

Red Kite Learning Trust

Code of Conduct

Our Trust Code of Conduct is based on key principles arising from our Trust values as well as our commitment to promoting ethical leadership and the [The Seven Principles of Public Life - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk) (also known as the Nolan Principles). The Code also reflects the statutory framework in which our schools and Trust operate. Our expectations over conduct apply equally to all colleagues working within our schools and to any other persons working with our children or who are present on school/academy premises for any reason (for example, agency staff, students on placement, volunteers and contracted services). The Code also applies to governors and trustees. The Code forms part of a colleagues terms and conditions of employment.

This Code of Conduct will be made available to all colleagues. Colleagues are responsible for ensuring they are aware of the content and that they ask for clarification if specific expectations are not clear for their particular circumstances.

Failure to adhere to any element of this Code may result in disciplinary action being taken against a colleague. Behaviour outside of working hours and outside the normal duties of a colleague, may also be considered contrary to the Code where our Trust is brought into disrepute.

All colleagues are expected to comply with the standards laid out below as well as all policies, procedures, contractual requirements, standards and expectations including our values. This includes any supplementary codes of conduct/expectations issued by individual schools or by our Trust, including our Leadership Charter.

The following guidance provides certain detail under certain circumstances. It does not provide an exhaustive list of acts of misconduct or gross misconduct.

1. General principles

Colleagues should, in accordance with our Trust values:

- Treat everyone with dignity and respect
- Show tolerance and respect for the rights of others
- Never use inappropriate or offensive language in their place of work
- Not show bias or favouritism towards any pupils or colleagues, including applicants during recruitment processes
- Uphold fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
- Not express personal beliefs in a way that will overly influence pupils, exploit pupils' vulnerability or lead them to break the law
- Not allow their personal or political beliefs or opinions to interfere with their work

- Understand the statutory frameworks they must act within
- Familiarise themselves and comply with all Trust and, where applicable, school or academy policies and procedures
- Adhere to the Teachers'/Headteachers/Professional Standards as applicable
- Avoid putting themselves at risk of allegations of abuse or unprofessional conduct
- Inform the headteacher/principal/head of department of any cautions, convictions or relevant orders accrued during their employment, and/or if they are charged with a criminal offence.
- Inform school or Trust leadership of any irregularities or concerns that may exist about another colleague in relation to any of the following or more generally in regard to conduct matters.

2.Safeguarding and child protection

Colleagues who work with, or who are in contact with children and young people in the course of their work, are required to follow all policies, procedures and guidance published by schools/academies or by our Trust. All colleagues have a responsibility to keep children safe and to protect them from abuse (sexual, physical or emotional), neglect and safeguarding concerns. Children have a right to be safe and to be treated with respect and dignity and trusted adults are expected to take reasonable steps to ensure their safety and wellbeing. Failure to do so may be regarded as misconduct or gross misconduct depending on the circumstances.

Fundamental documents and of particular significance are:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE)
- [Guidance for Safer Working Practice](#)
- Professional standards and Trust policies and procedures

Colleagues are responsible for maintaining an understanding of current working practices around keeping children safe. The Trust will ensure that colleagues can access the relevant documents detailed above at an appropriate time. In all cases colleagues will be asked to read and demonstrate an understanding of KCSiE as part of onboarding as well as on an annual basis. Relevant training will be provided as appropriate to all colleagues.

Colleague must ensure they are aware of school/academy/departmental processes, policies and procedures to follow if they have concerns about a child. They should ensure they know who the Designated Safeguarding Lead and deputies are.

All colleagues must fulfil the Prevent Duty to protect children from the risk of radicalisation. Prevent training will be provided to colleagues regularly.

Colleagues should be aware that children can abuse other children – often referred to as peer-on-peer abuse). This can happen inside and outside school as well as online. Colleagues should recognise the indicators and signs of peer-on-peer abuse and know how to respond to it. Such behaviour should be challenged or escalated as appropriate.

Our Trust expects all concerns about adults working in or on behalf of a school/academy to be dealt with appropriately in order to safeguard children. All allegations and low level concerns in relation to colleagues, supply or casual colleagues, contractors or volunteers must be reported to the headteacher/DSL. Where applicable, the headteacher will raise the

concerns and seek further advice from the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) to agree a course of action. HR advice must be taken at the earliest opportunity.

The Trust will record any concerns low level concerns that are identified. Colleagues are expected to support and engage as appropriate in expectations around low level concerns.

3. Professional Behaviour and General Relationships

Colleagues should ensure they behave, at all times, in a way that promotes good working relationships.

All colleagues have a responsibility to behave in a way that is not offensive to others and to acknowledge that views and opinions held by others, and decisions made by line managers, may not always coincide with their own. Such differences are unlikely to constitute harassment.

Colleagues must ensure that they work in accordance with the Trust's Dignity at Work and Dignity at Work Sexual Harassment Policies . Bullying and harassment is behaviour that makes someone feel intimidated or offended. Examples of bullying or harassing behaviour include:

- Spreading malicious or sexual rumours
- Unfair treatment
- Picking on or regularly undermining someone
- Denying someone's training or promotion opportunities or offering on the basis of sexual favours
- Unwelcome looks, touching, hugging
- Sexual gestures, propositions or advances

Bullying and harassment can happen by various methods, for example face to face, by letter, email, social media or by phone.

Harassment is unlawful and occurs when the unwanted behaviour relates to a protected characteristic as defined by the Equalities Act 2010.

Full details and procedures are found in the Dignity at Work and Dignity at Work Sexual Harassment Policies

4. External Interests and Commitments

A colleagues external interests must not conflict with their duties.

All colleagues, through their terms and conditions of employment, have obligations to the school/Trust and should not take outside employment or engage in activities which conflict with the school's/Trust's interests.

Colleagues are required to obtain the consent of the headteacher/principal/team leader, whether or not any outside employment is likely to conflict; consent will not be unreasonably refused.

No outside work of any sort, whether paid or unpaid, should be undertaken at the place of work and the use of facilities (telephone, photocopier, etc.) is forbidden unless prior permission is given and all costs are reimbursed.

Agreed Trade Union use of such facilities is of course acceptable.

Colleagues must follow the Trust's rules on ownership of intellectual property or copyright created during the course of their employment. In this respect, all patents, trademarks and other rights in any invention, device or concept (or any novel improvement or modification to an existing invention, device or concept) created or developed by an employee during the period of their employment shall belong to the Trust, subject only to any rights which may be acquired by an employee under the Patents Act 2004, or any statutory modifications thereof. The Trust shall be the legal and beneficial owner of the copyright in and all other rights to, the results of the development of the application of, all work produced by an employee during the course of their employment. Colleagues, during their period of employment, must not make any approaches to any internal or external organisation which has dealings with the Trust/School, with a view to soliciting and/or undertaking work for such internal or external organisation on a private basis either during their period of employment or thereafter. Nor should such approaches be made on behalf of another person or body.

There are additional ESFA requirements in terms of [related party transactions](#).

Red Kite Learning Trust is required to establish a register that lists any relevant business and commercial interest(s) that a colleague, trustee, member or governor, or their immediate family (parents, children, brothers, sisters or partners) has in businesses which have dealings with the schools or central teams within the Trust. Businesses dealing with the schools/central teams include sole traders and organisations (self-employed contractors, partnerships, charities, limited companies, PLC's and local authorities etc) which provide services to the schools/Trust in the form of supplies or contracted services. The Trust is also required to keep a register of trusteeships and governorships at other educational institutions and charities. This information will be held centrally but will not be made public.

Colleagues will be asked to disclose any relevant business and commercial interests and should provide this information when requested or provide a nil return.

5. Gifts and hospitality

Colleagues are required to record gifts and hospitality bestowed on them from outside individuals or bodies. A register will be maintained by the Trust. Colleagues will be asked to disclose gifts and hospitality and should provide this information when requested or provide a nil return.

Colleagues will be asked to declare gifts over a nominal value (circa £20 or less) as part of an annual declaration exercise. Please note the following information as to what will need to be declared.

What NOT to include: All individual token personal gifts of hospitality acts of a nominal value (circa £20 or less) which are provided in appreciation of either a task, service undertaken or when a pupil leaves the school, and which cannot be viewed as an inducement to preferment.

What to include: Offers of or individual personal gifts or acts of hospitality with an estimated value in excess of £20. These should be either refused or if accepted, recorded by the colleagues especially if it could be independently considered that there was an element of preferment involved in the ‘transaction.’

6. Theft

Colleagues are reminded that theft is a criminal offence. The primary meaning of “theft” is dishonestly taking property belonging to another person, with the intention of permanently depriving that person of it. However the term has a broader meaning and also includes:

- Unauthorised borrowing or use of vehicles or other equipment owned, leased or hired by the School/Trust.
- Criminal damage to any property within the Trust (including leased or hired property).
- Unauthorised use, copying or retention of copyright material (including but not limited to documents, drawings, maps and computer software) of the Trust/School.
- Offences, similar to any of the foregoing, committed by an employee against third party-owned property while at work (including work away from Trust/School premises).
- Deliberate falsification of claims, e.g. timesheets, mileage and travel/subsistence allowances with the intention of obtaining payment.

Defrauding and stealing (or attempting to do so) from our Trust, a school/academy or any person/organisation will not be tolerated. Colleagues should be aware that theft may be considered gross misconduct.

7. IT and Data Security

Colleagues are reminded of their obligations when accessing Trust IT systems.

By using any Trust IT system, colleagues are acknowledging they understand, and will adhere to, the following points:

- Data provided by colleagues should be accurate and truthful at all times whether relating to themselves or others.
- Colleagues who have been given responsibility for maintaining and updating Trust IT systems are reminded that they must carry out these responsibilities fully and in a timely manner. This includes raising problems or concerns immediately should it not be possible to fulfil these responsibilities for technical or other reasons.
- Data within all Trust IT systems will be maintained and processed according to the principles laid out in the Trust Data Protection Policy and Data Retention Policy which are available at www.rklt.co.uk as well as relevant legislative provisions (GDPR). Colleagues are responsible for ensuring that data is managed and processed appropriately and that they are clear around the parameters for confidentiality.
- Any account details have been provided for individual colleague use only and must not be shared. Colleagues must ensure they log out of systems when not used.
- Misuse of any Trust IT systems may lead to a withdrawal or suspension of the service and may lead to disciplinary action being taken against you.

Our Trust does not accept responsibility for information incorrectly supplied by colleagues as a user of the system.

8. Communication and media (including social media)

All colleagues are expected to engage in social media in a positive, safe and responsible manner when acting on behalf of a school/academy or Trust and also when engaging with social media on a personal basis especially where their role and employer (Trust) are easily identifiable. Colleagues are advised not to publish specific and detailed private thoughts, concerns, pictures or messages on any social media services, especially content that may be considered threatening, hurtful or defamatory to others or reputationally damaging to the school/academy and/or Trust.

Colleagues should be aware that their online conduct on social media can have an impact on their professional role and reputation at work. Colleagues should not engage with local, regional or national media unless they have the prior approval of the school/academy and/or Trust.

All colleagues should safeguard themselves and their privacy when using social media sites. Advice will be provided to colleagues via training and by sharing appropriate guidance and resources on a regular basis.

All colleagues are encouraged to carefully consider the information, including text and images, they share and post online and to ensure that their social media use is compatible with their professional role and is in accordance with Trust policies and the wider professional and legal framework.

Information and content that staff have access to as part of their employment, including photos and personal information about pupils and their family, carers or colleagues will not be shared or discussed on social media sites without the appropriate permissions being obtained prior.

Colleagues will notify their line manager immediately if they consider that any content shared on social media sites conflicts with their role and/or their professional responsibilities.

Work email addresses and other official contact details will not be used for setting up non work-related activity, including social media accounts.

Colleagues must ensure they are familiar with school/academy and Trust policies and procedures relating to the use of social media. Any training provided by the Trust must be completed within the timeframes supplied.

For personal use, reasonable access to e.g. social networking sites (for example Facebook) are permitted within any free time during working hours, for example at lunch time, however, colleagues should be aware that some websites are inaccessible at certain locations and that all Internet access is monitored and any concerns over excessive use will be raised as appropriate.

In some circumstances, colleagues may use public areas/dedicated to groups in support of lessons e.g. Facebook. They must ensure content and usage does not over step professional boundaries and are used solely in support of teaching and learning.

9. Disclosure of information, confidentiality and references

Colleagues 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. Colleagues must act in accordance with, and observe, the law in handling all personal and other information. Special care must be taken in handling special category data, personal and confidential information, which must in no circumstances be inappropriately used. Colleagues may be personally prosecuted for offences under the Data Protection legislation. If any employee is in doubt about their responsibilities, they must consult their headteacher/principal or team leader.

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. Colleagues seeking clarification about 'authorised' or 'unauthorised' persons should seek the guidance of their headteacher/principal, or team leader who will take specialist advice on the matter.

Colleagues must not abuse their position by disclosing confidential information to any third party, this will include the unauthorised release of confidential information regarding:

- competitive tendering or tendering for work which may be beneficial to a third party
- an employee or service user.

Colleagues must not use any information obtained in the course of their employment or tenure for personal gain or benefit or to attempt to obtain personal gain, nor pass it on to others who might use it in such a way.

References in relation to employment by Red Kite Learning Trust and its schools should only be given by persons authorised to do so. For schools, this would ordinarily be the headteacher/principal or team leader who will be able to comment on the safer recruitment requirement for references. If a colleague is seeking an additional reference, this can be provided however it must be made explicit that the reference is not a professional reference and that no comment can be made on safer recruitment matters. Please refer to the Recruitment Guidelines for more information.

10. Declaration of offences

In accordance with our Trust safeguarding procedures, colleagues/volunteers are required to report, in a timely manner*, any convictions, police cautions**, penalty notices, arrests, charges and summons and, in certain cases, civil offences. Colleagues are asked at the outset of employment whether there are any declarations that need to be made and this will be repeated annually.

If, at any time, a colleague has any concerns about an event outside of work and whether this requires a declaration, they should contact their school or HR@rkt.co.uk immediately for advice. Failure to disclose any relevant information could jeopardise a colleagues employment with Red Kite.

*'in a timely manner' normally refers to the first attendance at work following the event. There may be exceptions to this e.g. where an employee/volunteer is held in custody or takes pre-arranged leave immediately after the event. In such cases, the

employee should contact his/her manager at the first opportunity to relate the information. **Please report the event to the most senior colleague available.**

** Police Cautions are exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, therefore for all colleagues/volunteers, these must be declared.

11. Equality, diversity and inclusion

Our Trust values diversity and celebrates individual differences. Our aim is to create a culture and environment which enables all colleagues, children and young people to thrive and which encompasses our values, in particular respect. Colleagues must ensure that they read and adhere to the Trust Equality Policy, and any other related policy or guidance that exists within our schools as well as legal requirements as laid out in the Equalities Act and the Human Rights Act.

All colleagues must be treated equally and in a way that creates mutual respect. They must not be discriminated against on grounds of ethnicity, gender, pregnancy or maternity, age, religion or belief, marriage or civil partnership, gender identity or sexual orientation.

12. Recruitment and other employment matters

Colleagues must take care to ensure that they adhere to our Trust Recruitment Guidelines fully. This provides clear guidance as to how to run or take part in, recruitment processes which ensure fairness and safer recruitment practices which are paramount.

Colleagues who participate in recruitment exercises must ensure they are impartial throughout and therefore, should they have any close personal or business relationship with a candidate, this should be declared. Advice from HR can be taken where such circumstances arise.

Colleagues must ensure all decisions over employment matters are made based on merit and that they are objective.

13. Dress and personal appearance

All colleagues act as ambassadors and representatives of our Trust and its schools, and are role models to our children and young people. It is therefore important that they maintain a professional standard of dress and appearance that is appropriate and/or required for the workplace and to the work being undertaken.

Therefore the design of clothing, body art, hair styles or piercings should be in line with the maintenance of this professional image.

Where particular clothing is provided for health, safety and hygiene and/or uniform purposes, it must be worn. This includes the wearing of name badges for the school/academy/location with lanyard or clip, in accordance with safeguarding procedures.

Locally adopted guidelines on dress and personal appearance may be provided and must also be adhered to by all local colleagues.

14. Drugs and alcohol

In a child-centred environment it is essential that our Trust ensures that the highest standards of health and safety are adhered to. Alcohol and drug misuse affects individuals and organisations in terms of health and safety, efficiency, productivity and attendance. Alcohol and drug misuse can also have a detrimental effect on colleagues, pupils, parents, visitors, and on the reputation of our Trust.

We must therefore have complete confidence in the ability of our colleagues to carry out their duties safely and responsibly and to ensure that the reputation of the school/Trust is maintained. As a caring and responsible employer we recognise the need to provide support for colleagues but this will not preclude our addressing the misuse of alcohol and drugs by members of staff where necessary.

Full details on our approach and how we support colleagues are provided in our Wellbeing Policy.

15. Health and Safety

As a leader of the community that it serves, Red Kite Learning Trust recognises and accepts the financial and legal responsibilities and duties that it has for the health, safety and welfare of its employees and others affected by The Trust's activities.

All colleagues, trainees, temporary workers, and volunteers have an important part to play in protecting themselves and others. Health and safety responsibilities are based on legal obligations and are subject to the Trust's disciplinary procedures. In particular, colleagues, trainees, temporary workers, and volunteers are required to:

- Take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and others, who may be affected by what they do or fail to do at work.
- Co-operate with all principals/headteachers, senior leaders and our Trust health and safety leads on health and safety matters.
- Familiarise themselves with, and to act in accordance with, any health and safety procedures that have been issued to them or otherwise brought to their attention.
- Act in accordance with any safety training, or any verbal safety instructions that has been provided to them.
- Make full and proper use of any personal protective equipment (PPE) and clothing provided to them, in accordance with instructions or training received. Report any loss of, or obvious defect in, such PPE to their supervisor or manager.
- Adopt safe behaviour and avoid interfering with or misusing anything provided in the interest of health, safety, or welfare.
- Report any accident/incident or near miss to their headteacher/principal or other senior leader (to be done on the day of accident/incident or as soon as possible thereafter). This includes reporting any accident/incident involving a non-colleague while on Trust premises, sites or affected by Trust activities, which comes to their attention.
- Report to their principal/headteacher or other senior leaders any work situation they consider to represent a serious and immediate danger to health and safety, or any other relevant matter that they consider to represent a shortcoming in current arrangements for health and safety.

- Follow any laid down emergency procedures in the event of serious imminent danger, such as emergency evacuations, lockdown etc.

Full details of the [Health & Safety Policy](#) are available, including particular arrangements and expectations for e.g. Lone Working, DSE and other areas affecting colleagues.