

Staff Code of Conduct



Review Date

March 2023

Ratified

May 2023

Next Review

March 2024

Responsible Directorate

HR

Our Vision



Transforming Lives of our learners

We seek to ensure that all our learners receive a high-quality education from expert staff and aspire to achieve the best they possibly can, no matter their background or ability. Our learners have safe, supportive learning environments in which they develop, grow, and challenge themselves. We are determined that our learners will receive the very best enrichment and opportunities to help them reach their full potential and ensure they are prepared for the future, wherever it might take them.



Transforming Lives of our colleagues

Our colleagues are supported with the very best professional development through our innovative ATT institute, allowing them to stay focused on learning and developing as practitioners whilst they progress in their careers. We share the very best practice across our community of academies to help build systems and processes that really work.



Transforming Lives in the communities we serve

We are committed to actively engaging with and addressing inequality in our local areas. We understand that every one of our academies and their diverse communities are different, so we aim to build a supportive, collaborative, and nurturing relationship with each whilst sharing our key values across our Trust.

Commitment to Education

Transparency and Integrity

Innovation and Improvement

Dedication to Inclusivity

Our Values

Commitment to Education

Our core purpose is to positively impact the lives of all our learners. Education will always be at the heart of everything we do.

Transparency and Integrity

We are proud of our success whilst being open and honest about our areas for improvement. Our actions are always ethical and in the best interests of all our stakeholders.

Innovation and Improvement

We are committed to innovative education- always moving forward and never standing still. Our learners are ambitious and prepared for a future that is constantly changing and developing.

Dedication to Inclusivity

Our learners are all different and all important to us. We aspire to support, challenge, and help each one of them reach their full potential, regardless of their background or level of ability.

Contents

	Statement of Intent	4
1	Legal Framework and Definitions	5
2	Scope of this Policy	5
3	Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children	6
4	Duty of Care	7
5	Health and Safety	7
6	Honesty and Personal Integrity	7
7	Tackling Discrimination	8
8	Professional Boundaries and Relationships	8
9	Confidentiality and Data Protection	9
10	Physical Contact with Learners	9
11	Behaviour Management	10
12	Social Contact with Learners	10
13	Online Conduct	11
14	Photography, Videos and Other Images/Media	11
15	Working One to One with Learners	12
16	Curriculum	12
17	Professional Appearance	13
18	Gifts and Hospitality	13
19	Conflict of Interests	13
20	Keeping Within the Law	13
21	Conduct Outside of Work and at Work Related Functions	14
22	Whistleblowing	15
	Appendix 1- Establishing Safe Working Practices	16
	Appendix 2- Guidelines for Staff use of Social Media	18
	Appendix 3 – The Academy Way	20

Statement of Intent

We are proud of the many professions working inside our trust and proud to be professional!

While every organisation must have a clear statement of professional expectations, we are confident that much of what we state in this policy is a commitment to the obvious for all of our colleagues.

Key Principles

Our key principles for safe and professional conduct are:

1. Complying with relevant law and regulation
2. Ensuring that we are clear that conflicts of interest, bribery and corruption are not in line with our ethical principles
3. Respecting the confidentiality of personal and corporate information
4. Promoting diversity and equality and treating people fairly and with respect
5. Maintaining a safe and healthy environment for people to work in and being proactive in managing our responsibilities to the environment
6. Supporting those who have any suspicions of any misconduct, malpractice, illegal or unethical behaviour and reporting their concerns in confidence to the appropriate channels.

The importance of professional behaviour

We know that our professional behaviour inspires and impacts our learners. We are therefore committed to demonstrating the very best standards of behaviour. Our Code of Conduct and our *Academy Way* appendices aim to engender and foster exemplary behaviours which enable our people to be the best role models for our learners:

“Being a role model is the most powerful form of educating. Youngsters need good models more than they need critics” (John Wooden)

This code also provides a clear framework for leadership behaviours so that our aspirant leaders are always learning from the very best:

“Example is not the main thing in influencing others. It is the only thing” (Albert Schweitzer)

Ensuring safeguarding

We are committed to our duty to keep our people and our learners safe, to promote their welfare and to protect them from radicalisation (the Prevent Duty), abuse (sexual, physical and emotional), neglect and any other safeguarding concerns or risks. This duty is, in part, exercised through the development of respectful, caring and professional relationships between our people and our learners and professional behaviour that demonstrates integrity, maturity and good judgement.

This code cannot and does not provide an exhaustive list of what is, or is not, appropriate professional behaviour; but it does provide a clear professional conduct framework for all our colleagues. It must be read and used alongside the key policies and documents listed on the title page.

1 | Legal Framework and Definitions

- 1.1 This guidance has due regard to statutory legislation, including, but not limited to:
- *Equality Act 2010 and Disability Discrimination Act (1995)*
 - *Public Interest Disclosure Act (1998)*
 - *Bribery Act (2010)*
 - *Employment Rights Act (1996)*
 - *Employment Act (2002)*
- 1.2 This policy also takes account of the most recent versions of the following guidance (statutory and non-statutory); *Keeping Children Safe in Education* Department of Education (DfE) (statutory), *Working Together to Safeguard Children* HM Government (statutory) and *Guidance for Safer Working Practice for those Working with Children and Young People in Education Settings* (non-statutory).
- 1.3 Where this policy refers to *ATT* or *our Trust*, this should be taken to include any member of our staff, including governors and Trustees.

2 | Scope of this Policy

- 2.1 The statutory guidance for schools and colleges on safeguarding children and safer recruitment contained in *Keeping Children Safe in Education* states that governing bodies and proprietors should have a staff behaviour policy.
- 2.2 This code applies to all employees regardless of length of service including those in their probationary period. It also applies to agency workers and self-employed contractors although, unlike employees, any breaches of the code will not be managed through our disciplinary procedure. It applies to those working with us on a voluntary basis, and there is appropriate training and guidance for governance that sets out expectations.
- 2.3 As recognisable figures in local communities, the behaviour and conduct of our people outside of work can impact on their employment. Therefore, conduct outside work may be treated as a disciplinary matter if it is considered that it is relevant to the employee's employment.
- 2.4 This policy applies to any area where a regulatory body has deemed responsibility to be within the trust's remit.
- 2.5 This policy will be reviewed regularly in consultation with our recognised trade union colleagues.

3 | Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children

- 3.1 We are all responsible for safeguarding children and promoting their welfare and must have fully read and understood our safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures. We are required to act as soon as reasonably possible and always by the end of the academy day, to protect children from maltreatment, prevent impairment of children's health or development and ensure that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care. This will enable all children to have the best outcomes.
- 3.2 We must all be aware of the signs of abuse and neglect and know what action to take if these are identified and we 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.
- 3.3 We must be aware of the signs of abuse and neglect and know what action to take if these are identified.
- 3.4 We must be aware of low level concerns, no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' - that an adult working in or on behalf of the school or college may have acted in a way that:
- Is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work
 - Does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

Examples of such behaviour could include, but is not limited to:

- Being over friendly with children
 - Having favourites
 - Taking photographs of children on their mobile phone
 - Engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door
 - Using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language.
- 3.5 To do this, employees must have fully read and understood our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, be aware of our systems for keeping children safe and must follow the guidance in these policies at all times.
- 3.6 We must cooperate with colleagues and with external agencies where necessary.

4 | Duty of Care

4.1 We must all:

- Understand the responsibilities, which are part of our contract of employment or role, and be aware that sanctions may be applied if these provisions are breached
- Always act, and be seen to act, in our learners' best interests
- Avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question our motivation and/or intentions
- Take responsibility for our own actions and behaviour

5 | Health and Safety

5.1 We must all ensure that we read, understand and comply with our Health and Safety Policy.

6 | Honesty and Personal Integrity

6.1 We are all expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct and must comply with any lawful or reasonable instructions issued by leaders, line managers or Trustees.

6.2 We must all uphold public confidence in our trust and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside work, by:

- Treating learners and colleagues with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to our professional position
- Having regard for the need to safeguard learners' and colleagues' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions
- Showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others
- 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
- Ensuring that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways which exploit learners' or colleagues' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law.

- 6.3 We must all have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of our trust and maintain high standards in our own attendance and punctuality. We must treat all colleagues with respect, dignity, fairness and courtesy at all times.
- 6.4 Each academy Principal will securely maintain a conduct log which will assist in identifying any themes or patterns (low level concerns) in behaviour which will then inform decisions about training and development needs within each academy.
- 6.5 We must maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in our work.

7 | Tackling Discrimination

- 7.1 We must all read and understand our Anti Bullying Policy and Dignity at Work Policy. We must understand the types of discrimination and bullying that learners and colleagues may be subject to and must not ignore any form of discrimination.

8 | Professional Boundaries and Relationships

- 8.1 We are all in a position of trust in relation to our learners which means that the relationship between a colleague and a learner is never one of equals. It is a specific offence for a person in a position of trust to have a sexual relationship with a child or learner under 18 where that person is in a position of trust in respect of that child or learner, even if the relationship is consensual.

We must always follow safe working practices and the guidance provided in [Appendix 1](#).

- 8.2 We must ensure that we avoid behaviour which might be misinterpreted by others. This includes any type of communication that we may have with learners. We must not make sexual remarks to any learner or discuss our own sexual relationships with, or in the presence of learners. We must not discuss a learner's sexual relationships in inappropriate settings or contexts. **Any sexual behaviour or contact including grooming patterns of behaviour by a colleague towards any learner is unacceptable and illegal. Young people are protected by specific legal provisions regardless of whether they consent or not. Sexual activity does not just involve physical contact, it may also include causing children or young people to engage in or watch pornographic material. Staff should be aware that conferring special attention and favour upon a child or young person might be construed as being part of a 'grooming' process which is an**

offence. In line with KCSIE, we will report all allegations or suggestions of sexual impropriety to the Local Designated Officer (LADO).

8.3 We must ensure that professional boundaries are maintained at all times. This means that we should not show favouritism to any learner and should not allow learners to engage in any type of behaviour that could be seen to be inappropriate. **Learners are not our friends and should never be treated as such.**

8.4 We know that it is not uncommon for learners to become strongly attracted to a member of staff or to develop an infatuation. If any colleague becomes aware of an infatuation they should

discuss it with their line manager immediately so that they can receive support on the most appropriate way(s) to manage the situation.

8.5 For colleagues who are in a relationship with another colleague, parent or carer, or any other person associated with the academy or trust, we expect that they identify this to the Principal or Director or Executive Leader and ensure that this does not create a conflict of interest or affect their professional judgement or responsibilities in any way. Where a colleague has managerial authority over another colleague with whom they are in a close personal relationship, the trust reserves the right to transfer one or both colleagues to another role within the trust following appropriate consultation with both colleagues in order to seek agreement to the transfer.

9 | Confidentiality and Data Protection

9.1 We may have access to confidential information about students, colleagues or other matters which could include personal and sensitive data. This information should never be referred to casually or in order to humiliate, intimidate or embarrass a student, family or colleague. Highly sensitive information should only be shared on a 'need to know' basis at the direction of the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Principal. Gossip about students, their families or colleagues, is unnecessary and unprofessional. Staff must be familiar with and adhere to the expectations of the GDPR Policy.

10 | Physical Contact with Learners

10.1 There may be occasions when it is entirely appropriate and proper for colleagues to have physical contact with learners. We must ensure that we only do so in ways that are appropriate to our professional role and in response to the learner's needs at the time and we should always be able to explain why we have made physical contact with a learner. We should ensure that we have

read and understood specific academy policies on physical contact, use of reasonable force and behaviour management.

- 10.2 There may be occasions when a distressed student needs comfort and reassurance which may include age appropriate physical comforting, such as a parent/carer would give. Staff should use their discretion in such cases to ensure that what is, and what is seen by others present to be normal, and natural, does not become unnecessary and unjustified contact, particularly with the same student over a period of time. Members of staff should seek guidance from the Designated Safeguarding Lead if they become concerned about the type of care and reassurance a student needs.
- 10.3 We may legally physically intervene with learners to prevent them from committing a crime, injuring themselves or others, causing damage to property, engaging in behaviour prejudicial to good order and to maintain good order and discipline. In these situations only minimum force should be used in order to restrain. The incident should be reported immediately to the Designated safeguarding Lead. The only grounds for to physically intervene would be if it was genuinely believed that the student was at risk to themselves or others. Physical force should never be used as a form of punishment. An accepted guideline that any complaint of inappropriate handling by a student (proven or otherwise) should be reported to the Local Authority Designated Officer for Child Protection (LADO). Following an investigation, it may be that information is passed to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) and the Disclosure and Barring Service.

11 | Behaviour Management

- 11.1 Colleagues should not use any form of degrading or humiliating treatment to punish a student. The use of sarcasm, demeaning or insensitive comments towards students is completely unacceptable.
- 11.2 Where students display difficult or challenging behaviour, employees should follow the behaviour policy using strategies appropriate to the circumstance and situation.

12 | Social Contact with Learners

- 12.1 **We should not connect with or establish or seek to establish social contact with learners via any channels (including social media) at all** except for academy or trust social media platforms (e.g. academy Facebook pages/groups) which are to be used only for professional purposes and not for the purposes of securing a friendship or to pursue or strengthen a relationship.

- 12.2 We must only use our work provided equipment for communicating with learners. If there are any circumstances in which a colleague has had to provide their personal contact details, including phone numbers, email address etc, to any learner then they should report this to their line manager immediately.
- 12.3 Our Trust and our academies are part of communities and we recognise that, as members of the community, we will come into contact with learners outside of the academy. We will use our professional judgement in such situations and will report to our line manager immediately any contact that we have had with a learner, outside of school, that we are concerned about or that could be misinterpreted by others.
- 12.4 We should all read, understand and adhere to our E-Safety Policy, Social Media Policy and any other academy policies in relation to social media.

13 | Online Conduct

- 13.1 All staff should ensure high levels of security on social media platforms and avoid references to the place of work. Comments about colleagues, students or their families on social media are never appropriate. Staff need to be careful about comments made in any electronic communication and how they portray their lifestyle, as privacy on any social media cannot be guaranteed.
- 13.2 There is no acceptable reason for any member of staff to be connected with any child in the academy through social media. If a child attempts to contact you in any way, outside of work, by any means, you must contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Principal immediately.
- 13.3 We recognise that employees work long hours and are entitled to engage in the use of social media in their own time and that there are many positive outcomes of engaging on social media. All employees, however, need to be mindful of what is private and public with other individuals unintentionally or intentionally and misinterpreting online communication. As such, we have written a guide for staff, to support them in their interactions and to make clear the Trust's expectation (see Appendix 1).

14 | Photography, Videos and Other Images/Media

- 14.1 Many educational activities involve recording images. These may be undertaken or used for displays, publicity, to celebrate achievement and to provide records of evidence of the activity. Under no circumstances should we use our personal equipment to take images of learners at or

on behalf of the academy or trust nor should we download images from academy equipment to personal devices.

15 | Working One to One with Learners

15.1 There will be times where we are working one to one with a learner and this is acceptable. We need to understand that this means that we may be more vulnerable to allegations being made against us. Therefore, it is important that we:

- Avoid meeting on a one to one basis in secluded areas
- Ensure that the door to the room is open or that there is visual access into the room
- Inform a colleague or line manager of the meeting beforehand
- Report to our line manager if the learner becomes distressed or angry.
- Meetings or contact (e.g. via phone calls, texts, emails, social media) with students away from the academy premises (or indeed on the academy premises out of hours) are not permitted unless the specific approval of the Principal or Vice Principal has been obtained in advance.
- Staff must recognise that a relationship between a member of staff and a student cannot be a relationship of equals. There is a potential for exploitation and harm of vulnerable young people and staff have a responsibility to ensure that an unequal power balance is not used for personal advantage or gratification.

16 | Curriculum

16.1 Many areas of our curriculum can include or raise subject matter which is sexually explicit or of a political or sensitive nature. Care should be taken to ensure that resource materials cannot be misinterpreted and clearly relate to the learning outcomes identified by the lesson plan. This can be supported by developing ground rules with learners to ensure sensitive topics can be discussed in a safe learning environment. This plan should highlight particular areas of risk and sensitivity and care should especially be taken in those areas of the curriculum where usual boundaries or rules are less rigorously applied e.g. Health and Social Care, PSHE, Drama.

16.2 The curriculum can sometimes include or lead to unplanned discussion about subject matter of a sexually explicit, political or otherwise sensitive nature. Responding to children's questions requires careful judgement and we should take guidance in these circumstances from the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) where possible, particularly after we have dealt with something that has made us feel uncomfortable. This will allow us to discuss with our DSL how we handled the situation and any learning points.

17 | Professional Appearance

- 17.1 The *Academy Way* describes our dress code and expectations and we must read and adhere to this.

18 | Gifts and Hospitality

- 18.1 The trust has an *Anti-bribery and Gifts and Hospitality Policy* and we must all read and adhere to this.
- 18.2 We must not give gifts to learners unless this is part of a recognised practice and in line with our behaviour policy.

19 | Conflicts of Interest

- 19.1 It is important that, where decisions are made which have a significant effect on the trust and others, they are taken in a fair and balanced way. Any potential conflicts of interest must be declared so that individuals are not involved in decisions that could be regarded as biased.

20 | Keeping Within the Law

- 20.1 We are all expected to operate within the law. Unlawful or criminal behaviour, at work or outside work, may lead to disciplinary action, including dismissal, being taken. However, being investigated by the police, receiving a caution or being charged will not automatically mean that employment is at risk.
- 20.2 We must ensure that we uphold the law and that we never commit a crime away from work which could damage public confidence in us or the trust or the academy, or which makes us unsuitable for the work that we are employed to do. This includes, for example:

- Submitting false or fraudulent claims to public bodies (for example, income support, housing, or other benefit claims)
- Breaching copyright on computer software or published documents
- Sexual offences which will render us unfit to work with children or vulnerable adults
- Crimes of dishonesty which render us unfit to hold a position of trust.

20.3 Colleagues must inform their academy Principal immediately if they are questioned by the police, charged with, or convicted of, any crime whilst they are employed in our Trust (this includes outside of their working hours). This must be done without delay in order to allow for appropriate responses and mitigation to be made by the academy. The Principal will need to consider whether this charge or conviction damages public confidence in the academy or trust or makes the colleague unsuitable to carry out their duties or if any action is needed to mitigate any risk or concerns.

20.4 If any matter detailed in [20.3](#) applies to a Principal or a Trust Principal then the relevant National Education Director should be informed immediately.

20.5 If any matter detailed in [20.3](#) applies to any colleague not working in one of our academies on a daily basis, our Director of People Strategy should be informed immediately.

21 | Conduct Outside of Work and at Work Related Functions

21.1 Working in an educational trust means that our conduct outside of work may have an impact on our role. As such we must not engage in conduct outside work which could seriously damage the reputation and standing of the academy or Trust or our own reputation or the reputation of other members of the academy or trust community.

21.2 We must all be conscious that any conduct that we become aware of that could impact on their role within the trust or affect the academy's or Trust's reputation will be addressed under our disciplinary procedure. We must therefore make our line manager aware immediately and without delay, of any such situations that have happened outside of work. This is to allow for any responses and/or mitigation to be made.

21.3 We are all required to demonstrate responsible behaviour at work-related functions and work-related social events that take place outside normal work hours and to act in a way that will not have a detrimental effect on our reputation. Any incidents of poor or unacceptable behaviour may be dealt with appropriately either under our disciplinary procedures or by providing an opportunity for our colleagues to learn, develop and improve from feedback in relation to their behaviour or conduct.

22 | Whistleblowing

- 22.1 There may be instances where staff members may feel it appropriate to disclose via the trusts whistleblowing policy breaches of this guidance and/or our safeguarding policies and procedures. The policy is available on the trust website.

Appendix 1- Establishing Safe Working Practices:

Minimising Vulnerability to Allegations

Always:

- ✓ ...work in an open environment. Avoid private or out of sight locations and encourage open communication
- ✓ ...speak clearly, without whispering, so that learners do not need to come close to hear
- ✓ ...avoid spending time alone with individual learners away from others
- ✓ ...treat all learners, regardless of race, disability, religion or belief, gender, sexual orientation, equally and with respect and dignity
- ✓ ...ensure the learner's welfare comes first and record it
- ✓ ...be aware of the impact of proxemics; maintain safe and appropriate distances; know where and how to place your body
- ✓ ...avoid touching learners, but where **educationally necessary** staff should follow these guidelines:
 - try to demonstrate without touching first
 - ask permission; say what you intend to do first and explain why
 - if a pupil seems uncomfortable: stop
 - only touch hands, arms or shoulder nearest you (don't reach across the body)
 - be aware of overall proximity; maintain physical space; don't stand behind
 - inappropriate areas for touch include: chest, diaphragm, waist, thighs
 - move away as soon as the contact is no longer required
- ✓ ...maintain professional boundaries, perhaps using a specifically assigned mobile number or email address for work purposes, rather than sharing personal details
- ✓ ...present as an exemplary role model by not smoking or drinking alcohol, swearing, allowing suggestive conversations or jokes or wearing less than professional clothing when in the company of a learner
- ✓ ...seek to be enthusiastic and constructive when giving feedback rather than making negative or critical remarks
- ✓ ...record any injury that occurs and seek attention from a qualified First Aider or parent
- ✓ ...record any incident of concern involving learner's welfare.

Never:

- X ...allow allegations made by a child to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon (this applies to any form of abuse or bullying)
- X ...lock doors, cover windows or use 'Do Not Disturb' signs
- X ...impose humiliating or power-based punishments on a learner or reduce a child to tears
- X ...engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay
- X ...allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching
- X ...share a bedroom with a learner
- X ...allow children/learners to use inappropriate language unchallenged
- X ...make sexually suggestive comments or 'jokes' to a child, even in fun
- X ...engage in any form of relationship, sexual or otherwise, with a young person you work with even if they are over the age of consent
- X ...do things of a personal or intimate nature for children or disabled young people that they can do for themselves
- X ...invite or allow children/learners to stay with you at your home
- X ...'friend' a child/learner on their social media or yours; social media can blur boundaries
- X ...take photographs or videos of children unless using an academy or trust device and written/signed consent has been obtained from a parent/carer; this includes the use of phones
- X ...seek physical contact. Try to gently discourage contact, rather than reject learners. Model appropriate contact, eg. shaking hands or patting the shoulder. Never allow physical contact when you are alone
- X ...take a child/learner in your car, but where this is unavoidable:
 - ensure that a manager has agreed in advance
 - prepare a risk assessment
 - ensure the vehicle is roadworthy and insurance covers business use
 - obtain parental permission, preferably in writing
 - take more than one person
 - sit child in the back
 - travel directly to the destination
 - keep conversation professional

Appendix 2- Guidelines for staff use of social media

- These guidelines apply to all employees working at all grades and levels including consultants, contractors, casual and agency staff and volunteers, collectively referred to as staff.
- The guidelines refer to all forms of social media use both inside and outside of work hours and regardless of device used.
- The guidelines should be read in line with other policies as listed above.
- Staff work long hours and may occasionally desire to use social media for personal activity at work. Such use is acceptable as long as it does not interfere with employment responsibilities or productivity and does not breach other guidelines.
- As an employer, we have the right to monitor use of IT and resources during working hours.
- All use of social media for business purposes must be approved by the Principal of the academy, or in the case of a longer article or blog, the CEO.
- Principals and HR staff should not covertly search applicants on social media as part of the recruitment process as this may lead to unconscious bias and go against our Equality and Diversity policy.
- The exception to this would be if researching prospective candidates to encourage applications, for example, on a professional community site such as 'LinkedIn' , however, searches should never be a replacement for the safer recruitment process.
- Searches may be made once an offer and if an appointee is informed that this is part of the safer recruitment process (e.g. to ensure social media sites are private, for example).
- You should not communicate with students (or ex-students who are under 18) over social network sites and must block unwanted communication, reporting this to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Principal.
- Staff must be mindful of the Trust's reputation and must not post disparaging or defamatory statements about the academy, the Trust, our students or families, our governors or staff, suppliers or vendors or other known affiliates and stakeholders.
- Statements can be misconstrued and this can lead to damage to the Trusts' reputation, directly or indirectly.
- Staff must be aware that they are personally responsible for what they post on social media and that a digital footprint can be difficult to erase. When posting anything, they should consider whether what they are saying would pass the 'red face test' should it be brought into work.
- What may appear to be private communication can become public, particularly in the event of disagreements or conflict and staff must be mindful of this.
- Staff should refrain from posting comments about sensitive issues which could damage their or the Trust's reputation.
- Employees may find it easier to use different sites for different purposes, so, for example, LinkedIn and Twitter may be for purely educational connections, whereas, Facebook may be purely social and private.
- Given the issue of misinterpretation, employees should think very carefully before posting anything about work on their private site, additionally, blurring the public and private can have unintended consequences.

- If you feel uncomfortable about any post that another employee makes, you should print it off and take it to the Principal.
- Respect for others is absolutely key and you must not post anything that other members of our community or any stakeholder would find offensive, for example, insults or obscenity.
- Social media sites should have the optimum security settings and it is advisable to use a pseudonym and to keep personal details to an absolute minimum.
- Staff may be asked to remove a post if it is felt that it breaches these guidelines, co-operation is expected.
- Staff should not provide employment references by social media; this should always be done through HR.
- If a member of staff discloses their affiliation as an employee, for example, on Twitter when engaging with a learning community, the following statement must be added 'the views in this post do not represent the views of my employer'.
- Employees must be aware that some views are non-conducive with the mission and values of the Trust, for example, posting or re-posting comments or memes that go against the principles of our Equality and Diversity policy.
- Despite any disclaimer, the employee must be particularly mindful that the image presented should be consistent with the expectations of highly professionalised staff if an association with the organisation is made.

Appendix 3- *The Academy Way*

[ACADEMY TO INSERT THEIR LOCAL "ACADEMY WAY"]

2023-46-FI