



Staff Code of Conduct

v1.1

(Including Staff Electronic Communication Policy
and
Acceptable Use of Technology Statement)

Interim Review

V1.1 – Summer 2020 update

Approved by Trustees: 20th May 2020

For implementation across the Trust from March 2020

Full Review date: Summer 2022

Strong and Effective Leaders	High Performing Staff	Successful Students	Engaged Community
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Statement of intent

South Pennine Academies expects all of its students to receive the highest possible quality of teaching and learning within a positive and respectful environment.

Employees of the Trust should understand that their own behaviour, and the manner in which they conduct themselves with their colleagues, students, parents/carers and other stakeholders, sets an example. All staff should be aware of and adhere to the Seven Principles of Public Life (appendix 1).

South Pennine Academies recognises that the majority of staff members act appropriately and treat each other with dignity and respect; however, we consider it important to clarify the expected standards.

Ref: South Pennine Academies; Dignity at Work Policy (Anti Bullying and Harassment) June 2019 v1.0

This document forms part of a staff member's contract of employment and failure to comply with it, and with the associated Trust policies, may result in disciplinary action being taken, including legal action where this is warranted. This document outlines the minimum standards for all employees of South Pennine Academies.

Individual academies may develop and agree more detailed supplementary codes of practice on topics contained within this code, with the aim of providing additional guidance and meeting local operational needs, as long as these are not contrary to the minimum standards and are appropriately consulted on at a local level.

This document applies to all staff members who are:

- Employed by the Trust, including the Principals and the Chief Executive;
- Members of the central team(s);
- Employed in units or bases that are attached to the Trust;
- And, any other persons working with our children and/or on our academy premises.

This document does not apply to:

- Employees of external contractors; *these employees are governed by their employment contracts and any relevant laws pertaining to their activities within the Trust, for example, GDPR 2018.*

The Board believes that staff are responsible for their actions. It is the responsibility of staff members to read the Code of Conduct. The Principal is responsible for making the Code of Conduct available to staff, annually and at induction. If any of the provisions contained within this Code of Conduct, related codes of practice or any other policies are not fully understood staff must, in their own interests, seek clarification from their Principal (Operations Director, for central team members).

This Code of Conduct does not contain a comprehensive list of acts of misconduct. There may be other acts of commission or omission committed by staff that the Trust also views as misconduct and/or gross misconduct.

Failure to observe this Code of Conduct, failure properly to perform employee duties, serious misconduct or criminal offences committed during or outside working hours which bring the employee, an academy, or the Trust into disrepute will be dealt with under the disciplinary policy, and the most serious cases may result in dismissal.

Staff who are seconded to work in another academy, or organisation, are expected to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with this Code of Conduct and in a way which meets the requirements of the school or organisation to which they have been seconded.

The Code is compatible with the conventions contained in the Human Rights Act.

1. Legal framework

1.1. This policy has due regard to statutory legislation, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Primary Legislation - Education Act 2002
- Primary Legislation - Children Act 1989
- Primary Legislation - Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Primary Legislation - Data Protection Act 2018
- Secondary legislation - The Working Time Regulations 1998
- Secondary legislation - The General Data Protection Regulation
- DfE guidance - Staffing and Employment Advice for Schools
- DfE guidance - Statutory Policies for Schools and Academy Trusts

1.2. This policy also has due regard to statutory guidance, including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE 'Keeping children safe in education' latest version
- DfE 'Working together to safeguard children'

2. Related Trust policies

2.1. This Staff Code of Conduct has due regard to the following Trust / academy policies and procedures:

- Gifts or Donations, Hospitality and Personal Conduct Policy
 - Staff Expenses Policy
 - Conflict of interest policy and procedures
 - Driving Safely at Work Policy
 - Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
 - Health and Safety Handbook
 - Fire Safety Policy
 - General Data Protection Regulations Policy
 - Security Breach Prevention and Management Plan
 - Behaviour Principles Statement
 - Disciplinary Policy
 - Grievance Policy
 - Driving Safely at Work and Drivers checklists
 - Dignity at Work (anti bullying)
 - Anti-Bribery Policy (this is in the Trust Financial Handbook)
 - Equalities Policy
 - Arrangements for requesting time off, Adoption Leave, Flexible working inc Career Breaks, Maternity, Paternity, Shared Parental Leave
 - Safer Recruitment Policy
 - Whistleblowing Policy
 - Associated individual academy policies
- NB: this list is not exhaustive

3. Safeguarding students

3.1. In accordance with 'Keeping children safe in education' guidance, all staff members have a responsibility to safeguard students and protect their welfare.

- 3.2. All staff members have a responsibility to ensure that they provide a learning environment in which students feel safe, secure and respected.
- 3.3. In order to effectively safeguard students, staff members are required to follow the procedures outlined in this Staff Code of Conduct and the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, ensuring that they do not act in a way that may put students at risk of harm, or lead others to question their actions.
- 3.4. In accordance with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, staff members will be prepared to identify students who may be subject to, or at risk of, abuse and neglect, and will follow the necessary reporting and referral procedures.
- 3.5. Any staff member that has concerns about a staff member's actions or intent that may lead to a student being put at risk of harm will report this in line with guidance to the Principal immediately, so appropriate action can be taken. Where appropriate, staff should refer to the Trust Whistleblowing Policy.
- 3.6. Staff working in posts covered by the Childcare Disqualification Regulations ("relevant posts") are required to complete a declaration form prior to commencing employment. They are required to declare immediately anything which could render them disqualified (including disqualification by association), and are not permitted to work in a relevant post if disqualified unless a waiver is granted by Ofsted.
- 3.7. Staff must not contact students (or parents on school related business) from their private email address or social media accounts: everything must go via agreed work-based communication channels. It is acknowledged that staff may have genuine friendships and social contact with parents of students, independent of the professional relationship. Staff should, however, exercise professional judgement and seek advice if necessary, and be aware that behaviour outside of school can impact on suitability to continue in employment with South Pennine Academies.

4. Public Duty, Private Interest

4.1. General

- A staff member's academy duties and private interests must not conflict. Staff must declare any private interests relating to their academy duties. This may include, but is not limited to, membership of organisations which would be generally considered to conflict with their academy duties.
- Staff must not behave in a way that could place students, their colleagues, or themselves at risk, and must have regard to the duty of care described in the Trusts, Health and Safety Policies and act in accordance with safe systems of work and codes of practice.

4.2 Fraud and Theft

- Trust and academy staff must not use their position to obtain gain for themselves, business associates, friends or family either directly or indirectly. Please refer to separate policies on Anti-Fraud & Anti-Bribery. SPA Board members, and Local Academy Board (LAB) members acknowledge the responsibility they have for the administration of public funds, and emphasise to the public and staff the importance placed on probity, financial control, selflessness and honest administration. They are also committed to the fight against fraud, whether perpetrated by staff, contractors or the public.

- Staff must use public funds responsibly and lawfully. They must work to ensure that SPA and its academies use their resources prudently and within the law and that the local community gets value for money. The SPA Financial Procedures and Regulations and those of the Education Finance Authority (EFA) must be observed.
- Defrauding and stealing (or attempting to do so) from SPA, an academy or any person / organisation in any way will not be tolerated. This includes deliberate falsification of claims, e.g. time sheets, mileage and travel/subsistence allowances with the intention of obtaining payment.
- The SPA Board and LABs require staff to report genuine concerns relating to potential fraud, theft or unethical behaviour to the Principal, LAB, or Chief Executive. Further details are contained in the SPA Whistleblowing Policy.
- It is acknowledged that staff may not find it easy to 'blow the whistle' or report irregularities and SPA Board / LAB members will give them full support in raising such concerns. Every effort will be made to respect an employee's request for anonymity. However, staff are expected to demonstrate accountability and to co-operate fully with any scrutiny appropriate to their position. There are two sides to every story and the SPA Board / LABs will undertake to give people a fair hearing. It is possible that some allegations will turn out to be mistaken. If, however, you make malicious or deliberately false allegations, disciplinary action may be taken against you.

4.3 Financial Inducements, Gifts and Hospitality

- On no account must an employee accept a financial payment or other inducement from any person, body or organisation, e.g. contractors, developers, consultants, etc. It is an offence for an employee to accept any fee, gift, loan or reward whatsoever, other than his/her proper remuneration.
 - Where a fee is paid by an external body for work undertaken by an employee of South Pennine Academies in the course of their employment (for example, speaking at a conference) this should be treated as a payment to the Trust, not to the individual employee (see section 7).
 - As a general rule, staff must refuse any gift or hospitality offered to them or their family that may be perceived to influence their judgement. Exceptions are gifts of negligible value that are usually given to a wide range of people, e.g. pens, diaries, calendars etc. and small gifts from children. Offers of hospitality must only be accepted when proper written authorisation has been received from the Principal or Chief Executive (on behalf of the Chair of the SPA Board).
 - There is an expectation that in addition to declaring those gifts received, staff will also declare those which have been correctly refused. Each academy, and the central trust team, is expected to maintain a gifts & hospitality register.
- 4.4 Employee Declarations of Financial and Other Interests
- Staff must be aware that a personal relationship with a colleague could lead to a potential conflict of interest, particularly where there is an involvement in recruitment or a line management relationship, (South Pennine Academies – Staff Code of Conduct) and/or where a member of an academy Senior Leadership Team or the Central Team is involved. Staff should seek advice from their Principal (or Chair of Local Board / Chief Executive, as applicable) where there is a potential conflict of interest of this nature.

- All staff have a statutory duty to declare any financial or other interest in any existing or proposed contract or an interest in, or association with, any organisation, services, activity or person that may cause a direct or indirect conflict of interest with their SPA / academy employment. Private interests preclude staff from participation in any such activities. All staff must abide by these regulations.
- Where a staff member makes representations, or applies for services in which they have significant influence by virtue of their employment position, on behalf of a relative, colleague, friend or some other person with whom they have a close relationship, they must declare a personal interest.
- Staff with such a conflict of interest must tell their Principal, Chair of Local Board [if Principal making the declaration], Chief Executive [central team members] or Chair of the Trust Board [Chief Executive] in writing. That person will then make alternative arrangements so that a staff member is not involved, or, where the staff member's skills are required, ensure appropriate supervision is provided so that undue influence or bias to the staff member's advantage is prevented. They will also review any such declarations annually.
- Principals and the Chief Executive are responsible for the monitoring of staff members' activities in accordance with the provisions/declarations of this Code and any related codes of practice. Any such monitoring will comply with relevant legislation such as the Regulatory and Investigatory Powers Act, the General Data Protection Regulations and the Human Rights Act.
- All staff must annually complete a 'declaration of interest form', even if they have not declared an interest.
- Staff are entitled to use all of the services of SPA and their employing academy as appropriate but in doing so they will receive neither favour nor suffer discrimination or disadvantage. Staff must be aware at all times that members of the public expect the highest standards of fairness and equality to be upheld in the administration of services regardless of recipient. They have a responsibility to ensure that they conduct themselves in a manner which does not bring into question either their integrity or their motivation. At no time should they attempt to exert any pressure to obtain services because of their position or to access services other than through those channels available to members of the public. It is for these reasons they should ensure that personal interests are declared.

4.4 Relationships with Prospective or Current Contractors

- If staff engage or supervise contractors, have an official relationship with contractors or a potential contractor, and/or have previously had or currently have a relationship in a private or domestic capacity with a contractor, they must declare that relationship to their Principal or the Chief Executive.
- All orders and contracts must be awarded on merit, by fair competition against other tenders. Staff must exercise impartiality and no favouritism must be shown to businesses run for example by friends, partners, relatives or business associates. No section of the community should be discriminated against in the tendering, evaluation and award processes.
- Staff who are privy to confidential information on contracts for tender, or costs for either internal or external contractors, must not disclose that information to any unauthorised party or organisation.
- Staff are expected to follow the Trust's Anti-Slavery & Human Trafficking Policy

5. Appearance and Dress

5.1. The Trust expects that staff members will:

- Remember that they are role models for students, and that their dress and appearance should reflect this;
- Be clean and tidy and ensure good personal hygiene;
- Ensure that their appearance is clean and professional with hair that is appropriate to a business environment, when at work or representing the Trust;
- Dress in a manner that is appropriate to their role; where health, safety or hygiene clothing is provided, or uniform, it must be worn;
- Wear a name badge and associated academy security lanyard, which will be provided by the academy;
- Not dress in a way that would cause embarrassment to students, parents/carers, colleagues or other stakeholders;
- Where reasonably practicable, cover any tattoos or body art whilst in the Trust; small earrings are acceptable, including multiple pairs, but all other body piercings must be removed or not visible;
- Observe that where an academy has adopted local guidelines on dress and personal appearance, this should be adhered to by all staff.
- Hair colour should be appropriate to being a role model for students

6. Attendance

6.1. The Trust expects that staff members will:

- Attend work in accordance with their contract of employment and associated terms and conditions in relation to hours, days of work and holidays;
- Make routine medical and dental appointments outside of their working hours or during holidays, where possible;
- Refer to the Trust's Time off and leave arrangements if they need time off for any reason other than personal illness;
- Follow the Trust's absence reporting procedure when they are absent from work due to illness or injury.

7. Professional Behaviour and Conduct

7.1. Staff members are expected to treat other colleagues, students, parents/carers, and external contacts with dignity and respect.

7.2. The use of foul and abusive language will not be tolerated.

7.3. Discrimination, bullying, harassment or intimidation, including physical, sexual and verbal abuse, will not be tolerated.

7.4. Staff members will not misuse or misrepresent their position, qualifications or experience, or bring the Trust into disrepute.

7.5. Staff members will inform the Principal if they are subject to a criminal conviction, caution, ban, police enquiry, investigation or pending prosecution.

- 7.6. Staff are also to ensure they are fully compliant with any professional standards relating to their position.
- 7.7. Staff should ensure that their professional behaviour does not breach assessment or examination arrangement, set out by the academy, leaders, or outlined in national arrangements.

8. Conduct Outside of Work and Secondary Employment

NB: Where the work takes place outside the school day – evenings, weekends or days outside of contracted hours – this is viewed as ‘secondary employment’.

- 8.1. Staff may undertake work outside Trust, either paid or voluntary, provided that it does not conflict with the interests of the Trust. The nature of the work cannot be seen to bring the Trust into disrepute, nor be at a level which may contravene the working time regulations or affect an individual's work performance.
- 8.2. Staff will not engage in outside work which could seriously damage the reputation and standing of the Trust or the employee's own reputation, or the reputation of other members of the Trust community. In particular, criminal offences that involve violence, possession or use of illegal drugs or sexual misconduct are unacceptable.
- 8.3. Employee appointments as Governors, Councillors, Trade Union officials, membership of the Territorial Army, as a Justice of the Peace or as a Member of the Employment Tribunal do not constitute secondary employment as described in this Code of Conduct. Nonetheless, the principles of staff making Principals / Chief Executive aware of these duties and seeking appropriate time off in a reasonable and timely manner apply, as outlined in the Time Off and Leave Arrangements.
- 8.4. The SPA Board understands the value and importance to both individuals and their academies of extending professional experience. Where an employee wishes to provide their services on a consultancy basis, either to another organisation, or as a representative of another organisation, they should first obtain approval from their Principal and their Local Academy Board. In the case of Principals, approval should be sought through the Chief Executive and the Chair of the LAB. Approval will be dependent on the needs of the academy and Trust at that time.
- 8.5. Where the work takes place during normal working hours, any payments should be made to the academy or Trust through an invoicing system. The individual will be entitled to claim reasonable travel expenses for providing the service, though no additional remuneration will be possible.
- 8.6. In such cases, approval must be obtained for the use of any materials owned by an academy or the Trust or obtained through employment therein. This is of particular importance to data protection and child protections.
- 8.7. South Pennine Academies reserves the right to intellectual copyright over materials, research and innovative practice which have been developed in conjunction with or as a result of employment by the Trust, or its academies.
- 8.8. Staff should seek approval from the Principal prior to publishing professional articles or blogs

- 8.9. Staff will not engage in inappropriate use of social network sites which may bring themselves, the Trust, Trust community or employer into disrepute, or breach relevant professional standards.
- 8.10. CRIMINAL CONVICTIONS - Under the terms of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) order 1975 (as amended in 2013), employees must disclose details of any unspent convictions, cautions, reprimands, bind-overs and final warnings they may have, including any criminal proceedings pending against them, with the exception of any criminal history that is protected or “filtered”. Failure to disclose such convictions and to comply with any of the above constitutes possible gross misconduct and may result in disciplinary action including the possibility of summary dismissal without notice.
- 8.11. Staff whose work involves driving must declare any motoring offences to their Principal / Chief Executive.
- 8.12. Staff who have access to children or young people as part of their work are absolutely required to report any convictions whatsoever to their Principal / Trust HR. In this respect, staff must provide information of any pending criminal proceedings against them and subsequent cautions or convictions.

9. Smoking, Alcohol and Other Substances

- 9.1. Staff will not smoke, use e-cigarettes or vape on, or within, the immediate visible vicinity of the Trust premises.
- 9.2. Staff will not smoke / vape whilst working with or supervising students off-site, such as when on educational visits and trips.
- 9.3. Staff must attend work in a condition to undertake their duties in a safe manner. The taking of illegal drugs / legal highs or alcohol during working hours is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Staff members must never attend work under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs including residential/school visits/proms.
- 9.4. If alcohol or drug usage impacts on a staff member’s performance, the Trust has the right to discuss the matter with the employee and take appropriate action in accordance with the Trust’s disciplinary procedures, including referral to the police.
- 9.5. Any consumption of legal drugs (i.e. prescription or over the counter drugs), which impairs performance must be discussed with the Principal / Chief Executive.

10. Health and safety

Staff members will:

- Be familiar with and adhere to the Trust’s Health & Safety Policy, and ensure that they take every action to keep themselves and everyone in the Trust environment safe & well;
- Comply with health and safety regulations and use any safety equipment and protective clothing which is supplied to them;
- Comply with hygiene requirement;
- Comply with accident reporting requirements.

11. Relationships with Students and Families

- 11.1. The Trust expects that staff will:

- Maintain professional boundaries and relationships with students at all times, and will consider whether their actions are warranted, proportionate, safe and necessary;
- Act in an open and transparent way that would not lead to others questioning their actions;
- Ensure that they do not establish social contact with students for the purpose of securing a friendship, or to pursue or strengthen a relationship;
- Ensure that they do not develop personal or sexual relationships with students; this includes sexual remarks and discussing their own sexual relationships with, or in the presence of, students;
- Only contact students via the Trust's established mechanisms; personal phone numbers, email addresses or social media platforms will not be used to contact students, past students, present students or their families;
- Ensure that if contact is initiated by a student via social media it must be disclosed to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. A member of staff should not respond.

12. Relationships with Trust Colleagues

12.1. The Trust expects that staff will:

- Maintain professional boundaries and relationships with colleagues at all times;
- Act in an open and transparent way that would not lead to others questioning their actions;
- Remember that if personal relationships with colleagues are entered into, it is best practice to notify the Principal;

13. Physical Contact with Students

13.1. The Trust understands that there are circumstances in which it is entirely necessary for staff to have physical contact with students, e.g. when applying first aid and assisting with intimate care, but staff will only do so in a professional and appropriate manner in line with relevant Trust policies.

13.2. When physical contact is made with students, it is imperative that it is conducted in a way which is responsive to the student's needs, is of limited duration and is appropriate to their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background. Where a staff member is concerned about noticeable changes in a student's behaviour this should be reported, and advice from leaders sought.

13.3. Staff will seek the student's permission, where possible, before initiating contact.

13.4. Staff will always use their professional judgement when determining what physical contact is appropriate, as this may differ between students. As such, the student's feelings and wishes will always be taken into account.

13.5. Staff will never touch a student in a way which is indecent, and will always be prepared to explain their actions.

13.6. Staff will be aware that even well-intentioned physical contact may be misconstrued by a student, an observer or by anyone to whom this action is described and, therefore, will be prepared to justify their actions.

13.7. Staff will not engage in rough play, direct sporting competition, tickling or fun fights with students.

13.8. Extra caution will be taken where it is known that a student has previously suffered from abuse or neglect.

- 13.9. Physical contact will never be secretive; if a member of staff believes an action could be misinterpreted, this will be reported to the Principal and appropriate procedures will be followed.
- 13.10. Where it is necessary in PE classes for teachers to demonstrate use of equipment, this will be conducted with another member of staff if possible; if a student is required to participate, their consent will be given before doing so.
- 13.11. If a child is in distress and in need of comfort as reassurance, staff may use age-appropriate physical contact, such as placing their hand on the student's shoulder. Staff will remain self-aware of their actions at all times and ensure that their contact is not threatening, intrusive or subject to misinterpretation.
- 13.12. Staff may also use reasonable force as a means of physical contact with students for restraint purposes; such instances will always be in accordance with the academy Use of Reasonable Force Policy.
- 13.13. Confiscation and Search should always be conducted in line with the Academy policy.

14. Showering and Changing

- 14.1. Students are entitled to respect and privacy whilst they are changing before/after PE; however a level of supervision is required to ensure that students are safe, and that they are not subjected to bullying.
- 14.2. The supervision will be appropriate to the needs and ages of the students, and sensitive to the potential for embarrassment.
- 14.3. Staff will announce their intention of entering the changing room to allow students to maintain their privacy.
- 14.4. Staff will never change or shower in the same area as students.

15. Transporting Students

- 15.1. When it is necessary to transport students off-site, staff will ensure that the transport arrangements of the vehicle meet all legal requirements, including safe seating requirements, they have an appropriate license, and the vehicle is roadworthy, has a valid MOT certificate and is insured.
- 15.2. Staff will gain consent from parents/carers before transporting students, and will be aware that the welfare of all students in the vehicle is their responsibility.
- 15.3. Two or more staff will be present in the vehicle to avoid any discrepancy regarding safeguarding concerns, unless permission has been sought from the parent and the Principal has given authority.

16. Premises, Equipment and Communication

- 16.1. Trust equipment and systems are available only for Trust-related activities and will not be used for the fulfilment of another job or for personal use, unless specifically authorised by the Principal.
- 16.2. Illegal, inappropriate or unacceptable use of Trust equipment or communication systems may result in disciplinary action and, in serious cases, could lead to an employee's dismissal.

- 16.3. Employees receiving inappropriate communication or material, or who are unsure about whether something he/she proposes to do might breach this policy, should seek advice from the Principal.
- 16.4. The Trust reserves the right to monitor emails, phone calls, internet activity or document production, principally in order to avoid offensive or nuisance material and to protect systems from viruses, but also to ensure proper and effective use of systems.
- 16.5. Communication systems may be accessed when the Trust suspects that the employee has been misusing systems or facilities, or for the investigation of suspected fraud or other irregularity. Access will be secured by the systems manager, after informing the Trust Director of Operations.
- 16.6. Passwords should not be shared and access to computer systems must be kept confidential except on the express request of the Principal or systems manager. Breach of this confidentiality may be subject to disciplinary action.
- 16.7. Trust equipment that is used outside the premises, e.g. laptops, will be returned to the Trust when the employee leaves employment, or if requested to do so by the Principal.
- 16.8. All work carried out whilst being employed by the Trust remains the intellectual property of the Trust, permission must be sought before acquiring materials on departure.
- 16.9. Staff should report immediately to their line manager if equipment is lost or stolen.

17. Photography and Videos

- 17.1. Photographs and videos will only be taken using Trust equipment – using personal mobile phones for this purpose is prohibited.
- 17.2. Consent will be obtained from parents/carers and students in the event of any images or videos of students which the Trust wishes to use, e.g. to publish on the website.
- 17.3. The wishes of the student will also be taken into account when taking images or videos, ensuring that those who do not wish to have their photograph taken or be filmed are respected.
- 17.4. All photographs and videos will be available for scrutiny, and staff will be prepared to justify the images or footage taken.
- 17.5. Careful consideration will always be given to the activities which are being filmed or photographed, in order to ensure that images or videos are not indecent and cannot be misused.
- 17.6. Only designated and trained staff can access academy CCTV footage as designated by the Principal or Senior Trust representative.

18. Data Protection and Confidentiality

- 18.1. Staff members are required, under the General Data Protection Regulations, to collect, maintain and dispose of sensitive or personal data in a responsible manner.
- 18.2. Staff members will not disclose sensitive information about the Trust, its employees to other parties.

- 18.3. The only exception whereby it is acceptable for a staff member to disclose information which would otherwise be considered confidential is when the confidential information gives rise to concerns about the safety or welfare of a student.
- 18.4. Staff members have the right to request access to data that is held about them; such requests will be made to the Principal in writing, in accordance with the Trust's General Data Protection Regulations Policy.

19. Safer Recruitment, Employment Matters and Probity of Records

- 19.1. The deliberate falsification of documents, such as references, academic qualifications or legal documents, is unacceptable. Where a staff member falsifies records or other documents, including those held electronically, this will be regarded as a serious disciplinary matter and potentially a criminal offence.
- 19.2. To avoid any possible accusation of bias, staff must not be involved in selection and appointment processes where they are related to an applicant or have a close personal or business relationship with them. They should declare an interest where there is a potential conflict of interest in such cases.
- 19.3. Work decisions should be objective and always based on merit. Staff must not be involved in decisions relating to discipline, promotion or pay for any employee who is a relative, or with whom they have a close personal or business relationship.
- 19.4. Staff should be fair and open when dealing with others and ensure that they have access to the information they need unless there is a good reason not to permit this.
- 19.5. Confidential, personal or financial information about any employee, pupil or parent/carer, must not be disclosed to any organisation person, or normally, to any external organisation/agency, without the express approval of the person concerned. Staff seeking clarification about 'authorised' or 'unauthorised' persons should seek the guidance of their Principal or the Chief Executive who will take specialist advice on the matter.
- 19.6. References in relation to employment by South Pennine Academies and its academies should only be given by persons authorised to do so by the Principal or Chief Executive.

20. Neutrality

- 19.1 Staff must not allow their personal or political beliefs or opinions to interfere with their work.
- 19.2 Whilst engaged in Trust / academy business, staff must not wear or display items that might bring South Pennine Academies or its academies into disrepute or conflict with their work.

21. Contacts

- 21.1. Staff members shall not use Trust business contacts for acquiring materials or services at trade/discount prices for non-Trust activities, unless participating in concessionary schemes arranged by trade unions or other such groups.
- 21.2. Principals should be aware of any business cards that are in use within their academy.

22. Monitoring and Review

- 22.1. This policy will be reviewed on a biannual basis by the Trust, and kept under review in the light of legislation, and recommendations and guidance issued nationally in relation to standards of conduct in public life, and revised as necessary. Any changes made will be communicated to all members of staff.
- 22.2. All members of staff are required to familiarise themselves with this policy as part of their induction programme.

The Seven Principles of Public Life



Originally published by the Nolan Committee - set up in 1994 to consider standards of conduct in various areas of public life and to make recommendations.

Selflessness

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends.

Integrity

Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.

Objectivity

In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

Openness

Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

Honesty

Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

Leadership

Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

Staff Electronic Communications Policy

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 South Pennine Academies (SPA) and its academies have a range of e-communication systems in place (including e-mail, Internet, intranet, mobile and landline telephones). These enable us to provide:

- Effective and efficient services to children, parents and other stakeholders;
- Effective communication between staff, parents, children and other stakeholders;
- Flexible and reliable communication channels to allow convenient and far-reaching access to services.

1.2 It is important that these systems are used and managed effectively in order to maximise their benefits. However, we also recognise that people lead complex and busy lives and greater flexibility around the use of the communication systems at work, e.g. to address personal matters, will help to support staff work-life balance needs.

1.3 This document sets out SPA expectations of you when using any form of electronic communication, including but not limited to telephone, e-mail, Internet and Intranet.

1.4 This policy sets out:

- Who is covered by the policy and the circumstances when the policy applies (the scope);
- Our expectations of you when using the SPA e-communications systems;
- Monitoring arrangements;
- The law surrounding electronic communications;
- Good practice guidance.

2.0 AIMS

This policy aims to:

- 2.1 Set out the SPA expectations of all users of the SPA / academy's electronic communication systems, including e-mail, Internet, Intranet, social media and telephones;
- 2.2 Provide a mechanism that maintains and promotes effective, consistent and legal use of electronic communications across SPA;
- 2.3 Establish and support a balance between protecting the SPA interests and respecting your right to carry out your duties with regard for privacy;
- 2.4 Support your development and work life balance by allowing reasonable and appropriate personal use of the SPA e-communications systems.

3.0 SCOPE

3.1 The policy applies to the use of equipment, systems and/or networks belonging to, accessed or leased by SPA or its academies, and also the use of wireless networks;

This includes:

- Staff of South Pennine Academies and of any academy which forms part of the Trust;
- Supply staff
- All other people acting for, or on behalf of, any of the above, including those undertaking activities on an unpaid or voluntary basis e.g. work experience or shadowing.

3.2 The policy applies to the use of SPA and / or academy systems, equipment which is owned or leased and/or networks at any time during and outside work hours whether on SPA or academy premises or working at remote locations including home.

3.3 ~~Where equipment is provided by the Sponsor, the Sponsor's policies should be referred to with respect to use of that equipment.~~

Remember that misuse of the e-communication systems belonging to, or associated with, South Pennine Academies or any of its academies may breach the Staff Code of Conduct, other SPA policies and/or the law and may lead to civil, criminal or disciplinary action including dismissal.

4.0 PROTOCOL

4.1 This protocol sets out the minimum expectations when using the SPA and / or academy e-communication systems however it is not exclusive or exhaustive. Failure to comply with these requirements may be considered to be abuse or misuse of e-communications systems.

4.2 Passwords and login details must remain confidential.

4.3 A record should be kept within each academy where usernames and passwords have been shared with the central team, to access DfE/Ofsted documentation.

4.4 Access privileges to the SPA and academy electronic systems are granted where appropriate to allow you to perform effectively. Administrative privileges are restricted and you must not use or attempt to use these to:

- Install software unless specifically authorised to do so;
- Introduce viruses or other malicious software.

4.5 SPA and its academies' e-communications systems must not be used to:

- Store, send or distribute messages or material which may be perceived by the recipient as:
 - Aggression, threats, abuse or obscenities;
 - Sexually suggestive;
 - Defamatory;
 - Sexually explicit;
 - Discriminatory – whether it be comments, remarks or jokes;
 - Material which the sender knows, or ought to have known, would cause offence to others.
- Act in a way which contravenes the Staff Code of Conduct, other policies or the law or is likely to bring the Sponsor, Trust or an academy into disrepute;
- Disclose sensitive information or personal data to unapproved persons or organisations;
- Intentionally access or download any material containing sexual, discriminatory, offensive or illegal material;
- Participate in on-line gambling including lotteries;
- Participate in on-line auctions ~~unless authorised to do for work-related matters;~~
- Originate or participate in e-mail chain letters or similar types of communication;
- Participate in chat rooms / forums unless this is work related / for professional development purposes.
- Dispose of academy asserts without permission

4.6 If you accidentally access inappropriate material on the intranet or by e-mail disconnect immediately and inform your line manager.

4.7 Use of academy and student data must be kept in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations and should not be disclosed to a third party due to the sensitivity of the data available.

4.8 Data stored on devices such as CDs, DVDs and external hard drives / memory sticks are also at risk and is also subject to the General Data Protection Regulations, permission should be sought. ~~As the owner of any external storage devices you are responsible for protecting data stored on them.~~ Only encrypted data should be stored on external drives. Data containing student or staff personal data should be accessed from the cloud and not stored on your own PC or Laptop.

4.9 As a member of staff at SPA you are expected to maintain a high level of online identity awareness and must receive support from the academy if you are unsure about how to do this.

4.10 You are not permitted to have academy students as contacts on social networking sites and are advised to be cautious when allowing contact with other minors (those under 18 years of age) in case of a second or third level connection to an academy student.

4.11 You are also reminded that ex-students may have friends who are still at the academy.

4.12 Privacy settings for personal profiles (and any groups joined) should be used.

5.0 MONITORING AND RECORDING OF THE E-COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS

- i. Authorised officers or staff of SPA / academy's ICT providers may at any time monitor the use of SPA / an academy's e-communications systems.
- ii. The use of all e-communications systems particularly e-mail and the Internet is subject to recording in order to detect and deal with abuse of the systems, fault detection and so on. In some cases, monitoring (i.e. real-time observation etc.) of systems may also take place where this is necessary. Neither SPA nor any of its academies will, without reasonable cause, examine any private material that is discovered.
- iii. Personal data should not be stored on the network and you should not expect 'privacy' in relation to accessing websites, personal e-mail correspondence, personal documents stored on SPA or academy computers or networks or messages sent via the Internet, as these, in principle, are subject to the same checking procedures applied to business related access and e-mail correspondence.

6.0 E-COMMUNICATIONS AND THE LAW

- i. As well as being bound by the requirements of this policy, you are bound by restrictions under the law. Listed below are the key current legislative regulations that relate to electronic communications.
 - Data Protection Act 1998
 - General Data Protection Regulations 2018
 - Human Rights Act 1998
 - Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA)
 - Section 160 Criminal Justice Act 1988
 - Computer Misuse Act 1990
 - Copyright (Computer Software) Amendment Act (1985) and the Copyright (Computer Programs) Regulations 1992
 - Health and Safety (DSE) Regulations 1992 (amended 2002)
 - Electricity at Work Regulations 1989
 - Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP)

7.0 COMMUNICATION OF THE POLICY

- i. Academy leaders will be responsible for ensuring that current staff and any new staff are aware of and understand this policy. They should therefore discuss the policy with teams during team brief and with new starters during induction.
- ii. New starters will be asked to sign to confirm that they have read and understood the Staff Electronic Communications Policy.
- iii. Particular emphasis will be placed on ensuring that all e-communication users are aware of:
 - What e-communication systems may/may not be used for;
 - What is considered to be misuse or abuse;
 - What constitutes offensive or inappropriate material as set out at paragraph;
 - The type of action that is likely to bring SPA / the academy into disrepute;
 - Individuals' responsibilities relating to the use of their own user login and password.
- iv. Temporary staff, including those on temporary contracts, agency workers, unpaid workers or volunteers and consultants who use e-communications systems will be asked to confirm that they have read and understood the policy, before their account is activated.

Staff Code of Conduct and Acceptable Use of Technology Statement

To ensure that staff are fully aware of their professional responsibilities when using information systems, they are asked to sign this declaration. Staff should consult the Trust's Staff Code of Conduct and Electronic Communication Policy for further information and clarification.

- The information systems are the property of South Pennine Academies / academy and I understand that it may be a criminal offence to use a computer for a purpose not permitted by its owner.
- I will ensure that my information systems use will always be compatible with my professional role.
- I understand that school information systems may only be used for private purposes as outlined in the Staff Code of Conduct (including Staff Electronic Communications Policy).
- I understand that the Trust / academy may monitor my information systems and Internet use to ensure policy compliance.
- I will respect the system security, and I will not disclose any password or security information to anyone other than an appropriate system manager.
- I will not install any software or hardware without permission.
- I will ensure that personal data is kept secure and is used appropriately, whether in the premises in which I usually work, taken off those premises, or accessed remotely.
- I will respect copyright and intellectual property rights.
- I will report any incidents of concern regarding children's safety to the academy's online safety Co-ordinator or the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
- I will ensure that any electronic communications with students are compatible with my professional role, and in line with any guidance issued on e-communications and the use of social media.
- I will promote online safety with students in my care and will help them to develop a responsible attitude to system use and to the content they access or create.

SPA / the academy may exercise its right to monitor the use of the Trust's / academy's information systems, including Internet access, the interception of e-mail and the deletion of inappropriate materials where it believes unauthorised use of the Trust's / academy's information system may be taking place, or the system may be being used for criminal purposes or for storing unauthorised or unlawful text, imagery or sound.

In signing this document, I am confirming that I have read & understood:

- **The Staff Code of Conduct 2018 v1.1**
- **The Staff Electronic Communications Policy (Appendix 2 of the Staff Code of Conduct)**
- **The Staff Acceptable Use of Technology Statement (see above - Appendix 3 of the Staff Code of Conduct)**

Staff member's name (print):

Signature:

Date:

NB: A copy of this declaration should be stored in staff files