

	POLICY TITLE:	Standards of Conduct for Staff
Kingsmead Academy T/A Kingsmead School		
Committee/Person Responsible for Policy:		Head Teacher Finance, Strategy & Personnel sub-committee
Date Approved by Governing Body:		December 2019
Date of Last Review:		Term 2 – 2019/20
Next Review Due:		Term 2 – 2022/23

1. **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

1.1 **Introduction**

The school's reputation and the trust and confidence of the community in its integrity is of vital importance. It must discharge its day to day responsibilities with openness and honesty. This philosophy is embodied in this code. These principles are presented to assist staff employed in the school in carrying out their day to day responsibilities in accordance with legal requirements placed upon them and the school and any policies adopted by the school.

For its part, the school has a responsibility to take appropriate action where employees feel that they are subject to inappropriate action by a third party.

1.2 **Status of the Standards of Conduct**

The standards are based on a document drawn up by the Local Government Management Board on behalf of the Local Authority Association. They have been agreed after consultation between the LEA and recognised staff unions/associations, prior to the School becoming an Academy but are still valid and are adopted by the School. Any failure to follow the standards set in this document may, depending upon circumstances, give rise to disciplinary action.

2. **STANDARDS**

2.1 **General**

2.1.1 Employees of the school must carry out their duties objectively, professionally, to the best of their ability and in an impartial manner.

2.1.2 Employees of the school must operate in accordance with the stated Core Values of the school – Respect, Aspiration, Care and Determination

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2.1.3 Employees of the school are entitled to expect that no other colleague or governor will seek to pressure or persuade them to carry out their duties in any other way. Where it is alleged that such action has taken place the Headteacher and Chair of Governors will investigate the allegation if requested to do so.

2.1.4 **Dress**

Dress of staff should be smart and suitable for our profession. Footwear should also be smart and safe for professional duties.

2.1.5 **First Aid**

Except in cases of emergency, first aid will only be administered by qualified First Aiders. If it is necessary for the child to remove clothing for first aid treatment, there will, wherever possible, be another adult present. In the event of the above this will be recorded and shared with parents/carers at the earliest opportunity.

Children requiring regular medication or therapies for long-term medical conditions will be made the subject of a Medical Plan that has been agreed with the parents and health authority.

2.1.6 **Professional conversations**

At times it is necessary to discuss matters relating to other colleagues, students or families. It is important that such conversations are appropriately confidential and not in earshot of students or members of the public. Our conversations about others should be professional in nature.

2.1.7 **Use of mobile phones**

Staff are entitled to carry and use their mobile phones. In supporting the school's policy for student mobile use staff should be expected to have their mobile phones on silent in school and not make personal calls during directed time (it is acceptable to use our phones when not on duty at break and lunch). Where mobile phones do need to be used this should be out of sight of students. Staff should ensure that their mobile phones are encrypted and password protected in case of loss.

2.2 **Confidentiality and Openness**

2.2.1 As employees of the school, individuals may be privy to information which is confidential. Any express or implied responsibility to keep information confidential should be respected by employees and there should be an awareness that such responsibility might arise from the nature of the information itself, e.g. child abuse disclosure. It will however be extremely rare that employees will be unable to share confidences with either the Headteacher or the Chair of Governors.

- 2.2.2 Employees should not use 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. When employees are acquainted with confidential information belonging to the school, they must not disclose that information to any person not authorised to receive it unless such material must by law be made available to specific parties eg in child abuse cases to the Police or Social Services and disclosure of financial information to Internal or External Auditors.
- 2.2.3 The Governors and Headteacher will ensure in their dealings with employees that communication is as open and informative as possible within the constraints imposed by the law or by commercial or personal sensitivity.
- 2.2.4 Where necessary employees should have access to, make themselves aware of and implement relevant statute and common law which provides for either confidentiality or rights of access to information for Governors, Auditors and members of the public.

2.3 **Safeguarding**

2.3.1 **Matters relating to the safeguarding of students**

Reward and Sanction

Children will be treated with respect and dignity, sanctions or rewards will be in line with the School's Behaviour Management Policy. Whilst it would be unrealistic and undesirable to preclude all physical contact between adults and children, staff are expected to exercise caution and avoid placing themselves in a position where their actions might be open to criticism or misinterpretation. Where incidents occur which might otherwise be misconstrued, or in the exceptional circumstances where it becomes necessary to physically restrain a pupil for their own protection or others' safety, this will be appropriately recorded and reported to the Headteacher and parents. Any physical restraint used will comply with DfE guidance.*

2.3.2 **Social Contact**

School staff should also be alert to the possible risks that might arise from social contact with students outside of the School. Home visits to students or private tuition of students should only take place with the knowledge and approval of the Headteacher. Visits/telephone calls by students to the homes of staff members should only occur in exceptional circumstances and with the prior knowledge and approval of the Headteacher. Any unplanned contact of this nature or suspected infatuations or "crushes" will be reported to the Headteacher. Staff must not disclose their personal telephone numbers and personal email addresses to students or parents. Staff supervising off-site activities or school journeys will be provided with a school mobile telephone as a point of contact for parents and carers.

2.3.3 Employees must be familiar with relevant policies regarding safeguarding:

- Safeguarding & Child Protection
- Whistleblowing
- E-Safety

2.3.4 Employees have a statutory duty to report any disclosures to the safeguarding lead at the school.

2.3.5 Employees have a duty to attend training provided by the school on safeguarding and PREVENT.

2.3.6 **Giving lifts to students**

Giving lifts to students is generally not advisable. The situation would leave you open to allegations that are difficult to refute. If you ever do give a student a lift, you need to ensure that your car insurance covers 'business usage'. If providing a lift staff should ensure:

- Parental and student consent has been given
- The vehicle is roadworthy
- A second member of staff is present wherever possible
- A senior member of staff has been informed
- The student sits in the rear of the vehicle and uses a seatbelt

2.3.7 **Social Media +**

It is not appropriate for staff to engage in contact with students or families of students via social media. Where relationships exist within the school between staff and students due to issues of family/extended family relationships this should be made known to the Headteacher.

Use of cameras

Photographs of students should only be taken using school cameras. If an offsite activity is taking place that member of staff can request a school camera for such use.

**A copy of the DfE guidance regarding reasonable force (July 2013) can be found in the public drive/policy appendices.*

+ Further guidance on staff use of social media and how to set privacy can also be found in public drive/policy appendices.

2.4 **Political Neutrality**

2.4.2 Employees must follow every lawful policy of the school and must not allow their own personal or political opinions to interfere with the way in which they carry out their work or their duty to implement the policies.

2.4.3 Under the Education (No 2) Act 1986 the Governing Body and the Headteacher are required to ensure that where political issues are brought to the attention of pupils, they are offered a balanced presentation of opposing views.

2.5 **Relationships**

2.5.1 **Governors**

Mutual respect between Governors and staff is essential to good school management. Close personal familiarity between individual Governors and

employees should be avoided wherever possible as it can be detrimental to the relationship and prove embarrassing to other Governors and employees.

2.5.2 The Local Community including Parents

Employees of the school should remember their responsibilities to the local community and adopt a courteous, high quality, efficient and impartial approach to all groups and individuals with whom they come into contact in the course of their work. Such courtesy and efficiency should be shown to all people with whom employees deal remembering that all opportunities need to be taken to enhance the reputation of the school whether locally, nationally, or internationally.

2.5.3 Contractors

- (a) Relationships with contractors or potential contractors who are engaged or may be engaged to carry out work at the school should be made known to the Headteacher or Chair of Governors in accordance with the legal requirements in respect of declaring financial interest.
- (b) Contracts must be awarded on merit and fair competition against other tenders and no favouritism should be shown to businesses run by friends, partners or relatives of employees or Governors of the school, nor should there be discrimination against particular individuals, groups or sections of the community.
- (c) Employees who engage or supervise contractors on behalf of the school and who wish to engage a contractor with whom they previously had or currently have a relationship in a private or a domestic capacity should declare that relationship to the Headteacher or Chair of Governors. Such employees should not use in a private or domestic capacity a contractor with whom they have had official dealings as employees of the school without declaring it to the Headteacher or Chair of Governors. Similarly contractors should be required to disclose private or domestic relationships with any employee of the school or Governor. The school will have the responsibility to ensure that the attention of contractors drawn to the requirements of the Act and this document.
- (d) Monitoring the performance of contractors should be carried out in a fair and equitable fashion and no favouritism should be shown to or discrimination made against any particular contractor or any confidentiality breached.
- (e) Employees or Governors who are privy to confidential information on tenders or costs for contractors should not disclose that information to any unauthorised party or organisation.
- (f) The Headteacher and Governors will ensure that no special favour is shown to current or former employees or their partners, close relatives or associates in awarding or negotiating service level agreements or contracts. All selection processes will be conducted impartially and employees or governors who have or are known to have any relevant

interest should declare this and must play no part in the selection of tenderers or contractors.

2.5.4 Appointments and Employee Relationships

- (a) Employees and Governors will ensure that appointments are made on the basis of merit and in accordance with the school's policies and procedures. Merit is determined on the basis of matching the chosen candidate with a job specification and ignoring all other extraneous considerations eg close personal relationships with Governors or other employees. Employees in the course of their duties should not be involved in the appointment, pay adjustment, approval of expenses, promotion or discipline of partners, relatives or close friends.
- (b) Close personal relationships between employees and/or Governors should not be permitted to influence decisions made.
- (c) Employees should not be put under pressure by work colleagues particularly those in a position of seniority, or Governors to act or not to act so as to breach these standards or any other national, local or school rules of conduct. If such pressure is exerted it should be reported to the Headteacher or Chair of Governors. Where pressure is being exerted by the Headteacher and Chair of Governors jointly the Trustees should be informed. This may be done through an individual's professional association/trade union.

2.6 Other Employment

2.5.1 Employees subject to APT&C terms and conditions of service and paid above scale 6 must not engage in any other business or take up any additional appointments without the agreement of the Governing Body. The Governing Body will not unreasonably stop employees from undertaking additional employment but such employment must not in the view of the Governing Body conflict with or act in a way which is detrimental to the school's interest or have the effect of weakening public confidence in the proper conduct of the school.

2.5.2 There are no similar contractual provisions which apply to teaching staff within the school. However, the Headteacher and Governing Body expect that all staff employed in the school will give full commitment to the school whilst employed there and will not take up other employment which may directly impact on their ability to do so.

2.7 Personal Interests

Employees must declare to the Headteacher and/or Chair of Governors financial and any other interests that they consider could bring about direct conflicts with the school's interests including membership of any organisation not open to the public which requires of members any form of commitment or allegiance and which has secrecy about rules and membership or conduct.

2.8 **Equal Opportunities**

2.8.1 The school is committed to ensure equal opportunities in employment and education and believes that an effective equal opportunities policy is an essential means of increasing the value of its personnel by developing the potential of all its individual employees and students. This will also strengthen its influence in eliminating discrimination in the wider community.

The school's policy is designed to ensure that no employee or job applicant should receive more or less favourable treatment than another on the grounds of their gender, marital status, racial origin, disability, sexual orientations or political or religious beliefs. All employees must comply with both the spirit and letter of non-discrimination legislation and the school's equal opportunities policy and treat all members of the public and work colleagues with respect and fairness.

2.8.2 Employees should be fully aware of the school's commitment to equal opportunities and the employment of disabled persons.

2.8.3 Employees should note that the following acts may be unlawful as well as constituting misconduct liable to disciplinary action (which could in some cases include summary dismissal):-

- (a) discriminating improperly in the course of their employment against parents, students, fellow employees or job applicants, or in respect of job transfer or promotion applications, on a basis of race, gender or disability;
- (b) inducing or attempting to induce employees or managers to practice unlawful discrimination;
- (c) verbal, physical, sexual or racial harassment of a nature which is offensive to the victim;
- (d) victimising individuals who have made allegations or complaints of sexual or racial discrimination or harassment or who have provided information about such discrimination or harassment.

2.8.4 For its part the Governing Body will arrange for an investigation to be carried out into any allegation of discrimination or harassment and will take action as appropriate.

2.9 **Protection of Public Funds**

Employees must use public funds entrusted to them to the best advantage of the school and always try to ensure value for money for the local tax payer, and to be accountable for their actions.

2.10 **Gifts and Hospitality**

2.10.1 A potential source of conflict between private and public interests is the offer of gifts, hospitality or benefits in kind to employees in connection with their official duties.

- 2.10.2 Apart from the exceptions listed below, an employee of the school should refuse any personal gift offered to him or her or to any family member by any person or organisation who is involved with the school. Any such offer should be reported to the Headteacher or to the Chair of Governors if the offer is to the Headteacher. The exceptions are
- (a) gifts of a token value often given at Christmas time such as diaries, confectionery, calendars, pens etc or by children at Christmas or the end of an academic/term year or after a particular event;
 - (b) gifts of a promotional nature on the conclusion of any courtesy visit to/by a business or organisation of a sort normally given by that firm.
- 2.10.3 Employees should only accept offers of hospitality including invitations to functions, meals and site visits if there is a genuine need to impart or receive information or represent the school and/or the community, eg careers events. Offers to attend social or sporting functions at another's expense should be accepted only when these are part of the life of the community or where the school should be seen to be represented perhaps including occasions when a genuine business benefit may be obtained by the school as a result. Such visits should be properly authorised by the full Governing Body and recorded on a maintained register eg Log Book, Governing Body minutes and must not be excessive in the context of the occasion or the justification for attendance. If an employee is in any doubt about the propriety of accepting a gift then advice should be sought from the Headteacher or Chair of Governors.
- 2.10.4 Visits to sites or buildings belonging to providers of services to the school should normally be at the school's expense and be officially authorised by the Headteacher/Chair of Governors.
- 2.10.5 Employees of the school should not accept significant personal gifts, services or other benefits from contractors and service providers such as drink, cars, holidays, tickets etc. Where unsolicited gifts are received they should be drawn to the attention of the Headteacher or Chair of Governors who will keep a record of circumstances.
- 2.10.6 When visits to inspect equipment etc are required, schools should meet the cost of such visits to avoid jeopardising the integrity of subsequent purchasing decisions. Normal refreshments on such visits may be accepted.
- 2.10.7 When receiving authorised hospitality, employees should be sensitive to timing of decisions for letting contracts or where there are contractual disputes.

2.11 **Sponsorship**

- 2.11.1 Where an outside organisation wishes to sponsor or is sought to sponsor a school activity whether by invitation, tender, negotiation or on a voluntary basis the basic conventions concerning acceptance of gifts or hospitality apply. Particular care must be taken when dealing with contractors or potential contractors. Whilst such sponsorship may be proper, actively seeking it in some circumstances may be unwise. Sponsorship should be publicly reported eg at Governing Body meetings and recorded in the minutes.
- 2.11.2 Where the school wishes to sponsor an event or service, neither employees nor any partner, spouse or relative must benefit from such sponsorship in a direct way without there being full disclosure of any such interest. Similarly, where the school, through its sponsorship, grant aid by making available land or by other financial means gives support in the community employees should ensure that impartial advice is given and there is no conflict of interest involved.
- 2.11.3 Acceptance by employees of commercial sponsorship for attendance at relevant events conferences and courses is acceptable but only where the Governing Body gives consent in advance and where they are satisfied that the purchasing decisions are not compromised.
- 2.11.4 No member of staff or of the Governing Body should place pressure on students or parents to use a particular shop or product on the basis of offers that may be available to schools. This does not mean that requests for vouchers etc cannot be made if they are obtained in the normal course of events by parents or students. Neither does it apply where a school has an arrangement, approved by governors to provide school uniform/kit in appropriate colours.

2.12 **Health, Safety and Welfare**

The school has a legal obligation to protect the health, safety and welfare at work of all its employees and others in the workplace. Equally, employees should at all times be aware of and fulfil their legal responsibility to protect their own and others health, safety and welfare at work. This legal obligation is supported by the schools health and safety policy.

2.13 **Post Employment Duties**

- 2.13.1 The duty of fidelity which each employee owes to the school and which requires an employee to act in an honest fashion and not in a manner which will harm the school may, in certain respects, continue following the end of the employee's employment. For example, even though they are no longer employed by the school

a former employee must not disclose confidential information which belongs to the school.

- 2.13.2 Certain employees may have access to intellectual property (such as copyright and materials which belong to the School). An employee might even have contributed to the creation of that intellectual property during a period of employment. However, where part or whole of that property belongs to the school it cannot be used by a former employee for any purpose without the agreement of the school.

Appendix 10 – Staff Code of Conduct - Establishing Safe Working Practices

All Staff at Kingsmead School should be fully mindful of the following points:

They place the safety and welfare of students above all other considerations

When recruiting staff and volunteers, the school must ensure all appropriate checks are made

The school must keep a careful check on all visitors and guests whether their visit is by invitation or unsolicited

The school must ensure that there is sufficient staff (male/female balance) to run all activities

All school staff must be an adult role model for students: courteous, friendly and kind. No member of staff should make suggestive or discriminatory or other inappropriate comments

All school staff should respect students at all times regardless of their sex, ethnicity, disability or sexual orientation

No member of school staff must ever allow or engage in inappropriate verbal or physical contact of any description

Physical contact should be avoided unless not doing so would result in:

- the student being harmed
- other students being harmed
- you being harmed

Understand that staff are in a position of trust and that sexual relationships with a student, even over the age of 16, may be an offence and could lead to prosecution

Be alert to, and report appropriately, any behaviour that may indicate that a student is at risk of harm

All school staff should be firm and fair with students. Favouritism should be avoided, as should singling out 'troublemakers'

No member of school staff should allow students or adults to engage in abusive activities such as initiation rites, ridiculing or bullying

The school must develop an ethos that allows staff to feel comfortable and caring enough to point out any inappropriate attitudes or behaviour to each other

The school must encourage students to trust their own feelings about adult behaviour and to assert their right to determine (within sensible limits) the behaviour with which they are comfortable

All school staff should ensure that when working individually with a student, they should be mindful of safe working practices, (e.g. where possible doors are left open), other staff are aware they are working on a one to one basis, and immediate help is available if needed

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All school staff should report disclosures or concerns to the DSL/ DDSL

Staff should never trivialise child abuse issue

No member of school staff should drive a student home without informing and receiving permission from the parent/carer and Head Teacher / Member of the SLT

No member of staff should ever take a young person to their home

No member of staff should engage with any student on social media sites

All staff should be aware that in any one-to-one situation that is not a clear and proper part of your work, you put yourself at risk of false allegations