



Employee code of conduct

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This Code of Conduct for Employees is based on key principles arising from the work of the Nolan Committee on standards in public life; it outlines the minimum standards that all Trust employees, casual workers, agency staff, contractors and volunteers must adhere to.
- 1.2. The purpose of this code is to promote consistency and make all employees aware of their responsibilities whilst engaged in work for the Trust, by specifying standards of behaviour and by clearly defining rules concerning official conduct.
- 1.3. Employees must comply with this Code as it forms part of their terms and conditions of employment. Some schools/academies within the Trust may also issue supplementary codes of practice on employee conduct. These and the Trust's security policies and codes of practice must also be complied with at all times.
- 1.4. The Trust believes that employees are responsible for their actions. It is the responsibility of employees to read the Code. If any of the provisions contained within this Code of Conduct and related codes of practice are not fully understood employees must, in their own interests, seek clarification from their Headteacher or line manager. Managers should take in to account the translation and interpretation needs of the individual. This Code can be made available in other languages and formats on request.

2. Scope

- 2.1. This policy relates to all schools and settings across Nexus MAT and supersedes any local policies and procedures that have been in use prior to the academy conversion. Where required, an individual Nexus MAT academy – in agreement with the Trust Chief Executive Officer - may publish a supplementary policy guidance document or procedure in line with this policy, to ensure that any idiosyncrasies associated with that specific school are covered in their local policy library.

3. Standards

3.1.

3.2. Children, their families and members of the public expect the highest standards of behaviour from Nexus Multi Academy Trust employees. Public confidence in employees' integrity would be shaken by the least suspicion that they could be influenced by improper motives. Employees must not put themselves in a position where their honesty or integrity could be called into question. Employees should be aware at all times about the potential for public perception to be different to their own and avoid placing themselves at risk of allegation of wrongdoing at all times.

3.3. The Trust reserves the right to monitor its employees, including surveillance, in accordance with Trust Policy and the law to ensure that the provisions of this Code of Conduct are adhered to.

3.4. Employees will be expected, without fear of recrimination, to bring attention to the appropriate level of management, concerns about how Trust (and individual school) resources are managed or provided. The Trust operates a Confidential Reporting Code (Whistleblowing) and employees must report to the appropriate manager any impropriety or breach of procedure.

3.5. All employees have the legal right to request . Employees 1 0 0 1 110.42

an inability to recruit additional staff.

- 3.6. Part-time workers are protected from being treated less favourably than equivalent full-time workers just because they're part time. You can find out more about part-time worker rights at <https://www.gov.uk/part-time-worker-rights-and-acas-part-time-working>. It is important to note that all posts, whether on full time or part time contracts, should be manageable and sustainable for the individual. Please refer to the Trust's Flexible Working Policy for more information.
- 3.7.
- 3.8. Other general standards of conduct are set out in the Trust's disciplinary procedure and summarised below. The standards of conduct and behaviour are intended to promote fair and consistent treatment of individuals, apply to all employees of the Trust and will be regarded as part of each employee's contract of employment.
- 3.9.
- 3.10. All employees are expected to attend regularly and punctually, not to absent themselves from duty without permission and to perform their duties in a manner, which combines prompt and efficient service with a concern for the feeling of others, including colleagues, managers, children and members of the public.
- 3.11. All employees must ensure their line manager is aware of any planned absence from their designated work place. Headteachers are permitted to attend essential meetings offsite without requesting permission, with essential meetings defined as those relating to core school business, such as multi agency meetings with key statutory partners. Beyond this, Headteachers should discuss any offsite activity in advance with their line manager, including working from home days. Line managers reserve the

- 4.2. Confidential, personal or financial information about any employee, such as salary details, must not be disclosed to any unauthorised person, or normally, to any external organisation/agency, without the express approval of the person concerned.
- 4.3. Where the request relates to references, arising as a consequence of job applications, applications for mortgages, etc, these may be issued only after verifying the identity of the enquirer either by replying in writing or in case of telephone enquiries, by telephoning the person/organisation back. However, in the case of references relating to job applications for colleagues or ex-Trust employees, Trust employees can only act in a personal capacity. Only the applicant's line manager can provide employment references. Any misrepresentation of the Trust will be treated as misconduct.
- 4.4. Employees should not use any information obtained in the course of their employment for personal gain or benefit, nor should they pass it on to others who might use it in such a way.
- 4.5. Employees may be personally prosecuted for offences under the Data Protection legislation. If any employee is in doubt about their responsibilities, they must consult their manager or Headteacher.
- 4.6.
- 4.7. It is Trust Policy that all media liaison relating to Trust activities is handled by the Executive Leadership Team of the Trust and the Trust Board. If an employee has ideas for positive stories about the Trust's policies or activities or is approached by a journalist, who is unaware of, or avoiding, the Trust's procedures, the approval of the school Headteacher must be obtained before any information is given verbally, via e-mail or in writing. For Headteachers, approval of the Chief Executive Officer must be obtained before any information is given verbally, via e-mail or in writing. Where the issue relates to the wider business of the Multi Academy Trust, approval from the Chief Executive Officer must be sought.
- 4.8. Where an employee is writing material for publication which does not refer specifically to the Trust, but does relate to their profession/occupation e.g. articles in professional journals, the employee must ensure they have written approval of the school Headteacher before any information is given verbally, via e-mail or in writing. For Headteachers, approval of the Chief Executive

Officer must be obtained before any information is given verbally, via e-mail or in writing.

- 4.9. Employees are expected to raise any concerns, including concerns of a critical nature within the Trust, directly with Line Managers or within Employee Forums. Public comments of a critical nature which undermine the Trust or bring the Trust into disrepute, other than those disclosed under the protection of the Confidential Reporting Code or statute, could be construed as a fundamental breach of confidence and trust, which may have implications for continued employment. This may include comments made by employees when participating in an outside group if such comments bring them into conflict with the Trust.

5. Low Level Concerns

- 5.1. As part of our commitment to safeguarding and in accordance with 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' statutory guidance we must ensure that adults who work with children do so in a way that is in accordance with the ethos and policies set out by the Multi Academy Trust and Employee Code of Conduct. This includes the expectation that staff report concerns, no matter how small, about their own behaviour or that of another member of staff, volunteer, supply teacher, contractor or other person working in school.
- 5.2. The purpose of reporting low levels concerns is to help create and embed a

is inconsistent with the "Guidance for safer working practice" (May 2019) and Employee Code of Conduct, and does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to make a referral to the LADO

6.2. Examples of behaviour that could require reporting of a low-level concern include, but are not limited to:

being over friendly with chil

- 7.3. Where the Headteacher is not available, the information will be reported to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy), i.e. the most senior member of SLT acting in this role.
- 7.4. Low-level concerns about the Designated Safeguarding Lead will be reported to the Headteacher and those about the Headteacher will be reported to the Trust's Chief Executive Officer.
- 7.5. It may be the case that a person finds themselves in a situation which could be misinterpreted, or might appear compromising to others; or they may have behaved in a manner which on reflection they consider falls below the standard set out in the Employee Code of Conduct. In these circumstances

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9.2. All employees have a responsibility to treat their colleagues with dignity and respect.

9.3. The Trust requires all its employees to act responsibly to ensure their own and colleague's health and safety by: complying with safety clothing and equipment; contributing to the review and improvement of working methods;

- 9.9. Employees who engage or supervise contractors or have any other official relationship with contractors and have previously had or currently have a relationship in a private or domestic capacity with contractors, should declare that relationship in writing to Trust Board.
- 9.10. Employees who are privy to confidential information on contracts out to tender, or costs for either internal or external contractors, must not disclose that information to any unauthorised party or organisation.
- 9.11. Employees must ensure that no special favour is shown to current or former employees or their partners, close relatives or business associates in awarding contracts to businesses run by them or employing them.
- 9.12. Where the competitive tendering of Trust Services is being carried out, employees involved directly in the process must declare their membership of or affiliation to, any organisation which may have an interest in tendering for the service to the Trust Board.

10. Recruitment and other employment matters

- 10.1. Employees must take care that they are not open to any charge of discrimination in recruitment or employment practices, by fully adhering to the Trust's Recruitment and Selection Code of Practice.

of computer-held information. Particular care must be taken to observe established procedures when using passwords and when logging on and off. Employees must never share passwords, which may lead to unauthorised access to Trust systems. Where this practice is found, employees should be aware it may lead to disciplinary action.

- 11.2. In respect of internet access, employees must comply with Trust policies such as the Information Governance and Data Protection, Internet and e-mail usage, the Use of Communications Policy and relevant legislation such as the Regulatory and Investigatory Powers Act, Data Protection Act, Obscene Publications Act, Computer Misuse Act and the Theft Act.

12. Use of Trust Systems, Property and Facilities

- 12.1. The Trust's property such as telephones, mobile phones, the internet, e-mail, stationery, photocopiers, word processors and other machines or tools, materials, offices, car parks and facilities, may only be used for Trust business unless permission for private use is given under the terms of the Trust's codes of practice or by management. This also applies to all automatic processing equipment such as laptops, PCs, software including computer games and data, none of which may be used for private purposes or removed from the premises without the express permission of the appropriate manager.
- 12.2. Employees will be required to pay for telephone calls using land lines or mobile phones, or the use of facsimile equipment, for private purposes, through the approved systems in place for the collection of such monies. Employees will be expected to keep calls to a minimum level and managers will have the discretion to determine what is, or is not excessive.
- 12.3. Telephone call and e-mail/internet logging systems are in operation in the Trust and may be used to identify usage for private purposes. Any communications using Trust systems can be monitored.
- 12.4. Employees must adhere to all of the Trust's specific system security measures that are currently in place or introduced in the future.

- 12.5. Care in the use of language contained in e-mails is essential as misuse could leave employees and the Trust liable to legal action. In the case of employees internal proceedings under bullying and harassment procedures or the disciplinary procedure may also result.

13. Dress and Personal Appearance

- 13.1. Trust employees act as ambassadors for the Trust and/or the schools in which they work. Consequently employees must maintain a standard of dress and appearance that is appropriate or required for the workplace and

- 16.1. The Trust's duty of care under the Working Time Regulations requires that reasonable steps are taken to ensure that workers do not exceed an average 48 hours per week. The Trust prefers its full time employees not to have paid secondary employment of any kind. The Trust recognises that many of its part time employees may have secondary employment. However, all employees are required to declare to their Headteacher any secondary employment. It will be the responsibility of school leaders to confirm with the employee whether this conflicts with their Trust employment.
- 16.2. All employees should be clear about their contractual obligations and should not take outside employment which conflicts with the Trust's interests. This will include any activities which might be approved, monitored or regulated as part of their employment.
- 16.3. An employee's declaration of secondary employment, does not remove the right of the Trust to take disciplinary action against any employee whose secondary employment is deemed to be, or has been, detrimental to the interests or reputation of the Trust.
- 16.4. Employee appointments as School Governors, Councillors to Local Authorities, membership of the Territorial Army, appointment as a Justice of the Peace or as a Member of the Employment Tribunal do not constitute secondary employment as described in this Code. Nonetheless, the principles of employees making Headteachers aware of these duties and seeking appropriate time off in a reasonable and timely manner apply.
- 16.5. Employees of the Trust will not be permitted to hold voting rights or trusteeships of external bodies who have contracts with or otherwise grant funded by, the Trust, without the express consent of the Chief Executive Officer. There is a potential conflict of interest between an employee's responsibilities to protect the interests of the Trust and the legal duties of a Trustee or voting member of an independent organisation. It is also extremely doubtful whether employees will be covered by the Trust's indemnity in such circumstances.
- 16.6. The copyright in all records and documents made by employees in the course of their employment shall belong to the Trust.

17. Use of social media and mobile technology/devices and mobile

- 18.1. Employees must declare to their Headteacher (or in the case of the employee in question being the Headteacher, their line manager) any non-financial interests that may bring about conflict with the Trust's interests. All such declarations should be recorded in Trust registers of interests.
- 18.2. Employees must declare to an appropriate manager any financial interests which could conflict with the Trust's interests.
- 18.3. Employees should declare to an appropriate manager membership of any organisation not open to the public without formal membership and commitment of allegiance and which has secrecy about rules or membership or conduct. A definition of what constitutes a secret society is shown at Appendix 1.
- 18.4. Any employee contemplating purchasing or leasing of Trust owned land should raise the matter with their line manager to ensure that there is not or could not reasonably be seen to be any opportunity for influencing the disposal process or use or information not generally available to purchasers.

19. Corruption

- 19.1. Trust employees must not use their position to confer on or secure for himself/herself, or any other person, an advantage or disadvantage.
- 19.2. Employees must be aware that it is a serious criminal offence for them corruptly to receive or give any gift, loan, fee, reward or advantage for doing or not doing anything or showing favour or disfavour to any person in their official capacity.
- 19.3. Nexus Multi Academy Trust acknowledges the responsibility it has for the administration of public funds, and emphasises to the public and its employees the importance it places on probity, financial control and honest administration. The Trust is also committed to the fight against fraud, whether perpetrated by employees, contractors or the public.

- 19.4. Employees must

19.5. Defrauding and stealing (or attempting to do so) from the Trust or any person or organisation in any way will not be tolerated. This includes falsification of claims, e.g. mileage and travel/subsistence allowances with the intention of obtaining payment. Employees should be aware that the Trust shares data with other Government agencies such as Department for Work and Pensions and the Inland Revenue.

19.6. Employees should not use Trust procurement processes for personal purchases, unless authorised to do so.

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the approximate value;
whether accepted or declined;
reasons for acceptance (if applicable).

20.6. The only gifts not required to be recorded in accordance with the above paragraph are those of a nominal value issued for publicity purposes such as pens, diaries and calendars.

20.7.

20.8. Employees on occasion receive payment or gifts for personal care/work, which is unassociated with their employment with the Trust. All employees who carry out such work for members of the public must declare these arrangements to their Headteacher/manager in writing. Any such declaration must be acknowledged and the service user advised that next of kin should be made aware of the arrangement.

20.9.

whether a proposed visit is genuinely instructive or constitutes more of a social function;
the frequency of the hospitality.

20.12. In all cases employees should be able to justify the arrangements they have made in the interests of the Trust.

20.13. If an employee has any doubt about the acceptance of an invitation, this should be discussed with their Headteacher/line manager. Employees must discuss any offers of hospitality over and above meals and refreshments prior to accepting or declining them.

20.14. Acceptance by employees of hospitality through attendance at relevant conferences and courses is acceptable where it is clear the hospitality is corporate rather than personal, where the Trust gives consent in advance and where the Trust is satisfied that any purchasing decisions are not compromised. Where visits to inspect equipment, etc. are required, employees should ensure that the Trust meets the cost of such visits to avoid jeopardising the integrity of subsequent purchasing decisions.

20.15. Employees must record any hospitality, received or offered, in the Gifts and Hospitality (G&H) Register and declare any gifts or offers by email to the Headteacher/line manager.

24.2. This Code of Conduct should be read in conjunction with its appendices and with any other Trust codes of practice or policies that relate to employee conduct and/or workplace or system security policies and procedures.

Appendix 1 - Definition of what constitutes a secret society

The following is the Trust's definition of what constitutes a society with secret rules (secret society).

Any lodge, chapter, society, trust or regular gathering or meeting, which:

is not open to members of the public who are not members of that lodge, chapter, society or trust; and
includes in the grant of membership an obligation on the part of the member a requirement to make a commitment (whether by oath or otherwise) of allegiance to the lodge, chapter, society, gathering or meeting; and
includes, whether initially or subsequently, a commitment (whether by oath or otherwise) of secrecy about the rules, membership or conduct of the lodge, chapter, society, trust, gathering or meeting.

A lodge, chapter, society, trust, gathering or meeting as defined above should not be regarded as a secret society if it forms part of the activity of a generally recognised religion.

