

## **Redhill Primary Academy - Overarching Code of Conduct for Staff**

### **Introduction**

This document outlines the Academy's expectation in relation to employee conduct and outlines the Academy's responsibility to the employee. This document mainly refers conduct expected in the workplace but may also cover conducted when representing the Academy e.g. whilst at training, attending work related functions or activities on social media that may affect the reputation of the Academy.

It should also be used in conjunction with other relevant policies and standards such as professional standards, child protection and safeguarding policies, behaviour policy, contract of employment/written statement of particulars, to name but a few.

Given the nature of this establishment, this document should also be a guide to assist in ensuring children's and employees safety. It therefore explains the responsibilities the Academy has toward employees and children/pupils.

This code should be reviewed regularly by governors and reissued to staff after the review.

### **Duty of Care**

This Academy has a duty of care to the pupils/children within it and also to all its employees. This duty should be at the heart of all employee and employer practice.

Pupils/children – employees within this Academy have a duty to keep pupils/children safe and protect them from harm as outlined in "Keeping Children Safe in Education" 2023. Given the position of trust this places employee in, employees are expected to take reasonable steps to ensure pupils/children's safety and well being. Please refer to the Child Protection & Safeguarding in Schools Policies that this Academy have adopted.

Employees – employers should provide a safe working environment and appropriate guidance regarding safer working practices. They should also ensure that employees are treated fairly and reasonably in all circumstances. Employees will be informed of all relevant policies as part of their induction. Where a new or revised policy is adopted, the Academy will ensure each employee has access to it.

In addition, each employee has a personal duty to take care of themselves and anyone else who may be affected by their actions or failings.

Employees should:

- Understand the responsibilities of their role and the sanctions should these not be followed.
- Act and be seen to act in the pupil's/child's best interest.
- Act in a way to protect the Academy's reputation.
- Avoid conduct which could lead the Academy to question motivation and intentions.
- Act in line with Academy policy and procedure.
- Take responsibility for the learning environment in the classroom and beyond, keeping it tidy and clutter free at all times.
- Take responsibility for their own actions and behaviour.
- Speak up promptly about any concerns they have or anything they have witnessed that could give rise to concern.
- We expect that all teachers will act in accordance with the personal and professional behaviours set out in the Teachers' Standards.

- Seek to develop positive relationships with pupils, colleagues, parents and Academy management that are characterised by professional integrity and judgement.
- Have due regard that safeguarding children and their welfare is paramount and everyone's business.
- All Academy staff should make the Headteacher or Chair of Governors (if this is the Headteacher) aware of any relationships and associations both within and outside of the workplace (including online) that may have implications for the safeguarding of children in Academy.
- Note that unjustifiable delay in reporting concerns is not acceptable.
- Not undermine fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
- Not express personal beliefs in a way that exploits pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law.
- Understand the statutory frameworks they must act within.
- Maintain high standards in their attendance and punctuality.

Employers should:

- Clarify what is expected about an employee at work and where relevant, outside of work.
- Provide a safe and healthy working environment.
- Support for employees' rights and recognise diversity.
- Foster a culture of openness and support.
- Ensure that appropriate policies are adopted, implemented, monitored and reviewed e.g. employee policies, safeguarding, child protection, code of conduct.
- Ensure that employees have access to and understand guidance, related policies and systems that are in place.
- Ensure that employees are not placed in a vulnerable position.
- Ensure that those who provide services or activities are aware of safeguarding policies and procedures.
- Treat employees reasonably and fairly.

### Complaints

Should an employee have a concern with the way in which they are being treated by their employer, the grievance process should be followed. Advice should be sought by the employee from their relevant trade union.

Should an employee have a complaint relating to the Academy then they should use the relevant policy e.g. Whistleblowing Procedures, Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy or any other procedure that the Academy has identified and adopted.

Should the employer have concerns regarding employee conduct, the employer should always try to resolve the matter at the lowest possible level i.e. through discussion with the employee. For more serious matters, the Academy may need to refer to the relevant employment policy e.g. discipline.

### Employee Code of Conduct

This code covers a number of situations but does not cover all eventualities. Where it is necessary to refer to a specific Academy policy, this will be noted.

As stated in the introduction, a 'Professional Code of Conduct' is also provided as part of an employee's written statement of particulars which should be adhered to and used in conjunction with this document. Furthermore, the document produced by the Safer Recruitment Consortium - Guidance

on Safer Working Practice is universally regarded as a best practice guide to work alongside local policies.

### Dress and Appearance

All employees should dress in a manner that is appropriate for their role, individuals they work with and the work they undertake.

Clothing and appearance should not:

- cause embarrassment or give rise to any misunderstanding;
- be likely to be viewed as offensive, revealing or sexually provocative;
- be considered to be discriminatory or culturally sensitive;
- be political or represent contentious slogans; and
- all tattoos must be covered and no extreme hairstyles, jewellery including piercings must be discrete.

### Behaviour

All employees have a responsibility to maintain public confidence in both the Academy and their own ability to provide an outstanding level of education and care whilst safeguarding the welfare and best interest of the pupils/children they are responsible for.

Equally, all employees should be able to carry out their duties in an environment where all individuals treat each other fairly and with respect and dignity. Acts of discrimination, harassment or bullying, intentional or otherwise, will not be tolerated.

Employees should foster an approach which is aligned to the ethos of the Academy and understand the Academy's Relationships and Behaviour Policy. Therefore, employees can expect to be treated reasonably and fairly.

It is not acceptable to behave in a manner which could question an employee's suitability to work with pupils/children or encourage others to make unprofessional comments or comments which could cause offense.

This level of behaviour is to be expected at all times when representing the Academy which includes attending such events as training and work-related social functions.

With the rise of social media, it is not acceptable for employees to behave in such a way that would not uphold public confidence within the Academy. **Please refer to the Academy's Child Protection & Safeguarding in Schools Policies.**

### Confidentiality and Data Protection

Employees can expect to have their personal information secured confidentially. Personal matters should also be kept in the strictest of confidence.

Employees within the Academy may have access to private or sensitive information about the pupils/children who attend the Academy. These details must be kept confidential and only shared when it is in the child's best interest to do so.

The Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA 2018) establishes a framework of rights and duties which makes personal information safe. Personal information is information about a living individual, who can be identified from the information.

This Academy is committed to protecting the privacy of individuals and handles all personal information in a manner that complies with the DPA 2018. It is the personal responsibility of all employees (temporary or permanent), Governors, contractors, agents and anyone else processing information on our behalf to comply with this policy.

Storage of any such information should be in line with the Data Protection Act 2018.

Any deliberate breach of this policy could amount to a criminal offence under one or more pieces of legislation, for example the Computer Misuse Act 1990 and the Data Protection Act 2018. All breaches will be investigated, and appropriate action taken.

Employees should report any concerns to a senior member of the Academy.

### Honesty and Integrity

Staff should maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their role. This includes when dealing with pupils, handling money, claiming expenses and using school property and facilities.

Employees should not receive or accept gifts, loan, fees, hospitality or other reward which influences the way in which duties are carried out.

For transparency, if an employee is **given low level “thank you” gifts from parents or children e.g. homemade gifts, flowers, chocolates, biscuits etc.** then they should let the Academy know. In all cases a professional judgement should be made around what is acceptable, proportionate and appropriate. If in doubt the employee should seek guidance from the Headteacher of the Academy.

Employees have a responsibility to report any such reward or suspicions of any such awards to the **appropriate person within the Academy.**

Staff will ensure that all information given to the school is correct. This should include:

- background information (including any past or current investigations/cautions related to conduct outside of school)
- qualifications
- professional experience

Where there are any updates to the information provided to the school, the member of staff will advise the school as such as soon as reasonably practicable. Consideration will then be given to the nature and circumstances of the matter and whether this may have an impact on the member of staff's employment.

### Safeguarding

Staff have a duty to safeguard pupils from harm, and to report any concerns they have. This includes physical, emotional and sexual abuse, and neglect.

Staff will familiarise themselves with our child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures, and the Prevent initiative, and ensure they are aware of the processes to follow if they have concerns about a child.

### Allegations that may Meet the Harm Threshold

This section is based on 'Section 1: Allegations that may meet the harm threshold' in part 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

This section applies to all cases in which it is alleged that anyone working in the school, including a supply teacher, volunteer or contractor, has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child, and/or
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, and/or
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children, and/or

- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children – this includes behaviour taking place inside or outside of school.

We will deal with any such allegation quickly and in a fair and consistent way that provides effective child protection while also supporting the individual who is the subject of the allegation.

A 'case manager' will lead any investigation. This will be the headteacher, or the chair of governors [in independent schools: proprietor] where the headteacher is the subject of the allegation.

### Raising Concerns – Safeguarding

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. All staff should be committed to working in a culture where the values of the Academy and effective safeguarding are upheld, this includes openness, trust and honesty. All staff are responsible for implementing and reinforcing these values.

The Academy has a standalone Child Protection and Safeguarding in Schools Policy with appropriate appendices. For avoidance of doubt, **all Academy staff** need to be aware and implement the principles of its content.

It is important to note that these policies supplement and work within the overarching Telford & Wrekin Local Safeguarding Partnership procedures, for avoidance of doubt, these can be viewed at Telford and Wrekin Safeguarding Partnership. These policies are pivotal to all areas safeguarding and any actions that may be considered, taken and expected of those that work and interact with children.

It also acknowledged that "Working Together" 2018 and "Keeping Children Safe in Education" 2023 Parts 1-5 are viewed on the same principle & Annex A. For schools with early years children, Section 3 of the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage 2023 should also be viewed.

On a general level the highest standards of safeguarding conduct are expected from the whole Academy community. It is important to note that in particular well known and peripheral areas of safeguarding concern should be paramount to a child's welfare namely through the Four Defined Categories of Abuse - Sexual, Emotional, Physical and Neglect as defined in "Working Together" 2018.

Furthermore, staff are expected to encourage pupils to respect the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. Staff should ensure that partisan political views are not promoted in the teaching of any subject in the Academy and where political issues are brought to the attention of pupils, reasonably practicable steps have been taken to offer a balanced presentation of opposing views to pupils. Extremism & Radicalisation (Statutory - "Prevent duty guidance" March 2015)

Further areas (amongst others) for all staff to understand:

Children That Have Gone Missing (T&W Missing Children Process 2016)

Children Missing From Education - Whether Authorised or Not

Poor/Irregular Attendance (Protocol for Identifying and Maintaining Contact with Children Not Receiving Education)

Children Abused Through Exploitation (CATE) -T&W Pathway Process

Harm

Drug and substance misuse

Suicide Intervention

Fabricated and induced illness

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) - Multi Agency Practice Guidelines HM Government 2014 – There is a specific legal duty on teacher, who, in the course of their work in the profession, discovers that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18, the teacher must report this to the police.

Forced Marriage - "Handing Cases of Forced Marriage" Multi Agency Practice Guidelines HM Government June 2009.

Domestic Violence and Serious Harm

Youth Violence, Gang Activity and County Lines

The Academy's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policies will take account of all these issues and other areas and therefore, staff conduct in addressing any safeguarding concerns is paramount and doing nothing is not an option. All concerns for a child's welfare should be responded to and reported as set out in our Child Protection & Safeguarding policy. A delay in responding and reporting concerns for a child's welfare beyond what is reasonably practicable is a breach of this code of conduct.

If anyone working in the Academy community identifies a concern about a breach of this code of conduct, they must 'speak up'. All those working in the Academy community must follow the Academy's Whistleblowing Policy.

Creating a culture in which all concerns about adults (including allegations that do not meet the harms threshold) are shared responsibly and with the right person, recorded and dealt with appropriately, is critical. If implemented correctly, this should encourage an open and transparent culture; enable our Academy to identify concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour early; and minimise the risk of abuse. A culture of vigilance will help to ensure that adults working in or on behalf of our Academy are clear about professional boundaries and act within these boundaries, and in accordance with the ethos and values of the institution.

### Low Level Concerns

All staff should report concerns that are of a 'low-level'. This can be a concern of any kind; this can include a member of the Academy community acting in a way that:

- does not meet the allegations thresholds or of a level to refer to the LADO; and/or
- does not uphold the Academy code of conduct, including out of work.

We also encourage staff to self-refer if they find themselves in a situation that could be misinterpreted. If staff are not sure whether behaviour would be deemed a low-level concern, we encourage staff to report it.

A low-level concern is a behaviour towards a child by a member of staff that does not meet the harm threshold, is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, and may be as simple as causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt'. For example, this may include:

Being over-friendly with children

Having favourites

Taking photographs of children on a personal device

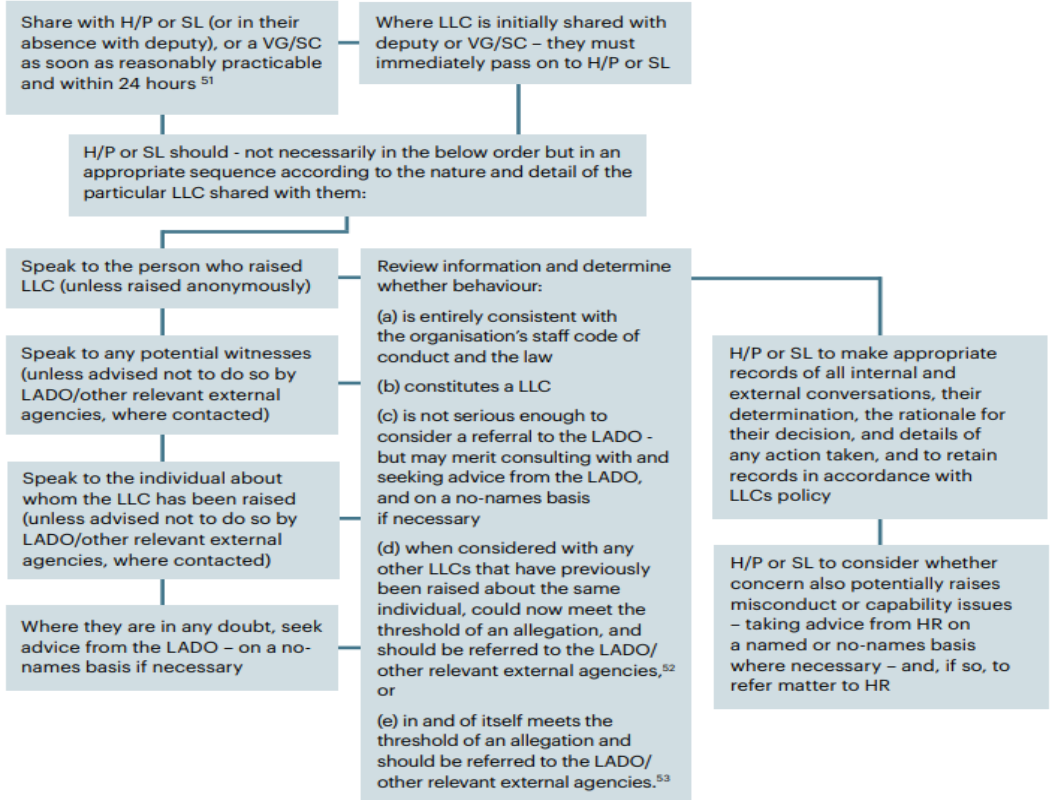
Engaging in 1-to-1 activities where they can't easily be seen

Humiliating pupils

Low-level concerns can include inappropriate conduct inside and outside of work. All 'low-level' concerns must be reported to the Headteacher. They may choose to delegate the investigation of 'low-level' concerns to other members of the senior leadership team. Where the concern pertains to the Headteacher, this should be reported to the chair of the governing body. Failure to report or respond to such concerns would constitute a failure in professional responsibilities to safeguard children and promote welfare. Please see our Dealing with Low Level Concerns Policy for further details.

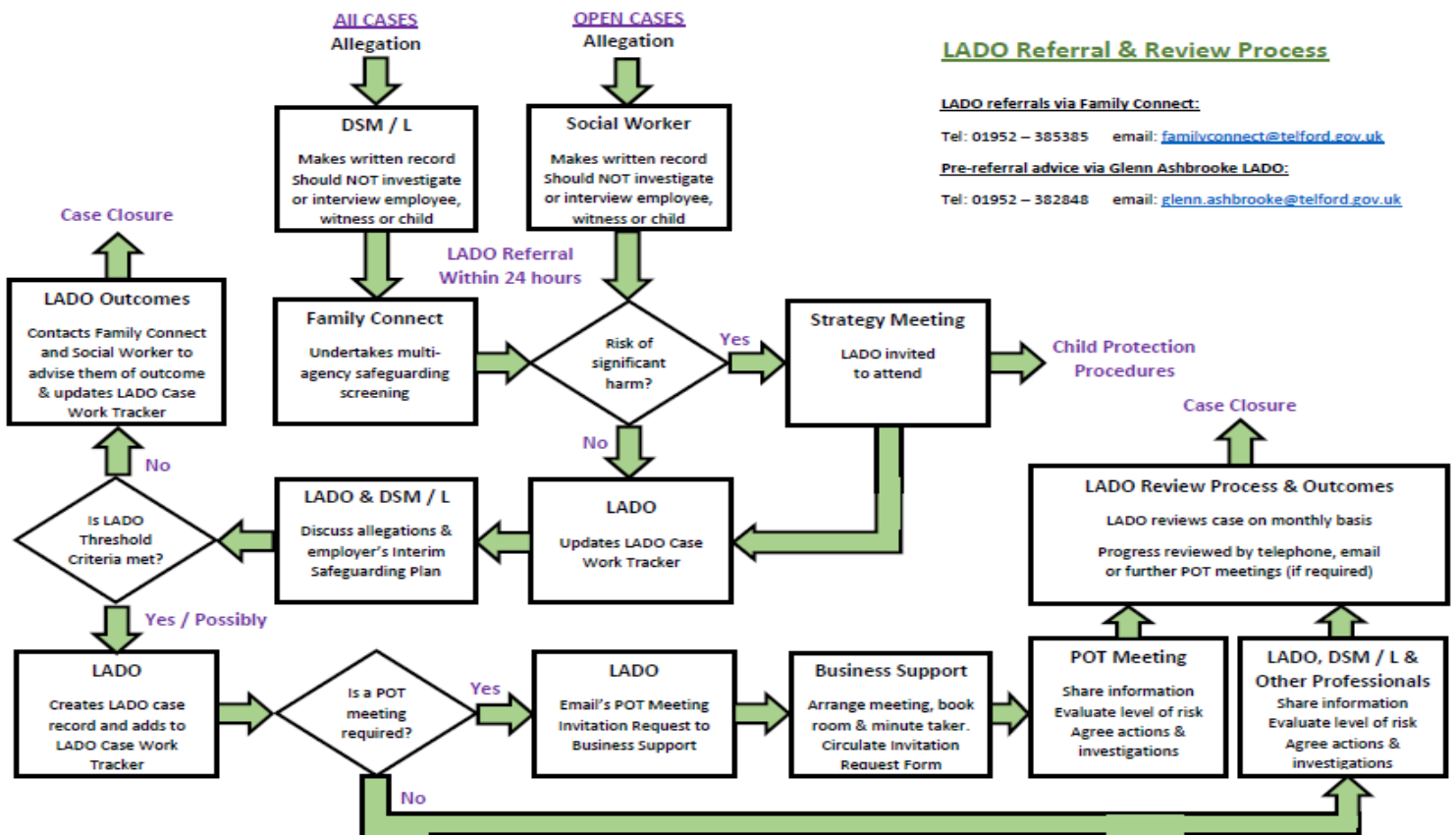
If member of staff has what they believe to be a concern that does not meet the harm threshold, they should take the below action. We will manage low-level concerns in accordance with the below.

**ACTION REQUIRED**



NB: Headteacher/Principal (H/P) or Safeguarding Lead (SL), values guardians (VGs)/safeguarding champions (SCs).

**Procedures for managing allegations**



## **Telford & Wrekin Council procedures:**

These procedures should be read in line with our Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy.

Staff should understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between peers, including peer on peer sexual violence and sexual harassment. Downplaying certain behaviours, for example dismissing sexual harassment can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours, an unsafe environment for children and in worst case scenarios a culture that normalises abuse leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.

### Whistleblowing – Speak Up

Whistleblowing reports wrongdoing that it is “in the public interest” to report. Examples linked to safeguarding include:

- Pupils’ or staff’s health and safety being put in danger.
- Failure to comply with a legal obligation or statutory requirement.
- Attempts to cover up the above, or any other wrongdoing in the public interest.

Staff are encouraged to report suspected wrongdoing as soon as possible. Their concerns will be taken seriously and investigated, and their confidentiality will be respected.

Staff should consider the examples above when deciding whether their concern is of a whistle-blowing nature. Consider whether the incident(s) was illegal, breached statutory or school procedures, put people in danger or was an attempt to cover any such activity up.

Staff should report their concern to the headteacher. If the concern is about the headteacher, or it is believed they may be involved in the wrongdoing in some way, the staff member should report their concern to the chair of the local governing board.

Concerns should be made in writing wherever possible. They should include names of those committing wrongdoing, dates, places and as much evidence and context as possible. Staff raising a concern should also include details of any personal interest in the matter.

For our school’s detailed whistleblowing process, please refer to our Whistleblowing Policy.

### Use of Internet, Technology and Social Media

Staff are not permitted to use personal technology devices while working directly with pupils and/or during their hours of work. These should only be used away from areas children access.

Where professional technology devices are provided to staff for the purpose of their role and responsibilities, these are permitted.

Staff will not use technology in school to view material that is illegal, inappropriate or likely to be deemed offensive. This includes, but is not limited to, sending obscene emails, gambling and viewing pornography or other inappropriate content.

Staff have a responsibility to model safe practice and use of technology devices at all times. We have the right to monitor emails and internet use on the school IT system.

Staff engaging in online learning should display the same standards of dress and conduct that they would in the real world; they should also role model this to pupils and parents.

The use of the internet and social media in the workplace can be very useful but also can be open to misuse. Employees must take every step to protect themselves when using such ‘media’ and **must refer to the Social Media Policy that is contained within the Academy Child Protection & Safeguarding in Academy Policies.**



Employees must also be careful when using social media personally to ensure that no activity relates negatively on the Academy's reputation. Should such information be brought to the Academy's attention, the disciplinary process may be followed.

School staff's social media profiles should not be available to pupils or parents. If they have a personal profile on social media sites, they should not use their full name, as pupils may be able to find them. Staff should consider using a first and middle name instead and set public profiles to private.

Staff should not attempt to contact pupils or their parents via social media, or any other means outside school, in order to develop any sort of relationship. They will not make any efforts to find pupils' or parents' social media profiles.

Staff will ensure that they do not post any images online that identify children who are pupils at the school without their consent.

### Filtering and monitoring standards – responsibilities of all school staff

All staff in the school have the following responsibilities to ensure the standards are effectively implemented.

You must:

- know how to report and record any concern where you have witnessed or suspect harmful content has been accessed.
- approach your IT lead if you are unsure whether the filtering system is working successfully on your school device.
- inform the SLT and IT lead if you can access unsuitable material.
- notify the named leads if you are teaching topics which may create unusual activity or alerts.
- discuss any unreasonable restrictions that affect teaching, learning or administrative tasks with your named leads.
- promptly report failure or abuse of the system.
- report any abbreviations or misspellings that allow access to restricted material.
- provide effective supervision of students when using school devices.
- maintain awareness of how devices are being used by students.
- be aware of the online safety, acceptable use and safeguarding policies.

### Staff-pupil relationships

Staff will observe proper boundaries with pupils that are appropriate to their professional position. They will act in a fair and transparent way that would not lead anyone to reasonably assume they are not doing so.

If staff members and pupils must spend time on a one-to-one basis, staff will ensure that:

- This takes place in a public place that others can access.
- Others can see into the room (all classroom doors have a window pane for transparency).
- If possible, a colleague or line manager knows this is taking place.

Staff should avoid contact with pupils outside of school hours if possible.

Personal contact details should not be exchanged between staff and pupils. This includes social media profiles.

If a staff member is concerned at any point that an interaction between themselves and a pupil may be misinterpreted, or if a staff member is concerned at any point about a fellow staff member and a pupil, this should be reported in line with the procedures set out in our child protection and safeguarding policy.

### Conflicts of Interest

Employees must be mindful to avoid personal circumstances which could lead to conflict of interest and should discuss/report any potential conflicts of interest with the Headteacher as soon as possible.

### Health & Safety

The Academy will endeavour to abide by Health and Safety legislation to ensure the safety and well-being of employees at work. Employees are expected to follow appropriate Health and Safety guidance to keep themselves and others safe at work.

Employees also have their own duty of care to take care of themselves and anyone else affected by their actions or failings.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_