



WALTON HIGH SCHOOL

Proud to be part of Walton Multi Academy Trust



STAFF BEHAVIOUR POLICY CODE OF CONDUCT

Reviewed by Governors:	November 2024
To be reviewed:	November 2026
Leadership link person:	Headteacher

*Walton Multi Academy Trust refers to all schools within the Trust.
When referring to Trust Boards, this includes Local Governor Boards, and the term 'Governor'
includes all Trustees or Local Board Governors.*

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 All employees (and volunteers) 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 the academy.
- 1.2 Staff must comply with requirements of their contract of employment, conditions of service, Articles of Governance and relevant local/national policies. The Code is supplementary to documents detailing terms and conditions of employment, including statutory provisions, relating to employment. In addition, teaching staff should have regard for the Teachers' Standards (July 2011), Part two: Personal and Professional Conduct.
- 1.3 **Failure to observe** the provisions of the Code may be relevant in considering action under disciplinary procedures. Should this occur, full consideration will be given to all the relevant facts and circumstances of the case in accordance with the principles of natural justice and following agreed procedures, in line with the Academy Disciplinary Policy.

2. CONDUCT IN RELATION TO PUPILS

- 2.1 School based staff act **in loco parentis** in respect of pupils in their charge as set out in the Children's Act of 1989 and must act in the role of a reasonable parent in the school context. Through their actions staff must act in accordance with this duty of care to ensure at all times 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.
- 2.2 **Interaction with pupils** should always be appropriate to their age and gender. 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 school activities with any pupils. Staff should not engage with pupils via personal social media accounts and must comply with the ICT acceptable use policy.
- 2.3 **Teaching materials** should be appropriate to the age and gender of pupils. Particular care should be taken that sex or health education materials are appropriate and are consistent with academy/Local Safeguarding Board policies.
- 2.4 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.
- 2.5 **Corporal punishment**, defined as any intentional application of force as punishment, is illegal and may render a member of staff liable to criminal action as well as action under the academy disciplinary procedures. Corporal punishment includes any form of physical chastisement.
- 2.6 **Physical intervention** will not constitute corporal punishment where its purpose is to avert an immediate danger of injury to, or an immediate danger to the property of, any person including a pupil. In such circumstances, the element of restraint should be the minimum necessary to prevent injury or remove the risk of harm, in accordance with academy policy.

- 2.7 Where **physical contact** is necessary (e.g. in teaching PE), that contact should be the minimum necessary for the purpose and any contact must comply with accepted good practice. Particular care should be taken in helping pupils with physical or other disabilities (e.g. in lifting). Further guidance is available in Codes of Practice produced by the professional associations and from the Local Authority representing staff in these subject areas.
- 2.8 Each academy should have and follow a policy on **first aid** and have sufficient members of staff appropriately trained in its application, and in any event must always have a first aider on the premises. The policy should indicate the recording process for any incidents or accidents and should be clearly linked to the Health and Safety Policy.
- 2.9 Following any incident where a member of staff has reason to believe that their actions may be open to **misinterpretation**, the Headteacher should be immediately notified and a written report submitted as soon as possible following the incident. Heads should follow Safeguarding Board guidance and contact a LADO where necessary.
- 2.10 Guidance on procedures regarding **suspected or alleged child abuse** is contained in the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures, available in all establishments. In every academy, either the Head or another teacher will have designated responsibility for child protection. In the event that a member of staff suspects or receives allegations that a child is the subject of abuse, a report should immediately be made in strict confidence to the designated teacher who will immediately inform the First Response service.
- 2.11 Agreed guidelines on procedures **where staff are accused of physical or sexual abuse** of pupils are contained in the academy safeguarding policy.
- 2.12 It is the responsibility of all members of staff working in academies to ensure that they are up to date on all relevant policies and procedures.

3. CONDUCT IN RELATION TO THE ACADEMY

- 3.1 Staff should make sure that they do not **disclose confidential information** to anyone who has no right to receive it and that they do not say or write anything that would constitute a breach of confidence. Confidential information relating to employment or the academy should only be communicated on a need to know basis or with the specific prior permission of the Headteacher. Please see the Data Protection and E-Safety Policy for guidance about confidentiality and the use of social media.
- 3.2 **Materials and equipment** provided by the academy should not be used for purposes unconnected with employment. Staff should always use public funds and resources to the best advantage of the pupils and community.
- 3.3 Academies should have a Code of Conduct which should describe the requirement to report to the Headteacher or other relevant person any **indirect or direct financial interest** in any contract or other matter involving the academy. This is particularly relevant in cases of tendering or in the selling of surplus equipment or property. Headteachers should disclose such interest to the Chair of Governors or, in case of doubt, to a senior officer of the Academy Trust.

- 3.4 Staff should not solicit or accept **any gift, loan, fee, hospitality or other reward** which influences the way in which they carry out their duties. They should not influence or be influenced unfairly in the way they carry out their duties by ties of kinship or friendship, or by any other association or loyalty. Staff should comply with the Academy's Gifts and Hospitality Policy.
- 3.5 Care should be taken to avoid any **conflict of interest** between activities outside the academy and professional responsibilities. Staff should not undertake work or engage in activities in their own time through which they seek to exercise unfair advantage by virtue of their position. In no case should outside activities be of a nature that they may bring the academy into disrepute.
- 3.6 Staff should not, without authority or prior approval, undertake **activities unconnected with their professional role** during working hours. Policies relating to Absence should be followed.
- 3.7 Staff in full-time employment should inform their Headteacher where they are undertaking **other paid work which may impinge on their normal duties**, including activities such as lectures, private tuition, publications, press articles or radio/TV appearances. Where work is undertaken in the employee's own time any fees paid may be retained by the employee. However, where the event, or preparation for it, takes place in working time and/or involves the use of academy resources, it is necessary to seek approval to do so or to use such resources and the employee and the school/academy must agree the proportion of any fee to be paid to the academy for such use.
- 3.8 The payment of fees to **teachers acting as examiners or moderators** is covered by the specific provisions of the Burgundy Book and the regulations of Examining Bodies.
- 3.9 In addition to financial interests, staff should exercise professional judgement when considering the need to disclose to the Headteacher or their line manager, **non-financial interests** which may conflict with the interests of the academy or the Trust. Such disclosure will depend upon circumstances (e.g. in making recruitment decisions) and may include personal acquaintances, membership of voluntary or other organisations or any other official position or public appointment.
- 4.0 All staff should abide by the 7 principles of public life (the 'Nolan principles') – See Page 4
- 4.1 All staff should exercise good judgement when using social media (any form of online public interaction with others), ensuring that they do not make negative comments regarding their employer, students or parties connected with their employment. In particular staff must not post material that could be considered obscene, threatening, intimidating, or discriminatory or which could bring their employer into disrepute.

The 7 principles of public life

1. Selflessness

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

2. Integrity

Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

3. Objectivity

Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

4. Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

5. Openness

Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

6. Honesty

Holders of public office should be truthful.

7. Leadership

Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.