

**THE SHROPSHIRE GATEWAY EDUCATIONAL TRUST  
STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT**

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## 1.0 Introduction & Scope

All employees should be aware of the standards of conduct expected of them by the Shropshire Gateway Educational Trust. Although it is impossible to lay down hard and fast rules to cover all eventualities this code sets out the principal areas where concerns may arise and staff awareness is necessary. The Code applies to all people working in schools whatever their position, roles or responsibilities and is therefore aimed at all school-based staff and volunteers.

In addition to this general code of conduct all teaching staff are required to adhere to the Teachers' Standards. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teachers-standards>

Staff must comply with requirements placed on them by their contract of employment, conditions of service, schools' Articles of Government and relevant policies of the Shropshire Gateway Educational Trust. The Code is supplementary to documents detailing terms and conditions of employment, including statutory provisions, issued at the time of appointment.

Failure to observe 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.

The Shropshire Gateway Educational Trust is committed to ensuring that all of its schools maintain a high reputation for the quality of their work and the professionalism of their staff. This Code will serve to confirm the current good practice of staff working in these schools. Should staff have any doubts about the issues raised they should consult their Headteacher.

It is an expectation that any third party used to provide a service within or on behalf of any of the schools would comply with the general principles of this code of conduct and therefore, while it may not be possible for the Trust to take disciplinary action against an individual who is not a direct employee, it is considered good practice to share the document and the Trust's expectations with all external providers.

## 2.0 Pupils

The law recognises that 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 reasonably 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 school.

Interaction with pupils should always be appropriate to each pupil's age and gender.

It is unrealistic to suggest that teachers should never touch pupils. There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate for staff to have physical contact with pupils, such as when a

distressed pupil needs comfort and reassurance or as an integral part of some lessons such as PE and music. However, innocent actions and appropriate physical contact can sometimes be misconstrued and it is therefore crucial that staff only initiate physical contact for the minimum time necessary and in ways appropriate to their own role and the needs of the child. Staff should use their professional judgement at all times. Where feasible, staff should seek the child's permission before initiating contact. Where a member of staff thinks that an incident could have been misinterpreted it should be reported to the Headteacher immediately. Further guidance is available in Codes of Practice produced by the professional associations.

Staff should not touch pupils, however casually, in ways or on parts of the body that might be considered indecent, unnecessary or familiar or use inappropriate language. Particular care may be necessary when supervising pupils in out of school activities. Further advice on the practical arrangements applying in this area is available from each school's Educational Visits Coordinator.

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 consistent with Trust policies.

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.

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 Trust's disciplinary procedures. Corporal punishment includes any form of physical chastisement.

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.

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.

It is the responsibility of all members of staff working in Schools to ensure that they are up to date on all relevant policies and procedures.

### **3.0 Confidentiality**

Staff should make sure that they do not disclose confidential information to anyone who has no right to receive it and do not say or write anything that would constitute a breach of

confidence. Confidential information relating to employment or the school should only be communicated on a need to know basis or with the specific permission of the Headteacher.

Staff should not use any information obtained in the course of their duties to the detriment of the school or the Shropshire Gateway Educational Trust for personal gain or benefit or pass this information on to others who might use it in such a way.

Staff must take all reasonable steps to ensure that the loss, destruction, inaccuracy or disclosure of information does not occur as a result of their actions, including information relating to school business and pupil data.

Staff should not use their position to gain access to information for their own advantage or to intimidate, humiliate or embarrass a child;

Staff are expected to treat any information they receive about children and young people in a discreet and confidential manner;

There are some circumstances in which staff may be expected to share information about a child, for example, when child protection issues arise. In such cases staff have a duty to pass information on without delay in line with school procedures. If staff are in any doubt about whether to share information or keep it confidential they should seek guidance from their Safeguarding Lead.

#### **4.0 Equality and Diversity**

Staff are expected to uphold fundamental British values which include democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

Staff should not discriminate in any recruitment and employment practices, nor in the delivery of services.

Staff should not denigrate their colleagues in the presence of third parties, nor should they adversely criticise a colleague in the presence of others except in the context of appropriate procedures.

#### **5.0 Financial Conflict of Interest**

Use of materials and equipment provided by the Trust should not be used for purposes unconnected with employment. Staff should use public funds to the best advantage and adhere to high standards of probity in their use.

Staff must advise the Headteacher of any direct or indirect financial interest in any contract or other matter involving the school or the Trust. 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 the Local Governing body and/or the Board of Directors.

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 some other association or loyalty.

Care should be taken to avoid any conflict of interest between activities outside the school 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 bring the school into disrepute.

Staff should not, without authority, undertake activities unconnected with their professional role during working hours.

## **6.0 Non-Financial Conflict of Interest**

Staff should exercise professional judgement in disclosing to the Headteacher or their line manager, non-financial interests which may conflict with the interests of the school or the Trust. Such disclosure will depend upon circumstances and may include personal acquaintances, membership of voluntary or other organisations or any official position or public appointment.

Staff should not put themselves in a position where their duty to their school or the trust and their private interests conflict.

Staff should not allow their own personal or political opinions to interfere with their work and the provision of a balanced and professional service, ensuring that they work to the professional standard required.

## **7.0 Conduct Outside Work**

Staff in full-time employment should inform their Headteacher where they are undertaking paid work which may impinge on their normal duties, including activities such as lectures, private tuition, publications, press articles or radio/TV appearances. Where the event, or preparation for it, takes place in working time and/or involves the use of Trust resources, it is necessary to seek approval to use such resources and where deemed appropriate agree the proportion of any fee to be paid to the Trust for such use.

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

## **8.0 Dress and Appearance**

Staff should ensure that they are dressed safely and appropriately for the tasks that they undertake and that through their appearance, they promote a positive and professional image.

## **9.0 Publication of Books/Articles**

If staff wish to publish books, articles, letters, dissertations etc that they have written in connection with their duties and in which they describe themselves as holding an appointment with the school they must consult the Headteacher.

## **10.0 Social Media**

Staff must exercise caution when using information technology and be aware of the risks to themselves and others.

Staff must not engage in inappropriate use of social network sites in any way that undermines the principles outlined in the code of conduct.

Staff must only use their school email account or school learning platform account when communicating electronically with pupils, parents and colleagues.

Staff must familiarise themselves with linked policies such as E-Safety.

### 11.0 Implementation Plan

Is training required to implement this policy?

Yes  No

If Yes, how will this be delivered and by whom?

To which groups of staff does this policy need to be issued?

*All school staff, Trustees, volunteers and contractors. Any person working within the school who needs to be aware of what is expected of anyone working within the school environment.*

How will the policy be issued and by whom?

*Via email from Head teachers  
Via Chairs of LGB*

Date adopted by Local Governing Body:

Signed:




## Appendix i – Safeguarding Leads

- a. Clee Hill Community Academy  
Mrs Ceri Little, Headteacher
  
- b. Cleobury Mortimer Primary School  
Mrs Carmel Mayfield, Headteacher
  
- c. Lacon Childe School  
Miss Angela Cole, Deputy Headteacher
  
- d. Stottesdon C of E Primary School  
Mrs Katie Jones, Headteacher

### Appendix ii - Equality impact assessment screening form

Section one: screening for impact				
Name of policy		SGET Staff Code of Conduct		
Project lead completing assessment:		Matt Hayes		
Position:		Business Manager		
1. What is the main purpose of the strategy/project/policy?				
Describes the code of conduct for any member of staff working within the Trust.				
2. Who will be the main stakeholders/users of the policy? Please consider the impact of the policy on the different groups of stakeholder /users.				
People working in a paid or voluntary capacity within the trust.				
3. Use the table to show:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Where you think that the policy could have a negative impact on any of the equality strands, that is, it could disadvantage them – if no impact please note the evidence for this.</li> <li>■ Where you think that the strategy/project/policy could have a positive impact on any of the groups or contribute to promoting equality, equal opportunities or improving relationships within equality characteristics.</li> </ul>				
	Positive impact	Negative impact	No impact	Reason and evidence (provide details of specific groups affected even for no impact)
Age	✓			The policy applies to all staff and is intended to provide a professional approach to all aspects of school life. There is a specific section relating to equality and diversity.
Disability	✓			The policy applies to all staff and is intended to provide a professional approach to all aspects of school life. There is a specific section relating to equality and diversity.
Gender	✓			The policy applies to all staff and is intended to provide a professional approach to all aspects of school life. There is a specific section relating to equality and diversity.

Gender identity	✓			The policy applies to all staff and is intended to provide a professional approach to all aspects of school life. There is a specific section relating to equality and diversity.
Sexual orientation	✓			The policy applies to all staff and is intended to provide a professional approach to all aspects of school life. There is a specific section relating to equality and diversity.
Race	✓			The policy applies to all staff and is intended to provide a professional approach to all aspects of school life. There is a specific section relating to equality and diversity.
Religion or belief	✓			The policy applies to all staff and is intended to provide a professional approach to all aspects of school life. There is a specific section relating to equality and diversity.
4. If you have indicated there is a negative impact on any group, is that impact:				
Legal? (not discriminatory under anti-discriminatory legislation)		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>		No <input type="checkbox"/>
Intended?		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>		No <input type="checkbox"/>
Level of impact?		High <input type="checkbox"/>		Low <input type="checkbox"/>
If the negative impact is possibly discriminatory and not intended and/or of high impact you must complete a full equality impact assessment. If not, complete the rest of section one below.				
5. Could you minimise or remove any negative impact that is of low significance? Could you add any additional action to have a positive impact rather than no impact?				
N/A				
6. If there is no evidence that the strategy, project or policy promotes equality, equal opportunities or improved relations – could it be adapted so that it does? If so, explain how.				
N/A				
7. Please list the outcome following this equality impact assessment (this could be no changes, some changes, further work needed around particular groups or cease development of the policy).				
N/A				
Signed: 		Date: 24.04.2016		