



Outcomes Focused, Child Centred

Northern Education Trust

Code of Conduct Policy

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Code of Conduct Policy

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1. Introduction

Northern Education Trust fosters a culture of the highest professional standards. This Code of Conduct sets out the standards expected and the duty upon all adults including employees, volunteers and members of the Academy Council. Following this Code of Conduct will help to safeguard all adults from being maliciously, falsely or mistakenly suspected or accused of professional misconduct. To ensure that the Trust can fulfil the prime responsibilities for the care, welfare and learning of students all staff are expected to abide by the Trusts vision

‘We constantly focus on standards as we understand outcomes are paramount. Our decision making is driven entirely by what is best for children. By doing this we enhance the life chances of the children and young people in our care’.

This document cannot provide a complete checklist of what is, or is not, appropriate behaviour for all adults working for Northern Education Trust. There will be occasions and circumstances in which employees have to make decisions or take action in the best interests of the Trust where no specific guidance has been given. Adults are expected to make responsible and informed judgements about their own behaviour in order to secure the best interests and welfare of the students in their charge.

Throughout this policy it refers to ‘nominated officer’. This will usually be the Executive Principal, Principal, Service Director, Line Manager or any other officer as nominated by the Chief Executive Officer. In some instances, it will be the Chief Executive Officer as outlined in the Scheme of Delegation.

2. Responsibilities of the Nominated Officer

- 2.1 Explain the provisions of the Code of Conduct to employees and signpost employees to other relevant policies, document and guidelines.
- 2.2 Provide additional advice and guidance to employees in relation to queries they may have regarding the application of the code of conduct.
- 2.3 Coach, support and provide feedback to employees on their performance in relation to the required standards of conduct.
- 2.4 Take appropriate action at the earliest opportunity to address breaches of the expected standards of conduct.

3. Responsibilities of the Employee

- 3.1 To read, understand and comply with the Code of Conduct at all times.
- 3.2 To use this code, alongside other relevant Trust policies and professional codes.
- 3.3 To seek guidance from the nominated officer if they are unclear about the conduct or actions expected of them.
- 3.4 To alert their nominated officer at the earliest opportunity if they are aware that they have conducted themselves in a way which may have breached the expected standards of conduct.

4. Setting an Example

Employees are role models and must adhere to behaviour that sets a good example to all colleagues and students within the Trust.

This includes but is not limited:

- 4.1 Refraining from abusive or potentially offensive / discriminatory language or actions.

- 4.2 Demonstrating tolerance and respect towards others.
- 4.3 Observing appropriate boundaries.
- 4.4 Ensuring any topics of conversation with students are suitable and appropriate.
- 4.5 Refraining from allowing personal / political opinions to impact on the discharge of duties and / or unduly influence staff or students.
- 4.6 Maintaining high standards of personal presentation, attendance and punctuality.

5. Health and Safety

All employees must, by law, take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that of others in the workplace.

Employees are required to comply with the Trusts Health and Safety Policy and agreed procedures at all times.

6. Standards

The Trust expects that all teachers comply with the Teachers' Standards. These standards are a good benchmark for all staff, not just teachers, to set standards of their own behaviour by. All staff should make the education of students their first concern, and are accountable for achieving the highest possible standards in work and conduct. Teachers must 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 in the best interests of their students.

7. Professional Practice

All employees working for the Trust must:

- 7.1 Uphold public trust in the Trust by maintaining high standards of ethics and behaviour. Employees shall refrain from criticism or a discussion of the merits and demerits of colleagues or the Trust in public or with parents.
- 7.2 Place the well-being and learning of students at the centre of their professional practice.
- 7.3 Be committed to safeguarding all students.
- 7.4 Adhere to and have appropriate and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the Trust.
- 7.5 Treat all colleagues and students with mutual respect and at all times observe appropriate professional boundaries.

8. Student Development

Employees must comply with all policies and procedures that support the well-being and development of students; co-operating and collaborating with colleagues and with external agencies where necessary to support the development and welfare of students.

Employees must follow all reasonable instructions that support the emotional and educational development of students.

9. Honesty and Integrity

Employees must maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their professional work.

Employees should not behave in a manner which would call into question their motivation or intentions.

During the course of employment employees should ensure they do not:

- 9.1 Provide false / misleading information.
- 9.2 Destroy or alter information / records without proper authorisation (including student data).
- 9.3 Withhold information or conceal matters which they could reasonably be expected to have disclosed.
- 9.4 Misrepresent the Trust.
- 9.5 Accept or offer any form of bribe / inducement or engage in any other corrupt working practice.
- 9.6 Misuse Trust property and facilities.

Should an employee become aware of any conduct on the part of a colleague which raises concerns regarding health and safety, safeguarding or criminal activity – they have a duty to disclose this.

Allegations concerning fraudulent, dishonest or corrupt practices or the falsification or withholding of information may be addressed under the Trust Disciplinary Policy.

10. Conduct Outside of Work

Employees must not engage in conduct outside of work which has the potential to:

- 10.1 Affect or is likely to affect the suitability of the employee to undertake their job role or work with students.
- 10.2 Impact on the operation or reputation of the Trust.
- 10.3 Seriously undermine the trust and confidence that the Trust had in an employee to undertake their job role or with our students.

The above actions may be the subject of disciplinary action which could lead to dismissal.

11. Duty to Disclose

Employees have a duty to immediately disclose to the nominated officer prior to the start of their employment, at the start of their employment or during the course of their employment, any change in their circumstances or any information which may affect or is likely to affect the suitability of the employee to undertake their job role or work with students.

Should an employee be unclear about whether it is appropriate to disclose a matter they are encouraged to seek guidance from their nominated officer at the earliest opportunity.

12. Dress Code & Personal Appearance

Students are required to wear their uniform with pride and it is the expectation that they will be smartly dressed at all times, therefore it is expected that: -

- 12.1 Employees dress, personal appearance and personal hygiene is appropriate to the professional nature of their role and promotes a professional image.
- 12.2 Employees should wear business dress i.e. smart trousers, shirt, dress and jacket, or clothing that is appropriate for the role i.e. Trust PE uniform.
- 12.3 Employees should not dress in a manner that is potentially offensive or revealing.
- 12.4 Suitable protective equipment must be worn where provided.
- 12.5 Uniforms should be worn where provided.
- 12.6 Where possible tattoos and body piercings should not be exposed (except earrings).

12.7 The Trust recognises the diversity of cultures and religions of its employees and will take a sensitive approach where this affects dress and uniform requirements. However, Health and Safety requirements override this.

13. Photo ID

All employees must wear photo identification at all times during working hours unless health and safety reasons do not permit this.

14. Other Employment

Employees should ensure that their activities outside of work do not conflict with their duty to the Trust.

Employees must discuss with their nominated officer and obtain their consent before taking up additional paid / unpaid employment or engaging in any other business. Please see the form provided for this purpose at **Appendix 1**.

Requests will not be unreasonably refused providing that:

- 14.1 It does not affect or is likely to affect the suitability of the employee to undertake their job role or work with students.
- 14.2 It does not conflict with the interests of the Trust or have the potential to bring the Trust into disrepute.
- 14.3 There is no detrimental impact on work performance or their own or others health and safety.
- 14.4 Privileged or confidential information is not shared.
- 14.5 Work is undertaken outside of contracted hours of work with the Trust.
- 14.6 The activity is not in direct competition with those of the Trust.

It is an employee's responsibility to monitor the hours they work and ensure they are rested and refreshed to be able to carry out their role.

15. Confidentiality

Confidentiality should be maintained at all times in accordance with the principles of the Data Protection Act 1998, GDPR 2018 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000; unless of course there are safeguarding issues when confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.

Should employees be in any doubt about the appropriateness of sharing information they should seek guidance from the Trusts HR Department or their Trade Union representative.

16. Smoking, Use of Drugs and Alcohol

All Trust sites are a no smoking environment. Smoking and the use of e-cigarettes or 'vaping' is not allowed on Trust sites. Employees should also refrain from smoking immediately outside of Trust sites.

Employees must not consume alcohol/use illicit drugs or other illegal substances in the workplace or be under the influence of such substances whilst at work.

Employees must ensure that any use of alcohol/other substances outside of work does not adversely affect their work performance, attendance, conduct, working relationships, health and safety to themselves and others. Further guidance can be found in the Trusts Substance Misuse Policy.

Consumption of alcohol is allowed at Trust social events (away from Trust premises) but at all times employees should remember their position in the Trust and not behave in any way that could undermine their professionalism.

If an employee is representing the Trust at a business function outside of working hours' alcohol should only be consumed in moderation. Care should also be taken at residential events and Academy trips where staff are responsible for the students in their care.

17. Educational Visits & Enrichments

Adults should take particular care when supervising students in the less formal atmosphere of an educational visit, particularly in a residential setting, or after Academy activity. Employees and volunteers remain in a position of trust and the same standards of conduct apply.

18. General

The information contained in this policy is intended as a guide and this is not exhaustive. Any behaviour or conduct that is considered unprofessional may result in disciplinary action being taken.

19. General Principles Underlying This Policy

19.1 Consistency of Treatment & Fairness

19.1.1 The Trust is committed to ensuring consistency of treatment and fairness and will abide by all relevant equality legislation.

19.2 Confidentiality

19.2.1 The conduct of conduct process will be treated with confidentiality. However, the desire for confidentiality does not override the need for the Trust to quality assure the operation and effectiveness of the policy.

19.3 Monitoring & Evaluation

19.3.1 Northern Education Trust is committed to monitoring and reviewing the effectiveness of the Code of Conduct Policy with recognised trade unions, both at national level through the JCC and at local level with Academy representatives.

**Request for consent to undertake additional employment outside of my
contracted hours with the Trust**

Name:

Base:

Post title:

Additional Employer (Name and Address):

Description of work to be undertaken:

Proposed start date:

Proposed end date:

I confirm that the details provided above are accurate and undertake to notify my nominated officer in writing of any changes that may arise in the course of my employment. I understand that approval, if given, is subject to this undertaking on my behalf.

Signed:
(Employee)

Date:

Signed:
(Nominated Officer)

Date:

A copy should be given to the employee for retention and a copy should be placed on the personal file.

CONTACTS

For advice on the content of this policy please contact:

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Employees are also encouraged to contact their trade union representative for advice and support where appropriate.