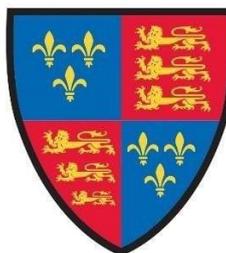




**KING EDWARD VI  
FOUNDATION  
BIRMINGHAM**

*Educational excellence for our City*



**KING EDWARD VI  
ACADEMY TRUST  
BIRMINGHAM**

<b>Code of Conduct Policy</b>	
<b>Responsible Board/Committee</b>	People and Systems Committee
<b>Policy Type</b>	Central Policy (Group A)
<b>Policy Owner</b>	People and Systems
<b>Statutory</b>	Yes
<b>Publish Online</b>	No
<b>Last Review Date</b>	July 2025
<b>Review Cycle</b>	Annual  This policy will not expire but will be reviewed as per its designated cycle. This policy remains effective whilst the review is taking place and will only become non-applicable once the updated version has been approved.
<b>Next Review Date</b>	July 2026
<b>Version</b>	3

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## 1. Introduction

This policy sets out the expectations that the Academy Trust, independent schools, and Foundation Office (the 'organisation') have in regard to the personal and professional conduct of all employees.

Relationships with fellow employees, governors, trustees, contractors, visitors, volunteers, students, and their parents, guardians, or carers should always be reasonable and mutually respectful. This Code has been produced to place the welfare of students in our Schools and workplaces at the centre of the organisation and its culture, and to ensure that all those who work in the organisation and may have contact with students are clear on the rules of conduct and the expectations of the organisation. Students place trust in those connected to the Schools, creating obligations which we must all meet to ensure the successful outcomes achieved by the students in our care.

This Code has regard to the organisation's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures and the following (collectively referred to in this Code as the **Guidance**):

- *Keeping children safe in education* (September 2025) (**KCSIE**):
  - KCSIE incorporates the additional statutory guidance, *Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006* (August 2018).
  - KCSIE also refers to the non-statutory advice for practitioners: *What to do if you're worried a child is being abused* (March 2015).
- *Working together to safeguard children* (2023) **guidance (WT)**:
- *Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales* (2023) (**Prevent**).
- Guidance on Female Genital Mutilation, to include:
  - *Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation* (2020)
  - Home Office statutory guidance *Mandatory Reporting of Female Genital Mutilation: procedural information* (October 2020).
- Guidance published by the Department for Health which provides useful information and support for health professionals, which will be considered by any medical employees in the schools.

### **The purpose of the Code is to:**

- Confirm and reinforce the professional responsibilities of all employees.
- Clarify the legal position in relation to sensitive aspects of employee/student relationships and communication, including the use of social media.
- Set out the expectations of standards and behaviour to be maintained within the organisation.
- Help adults establish safe practices and reduce the risk of false accusations or improper conduct.

The Code of Conduct (**Code**) applies to all employees working at any time for the organisation, whether paid or unpaid, whatever their position, role, or responsibilities and includes governors, trustees, contractors, work experience/placement students, and volunteers.

It is the duty of every employee to observe the rules and obligations in this Code. You should also follow the **Guidance**. The organisation has a duty of care to its employees, and the implementation of the practices in this Code will help to discharge that duty.

All employees are required to report their own wrongdoing, or any wrongdoing or proposed wrongdoing of any other employees, or any conduct that they suspect may be inappropriate. The organisation operates a Whistleblowing Policy.

The Code should be read in conjunction with the organisation's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures and the organisation's Whistleblowing Policy.

## **2. Guiding Principles**

All employees should put the well-being, development and progress of the students within our Schools and workplaces first by:

- Raising concerns about the practices of teachers or other professionals where these may have a negative impact on students' learning or progress, or may put students at risk.
- Being familiar with the organisation's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.
- Knowing the role, identity, and contact details of the current Designated Safeguarding Leads and their Deputies.
- Knowing the role, identity, and contact details of the Nominated Safeguarding Governor in each governing body.

All staff should demonstrate respect for diversity and take steps to promote equality by:

- Acting appropriately and in accordance with this Code of Conduct towards all other staff, students, parents, guardians, or carers and colleagues.
- Complying with this Code of Conduct.
- Addressing issues of discrimination and bullying whenever they arise.
- Helping to create a fair and inclusive working environment.

All staff should work as part of a unified staff body by:

- Developing productive and supportive relationships with colleagues.
- Exercising any management responsibilities with integrity and in a respectful, inclusive and fair manner.
- Complying with all organisation policies and procedures.
- Participating in the organisation's development and improvement activities.
- Recognising the role of the organisation in the life of the local community.
- Upholding the organisation's reputation, standing within the local community and building trust and confidence in it.

All employees should understand that our organisation has a legal duty to have regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism, and consequently should be aware of:

- What extremism and radicalisation mean and why people, including students and fellow staff members, may be vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism as a consequence of it.
- What measures are available to prevent people from becoming drawn into terrorism, and how to challenge the extremist ideology that can be associated with it.
- How to obtain support for people who may be being exploited by radicalising influences.

### **Confidentiality**

During their role, employees are often privy to sensitive and confidential information about the school, staff, pupils, and their parents.

This information must never be:

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

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

## **Guidance on staff/student relationships**

Allegations of unprofessional conduct, improper contact, or words can arise at any time. Professionalism and vigilance are required to ensure the safety of students and to reduce the risk of an allegation of impropriety against an employee. This guidance applies to all employees.

Employees must not:

- Have any type of sexual relationship with a student, students, or apprentices at any age.
- Have sexually suggestive or provocative communications with a student.
- Make sexual remarks to or about a student.
- Discuss their own sexual relationships in the presence of students.

Sexual relationships or sexual contact with any students or encouraging a relationship to develop in a way which might lead to a sexual relationship, or any relationship considered inappropriate with any student within the organisation, is a grave breach of trust that will usually lead to disciplinary action and may also lead to criminal prosecution. It is a criminal offence for a person who is in a position of trust to have any sexual relationship with any organisation student or apprentice, both under the age of 18 or over 18 if studying within the organisation. This will be deemed a breach of this Code and considered gross misconduct, and the individual will be referred to the Teacher Regulation Agency. The Teachers' Standards can be found in Appendix A of this document.

Forming inappropriate relationships with students or apprentices will be a criminal offence if they are under 16, but may also be a criminal offence if under the age of 18, and will be regarded as gross misconduct. Such behaviour tends to bring the organisation into disrepute and gives rise to concern that the staff involved cannot be trusted to maintain professional boundaries with students or apprentices. Whilst not necessarily a criminal offence, the organisation considers it unacceptable for staff to form inappropriate relationships with a student or apprentice from any School or workplace.

You should be aware of the general guidance that will apply in all cases. In particular, you need to exercise professional judgement but always act within the spirit of these guidelines. If you are involved in a situation, you should discuss the circumstances with the relevant Designated Safeguarding Lead. A written record should be kept that includes justification for any action taken.

Comprehensive records are essential. All concerns, discussions, and decisions made, along with the reasons for those decisions, should be recorded in writing. Any incident involving a student that could give cause for concern must always be reported promptly to the relevant Designated Safeguarding Lead in accordance with the organisation's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures. If there is any doubt about recording requirements, this should be discussed with the relevant Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Organisation staff must maintain good order and discipline at all times when present on organisation premises.

### **3. General Conduct**

You must take proper care when using organisation property, and you must not use organisation property for any unauthorised use or for private gain.

You must not carry out any work or activity on organisation premises other than pursuant to your terms and conditions of employment, without the prior permission of the respective Principal/Headteacher or Chief Master & Principal. This excludes exam board work, which will already be sanctioned by the respective leader.

### **3.1 Home Visits**

In some circumstances, home visits may be necessary. Whilst the welfare of pupils is at the centre of everything we do, the safety of staff is paramount. Please, therefore, follow the guidelines below when carrying out a home visit.

- Discuss the purpose of any visit with your line manager. Your line manager must know the location of your visit, the purpose, the time of the appointment, the likely end time of your appointment, and the arrival time back at your workplace. This should be done through a conversation undertaken prior to the visit being made.
- Follow the risk management process in the organisation's 'Lone Working' Policy, refer to the guidelines for home visits, and ensure appropriate risk assessments are in place.
- Every effort should be made to inform the pupil and parents that you intend to make a home visit, and explain the reason.
- Leave the door open when you will be alone with someone.
- Keep records detailing times of arrival and departure, and work undertaken.
- Ensure that any behaviour or situation that gives rise to a concern is reported and actioned.
- Have a mobile telephone and an emergency contact.

### **4. Language and Appearance**

You should use appropriate language at all times. You should:

- Avoid words or expressions that have any unnecessary sexual content or innuendo.
- Avoid any form of aggressive or threatening words.
- Avoid any words or actions that are over-familiar.
- Not swear or use any sort of offensive language outside the context of the educational environment, where it may be used as part of lessons.

You should dress appropriately and in a professional manner. Dress must not be offensive, distracting, revealing, sexually provocative, embarrassing, or discriminatory. Political or other contentious slogans or badges are not allowed. Each workplace will have its own policy relating to dress code and what is viewed as acceptable.

### **5. The Use of Physical Force and Restraint**

The law allows anyone to defend themselves against an attack, provided they do not use more force than is necessary. Similarly, where an employee is at risk of immediate injury, any employee (whether authorised or not) would be entitled to intervene. Ideally, staff physically restraining students should have the appropriate training.

- When physical contact is made with a child, this should be in response to their needs at the time, of limited duration, and appropriate for their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity, and background.
- In all circumstances where a student initiates inappropriate physical contact, employees should sensitively deter the student and help them understand the importance of personal boundaries and must always report such circumstances to their Principal/Headteacher/Chief Master & Principal or Line Manager.

### **6. Code of Conduct for Contact Outside the Workplace**

You should avoid unnecessary contact with students. However, there may be limited occasions where it is necessary to contact a student at home, for example, contacting a sixth form student whilst on study leave. On these occasions, you should keep a record of any such contact. All communication with

students must be through either school email addresses or school-owned mobile devices unless permission has been given by the Principal/Headteacher/Chief Master & Principal to the contrary.

You should:

- Gain permission from the Principal/Headteacher/Chief Master & Principal if you need to share your personal details, such as home/mobile phone number, home or email address, with a student or apprentice. Under normal circumstances, this would be discouraged because of the potential implications of such an action.
- Not send personal communications (such as birthday cards or faith cards, text messages, etc.) to students unless agreed with the Principal/Headteacher/Chief Master & Principal.
- Not make arrangements to meet students, individually or in groups, outside of School other than on School trips authorised by the Principal/Headteacher/Chief Master & Principal.
- Not give a student a lift in your own vehicle other than for organisational business and with permission from the Principal/Headteacher/Chief Master & Principal.
- Report and record any situation that may place a student at risk or compromise the School, the organisation, or your professional standing.
- Never engage in secretive social contact with students or their parents, guardians, or carers, e.g., Instagram, WhatsApp.

You should be aware that where you meet students or parents, guardians, or carers socially, such contact could be misinterpreted as inappropriate, an abuse of a position of trust, or as grooming. Any social contact that could give rise to concern should be reported to the relevant Head.

Employees who are friends with parents, guardians, or carers of students or who, for example, are voluntary workers in youth organisations attended by students, will of course have contact with those students outside their School. However, employees should still respect the above advice wherever possible. They should keep the Principal/Headteacher/Chief Master & Principal informed of such relationships and, in particular, any issues arising from them.

Employees must establish safe and responsible online behaviours and must comply with the relevant IT Acceptable Use Policies and the Social Media Policy. Employees should report to senior colleagues any new and emerging technologies that may impact organisational practices and the review of relevant IT policies. Local and national guidelines on acceptable user policies should be followed. Employees should also:

- Ensure that your own personal social networking sites are set to private, and ensure that students are not approved contacts.
- Only contact students for professional reasons.
- Recognise that text messaging should only be used as part of an agreed protocol and only when other forms of communication are not possible.

It is understood that staff may need to check text messages and/or personal emails in case of an emergency. Personal use must not interfere with your work commitments (or those of others). It is a privilege and not a right. For further details, please see the IT Acceptable Use Policy.

## **7. Code of Conduct for Photographs and Video**

Employees are instructed to read the organisation's photography policy for a detailed explanation of the correct procedure for obtaining and using images.

### **Consent**

Appropriate consents for taking and use of photography and video should be obtained from parents, guardians, carers, or from the students themselves if sufficiently mature (most students are seen as being sufficiently mature from the age of 12 years).

In addition to the policy, the following guidance should be observed:

- Ensure that the student understands why the images are being taken and has agreed to the activity.
- Images should not be made during one-to-one situations.
- Ensure that the student is appropriately dressed.
- All images of students should be stored securely and only accessed by those authorised to do so.
- Images must not be taken secretly or for personal use.

Inappropriate material, such as pornography, should not be brought to work, and you must not use organisational property or the organisation's network to access such material. If you discover material that is potentially illegal or inappropriate, you must immediately isolate the equipment and contact the People team if the material was discovered in or relates to the organisation or its employees.

## **8. Reporting Obligations**

It is in your interests to follow this Code so as to maintain appropriate standards of behaviour and your own professional reputation. A breach of this Code may be treated as misconduct and will render you liable to disciplinary action, including, in serious cases, dismissal.

## **9. Termination of Employment**

If the organisation ceases to use the services of an employee because they are unsuitable to work with children, a settlement agreement (formerly known as a compromise agreement) will not be used, and a referral to the Teacher Regulation Agency and Disclosure and Barring Service will be made promptly if the criteria for a referral are met. Any such incidents will be followed by a review of the safeguarding procedures, with a report being presented to the organisation without delay.

If an employee tenders his or her resignation or ceases to provide his or her services to the organisation at a time when child protection concerns exist in relation to that person, those concerns will still be investigated in full by the organisation and a referral to the Teacher Regulation Agency and the Disclosure and Barring Service will be made promptly, if the criteria for a referral are met.

## Appendix A

Teachers make the education of their students their first concern and are accountable for achieving the highest possible standards in work and conduct. Teachers act with honesty and integrity; have strong subject knowledge, keep their knowledge and skills as teachers up to date and are self-critical; forge positive professional relationships; and work with parents/guardians in the best interests of their students.

### Teaching

#### A teacher must:

- **Set high expectations which inspire, motivate and challenge pupils**
  - Establish a safe and stimulating environment for pupils, rooted in mutual respect.
  - Set goals that stretch and challenge pupils of all backgrounds, abilities and dispositions.
  - Demonstrate consistently the positive attitudes, values and behaviour which are expected of pupils.
  
- **Promote good progress and outcomes by pupils**
  - Be accountable for pupils' attainment, progress and outcomes.
  - Be aware of pupils' capabilities and their prior knowledge, and plan teaching to build on these.
  - Guide pupils to reflect on the progress they have made and their emerging needs.
  - Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how pupils learn and how this impacts teaching.
  - Encourage pupils to take a responsible and conscientious attitude to their own work and study.
  
- **Demonstrate good subject and curriculum knowledge**
  - Have a secure knowledge of the relevant subject(s) and curriculum areas, foster and maintain pupils' interest in the subject, and address misunderstandings.
  - Demonstrate a critical understanding of developments in the subject and curriculum areas, and promote the value of scholarship.
  - Demonstrate understanding of and take responsibility for promoting high standards of literacy, articulacy and the correct use of standard English, whatever the teacher's specialist subject.
  - If teaching early reading, demonstrate a clear understanding of systematic synthetic phonics.
  - If teaching early mathematics, demonstrate a clear understanding of appropriate teaching strategies.
  
- **Plan and teach well-structured lessons**
  - Impart knowledge and develop understanding through effective use of lesson time.
  - Promote a love of learning and children's intellectual curiosity.
  - Set homework and plan other out-of-class activities to consolidate and extend the knowledge and understanding pupils have acquired.
  - Reflect systematically on the effectiveness of lessons and approaches to teaching.

- Contribute to the design and provision of an engaging curriculum within the relevant subject area(s).
- **Adapt teaching to respond to the strengths and needs of all pupils**
  - Know when and how to differentiate appropriately, using approaches that enable pupils to be taught effectively.
  - Have a secure understanding of how a range of factors can inhibit pupils' ability to learn, and how best to overcome these.
  - Demonstrate an awareness of the physical, social and intellectual development of children, and know how to adapt teaching to support pupils' education at different stages of development.
  - Have a clear understanding of the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs; those of high ability; those with English as an additional language; those with disabilities; and be able to use and evaluate distinctive teaching approaches to engage and support them.
- **Make accurate and productive use of assessment**
  - Know and understand how to assess the relevant subject and curriculum areas, including statutory assessment requirements.
  - Make use of formative and summative assessment to secure pupils' progress.
  - Use relevant data to monitor progress, set targets, and plan subsequent lessons.
  - Give pupils regular feedback, both orally and through accurate marking, and encourage pupils to respond to the feedback.
- **Manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe learning environment**
  - Have clear rules and routines for behaviour in classrooms, and take responsibility for promoting good and courteous behaviour both in classrooms and around the school or workplace, in accordance with the school or workplace's behaviour policy.
  - Have high expectations of behaviour, and establish a framework for discipline with a range of strategies, using praise, sanctions and rewards consistently and fairly.
  - Manage classes effectively, using approaches that are appropriate to pupils' needs in order to involve and motivate them.
  - Maintain good relationships with pupils, exercise appropriate authority, and act decisively when necessary.
- **Fulfil wide professional responsibilities**
  - Make a positive contribution to the wider life and ethos of the school, workplace and organisation.
  - Develop effective professional relationships with colleagues, knowing how and when to draw on advice and specialist support.
  - Deploy support staff effectively.
  - Take responsibility for improving teaching through appropriate professional development, responding to advice and feedback from colleagues.
  - Communicate effectively with parents regarding pupils' achievements and well-being.

- **Personal and professional conduct**

A teacher is expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct. The following statements define the behaviour and attitudes that set the required standard for conduct throughout a teacher's career.

- Teachers uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, both within and outside school, by:
  - Treating pupils with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to a teacher's professional position.
  - Having regard for the need to safeguard pupils' 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, mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.
  - Ensuring that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways that exploit pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law.
- Teachers must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies, and practices of the school in which they teach, and maintain high standards in their own attendance and punctuality.
- Teachers must have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks that set out their professional duties and responsibilities.