



**ANSFORD ACADEMY**

LEARNING TOGETHER TO LEAD OUR LIVES

# **Safeguarding and Personnel Policy Suite**

## **EMPLOYEE CODE OF CONDUCT**

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| <b>Status</b>            | <b>Statutory</b> |
| <b>Governors Adopted</b> | <b>July 2024</b> |
| <b>Renewal Period</b>    | <b>Yearly</b>    |
| <b>Review Due</b>        | <b>July 2025</b> |

# Employee Code of Conduct 2024-2025



**ANSFORD ACADEMY**  
LEARNING TOGETHER TO LEAD OUR LIVES

*We expect all staff, governors and volunteers to 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.*

## **Section 1: Introduction**

### **1 Legal and Professional Basis**

The Department for Education's (DfE's) statutory safeguarding guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023, sets out that all staff members should be aware of the standards expected through a code of conduct. In addition to this code of conduct, all staff employed under the teachers' terms and conditions must also adhere to the Teachers' Standards 2016 and to Part 2 of the Teachers' Standards: Personal and Professional Conduct (Appendix A).

### **2 Safeguarding and Child Protection Responsibilities**

All adults working at Ansford Academy should know the name of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), the named deputy DSLs, be familiar with local child protection arrangements, and understand their responsibilities to safeguard and protect young people.

### **3 Policies and Procedures**

All staff are expected to work in line with the other policies and procedures adopted by the Academy.

## **Section 2: Purpose**

- 1** The Academy's reputation and the trust and confidence of the community in its integrity is of vital importance. It must discharge its day to day responsibilities with openness and honesty. This code is designed to give clear guidance on the standards of behaviour expected of all staff working within the Academy. Academy staff are role models and are in a unique position of influence students. As a member of our community, each employee has an individual responsibility to maintain their personal reputation and that of the Academy, whether inside or outside of working hours.
- 2** This Code of Conduct applies to all staff that are employed and contracted to work for the Academy and should make clear to employees the expectations the Academy has of them. Employees should note that this code is not exhaustive in defining acceptable and unacceptable standards of conduct and employees must use common sense in adhering to the underpinning principles. If any employee is unsure what the expectations are in any given circumstance they should speak to their

line manager or the Headteacher. This Code of Conduct does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and it may be amended at any time.

### **Section 3: Underlying Principles**

- 1 This Code of Conduct is based on the following underlying principles:
  - a) The child's welfare is paramount (Children Act 1989); all adults in school are in a position of trust. All of us have a responsibility to maintain public confidence in our ability to safeguard the welfare and best interests of young people.
  - b) All adults working at Ansford should maintain an attitude of "it could happen here" as far as safeguarding is concerned.
  - c) Adults working in the Academy are responsible for their own action and behaviour and should avoid any conduct which would lead a reasonable person to question their motivation or intentions or bring the Academy into disrepute.
  - d) Adults working in the Academy must work and be seen to work in an open and transparent way.
  - e) Adults should discuss and/or take advice promptly from their line manager or another senior member of staff about any incident which could give rise to concern.
  - f) A record should be kept of any such incident and of decisions made/further actions agreed, in accordance with the Academy record keeping policy.
  - g) The same professional standards are applied regardless of gender or sexuality.
  - h) Adults should be aware that breaches of the law and other professional guidelines could result in criminal or disciplinary action being taken against them.
  - i) Staff should be aware of examples of behaviours which would be regarded as misconduct as listed in the Academy Disciplinary Procedure.
  - j) Staff should adopt an approach of "if in doubt, raise it". This includes personal or domestic issues which might give rise to questions being raised (e.g. by the press or on social media) about impact on your role in school: colleagues should raise any such concerns in confidence with the Headteacher.
  
- 2 Staff should take all reasonable precautions to avoid putting themselves at risk of allegations of unprofessional conduct. If they are concerned that they may have inadvertently acted in a way which contravenes any aspect of this Code of Conduct, they should discuss this with the Headteacher at the earliest opportunity, in order to safeguard students and protect their own professional integrity.

### **Section 4: Interactions with Students**

#### **1 Position of Trust and Professional Boundaries**

Staff must recognise the professional boundaries that must exist in their interactions with students and ensure that their relationships with students remain on a professional footing. Staff should:

- a) recognise that they are in a position of trust in relation to our students which means that the professional relationship between an employee and a student is not one of equals or of friendship. As such, staff do not need to 'get along with' students in order to be an effective teacher for them and should not alter the required standards or expected levels of behaviour to make students like them;

- b) maintain professional, formal workplace language with students, using preferred names and pronouns for students, refraining from the use of nicknames and addressing other staff by their full name i.e. Mr Smith, in front of students;
- c) not socialise with students outside of the Academy, unless it is part of an event organised by the Academy, ensuring that these out of hours activities (including 1:1 tuition) are organised in accordance with Academy guidelines on safeguarding;
- d) not make arrangements to contact, communicate or meet with students outside of work, including use of e-mail, text and other messaging systems;
- e) ensure that all communications with students are through official Academy channels (via school telephone, email or other Academy communication vehicle) except in the case of an emergency;
- f) not share details of personal social networking sites with children and young people, ensure that privacy settings are set at maximum, not invite students to become network 'friends' – including former students with younger siblings still at school and not accept attempts by students to establish social media contact;
- g) not meet students outside the Academy premises or on non-school days, unless as part of an organised Academy event
- h) exercise due professional care regarding out of hours and off-site contact with students who are friends of their own children or children of friends;
- i) only touch students for professional reasons, and when this is necessary and appropriate for the student's wellbeing or safety. More guidance on this is set out in school policies or guidelines on The Use of Reasonable Force, Personal /Intimate Care, Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, the DCSF Guidance for Safe Working Practice for Adults who Work with Children and Young People
- j) behave in a way that does not lead a reasonable observer to question their conduct, intentions or suitability to care for young people, avoiding behaviour which might be misinterpreted by others.
- k) take care if it is necessary to spend time with students on a one-to-one basis, ensuring that this takes place in a public place that others can access, or others can see in to the room or a colleague or line manager knows this is taking place.
- l) not develop 'personal' or sexual relationships with students. In particular your attention is drawn to the provisions of the Sexual Offences Act 2003, which creates a new criminal offence of abuse of a position of trust (when a person aged 18 or over is in a 'position of trust' with a person under 18 and engages in sexual activity with or in the presence of that young person or causes or incites that young person to engage in or watch sexual activity; this applies whether the young person consents or not).
- m) treat all students equally and not discriminate favourably or unfavourably towards any young person. For example, never: building 'special' relationships or conferring favour on particular students; arranging to meet students off site or out of hours; giving or receiving (other than a token) gifts, unless arranged through the Academy.
- n) immediately report to the Headteacher any report or indication, however small or seemingly insignificant, that a student has become or may be becoming infatuated with either themselves or a colleague. In this way appropriate early intervention can be taken which can prevent escalation and avoid hurt, embarrassment or distress for those concerned.

## 2 Model Behaviour

All staff who work in the Academy set examples of behaviour and conduct that can be copied by students. Therefore, it is important that staff set a good example and a positive role model to

students, behaving in a mature, respectful, safe, fair and considered manner and displaying high standards of conduct in order to encourage students to do the same. For example:

- Staff should maintain high standards in their attendance, punctuality and professional appearance
- Use professional language when talking to or about others (staff, students, families)
- Never use inappropriate or offensive language in school
- Treat pupils and others with dignity and respect, avoiding sarcasm and remarks or 'jokes' that are of a personal, sexual, racist, homophobic, discriminatory, intimidating or otherwise offensive nature.
- Avoid embarrassing or humiliating others, including shouting, unless it is deemed necessary to avoid harm, protect others or is an emergency
- Show tolerance and respect for the rights of others
- 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 will not exploit pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law
- Staff should not smoke on site
- Staff should not use mobile phones during lesson times.

Staff should model at all times the behaviour they expect to see from students, this includes working hard, refraining from gossip, saying please and thank you in dealings with colleagues, not airing grievances in public, providing calm responses to confrontation and treating others with respect, courtesy, empathy and patience.

## **Section 5: Staff Professional Conduct and Behaviour**

### **1 Honesty and Integrity**

Staff must maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their work. This includes the handling and claiming of money as well as the use of Academy property and facilities. Staff should familiarise themselves with the policy on whistleblowing (e.g. the disclosure of information which relates to suspected wrongdoing or dangers at work). This policy sets out procedures for any employee to raise concern about danger or illegality that affects others and do not fall within the scope of other specific policies.

### **2 Behaviour Towards Colleagues**

- a) Staff must behave in a courteous and respectful manner towards all colleagues, irrespective of position or status within the Academy. This includes publicly supporting colleagues and dealing with concerns privately with support if necessary. Staff should refrain from gossiping.
- b) It is completely unacceptable to bully, threaten or belittle colleagues; when speaking to colleagues we should treat them as we would want to be treated. Staff should never act in a way that publicly undermines a colleague, especially in front of students which includes criticising colleagues, explicitly or implicitly, in front of students or parents.
- c) Members of staff must respect the professional boundaries of colleagues where they are also a parent or carer of a child at the Academy. It is inappropriate to approach or challenge colleagues about one's own child outside the usual protocols for parental contact (email

from home, arranged parent – teacher meeting etc) or for a member of staff to use the work place to access parental contact where the parent/carer is also a member of staff. If in doubt about how to proceed, please seek advice from your line manager or a member of the senior leadership team.

- d) All staff are accountable for their own actions and performance, which may at times need to be challenged by leaders. All challenges should be given sensitively, constructively and shared only with those that need to know.

### **3 Out of School Conduct**

- a) Staff must not engage in conduct outside of work which could damage the reputation of the Academy, the employee or other members of the Academy community. Staff must inform the Headteacher of any such situation that could bring the Academy into disrepute.
- b) maintain the same professional standards in all Academy related settings e.g. on school trips, residential activities and social situations where staff are designated as being on duty.
- c) There must be NO consumption of alcohol by staff on any Academy activity involving students, residential or otherwise. This includes “off duty” times. Any potential exceptions to this for a particular situation (e.g. French or German exchanges when staff are staying with a host teacher) must be discussed in advance with the Headteacher.
- d) Staff who know current students in an out of Academy situation (i.e. children of friends or from their community) should ensure they maintain their professional integrity and standards of behaviour. Any concern felt by a member of staff (who has an existing link to a student) about this advice, should be raised with the Headteacher prior to accepting an offer of employment.

### **4 Communication**

- a) In situations where staff have social contact with parents and carers of our students, they must ensure that any communication about the student’s progress, behaviour or wellbeing at the Academy is conducted in a professional manner. As much as possible, colleagues should reach an understanding with parents and carers about professional boundaries in these situations.
- b) Staff should also be aware that written comments in emails or on social media may be regarded as written evidence and so care should be exercised when referring to students, parents or colleagues.

### **5 Acceptable Use of Technology**

- a) Staff must be fully aware if the Academy’s requirements for acceptable use of technologies i.e. school equipment will not at any time be used to view, download or store unsuitable content, including pornography and materials likely to incite hatred or discrimination.
- b) Staff must exercise caution when using information technology especially when using social networking sites. Any comments made that are likely to bring the Academy or students into disrepute will be deemed unacceptable behaviour.
- c) Comments regarding students or Academy business must not be made on social networking sites and staff who do so may be subject to disciplinary action. (Staff should refer to the E-safety policy for detailed guidance on this matter).
- d) Members of staff must not access internal information about their own child, or other children who are known to them outside of the Academy, without a professional reason to do so.

## **6 Professional Responsibilities**

- a) Staff are expected to arrive promptly in the Academy and attend the relevant briefing sessions.
- b) Staff are assigned duties when they are expected to supervise a particular area. Failure to carry out your duty is a disciplinary matter due to the potential health and safety implications.
- c) Staff should meet the deadlines set by other members of staff and recognise the impact they would have if deadlines are missed.
- d) Staff should ensure they are up to date with information and should check emails, SIMS information, pigeon holes and briefing notices daily to ensure they are aware of situations and events that will affect them.

## **7 Professional Appearance**

The students of the Academy wear a smart uniform based on business wear. Staff are role models to our students and the way in which staff present themselves is important and helps maintain a professional atmosphere. The Academy is a work place and casual clothing is not appropriate. Our expectation is that staff are smartly, decently, appropriately and professionally dressed in work at all times. For the avoidance of doubt the following are not permitted:

- clothes that are revealing or tight fitting (including strappy tops or skirts shorter than a hands width from the knee).
- clothing that allows underwear to be seen.
- clothing with any large non academy logos or writing.
- Leggings, unless worn with skirts / dresses as an alternative to tights.
- Clothing that is ripped or torn.
- Jeans (Estates and IT staff excluded because of the nature of their job).
- Flip flops are not acceptable due to being leisure/ beach wear and health and safety risks.
- High heeled shoes carry an additional health and safety risk and staff should be aware that personal injury caused whilst wearing such shoes will not be insurable and that will always be considered as a result of staff accepting personal liability. If staff choose to wear them, they must be of a style and colour suitable for work.

If an employee is unsure whether any item of clothing is inappropriate then they should not wear it to work. Employees can always speak to their line manager if they are unsure. Where we identify that an employee is wearing clothing that we do not find acceptable they will be informed.

Jewellery should be kept to a minimum in line with responsibilities towards health and safety of oneself and others.

## **8 Confidentiality**

Where staff have access to confidential information about students or their parents/carers, staff must not reveal such information except to those colleagues who have a professional role in relation to the student and for whom it is necessary that they are informed. All staff are likely to witness actions which need to be kept confidential; this needs to be reported and dealt with in accordance with the appropriate Academy procedures. It must not be discussed outside of the

Academy except with a senior member of staff with the appropriate role and authority to deal with the matter.

## **9 Data Protection**

The Academy holds and processes data that is protected under Data Protection legislation. Employees are expected to comply with the systems for collecting, storing and using data. If any employee becomes aware that data is at risk of compromise or loss, or has been compromised or lost they must report it immediately to the Business Manager. Staff should be aware that substantial personal and organisational fines are possible for non-adherence to procedures and legislation.

## **10 Photography**

Staff should never photograph or film students using their personal devices or mobile phones. Staff should ensure that parental permission is in place for any photographs or recordings to be made on school equipment.

## **11 Gifts and Hospitality**

For many of our employees there will be a limited circumstances where gifts and hospitality are given to them. However, all staff must be aware that it is not acceptable for staff to accept bribes. Therefore any gift, promotional offer or hospitality, intended either for the employee or for the Academy that exceeds a nominal value of £35.00 must be declared to the Headteacher and permission must be obtained before accepting. If an employee is ever unsure, then the best course of action is to politely decline the offer.

It is traditional for students and their parents or carers to give gifts as a small token of appreciation or as a thank you to members of staff at certain times throughout the academic year. This code is not designed to stop that practice. Staff may accept gifts from students and their parents or carers provided that they meet this definition.

Staff should make the Headteacher aware of any student who is giving them gifts on a regular basis, or any student or parent or carer who expects something in return for a gift, as this would not be acceptable. Staff should not give gifts to students unless this is part of a recognised practice in line with the academies behaviour policy.

## **12 Criminal Offences**

Staff are 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 an employee's employment is at risk. Employees must ensure that they:

- Uphold the law at work
- Never commit a crime away from work which could damage public confidence in them or the Academy or which makes them unsuitable for the work they do
- Write and tell the Headteacher immediately if they are questioned by the police, charged with, or convicted of, any crime whilst they are employed by the Academy (this includes outside of their working hours). The Headteacher and/or governors will then need to



consider whether this charge or conviction damages public confidence in Academy or makes the employee unsuitable to carry out their duties.

### **13 Other Employment**

Staff may undertake work outside of the Academy, either paid or voluntary, provided that it does not conflict with the interests of the Academy or affect an individual's work performance. If a member of staff is engaged in such an activity, they should notify the Headteacher.

### **14 Financial and Other Interests**

Employees must declare any financial and any other interests that they consider could bring about direct conflicts with the Academy's interests, including membership of any organisation not open to the public which requires of members any form of commitment or allegiance and which has secrecy about rules and membership

### **15 Political Neutrality**

All employees and volunteers of the Academy are required to act in a way that is politically neutral and must not allow their own personal or political opinions to interfere with the way in which they carry out their work or duty to implement the policies. Under the Education (No 2) Act 1986 the Governing Body and the Headteacher are required to ensure that where political issues are brought to the attention of students, they are offered a balanced presentation of opposing views.

### **16 Equal Opportunities**

The Academy is committed to ensuring equal opportunities in employment and provision of education and believes that an effective equal opportunities policy is an essential means of increasing the value of its personnel by developing the potential of all its individual employees.

The Academy's equal opportunities policy is designed to ensure that no employee or job applicant should receive less favourable treatment than another because of a protected characteristic as defined by the Equality Act 2010 i.e. age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

All employees and volunteers must comply with both the spirit and letter of the Equality Act and the Academy's equal opportunities policy and treat all members of the public and work colleagues with respect and fairness.

### **17 Health and Safety**

The Academy share a legal obligation to protect the health, safety and welfare at work of all its employees and others in the workplace. Equally, employees should at all times be aware of and fulfil their legal responsibility to protect their own and others health, safety and welfare at work. This legal obligation is supported by the Academy's health and safety policy.

### **18 Post-Employment**

The duty of fidelity which each employee owes to the Academy and which requires an employee to act in an honest fashion and not in a manner which will harm the Academy may, in certain respects, continue following the end of the employee's employment. For example, even though they are no longer employed by the Academy, a former employee must not disclose confidential information which belongs to the Academy. Certain employees may have access to intellectual property (such

as copyright and materials which belong to the Academy). An employee might even have contributed to the creation of that intellectual property during a period of employment. However, where part or whole of that property belongs to the Academy it cannot be used by a former employee for any purpose without the agreement of the Academy as appropriate

## APPENDIX A

### Teachers' Standards

#### Part Two: Personal and Professional Conduct

A teacher is expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct. The following statements define the behaviour and attitudes which set the required standard for conduct throughout a teacher's career.

Teachers uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside Academy, by:

- treating students with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to a teacher's professional position
- having regard for the need to safeguard students' 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 students' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law.

Teachers must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the Academy in which they teach, and maintain high standards in their own attendance and punctuality.

Teachers must have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities.