

# The Vines Academy Trust



## Code of Conduct for Employees in Schools

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<b>Ratified by Governing Body:</b>				
COG Name:		COG Signature:		Date:

## Objective, Scope and Principles

This Code of Conduct is designed to give clear guidance on the standards of behaviour all school employees are expected to observe. We recognise 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.

School employees are role models and are in a unique position of influence and trust and must adhere to behaviour that sets a good example to all the pupils/students within the school. As a member of a school community, each employee has an individual responsibility to maintain their reputation and the reputation of the school, whether inside or outside working hours.

This Code of Conduct applies to all employees of the school, including those on voluntary or work placements. This Code of Conduct forms part of any employees' contract of employment.

In addition to this Code of Conduct, all employees engaged to work under Teachers' Terms and Conditions of Employment have a statutory obligation to adhere to the '*Teachers' Standards 2011, updated 2013*' and in relation to this policy, Part 2 of the Teachers' Standards - Personal and Professional Conduct. All staff are expected to support and uphold the Christian ethos of the school.

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.<sup>1</sup>

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

- treating pupils 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 pupils' 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 pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law.

Teachers must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school 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.

This policy has due regard to all legislation including, but not limited to, the following:

- The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- The Data Protection Act 2018
- The Education Act 2002
- The Children Act 1989
- The Working Time Regulations 1998 (as amended)
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- The Equality Act 2010

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

- DfE (2022) 'Keeping children safe in education'
  - DfE (2022) 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'
  - DfE (2018) 'Staffing and employment advice for schools'
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**PREAMBLE**

Teachers make the education of their pupils their first concern, and are accountable for achieving the highest possible standards in work and conduct. Teachers act with honesty and integrity; have strong subject knowledge, keep their knowledge and skills as teachers up-to-date and are self-critical; forge positive professional relationships; and work with parents in the best interests of their pupils.

**PART ONE: TEACHING**

A teacher must:

**1 Set high expectations which inspire, motivate and challenge pupils**

- establish a safe and stimulating environment for pupils, rooted in mutual respect
- set goals that stretch and challenge pupils of all backgrounds, abilities and dispositions
- demonstrate consistently the positive attitudes, values and behaviour which are expected of pupils.

**2 Promote good progress and outcomes by pupils**

- be accountable for pupils' attainment, progress and outcomes
- be aware of pupils' capabilities and their prior knowledge, and plan teaching to build on these
- guide pupils to reflect on the progress they have made and their emerging needs
- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how pupils learn and how this impacts on teaching
- encourage pupils to take a responsible and conscientious attitude to their own work and study.

**3 Demonstrate good subject and curriculum knowledge**

- have a secure knowledge of the relevant subject(s) and curriculum areas, foster and maintain pupils' interest in the subject, and address misunderstandings
- demonstrate a critical understanding of developments in the subject and curriculum areas, and promote the value of scholarship
- demonstrate an understanding of and take responsibility for promoting high standards of literacy, articulacy and the correct use of standard English, whatever the teacher's specialist subject
- if teaching early reading, demonstrate a clear understanding of systematic synthetic phonics
- if teaching early mathematics, demonstrate a clear understanding of appropriate teaching strategies.

**4 Plan and teach well structured lessons**

- impart knowledge and develop understanding through effective use of lesson time
- promote a love of learning and children's intellectual curiosity
- set homework and plan other out-of-class activities to consolidate and extend the knowledge and understanding pupils have acquired
- reflect systematically on the effectiveness of lessons and approaches to teaching
- contribute to the design and provision of an engaging curriculum within the relevant subject area(s).

**5 Adapt teaching to respond to the strengths and needs of all pupils**

- know when and how to differentiate appropriately, using approaches which enable pupils to be taught effectively
- have a secure understanding of how a range of factors can inhibit pupils' ability to learn, and how best to overcome these
- demonstrate an awareness of the physical, social and intellectual development of children, and know how to adapt teaching to support pupils' education at different stages of development
- have a clear understanding of the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs; those of high ability; those with English as an additional language; those with disabilities; and be able to use and evaluate distinctive teaching approaches to engage and support them.

**6 Make accurate and productive use of assessment**

- know and understand how to assess the relevant subject and curriculum areas, including statutory assessment requirements
- make use of formative and summative assessment to secure pupils' progress
- use relevant data to monitor progress, set targets, and plan subsequent lessons
- give pupils regular feedback, both orally and through accurate marking, and encourage pupils to respond to the feedback.

**7 Manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe learning environment**

- have clear rules and routines for behaviour in classrooms, and take responsibility for promoting good and courteous behaviour both in classrooms and around the school, in accordance with the school's behaviour policy
- have high expectations of behaviour, and establish a framework for discipline with a range of strategies, using praise, sanctions and rewards consistently and fairly
- manage classes effectively, using approaches which are appropriate to pupils' needs in order to involve and motivate them
- maintain good relationships with pupils, exercise appropriate authority, and act decisively when necessary.

**8 Fulfil wider professional responsibilities**

- make a positive contribution to the wider life and ethos of the school
- develop effective professional relationships with colleagues, knowing how and when to draw on advice and specialist support
- deploy support staff effectively
- take responsibility for improving teaching through appropriate professional development, responding to advice and feedback from colleagues
- communicate effectively with parents with regard to pupils' achievements and well-being.

**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 school, by:
  - treating pupils 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 pupils' 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 pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law.
- Teachers must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school 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.

In addition to teachers having an understanding of Teachers Standards, it is advised that all staff have read and are aware of the *'Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings, Feb 22'*.<sup>3</sup>

## **1. Setting an Example**

All staff must support and uphold the Christian ethos of the Trust and of each school at all times.

All staff who work in schools set examples of behaviour and conduct which can be copied by pupils/students. Staff must therefore for example avoid using inappropriate or offensive language at all times.

All staff must, therefore, demonstrate high standards of conduct in order to encourage our pupils/students to do the same.

All staff must also avoid putting themselves at risk of allegations of abusive or unprofessional conduct.

Staff members will inform the headteacher if they are subject to a criminal conviction, caution, ban, police enquiry, investigation or pending prosecution.

This Code helps all staff to understand what behaviour is and is not acceptable, regard should also be given to the disciplinary rules set out in The Vines Staff Disciplinary Policy.

All staff are expected to familiarise themselves and comply with all Trust and school policies and procedures.

## **2. Safeguarding Pupils/Students**

Staff have a duty to safeguard pupils/students from physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse and neglect. This also includes staff having an awareness of all aspects of safeguarding as mentioned in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022.<sup>4</sup>

The duty to safeguard pupils/students includes the duty to report concerns about a pupil/student or colleague to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead for Child Protection & Safeguarding.

Staff must familiarise themselves with who are the DSLs in school.

Staff should treat children with respect and dignity and must not seriously demean or undermine pupils, their parents or carers, or colleagues.

Staff should not demonstrate behaviours that may be perceived as sarcasm, making jokes at the expense of students, embarrassing or humiliating students, discriminating against or favouring students.

Staff must take reasonable care of pupils/students under their supervision with the aim of ensuring their safety and welfare.

Staff have read and understood Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022<sup>5</sup> and Annex A.

Staff are emailed copies of the Trust's Child Protection Policy and Whistleblowing Procedure and staff must be familiar with these documents.

If a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with the school, they will use other whistleblowing channels, including contacting the NSPCC's helpline on 0800 028 0285 (between the hours of 8:00am and 8:00pm Monday to Friday) or email [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk). Staff members can also access guidance at [www.gov.uk/whistleblowing](http://www.gov.uk/whistleblowing).

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### **3. Relationships with students**

Staff must declare any relationships that they may have with students outside of school; this may include mutual membership of social groups, tutoring, or family connections. Staff should not assume that the school are aware of any such connections. A declaration form can be found in appendix 1 of this document.

Relationships with students must be professional at all times, physical relationships with students are not permitted and may lead to a criminal conviction.

Contact with students must be via school authorised mechanisms. At no time should personal telephone numbers, email addresses or communication routes via personal accounts on social media platforms be used to communicate with students. Please refer to Safer Working Practices 2019 for more information.

If contacted by a student by an inappropriate route, staff should report the contact to the Headteacher immediately.

### **4. Pupil/Student Development**

Staff must comply with Trust and school policies and procedures that support the well-being and development of pupils/students.

Staff must co-operate and collaborate with colleagues and with external agencies where necessary to support the development of pupils/students.

Staff must follow reasonable instructions that support the development of pupils/students.

### **5. Honesty and Integrity**

Staff must maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their work. This includes the handling and claiming of money and the use of school property and facilities, including completing appropriate paper work prior to ordering resources or materials.

All staff must comply with the Bribery Act 2010. A person may be guilty of an offence of bribery under this act if they offer, promise or give financial advantage or other advantage to someone; or if they request, agree or accept, or receive a bribe from another person. If you believe that a person has failed to comply with the Bribery Act, you should refer to the Whistleblowing procedure for schools.

Gifts from suppliers or associates of the school must be declared to the Headteacher, with the exception of "one off" token gifts from students or parents. Personal gifts from individual members of staff to students are inappropriate and could be misinterpreted and may lead to disciplinary action. A record will be kept of all gifts received.

Gifts from individual staff members to pupils/students should only be part of the school's rewards system and clearly outlined in school's policy.

### **6. Conduct Outside of Work**

Staff must not engage in conduct outside work which could seriously damage the reputation and standing of the Trust or school or the employee's own reputation or the reputation of other members of the school or Trust community.

In particular, criminal offences that involve violence or possession or use of illegal drugs or sexual misconduct are likely to be regarded as unacceptable.

Staff may undertake work outside school, either paid or voluntary, provided that it does not conflict with the interests of the school nor be to a level which may contravene the working time regulations or affect an individual's work performance in the school.

## **7. E-Safety, technology and Internet Use**

Staff must exercise caution when using information technology and be aware of the risks to themselves and others. Regard should be given to the schools' E-Safety and ICT Acceptable Use Policies at all times, both inside and outside of work.

Staff must not engage in inappropriate use of social network sites which may bring themselves, the school, school community or employer into disrepute. Staff should carefully consider how what they post may affect others. Staff should ensure that they adopt suitably high security settings on any personal profiles they may have.

Staff should exercise caution in their use of all social media or any other web based presence that they may have, including written content, videos or photographs, and views expressed either directly or by 'liking' certain pages or posts established by others. This may also include the use of dating websites where staff could encounter students either with their own profile or acting covertly.

Contact with students should only be made via the use of school email accounts or telephone equipment when appropriate.

Photographs/stills or video footage of students should only be taken using school equipment, for purposes authorised by the school. Any such use should always be transparent and only occur where parental consent has been given. The resultant files from such recording or taking of photographs must be stored in accordance with the school's procedures on school equipment.

Mobile phones or Smart Watches should not be on show or used in class, unless discussed previously with the Headteacher, for example needing to take an important phone call in relation to the safety of a loved one.

## **8. Confidentiality**

Where staff have access to confidential information about pupils/students or their parents or carers, staff must not reveal such information except to those colleagues who have a professional role in relation to the pupil/student. All staff must comply with Trust guidance and communication on the General Data Protection Requirements (GDPR).

All staff are likely at some point to witness actions which need to be confidential. For example, where a pupil/student is bullied by another pupil/student (or by a member of staff), this needs to be reported and dealt with in accordance with the appropriate school procedure. It must not be discussed outside the school, including with the pupil's/student's parent or carer, nor with colleagues in the school except with a senior member of staff with the appropriate authority to deal with the matter.

However, staff have an obligation to share with their manager or the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead any information which gives rise to concern about the safety or welfare of a pupil/student. Staff must **never** promise a pupil/student that they will not act on information that they are told by the pupil/student. Staff should never promise a pupil/student confidentiality or 'keep a secret'. GDPR does not trump safeguarding.

## **9. Dress and Appearance**

All staff must dress in a manner that is appropriate to a professional role and promoting a professional image; No jeans or denim are to be worn. Staff should dress in a manner that is not offensive, revealing or sexually provocative. Staff should dress in a manner that is absent from political or other contentious slogans.

## **10. Disciplinary Action**

Staff should be aware that a failure to comply with the following Code of Conduct could result in disciplinary action including but not limited to dismissal.

## **11. Attendance**

The school 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 Trust's Leave of Absence policy if they need time off for any reason other than personal illness.
- Follow the school's absence reporting procedure when they are absent from work due to illness or injury.

## **12. Compliance**

All staff must complete the form in appendix 2 to confirm they have read, understood and agreed to comply with the code of conduct or complete an electronic 'forms' submission as outlined by your school. This form should then be signed, dated and then passed on to the Head Teacher if using a paper copy.

## **Professional Responsibilities**

When using any form of ICT, including the Internet, in school and outside school

**For your own protection, The Vines Academy Trust advises that you:**

- Ensure all electronic communication with students, parents, carers, staff and others is compatible with your professional role and in line with school policies
- Do not talk about your professional role in any capacity when using social media such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and You Tube, etc
- Do not put online any text, image, sound or video that could upset or offend any member of the whole school community or be incompatible with your professional role
- Use school ICT systems and resources for all school business. This includes your school email address, school mobile phone and school video camera
- Do not disclose any passwords and ensure that personal data is kept securely and used appropriately
- Only take images of students and/or staff for professional purposes, in accordance with school policy and with the knowledge of school leaders
- Do not browse, download, upload or distribute any material that could be considered offensive, illegal or discriminatory
- Ensure that your online activity, both in school and outside school, will not bring the school or professional role into disrepute
- Your school e mails should be checked daily as a minimum on working days, or every other day if one day is particularly busy
- You have a duty to report any E Safety incident which may impact on you, your professionalism or the school to your DSL or SLT



**Appendix 1**

**Relationships with students outside of work declaration**

It is recognised that there may be circumstances whereby employees of the school are known to students outside of work. Examples include membership of sports clubs, family connections, or private tutoring.

Staff must declare any relationship outside of school that they may have with students:

Employee Name	Student Name	Relationship

I can confirm that I am fully aware of the code of conduct relating to contact out of school with students in line with this policy.

If I am tutoring a student outside of school I am aware that the following must be adhered to:

- I do not, at any point, teach the child in question as part of my daily timetable - this is a stipulation of such tutoring
- I emphasise to parents that this is done completely independently of the school
- No monies come through the school at any point, informally (e.g. via the child) or formally
- No private tutoring is to take place on the school premises

I confirm that if these circumstances change at any time I will complete a new form to ensure the school are aware of any relationships.

**Signed**..... **Date**.....

**Once completed, signed and dated, please return this form to the Headteacher**

## Appendix 2

### Confirmation of compliance

I hereby confirm that I have read, understood and agree to comply with the Trust's code of conduct.

Name:

School

Position/Post Held:

Signed:

Date :

**Once completed, signed and dated, please return this form to the Headteacher**