



Mossbourne Federation

STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT 2023 - 2024

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1. Overview

- 1.1 The Mossbourne Federation seeks to provide a safe and supportive environment, which secures the wellbeing and absolute best outcomes for pupils in its care. Our values are set out in our Mission Statement.
- 1.2 This Code of Conduct applies to all employees of the Mossbourne Federation and does not form part of any employees' contract of employment. It is designed to give clear guidance on the standards of behaviour which all Mossbourne Federation employees and volunteers are expected to observe. Federation employees are role models and are in a unique position of influence and must adhere to behaviour that sets a good example to all the pupils within the school. As a member of a school community, each employee has an individual responsibility to maintain both their own reputation and the reputation of the academy and federation, whether inside or outside working hours and are also responsible for ensuring they are fully aware of, and adhere to, all policies and procedures in place.
- 1.3 In addition to this Code of Conduct, all employees engaged to work under the Federation Teachers' Terms and Conditions of Employment have a statutory obligation to adhere to the 'DfE Teachers' Standards', which came into effect September 2012, and in relation to this policy, specifically Part 2 of the Teachers' Standards - Personal and Professional Conduct.
- 1.4 This document should clarify what is expected in terms of professional behaviour; it gives clear advice about what constitutes illegal behaviour and what might be considered as misconduct. It also describes safe practice, and behaviours that should be avoided.

Staff deviating from this code of conduct may be subject to disciplinary procedures.

- 1.5 There may be times when professional judgements are made in situations not covered by this document, or which directly contravene the guidance given. It is expected that in these circumstances staff will always advise a senior leader of their justification for any such action already taken or proposed.

2. Core Principles

- 2.1. The welfare of pupils is paramount.
- 2.2. Staff are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions.
- 2.3. Staff should work, and be seen to work, in an open and transparent way and are expected to declare any personal relationship that could have the potential to cause a conflict of interest.
- 2.4. Staff should discuss and/or take advice promptly from their line manager, or another senior member of staff, over any incident which may give rise to concern.
- 2.5. Records should be made of any such incident and of any decisions made or further actions agreed.
- 2.6. Staff are expected to work collegiately and collaboratively in the interests of the Federation, the academies, and pupils.
- 2.7. Staff should apply the same professional standards in keeping with the Federation Equality Policy.
- 2.8. Staff should be aware that breaches of the law and other professional guidelines could result in criminal or disciplinary action being taken against them.

3. Safe Working Practices for the Protection of Pupils, Staff & the Federation

3.1. Introduction

This guidance has been produced to help all staff establish the safest possible learning and working environments. The aims are to safeguard young people and reduce the risk of staff being falsely accused of improper or unprofessional conduct. This means that these guidelines apply to all adults working in education settings whatever their position, roles, or responsibilities.

3.2. Duty of Care

Teachers and other staff are accountable for the way in which they exercise authority; manage risk; use resources; and protect pupils from discrimination and avoidable harm.

All staff, whether paid or voluntary, have a duty to keep young people safe and to protect them from physical and emotional harm. This duty is in part exercised through the development of respectful, caring, and professional relationships between staff and pupils and behaviour by staff that demonstrates integrity, maturity, and good judgement.

There are legitimate high expectations about the nature of the professional involvement of staff in the lives of pupils. When individuals accept a role that involves working with children and young people, they need to understand and acknowledge the responsibilities and trust inherent in that role.

Employers have a duty of care towards their employees which requires them to provide a safe working environment for staff and guidance about safe working practices. In line with the Federation's Safeguarding Children Policy, it is each academy's duty to ensure that an open and transparent culture, in which all concerns about all adults working in or on behalf of the Federation (including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors) are dealt with promptly and appropriately. The early identification of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour aims to minimise the risk of abuse and to ensure that adults working in or on behalf of the Federation are clear about professional boundaries and act within these boundaries, and in accordance with the ethos and values of the Federation.

Critical to this approach is the creation of a culture in which all concerns about adults (including allegations that do not meet the 'harms' threshold) are shared responsibly and with the right person, recorded and dealt with appropriately.

This means that staff should:

- Understand the responsibilities, which are part of their employment or role, and be aware that sanctions will be applied if these provisions are breached.
- Be familiar with, and adhere to, all policies and procedures, including those for safeguarding.
- Ensure they comply with their duty to report concerns about a pupil to an academy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for Child Protection.
- Be aware that their concern may relate to any adult working in, or on behalf of, the Federation (including supply teachers, volunteers, and contractors) and that this must be reported.
- Be aware that their concern may appear 'low level'. The term 'low-level' does not mean that it is insignificant, it means that the behaviour towards a child does not meet the threshold for 'significant harm'. However, a low-level concern is any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' - that an adult working in or on behalf of the Federation may have acted in a way that is inconsistent with the Staff Code of Conduct. Such behaviour can exist on a wide spectrum, from the inadvertent or thoughtless, or behaviour that may look to be inappropriate, but might not be so in specific circumstances, through to that which is ultimately intended to enable abuse.

Examples, but not limited to those below, are:

- Engaging in inappropriate conduct outside of work.
- Being over friendly with pupils.
- Having favourites.
- Taking photographs of pupils on their mobile phone.
- Engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door without a valid reason for doing so.
- Using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating, or offensive language.
- Be aware that they must always act, and be seen to act, in the child's best interests.
- Avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation & intentions.
- Take responsibility for their own actions and behaviour, treating children with respect and dignity and not seriously demean or undermine pupils, their parents or carers, or colleagues.
- Not demonstrate behaviours that may be perceived as sarcasm, making jokes at the expense of pupils, embarrassing, or humiliating pupils, discriminating against, or favouring, pupils.

This means the federation should:

- Ensure that safeguarding procedures are in place and reviewed annually.
- Ensure that systems are in place for concerns to be raised.
- Ensure that adults are not placed in situations which render them particularly vulnerable.
- Address any such concerns, including those which do not meet the 'harm threshold, and must share these responsibly and with the right person, and record and deal with such concerns appropriately.
- Ensure that all concerns are dealt with effectively to protect those working in or on behalf of the federation from potential false allegations or misunderstandings

3.3. Exercise of Professional Judgement

This guidance cannot provide a complete checklist of what is, or is not, appropriate behaviour for staff. It does highlight, however, behaviour that is illegal, inappropriate, or inadvisable. There will be occasions and circumstances in which staff must make decisions or act in the best interests of the pupils which could contravene this guidance or where no guidance exists. Individuals are expected to make judgements about their behaviour to secure the best interests and welfare of the children in their charge and, in so doing, will be seen to be acting reasonably.

This means that where no specific guidance exists staff should:

- Discuss the circumstances that informed their action, or their proposed action, with a senior colleague. This will help to ensure that the safest practices are employed and reduce the risk of actions being misinterpreted.
- Always discuss any misunderstanding, accidents, or threats with a senior leader.
- Always record discussions and actions taken with their justifications.

4. Power and Positions of Trust

All adults working with pupils in education settings are in positions of trust in relation to the young people in their care. A relationship between a member of staff and a pupil cannot be a relationship between equals. There is potential for exploitation and harm of vulnerable young people; staff have a responsibility to ensure that an unequal balance of power is not used for personal advantage or gratification.

This means that staff should not:

- Use their position to gain access to information for their own advantage &/or a pupil's or family's detriment.
- Use their power to intimidate, threaten, coerce, or undermine pupils.
- Use their status and standing to form or promote a relationship with a pupil, which is of a sexual or otherwise inappropriate nature.
- Attempt to initiate a relationship with a recent ex-pupil, which is of a sexual nature.

Staff should always maintain appropriate professionalism and, wherever possible, they should avoid behaviour which might be misinterpreted by others, and report and record any incident with this potential. Where a person aged 18 or over is in a position of trust with a pupil on roll at a Federation Academy, it is an offence for that person to engage in sexual activity with or in the presence of that pupil, or to cause or incite that pupil to engage in or watch sexual activity.

Where a person aged 18 or over is in a position of trust established with a person who has only recently left the school, any attempt to engage in sexual activity with that person will be a cause for concern and will be treated as a breach of trust established in that prior relationship.

5. Confidentiality

Members of staff may have access to confidential information about pupils, and their families, to undertake their day-to-day responsibilities. In some circumstances staff may be given additional extremely sensitive or confidential information. Staff should never use or share with a third party any confidential or personal information about a pupil or their family for their own, or others' advantage. Information known must never be used to intimidate, humiliate, or embarrass the pupil.

Confidential information about pupils should never be used casually in conversation or shared with any person other than on a need-to-know basis. In circumstances where the pupil's identity does not need to be disclosed the information should be used anonymously.

There are some circumstances in which a member of staff may be expected to share information about a pupil, for example when abuse is alleged or suspected. In such cases, individuals have a duty to pass information on without delay, but such information must only be shared with those with designated child protection responsibilities (DSLs).

If a member of staff is in any doubt about whether to share information or keep it confidential, he or she should seek guidance from a senior member of staff or the Federation Data Protection Officer at: dpo@mossbourne.org. Any media or legal enquiries must be reported to the principal.

All adults need to be aware that although it is important to listen to and support pupils, they must not promise confidentiality or request pupils to do the same under any circumstances.

All concerns and allegations about adults should be treated confidentially and passed to the principal, or a deputising senior leader, without delay.

This means that staff:

- Are expected to treat information they receive about pupils in a discreet and confidential manner and in accordance with legislation pertaining to data protection under GDPR.
- In any doubt about sharing information they hold, or which has been requested of them, should seek advice from a senior member of the Pastoral Team who acts as a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
- Must always act in line with the above protocol before passing information about pupils to others.
- Need to know that any concerns about a pupil must be referred, without delay, to a DSL in line with Safeguarding Policy.
- Need to know that any concerns about an adult must be reported, without delay, to the principal or deputy.

6. Propriety and Behaviour

All staff have a responsibility to maintain public confidence in their ability to safeguard the welfare and best interests of pupils by setting a good example. They should adopt exacting standards of personal conduct to maintain the confidence and respect of their peers, pupils, and the public in general. An individual's behaviour, either in or out of the workplace, should not compromise her/his position within the work setting so it is important to exercise due care and attention when outside of the school environment. Membership of organisations, whose goals conflict with the values and equality policies of the Mossbourne Federation is not acceptable.

If staff have any relationships with pupils outside of school (these may include but are not limited to mutual membership of social groups; sports clubs; religious organisations; tutoring; or family connections) they must declare these. Staff should not assume that the school are aware of any such connections. The appropriate declaration form may be found in Appendix 1 of this document. Regardless of any relationship (other than direct relative) outside of school, staff must still refrain from communicating with pupils at any time via social media, online gaming, personal email, or text messages as per sections 11 and 12 of this Code of Conduct.

This means that staff should not:

- Behave in a manner which would lead any reasonable person to question their suitability to work with pupils or to act as a role model.
- Drink alcohol in the presence of current pupils in public or private places, nor purchase alcohol for pupils. (Exceptional circumstances may exist where a member of staff may be personal friends with a parent when normal social life may bring the pupil into social contact with a member of staff. This issue should be discussed with a senior member of staff in advance.)
- Drink alcohol when supervising pupils or on school trips. This applies even when there are no pupils present, as the member of staff may be called to act if an emergency occurs
- Make inappropriate remarks to a pupil
- Discuss their own sexual relationships with, or in the presence of, pupils
- Discuss a pupil's sexual relationships in inappropriate settings or contexts. ('Inappropriate' means outside of the DSL role in a child protection context.) Should a pupil disclose information pertaining to sexual relationships, the Federation Safeguarding procedures must be followed
- Make (or encourage others to make) unprofessional personalized comments in any form of communication

Staff must:

- Be aware that their behaviour in their personal lives may impact upon their work with pupils.
- Use the declaration form to declare any relationships that they have with pupils outside of school.

Staff must not:

- Federation staff should not tutor Federation pupils, past or present, outside of the academy.
- Former employees may not tutor Federation pupils on roll at the time of the tuition.
- Staff who tutor non-Federation pupils must declare any such activity to the principal of their academy and this will be recorded in the staff member's personnel file.

7. Dress and Appearance

Staff should dress in a professional manner. Although it is difficult to be prescriptive about this, staff should be aware that federation schools are formal institutions where pupils are expected to dress in full academy uniform.

All staff should, therefore, dress in a similar smart and professional manner, appropriate to their role, to promote a professional image and to set a good example.

Professional, personal presentation is also expected to avoid staff becoming vulnerable to criticism or allegation. Clothing worn and the personal presentation of staff members should not be likely to be viewed as

offensive, revealing, or sexually provocative and should not distract, cause embarrassment, or give rise to misunderstanding. Clothing that is very tight, revealing, or that draws attention to the staff member should be avoided. For identification and effective communication, faces must be visible. Facial hair should be well trimmed, earrings and jewellery should not be ostentatious and other than discrete earrings and one discrete nasal piercing, facial piercings are not permitted.

Smart office attire is the dress code for staff working directly with pupils i.e., teaching staff, teaching assistants and office / administrative staff. It is also acknowledged that suitable, or role-specific, attire is also required / acceptable for some specialist subjects and stages including PE and those working in the Foundation Stage. For most roles the guidance is:

- Gentlemen: Formal office wear e.g., shirt and tie worn with a suit / rousers and jacket.
- Ladies: Formal office wear e.g., skirt / dress / trousers worn with a jacket / formal cardigan.

Staff, required to dress in role-specific attire, must always wear appropriate, professional clothing; these roles include technicians, site, medical welfare, cleaning, and catering colleagues.

This means that staff should ensure their appearance and clothing:

- Promotes a positive and professional image.
- Is appropriate to their role.
- Is not likely to be viewed as offensive, revealing, or sexually provocative.
- Does not distract, cause embarrassment, or give rise to misunderstandings.
- Is absent of any political or otherwise contentious slogans.

8. Honesty and Integrity including Gifts & Hospitality

Staff must maintain exacting standards of honesty and integrity in their work. This includes the handling and claiming of money, the use of school property and facilities and relationships with suppliers and contractors.

All staff must comply with the Bribery Act 2010. A person may be guilty of an offence of bribery under this act if they offer, promise, or give financial advantage or other advantage to someone; or if they request, agree, or accept, or receive a bribe from another person. If a staff member believes that a person has failed to comply with the Bribery Act, they should refer to the Federation Whistleblowing Policy.

Staff should be aware of the Federation's arrangements for the declaration of gifts received and given. Gifts from suppliers or associates of the school must be declared to the Chief Operating Officer who will keep a record of all gifts received.

Personal gifts from individual members of staff to pupils are inappropriate, could be misinterpreted and may lead to disciplinary action. It is acceptable, however, for staff to offer prizes of small value in certain tasks or competitions. Staff need to take care that they do not accept any gift that might be construed as a bribe by others or lead the giver to expect preferential treatment.

There are occasions when pupils or parents wish to pass small tokens of appreciation to staff, for example at Christmas or as a thank-you, and this is acceptable. However, it is unacceptable to receive gifts on a regular basis or of any significant value.

Any member of staff concerned about whether they or their colleagues may be at risk of giving or receiving a bribe (financial or otherwise) should contact the Chief Operating Officer. Any member of staff receiving gifts or entertainment valued at more than £50 must also disclose this to the Chief Operating Officer.

This means that staff should adhere to the Federation's financial regulations:

- Declare any existing social relationships with contractors and suppliers of goods and services in advance to the Chief Operating Officer.
- Ensure they are familiar with each Academy's 'Whistleblowing Policy'.
- Ensure that gifts received or given in situations which may be misconstrued are declared ensure that gifts of significant value are declared.
- Generally, only give gifts to an individual young person as part of an agreed reward system.
- Where giving gifts, other than as above, ensure these are of insignificant value and given to all pupils equally.

9. Infatuations

Staff need to be aware that it is not uncommon for pupils to be strongly attracted to a member of staff and/or develop an infatuation. Staff should be aware that such circumstances always carry an elevated risk of words or actions being misinterpreted and for allegations to be made against staff.

A member of staff who becomes aware that a pupil may be infatuated with themselves, or a colleague should discuss this at the earliest opportunity with a senior colleague so that appropriate action can be taken. In this way, steps can be taken to avoid hurt and distress for all concerned.

This means that staff should:

- Report to senior colleagues any indications (verbal, written or physical) that suggest a pupil may be infatuated with a member of staff.
- Be mindful if they are alone in a room with a pupil to leave the door open, if possible.
- Avoid discussions, or conversations, of a personal nature other than in line with the Federation Safeguarding Policy whereby it is made clear to the pupil that no promise of confidentiality can be made.

10. Personal Living Space

No pupil should be in or invited into the home of an adult, who works with them, unless the reason this has been firmly established and agreed with parents and senior leaders or the home has been designated by the organisation or regulatory body as a workplace e.g., childminders, foster carers. No employee should enter the home of a pupil without the knowledge of the principal of the respective Academy. This includes off-site meetings with pupils or parents that are outside the realm of agreed practice.

This means that staff should:

- Be vigilant in maintaining their privacy and mindful of the need to avoid placing themselves in vulnerable situations.
- Be mindful of the need to maintain professional boundaries.

11. Communication with pupils and adults (including the use of technology)

Communication between pupils and adults, by whatever method, should take place within clear and explicit professional boundaries. This includes the wider use of technology such as mobile phones, text messaging, e-mails, digital cameras, videos, webcams, websites, social networking sites, online gaming, and blogs.

Staff must ensure that all communications, including all those written using technology, are undertaken in a professional manner and should be aware that all communications that include the name of any individual are subject to GDPR. (This means that any document containing a person's name, or recognisable abbreviation thereof, will be retained for 7 years, in line with the Federation's Data Retention Policy, and must be provided to the individual upon receipt of a SAR 'Subject Access Request'). Pupil names should only be used in written communication when strictly necessary.

Adults should not share any personal information with a pupil. They should not request, or respond to, any personal information from the pupil, other than that which might be appropriate as part of their professional role. Adults should ensure that all communications are transparent and open to scrutiny.

Adults should also be circumspect in their communications with pupils to avoid any misinterpretation of their motives or any behaviour which could be construed as grooming. They must not give their personal contact details to pupils including, but not limited to, e-mail, home, or mobile telephone numbers, unless the need to do so is agreed with senior leadership and parents. E-mail or text communications between an adult and a pupil outside agreed protocols may lead to disciplinary and/or criminal investigations. This also includes communications through internet-based web sites, such as social networking, instant messaging, or gaming.

Communication with ex-pupils who are over 18 and are not on the roll is left to staff discretion. Staff must be conscious of the fact that ex-pupils may be in contact with current pupils.

Be aware that actions that bring the school into disrepute could lead to disciplinary procedures being taken.

This means that staff should:

- Never give their personal contact details to pupils, including their mobile telephone number, without express permission from a senior pastoral leader.
- Never make any type of digital (visual or auditory) recording without the express permission of those being recorded and, in the case of pupils, without checking the recording is in line with the signed consent forms.
- Communicate with pupils in an appropriate and professional manner, making sure that parents have given permission for this form of communication to be used.
- Ensure all written communications, including email, are written with the utmost professionalism.
- Be aware that following a SAR all communications written by staff, incl. email, will be recovered (even if permanently deleted from the individual's account) up to 7 years after the member of Staff's leaving date.
- Only contact pupils for professional reasons.

- Not use internet or web-based communication channels to send private messages to a pupil.
- Not to have images of pupils stored on personal cameras, devices, or home computers.
- Not make images of pupils available on the internet, other than through the school network/website, without express permission from parents and a senior pastoral leader.
- Be cautious in their contact with ex-pupils, as there is still a professional relationship and there may be contact with current pupils.

12. Social Contact

Staff should not establish, or seek to establish, social contact with pupils, or their families, for the purpose of securing a friendship or to pursue or strengthen a relationship. Even if a young person seeks to establish social contact, or if this occurs coincidentally, the member of staff should exercise her/his professional judgement in making a response but should always discuss this with a senior leader. Staff must be aware that social contact, in certain situations, could be misconstrued as grooming. Staff should not give their personal details such as their home or e-mail address; social network sites, gamer tags or web pages to pupils unless the need to do so is agreed with senior leadership. If pupils do become aware of staff online identity, it must be changed, and the relevant pastoral lead made aware.

This means that staff should:

- Have no undeclared social contact with pupils.
- Consider the appropriateness of the social contact according to their role and nature of their work.
- Advise senior leadership of any regular social contact they have with a pupil or parent which may give rise to concern via the declaration form.
- Report and record any situation which they feel might compromise the federation or their own professional standing.

13. Social networking sites and online gaming

Federation staff may use social networking sites for personal use. However, accessing social media and posting during the working day is not permitted.

Staff members must be aware that use of social media must not bring the Federation or its academies into disrepute through any breaches in confidentiality or copyright. Use of social media must not be seen to bully, harass, be discriminatory, defamatory, or derogatory in any way.

Staff members are not permitted to make any postings on social media, that could be associated with a Mossbourne academy, without the express permission of the CEO. This includes, but is not limited to, images of children, images of themselves at work, comments about any academy, its staff, or pupils within the Mossbourne Federation.

In addition, the federation requires that profiles and photos of staff members be 'locked down' as private so that pupils or parents do not have access to staff personal data or images.

Staff must deny current or recent pupils' access to their profile to avoid placing themselves in a vulnerable position.

Staff should be aware that they leave themselves open to a charge of professional misconduct if images of a member of staff in a compromising situation, are made available on any public profile by a third party.

Should a pupil gain access to the profile of a member of staff by fraudulent means (impersonation or hacking), the relevant pastoral lead should be informed immediately.

Where relationships exist between staff and those who are also parents at the school, or personal friends who are parents at the school, social networking is acceptable, but caution must be exercised so that professional standards are maintained, and staff do not compromise themselves or the Federation.

As soon as a member of staff becomes aware that they are in an online game with a pupil attending a school within the Federation, the member of staff should cease to play against that pupil and should not enter any games containing that player as part of the group. Under no circumstances should staff seek out pupils and/or share their own gamer tags/ID with pupils or use school equipment to play online games.

This means that staff should:

- Be familiar with and adhere to guidance on the use of social media.
- Never post comments about the Federation or a school within it without the permission of the CEO.
- Never post photographs of themselves or of other colleagues at work, or of any work event.

- Never post pupils' work or comments about pupils' work.
- Never share work log-in details or passwords.
- Never respond to a request from a fellow staff member without ensuring the request is legitimate.
- Keep personal phone numbers private.
- Never give personal email addresses to pupils or parents.
- Be conscious of the need to restrict access to defined groups of people on their social media sites & pages.
- Ensure they make clear that views shared are their own and not reflective of those of the Federation.
- Avoid using any form of social media throughout the working day.
- Lock down their profile to ensure that data and images are not freely available. Staff should seek advice if unsure how to do this.
- Ensure all passwords are kept strong and secure.
- Be aware that images of others should be protected and must be treated as carefully as your own.
- Inform the relevant pastoral lead immediately, should any pupil attempt to contact a member of staff via social media, or gain access to a staff member's account.
- Be aware that failure to observe this policy is likely to lead to disciplinary procedures.

14. Physical Contact

There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate and proper for staff to have physical contact with pupils, but it is crucial that they only do so in ways appropriate to their professional role.

A 'no touch' approach is impractical for most staff and may in some circumstances be inappropriate. When physical contact is made with pupils this should be in response to their needs at the time, of limited duration and appropriate. Staff should always use their professional judgement about the appropriateness of any physical contact.

Physical contact should never be secretive, or for the gratification of the adult, or represent a misuse of authority. If a member of staff believes that an action could be misinterpreted, the incident and circumstances should be made clear to senior staff.

Physical contact, which occurs regularly with an individual pupil, is likely to raise questions unless the justification for this is part of a formally agreed plan (for example in relation to pupils with SEND or physical disabilities). Any such contact should be agreed in the pupil's individual plan and must be subject to review.

This means that staff should:

- Be aware that even well-intentioned physical contact may be misconstrued by the pupil, an observer or by anyone to whom this action is described.
- Never touch a pupil in a way which may be considered indecent.
- Always seek a pupil's permission to use physical contact.
- Always be prepared to explain actions and accept that all physical contact be open to scrutiny.
- Be aware and sensitive to the existence of cultural differences in perceptions around the use of touch which may cause misunderstanding or for staff intention to be misconstrued.

This means that the Federation should:

- Ensure they have policies and procedures in place for recording serious incidents, including incidents of physical restraint, and how information about incidents and outcomes can be easily accessed by senior leadership.
- Provide staff, on a "need to know" basis, with relevant information about vulnerable pupils in their care.

15. Physical Education & other activities which require physical contact.

Some staff, for example, those who teach PE and games, or who offer music tuition, will on occasions have to initiate physical contact with pupils to support a pupil to perform a task safely, to demonstrate the use of a particular piece of equipment/instrument or assist them with an exercise. This should always be done with the pupil's agreement.

Contact under these circumstances should be for the minimum time necessary to complete the activity and take place in an open environment (see section 19 on one-to-one situations, below). Staff should remain sensitive to any discomfort expressed verbally or non-verbally by the pupil.

This means that staff should:

- Ensure agreed and appropriate procedures in relation to the provision of physical support are used in physical education lessons.

- Consider alternatives where it is anticipated that a pupil might misinterpret any such contact, involving another member of staff, or a less vulnerable pupil in the demonstration.
- Always explain to a pupil the reason contact is necessary and what form that contact will take unless their safety is at immediate risk.

16. Showers & Changing

Young people are entitled to respect and privacy when changing clothes or taking a shower. However, there needs to be an appropriate level of supervision to safeguard pupils, satisfy health and safety considerations and ensure that bullying or teasing does not occur. This supervision should be appropriate to the needs and age of the pupils concerned and sensitive to the potential for embarrassment.

This means that staff should:

- Avoid any physical contact when pupils are in a state of undress.
- Avoid any visually intrusive behaviour and where there are changing rooms remain in the room when groups are changing.
- Ensure sensitive pupils are offered the opportunity to change privately.

This means that staff should not:

- Change in the same place as pupils.
- Shower with pupils

17. Pupils in Distress

There may be occasions when a distressed pupil needs comfort and reassurance. Staff should always remain self-aware in order that any support, including physical contact, is not threatening, intrusive or subject to misinterpretation.

Where a member of staff has a particular concern about the need to provide this type of care and reassurance, the staff member should ensure that the relevant pastoral lead is made aware.

This means that staff should:

- Consider the way in which they offer comfort to a distressed pupil.
- Always inform the relevant pastoral lead when and how they offered comfort to a distressed pupil.
- Record situations which may give rise to concern.

18. Behaviour Management

All pupils have a right to be treated with respect and dignity. Staff should not use any form of degrading treatment to punish a pupil. The use of humour can help to defuse a situation however, the use of sarcasm, demeaning or insensitive comments towards pupils is not acceptable in any situation.

This means that staff should:

- Not use force as a form of punishment.
- Try to defuse situations before they escalate and keep parents informed of any sanctions.
- Adhere to the relevant academy behaviour policy.

19. Care, Control and Physical Intervention

Staff may legitimately intervene to prevent a pupil from committing a criminal offence, injuring themselves or others, causing damage to property, engaging in behaviour prejudicial to good order and to maintain good order and discipline. Staff should always use physical intervention as a last resort and must always have regard to the health and safety of themselves and others when doing so.

Under no circumstances should physical force be used as a form of punishment. The use of unwarranted physical force is likely to constitute a criminal offence.

In all cases where physical intervention is deemed necessary, the incident and subsequent actions should be documented and reported.

This means that staff should:

- Always seek to defuse situations.
- Always use minimum force for the shortest period necessary.
- Ensure they are familiar with and follow the federation/academy 'restraint procedure' available as part of the 'behaviour policy'.

20. Sexual Contact with Pupils

Any sexual behaviour by a member of staff with or towards a pupil is both inappropriate and illegal. Pupils are protected by the same laws as adults in relation to non-consensual sexual behaviour. They are additionally protected by specific legal provisions regardless of whether the child or young person consents or not. This includes the prohibition on adults in a position of trust (see Section 5).

The sexual activity referred to does not just involve physical contact including penetrative and non-penetrative acts. It may also include non-contact activities, such as causing children to engage in or watch sexual activity or the production of pornographic materials known as 'grooming' where the sole purpose is to gain the trust of a child and manipulate that relationship so that sexual abuse can take place.

Staff should be aware that conferring special attention and favour upon a child might be construed as being part of a 'grooming' process, which is an offence.

This means that staff should:

- Not pursue sexual relationships with children and young people either in or out of school.
- Avoid any form of communication with a child or young person which could be interpreted as sexually suggestive or provocative i.e., Verbal comments, letters, notes, electronic mail, phone calls, texts, physical contact.

21. One-to-one Situations

Staff working in one-to-one situations with children and young people are more vulnerable to allegations. Teachers and support staff should recognise this possibility and plan and conduct such meetings accordingly. Every attempt should be made to ensure that the safety and security needs of both staff and pupils are met.

Pre-arranged off-site meetings with pupils, are not permitted without approval from the principal or deputy.

This means that staff should:

- Avoid meetings with pupils in remote, secluded areas of the academy.
- Ensure there is visual access and/or an open door in a one-to-one situation.
- Inform other staff of the meeting beforehand, assessing the need to have them present or close by.
- Avoid use of 'engaged', or equivalent, signs wherever possible. Such signs may create an opportunity for secrecy or the interpretation of secrecy.
- Always report any situation, where a pupil becomes distressed or angry to the relevant senior pastoral lead.
- Consider the needs and circumstances of the pupil involved.

22. Transporting Children

In certain situations, for example out of school activities, staff or volunteers may agree to transport children. A designated member of staff should be appointed to plan and provide oversight of all transporting arrangements and respond to any difficulties that may arise.

Wherever possible and practicable it is advisable that transport is undertaken other than in private vehicles, with at least one adult additional to the driver acting as an escort. The driver must also have appropriate insurance.

Staff should ensure that their behaviour is safe and that the transport arrangements and the vehicle meet all legal requirements. They should ensure that the vehicle is roadworthy and appropriately insured and that the maximum capacity is not exceeded.

This means that staff should:

- Plan and agree arrangements with all parties in advance in accordance with the Federation Educational Visits Policy, responding sensitively and flexibly to disagreements.
- Ensure that they are alone with a child for the minimum time possible.
- Be aware that the safety and welfare of the child is their responsibility until this is safely passed over to a parent/carer.
- Report the nature of the journey, route and expected time of arrival in accordance with agreed procedures.
- Ensure that their behaviour and all arrangements ensure vehicle, passenger, and driver safety.
- Consider any specific needs that the pupils may have.

23. Extra-curricular activities

Staff should take particular care when supervising pupils in the less formal atmosphere of a residential setting or after-school activity.

During school activities that take place off-site or out of school hours, a more relaxed atmosphere i.e., dress code may be acceptable. However, staff remain in a position of trust and need to ensure that their behaviour cannot be interpreted as seeking to establish an inappropriate relationship or friendship with pupils.

This means that staff should:

- Always have another adult present in off-school activities, unless otherwise agreed with senior school staff.
- Undertake the required 'Trip' training and a risk assessment in line with the 'Educational Visits Policy'
- Ensure they have received parental consent to undertake the activity.
- Ensure that their own behaviour always remains professional.

Where out of school activities include overnight stays, careful consideration needs to be given to sleeping arrangements. Pupils, staff, and parents should be informed of these prior to the start of the trip.

Health and Safety arrangements require members of staff to keep colleagues/employers aware of their whereabouts, especially when involved in an out of school activity.

24. First Aid and Administration of Medication

Each academy has an administration of medication policy which must always be adhered to.

This means that staff should:

- Always refer any pupil requiring medication to the designated staff member i.e., the Medical Welfare or Attendance Officer.
- Never offer any advice regarding medication that could be construed as medical advice to a pupil.
- Never provide any pupil with medication unless you hold the role of Medical Welfare Officer, or the medication is for emergency purposes and a Health Care Plan is being followed i.e.: use of an epi-pen.
- No member of staff should dispense any form of non-essential medication. If in doubt, consult the medical officer in the first instance.
- Ensure they follow exactly all policies and information around pupils' medical needs i.e., the need for a pupil to attend the medical room, wear specific items of clothing, or around the undertaking or avoiding of specific activities or circumstances.

25. Intimate Care

All children have a right to safety, privacy and dignity when contact of an intimate nature is required (for example assisting with toileting or removing wet/soiled clothing). A care plan should be drawn up and agreed with parents for all children who require intimate care on a regular basis.

Children should be encouraged to act as independently as possible and to undertake as much of their own personal care as is practicable. When assistance is required, staff should ensure that another appropriate adult is in the vicinity and is aware of the task to be undertaken.

Additional vulnerabilities that may arise from a physical disability should be considered regarding individual teaching and care plans for each child. As with all arrangements for intimate care needs, agreements between the child, their parents and the academy and any involved external agencies must be negotiated, agreed, and recorded in advance and must be subject to regular review.

This means that staff should:

- Make other staff aware of the task being undertaken.
- Explain to the child what is happening.
- Consult with colleagues where any variation from the agreed procedure/care plan is necessary.
- Record the justification for any variations to the agreed procedure/care plan and share this information with parents, having taken any advice necessary from relevant professionals.

26. Curriculum

Many areas of the curriculum can include or raise matters that are sexually explicit, or of an otherwise sensitive nature. Care should be taken to ensure that resource materials cannot be misinterpreted and that they clearly relate to the learning outcomes identified by the programme of study and lesson plan. This plan should highlight any areas of risk and sensitivity.

The curriculum can sometimes include or lead to unplanned discussion about subject matter of a sexually explicit or otherwise sensitive nature. Responding to pupils' questions can require careful judgement and staff may wish to take guidance in these circumstances from a senior member of staff.

Care should also be taken to abide by the governing body's required policy on sex and relationships education and the wishes of parents. Parents have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of any sex education provided (but not from the biological aspects of human growth and reproduction necessary under the science curriculum).

This means that staff should:

- Have clear written lesson plans and must adhere to guidance in these regarding sensitive issues.
- Establish clear ground rules for the class, at the start of the lesson, including ensuring that pupils receive clear instructions about what can and cannot be raised.
- Complete an Initial Concern should staff feel any pupil is at risk from a disclosure made or questions asked in a lesson.

This means that staff should not:

- Take part in or encourage, inappropriate, personal, or offensive discussion about sexual activity.

27. Photography, Videos and Creative Activities

Many school activities involve recording images. Recording images may be undertaken as part of the curriculum, off-site activities, for publicity, or to celebrate achievement. Staff need to be aware of the potential for these activities to be misused for pornographic or 'grooming' purposes. Careful consideration should be given as to how these activities are organised and undertaken.

Parental agreement to use images of children for educational purposes, including publicity for the Federation, has already been received for most pupils. However, images should not be displayed on other websites, in publications or in a public place without additional consent.

This means that staff should:

- Be clear about the purpose of the activity and about what will happen to the photographs when the lesson/activity is concluded.
- Ensure that a senior pastoral staff member is aware that the photography/image equipment is being used and for what purpose.
- Ensure that all images are available for scrutiny, to screen for acceptability.
- Be able to justify images of children in their possession.
- Avoid recording images in one-to-one situations.
- Be aware that some parents have withdrawn consent for the recording of images and ensure that no images are recorded and stored of pupils for whom consent has not been received.

This means that staff should not:

- Have images of pupils stored on personal cameras, devices, or home computers.
- Make images of pupils available on the internet, other than through the federation network/website, without permission from parents and the senior pastoral leader.

28. Internet Use

The Mossbourne Federation has a clear policy about access to and the use of the Internet. Please refer to the acceptable use of IT policy for further guidance.

Under no circumstances should adults in the school access inappropriate images. Accessing child pornography or indecent images of children on the internet, and making, storing, or disseminating such material, is illegal and, if proven, will invariably lead to the individual being barred from work with children and young people.

Using school equipment to access inappropriate or indecent material, including adult pornography, would normally lead to disciplinary action, particularly if as a result, pupils might be exposed to inappropriate or indecent material.

29. Whistleblowing

Whistleblowing is the mechanism by which staff can voice their concerns, made in good faith, without fear of repercussion. Please refer to the Federation Whistle Blowing Policy.

Staff should acknowledge their individual responsibilities to bring matters of concern to the attention of senior leadership and/or relevant external agencies. This is particularly important where the welfare of children may be at risk.

This means that staff should:

- Report any behaviour by colleagues that raises a concern.

Whistleblowing is when a worker reports, in the public interest, suspected wrongdoing at work.

Wrongdoing covered by this 'public interest disclosure' includes:

- When someone's health and safety is in danger
- Damage to the environment
- A criminal offence
- Not obeying the law
- Covering up wrongdoing
- Misusing public funds; (and in schools) -actions that negatively affect the welfare of children

30. Sharing Concerns and Recording Incidents

All staff should be aware of the Federation's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, including procedures for dealing with allegations against staff. Staff who are the subject of allegations are advised to contact their professional association.

In the event of an incident occurring, which may result in an action being misinterpreted and/or an allegation being made against a member of staff, the relevant information should be clearly and promptly recorded and reported to senior staff. Early discussion with a parent could avoid any misunderstanding.

Members of staff should feel able to discuss with their line manager, or another appropriate senior member of staff, any difficulties or problems that may affect their relationship with pupils so that appropriate support can be provided, or action can be taken. If the difficulty is related to the wellbeing or safety of a pupil/pupils(s) safeguarding procedures must be followed in the first instance.

This means that staff must:

- Have attended the accredited safeguarding training specified by the federation, including site-specific training. Staff must be familiar with, and know how to follow, the Mossbourne federation child Protection safeguarding policy and procedures.
- Take responsibility for recording any concern about any matter pertaining to the welfare of a pupil and for passing on that information to a DSL, in line with procedures, as soon as is safely possible.
- Refer to the Mossbourne federation child protection safeguarding policy and procedures for further information.

Appendix 1

Relationships with pupils outside of work declaration

It is recognised that there may be circumstances whereby employees of the school are known to pupils outside of work. Examples include but are not limited to social groups; sports clubs; religious organisations; tutoring; family connections. Staff must declare any relationship/s outside of school that they may have with pupils, on this form. There is no need to complete this form if to the best of their knowledge staff do not have a relationship with a pupil outside of school.

Employee Name	Pupil Name	Relationship
I can confirm that I am fully aware of the code of conduct relating to contact out of school with pupils in line with this policy.		<input type="checkbox"/>
I confirm that if these circumstances change at any time, I will complete a new form to ensure the Mossbourne Federation is aware of any relationships.		<input type="checkbox"/>
Signed:		Date:
Once completed, signed & dated, please return to HR for the attention of the SDSL.		

Appendix 2

Confirmation of Compliance

I hereby confirm that I have read, understood, and agree to comply with The Mossbourne Federation Staff Code of Conduct.		<input type="checkbox"/>
Name:		
Position:		
Signed:		Date:
Once completed, signed, and dated, please return this form to HR.		

Document Name	Staff Code of Conduct	First Use	2018
Originator	Alice Painter	Endorsed by board	December 2017
Editor	Stephen Greenman	Last Changes	August 2023