The employer may not have raised any concern regarding their activity at work but their out of work relationships could call into question their position of trust.

Failure to notify the Headteacher / Head of Service of a Police Investigation, arrest, charge or conviction may constitute ground for disciplinary action.

17.5 Where it is deemed that there is an adverse impact on their employment, the disciplinary procedure may be invoked. The school/trust is not required to wait for the Criminal Justice or other legal system to run its course before commencing disciplinary investigations.

## 18. DRIVING DISQUALIFICATION

18.1 Employees, or whose job requires a driving licence, **must immediately** inform the Headteacher / Head of Service if they are disqualified from driving for medical or criminal reasons.

18.2 For those employees disqualified from driving on the grounds of medical reasons, reasonable efforts will be made to redesign the job to exclude the requirement to drive (temporarily or indefinitely). Where this means redeployment is to a job on lower remuneration, pay protection will be in accordance with the current policy or conditions of service and the school / trust will make every effort to identify equivalent, alternative responsibilities regarding this.

18.3 For those employees disqualified from driving on the grounds of criminal reasons, reasonable efforts will be made to redesign or redeploy the employee role. Where this is possible, but results in a lower paid job, no pay protection will apply.

## 19. USE OF FACILITIES

- 19.1 Facilities that are provided by the school/trust and used by employees as part of their normal duties, must not be used, or abused by employees for their own private use or gain. This will cover all school property, for example telephones, computers, vehicles, safety equipment/clothing, tools, paper. etc.
- 19.2 The contents of our ICT resources and communications systems are our property. Therefore, staff should have no expectation of privacy in any message, files, data, documents, telephone conversation, social media post, conversation or message, or any other kind of information or communications transmitted to, received or printed from, or stored or recorded on our electronic information and communications systems. We reserve the right to monitor, intercept and review, without prior notification or authorisation from adults. Usage of our IT resources and communications systems, including but not limited to telephone, e-mail, messaging, voicemail, CCTV, internet and social media postings and activities are monitored to ensure that our rules are being complied with.
- 19.3 This school anticipates the following resources may be used at home, by the **employee only**:
- Laptop computer, screen and associated peripherals
  - Electronic tablet
  - Text books
  - Mobile phone
- This list is not exhaustive.
- 19.4 Arrangements do exist for employees, in certain situations, and without overly abusing the privilege, to use school/trust telephones to make private calls. This will be at the discretion of the Headteacher/Head of Service.

## 20. SANCTIONS FOR THE BREACH OF THE CODE

- 20.1 Any breach of this Code will be dealt with under the agreed disciplinary procedures, and may, subject to the seriousness of the breach, lead to a dismissal from the school/trust. In cases where the breach is the subject of police investigation, the school/trust will commence their investigation as soon as reasonably practicable.
- 20.2 Where inappropriate behaviour is by an individual engaged on a contract of services, or employees not subject to a disciplinary procedure, e.g. those during their probationary period, then their services with the school/trust will be terminated following the probationary procedure or other appropriate procedures.

## 21. WHERE TO OBTAIN FURTHER ADVICE

- 21.1 Any queries in respect of this Code should be raised with the Headteacher, Head of Service, or Head of People.