



Trust Policy

Code of Conduct

Approver: Trustees
Review Cycle: Triennially

Revision History			
Date	Version	Short Description of Changes	Approved by:
Mar 2019	V1.0	NYCC Dec 2018 Policy Adopted	Trustees
Nov 2020	V1.1	No changes	Trustees
Mar 2022	V1.2	NYCC October 2020 changes adopted, policy updated to reflect trust structures	Trustees

This Policy Applies To:

- Secondary Schools
- Primary Schools
- Centralised Trust Employees
- Agency Staff & Contractors
- Trustees & Governors

Document Management Information

Applicable to:	All staff, volunteers, contractors
Development and Consultation:	The template Code of Conduct is consulted on by NYCC. JCNC have agreed with NYES HR LMS template policies being adapted.
Dissemination:	Sent to staff via SendMy. Staff are asked to sign to confirm they have read this. And to complete the declaration where appropriate.
Implementation:	Staff will receive a copy on induction and updates when it is updated. Staff have the opportunity to ask questions or seek clarification. Staff are asked annually to complete a declaration of interests via SendMy.
Training:	This is supported with Child Protection and Safeguarding training.
Review Frequency:	Triennially
Based on:	V1.1 Oct 2021 NYCC changes are incorporated
Policy Author:	Trust Compliance Officer
Executive Policy Owner:	Michaela Dennis
Approval by:	Trustees
Version	1.2
Approval Date:	16 March 2022
Next Review Due:	March 2025

This Policy has been produced based on a document written by NYES HR which has been through consultation with Trade Unions.

If you require this policy in a more accessible format please contact the Trust Compliance Officer on compliance@coastandvale.academy

Executive summary text for current policy version:

NYCC policy updates are incorporated. The policy has also been updated to reflect job titles used in the Trust as well as our working practices.

Low Level Concerns are included as part of this code.

Contents

1.	Introduction	3
2.	Scope	4
3.	Standards and Attitude	5
4.	Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children	6
5.	Behaviour Management and Restrictive Physical Intervention	7
6.	Confidentiality, Disclosure and Security of Information	8
7.	Outside Commitments	8
	Conduct	9
	Additional work	9
	Intellectual Property and Copyright	10
	Personal interests	10
	Gifts and Hospitality	10
	Sponsorship	11
	Cautions, Charges, Convictions and Court Orders	12
8.	Relationships and Conflicts of Interest	12
9.	Financial and Tendering Procedures	13
10.	Dress and Appearance	14
11.	Transporting pupils during and outside of normal working duties	14
12.	Use of information systems	15
	Trust systems	15
	Personal devices	15
	Use of social networking sites	16
	Communicating with pupils	16
13.	Whistleblowing	17
14.	Code of Conduct - Confirmation of Compliance	18
15.	Appendix 1 Declaration of relationships with learners outside of the Trust	19
16.	Appendix 2: ADDENDUM TO SCHOOL CODE OF CONDUCT: Low Level Concerns [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021]	20 20

1. Introduction

1.1 This Code of Conduct is designed to give clear guidance on the standards of behaviour of all Truststaff and as such:

- Makes a clear statement about the standards of conduct expected of employees of, and those working with, Coast and Vale Learning Trust (the Trust)

- Ensures all employees and associated persons understand their obligations with regard to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of pupils
 - Ensures the highest standards of conduct by identifying the Trust's standards which sit alongside professional codes and guidelines
 - Helps all employees to act in a way which upholds the Trust's standards and, at the same time, protects them from criticism, misunderstanding or complaint
 - Helps build trust between the Trust and the people who come into contact with those working for it.
- 1.2 All individuals working in the Trust are expected to comply with the law as it applies to their work in the Trust, particularly in matters such as health and safety, safeguarding of children and data protection. They are also expected to carry out their duties in accordance with the relevant policies, procedures, rules and guidance adopted by the Trust Board.
- 1.3 In addition to this Code of Conduct, all employees engaged to work under teachers' terms and conditions of employment have a statutory obligation to adhere to the Teachers' Standards (England) and in relation to this policy, Part 2 of the Teachers' Standards – Personal and Professional Conduct.

2. Scope

2.1 This Code of Conduct applies to:

- **Employees** - all employees of the Trust, including apprentices and temporary and casual staff
- **Associated persons** - individuals providing services for the Trust but who are not employed, e.g. contractors and their sub-contractors, supply and agency staff, students, volunteers, secondees from other establishments and self-employed consultants

2.2 This Code does not apply to Members, Trustees or Governors when they are fulfilling their statutory role, including as a link governor and when attending meetings with senior staff and/or the Trust Board or Governing Body. However, should a Member, Trustee or Governor take a volunteer role within the Trust, then they should be considered to be an associated person under this policy whilst undertaking that role.

2.2 Disregarding this Code will, in certain circumstances, result in disciplinary action being taken in the case of employees. For associated persons failure to follow the code may result in the cessation of contractual arrangements.

2.3 All employees will be supplied with a copy of this Code, against which their conduct will be measured. Associated persons will also be issued with a copy of this Code and will be expected to comply with it whilst engaged to work with the Trust.

2.4 Some provisions contained within this code will continue after employment or the contractual relationship has ended e.g. the requirement to maintain

confidentiality. Where this is the case, it will be highlighted within the relevant section of the code.

- 2.5 For ease of reading, and from this point onwards, the term 'employee' will be used for both directly employed staff and associated persons working within the Trust. Should the arrangements for each group differ then this will be highlighted accordingly.

3. Standards and Attitude

- 3.1 All employees of the Trust are expected to give the highest possible standard of service to learners, parents and carers, fellow employees, Members, Trustees and Governors and members of the public. The following principles exemplify the standards that are required:

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children

- 3.2 Safeguarding is at the heart of the work of the Trust and all employees must undertake their work in support of the Trust's duties for safeguarding children and young people. All employees must ensure that they conduct themselves in an appropriate manner which indicates their suitability to work with children at all times while undertaking their duties and should be aware that any concerns, whether these meet the threshold of harm or not, will be considered in line with statutory and local guidance. Further information is given in section 4 below.

Honesty and integrity

- 3.3 All employees must perform their duties with integrity and be open and honest in their dealings and communications with others. They should strive to deliver on the commitments they have made and observe high ethical standards. Employees must not disclose information given to them in confidence or share confidential information where it is inappropriate or unlawful to do so. They must not allow their own personal or political opinions to interfere with their work and must at all times perform their duties in an objective manner. For further information regarding confidentiality please see section 6.

Responsibility

- 3.4 All employees must take responsibility for their own actions and be accountable for these. They should use any Trust funds or resources entrusted to, or handled by, them in a responsible and lawful manner. In addition, they should not make personal use of resources, property or facilities of the Trust unless properly authorised to do so. Employees must not put themselves in a situation where there is a conflict between their personal and professional interests. Please see sections 7 and 8 below for further information regarding relationships, conflict of interest and outside commitments.

Respect for others

- 3.5 The Trust believes that every employee has the right to work in a safe environment without the fear of discrimination, harassment or abuse. All employees must treat others with dignity and respect and should value the contribution that others can make. They should not discriminate unlawfully or inappropriately against any person and must always act in a professional and courteous manner. Employees should strive to maintain positive relations with all parties and must not act in a way which could be perceived as bullying.
- 3.6 Employees should recognise and respect the work demands of, and contributions made by, others within the workplace. This respect can be demonstrated by completing tasks to agreed deadlines, attending calendared meetings promptly and communicating effectively with others. Employees are expected to take direction and leadership from senior staff within the Trust.
- 3.7 The Trust aims to ensure that everyone who comes into contact with it is treated in line with the provisions of the Equality Act 2010, and not in any way disadvantaged by factors which could prevent the implementation of fair policies and operations.
- 3.8 The Trust takes a zero tolerance approach to aggressive and violent behaviour towards its staff and, in serious cases, the Headteacher or any member of the school or Trust Senior Leadership Team may ban an individual or individuals from any Trust site.

4. Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children

- 4.1 Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:
- Protecting children from maltreatment
 - Preventing impairment of children’s mental and physical health or development
 - Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care, and
 - Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes
- 4.2 Everyone who comes into contact with pupils and their families has a role to play in safeguarding children. The role played by Trust employees is particularly important as they are in a position to identify concerns early and potentially prevent concerns from escalating.
- 4.3 All employees have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn. In addition, employees have a responsibility to identify children who may be in need of extra help or who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm. All employees then have a responsibility to take appropriate action, working with other services as needed.
- 4.4 All employees within the Trust are required to remain vigilant around pupils, be mindful of the indicators of possible abuse or neglect and act on issues of

concern immediately should they arise. Such issues should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or the deputy DSL in their absence.

- 4.5 The Trust has a Safeguarding Policy which all employees must read and act in accordance with at all times. Induction training on safeguarding and the Safeguarding Policy will be made available to all new staff within the Trust. This training will be updated for all staff at least annually. Failure to attend this training without good reason will be considered a serious issue which may result in further action being taken. Associated persons may fulfil their safeguarding training requirements through alternative provision e.g. through their own employer, however, they must be able to provide evidence of such training to the Trust.
- 4.6 Employees of the Trust must maintain an attitude of ‘it could happen here’ where safeguarding is concerned. Should they have any concerns, regardless of how harmful they think they may be, regarding the welfare of a pupil or pupils, or concerns regarding adults working with children, employees should always follow the Trust’s procedures and act in the interests of the child.
- 4.7 When allegations are made against a member of staff regarding a safeguarding issue, then the formal policy for dealing with allegations will be invoked, in line with local Safeguarding Partnership guidance. For associated persons an appropriate process will be followed, involving that person’s employer, if relevant. In all relevant cases the Trust will make referrals to the DBS in line with its statutory obligations.
- 4.8 Concerns raised in relation to adults working with children, which do not meet the harm threshold for being considered as an allegation in line with the Local Safeguarding Partnership guidance, but which are deemed to be ‘low-level concerns’ in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021, will be considered against the NYES HR further Low Level Concern guidance provided for in the Addendum and found at the end of this policy at Appendix 2. Concerns which are deemed to be ‘low-level’, may be considered as examples of poor performance/capability and or misconduct and disciplinary action may be necessary
- 4.9 Failure to report issues of concern and/or failure to act in the best interests of a child will be considered as a serious issue which may, if proven, constitute gross misconduct. For associated persons an alternative process will be followed which may result in cessation of their contractual arrangements.

5. Behaviour Management and Restrictive Physical Intervention

- 5.1 Staff must ensure they fully understand the Trust’s policies on behaviour management, pupil discipline and restrictive physical intervention guidance and training and follow these at all times, using strategies appropriate to the circumstances and situation. Staff should not use any form of degrading or humiliating treatment to punish a learner.
- 5.2 There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate and proper for staff to have physical contact with children; however, it is crucial that staff only do so in ways

POLY010 - Code of Conduct - v1.2			Organisation: Coast and Vale Learning Trust	Page 7 of 21
Date: 16/03/2022	Version: v1.2	Review Date: Mar 2025		

appropriate to their professional role and in relation to the pupil's individual needs and any agreed care plan.

- 5.3 Any physical contact should be in response to the child's needs at that time, of limited duration and appropriate to their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background. Employees should, therefore, use their professional judgement at all times.

6. Confidentiality, Disclosure and Security of Information

- 6.1 The Trust recognises the importance of an open, transparent culture with clear communication and accountability. It is the Trust's aim to be as open as possible about its activities. The law requires that certain types of information must be available to auditors, inspectors, the Police, children's services, government departments, parents and the public. If an employee is in any doubt as to whether they can release any particular information, they should always check with the Headteacher or other appropriate colleague first.

- 6.2 The confidentiality of information received in the course of an employee's, duties should be respected and must never be used for personal or political gain or to cause damage to the interests and reputation of the Trust, its employees and its learners. Employees must not knowingly pass information on to others who might use it in such a way. If they believe that information should be disclosed in the public interest, they should follow the Trust's whistle-blowing policy before doing so. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action being taken or the cessation of contractual arrangements.

- 6.3 Employees must not communicate confidential information or documents to others who do not have a legitimate right to know. Furthermore, information which is stored on computer or manual systems must only be disclosed in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018.

- 6.4 When an employee leaves the employment of the Trust, or an associated person ceases to work with the Trust, then the requirement to maintain confidentiality regarding the information gained during their employment/association will continue. In addition, on ending their employment/association with the Trust individuals must ensure all confidential documentation and records are returned and copies are not retained.

- 6.5 Employees must ensure that confidential information is stored securely, whether it be in documents and files, or held electronically and whether this information is held on the Trust premises or taken off site.

- 6.6 Further information is available in the Trust's data protection policies, which employees must ensure that they understand and follow at all times.

7. Outside Commitments

- 7.1 The Trust recognises that employees are entitled to their private lives. In general, the choices and actions of employees outside of their role are not the

Trust's concern. However, in order to protect all parties and the Trust there are exceptions to this.

Conduct

- 7.2 Whether in or outside the Trust environment, employees must not conduct themselves in any way which creates doubt as to their suitability for their post or which brings the Trust into disrepute. This includes conduct which would bring into question their suitability to work with children.
- 7.3 All adults working with children and young people have a responsibility to maintain public confidence in their ability to safeguard the welfare and best interests of children and young people. It is, therefore, expected that they will adopt high standards of personal conduct in order to maintain the confidence and respect of the public in general and all those with whom they work.
- 7.4 There may be times, for example, when an adult's behaviour or actions in their personal life come under scrutiny from local communities, the media or public authorities. This could be because their behaviour is considered to compromise their position within the Trust or indicate unsuitability to work with children or young people. Misuse of drugs or acts of violence would be examples of such behaviour.
- 7.5 Adults working with children and young people should therefore understand and be aware that safe practice also involves using judgement and integrity about behaviours in places other than the work setting.
- 7.6 The behaviour or actions of an adult's partner or other family members may raise similar concerns. The Trust may take action if it believes that this behaviour may be a potential risk to learners or if it impacts on the suitability of an employee to work with the Trust.

Additional work

- 7.7 Employees are able to take on work in addition to their existing contract of employment, providing it does not conflict with the performance of their duties in the role for which they are employed.
- 7.8 An employee who wishes to take on additional work must ensure that:
- a) the additional hours worked do not contravene the Working Time Regulations or otherwise give the Trust cause for concern about health and safety at work, and
 - b) the outside work does not place the employee in a position where their duties and private interests conflict, and
 - c) the outside work does not damage, or potentially damage, public confidence in the Trust's conduct or business.
- 7.9 All teaching staff, and support staff employed on spinal column point 23 and above, are required to obtain the consent of the Headteacher if they are school based or the CEO or DoL / COO if they are a member of the Central Trust Team

prior to accepting additional work. The Trust will not unreasonably refuse any requests and each will be considered on a case-by-case basis taking into account the particular circumstances. If the additional work involves pupils of the Trust, for example babysitting, then the employee must inform the Headteacher regardless of their salary grade. Such notifications should be made to help protect the employee and to ensure that relevant safeguarding information can be shared if appropriate (also see paragraph 12.20 below).

- 7.10 Associated persons are not required to obtain consent before accepting additional work. However, they should bring to the attention of the Headteacher if they are school based or the CEO or DoL / COO if they are a member of the Central Trust Team any other work or activities which they undertake which may constitute a conflict of interest with the work of the Trust.
- 7.11 Employees must not undertake private or personal work, paid or unpaid, of any description during working hours or on the Trust premises or using Trust equipment unless that have been given specific permission by the Headteacher. Even if approval is granted, any fees received, e.g. lecture fees or examination board payments, would be passed over to the Trust, or unpaid leave must be taken.

Intellectual Property and Copyright

- 7.12 All intellectual property rights, (that is copyright, design rights and the right to patent inventions) relating to anything created or invented by staff in the course of his/her duties automatically belongs to the Trust, unless otherwise agreed; staff cannot exploit the rights to any such thing without the written permission of the CEO. Any income raised through the use or sale of these products belongs to the Trust.
- 7.13 The CEO may agree to the Trust collaborating with other schools or Trusts to create or invent intellectual property to be shared with other schools or Trusts.

Personal interests

- 7.14 Employees may have a variety of personal interests, which may, from time-to-time, impact on their role for the Trust. To protect the Trust and the employee from any accusations of wrong doing the Trust has in place a number of safeguards which demonstrate that these interests are not allowed to influence the way the Trust operates.
- 7.15 Whatever an employee’s role within the organisation, they must declare to the Trust’s Finance Department in writing any financial or non-financial interests which could bring about conflict with the Trust’s interests. Employees must not make, or become involved with, any official or professional decision about matters in which they have a personal interest.

Gifts and Hospitality

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

duties. It is important to avoid any suggestion of improper influence and ensure that the Trust operates in accordance with the highest standards of integrity, probity and openness.

- 7.17 Employees must not accept gifts, hospitality or any benefits in kind from a third party which might be seen to compromise their personal judgement or integrity or be seen as an inducement.
- 7.18 Casual gifts offered by contractors, organisations, firms, parents and carers or individuals such as calendars, diaries, pens, food, drink, flowers and other small gifts need not be declared provided their value does not exceed £20.
- 7.19 Small gifts from learners to their class teacher are acceptable and can be retained by employees provided that they do not exceed the £20 limit.
- 7.20 Hospitality is sometimes offered to representatives of the Trust in an official or formal capacity. Hospitality can take many forms and could include attending exhibitions, seminars, sporting events, shows or concerts. Training events with very low training content and free catering, drink or transport may also be hospitality.
- 7.21 The following are examples of gifts or hospitality which should be refused by staff:
- gifts of money or vouchers
 - free membership or subscriptions
 - free goods, services or equipment which are normally provided by a supplier to the Trust at a charge
 - any gifts/hospitality which exceed £20
- 7.22 These gifts and hospitality should be tactfully and courteously refused. If a gift is simply delivered to the Trust and cannot be returned, or cannot reasonably be refused without causing offence, then this gift must be declared to the Headteacher or COO for the Central Team and recorded in the Register of Gifts and Hospitality. These items should not be retained by the individual and, where suitable, these items should be used for Trust purposes e.g. fundraising, raffles, etc.

Sponsorship

- 7.23 Where an outside organisation wishes to sponsor a Trust activity or project, whether by invitation, tender, negotiation or voluntarily, the basic conventions concerning acceptance of gifts and hospitality apply. Particular care must be taken when dealing with contractors or potential contractors.
- 7.24 Where the Trust wishes to sponsor an event or services, neither an employee nor their partner, spouse or relative must benefit from such sponsorship in a direct way with there being full disclosure to the Trust's Finance Team of any such interest.

Cautions, Charges, Convictions and Court Orders

- 7.25 An employee must notify the Headteacher, DoL, COO or CEO (as appropriate) if charged with, or convicted of, any criminal offence, or accepts a formal police caution, and should do so as soon as possible after the charge, caution or conviction. If the CEO is the subject of the charge they must inform the Chair of Trustees.
- 7.26 The Trust acknowledges that a caution is not a criminal conviction, but employees must be aware that cautions have to be declared during Disclosure and Barring checks unless they meet the filtering rules of the Disclosure and Barring Service.
- 7.27 The Trust acknowledges that an employee charged with an offence is innocent until proven guilty. However, special considerations will apply if the offence is one of those which is on the list of offences relevant to safeguarding (a full list is available on the Disclosure and Barring Service's website) or if an employee is imprisoned on remand pending trial.
- 7.28 Information given to the Trust will be treated as confidential and stored securely in the same way as other confidential personal information, having regard to the guidance from the Disclosure and Barring Service on the length of time for which particular kinds of information should be stored.
- 7.29 Employees must also notify the Headteacher DoL, COO or CEO (as appropriate) if they are subject to a court order or any other conditions which may affect their suitability to work with children or any circumstances which could lead to disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 if they are employed in relevant childcare.

8. Relationships and Conflicts of Interest

- 8.1 It is unlawful for appointments to be made on the basis of anything other than the ability of the candidate to undertake the duties of the post. Employees and governors involved in making appointments should do everything possible to ensure that these are made on the basis of merit and in accordance with the Trust's policy on recruitment and selection and the prevailing regulations on safer recruitment.
- 8.2 In order to avoid any possible accusations of bias, employees, trustees and governors must not become involved in any appointment or any other decision relating to the discipline, promotion, pay or conditions of another employee, or prospective employee, if they are a relative of an applicant or have a close personal relationship with said person, nor where they have the opportunity to benefit, directly or indirectly, from an appointment without the express prior approval of the relevant person in line with the Trust's Scheme of Delegation, and the most senior person listed would make that approval.
- 8.3 In this section 'relative' means a spouse, partner, parent, parent-in-law, son, daughter, stepson, stepdaughter, child of a partner, brother, sister,

grandparent, grandchild, uncle, aunt, nephew, niece or the spouse or partner of any of the preceding persons.

- 8.4 'Partner' means a couple who live together or who are involved in a romantic relationship.
- 8.5 'Close personal relationship' would include a person not employed by the Trust with whom an employee has a close business connection.
- 8.6 Personal relationships between colleagues who work together can give rise to conflicts of interest. Therefore, employees who have entered into a close personal or romantic relationship with a colleague are required to disclose this fact to their Headteacher, DoL, COO or CEO (as appropriate). Any information declared or disclosed should be recorded on both employees' personal files and treated in strict confidence.
- 8.7 This information should only be considered to ensure that the existence of the relationship does not impact on the smooth running of the Trust.
- 8.8 All relationships of a business or personal nature with external contractors or suppliers, or potential contractors or suppliers, must be declared to the Headteacher DoL, COO or CEO (as appropriate) (or Chair of Trustees in the case of the CEO) at the earliest opportunity.

9. Financial and Tendering Procedures

- 9.1 Employees should exercise fairness and impartiality when dealing with all customers, contractors and subcontractors. Tendering processes must always be carried out in line with the Trusts' financial policies and procedures.
- 9.2 Employees responsible for engaging or supervising contractors and who have previously had, or currently have, a relationship in a private or domestic capacity with a particular contractor, must declare that relationship to the Headteacher DoL, COO or CEO (as appropriate) (or Chair of Trustees in the case of the CEO).
- 9.3 If employees become privy to confidential information on tenders or costs relating to external contractors they must not disclose that information to any unauthorised person or organisation.
- 9.4 All employees must ensure that special favour is not shown to current or recent former employees or their partners, close relatives or associates in awarding contracts to businesses run by them or employing them in any capacity.
- 9.5 All employees involved in financial activities and transactions on behalf of the Trust, including budgetary control, payments of accounts, payments of salaries and wages, petty cash and orders of works, goods or services must follow the financial regulations detailed in paragraph 9.1 above.

10. Dress and Appearance

- 10.1 The Trust recognises that dress and appearance are matters of personal choice and self-expression. However, all employees must dress in a manner that is appropriate to a professional role and which promotes a professional image.
- 10.2 Employees should dress in a manner that is not offensive, revealing or sexually provocative and in a manner that is free from political or contentious slogans. They should dress safely and appropriately for the tasks they undertake and pay regard to any health and safety considerations. For safety reasons appropriate footwear should be worn.
- 10.3 Offensive tattoos and body art should be covered while employees are on any Trust premises or undertaking external meetings on Trust business or at work. Discreet earrings and body piercings are acceptable, however, those which could pose a health and safety risk whilst undertaking the tasks of the role should be removed while on Trust premises or undertaking work on behalf of the Trust.
- 10.4 No caps or hats may be worn during work, except where necessary for hygiene reasons, on health and safety grounds, or have been permitted on religious or racial grounds. Head dress in line with beliefs and traditions of various religions and sects are allowed, with the exception of those that cover a substantial part of a person's face such that their identity cannot be confirmed. The reasons for this are:
- the Trust takes the view that in an institution where verbal communication and body language form an important and significant part of the work with children and young persons, it is not appropriate for any employee who comes into contact with pupils in teaching and learning situations to have a substantial part of their face covered; and
 - the Trust wishes to ensure that it remains vigilant about the safety and security of staff and pupils, and that no person employed by the Trust should have their faces covered and therefore conceal their identity.

11. Transporting pupils during and outside of normal working duties

- 11.1 In certain circumstances employees may be required or offer to transport learners in their own vehicle e.g. sporting events, visits to other schools. As with any other activity undertaken at work this should not be undertaken without the knowledge and permission of the Headteacher. To help safeguard this action, it is also recommended that more than one staff member be present in such a scenario.
- 11.2 Employees should ensure that their vehicle meets all legal requirements, ensuring the vehicle is roadworthy and appropriately business insured and that the maximum carrying capacity is not exceeded.
- 11.3 Employees should never offer to transport learners outside of their normal working duties, other than in an emergency or where not doing so would mean

the child may be at risk. In these circumstances the matter should be recorded and reported both to the Headteacher and the child's parent(s) / carer.

12. Use of information systems

Trust systems

- 12.1 The Trust wants employees to use information systems to the full and to feel competent and comfortable about doing so. However, it is essential that such systems are used appropriately. Any reference to information systems should be taken to mean computer equipment, associated technology and internet access.
- 12.2 The misuse of information systems is a serious matter and may result in employees being subject to disciplinary and, where appropriate, legal action.
- 12.3 Guidance documents are available within the Trust in relation to the use of computers and information technology. Employees must be familiar with, and abide by, the Trust's policies on the acceptable use of information systems.
- 12.4 Private use of Trust facilities, such as computers (including use of the internet), stationery and photocopiers is governed by these documents. Employees should not arrange to receive correspondence, telephones calls or emails at the Trust related to outside work or private interests.
- 12.5 The Trust will monitor the use of information systems without notice. A record of any websites accessed by employees is recorded by the Trust's system and may be examined later if misuse is suspected.

Personal devices

- 12.6 The Trust accepts that employees will bring their own devices into the workplace and may use them for work purposes e.g. sending and receiving work e-mails on a mobile phone or tablet. When employees are using personal devices for work purposes, including accessing WiFi whilst on Trust premises, then the standards contained in this code will apply to their use.
- 12.7 The personal use of mobile phones during working hours should be undertaken with discretion and be primarily restricted to dealing with emergencies. Employees should not make or receive calls or texts during work time where learners are present. Mobile phones should be on silent at all times whilst at work and should not be left on display, with the exception of places determined by the Trust.
- 12.8 Employees are not permitted to use their personal devices for making voice or video recordings within Trust or taking photos of learners. If there is a requirement in the individual's role to take photographs of children for Trust purposes, this should be carried out using Trust equipment which will be provided with the agreement of the Headteacher/senior manager and in line with the agreed Trust procedures and where appropriate permissions have been sought.

Use of social networking sites

- 12.9 Employees should ensure that they do not bring the Trust into disrepute or breach their obligations in relation to confidentiality and appropriate behaviour when using social media.
- 12.10 Employees should not access social networking/media sites during working hours. When accessing such sites outside working hours employees are advised not to write about their work or make reference to the Trust or employer on external web pages. Where an employee chooses to do so they should make it clear that the views expressed are their own and do not reflect the views of the Trust.
- 12.11 In addition, employees must not:
- Disclose any information that is confidential to the Trust to any third party or disclose personal data or information about any individual, colleague, learner or parent/carer which could be in breach of data protection legislation
 - Disclose any information which is not yet in the public arena
 - Post illegal material, e.g. material which incites racial hatred
 - Link their own personal web pages to the Trust's website
 - Include any information, sourced from the Trust, which breaches copyright
 - Make defamatory remarks about the Trust, colleagues, Trustees or Governors, learners and parents/carers
 - Publish any material or comment that could undermine public confidence in the individual as a representative of the Trust or in their position of trust within the community
 - Misrepresent the Trust, by posting false or inaccurate statements about the work of the Trust
- 12.12 In circumstances where an employee makes an inappropriate comment in relation to the Trust or an employee of the Trust but does not actually name them, then the Trust may still consider taking action if it believes that the comment is damaging to the Trust.

Communicating with pupils

- 12.13 Employees work in a position of trust with learners and it is therefore vital that this position is not abused. Individuals also need to ensure that they do not put themselves in a position where they can be accused of abusing that trust.
- 12.14 In support of this, employees must not have any communication with pupils through personal information and communication systems including personal e-mail accounts, social media sites, mobile phones, text messaging, etc.
- 12.15 All electronic communication with pupils must be through Trust e-mail accounts, for both pupils and staff, and should be appropriate to the staff/learner relationship.

- 12.16 Employees must not give out their personal mobile phone numbers or e-mail addresses to any learner or request and/or retain the personal phone numbers or e-mail addresses of learners.
- 12.17 The above guidance regarding communication with learners continues to apply when the learners have left the Trust and/or the employee has left the Trust, this would continue to apply until the learner has left the Trust for 5 years.
- 12.18 It is recognised that there may be circumstances where employees of the Trust are known to pupils outside of work e.g. family relationships, private tutoring, membership of clubs, etc.
- 12.19 When employees are related to pupils within the Trust they are required to inform the Headteacher and this will be recorded on Trust systems. Electronic communication with learners to whom an employee is related should take place out of working hours.
- 12.20 When employees interact with learners from the Trust as a result of any additional employment they hold or volunteering they undertake, they are required to inform the Headteacher of this (or DoL in the case of the Headteacher). A declaration form is attached at appendix 1. In these circumstances all electronic communications regarding these arrangements should take place out of working hours and not using Trust resources.
- 12.19 Exceptions to paragraphs 12.14 and 12.16 above may be agreed in writing by the Headteacher in certain circumstances, for example, for the duration of an educational visit to ensure effective communication between staff and learners.

13. Whistleblowing

- 13.1 Employees are often the first to realise that there may be something seriously wrong within an organisation. However, they may not express their concerns because they feel that speaking up would be disloyal to their colleagues or to the Trust. They may also fear harassment or victimisation.
- 13.2 The Trust is committed to the highest possible standards of openness, probity and accountability. In line with that commitment, employees, and those associated with the Trust, who have serious concerns about any aspect of the Trust's work are expected to come forward and voice those concerns. It is recognised that most cases will have to proceed on a confidential basis.
- 13.3 In order to ensure that this can happen the Trust has adopted a whistle-blowing policy **which is available from (the Trust Staff Hub/School Office)**. This policy is intended to encourage and enable employees to raise serious concerns within the Trust rather than overlooking a problem or 'blowing the whistle' outside.

14. Code of Conduct - Confirmation of Compliance

I hereby confirm that I have read, understood and agree to comply with the Trust's code of conduct.

Name: _____

Position/Post held: _____

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Once completed, signed and dated, please return this form to the Headteacher.

15. Appendix 1 Declaration of relationships with learners outside of the Trust

It is recognised that there may be circumstances whereby employees of the Trust are known to learners outside of work. Examples include membership of sports groups, uniformed clubs, private tutoring and babysitting

Where employees have a relationship on a one-to-one basis or with a single family they should give the details below:

Learner Name	Relationship

Continue on reverse if required.

Where employees are, for example, a group leader for a club which multiple pupils attend they should give the details below:

Name of Group	
Meeting place of Group	
Age range of children attending	
Gender of children	Male/Female/Mixed
Governing body details for group if applicable e.g. Girlguiding	
Approximate number of children in group	

I can confirm that I am fully aware of the code of conduct relating to contact out of Trust with pupils in line with this policy.

If I am tutoring a student outside of Trust I am aware that the following must be adhered to:

- I do not, at any point, teach the child in question as part of my daily timetable – this is a stipulation of such tutoring
- I emphasise to parents that this is done completely independently of the Trust
- No monies come through the Trust at any point, informally (e.g. via the child) or formally
- No private tutoring is to take place on the Trust premises

I confirm if that if these circumstances change at any time I will complete a new form to ensure that the Trust are aware of any relationships.

Name: _____

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Once completed, signed and dated, please return this form to the Headteacher.

16. Appendix 2: ADDENDUM TO SCHOOL CODE OF CONDUCT:

Low Level Concerns [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021]

- 16.1 'Low-level concerns', and the importance of addressing such concerns, is set out within KCSIE 2021. The statutory guidance provides examples as to the type of behaviour which could be deemed to be a low-level concern, i.e. behaviour or conduct which does not meet the threshold to be considered as an allegation against staff in line with the local safeguarding children board procedures, but which may cause a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' that an adult working in or on behalf of the school may have acted in a way that;
- Is inconsistent with the code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work; and
 - Does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO
- 16.2 Behaviour which may be considered as a low-level concern can exist on a wide spectrum, from the inadvertent or thoughtless, or behaviour that may look to be inappropriate, which however, but might not be in specific circumstances, through to that which is ultimately intended to enable abuse. The advice from NYES HR, and from the LADO team within North Yorkshire, is that any concern about an individual working with children or on school site should be considered in discussion with LADO and NYES HR to ensure that the advice provided considers the full range of circumstances. Therefore, even when concerns about an adult do not, at first consideration, appear to meet the harm threshold (as per para 4.8 below), you are advised to seek advice from the LADO and NYES HR.
- 16.3 It is crucial that any such concerns, including those which do not meet the harm threshold are shared responsibly and with the right person, and recorded and dealt with appropriately. It is expected that initially, concerns will be raised with the Designated Senior Manager/Headteacher (in line with the schools' child protection manual). Headteachers are advised to discuss any concerns with the LADO and NYES HR.
- 16.4 Following initial discussion with the LADO and / or NYES HR, on receipt of a low-level concern from a third party, the Designated Senior Manager/Headteacher should collect as much evidence as possible by speaking to the person who raised the concern and to the individual involved and any witnesses. This information will aide your consideration of any further action that may be necessary.
- 16.5 Where it has been confirmed that the concerns do not meet the threshold to be considered as an allegation under the local safeguarding children board procedures, schools are advised to consider whether the matter relates to poor performance or alleged misconduct, and therefore should consider their disciplinary and developing performance / capability policies in determining the most appropriate way of addressing their concerns. Each case will be

considered on its merits, and action may range from monitoring and additional supervision, informal management advice through to a more formal disciplinary investigation and the possibility of a formal disciplinary sanction where the concerns are of a more serious nature, or demonstrate a pattern where informal action or support has not been successful in resolving the identified concerns.

- 16.6 All actions taken by the school in respect of the low-level concerns, all instances should be recorded clearly and comprehensively in writing, including the details of the concern, the context in which the concern arose, and the action taken. A template form has been provided to help in this process. The name of the individual sharing their concern should also be noted, if the individual wishes to remain anonymous then that should be respected as far as is reasonably possible. Schools can decide where these records are kept, but they must be kept confidential, held securely and comply with GDPR. It is recommended that records are held in one place and not as part of an individual's own personal file. Schools should consider how long to retain the information, but it is recommended that it is retained at least six years after the individual leaves their employment, in line with other HR file retention protocols.
- 16.7 Records should be reviewed regularly so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified. Where a pattern of such behaviour is identified, the school or college should decide on an appropriate course of action, and it is advised that advice is sought from NYES HR and the LADO. Any concerns which have the potential to meet the harm threshold must be referred to the LADO in line with the local safeguarding children board procedures.