



L.E.A.D. Academy Trust
Lead • Empower • Achieve • Drive

L.E.A.D. Staff Code of Conduct



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1. Introduction

This document is written to assist staff and should be considered alongside all other appropriate L.E.A.D. Academy Trust policies. For links to these Trust policies, please see [Section 24](#).

All staff who are employed under Teacher terms and conditions of employment also have a statutory obligation to adhere to national Teachers' Standards which can be found using the following link: (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teachers-standards>).

2. Purpose, scope & principles

All members of staff should be aware of the standards of conduct expected of them by their employer. Although it is impossible to lay down rules to cover all eventualities, this Code sets out the key areas where concerns are likely to arise and staff awareness is necessary. The Code applies to all staff working in academies including any staff bases or units associated with the Trust.

Failure to observe the provisions of the Code may result in consideration of action under disciplinary procedures. Should this occur, a full review of all the relevant facts and circumstances of the case will be undertaken in accordance with the principles of natural justice and following agreed procedures in line with the Trust Disciplinary Policy.

Whilst not employed by the Trust, we expect all other visitors, agency workers and others employed through third parties on our sites to have regard for the Trust Code of Conduct whilst working on our premises.

3. Leading by example

All staff working within any Trust location are expected to set a positive example in relation to behaviour and conduct with other staff and our pupils. All staff should consider their role and behaviours to avoid putting themselves at risk of allegations of abusive or unprofessional conduct.

All staff must embrace and promote a diverse and inclusive working and learning environment. This will allow for differences to be valued and respected. All staff are expected to treat others with mutual respect and dignity at all times.

Staff must not discriminate, harass or victimise another person because they have or are perceived to have a protected characteristic as defined by the Equality Act 2010 including:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage or Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy or maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

This means that staff must:

- Be attentive of their conduct and use of language so it is not considered to be inappropriate or offensive and/or deemed a breach of the professional standards specified in Trust policies.
- Undertake regular training to ensure their awareness of the up-to-date requirements is maintained.
- Be familiar with the requirements under the statutory provisions of *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE)* and annually sign to acknowledge Part 1 of this document.
- Be willing to report potential misconduct by another staff member at work that falls below the standards expected. Please refer to the Managing Allegations Against Staff Policy for more information.

4. Conduct outside of work

Staff should be aware that they must not engage in activities outside of the workplace which may damage the reputation of the academy or the Trust. This includes criminal offences e.g. acts of violence, the use of illegal drugs or sexual misconduct.

Staff should also have caution for their own personal use of social media and IT, being aware of the risks to themselves. Further details are included within the IT Acceptable Usage Policy; however, even where an individual's personal accounts do not directly attribute them to the academy or Trust, any comments or affiliations considered inappropriate may be investigated in relation to conduct.

Subject to disclosure to the academy or Trust, staff may undertake work outside of their normal working time, either paid or voluntary, on the basis that this does not conflict with the interests of their paid role or would contravene working time regulations. No other work activity should impact on a staff member's ability to undertake their role to the highest standards and expectations.

5. Social contact outside of the workplace

Staff are expected to declare any relationships they may have with academy pupils outside of school including mutual membership of social groups, tutoring, out of school activities (e.g. sports clubs, scouting associations) or family connections. It is acknowledged that staff may have genuine friendships and social contact with colleagues and parents of pupils, independent of the professional relationship. Staff should always declare these relationships to ensure that any potential conflict of interest, whether in relation to the requirements of safeguarding, financial interest or personal relationships, can be properly assessed by the line manager. Staff should not assume that the academy is aware of any connections and should disclose these to the line manager.

This means that staff should:

- Understand how to raise a concern and to contact designated staff or partner agencies if they have a concern about a child, particularly if the normal arrangements have been amended.
- Always act, and be seen to act, in the child's best interests.
- Avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions.
- Take responsibility for their own actions and behaviour.
- Always declare any potential contact that could be deemed a conflict of interest via a [Declaration of Interest Form](#) so this can be carefully considered and, if necessary, risk assessed by the line manager.

E.g.

- A situation in which a person is in a position to derive personal benefit from actions or decisions made in their official capacity. This may apply where a family member or close contact is employed at the Trust or another Trust or is a supplier.
- Regular social contact with a pupil, parent or colleague or where contact could be deemed to extend beyond the usual day to day professional relationship.
- Any requests or arrangements where parents wish to use their services outside of the workplace e.g., babysitting, tutoring.

6. Use of technology when communicating

Staff should ensure that they establish safe and responsible online behaviours, working to local and national guidelines and acceptable use policies which detail how to safely and appropriately harness the benefits of both existing and new or emerging technologies. Staff should refer to the Online Safety Policy for further details including the use of social networks and online gaming sites. Staff should be conscious of their visibility online and when using online platforms, should mitigate any risk that they could be communicating with students or other children.

Staff should not give their personal contact details to children, for example, mail address, home or mobile telephone numbers or details of web-based identities. If children locate these by any other means and attempt to contact or correspond with the staff member, the adult should not respond and must report the matter to the appropriate Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

Staff should adhere to Trust policies, including those with regard to communication with media, colleagues, parents and carers and the information they share when using the internet.

This means that staff should:

- Not seek to communicate/make contact with or respond to contact with pupils outside of the purposes of their work.
- Not give out their personal details.
- Follow the Trust Acceptable Use Policy and online safety guidance.
- Ensure that their use of technologies could not bring their employer into disrepute.
- Not discuss or share data relating to colleagues/children/parents/carers in staff social media groups.

7. Conduct in relation to pupils

School-based staff act *in loco parentis* in respect of pupils in their charge as set out in the Children's Act 2004 and must act in the role of a reasonable parent in the academy context.

Through their actions, staff must act in accordance with this duty of care to always ensure that the safety and welfare of pupils is accorded the highest priority. In this and other ways staff should always maintain standards of conduct which sustain their professional standing and that of the academy.

Interaction with pupils should always be appropriate to their age and gender and always mindful of any adjustments that may be required for SEND purposes. Staff should not touch pupils, however casually, in ways or on parts of the body that might be considered indecent, unnecessary or familiar and must not use

inappropriate language. Particular care may be necessary when supervising pupils who are particularly vulnerable, and when engaged in out of academy activities with any pupils.

Teaching materials should be appropriate to the age and ability of pupils.

When holding meetings with pupils on sensitive issues, staff should exercise proper professional judgement over the arrangements for the meeting. They should safeguard their own position by, for instance, considering the need for a second adult to be present and/or ensuring the meeting takes place in a visible area of the academy.

8. Conduct in relation to the Trust or academy

All staff should adopt high standards of personal conduct in order to maintain the confidence and respect of their colleagues, pupils, parents and the public in general.

An individual's behaviour, either in or out of the workplace, should not compromise their position within the work setting. It is important to exercise due care and attention when outside of the Trust or academy environment.

Membership of an organisation, outside of the work setting, whose goals conflict with Trust values and equality policies is not permitted.

This means that staff should not:

- Behave in a manner which would lead any reasonable person to question their professional standards or integrity.
- Breach any standards that are specific to an education setting.

Staff must:

- Be aware that their behaviour, both in and out of the workplace, could compromise their position within the Trust in relation to the protection of children, loss of trust and confidence or bringing the Trust into disrepute and may lead to disciplinary action being taken against them.

9. Use of alcohol, medication and smoking

All staff and volunteers, whilst carrying out their duties for and on behalf of the Trust, must not be under the influence of alcohol or any other substance which may affect their ability to undertake their role to the standard required and in line with all the relevant Health & Safety requirements. If staff are taking any medication which may affect their ability to do so, they must report this to their line manager. In cases where further advice may be required, please contact HR.

This means that staff and volunteers should:

- Inform their line manager if they need to take any medication which may affect their ability to undertake their role safely and/or to the standard required.
- Store any medication safely, if required to take it whilst at work.
- Not smoke or vape on site or near Trust or academy grounds and not whilst representing the Trust e.g. at an external meeting or training event, or on a school trip/residential.

10. Gifts

Staff should be aware of the Trust's Finance Policy regarding arrangements for the declaration of gifts received and given. Staff need to take care that they do not accept any gift that might be construed as a bribe by others or lead the giver to expect preferential treatment.

11. Infatuations

Staff need to be aware that it is not uncommon for pupils or even colleagues to become attracted to a member of staff and/or develop an infatuation. Staff should make every effort to ensure that their own behaviour cannot be brought into question and does not appear to encourage this and should be aware that such infatuations may carry a risk of their words or actions being misinterpreted and for allegations to be made against staff.

A member of staff who becomes aware that a pupil or colleague may be infatuated with them should sensitively raise this matter at the earliest opportunity with a senior colleague so that appropriate action can be taken. In this way, steps can be taken to avoid the potential for hurt and distress for all concerned.

Any plan should respond sensitively to those involved and should involve all relevant parties, be robust and regularly monitored and reviewed.

This means that staff should:

- Report to senior colleagues any indications (verbal, written or physical) that suggest a pupil or colleague may be infatuated with a member of staff.
- Be mindful if they are alone in a room with the other individual, and leave the door open if necessary.
- Maintain the dignity of all by developing a plan to involve all parties, with regular monitoring.

12. Physical contact

There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate for staff to have physical contact with pupils or other colleagues, but it is crucial that they only do so in ways appropriate to their professional role and in relation to the individual's needs and, with pupils, in line with any agreed care plan.

Staff should use their professional judgement at all times about the appropriateness of any physical contact, considering the protected characteristics and such contact should be proportionate to the circumstances e.g. if there is a need to administer first aid or modelling in PE.

When dealing with pupils their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background should always be carefully considered. When physical contact is made, this should be in response to their needs at the time, of limited duration and appropriate to the circumstances. Younger children may have different needs in this regard however professional boundaries should always be considered.

Physical contact should never be secretive, or for the gratification of the adult, or represent a misuse of authority. If a member of staff believes that an action by them or a colleague could be misinterpreted, or if an action is observed which is possibly abusive, the incident and circumstances should be immediately reported to the Headteacher and recorded. Where appropriate, the Headteacher should consult with the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

This means that staff should:

- Report non-planned physical contact in line with academy policy
- Be aware that even well-intentioned physical contact may be misconstrued by a colleague or pupil, an observer or by anyone to whom this action is described.
- Never touch a colleague or pupil in a way which may be considered indecent.
- Always be prepared to explain actions and accept that all physical contact is open to scrutiny.
- Always allow/encourage pupils, where able, to undertake self-care tasks independently.
- Ensure the way they offer comfort to a distressed pupil is age-appropriate and always tell a colleague when and how they offered comfort to a distressed pupil.
- Always explain to the pupil the reason why contact is necessary and what form that contact will take.

This means that the Trust or academy should:

- Ensure they have a system in place for recording serious incidents and the means by which information about incidents and outcomes can be easily accessed by senior leadership.
- Provide staff, on a "need to know" basis, with relevant information about vulnerable students in their care.

13. Behaviour management

All staff and pupils have the right to be treated with respect and dignity. Staff should not use any form of degrading or humiliating treatment to punish a pupil or when dealing with a colleague. The use of humour can defuse a situation; however the use of sarcasm, demeaning or insensitive comments towards children or colleagues is not acceptable in any situation. Please refer to the Academy Behaviour Management Policy for further details relating to children.

14. One-to-one situations with pupils

Adults working in one-to-one situations with pupils at the setting, can be more vulnerable to allegations or complaints. To safeguard both pupils and adults, a risk assessment in relation to the specific nature and implications of one-to-one work should always be undertaken. Each assessment should take into account the individual needs of each pupil and should be reviewed regularly. Arranging to meet with pupils from the academy or setting away from the work premises should not be permitted unless the necessity for this is clear and approval is obtained from a senior member of staff, the pupil and their parents/carers.

Where staff are expected to work one to one with a pupil on a virtual platform, [clear expectations](#) should be set out for all of those involved that are reflective of the setting's safeguarding policies and procedures.

This means that staff should:

- Avoid meetings with pupils in remote, secluded areas of the academy.
- Ensure there is visual access and/or an open door in one-to-one situations. If this is not possible, a second member of staff should be in attendance.
- Inform other staff of the meeting beforehand, assessing the need to have them present or close by.
- Avoid use of 'engaged' or equivalent signs wherever possible. Such signs may create an opportunity for secrecy or the interpretation of secrecy.

- Always report any situation where a pupil/student becomes distressed or angry to a senior colleague.
- Consider the needs and circumstances of the pupil/student involved.

15. Transporting children

In certain situations, staff or volunteers may be required or offer to transport pupils as part of their work. As for any other activity undertaken at work, an SLT member or staff member with delegated responsibility has a duty to carry out a [risk assessment](#) covering the health and safety of their staff, to ensure appropriate insurance is in place and to manage any known risks.

16. Home visits

All work with pupils, parents and staff should usually be undertaken in the academy or setting or other recognised workplace. There are, however, occasions in response to an urgent, planned or specific situation or job role, where it is necessary to make one-off or regular home visits; e.g., to undertake a welfare visit. It is essential that appropriate policies and related risk assessments are in place to safeguard both staff and pupils, who can be more vulnerable in these situations.

A risk assessment should be undertaken prior to any planned home visit taking place. The assessment should include an evaluation of any known factors regarding the pupil, parents/carers and any others living in the household. Consideration should be given to any circumstances which might render the staff member becoming more vulnerable to an allegation being made, e.g. hostility, child protection concerns, complaints or grievances.

Specific thought should be given to visits outside of 'office hours' or in remote or secluded locations. Following the assessment, appropriate risk management measures should be put in place before the visit is undertaken. In the unlikely event that little or no information is available, visits should not be made alone.

This means that staff should:

- Agree the purpose for any home visit with their manager and adhere to agreed risk assessments.
- Have a clear understanding of the actions that should be taken if it is believed that a pupil, parent or colleague is at immediate risk of harm, including when to contact emergency services and / or partner agencies.
- With regard to pupils, never enter a home without the parent or carer's consent or when the parent is absent, except in an emergency.
- Always make detailed records including times of arrival and departure.
- Ensure any behaviour or situation which gives rise to concern is discussed with their manager.
- Ensure that children are seen in open and observable spaces; for example, living rooms.

17. Co-curricular activities

Where extra-curricular activities and residential trips take place outside of the school day, staff have *in loco parentis* responsibility for the pupils in their care.

During academy activities that take place off the academy site or out of academy hours, a more relaxed discipline or informal dress and language code may be acceptable. However, staff remain in a position of trust and need to ensure that their behaviour remains professional at all times and cannot be interpreted as seeking to establish an inappropriate relationship or friendship.

Staff are not permitted to drink alcohol, vape/smoke or be under the influence of medication that may impair their ability to remain responsible for the children in their care. Health and safety arrangements require members of staff to keep colleagues/employers aware of their whereabouts, especially when involved in an out of academy activity.

This means that staff should:

- Undertake a risk assessment.
- Have parental consent to the activity.
- Ensure that behaviour remains professional at all times.

18. First Aid & administration of medication

Each Trust location will have a first aid policy relevant to their individual setting. This document should be referred to for further information as to aspects of this policy. It is advised that all staff who require regular medication within work time or where this may be taken prior to attending work advise their line manager of the medication and an individual health risk assessment can be undertaken to ensure all relevant measures are taken to support the individual. Staff should also adhere to any provisions in policy where they are responsible for administering medications or first aid to students.

19. Curriculum

Many areas of the 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 pupils/students 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.

Staff should also always comply with the policy for relationships, sex and health education (RSHE), promoting healthy relationships inclusive of an understanding of consent.

This means that staff should:

- Have a clear written plan detailing the intention for learning.
- Take care, when encouraging pupils to use self-expression, not to overstep personal and professional boundaries.

This means that staff should not:

- Enter into or encourage inappropriate or offensive discussion about sexual activity.
- Undermine fundamental British values.
- Express any prejudicial views.
- Attempt to influence or impose their personal values, attitudes or beliefs on pupils.

20. Photography, videos and other images/media including Internet Use

Many educational activities involve recording images. These may be undertaken for displays, publicity, to celebrate achievement and to provide records of evidence of the activity. Under no circumstances should staff be expected or allowed to use their personal equipment to take images of pupils/students at or on behalf of the academy/Trust (see Online Safety & Acceptable Use Policy).

21. Whistleblowing

The Trust has a clear policy regarding Whistleblowing, which is the mechanism by which staff can raise concerns anonymously relating to malpractice that is witnessed in the workplace which should be deemed to be in the public interest.

Examples of this could include:

- criminal activity
- miscarriages of justice
- danger to health and safety
- damage to the environment
- failure to comply with any legal or professional obligation or regulatory requirements
- financial fraud or mismanagement
- safeguarding concerns not being dealt with properly
- negligence
- breach of our internal policies and procedures
- conduct likely to damage the Trust's reputation
- unauthorised disclosure of confidential information
- the deliberate concealment of any of the above matters

There are other policies and mechanisms whereby staff can raise their concerns including the Trust Grievance & Dignity Policy. For matters where the welfare of children may be at risk and pertain to a safeguarding matter, the Trust has a Managing Allegations Against Staff Policy. In the event staff do not feel comfortable to raise concerns via this route, they can contact the NSPCC Whistle-blowing Helpline on 0800 028 0285.

22. Dress & personal appearance

All staff are representing the academy and the Trust and as such are expected to maintain a professional appearance that is appropriate to the workplace and the work being undertaken.

Staff must be clean and tidy and ensure good personal hygiene.

On occasions, particular clothing is required for the activities being undertaken or for health and safety. Where this is provided by the Trust (e.g. uniforms) these must be worn. Different clothing may be required to undertake PE/Sporting activities however it is advised to ensure this remains appropriate and does not leave the staff member at risk concern due to safeguarding principles.

Name badges/lanyards must be worn at all times whilst on any Trust academy site.

In line with health and safety requirements, appropriate footwear should be worn at all times. Any adjustments due to medical reasons must be agreed with an appropriate senior manager.

Should there be any concerns in relation to a staff members appearance, this should be raised to the Headteacher or relevant Senior Leader and should be discussed in a way which is sensitive to the individual. Should there be any concerns, it is recommended to discuss this with HR in the first instance.

This means that staff should wear clothing which:

- Promotes a positive and professional image.
- Is appropriate to their role.
- Is not likely to be viewed as offensive, revealing or provocative.

- Does not distract, cause embarrassment or give rise to misunderstanding.
- Is absent of any political or otherwise contentious slogans.
- Is not considered to be discriminatory.
- Is compliant with professional standards.
- In online engagement, is similar to the clothing they would wear on a normal school day.

23. Confidentiality

All staff are subject to the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018 (“Data Protection Legislation”). In addition, all staff have a duty of care to safeguard the welfare of all Trust pupils. This duty is acknowledged in the provisions governing disclosure of information about pupils.

Therefore, all staff should be cognisant of their specific responsibilities in a workplace context when dealing with the sharing and storage of any electronic or paper based confidential or sensitive information. Any confidential information should always be held securely. The Trust Online Safety Policy and Document Storage Policy should be referred to along with any relevant provisions within the Safeguarding Policy.

This means that staff:

- Are expected to treat sensitive or confidential information they receive in a discreet and confidential manner.
- Should seek advice from their line manager if they are in any doubt about sharing information they hold or which has been requested of them.
- Need to be clear about when and how confidential or sensitive information can/must be shared and in what circumstances.
- Need to ensure that, where personal information is recorded electronically, systems and devices are kept secure.

Where there are additional expectations specific to an individual setting, staff will be advised of these requirements by their line manager.

24. Links to relevant policies/documents

[Safeguarding Policy / Child protection Policy – Staffshare / Forest Lodge Academy school system](#)

[Online Safety and Acceptable Use Policy – Staffshare / Forest Lodge Academy school system](#)

[Disciplinary Policy](#)

[Managing Allegations against Staff Policy](#)

[Whistleblowing Policy](#)

[Records Retention Policy](#)

[H&S Policy / First Aid Policy / Managing Medical Conditions Policy / Intimate Care Policy – Staffshare / Forest Lodge Academy school system](#)

[Finance Policy](#)