

Pickwick Academy Trust



Professional Expectations and Standards

Policy Group:	Staffing & HR
Policy Ref:	SHR/17
Responsible Reviewing Officer and Job Title:	James Passmore CEO
Date Written:	June 2021
Date Approved by the Board:	October 2021
Date of Next Review:	October 2023

1. Introduction

- a. Pickwick Academy Trust has previously had separate policies relating to the Professional Expectations and dress codes of different staff, visitors, volunteers and students, and Trustees and Governors.
- b. This Professional Expectations and Standards Policy is an amalgamation of the three separate policies.
- c. Pickwick Academy Trust is committed to providing positive academic, social and emotional outcomes for the children in its schools, underpinned by a strong safeguarding ethos. The Trust is committed to the welfare of its staff, who are expected to adhere to the highest standards of professional behaviour to maintain confidence and respect of parents, colleagues, local community and stakeholders.

2. Purpose and Scope

- a. The purpose of this policy is to provide clarity on Pickwick Academy Trust's Professional Expectations and Standards for all adults operating in a professional capacity associated with the Trust.
- b. This policy applies to staff, volunteers, students, trainee teachers, apprentices, visitors, Governors, Trustees and Members working in and supporting Pickwick Academy Trust schools.
- c. All of these groups of people will be made aware of the content of this policy and are required to adhere to the expectations and standards set out in it.
- d. Parents/carers of children in the Trust's schools expect the highest standard of behaviour from all adults working in and supporting the Trust.
- e. For staff working in a Trust's school, including those working at the Trust's central offices, this Policy should be read in conjunction with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection and Staff Code of Conduct/Staff Behaviour Policy.

3. Responsibilities and Accountabilities

- a. The Trust Board is responsible for approving and reviewing this policy, and ensuring it reflects the ethos of the Trust.
- b. Members, Trustees, Governors and the Trust's central team are responsible for ensuring they comply with the content of the policy, particularly when visiting schools or attending meetings. Governors should also ensure they adhere to the Trust Code of Conduct for Governors set out the Pickwick Academy Trust Local Governance Committee Handbook.

- c. The CEO is responsible for the broadcast of this policy across the Trust and for its promulgation through the Executive Headteachers, Headteachers and Heads of School.
- d. Headteachers and Heads of School are responsible for implementing this policy within their schools and for monitoring compliance by their staff, students, volunteers and visitors.
- e. Staff are responsible for complying with the requirements in this policy.
- f. Students, volunteers and visitors are responsible for complying with the requirements in this policy.
- g. Trust and school staff induction leaders are responsible for ensuring this policy is shared with all staff as part of their Induction process.

4. Definitions / explanations of terms used

- a. Where the terms 'staff', 'staff members' or 'employee' are used, this refers to all adults working in and/or supporting the work of Pickwick Academy Trust – this includes Trustees, Governors, staff, visitors, apprentices, trainee teachers, volunteers and students.
- b. If something only applies to one or more specific groups, these are specified by name, e.g. Trustees.

5. Dress Code and Appearance

- a. Members of staff represent their school and the Trust, and their appearance will have an impact on the image the school/Trust portrays to pupils, parents, visitors and the local community. It is therefore important to set a standard of appropriate dress.
- b. It is recognised that employees represent a wide range of backgrounds, cultures, ages and tastes and staff should exercise considered judgement when choosing the clothing they wear for work.
- c. This dress code has taken account of:
 - 'Article 9 of the Human Rights Act': Freedom of thoughts, conscience and religion
 - Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief, in worship, teaching, practice and observance.
 - Freedom to manifest one's religion or beliefs shall be subject only to such limitations as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a

democratic society in the interests of public safety, for the protection of public order, health or morals, or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.

- The Equality Act (2010)
 - It shall be the duty of a body to:
 - a. Eliminate harassment, discrimination and victimisation
 - b. Advance equality of opportunity
 - c. Foster good relationships between persons of the same and different protected characteristics
- d. Working in a school environment is a professional vocation and high standards of professionalism are required. Adhering to this dress code:
 - Helps set and maintain reasonable standards of practice that are also enshrined in the Teachers' and Headteachers' Standards
 - Ensures staff are seen to support (by setting a good example) the school's uniform policies and expectations, and helps staff to act as suitable role models for children
 - Ensures that staff appearance does not compromise the Trust's reputation
 - Supports and maintains good health and safety practice
 - Helps the Trust comply with relevant legislation
 - Limits the likelihood of causing embarrassment to pupils, parents, colleagues or other stakeholders
- e. Staff are expected to dress professionally and appropriately for the role they are undertaking. This may vary according to the role of the individual and the duties being performed on particular occasions (e.g. an EYFS teacher is likely to dress differently to a caretaker) in order to comfortably complete the work, but in all cases, the individual should appear well presented, clean and tidy, and clothing and footwear should be suitable for safe working in a school.
- f. No aspect of an employee's dress or appearance should be politically motivated, sexually provocative or revealing, discriminatory, insensitive or offensive.
- g. Jewellery and piercings should not be worn excessively nor amount to an unacceptable risk either to the employee or to the pupil.
- h. Hair should be kept tidy and out of the employee's face, and nails should be kept at a length where they are unlikely to amount to a risk, prevent completion of tasks or cause harm to pupils.
- i. If visible, tattoos must not cause offence to others; if tattoos are likely to cause offence, they must be covered up whilst on duty.
- j. High standards of personal cleanliness and hygiene should be maintained at all times.

- k. The dress code may be relaxed in certain circumstances such as outdoor/adventure visits, staff training days, charity days etc (at the Headteacher's/Head of School's or CEO's discretion).

6. Attendance

- a. 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 where possible;
 - Refer to the Trust's Managing Absence and Ill-Health Policy 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;
 - Attend staff training.
- b. Trustees and Members are expected to attend Board meetings, and send apologies in the event of not being able to attend.
- c. Governors are expected to attend Local Governance Committee meetings (and send apologies in the event of not being able to attend) and carry out Link Governor visits to their schools.

7. Professional Behaviour and Conduct

- a. The Trust believes everyone who works in and supports its schools is responsible for their own actions and behaviour; they should avoid any conduct which would lead any responsible person to question their motives and intentions.
- b. The Trust believes that everyone in the Trust's community and external contacts should be treated with dignity and respect.
- c. The use of foul and abusive language will not be tolerated
- d. The Trust and its staff will be mindful of the use of language or vocabulary that has negative historical connotations in our society, and will discontinue the use of these words or phrases
- e. Discrimination, bullying, harassment or intimidation, including physical, sexual and verbal abuse, will not be tolerated.
- f. Personal and political opinions must not interfere with the provisions of balanced professional advice or the duty to carry out those policies.

- g. The Trust expects everyone to work in an open and transparent way; the same professional standards should always be applied regardless of individual characteristics which include age, disability, gender, language, race, religion or belief and/or sexual orientation.
- h. The Trust expects everyone to monitor and review their personal practices and ensure they behave appropriately.
- i. Members, Trustees and Governors should attend regular training specifically around governance in order that they can fulfil their roles and responsibilities effectively.
- j. Trustees and Governors should be willing to take on specific responsibilities within the Board or Local Governance Committee, for example Safeguarding Lead, Health and Safety Lead or Pupil Premium Champion.
- k. Governors should also refer to the Trust Code of Conduct for Governors set out the Pickwick Academy Trust Local Governance Committee Handbook.
- l. Staff should also refer to their school's Staff Behaviour/Conduct Policy (bespoke to each school; based on LA model; linked to Safeguarding Audit)
- m. Any breach of this policy could result in action being taken under the 'Disciplinary Policy'

8. Conduct Outside of Work

- a. Staff may undertake work outside of school, either paid or on a voluntary basis provided that it does not conflict with the interests of the school or Trust. The nature of the work cannot be seen to bring the school or Trust into disrepute.
- b. Staff must not engage in conduct outside of work or on social media which could seriously damage the reputation and standing of the school or the Trust; the employee's own reputation; or that 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.

9. Smoking, Vaping, Alcohol and Other Substances

- a. Staff must not smoke or vape on the school premises.
- b. Staff must not smoke or vape whilst working with or supervising children off-site such as when on educational trips and visits.

- c. The taking of illegal drugs 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.
- d. Please also refer to the Trust's Substance Abuse Policy

10. Health and Safety

- a. The Trust requires that everyone is familiar with the Trust's Health and Safety Policy.
- b. The Trust requires that everyone complies with health and safety regulations and legislation, including accident reporting requirements.

11. Financial Inducements and Declarations of Interests

- a. All staff and volunteers are required to declare their interests, both personal and financial, where the group or organisation they are affiliated with would be considered to be in conflict with the ethos of the Trust.
- b. See also the Trust's Gifts and Hospitality Policy.

12. Confidentiality

- a. The Trust expects that everyone within the school or Trust community will maintain confidentiality at all times and not disclose any sensitive information about the school or staff.

13. E-safety and Internet Use

- a. Please refer to the Trust's Data Protection and Secure Data Handling Policy and each school's Acceptable Use Policy

14. Equal Opportunities

An Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment has been completed in order to ensure it complies with equality obligations outlined in discrimination legislation. The policy positively reflects the aims and ambitions of Pickwick Academy Trust.

15. References, acknowledgements and associated documents

- a. This policy will be implemented in conjunction with other Pickwick Academy Trust policies in this group:
 - Complaints Policy
 - Data Protection Policy

- Gifts and Hospitality Policy
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Recruitment Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Substance Abuse Policy
- Staff Disciplinary Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Acceptable Use Policies (school-based policies)
- Staff Behaviour Policies (school-based policies)

16. Appendices

- a. Appendix 1: Compliance form for signature



Appendix 1:

Professional Expectations and Standards Policy - Compliance form for signature

Every adult working for and/or supporting the work of Pickwick Academy Trust is required to read and adhere to the Professional Expectations and Standards set out in this policy.

Please either complete and return this slip as soon as possible to the Head of School/Headteacher/CEO or confirm you have read it when prompted to do so through the online document sharing system used by your school.

I confirm that I have read and understood the Professional Expectations and Standards Policy for Pickwick Academy Trust and agree to abide by the contents.

Signed:

Date:

Print Name:

Role within the Trust: