

The Mead Academy Trust

CODE OF CONDUCT

From September 2021

An information leaflet for staff, volunteers and visitors to our schools

This guidance has been produced to help establish the safest possible environment both for children and adults. It aims both to safeguard children and reduce the risk of any false allegations being made against those adults working with children.

This guidance **cannot** provide an exhaustive checklist of what is, or is not, appropriate behaviour. However, it does highlight behaviour that is illegal, inappropriate or inadvisable.

There will be occasions when adults have to make decisions, or take action, which could contravene guidance or where no guidance exists. When working with children, **the decisions you make need to be in the best interests of the child and be able to be perceived and judged as responsible.**

If you are ever in a situation where you have to act in a way that contravenes guidelines, it is important that you record the event and inform the Headteacher as the DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead).

Child Protection procedures:

- The Trust has clear guidance and regular training for all staff on Child Protection processes. All staff have a duty to follow these. All adults who visit a school on a regular basis need to be aware of these school's Child Protection Procedures. This includes volunteers.
- **If you have any concerns about a child, please report it as soon as possible to the DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead). If you are unsure who this is please ask in the office.**
- Remember that you also have a responsibility to report concerning/inappropriate behaviour of any adult in school – that includes any Low Level Concerns. In the case of an adult to the Headteacher, in the case of the Headteacher to the Chair of the Academy Advisors (contact information in the school office)

Power and positions of trust:

- As an adult working in, or visiting our schools, you are in a position of trust in relation to the children in your care. You must not use this position in any way that compromises the safety of the child, intimidates, threatens or coerces a child, or promote any kind of relationship that is inappropriate.

Confidentiality:

- Visitors to the school may have access to, or overhear, information about pupils that is confidential or sensitive. All adults are expected to treat any such information as confidential and, if they have any concerns, they need to discuss them with a member of the leadership team.

Propriety and Behaviour:

- All adults working with children act as role models for them. It is important therefore that they adopt high standards of personal conduct in order to maintain the respect and confidence of the children.
- A person's dress and appearance are matters of personal choice and self-expression and some individuals will wish to exercise their own cultural customs. However, staff should select a manner of dress and appearance appropriate to their professional role and which may be necessarily different from that adopted in their personal life. Staff should ensure they are dressed decently, safely and appropriately for the tasks they undertake.
- This equally applies to the context of remote learning and meetings. When using IT one also needs to consider:
 - The environment – are there photos of children in the background? Or personal items on show?
 - Is anybody else in the room with you? Is it relevant and appropriate that they are?

- If a live interaction – is the person/people you are speaking with dressed appropriately? If you are uncomfortable about their clothing or that they have someone else in the room who you consider should not be, then you can politely suggest what might be changed for you to continue. If you become uncomfortable at any point it is acceptable to politely close the meeting and seek support from your DSL.

Mobile Phones, Cameras, Personal devices:

- No-one should have their personal mobile phones, cameras or devices on in the classroom during lessons or when children are in the room.
- Personal mobile phones, personal cameras and recording equipment should not be used to take photographs or videos of children whilst you are on the school's premises or in your capacity as a volunteer or visitor.
- Personal devices should be kept out of sight of children and public areas.
- Personal mobile phones or devices should not be used to contact children, young people and their families within, or outside, the setting in your professional capacity.
- There will be occasions when some staff will use their mobile device to enhance their school role. In ALL cases permission will be given for this and the usual expectations will apply and in addition they will be stored out of sight in school when not in use. Access to any of the software used is NOT for personal use.

All users of technology in school or for school purposes, will complete the staff acceptable use agreement for technology. This is an appendix within the TMAT Online and Digital Safety Policy

Gifts:

- There may be times when children wish to pass on small tokens of appreciation to the adults that work with them – especially at the Christmas or the end of the year as a 'thank-you'. However, it is unacceptable either to give, or receive, gifts on a regular basis or of any significant value.

Physical contact:

- There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate and proper to have physical contact with children, such as when a distressed child needs comfort or reassurance or needing First Aid. You need to be aware at all times that such contact is neither threatening nor intrusive, or could be subject to misinterpretation. It is important that any contact is in the public arena and not behind closed doors. It is not appropriate to indulge in horseplay, tickling or fun fights.
- Great care should be taken when trying to move or shepherd children around, or in efforts to gain their attention. Children should not be poked or pushed in a particular direction. For your own protection, it is advisable to avoid any physical contact in such situations that might be open to misinterpretation.
- Physical intervention or restraint should not be used unless you are authorised to do so by the school. However, if there is a danger to children or adults, minimum intervention can be used to keep people safe. Please seek immediate assistance from a member of staff who will be able to support you in the decision making process. In the event of an emergency you need to send a child to the office with a red 'HELP' card. Some children with particular needs may have a Behaviour Care Plan (BCP) which includes the use of physical intervention strategies that can be used by staff when required.
- If you have any concerns about an incident that has taken place, please talk to either the Head teacher or a member of the leadership team.

NB the Current guidance on protective measures that are in place in our schools at any time need to be strictly adhered to. Please ensure that you stay informed and follow that guidance. If you are a visitor or volunteer, please be guided by the member of staff responsible for your time in school.

Whistle blowing:

- All adults working at the schools should be able to voice their concern, made in good faith, without fear of repercussions. Should you have any concerns about something that you have witnessed or seen in school, you must feel free to bring it to the attention of the Headteacher. This is especially important where you believe the welfare of a child, or children, to be at risk.

Sexual contact with young people:

- Any sexual behaviour by an adult at the school with, or towards a child is both inappropriate and illegal.

Discrimination:

- Do not discriminate favourably, or unfavourably, towards **any** child, family, volunteer or staff member.

REMEMBER

- Confidentiality
- Be a good role model
- Be consistent
- Listen to the children
- Everything you say and do affects the children's learning, and influences the way they behave
- Use IT responsibly
- Report concerns