

Updated: May 2019
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Cornerstone Academy Trust

Code of Conduct

Introduction

As an Academy, the Board of Trustees is required to set out a Code of Conduct for all school employees. All staff in the school are expected to actively follow and support our mission statement:

**“Relevant, purposeful, enjoyable learning...
preparing children for today and for their future”**

Cornerstone Academy Trust expects all staff to comply with management and to conform to the Academy’s policies at all times. If these policies are disregarded or the employee behaves wrongly in some other way the Academy may discipline employees.

Disciplinary action can consist of formal oral warning, written warning, a final written warning, dismissal or, in the case of gross misconduct, summary dismissal.

This Code of Conduct document should be used in partnership with the Staff Handbook.

Purpose and Principles

PURPOSE OF GUIDANCE

It is important that all adults working with children understand that the nature of their work and the responsibilities related to it, place them in a position of trust. This practice guidance provides clear advice on appropriate and safe behaviours for all adults working with children in paid or unpaid capacities, in all settings and in all contexts.

The guidance aims to:

- Keep children safe by clarifying which behaviours constitute safe practice and which behaviours should be avoided
- Assist adults working with children to work safely and responsibly and to monitor their own standards and practice
- Support managers and employers in setting clear expectations of behaviour and/or codes of practice relevant to the services being provided
- Support employers in giving a clear message that unlawful or unsafe behaviour is unacceptable and that, where appropriate, disciplinary or legal action will be taken
- Support safer recruitment practice
- Minimise the risk of misplaced or malicious allegations made against adults who work with children and young people
- Reduce the incidence of positions of trust being abused or misused.

UNDERPINNING PRINCIPLES

- The welfare of the child is paramount
- It is the responsibility of all adults to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people. This responsibility extends to a duty of care for those adults employed, commissioned or contracted to work with children and young people
- Adults who work with children are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and

intentions

- Adults should work and be seen to work, in an open and transparent way
- The same professional standards should always be applied regardless of culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity
- Adults should continually monitor and review their practice and ensure they follow the guidance contained in this document

Safeguarding Pupils

Please read fully and ensure you are constantly familiar with the Academy's Child Protection policy

Duty of Care

Staff must:

- Understand the responsibilities, which are part of their employment or role, and be aware that sanctions will be applied if these provisions are breached
- Always act, and be seen to act, in the child's best interests
- Avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions
- Take responsibility for their own actions and behaviour

Honesty and Integrity

Employees are 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 at our Academy :

- Employees must comply with any lawful or reasonable instructions issued by managers or Trustees
- Employees uphold public trust in our Academy and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, by:
 - Treating students with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to their professional position
 - Having regard for the need to safeguard students' 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 students' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law.
- Employees must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of our Academy and maintain high standards in their own attendance and punctuality. Employees must treat all colleagues with respect, dignity, fairness and courtesy at all times
- Staff must maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their work. This includes the handling and claiming of money and the use of the Academy's property and facilities.

Health and Safety

Please read fully and ensure you are constantly familiar with the Academy's Health and Safety policy.

Confidentiality

- Where staff have access to confidential information about children or their parents or carers, staff must not reveal such information except to those colleagues who have a professional role in relation to the children
- All staff are likely at some point to witness actions which need to be confidential. For example, where a child is bullied by another child (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 child's parent or carer, nor with colleagues in the school except with a senior member of staff with the appropriate role and authority to deal with the matter
- However, staff have an obligation to share with their manager or the school's Designated Senior Person any information which gives rise to concern about the safety or welfare of a child. Staff must never promise a child that they will not act on information that they are told by the child.

Drugs and Alcohol

ALCOHOL

Alcohol intoxication is defined within this policy as at or above the UK legal limit for driving. Staff must ensure that they are not intoxicated by alcohol when they report for work or return to work, and that they remain free from alcohol whenever they are at work, when driving Company vehicles or when driving on Company business.

Staff must not consume alcohol during the working day. No alcohol may be drunk at any time on Academy premises or in Academy vehicles.

ILLEGAL DRUGS

Staff must ensure that they are free of any illegal drugs when they report for work or return to work, and that they remain so whenever they are at work, when driving Company vehicles or when driving on Company business.

The use, possession, storage, transportation, promotion, distribution and/or sale of illegal drugs or drug equipment is forbidden during working time, in the workplace or at the worksite. The use of Trust telephony or IT systems at any time for these purposes is forbidden. Cornerstone may report any criminal activity. Decision making on this matter will involve the Academy Leadership Team and Board of Trustees.

When it has reasonable grounds to suspect an individual of possessing illegal drugs. The Chief Executive Officer (CEO), accompanied by a Trustee, may search Trust property used by that individual, or the individual's personal property that is on Academy premises.

PRESCRIBED OR OVER THE COUNTER MEDICINES AND OTHER SUBSTANCES

The CEO recognises that individuals may, on occasion, use prescribed or over the counter medicines which are unconnected with the abuse of drugs, but have the potential to cause impaired performance at work. In these circumstances, it is the individual's responsibility to read the label and to consider the potential consequences on their fitness for duty, if they have any concerns they should seek advice from a pharmacist or their GP.

Where the individual could reasonably expect that there may be effects on their work performance or the safety of themselves or others, they must advise the CEO.

The use, promotion, distribution and/or sale of prescription or over the counter medicines for non-medical purposes is forbidden during working time, in the workplace or at the worksite, as is the misuse of other substances, eg solvents, for mind altering purposes. The use of Academy telephone or IT systems at any time for these purposes is forbidden.

Data Protection

Members of staff may have access to confidential information about students, colleagues or other matters relating to the Academy. This could include personal and sensitive data, for example information about a student's home life. Employees should never use this information to their own personal advantage, or to humiliate, intimidate or embarrass others. Employees should never disclose this information unless this is in the proper circumstances and with the proper authority. If an employee is ever in doubt about what information can or can't be disclosed they should speak to their line manager in the first instance.

We will comply with the requirements of **Data Protection Legislation** (being (i) unless and until the GDPR is no longer directly applicable in the UK, the General Data Protection Regulation ((EU) 2016/679) and any national implementing laws, regulations and secondary legislation, as amended or updated from time to time, in the UK and then (ii) any successor legislation to the GDPR or the Data Protection Act 1998). Employees are expected to comply with the Academy's systems as set out in our Data Protection Policy. If any employee becomes aware that data is at risk of compromise or loss, or has been compromised or lost they must report it immediately to the Data Protection Officer, in order (where applicable) for relevant breaches to be reported to the Information Commissioners Office within 72 hours.

Employees must read and understand our Data Protection Policy and other relevant policies including in relation to criminal records information, recruitment and safer recruitment, internet, email and communications and information security.

Media Relations

Responses to any enquiries relating to the Academy from the media, including national or local press/publications, TV and/or radio, should be addressed to the CEO or the Chair of Trustees. Responses to requests for personal media interviews received by a member of staff as a consequence of their position at the Academy should also be cleared with the CEO or the Chair of Trustees, as should all material distributed externally which may be taken as an expression of the views of the Academy.

Dress Code

Staff must dress appropriately for work in school. Further details of items of clothing that are acceptable or not can be found in the Dress Code Policy.

Environment

Your working environment should be kept tidy and organized and should not present any significant danger or hazard to any person, child or adult.

Behaviour Towards Others

Whilst employed by the Academy, employees should treat their colleagues and any other person with whom they come into contact, with respect and dignity. The Trust is committed to a work environment free of harassment and bullying, where everyone is treated with dignity and respect.

Gifts, Hospitality and Prizes

The Trust has set this policy for the acceptance of gifts, hospitality, awards, prizes or any other benefit by the Academy or its staff which might be seen to compromise personal judgement or integrity. Where benefits have been received they must be recorded in a register detailing, for each occasion, the nature of the benefit and the donor, in case of later complaint.

When giving gifts, the CEO will ensure that the decision is fully documented and has regard to the propriety and regularity of the use of public funds. Gifts to children should be proportional and fair across all and agreed as a year group.

The Academy is committed to ensuring full governance regarding gifts, hospitality and prizes. Further details can be found in the Gifts and Hospitality Policy.

Staff Policies

Please refer to the Cornerstone Staff Notebook on OneNote for the following procedures and policies:

- Grievance Procedure
- Disciplinary Procedure
- Capability Procedure
- Leave of Absence Policy
- Maternity, Paternity, Adoption & Parental Leave Policy
- Management of Sickness Absence Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Redundancy Policy

Email and Internet

Academy technology systems, including access to email and the Internet, are provided and supported for business purposes. All usage must be both reasonable and appropriate. Use of Academy

technology systems for non-business matters is not permitted during working hours. Use of personal **devices** like smartphones and tablets is not permitted during working hours. Users may use the Internet and email systems for their personal use outside of their working hours, so long as this does not interfere in any way with their work or the Academy's operational requirements.

The use of these systems for both business and personal use is at the CEO's discretion and may be withdrawn at any time. The CEO reserves the right to block access to any internet site (for further details please see the Academy's policy on 'Acceptable Use of Technology').

The use of Academy technology systems will be monitored and misuse will be addressed as a disciplinary matter.

Smoking

Smoking is not permitted on the school premises. Further details can be found in the Smoking Policy.

Working Time

It is necessary that all staff are in school at their agreed starting time and do not leave before their agreed finishing time, unless by prior arrangement. Our expectations are that:

- You attend work in accordance with your contract of employment and associated terms and conditions in relation to hours, days of work and holidays
- Wherever possible, you make routine medical and dental appointments outside of your working hours or during holidays. The only exceptions to this requirement will be in the event of an emergency or particular difficulty, in relation to hospital appointments (which are rarely negotiable) or to attend ante-natal care if you are pregnant. Pregnant employees are entitled to paid time off for ante-natal appointments. In any circumstances, however, you should agree time off with the Head of Schools at the earliest opportunity to ensure that adequate cover arrangements can be made
- Prior to making any request, you refer to the Academy's policy on special leave if you need time off for any reason other than personal illness. Any member of staff taking such leave without permission will be subject to disciplinary action.

School Continuity

In the event of major disruption, such as inclement weather, we need to minimise the impact on our pupils and community. In these instances, please refer to the school continuity plan. Please ensure the contact details held by the school for you are up to date.

Conduct Outside of Work

Staff must not engage in conduct outside work which could seriously damage the reputation and standing of the school or the employee's own reputation or the reputation of other members of the school community. Any such conduct could lead to dismissal. In particular, criminal offences that involve violence or possession or use of illegal drugs or sexual misconduct are likely to be regarded as unacceptable and could lead to dismissal.

Staff must exercise caution when using information technology and be aware of the risks to themselves and others. Staff must not use social media eg Facebook with pupils or parents.

Staff may undertake work outside school, either paid or voluntary, provided that it does not conflict with the interests of the school and is not to a level which may contravene the working time regulations or affect an individual's work performance.

All members of staff must declare any business interests outside of school that may be connected either to the supply of goods / services to the school or be rewarded through association with the school.

Employees are required to demonstrate responsible behaviour at work related functions and work related social events that take place outside normal work hours and to act in a way that will not have a detrimental effect on our reputation.