



E12

STAFF PROFESSIONAL EXPECTATIONS FRAMEWORK (CODE OF CONDUCT)

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1 About This Framework

- 1.1 This document provides a clear framework of professional expectations of all staff employed within Esteem Multi-Academy Trust along with Members, Trustees, Governors, Contractors, Agency Staff, Volunteers, and those on student/work experience placements working on behalf of the Trust. Note: for ease of reading, this framework will refer to all those listed above as either staff or members of staff.
- 1.2 This framework together with our values and behaviours underpins our culture. Developed by staff across the trust, our four values along with our behaviours clearly set out the expectations of how we work with each other to achieve our vision and the priorities of Esteem MAT's corporate strategy (see Appendix 1).
- 1.3 This framework is intended to support and encourage members of staff to achieve and maintain satisfactory standards of conduct and behaviour both inside and outside of the workplace.
- 1.4 In accordance with the DFE 'Keeping children safe in education' guidance this code has been adopted so all members of staff are fully aware of the standards of personal and professional conduct in relation to various aspects of their work.
- 1.5 The code gives a clear framework for members of staff to know their responsibilities and will be discussed during the course of their employment, to ensure it is understood by everyone.
- 1.6 Every member of staff will be asked to read this code of conduct and date and sign that they have read and understood the document as part of their induction. This code will be reviewed annually and updated as and when necessary. Members of staff will be informed of amendments. If staff have any questions about the requirements of this code, then advice should be sought from their line manager, headteacher, school business manager or a member of the Esteem HR team (HR@esteemmat.co.uk).
- 1.7 There is an expectation that all members of staff within the Trust will conduct themselves with the highest standard in order to maintain public trust and confidence and be beyond reproach in the performance of their duties.
- 1.8 Each member of staff has a duty to ensure that the appropriate standards of conduct are upheld both by themselves and by colleagues. Please see Esteem MAT Safeguarding policy and/or Esteem MAT Whistleblowing Policy for more information.
- 1.9 Part of the responsibilities of Ofsted Inspections are to assure safe and secure provision for children, young people and learners across all remits through effective inspection and regulation. Safeguarding the welfare of children is part of Ofsted's core business for all staff, who are expected to be aware of their responsibilities in this regard. A code of conduct is essential to inform staff of the required expectations of them across the Trust.
- 1.10 This framework does not deal with breaches of the expected conduct and behaviours. These are dealt with via either our E04 Capability Policy, E06 Staff Managing Attendance Policy and/or E07 Disciplinary Policy or any other relevant Esteem or local level policy.

2 Underlying Principles

- 2.1 All members of staff must act within the law both inside and outside of the workplace. They must not undermine fundamental British values, democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and ensure that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways which exploit others vulnerability or might lead them to break the law or the policies and procedures within the Trust.
- 2.2 Teachers must have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities. The conduct of all teachers must always be in line with the Teacher's Standards and where appropriate the Leadership Standards.
- 2.3 Where members of staff are members of professional bodies, they must also comply with any standards of conduct which are set by that body.

- 2.4 Staff must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the Trust, and maintain high standards in their own conduct, performance, attendance and punctuality.
- 2.5 Staff are subject to national and local terms and conditions of employment, which are tailored to their particular job. All staff are accountable in their employment and are expected to comply with written or oral instructions about the way in which they tackle their duties and conduct themselves. They must ensure that management roles and decisions are not ignored or undermined.
- 2.6 Staff must not single out another for treatment where they feel threatened, humiliated, or patronised. This type of behaviour could be seen as harassment or in serious cases, bullying and will be dealt with in line with the E03 Esteem Harassment, Bullying and Victimisation Policy.
- 2.7 Staff are expected to provide the highest possible standard of service. Where members of staff are aware of any contraventions of this framework, illegality, misconduct, or breach of procedure they should notify their Headteacher either in person or via Confide.
- 2.8 This framework does not seek to address every possible circumstance, and simply because a particular action may not be addressed within the framework, this does not condone that action by omission.

3 Framework Sections

3.1 Safeguarding

- 3.1.1. Staff must safeguard children's well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions, the local Safeguarding Children Boards procedures, the Trust Safeguarding Policy and their school's child protection procedures. Staff must report any safeguarding concerns immediately using their school's secure reporting system. All staff have a responsibility to take appropriate action and work with other services as needed.
- 3.1.2. All staff must be fully aware of both the Trust and school policies and procedures relating to safeguarding and given their position of trust, must ensure that they do not put themselves in any situation where their conduct or behaviour with any pupil could be misconstrued. Any allegations of inappropriate contact with pupils will be investigated in line with the E07 Esteem MAT Disciplinary Policy.
- 3.1.3. If a child reports any safeguarding concerns to any member of staff, this must be reported immediately using the school's secure safeguarding reporting system. Staff must not promise confidentiality to a child and always ensure that any actions they take are in the interests of the child.
- 3.1.4. Where staff have any safeguarding concerns about another member of staff these concerns must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and/or Headteacher using the Confide system.
- 3.1.5. All staff must be aware that it is a criminal offence under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 (as amended) for anyone to engage in a sexual relationship or grooming for such a relationship with a child aged under 18 with whom they are in a position of trust. It is vital that members of staff work within appropriate professional boundaries at all times with children and young people with whom they are in a position of trust. If members of staff are unsure about what action to take or how they should respond to any situation, they must immediately contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead and/or Headteacher. Any concerns about an inappropriate relationship between a member of staff and a student/pupil (irrespective of their age) will be fully investigated under E07 Esteem MAT Disciplinary Policy.

3.2 Equality Issues

- 3.2.1. Esteem MAT believes in equality and will not tolerate any harassment, intimidation, unfair

discrimination (direct or indirect) or victimisation, by staff against pupils, colleagues, parents, governors, contractors and other visitors. Staff must ensure that the Equality Act 2010 is adhered to, in relation to their engagement with Esteem MAT. Staff should not by their manner or communications be discriminatory with regards to a person's age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, referred to as 'protected characteristics'.

3.3 Health and Safety

- 3.3.1. It is the responsibility of all members of staff and visitors to take reasonable care of health and safety for themselves and others and to assist in the creation of a safe work environment.
- 3.3.2. Staff have a responsibility to inform their Headteacher of any medical condition/illness they have during the course of their employment which may impact on their fitness to undertake their duties or on the health and safety of themselves or other stakeholders.
- 3.3.3. Staff are accountable for the way in which they exercise their authority, manage risk, safeguard both children and young people and have a duty to keep them safe and protect them from sexual, physical and/or emotional harm. Failure to do so may be regarded as neglect.

3.4 Relationships and Contact Between Staff, the General Public, Parents and Pupils including Outside the Usual Working Context

- 3.4.1. Members of staff should always act courteously, competently, and impartially towards all individual pupils, groups of pupils, members of staff and other individuals. Staff must always treat people within these groups with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, observing proper boundaries appropriate to their position.
- 3.4.2. Staff must not misuse or misrepresent their professional position, qualifications or experience or seriously demean or undermine pupils, colleagues, parents, governors, contractors, and other visitors.
- 3.4.3. Staff should avoid doing anything which could make the public doubt the motives, integrity of a member of staff or bring Esteem MAT and/or school into disrepute.
- 3.4.4. There will be no personal contact other than in certain exempted circumstances between staff and current/former pupils of school age, or their families, outside the normal work environment. This includes direct, face to face contact and non-direct contact such as telephone, via text message, email or on social networking sites. Examples of exempt circumstances could include, but not limited to: sporting activities, organised social circumstances (such as organised sports events, shared interests such as volunteering or scouts or activities involving your own children that attend an Esteem school). Keeping Children Safe in Education is clear that members of staff should not establish or seek to establish social contact with pupils for the purpose of securing friendship or to pursue or strengthen a relationship.
- 3.4.5. Any transport of pupils must be agreed in line with the member of staff's role, the school policy and always agreed with the Headteacher.
- 3.4.6. Staff should be extremely cautious when using social media or networking sites outside of work and avoid publishing, or allowing to be published, any material, including comments or images that could damage their professional reputation and/or bring Esteem MAT and any of its schools into disrepute. Where staff do use social media or networking sites it is strongly advised that profiles should be set as 'private' and under no circumstances should staff allow access to pupils, their families and/or carers.
- 3.4.7. Staff should also be mindful that maintaining the confidentiality of pupils, their families, colleagues, Esteem MAT and the school itself, apply to all forms of communication, including that

which takes place on social media or networking sites.

- 3.4.8. Staff should not give their personal details such as home/mobile phone number, home, or email address to pupils unless the need to do so is agreed with their Headteacher. Where this is the case, correspondence should be kept to a minimum, be professional at all times in accordance with the ethos of this framework and may require monitoring by Esteem MAT or the Headteacher.
- 3.4.9. The reasons for this are:
 - a) Such contact can blur the professional boundaries between the staff member and pupil or their families.
 - b) Such contact can compromise confidentiality.
 - c) Such contact can place both pupil and the member of staff in a position of vulnerability.
 - d) Pupils may struggle to differentiate between the role of a member of staff and friend. They may therefore have expectations which the member of staff cannot fulfil.

Intended/Planned Contact

- 3.4.10. Any proposed work-related contact, outside of the normal working environment, must be agreed in advance by the Headteacher, be recorded and monitored.
- 3.4.11. In many cases contact outside the working environment is normal. For example, where staff have their own children at school; their friends are visiting or where additional employment outside Esteem has been agreed with the Headteacher such as personal assistance work or private tuition.

Unexpected/Unplanned Contact

- 3.4.12. Unplanned or unexpected contact with pupils with whom a member of staff will have no on-going professional contact is inevitable at some point and this should be of a minimal nature (e.g., a brief greeting in the street). If a member of staff is concerned or uncomfortable regarding any incident of unplanned contact, they should voice these concerns to their Headteacher or Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Correspondence

- 3.4.13. Correspondence outside of normal class or work-related communications received by a member of staff from former pupils, the public or parents should always be discussed with their Headteacher and filed with any response in the appropriate school records system.
- 3.4.14. Esteem MAT email systems and ICT equipment should only be used in accordance with the ICT acceptable usage policy.

Contact with Former Pupils

- 3.4.15. Where former pupils who are under the age of 18 and still in receipt of education in whatever educational setting makes contact with a member of staff, staff must refer this to their Headteacher and discuss prior to their response to the contact.
- 3.4.16. In some circumstances former pupils over the age of 18, may make contact with a current member of staff. This may occur when they have grown to adults. Staff members must always discuss any such significant contact with their Headteacher and seek advice on how to manage any future contact.
- 3.4.17. If a former pupil requires assistance or some form of help that lies outside of the Academy, they should be signposted to relevant services. However, if the Headteacher agrees that further contact with the staff member is relevant and appropriate, a clear plan of involvement, including

outcomes expected and timescales must be drawn up and agreed by the Headteacher. In these circumstances, the Headteacher must ensure that adequate support/supervision is available to the member of staff and ensure that all such contacts and plans are recorded and that other appropriate agencies are involved.

- 3.4.18. Where a close relationship develops between a member of staff and an ex-pupil which may raise concerns about the member of staff's suitability to work with children, the Headteacher should contact Esteem's Head of HR and/or Esteem's Safeguarding Lead for advice and guidance.

3.5 Confidentiality

- 3.5.1. Members of staff should be mindful of their requirement to maintain confidentiality of pupils, their families, colleagues, and any matters relating to Esteem MAT and its schools apply to all forms of communication, including but not limited to spoken, signed, written, internet, social media and networking sites.

3.6 Use of Personal Mobile Phones, Laptops and Tablets

- 3.6.1. All staff must sign, agree and abide by the E13 Esteem ICT acceptable use policy.
- 3.6.2. All staff are required to place any personal equipment capable of photographing children in a locked drawer/locker and such items should not be taken into the classroom. Such personal equipment is not to be used at any time during contact with pupils, unless agreed by the Headteacher.
- 3.6.3. If there is a requirement in the teacher's or supports staff's role to take photographs of children for school purposes this must be carried out using school equipment that will be provided and with the agreement of the Headteacher and in line with the agreed procedures.
- 3.6.4. Any personally owned equipment must be used in accordance with E13 Esteem ICT acceptable use policy.

3.7 Use of School Premises and/or Facilities for Work not Connected with Esteem MAT

- 3.7.1. Members of staff must not use Esteem MAT premises or facilities for activities which are not connected with their employment at the Trust, without agreement from the CEO/Headteacher or Trustees/Local Governing body. This includes the personal use of the school email, telephones, computers, photocopiers, or other equipment, in line with the Esteem ICT Acceptable Usage Policy.
- 3.7.2. Internal email systems and ICT equipment should always be used in accordance with the appropriate Trust policies.

3.8 Disclosure of Information

- 3.8.1. All the staff within Esteem MAT must take their UK GDPR obligations very seriously and compliance with statutory, regulatory practice and contractual obligations is key priority across each of our schools.
- 3.8.2. Staff must be committed to protecting and respecting the privacy of sensitive information relating to staff, pupils, parents/carers, and those in a governance role.
- 3.8.3. Staff must ensure all data is processed to be in line with the requirements and protections set out in the UK General Data Protection Regulation.
- 3.8.4. Staff must not disclose information given to them in confidence without consent except for that

relating to safeguarding of a child which must be passed on and/or recorded on the applicable safeguarding system. Advice should always be sought from their Headteacher as appropriate on the appropriate use of Trust/school data and disclosure of Trust/school information.

- 3.8.5. Staff should not use confidential information obtained in the course of their employment with the Trust/school for personal use, nor should they pass it on to others who have no legal entitlement to the information and/or might use it for unauthorised purposes.

3.9 Staff Facing Criminal Charges

- 3.9.1. Any member of staff who during the course of their employment or duties, is subject to a criminal investigation or charged with a relevant criminal offence, you must inform your Headteacher as soon as possible. This will be managed in line with E07 Esteem Mat Disciplinary Policy. This includes but is not limited to driving cautions and convictions where no custodial sentence has been given.

3.10 Conflict of Interest

- 3.10.1. Staff should declare any personal and/or pecuniary interest that could bring about conflict with the Trust's interests or could be perceived to conflict with their role within the Trust.
- 3.10.2. All members, trustees, local governors of academies and senior employees must complete the register of interests, in accordance with sections 5.45 to 5.48 of the Academy Trust Handbook
- 3.10.3. No member, trustee, local governor, employee or related individual can use their connection to the trust for personal gain, including payment under terms that are preferential to those that would be offered to an individual or organisation with no connection to the trust.
- 3.10.4. Staff are not to take outside employment which conflicts with Esteem and/or the schools' interests. Any staff intending to work for outside organisations or set up their own business, whilst still employed by Esteem MAT, should seek permission from either the CEO/Headteacher and/or chair of Trustees/Governors, as appropriate.
- 3.10.5. Staff must not be involved in the appointment or any other decision relating to the discipline, promotion, pay or conditions of another employee, or perspective employee, who is a relative, friend or partner. In this paragraph: 'Relative' refers to spouse, partner, civil partner, parent, parent-in-law, son, daughter, step-son, step-daughter, child of a partner, brother, sister, grandparent, grandchild, uncle, aunt, nephew, niece or the spouse of partner in any of the preceding persons. 'Partner' refers to a member of a couple who live together or have a close personal relationship.

3.11 Acceptance of Gifts

- 3.11.1. It is against the law for public servants to take bribes. There are occasions when children, young adults, parents, or other staff members wish to pass small tokens of appreciation to staff. For example, Christmas or as a thank you and this is acceptable. However, it is unacceptable to receive gifts on a regular basis or any of significant value (e.g., over £10 in value). Money should never be accepted as a gift.
- 3.11.2. Any reward given to students must be funded by the school rather than individual staff and authorised appropriately in line with financial regulations.
- 3.11.3. Staff should avoid putting themselves in debt to other members of staff where this would be likely or could be seen to influence their work.
- 3.11.4. Staff should avoid putting other members of staff in debt to them where this would be likely or could be seen to influence their work.

Appendix 1 – Esteem MAT's Values and Behaviours

Values

▲ Working Together ▲ Celebrating Difference ▲ Being Brave ▲ Enjoying Learning

Behaviours

Driving for success:

- ▲ We consult and engage to win hearts and minds
- ▲ We have a clear vision / aims
- ▲ We are accountable and hold others to account
- ▲ We are outward facing and embrace change that drives improvement

Doing the right thing and the wider perspective:

- ▲ We inspire inclusivity in or outside of our schools/ the trust
- ▲ We make research and evidence based decisions
- ▲ We are open to new ideas through learning from others

Respecting and empowering others:

- ▲ We provide opportunities to develop our skills and knowledge
- ▲ We grow and foster critical friends and partnerships across the trust
- ▲ We are good role models

Communicating authentically:

- ▲ We talk positively about the Trust and our Academies and role model the values when communicating
- ▲ We are upfront, honest & transparent
- ▲ We radiate positivity and find solutions
- ▲ We communicate effectively through being consistent, ensuring the message (what, how and why) is cascaded to all in a timely manner