



Castleford Academy Trust

Code of Conduct Policy

Version No:	Date Ratified:	Review Date:
1.0	03.01.2023	03.01.2024



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Statement of intent

Castleford Academy Trust expects all of its pupils to receive the highest possible quality of teaching and learning within a positive and respectful environment.

Employees at our academies should understand that their own behaviour, and the manner in which they conduct themselves with their colleagues, pupils, parents/carers and other stakeholders, sets an example.

The Trust recognises that the majority of staff members act appropriately and treat each other with dignity and respect however, we consider it important to clarify the expected standards.

All adults who come into contact with children in their work have a duty of care to safeguard and promote their welfare. The Trust believes in creating a culture that is safe and inclusive. This code of conduct sets out key principles for the creation and maintenance of a safe academy culture and should be read in conjunction with the document 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (DFE 2022 – and any subsequent updates).

This document forms part of a staff member's contract of employment and failure to comply with it, and with the associated academy policies, may result in disciplinary action being taken, including legal action where this is warranted.

This document applies to all staff members who are:

- Employed by Castleford Academy Trust.
- Employed in units or bases that are attached to any academies within Castleford Academy Trust.

Objectives of a safe academy culture:

- To safeguard pupils and protect staff
- To make explicit expectations of performance and conduct
- To minimise opportunities for abuse
- For all staff to have confidence to report concerns with full confidentiality
- To respond promptly to concerns: we always investigate and address issues
- To exercise appropriate sanctions
- To create and maintain an ethos of mutual respect, openness and fairness

1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and regulations for Education and Working with Children.

This policy also has due regard to statutory guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' 2022 (and any updated versions amended after this policy is distributed)
- DfE 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' 2018 (and any updated versions amended after this policy is distributed)



2. Related Academy Policies

All staff are expected to follow the Trust policies in regard to all interactions in any of our academies.

This Staff Code of Conduct has due regard to the following Trust policies and procedures:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Dignity at Work Policy
- Equality & Diversity Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Leave of Absence Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Physical Restraint and use of Reasonable Force Policy
- ICT Acceptable Use (including E-safety) Policy

3. Safeguarding pupils

In accordance with 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' guidance, all staff members have a responsibility to safeguard pupils and protect their welfare.

All staff members have a responsibility to ensure that they provide a learning environment in which pupils feel safe, secure and respected.

In order to effectively safeguard pupils, staff members are required to be aware of and follow the procedures outlined in this Staff Code of Conduct and the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, ensuring that they do not act in a way that may put pupils at risk of harm, or lead others to question their actions.

All staff will be provided with a copy of the academy in which they are located Safeguarding policy annually.

In accordance with the Trust Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, staff members will be prepared to identify pupils who may be subject to, or at risk of, abuse and neglect, and will follow the necessary reporting and referral procedures.

Any staff member that has concerns about a staff member's actions or intent that may lead to a pupil being put at risk of harm will report this in line with the Whistleblowing Policy to the Headteacher immediately so appropriate action can be taken.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Safeguarding Lead for Child Protection at each academy is outlined in their individual Safeguarding Policy that is updated annually. Staff should also be made aware that there are other DLS's within our academies and this information should be displayed on location.

All teaching staff should maximise opportunities arising from the curriculum to develop a proactive approach to behaviour and child protection issues.



All staff should take a proactive approach towards both child protection and behaviour policies, through the creation of a positive classroom environment.

4. Appearance and dress

The Trust expects that staff members will:

- Ensure that their appearance is clean and neat when at work or representing the Trust.
- Dress in a manner that is appropriate to their role and not overly casual.
- Remember that they are role models for pupils, and that their dress and appearance should reflect this.
- Not dress in a way that would cause embarrassment to pupils, parents/carers, colleagues or other stakeholders.
- Not wear clothing that could be viewed as offensive or has political/contentious slogans.
- Cover any tattoos or body art whilst in the academy; small earrings are acceptable, but all other body piercings must be removed.
- Keep jewellery to a bare minimum for health and safety reasons and to support our expectations for the children.
- Wear shoes that are appropriate to protect their feet in the relevant working environment (elaborate straps or flip flops are not deemed appropriate footwear for the working environment).
- Avoid extreme hair colours or styles- (hair should be of a natural colour).

5. Attendance

The Trust expects that staff members will:

- Attend work in accordance with their contract of employment and associated terms and conditions in relation to hours, days of work and holidays.
- Make routine medical and dental appointments outside of their working hours or during holidays, where possible.
- Refer to the Leave of Absence Policy if they need time off for any reason other than personal illness.
- Follow the absence reporting procedure when they are absent from work due to illness or injury.

6. Professional behaviour and conduct

- All staff are expected to behave professionally and exercise confidentiality.
- All staff are expected to behave thoughtfully and responsibly.
- Staff should be punctual and well-prepared, and should carry out tasks to the best of their ability, taking pride in their work.
- Staff members are expected to treat other colleagues, pupils, parents/carers, and external contacts with dignity and respect.
- Relationships between staff should be characterised by fairness, openness and respect. This means valuing all contributions, acknowledging difference, and working together to build a climate of continuous improvement.

Politeness and respect are essential ingredients: where differences occur, they should be dealt with calmly and fairly.

- The use of foul and abusive language will not be tolerated.
- Staff should seek to establish a good and open relationship with parents



- Staff should aim to create a welcoming and open relationship with parents. All parental concerns should be treated seriously and dealt with promptly.
- Discrimination, bullying, harassment or intimidation, including physical, sexual and verbal abuse, will not be tolerated.
- Staff members will not misuse or misrepresent their position, qualifications or experience, or bring the Trust into disrepute.
- Staff members will inform the Headteacher of their academy if they are subject to a criminal conviction, caution, ban, police enquiry, investigation or pending prosecution.

7. Conduct outside of work

Staff may undertake work outside of the Trust, either paid or voluntary, provided that it does not conflict with the interests of the Trust or academy in which they work. The nature of the work cannot be seen to bring the Trust into disrepute, nor be at a level which may contravene the working time regulations or affect an individual's work performance (see individual contracts for further details).

Staff will not engage in outside work which could seriously damage the reputation and standing of the Trust or the employee's own reputation, or the reputation of other members of the academy community. In particular, criminal offences that involve violence, possession or use of illegal drugs or sexual misconduct are unacceptable.

The use of facilities (e.g. telephone, photocopier, typist) for unofficial purposes is forbidden unless appropriate arrangements are made and approval given.

Staff will not engage in inappropriate use of social network sites which may bring themselves, the academy, academy community or employer into disrepute (this is explored further in section 18).

8. Smoking, alcohol and other substances

Please see the 'Smoking and other Substances at Work Policy' for full information.

Staff and visitors are not permitted to smoke within any of our academy buildings or on our academy grounds. This includes the use of e- cigarettes. Staff are not permitted to smoke in or on any part of the academy sites.

All premises belonging to the Trust including offices, function rooms, all areas of the buildings and grounds, are to be designated smoke free environments. Important note: smoking will not be allowed at entrances and exits to any of the academy's buildings or grounds. This includes the use of e- cigarettes.

Staff will not smoke whilst working with or supervising pupils off-site, such as when on educational visits and trips.

The taking of illegal drugs or alcohol during working hours is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Staff members must never attend work under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.



If alcohol or drug usage impacts on a staff member's performance, the Trust has the right to discuss the matter with the employee and take appropriate action in accordance with the academy's disciplinary procedures, including referral to the police.

9. Health and safety

Staff members will:

- Be familiar with and adhere to the Health and Safety Policy, and ensure that they take every action to keep themselves and everyone in the academy environment safe and well.
- Comply with health and safety regulations and use any safety equipment and protective clothing which is supplied to them.
- Comply with hygiene requirements.
- Comply with accident reporting requirements.
- Inform the Headteacher of any paid work which is undertaken elsewhere, for compliance with The Working Time Regulations 1998 (as amended).

10. Declaration of interests

Staff members are required to declare their interests, both personal and financial, where the group or organisation they are affiliated with would be considered to be in conflict with the ethos of the Trust.

For the purpose of this policy, a financial conflict of interest is one where there is, or appears to be, opportunity for personal financial gain, financial gain for close relatives or friends, or where it may be reasonable for a third party to take the view that financial benefits may affect an individual's actions.

The term 'financial interest' means anything of monetary value, including:

- Payments for services
- Equity interests
- Intellectual property rights
- Hospitality or gifts

Examples of financial interests that must be declared include, but are not limited to, equity interests in services considered for use by the academy.

Non-financial conflicts of interest can also come into conflict, or be perceived to come into conflict, with an individual's obligations or commitments to the Trust. These interests may include any benefit or advantage, including but not limited to, direct or indirect enhancement of an individual's career, or gain for immediate family or someone with whom the individual has a close relationship.

Examples of situations that could give rise to non-financial conflicts of interest include the following:

- Pressure or temptation to accept gifts, inducements or hospitality
- Participating in the appointment, hiring, promotion, supervision or evaluation of a person with whom the individual has a close personal relationship
- Where a member of staff has or develops a close personal relationship with a colleague

Membership to a trade union or staff representative group does not need to be declared.



Staff members will also carefully consider whether they need to declare their relationship with any individual where this might cause a conflict with academy activities:

- Any employment or business that is conducted in addition to work at any of our academies.
- Any close involvement with companies
- Involvement in contracts
- If they are a governor or trustee of an educational establishment.
- Any beneficial interests of land or property
- Membership of a secret society (i.e. any lodge, chapter, society, trust or regular gathering which is not open to members of the public who are not members, require members to make a commitment of allegiance and/or includes a commitment to secrecy in regard to the rules).

Failure to make a relevant declaration of interests is a very serious breach of trust and, therefore, if employees are in doubt about a declaration, they are advised to contact the individual academy or trade union.

All declarations should be submitted in writing to the Headteacher for inclusion on the Register of Business Interests.

11. Separation of Roles During Tendering

Employees in contractor or clients units must exercise fairness and impartiality when dealing with all customers, suppliers, other contractors and sub-contractors.

Employees who are privy to confidential information on tenders or costs for either internal or external contractors should not disclose that information to any unauthorised party or organisation.

Employees should ensure that no special favour is shown to current or recent former employees or their partners, close relatives or associates in awarding contracts to business run by them or employing them in a senior or relevant managerial capacity.

12. Relationships with pupils

The Trust expects that staff will:

- Maintain professional boundaries and relationships with pupils at all times, and will consider whether their actions are warranted, proportionate, safe and necessary.
- Act in an open and transparent way that would not lead to others questioning their actions.
- Ensure that they do not establish social contact with pupils for the purpose of securing a friendship, or to pursue or strengthen a relationship.
- Ensure that they do not develop personal or sexual relationships with pupils; this includes sexual remarks and discussing their own sexual relationships with, or in the presence of, pupils.
- Only contact pupils via the individual academy's established mechanisms; personal phone numbers, email addresses or social media platforms will not be used to contact pupils.

Social contact with pupils, children or young people.

- Staff must not establish or seek to establish social contact with pupils, children or young people for the purpose of securing a friendship or to pursue or strengthen a relationship.



13. Managing Pupil behaviour

Pupils and staff are expected to work together to build a Trust whose relationships are characterised by mutual and appropriate respect.

Praise and building on the positive should always come first.
Where firmness is called for this should be exercised calmly.

Please see the individual academy's Behaviour Policy and associated documents for full information. These documents establish expectations and approved sanctions and any behaviour concerns should be dealt with in line with them.

Where a member of staff is having difficulties managing pupil behaviour, they should discuss this matter with their line manager or a Senior Leader at the earliest opportunity.

14. Physical contact with pupils

The Trust understands that there are circumstances in which it is entirely necessary for staff to have physical contact with pupils, e.g. when applying first aid and assisting with intimate care, but staff will only do so in a professional and appropriate manner in line with relevant individual academy policies.

When physical contact is made with pupils, it is imperative that it is conducted in a way which is responsive to the pupil's needs, is of limited duration and is appropriate to their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background.

Staff will seek the pupil's permission, where possible, before initiating contact.

Staff will always use their professional judgement when determining what physical contact is appropriate, as this may differ between pupils. As such, the pupil's feelings and wishes will always be taken into account.

All staff should be aware of what physical contact with pupils is appropriate

Staff should only exercise physical restraint as a last resort to prevent injury or harm (see Physical Restraint and Reasonable Force Policy).

Staff are allowed to comfort a child who is hurt/distressed in a manner appropriate to the age of the child. Holding children's hands is generally appropriate in Key Stage 1, or when attempting to calm or reassure a child. However, adults should not initiate any physical contact unnecessarily, and there should be clear boundaries:

Children should not be picked up. (unless medically necessary or being restrained).

Children should not sit on an adult's laps.

Children should be discouraged from hugging adults.



Adults should avoid being in a room alone with a child where the door is closed. If an adult needs to talk to a child, they should either leave a door open and position themselves within sight of the door, or ask another adult to be present.

Staff will never touch a pupil in a way which is indecent, and will always be prepared to explain their actions.

Staff will be aware that even well-intentioned physical contact may be misconstrued by a pupil, an observer or by anyone to whom this action is described and, therefore, will be prepared to justify their actions.

Staff will not engage in rough play, tickling or fun fights with pupils.

Extra caution will be taken where it is known that a pupil has previously suffered from abuse or neglect.

Physical contact will never be secretive; if a member of staff believes an action could be misinterpreted, this will be reported to the DSL and appropriate procedures will be followed.

Where it is necessary in practical classes for teachers to demonstrate use of equipment, this will be conducted with another member of staff if possible; if a pupil is required to participate, their consent will be given before doing so.

If a child is in distress and in need of comfort or reassurance, staff may use age-appropriate physical contact, such as placing their hand on the pupil's shoulder. Staff will remain self-aware of their actions at all times and ensure that their contact is not threatening, intrusive or subject to misinterpretation.

Staff may also use reasonable force as a means of physical contact with pupils for restraint purposes; such instances will always be in accordance with the Physical Restraint and use of Reasonable Force Policy.

15. Showering and changing

Pupils are entitled to respect and privacy whilst they are changing before/after PE; however, a level of supervision is required to ensure that pupils are safe, and that they are not subjected to bullying.

The supervision will be appropriate to the needs and ages of the pupils, and sensitive to the potential for embarrassment.

Staff will announce their intention of entering the changing room to allow pupils to maintain their privacy.

Staff will never change or shower in the same area as pupils.

16. Transporting pupils

When it is necessary to transport pupils off-site, staff will ensure that the transport arrangements of the vehicle meet all legal requirements, they have an appropriate license, and the vehicle is roadworthy, has a valid MOT certificate and is insured.



Staff will gain consent from parents/carers before transporting pupils, and will be aware that the welfare of all pupils in the vehicle is their responsibility.

Staff should not transport pupils alone, at least one other member of staff or pupil will be present in the vehicle to avoid any discrepancy regarding safeguarding concerns.

17. Finance and Resources

All staff have a responsibility to look after the resources of the Trust and should treat resources responsibly, and exercise due financial care.

This includes: not wasting resources unnecessarily (including physical resources and those such as heat/electricity); following the principles of 'reduce, re-use, recycle' where appropriate.

Staff should not handle money from pupils. All payments should be processed through student support or the appropriate channel. Those staff permitted to handle money need to be aware of the individual academy guidelines for handling money, and are expected to follow these. VAT receipts should be provided for items bought for the Trust or any academy use if possible.

Financial inducements

Staff members will:

- Familiarise themselves and comply with the Trust financial regulations.
- Declare to the board of trustees and governing body, in writing, any gifts received, with the exception of:
 - Low cost, functional items suitable for business rather than personal use and displaying the supplier's logo – these items may be accepted.
 - Gifts offered by parents/carers or pupils to academy staff to express their gratitude, but staff members should always refuse monetary gifts.
 - Hospitality in the form of meals and drinks where it is part of a normal business meeting.
 - Authorised visits to exhibitions, demonstrations, conferences, business meals and social functions in connection with the academy or Trust business, which shall be at the Trust expense.
- Not accept a personal gift, payment, or other incentive from a business contact – any such gifts should be returned.
- Declare any gift that cannot be returned to the board of trustees and governing body, who will decide how it will be used.
- Only accept offers to specific events after authorisation from the Headteacher.

18. E-safety

Staff will adhere to the procedures outlined in the E-safety Policy and ICT Acceptable Use Agreement at all times.

Staff are required to employ the highest security settings on any personal profiles they may have.

Staff will not engage in inappropriate use of social networking sites; this includes contacting pupils or their family members, accepting or inviting friend requests from pupils or their family members, or following pupils or their family members on social media.



The Trust understands that some staff members are also parents/carers of pupils at our academies and, therefore, may wish to make contact with other parents/carers. When doing so, staff will exercise their professional judgement and will not contact family members on social media if this would lead to a conflict of interest.

Staff will remain mindful of their use of social media and their web-based presence; this includes written content, videos or photographs, and views expressed directly or indirectly which may bring themselves, the Trust or the Trust community into disrepute. This also extends to use of Social Networking sites.

19. Social Networking Websites

Members of staff must not have any contact with pupils, children or young people through such sites and staff must not add pupils, children or young people as friends or respond to requests for friendship from children if asked. If a member of staff suspects that an existing friend is a student, child or young person, they should take reasonable steps to check the identity of the individual and end the friendship should the suspicions not be put to rest.

It is recognised that personal access to Social Networking sites outside the work environment is at the discretion of the individual however members of staff should consider their use of social networks as they take on the responsibilities of a professional, taking particular care to secure personal information and ensure their use of such networking sites is respectable and appropriate.

Secure and suitable strength passwords should be devised and security settings should be applied so access to your profile and the information contained is limited to those explicitly given access.

Personal profiles on social networking sites and other internet posting forums must not identify your employer or place of work and careful consideration should be given to information which is published on such sites. For example, information which is confidential or could put others at risk should not be posted on such public domains.

If the material you post or display is considered inappropriate or could be considered to bring the academy, trust or profession into disrepute, disciplinary action may be considered.

20. Contact with the Press and Media

Unless specifically nominated and authorised by the Governing Body, staff are not permitted to give reports or speak to the press and media on matters relating to employment at any Academy, its business or decisions of the Governing Body or Trust. The Headteacher is responsible for dealing with the press and media (other employees may be specifically nominated by them). Employees with this responsibility should guard themselves against declaring a view which is contrary to a position taken by the Governing Body or Trust and which may be deemed to be critical of that decision.

Nothing in this Code is intended to inhibit or restrict the reasonable and legitimate role of trade union representatives but they are bound, in carrying out their role, to honour the intent of the Code. No representative should use unauthorised information in their union roles.



21. Premises, equipment and communication

Trust equipment and systems are available only for academy-related activities and will not be used for the fulfillment of another job or for personal use, unless specifically authorised.

Illegal, inappropriate or unacceptable use of equipment or communication systems may result in disciplinary action and, in serious cases, could lead to an employee's dismissal.

Employees receiving inappropriate communication or material, or who are unsure about whether something he/she proposes to do might breach this policy, should seek advice from the Headteacher

The Trust reserves the right to monitor emails, phone calls, internet activity or document production, principally in order to avoid offensive or nuisance material and to protect systems from viruses, but also to ensure proper and effective use of systems.

Communication systems may be accessed when the Trust suspects that the employee has been misusing systems or facilities, or for the investigation of suspected fraud or other irregularity. Access will be secured by the IT Systems Manager, only with the permission of the Headteacher.

Passwords should not be shared and access to computer systems must be kept confidential except on the express request of the Headteacher. Breach of this confidentiality may be subject to disciplinary action.

Trust equipment that is used outside the premises, e.g. laptops, will be returned to the academy when the employee leaves employment, or if requested to do so by the Headteacher

The use of any personal equipment in any academy should always be with the prior permission of senior management in order to comply with health and safety regulations and members of staff should take care to comply with Acceptable Use and IT policies.

Personal mobile phones should not be visible or used during teaching hours. Staff should seek prior agreement with Senior Management should they need to access their mobile phone.

Mobile phones may be used at break times in a discrete manner.

22. Photography and videos

Photographs and videos will only be taken using academy equipment – using personal mobile phones for this purpose is prohibited.

Consent will be obtained from parents/carers and pupils in the event of any images or videos of pupils which the academy wishes to use, e.g. to publish on the website.

The wishes of the pupil will also be taken into account when taking images or videos, ensuring that those who do not wish to have their photograph taken or be filmed are respected.

Images of children must not be created or stored for personal use.

Members of staff must:



- be clear about the purpose of the activity and about what will happen to the photographs when the lesson/activity is concluded
- ensure that senior management is aware that photography/image equipment is being used and for what purpose
- ensure that all images are available for scrutiny in order to screen for acceptability
- be able to justify images of children in their possession
- avoid making images in one to one situations

Line Managers will always be notified of the proposed use of the imagery or video and the equipment, and ensure that the use of such is included in lesson plans where this is necessary.

All photographs and videos will be available for scrutiny, and staff will be prepared to justify the images or footage taken.

Careful consideration will always be given to the activities which are being filmed or photographed, in order to ensure that images or videos are not indecent and cannot be misused.

23. Data protection and confidentiality

Staff members are required, under the Data Protection Act 1998 (and subsequent updates), to collect, maintain and dispose of sensitive or personal data in a responsible manner.

Staff members will not disclose sensitive information about the trust, the academies or its employees to other parties.

Staff should exercise due confidentiality towards matters that are either discussed or overheard.

The only exception whereby it is acceptable for a staff member to disclose information which would otherwise be considered confidential is when the confidential information gives rise to concerns about the safety or welfare of a pupil.

Staff members have the right to request access to data that is held about them; such requests will be made to the Headteacher in writing, in accordance with the Data Protection Policy.

24. Probity of Records

The deliberate falsification of documents, such as references, academic qualifications or legal documents, is unacceptable. Where a staff member falsifies records or other documents, including those held electronically, this will be regarded as a serious disciplinary matter and potentially a criminal offence.

25. Whistleblowing

All staff need to be aware of how to record/report concerns

Where staff have any concerns about another member of staff, these should be reported immediately to their line manager, or directly to the Headteacher or Senior Leaders. Where the concern is about the line manager, this should be reported to Headteacher or Senior Leaders. Concerns about the Headteacher should be reported to the Chair of Governors and Trustees.

All concerns will be investigated thoroughly and confidentially, and appropriate action taken.



Please see the Whistleblowing Policy for full information

26. Wellbeing

All staff are encouraged to look after their physical and mental wellbeing. This includes maintaining a healthy work-life balance.

The academy takes reports of stress very seriously, and will seek to provide appropriate support and help in these cases.

Please see the Wellbeing Policy for full information.

27. Contacts

Staff members shall not use Trust business contacts for acquiring materials or services at trade/discount prices for non-academy activities, unless participating in concessionary schemes arranged by trade unions or other such groups.

28. Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis and any changes made will be communicated to all members of staff.

All members of staff are required to familiarise themselves with this policy as part of their induction programme.

Signed by Employee/Associate/Contractor:

Print Name:

Date:
