



**The White Hills Park Trust**  
*A Culture of Excellence*

# **Employee Code of Conduct**

**March 2019**

## EMPLOYEE CODE OF CONDUCT – Table of Contents

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# The White Hills Park Trust – Employee Code of Conduct

## Introduction

- 1.0 The Trustees of The White Hills Park Trust adopted this code of conduct on 20<sup>th</sup> March 2019. The Executive Principal will review and monitor the impact of the code annually and report to Trustees.
- 1.1 The Trustees have adopted the policy set out in this document to provide a clear framework for the exercise of its powers and discretions in relation to all staff employed in the Trust and paid from within the Trust budget.
- 1.2 This code of conduct should be read in conjunction with the Induction of school staff policy and the Disciplinary Procedure for school staff.
- 1.3 In accordance with the DFE ‘Keeping children safe in education’ guidance September 2018 this code has been adopted by this Trust in order for all school 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 the course of their employment, for example in team meetings as queries arise - to ensure the code is mutually monitored, positively promoted in school and understood by everyone.
- 1.4 **Every member of school staff will be asked to read this code of conduct and date and sign the Checklist of Safeguarding Procedures in The White Hills Park Federation Trust that they have read and understood the document.** This code will be reviewed annually and updated by the Executive Principal as and when necessary, and staff will be informed of any amendments. If staff have any questions about the requirements of this code then advice should be sought from their line manager or the Executive Principal.
- 1.5 There is an expectation that all employees in this Trust will conduct themselves in a manner commensurate with the highest standard in order to maintain public trust and confidence and be beyond reproach in the performance of their duties.
- 1.6 Each member of school staff has a duty to ensure that the appropriate standards of conduct are upheld both by themselves and by colleagues.
- 1.7 This policy has been agreed by the following Nottinghamshire recognised trade unions: NUT; NASUWT; ATL; ASCL , NAHT, UNISON and GMB.

## **Underlying principles**

- 2.0 All school 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.
- 2.1 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 Leadership Standards.
- 2.2 Staff must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the Trust, and maintain high standards in their own conduct, performance, attendance and punctuality. Staff should 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 school. Staff should always show respect for the rights of others.
- 2.3 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 the Executive Principal.
- 2.4 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.

## **Safeguarding**

- 3.0 Staff must safeguard children's well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions, the local Safeguarding Children Board procedures and their school's child protection policy. Staff must report any safeguarding concerns immediately to the designated safeguarding lead person in school and ensure the Executive Principal is also informed. All staff have a responsibility to take appropriate action and work with other services as needed.
- 3.1 All staff must be fully aware of the school 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 Schools Disciplinary Procedure.
- 3.2 If a child reports any safeguarding concerns to any member of staff, this must be reported immediately to the designated safeguarding lead. Staff must not promise confidentiality to a child and always ensure that any actions they take are in the interests of a child

- 3.3 Where staff have any safeguarding concerns about another member of staff these concerns must be reported immediately to the designated safeguarding lead and Executive Principal. Serious case reviews from past cases in the media have highlighted the concerns about school staff not sharing their knowledge with the leadership of the school.
- 3.4 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 work within appropriate professional boundaries at all times 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. Any concerns about an inappropriate relationship between a member of staff and a student/pupil (irrespective of their age) will be fully investigated under the Disciplinary Procedure for school staff as a potential issue of gross misconduct. Alternatively, the member of staff can contact the LADO directly, as identified on the front of the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

### **Equality issues**

- 4.0 Staff must ensure that equality policies in relation to employment and their duties and responsibilities are adhered to. The Trust believes in equality and will not tolerate any harassment, intimidation, unfair discrimination or victimisation, by school staff against pupils, colleagues, parents, Trustees 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.

### **Health and safety**

- 5.0 It is the responsibility of all staff, Trustees and visitors to the school to take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and others and to assist in the creation of a safe work environment.
- 5.1 Staff have a responsibility to inform the Executive Principal 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, Trustees of the school.

### **Relationships and contact between school staff - the public, parents and pupils**

- 6.0 Trust 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.
- 6.1 When dealing with colleagues, staff should act with respect and courtesy, and have regard for the feelings and sensibilities of others. Staff should always endeavour to act in a way that does not leave colleagues feeling uncomfortable or embarrassed, or puts them in a position where they feel vulnerable or pressurised.
- 6.2 Particular care should be taken to ensure that light-hearted or irreverent comments, or 'banter' or over-familiar language or actions, do not cause distress or create situations that are difficult for people to deal with. Concerns will normally be addressed through the relevant line manager. However, in situations where this is not appropriate because of the nature of the concern, staff can request a private meeting with any member of the Trust SLT, or with a Trustee.
- 6.3 Staff should also refer to the specific school staff policy on the L:/Drive 'Contact Between Staff and Pupils outside of work context, which must be read in conjunction with this code.
- 6.4 It is the policy of the Trust that there will be no personal contact other than in certain exempted circumstances between staff and current/former pupils of school age outside the normal school work environment. Any proposed work related contact, outside of the normal working environment, must be agreed in advance by the Executive Principal, 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 school policy and always agreed with the Executive Principal.
- 6.5 Correspondence received by a member of staff from former pupils, the public or parents should always be discussed with their line manager / Executive Principal and filed with any response in the appropriate school records system.
- 6.6 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 images that could damage their professional reputation and/or bring the school into disrepute. Where staff do use social networking sites it is strongly advised that profiles should be set as 'private' and under no circumstances should staff allow access to pupils, their families and or carers.
- 6.7 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 Executive Principal. Where this is the case, correspondence should be kept to a minimum and be professional at all times in accordance with the ethos of this code.

- 6.8 Where former pupils who are under the age of 18 and still in receipt of education in whatever educational setting make contact with a member of staff, staff must refer to the 'Contact between Staff and Pupils outside the work context' and discuss their response to any such significant contact with their current line manager/Executive Principal.

### **Confidentiality**

- 7.0 Staff and Trustees should also be mindful that they have individual responsibility in relation to managing, maintaining and protecting the confidentiality of pupils, their families, colleagues and any matters relating to the school itself apply to all forms of communication, including social networking sites. This responsibility is detailed in the Trusts General Data Protection Regulations Policy and the Management and Retention of Records Policy.

### **Use of personal mobile phones, laptops and tablets**

- 8.0 All staff are normally required to place any personal equipment capable of photographing children in a locked 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 Executive Principal, during contact with pupils.
- 8.1 Individual schools 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.
- 8.2 If there is a requirement in the teacher's role to take photographs of children for the Trust's purposes this must be carried out using school equipment that will be provided and with the agreement of the Executive Principal and in line with the agreed school procedures.

### **Use of school premises or facilities for work not connected with the school**

- 9.0 Trust staff must not use the school's premises or facilities for activities which are not connected with their employment at the school, without agreement from the Executive Principal or governing body. This includes the personal use of the school email, telephones, computers, photocopiers, or other equipment.
- 9.1 Internal email systems and school computer equipment should always be used in accordance with the appropriate school policies.

### **Disclosure of information**

- 10.0 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. Advice should always be sought from their line manager or Executive Principal as appropriate on the appropriate use of school data and disclosure of school information.

- 10.1 Any actions taken by the school must always be in line with the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulations (EU) 2016/679 (Formerly the Data Protection Act 1984) and the Freedom of Information Act 2000. School staff should not use confidential information obtained in the course of their employment with the school for personal use, nor should they pass it on to others who might use it for unauthorised purposes.

### **School staff facing criminal charges**

- 11.0 Any member of staff, volunteer or governor who during the course of their employment or duties with the school faces criminal charges or who receives a new caution or conviction must inform their line manager, or in the case of the Executive Principal, the Chair of Trustees.

### **Conflict of interest**

- 12.0 Staff should declare any personal interest that could bring about conflict with the Trust's interests. Trust staff must declare to their Executive Principal or chair of Trustees any financial interests or non-financial interests which could or could be perceived to conflict with their role within the School.
- 12.1 Staff are required not to take outside employment which conflicts with the Trust's interests, any staff intending to work for outside organisations should seek permission from their Executive Principal or chair of Trustees, as appropriate.

### **Acceptance of gifts**

- 13.0 It is reasonable for a member of staff to accept modest gifts from pupils, especially at the end of a school year or at Christmas. The giving of gifts to pupils should be in line with the agreed school policy – reference should be made to the Gifts and Hospitality Policy on the L:/drive.

**There may be other instances that occur in school life that will need referral to the Executive Principal or Board of Trustees.**