



The Rivers  
C.of E. Academy Trust

## Staff Code of Conduct Policy

### **1. Purpose**

1.1. The purpose of this document is to make all staff employed by the Rivers C of E Multi Academy Trust (hereafter referred to as the MAT) aware of the accepted standards of behaviour and conduct. Wherever possible, specific advice is given but in general employees are expected to conduct themselves at all times, in such a way that no discredit could be brought upon the MAT or individual schools.

1.2. It is important that staff familiarise themselves with the expectations and where there is doubt, speak to the Principal or Headteacher / Head of School for further guidance. Failure to comply with the standards can lead to disciplinary action, and in cases of serious or persistent breach, can lead to dismissal. The guidance offered is meant to be supportive and explanatory rather than an attempt to interfere either in the professional or personal lives of staff.

1.3 This procedure is effective from the 01/10/2014 as approved by the MAT.

### **2. Applicability**

2.1. This procedure applies to all employees within the MAT. All employees are included, whether permanent or on a fixed term contract. It does not apply to agency workers, contractors or volunteers. (see volunteer policy)

### **3. Roles and responsibilities**

3.1. Line managers are responsible for;

3.1.1. Managing the conduct of employees in accordance with this policy and the Disciplinary Procedure.

3.1.2. Ensuring that employees are aware of the expected standards of conduct, the Disciplinary Rules and of any local rules or regulations specific to their job or area.

3.2. Employees are responsible for adhering to the set standards of conduct, the Disciplinary Rules and any local rules or regulations, including any reasonable management instructions.

## 4. The Code

4.1 Staff are expected to Implement and adhere to the Policies, Procedures and Guidance as set out by the MAT published to all staff, and identified as part of the induction process

4.3 Staff are expected to support the aspirations of the MAT at all times, and be especially sensitive when out of school. All staff before appointment are given every opportunity to investigate the MAT school and come to a decision as to whether the environment is right for them. Once appointed, the MAT expects that all staff will actively promote the values which permeate the vision of the school. For example:

- To promote an educational community based on love and inclusivity, providing a beacon of hope where all can flourish
- To act at all times with honesty, integrity and probity
- To positively promote the work of the MAT
- To foster, maintain and celebrate Christian distinctiveness in our schools
- To ensure that our schools are centres of excellence with a focus on the nurture and achievement of all their members
- To promote mutual support, encouragement and benefit between all our schools
- To develop a future and inspire aspirational thinking based on our educational heritage and to make use of the latest research in pedagogy and child development.
- To support the nurture and respect of God's creation with a close focus on the sustainability agenda.
- All human beings are made in the image of God. Each child is a unique human being, made by God and loved by him, and worth the highest possible standards of education and care and the closest attention to what will enable them to flourish
- We must ensure that 'every child and young person has a life enhancing encounter with the Christian faith'
- To recognise and enable those who often remain invisible, through ethnic or cultural disadvantage, or through disability or poverty
- Church schools have a particular vocation to the poor and vulnerable, to enable them through education to change their lives

4.4 Staff are expected to be committed to the wider life of the school.

4.5 Staff should:

- Support all pupils of whatever ability to do their best and have high personal aspirations. The school is a learning community which hopes to inspire young people and to enhance and enrich students' lives enabling them to experience as wide and as full a range of learning opportunities as possible. It is assumed that staff will use their expertise and enthusiasm for the benefit of the students.

- Have the highest possible example in their personal and professional relationships, their attitude in the community, their appearance, decorum and lifestyle. Be committed to promoting the safety and well-being of all student4.6 In terms of the students, staff are, when admonishing, expected to differentiate between the unacceptable actions of the child and the child itself, treating all students as individuals and with respect.

4.7 Staff should never humiliate a child either privately or publicly. Sarcasm should not be used and where practicable, students should be dealt with privately, not in front of others. Familiar or inappropriate language should not be used.

4.8 Male Staff should be referred to as Mr or Sir and Female Staff as Miss (or Mrs when using a surname). All language which could constitute or be construed as of a sexual nature should be avoided.

4.9 When interviewing members of the opposite sex, staff should seek to speak to individuals in open areas, and no meeting is to be held in closed locked areas or any location without external visibility. If appropriate or practical, another member of staff should also be present.

4.10 Outside school, if a member of staff enters licensed premises and is aware that under age students are present, this should be reported to the management or, staff should leave the premises. When students are present at social events outside school but are legally of age, the member of staff will have to make a decision as to whether to remain is advisable, in the light of the general expectations laid out above.

4.11 More specifically staff should be conversant with the Conditions of Service under which they are employed. A contract is signed by all staff and individuals are responsible for ensuring that they are aware of the specific requirements of their post. When in doubt, staff should ask for clarification.

4.12 Staff should be aware of current and relevant legislation such as below. Staff are to ensure that they are up to date on these legal obligations. Copies of relevant information can be obtained on request.

- Health and Safety at Work Act
- Equality Act

4.13 Staff will ensure they are aware of and comply with the requirements of GDPR. They will ensure that they do not store school data on USBs, external hard drives, cameras and any other type of storage device. They will not store school data on Drop-box, iCloud or any cloud storage not managed by school.

Staff will ensure that they do not store any Rivers information that can be traced back to an individual (child or adult) away from their workplace. This includes taking paperwork away from the school, sending emails to personal accounts or placing data in any online storage app or location other than school authorised storage. Breaching the requirements of GDPR could lead to staff receiving a personal fine from the Information Commissioner's Office and/or gross misconduct proceedings. (See GDPR Workforce Privacy Notice for further information).

4.14 Staff should carry out duties and responsibilities at all times with honesty and integrity. Authority or positions should never be used for personal gain or to enable colleagues or others to gain personally. Staff must declare if they have connections with any business or organisation that supply the MAT/School

4.15 MAT equipment is to be treated with due care and respect. If staff wish to borrow equipment for personal use they must first gain permission from the Line Manager to whose department the equipment is inventoried and to whom the Head teacher has delegated the authority to authorise loans. Any local school procedures for signing equipment in and out must be followed. If in doubt, check with the line manager. Equipment taken out of school which has not been authorised and is subsequently lost or broken must be replaced at the borrower's own expense. Staff taking equipment out of school without following the procedures are laying themselves open to accusations of "improper conduct". Improper conduct can lead to disciplinary action including dismissal. Breakages should always be reported immediately to the Inventory Holder.

4.16 Permission must be obtained from the Head teacher to undertake additional employment where the staff member holds a permanent or fixed term contract. The MAT expects all staff to fulfil their obligations to the students, and reserves the right to make a judgment as to whether undertaking additional work would be prejudicial to that outcome, or bring the school into disrepute. A discussion with the SMT before seeking additional employment should always precede the attempt to find an additional job/post. If on appointment a member of staff already has a further post, this should be declared at the interview.

4.17 The Head teacher is to be informed in advance of a decision to apply for a post elsewhere. The MAT recognises that every individual has a right to seek employment as and when they deem appropriate. However, since the school will generally be asked for a Reference, it is both courteous and sensible for the application to have been discussed in advance. Staff who have been on interview are asked to inform the Head teacher of the outcome on the morning following return to school.

4.18 Staff must declare and pay for any private telephone, photocopying, faxing and postage made using school resources. Mobile telephones should not be used for personal matters during work hours. Emergency calls can be made from school land lines.

4.19 The MAT's advice via the appropriate member of the SMT should be sought on any matter regarding Patent Copyright and the acceptance of gifts. Staff should be aware that "intellectual copyright" of; for example, textbooks written by Staff, can in some circumstances be claimed by the MAT and clarification of the MAT's position should be sought.

4.20 A member of staff must notify the Principal/Head teacher of any criminal charges or convictions whilst they are in the employment of the MAT. The Governors may then make a decision as to whether this constitutes unprofessional conduct and whether there has been a breakdown in the bond of trust necessary between employer and employee. In such cases, dismissal may be appropriate. Each case will be considered independently and on its merits. It is likely that the Governors would view any conviction for possession of prohibited drugs, sexual misconduct, theft, misappropriation of school funds or equipment, violent conduct, disorderly conduct in a public place etc. as gross misconduct, within the general heading of "professional misconduct" and therefore the member of staff concerned would be liable for dismissal.

4.21 The additional following points are brought to all Staff's attention:

- Smoking on site is totally prohibited.
- The use, possession or distribution or sale of drugs is totally prohibited and constitutes gross misconduct for which the penalty could be dismissal.
- Staff are prohibited from working whilst under the influence of non-prescribed drugs or alcohol. It is potentially a dismissal offence for any member of staff failing to meet their contractual obligations due to alcohol or substance abuse. Staff must bring to the attention of their Line Manager any medication or illness which may affect their work performance or behaviour.
- The Principal has the final say as to what the MAT deems to be an appropriate professional standard of appearance; including hairstyles. In general terms, male staff are expected to wear collar and tie and female Staff should be dressed for work in a professional environment and where regular contact with members of the public is the norm.
- While the MAT accepts that Staff will access the internet for personal reasons, using the school system access should not take place while on "duty", (e.g. when teaching or for support staff, in working time). During non-contact time, before or after school etc. the school system can be used but all staff should be aware that personal access to sites will be monitored and no site is to be accessed that would be considered inappropriate. Staff are asked to seek guidance from their Line Manager if in any doubt about the appropriateness of accessing a particular site.
- Staff are expected to display appropriate personal standards of behaviour i.e. respecting colleagues and management, and communicating and interacting in an appropriate manner with colleagues and management.
- Staff are required to maintain an appropriate standard of confidentiality. Any disclosures of confidential information (including personal information kept on

computer or other media) made unlawfully outside the proper course of duty will be treated as a disciplinary offence.”

- Further guidance on what the MAT considers miss conduct/gross misconduct are set out in the Disciplinary policy.

4.22 In summation, the Governors expect all Staff to behave at all times with dignity and professionalism. The Code is not exhaustive. Each situation will have to be dealt with separately and with due consideration.

4.23 All members of staff and at all levels are to bring to the notice of their immediate Line Manager on an ‘in confidence’ basis any matter whether personal or professional which may be in conflict with either the letter or spirit of these guidelines.