



Ark Acton
Academy

Staff code of conduct

May 2022

Approved by:

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1. Aims, Scope and Principles

This document aims to set and maintain standards of conduct that we expect all staff to follow. By creating this document, we aim to ensure our school is an environment where everyone is safe, happy and treated with respect. Many of the principles in this code of conduct are based on the Teachers' Standards.

School staff have an influential position in the school and will act as role models for pupils by consistently demonstrating high standards of behaviour.

We expect that all leaders and teachers will act in accordance with the personal and professional behaviours set out in the Teachers' Standards. We expect all support staff, governors and volunteers to also act with personal and professional integrity, respecting the safety and wellbeing of others.

Our academy is shaped by its culture of inclusion and mutual respect, which encourages a close working relationship between students and staff. We are working hard to provide an inspirational and secure environment which recognises and celebrates success whilst challenging students sufficiently to realise their full potential. Failure to follow the code of conduct may result in disciplinary action being taken, as set out in our staff disciplinary procedures. Please note that this code of conduct is not exhaustive. If situations arise that are not covered by this code, staff will use their professional judgement and act in the best interests of the school and its pupils.

2. Legislation and Guidance

In line with the statutory safeguarding guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', we should have a staff code of conduct, which should cover acceptable use of technologies, staff/pupil relationships and communications, including the use of social media. This policy also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

3. General Obligations

Staff set an example to pupils. They will:

- Maintain high standards in their attendance and punctuality
- Actively support diversity and inclusion within the school community and the organisation
- Never use inappropriate or offensive language in school
- Treat pupils and others with dignity and respect
- Show tolerance and respect for the rights of others
- 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
- Express personal beliefs in a way that will not overly influence pupils, and will not exploit pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law
- Understand the statutory frameworks they must act within
- Adhere to the Teachers' Standards

4. Safeguarding

Staff have a duty to safeguard pupils from harm, and to report any concerns they have. This includes physical, emotional and sexual abuse, or neglect. All staff will familiarise themselves with our 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. Our safeguarding policy and procedures are available on the school website [here](#). New staff will also be given copies on arrival.

5. Staff/Pupil Relationships

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

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

- This takes place in a public place that others can access
- Others can see into the room
- A colleague or line manager knows this is taking place

Staff should avoid contact with pupils outside of school hours if possible, unless on a school sanctioned activity. Personal contact details should not be exchanged between staff and pupils. This includes social media profiles. While we are aware many pupils and their parents may wish to give gifts to staff, for example, at the end of the school year, gifts from staff to pupils are not acceptable. If a staff member is concerned at any point that an interaction between themselves and a pupil may be misinterpreted, this should be reported to their line manager or the Principal.

6. Communication and Social Media

Social media profiles belonging to staff should not be available to pupils. If staff have a personal profile on social media sites, they should be aware that using their full names may enable students 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 must not make any efforts to find or contact pupils or parents via 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.

Staff should be aware of the school's e-safety policy which can be found on the school website [here](#). – Safeguarding Policy Appendix A

7. Acceptable Use of Technology

Staff should always abide by the Ark ICT Policy & Acceptable Use of Agreement when using ICT and processing sensitive data. A copy of the agreement is available [here](#).

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 should not use personal mobile phones and laptops, or school equipment for personal use, in school hours or in front of pupils. If staff use personal devices in work, the same expectations of behaviour apply as if using school equipment.

Staff should not store images of pupils on any personal devices and any images taken on personal devices will be downloaded to school or Ark systems as soon as reasonably possible and the personal copy permanently removed.

As per Ark's ICT Acceptable Use Policy, which is available [here](#), the employer retains the right to monitor emails and internet use on the school IT system.

8. Confidentiality

In the course of their role, members of staff are often privy to sensitive and confidential information about the school, staff, pupils and their parents. Staff must always collect, process and store personal and confidential information as outlined in the Ark Schools Data Protection & Freedom of Information Policy.

This information will never be:

- Disclosed to anyone without the relevant authority
- Used to humiliate, embarrass or blackmail others
- Used for a purpose other than for that which it was collected and intended.

This does not overrule the staff duty to report child protection concerns to the appropriate team where staff believe a child is at risk of harm.

9. 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.

Staff will not accept bribes. Gifts that are worth more than £25 must be declared and recorded on the gifts and hospitality register, as outlined in the [Expenses, Gifts & Hospitality Policy](#).

Staff will ensure that all information given to the school about their qualifications and professional experience is correct. Employment with the school may be terminated if it is found that the employee has been dishonest during the recruitment process.

10. Dress Code

The staff dress code has been designed to guide employees on the required standards of attire and appearance at work. Staff should always be dressed professionally both within the school and when representing the organisation externally. Students look to staff as role models and staff appearance should reflect this.

Term Time Attire

All employees must comply with the school's dress code of 'smart business attire' during working hours, which includes staff taking students on off-site visits. This includes:

- Professional, supportive footwear should always be worn – flip flops are not acceptable; trainers are allowed to be worn but should be of a dark colour.
- Jewellery should not be excessive.
- Where appropriate and practical, tattoos and piercings should remain covered.
- Visual body piercings are not permitted e.g. lip rings, etc.
- Ensuring clothing is not revealing or excessively tight. Staff who teach PE should not wear lycra unless other items are worn over the top.
- Staff who are provided with a departmental uniform, e.g. catering, premises, and other support staff, should always wear this during their working hours.
- Employees who meet with members of the public and external organisations must always present a professional image of the organisation.
- During INSET days, staff are required to wear business attire unless instructed otherwise by the Principal.
- All staff are supplied with an Ark Acton Academy ID badge which must always be worn and be visible when at work.

It is recognised that some staff may cycle or run to work. In these circumstances, staff should be mindful of excessively revealing clothing and must change into acceptable professional attire upon arrival to school.

Non-Term Time Attire

During holiday periods casual wear is allowed. However, given that students may at times be onsite, the following guidance should be applied:

- No sweatshirts or t-shirts with slogans or symbols that could cause offence
- Clothing should not be revealing or excessively tight or short
- Staff should always be dressed in a way that is suitable for the workplace which may be different to how staff dress outside school.

Please note that the Principal may require staff to dress according to the term time attire during holiday periods; this will be communicated to staff accordingly.

During School Trips

For school trips where students are required to wear uniform, staff must also wear professional dress that reflects the expected attire for work. In all other circumstances and depending on the activity undertaken, staff may receive advice on the dress code from their line manager or member of the leadership team.

Extenuating Circumstances

In some circumstances, particularly with medical issues, staff may discuss and seek consent for any reasonable adaptations to the dress code with their line manager. The organisation recognises the diversity of cultures and religions of staff and will take a sensitive approach when this affects the dress code requirements.

All staff are required to comply with the dress code and failure to do so may result in formal action. The process for this is outlined in the published [disciplinary](#) and [grievance](#) procedures.

11. Conduct Outside of Work

Staff will not act in a way that would bring the school, or the teaching profession into disrepute. This covers relevant criminal offences, such as violence or sexual misconduct, as well as negative comments about the organisation and its members on social media. As per the employment contract, staff must inform the Principal if criminal proceedings relating to them begin outside of the workplace.

12. Monitoring Arrangements

This document will be reviewed every two years but may be revised as needed and in line with changing legislation. Any amendments will be communicated to staff accordingly.

13. Links with other Policies

This policy links with Ark policies on:

- [Staff Disciplinary Procedures](#), which will be used if staff breach this code of conduct. It also sets out examples of what we will deem as misconduct and gross misconduct
- [Staff Grievance Procedures](#)
- [Safeguarding](#)
- [Gifts and Hospitality](#)
- [E-Safety](#)
- [ICT acceptable use policy](#)
- [Data Protection](#)