DIOCESE OF SOUTHWELL & NOTTINGHAM MULTI ACADEMY TRUST

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STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following SNMAT policies as well as any relevant local academy policies:

Child Protection to Safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Confidential reporting and whistleblowing

Social Media

Disciplinary Policy

Gifts Policy

Policy:	SNMAT Code of Conduct for School Staff
Approved by:	SNMAT Board of Directors
Date:	July 2025
Review cycle:	Three yearly

VERSION CONTROL			
VERSION	**DATE**	**AUTHOR**	**CHANGES**
1			New Policy
2	24.03.2020	SD	Section 14 added – online teaching sessions
3	18.01.2024	SD	Section 14 amended
4	09.03.2022	JS	Section 12 added – personal relationships
5	April 2024	CP	Section 13 added – time keeping
6	July 2025	AB AB	Section -Safeguarding (page 4 and removal of dated appendix) updated FGM section as this was dated 2015 referred to Safeguarding policy. Section 15 – updated dress code Section 17 – included details for Complaints process. Section 18 -included Disciplinary Action statement.

Introduction

In accordance with the DFE 'Keeping children safe in education' guidance this code has been adopted by this academy for all academy staff to be fully aware of the standards of personal and professional conduct in relation to various aspects of their work. The code gives a clear framework for staff to know their responsibilities and will be discussed during their employment, for example in team meetings as queries arise - to ensure the code is mutually monitored, positively promoted in the academy and understood by everyone.

The code will be discussed as appropriate during their employment to ensure the code is mutually monitored, positively promoted and understood by everyone. Every member of academy staff will be asked to read this code of conduct as part of their induction. This code will be reviewed annually and updated by the Directors as and when necessary. If staff have any questions about the requirements of this code, then advice should be sought from their line manager or the principal/headteacher. There is an expectation that all employees in this Trust will conduct themselves in a manner commensurate with the highest standard to maintain public trust and confidence and be beyond reproach in the performance of their duties. Each member of academy staff has a duty to ensure that the appropriate standards of conduct are upheld both by themselves and by colleagues.

Underlying principles

All academy staff must act within the law whilst undertaking their official duties. Staff must not undermine fundamental values, including democracy, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

Teachers must have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities. Where staff are members of professional bodies, they must also comply with any standards of conduct which are set by that body. The conduct of all teachers must always be in line with the Teacher's Standards and where appropriate the Headteacher standards. Staff must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the academy, and maintain high standards in their own conduct, performance, attendance and punctuality. Staff must ensure that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways which exploit pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law or the policies and procedures of the academy and always show respect for the rights of others.

Staff are expected to provide the highest possible standard of service. Where staff are aware of any contraventions of this Code, illegality, misconduct or breach of procedure they should notify their principal/head teacher at the earliest opportunity. The Code does not seek to address every possible circumstance, and simply because a particular action may not be addressed within the Code, this does not condone that action by omission

1. Safeguarding

Staff must safeguard children's well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions, the local Safeguarding Children Board procedures and their academy's child protection policy. Staff must report any safeguarding concerns immediately to the designated safeguarding lead person in academy and ensure the principal/headteacher is also informed. All staff have a responsibility to take appropriate action and work with other services as needed.

All staff must be fully aware of the academy policies and procedures relating to safeguarding and given their position of trust, must ensure that they do not put themselves in any situation where their conduct or behaviour with any pupil could be misconstrued. Any allegations of inappropriate contact with pupils will be investigated according to the Trust's Disciplinary Procedure.

If a child reports any safeguarding concerns to any member of staff, this must be reported immediately to the designated safeguarding lead and/or the principal/headteacher. Staff must not promise confidentiality to a child and always ensure that any actions they take are in the interests of a child. Where staff have any safeguarding concerns about another member of staff these concerns must be reported immediately to the designated safeguarding lead and/or the principal/ headteacher. Serious case reviews from past cases in the media have highlighted the concerns about academy staff not sharing their knowledge with the leadership of the academy.

All staff must be aware that it is a criminal offence under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 (as amended) for anyone to engage in a sexual relationship or grooming for such a relationship with a child aged under 18 with whom they are in a position of trust. It is vital that staff always work within appropriate professional boundaries with children and young people with whom they are in a position of trust. If staff, are unsure about what action to take or how they should respond to any situation they must immediately contact the designated safeguarding lead/headteacher. Any concerns about an inappropriate relationship between a member of staff and a pupil (irrespective of their age) will be fully investigated under the Disciplinary Procedure for Trust staff as a potential issue of gross misconduct.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

If a teacher, in the course of their work in the profession, discovers that an act of Female Genital Mutilation appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, the teacher must report this to the police.

FGM mandatory reporting duty FGM comprises all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs. It is illegal in the UK and a form of child abuse with long-lasting harmful consequences. Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by the Serious Crime Act 2015) places a statutory duty upon teachers along with regulated health and social care professionals in England and Wales, to report to the police where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have

been carried out on a girl under 18. Those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining pupils, but the same definition of what is meant by "to discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out" is used for all professionals to whom this mandatory reporting duty applies. Information on when and how to make a report can be found at Mandatory reporting of female genital mutilation procedural information https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mandatory- reporting-of-female-genital-mutilation-procedural-information. Teachers must personally report to the police cases where they discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out. Unless the teacher has a good reason not to, they should also still consider and discuss any such case with the school or college's designated safeguarding lead and involve children's social care as appropriate. The duty does not apply in relation to at risk or suspected cases (i.e. where the teacher does not discover that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out, either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) or in cases where the woman is 18 or over. In these cases, teachers should follow local safeguarding procedures. Refer to Safeguarding policy for a summary of FGM mandatory reporting duty.

2. Equality issues

Staff must ensure that the equality and diversity policy, in relation to employment and their duties and responsibilities, are adhered to. All policies are held on the premises. This academy believes in equality and will not tolerate any harassment, intimidation, unfair discrimination or victimisation by academy staff against pupils, colleagues, parents, governors, trade union reps and other visitors. Staff should not by their manner or speech be discriminatory with regards to a person's age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

3. Health and safety

It is the responsibility of all staff, governors and visitors to the academy to take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and others and to assist in the creation of a safe work environment.

Staff have a responsibility to inform the principal/headteacher of any medical condition/illness they have during the course of their employment which may impact on their fitness to undertake their duties or on the health and safety of themselves, pupils, other staff, governors and visitors to the academy.

4. Relationships and contact between academy staff - the public, parents and Pupils

Academy staff should always act in a courteous, efficient and impartial manner towards all individual pupils, groups of pupils, staff and individuals. Staff must always treat pupils with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, observing proper boundaries appropriate to their position.

It is the policy of the academy that there will be no personal contact other than in certain exempted circumstances between staff and current/former pupils of academy age

outside the normal academy work environment. Any proposed work-related contact, outside of of the normal working environment, must be agreed in advance by the principal/head teacher and be recorded and monitored. Unexpected contact with pupils should be kept to a minimum. e.g. brief greeting. Any transport of pupils must be agreed in line with the academy policy and always agreed with the head teacher.

Correspondence received by a member of staff from former pupils, the public or parents, including that from social media sources, should always be discussed with their line manager/ or principal/headteacher and filed with any response in the appropriate academy records system.

Staff should be extremely cautious when using social networking sites outside of work and avoid publishing, or allowing to be published, any material, including comments or image, that could damage their professional reputation and/or bring the academy into disrepute. Where staff do use social networking sites profiles should be set as 'private' and under no circumstances should staff allow access to pupils, their families and or carers. Please refer to the SNMAT social media Policy.

Staff should not give their personal details such as home/mobile phone number; home or email address to pupils unless the need to do so is agreed with their principal/head teacher. Where this is the case, correspondence should be kept to a minimum and always be professional in accordance with the ethos of this code.

Where former pupils who are under the age of 18 and still in receipt of education, in whatever educational setting, make personal contact with a member of staff, that member of staff must discuss their response to any such significant contact with their current line manager or principal/headteacher.

5. Confidentiality

Staff and members of local governing bodies should also be mindful that requirements in relation to maintaining the confidentiality of pupils, their families, colleagues and any matters relating to the academy itself apply to all forms of communication, including social networking sites.

6. Use of personal mobile phones, laptops and tablets

All staff are normally required to place any personal equipment capable of photographing children in a drawer/locker and such items should not be taken into the classroom. Such personal equipment is not to be used at any time, unless agreed by the principal/headteacher, during contact with pupils. Where appropriate, an academy owned mobile phone will be used for example on visits and trips outside of the premises.

Individual academies should set out in writing their own expectations of the use of this equipment by staff and should review this in line with the agreed procedures. If there is a requirement in the teacher's role to take photographs of children for academy purposes this must be carried out using academy equipment that will be provided and with the agreement of the principal/headteacher and in line with the agreed academy procedures.

7. Use of academy premises or facilities for work not connected with the academy

Trust staff must not use the academy premises or facilities for activities which are not connected with their employment at the academy, without agreement from the principal/headteacher or local governing body. This includes the personal use of the academy email, telephones, computers, photocopiers, or other equipment. Internal email systems and academy computer equipment should always be used in accordance with the appropriate academy policies. However, Trade Union reps (as part of their job), can carry out their work on the premises.

8. Use of Alcohol and illegal drugs

The use of Alcohol and illegal drugs during working hours is unacceptable. All employees are expected to attend school in a fit state to work.

SNMAT will take all reasonable steps to prevent a member of staff carrying out work-related activities if they are unfit/ unsafe to undertake the work because of alcohol consumption or substance abuse.

Staff must not consume alcohol whilst they have responsibility for pupils or be under the influence of alcohol when they resume responsibility for pupils.

Alcohol may be consumed responsibly on the school premises when the Headteacher has given express permission, such as during an evening or weekend social function or a celebration event.

In the case of Residential Trips, a minimum of two staff members must be 'in charge'. One of these must not consume alcohol as they may be called upon to deal with an emergency which may require them to drive a vehicle.

9. Disclosure of information

Staff must not disclose information given to them in confidence without consent except for that relating to safeguarding of a child which must be passed on to the designated Safeguarding Lead (refer to SNMAT Safeguarding Policy). Advice should always be sought from their line manager or principal/headteacher on the appropriate use of academy data and disclosure of academy information. Any actions taken by the academy must always be in line with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1984 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Trust staff should not use confidential information obtained in the course of their employment with the academy for personal use, nor should they pass it on to others who might use it for unauthorised purposes.

10. Trust staff facing criminal

charges

Any member of staff, volunteer or governor who, during their employment with the Trust, faces criminal charges or who receives a new caution or conviction must inform their line manager, or in the case of the principal/headteacher, the chair of the local governing body. Refer to the Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009 and SNMAT Safeguarding Policy.

11. Conflict of interest

Staff should declare any personal interest that could bring about conflict with the academy's interests. Trust staff must declare to their principal/headteacher or chair of the local governing body any financial interests or non-financial interests which could or could be perceived to conflict with their role within the academy. Staff are required not to take outside employment which conflicts with the academy's interests. Any staff intending to work for outside organisations should notify their principal/head teacher or chair of the local governing body, as appropriate.

12. Personal Relationships

For employees who are in a relationship with a colleague, parent or carer, or any other person associated with the academy/trust we expect that they identify this to the Headteacher/line manager and ensure that this does not create a conflict of interest or affect their professional judgement or responsibilities in any way.

Where an employee has managerial authority over another employee with whom they are in a close personal relationship, the academy/trust reserves the right to consider the option to alter the lines of accountability to ensure a professional distance is maintained. This will be done following appropriate consultation with both employees.

13. Time Keeping

All staff are expected to keep to contracted times of work.

Late arrivals or leaving early may be agreed in exceptional circumstances. Should a pattern of later arrivals etc., without authorisation occur then disciplinary action may be taken.

All staff are expected to communicate professionally and courteously regarding any lateness, giving a clear reason for that lateness.

14. Acceptance of gifts

It is reasonable for a member of staff to accept modest gifts from pupils, especially at the end of an academy year or at Christmas. The giving of gifts to pupils should be in line with the agreed academy policy. Refer to the SNMAT Gifts Policy.

15. Dress Code

Standard Dress Policy

The Governors/Board of Trustees takes the view that all staff at the SNMAT should be dressed appropriately for their role. The Governors/Board of Trustees is also mindful of the need to avoid direct or indirect discrimination against any employee on the grounds of their sex, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, or age.

15.1 The Governors/Board of Trustees is aware of the responsibility to consider possible health and safety issues in determining an acceptable dress code.

Standard of Dress

15.2 In general the dress of all teaching and support staff must be tidy and smart, reflecting the business-like ethos that the Governors/Board of Trustees wish to foster and maintain in staff and pupils.

15.3 The Governors/Board of Trustees accept those engaged in caretaking, cleaning and lunchtime supervision will wear dress appropriate for their work.

15.4 Footwear should also be smart and safe. Shoes and not trainers should be worn for classroom activities (An exception is if teachers or other adults are involved in PE lessons — in which case it is appropriate for adults to wear sensible PE kit including trainers, please be mindful of where and when you get changed — it is very strongly suggested you use the staff facilities/toilets).

15.5 For safety reasons no flip flops to be worn and no inappropriately casual clothing should be worn including any items deemed to be too revealing or carrying logos that could be offensive in any way.

15.6 All attempts should be made to cover tattoos.

15.7 The Head Teacher is empowered to determine the standard of smartness that is acceptable.

15.8 Staff working in areas, where particular dress is necessary for health and safety reasons, must wear appropriate dress. Staff should note that it can be a criminal offence not to wear safety dress in certain situations. (e.g., headwear in kitchens, and hard hats in construction areas). Failing to wear the correct safety dress can amount to gross misconduct which could lead to dismissal. Refer to Health and Safety Policy.

15.9 Staff are permitted to wear religious symbols and ornaments, but the Governors/Board of Trustees expect these to be discreet and worn in a safe manner. The Head Teacher in consultation with the Governors/Board of Trustees is empowered to determine whether a particular symbol or ornament is sufficiently discreet and commensurate with health and safety standards.

This dress code refers to 'public facing' time. There will be occasions, including visits, INSET days and other events as determined by principals/headteachers, that this dress code does not apply.

16. Online Teaching Sessions

If it should be necessary to teach pupils remotely staff must adhere to the following points:

Teaching sessions must be facilitated through a secure system, e.g. Microsoft
TEA
M

- Sessions should ideally be in groups
- Staff and children must wear suitable clothing, as should anyone else in the household.
- Any computers used should be in appropriate areas, for example, not in bedrooms; and where possible be against a neutral background. Microsoft Teams has the facility to blur the background when on a video call.
- The live class should be recorded and backed up elsewhere.
- Language must be professional and appropriate, including any family members in the background

<u>1 to 1 virtual sessions</u>

Where these are deemed necessary the following must be in place:

- A clear rationale for the need for 1-1 sessions
- A risk assessment
- A code of conduct between the academy/teacher/pupil/parent
- Completion of a virtual teaching log

There will be other instances that occur in academy life that will need referral to the head teacher or governing body.

The contents of this policy should be read in conjunction with "Guidance for Safer Working Practices for Adults Working with Children and Young People in Education

Settings" Revised October 2015 by the Safer Recruitment Consortium from an original document by the DfE.

17.Complaints

Any complaints about the operation of this policy should be made at first to the Head Teacher. If not satisfied, the complainant may take their complaint to the Governors/Board of Trustees via the clerk to the Governors/Board of Trustees. The Governors/Board of Trustees decision will be final.

18. Disciplinary Action

All staff should recognise failure to meet these standards of behaviour and conduct may result in disciplinary action.