



# 9 – Staff Code of Conduct

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The following assessments have been completed in relation to this policy

Workload impact       Equality impact       Trust virtues



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## Introduction

The MITRE trustees will review this code on an annual basis and it will be updated as necessary.

- 1.1 If changes are made to the code of conduct MITRE employees will be informed of any amendments to ensure clarity.
- 1.2 This code of conduct enables all MITRE employees to be clear about expectations and issues around professional conduct to ensure a positive working environment for all.
- 1.3 This code of conduct should be read in conjunction with the individual school's induction policies and programmes and the disciplinary procedure for school employees.

## Purpose

This code of conduct is designed to give clear guidance regarding behaviour to which all employees working in MITRE are expected to observe and adhere.

- 2.1 Employees should note that this code of conduct is not exhaustive in defining acceptable and unacceptable standards and employees must use common sense in adhering to the underlying principles. If any employee is ever unsure what the expectations are in any given circumstance they should speak to their line manager or their Head Teacher.
- 2.2 This code does not form part of an employee's contract of employment and it may be amended by the trustees at any time.
- 2.3 The purpose of this code is to protect and promote the interests of employees and the pupils with whom they work. All adults who come into contact with pupils and young people in their work have a legal and moral duty to keep pupils and young people safe and to protect them from harm. The duty that rests on an individual is to ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure the welfare of a pupil or young person is paramount.

## Scope

The code applies to all employees of MITRE regardless of length of service including those in their probationary period. It also applies to agency workers and self-employed contractors although, unlike employees, breaches of the code will not be managed through the disciplinary procedure.

- 3.1 As recognisable figures in the local community the behaviour and conduct of MITRE employees outside of work can impact on their employment. Therefore, conduct outside work may be treated as a disciplinary matter if it is considered that it is relevant to the employee's employment (see disciplinary policy).
- 3.2 MITRE is responsible for notifying employees of this code of conduct and the expectations within it.

## Underlying principles of conduct and behaviour

4.0 In accordance with the DFE 'Keeping children safe in education' guidance this code has been adopted by MITRE in order for all employees to be fully aware of the standards of personal and professional conduct in relation to various aspects of their work. The code will be discussed as appropriate during the course of their employment to ensure the code is mutually monitored, positively promoted and understood by everyone.



- 4.1 Teachers must have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities. Where employees are members of professional bodies, they must also comply with any standards of conduct which are set by that body. The conduct of all teachers must always be in line with the Teachers' Standards and, where appropriate, the Headteachers' Standards.
- 4.2 Employees are expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct, acting within the law and supporting fundamental values such as democracy, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance.
- 4.3 Employees are expected to uphold and demonstrate the trust's virtues of wisdom, integrity, service, collaboration and kindness in their daily conduct.
- 4.4 All employees have a duty to ensure that the appropriate standards of conduct are upheld both by themselves and by colleagues. Where staff are aware of any contraventions of this code, illegality, misconduct or breach of procedure they should notify the Head Teacher.
- 4.5 Employees must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of MITRE and the school, and maintain high standards in their own conduct, performance, attendance and punctuality.
- 4.6 Employees must maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their work. This includes the handling and claiming of money and the use of the property and facilities of MITRE and the school.
- 4.7 Employees should ensure that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways which exploit pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law or the policies and procedures of the school. Employees should always show respect for the rights of others.
- 4.8 This code does not seek to address every possible circumstance, and simply because a particular action may not be addressed within the code, this does not condone that action by omission.

### Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children

- 5.0 All employees are responsible for safeguarding children and promoting their welfare. This means that employees are required to take action to protect children from maltreatment, prevent impairment of children's health and/or development and ensure that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care, taking action to enable all children to have the best life chances. [Keeping children safe in education 2025](#)
- 5.1 Each employee has an individual responsibility for referring child protection concerns. Employees must report disclosures, or concerns received from other sources, to the respective school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), providing a written record of the disclosure. The written record must be accurate and should include information about what was said, the time and where the disclosure took place and who was present. All employees must be aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets which might compromise the child's own safety or well-being, or that of another child.
- 5.2 Where employees have any safeguarding concerns about another member of staff these concerns must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Head Teacher. Serious case reviews from past cases in the media have highlighted the concerns about employees not sharing their knowledge with the leadership of the school.



5.3 All employees must cooperate with colleagues and with external agencies as appropriate.

5.4 All employees must be fully aware of the school policies and procedures relating to safeguarding and must attend safeguarding training on at least a 3-yearly basis, signing to acknowledge that they have received this training. Training is available annually.

### Professional boundaries and relationships

6.0 All employees work in a position of trust with pupils which means that their relationship is not one of equals. Employees must therefore ensure that they do not put themselves in any situation where their conduct or behaviour with any pupil could be misconstrued. Any allegations of inappropriate contact or communication with pupils will be investigated.

6.1 Employees must not make sexual remarks to any pupil or discuss their own sexual relationships with, or in the presence of, pupils. Any sexual behaviour by a member of employees towards any pupil (regardless of their age) is unacceptable and illegal and will be fully investigated as a potential issue of gross misconduct.

6.2 Employees must ensure that professional boundaries are maintained at all times. This means that employees should not show favouritism to any pupil and should not allow pupils to engage in any type of activity that could be seen as inappropriate. Pupils are not employees or friends and should not be treated as such.

6.3 Employees should be aware that it is not uncommon for pupils to become strongly attracted to a member of staff or to develop an infatuation. If any employee becomes aware of an infatuation they should discuss it with the Head Teacher immediately so that they can receive support on the most appropriate way to manage the situation sensitively and tactfully.

6.4 For employees who are in a relationship with a colleague, parent or carer, or any other person associated with MITRE, we expect that they identify this to their Head Teacher and ensure that this does not create a conflict of interest or affect their professional judgement or responsibilities in any way.

### Communication and contact with pupils (including social contact)

7.0 Communication between pupils and adults, by whatever method, should take place within clear and explicit boundaries. Employees should ensure that all communications are transparent and open to scrutiny.

7.1 Employees should not establish or seek to establish social contact, via any channels (including social media), with pupils for the purposes of securing a friendship or to pursue or strengthen a relationship.

7.2 Employees should only communicate electronically with pupils via their work email account. Employees should not give their personal details such as home/mobile phone number; home or email address to pupils.

7.3 Communications with former pupils who are over 18 are left to employee discretion but MITRE highlights to employees that former pupils may be in contact with current pupils and communication may be passed on.

7.4 Our trust and all our academies are part of the wider community and it is recognised that, as members of the community, employees will come into contact with pupils outside of work. We expect employees to use their professional judgement in such situations and to report to their line manager



any contact that they have had with a pupil or parent, outside of school, that they are concerned about or that could be misinterpreted by others.

7.5 MITRE recognises that employees, parents and pupils utilise social media within personal and professional contexts. It is expected that all employees are vigilant in their use of social media, ensuring privacy settings maintain appropriate professional boundaries. Use of social media must not bring the school into disrepute or share information of a sensitive or confidential nature.

7.6 MITRE recognises and celebrates that many employees' own children attend MITRE academies as pupils. Employees are expected to exercise their professional judgement in discussing work-related issues with their children in a manner in keeping with the underlying principles of this code of conduct and to enable them and their colleagues to discharge their duties effectively.

7.7 Employees who are also parents of pupils are likely to come into contact with other pupils outside of work. In these circumstances employees should engage in the normal activities of a parent, whilst also bearing in mind that their reputation as a parent will affect their professional reputation. Employees in these circumstances must also be mindful of their status and responsibilities as an employee, and that they should avoid placing themselves in positions or behaving in a manner which could be misconstrued. If employees are in any doubt they should discuss the matter with their Head Teacher.

### Transporting pupils

8.0 Any transport of pupils must be agreed in line with the school's policy.

8.1 Any staff transporting pupils must have business insurance included as part of their vehicle insurance policy.

8.2 Wherever possible and practicable, employees should not use their own vehicle and it is advisable that at least one adult as well as the driver is present to act as an escort.

8.3 If a pupil's welfare is clearly at risk and an employee is in a one to one situation they should ensure that the pupil is in the back of the car and, if applicable, appropriate arrangements are made for booster or child seats. The employee is responsible for ensuring that they have adequate insurance for transporting pupils. If an employee transports a child because their welfare is clearly at risk they should inform the Head Teacher at the earliest opportunity.

8.4 Employees must not offer 'lifts' to pupils outside normal working duties unless this has been brought to the attention of the Head Teacher and agreed with parents/carers.

8.5 Employees must record details of any such journey and ensure that they can be justified if questioned.

8.6 This section of the code of conduct does not apply to employees transporting their own children who may be pupils at a school within the trust, at which point they are regarded as parents rather than employees. As such, in a parental capacity, they may give lifts to other pupils with the agreement of their families, being mindful of their position and status as an employee.

### Teaching Standards

9.0 Teachers make the education of their pupils their first concern, and are accountable for achieving the highest possible standards in work and conduct. Teachers should act with honesty and integrity; have strong subject knowledge; keep their knowledge and skills as teachers up to date and be



self-critical; forge positive professional relationships and work with parents in the best interest of their pupils.

9.1 Teachers must consistently fulfil the Teaching Standards.

9.2 In addition all teaching staff are required to:

- make a positive contribution to the wider life and ethos of MITRE;
- develop effective professional relationships with colleagues, knowing how and when to draw on specialist advice;
- take responsibility for improving teaching through appropriate professional learning;
- communicate effectively with parents with regard to pupils' achievements and well-being.

## Equality issues

10.0 This policy will be applied in accordance with the Equality Act 2010. Employees must ensure that equality policies in relation to employment and their resulting duties and responsibilities are adhered to. MITRE believes in equality and will not tolerate any harassment, intimidation, unfair discrimination or victimization by employees against pupils, colleagues, parents, governors and other visitors. Employees should not by their manner or speech be discriminatory with regard to a person's age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

## Health and safety

11.0 It is the responsibility of all employees, governors and visitors to take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and others and to assist in the creation of a safe work environment.

11.1 Employees have a responsibility to inform the Head Teacher of any medical condition/illness they have during the course of their employment which may impact on their fitness to undertake their duties or on the health and safety of themselves, pupils, other employees, governors of the school.

11.2 Employees must promote and achieve high standards of health and safety by taking reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of other persons who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work.

11.3 Unless designated a specific role during a fire evacuation which requires you to remain in or near the building, employees must leave the building upon hearing the fire alarm, there are no circumstances where this is not the case. Employees must report to the muster point.

## Confidentiality

12.0 Most of the information held by MITRE and individual academies is confidential. This does not mean it is 'secret', but that it is shared on a 'need to know' basis and in accordance with legal requirements. When confidential personal data is treated on this basis this is consistent with the relevant parts of the General Data Protection Regulations under the Data Protection Act 2018.

12.1 Employees and governors should be mindful that requirements in relation to maintaining the confidentiality of pupils, their families, colleagues and any matters relating to the school or MITRE itself apply to all forms of communication, including social networking sites.

12.2 All those who have access to confidential information should take particular care not to breach confidentiality inadvertently, for example through:



- discussing confidential information with family and friends, especially if this allows individuals to be identified;
- talking about confidential information where it can be overheard;
- working on confidential information in places where it might be seen;
- sharing information without checking whether it is confidential – in particular where there are issues within a family.

## General Data Protection Regulations

13.0 Employees must be familiar with the trust's data protection policy and the data retention and destruction policy. Employees must comply with the guidance set out in these policies. To breach these policies could mean a personal fine for the individual.

13.1 Employees must know when to recognise and how to respond to a subject access request.

13.2 Employees will be trained on a regular basis regarding their responsibilities under the GDPR regulations. Employees must attend this training and sign to acknowledge that they have received this training.

## Use of personal mobile phones, laptops and tablets

14.0 Employees who have personal electronic equipment in school should ensure that this is used professionally during the school day. Employees will not make phone calls, use social media, send personal text messages or otherwise use their devices for personal purposes during lesson times.

## Photography and videos

15.0 Many MITRE and school activities involve recording images; these may be undertaken as part of the curriculum, extra-curricular activities for publicity or to celebrate achievement.

15.1 Each school will record permissions from parents and pupils relating to the recording of images in accordance with the law and employees should check these permissions before publishing images in any format.

15.2 Any photographs of pupils taken on personal devices should be deleted at the earliest opportunity. They should only be used for professional purposes and should be deleted as soon as they have been used.

## Internet Acceptable Use

16.0 Employees must abide by the Internet Acceptable Use policy of their school.

16.1 In particular, employees must:

- use the internet and other technology responsibly and professionally;
- ensure that their accounts and passwords are secure and never shared with others;
- always lock computers and other devices when leaving them unattended;
- ensure that their use of the internet and other technology meets the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulations;



- take personal responsibility for their awareness of the opportunities and risks associated with new technology;
- be mindful that the IT systems in school are the property of the school and that email and the use of other systems can be monitored or checked.

### Use of school premises or facilities for work not connected with the school

17.0 Employees must not use the premises or facilities of MITRE academies for activities which are not connected with their employment at the school without agreement from the Head Teacher or Local Governing Body. This includes the personal use of the school email, telephones, computers, photocopiers, or other equipment.

### Keeping within the law

18.0 All employees are expected to operate within the law. Unlawful or criminal behaviour at work or outside work may lead to disciplinary action (including dismissal) being taken. However, being investigated by the police, receiving a caution or being charged will not automatically mean that an employee's employment is at risk.

18.2 Employees must ensure that they:

- uphold the law at work;
- never commit a crime away from work which could damage public confidence in them or MITRE or which makes them unsuitable for the work they do. This includes, for example:
  - submitting false or fraudulent claims to public bodies (for example, income support, housing or other benefit claims);
  - breaching copyright on computer software or published documents;
  - perpetrating sexual offences which will render them unfit to work with children or vulnerable adults;
  - committing crimes of dishonesty which render them unfit to hold a position of trust.
- inform the Head Teacher, or in the case of the Head Teacher, the Chair of the Local Governing Body, if they are questioned by the police, face criminal charges or receive a new caution or conviction;

### Conduct outside of work

19.0 Unlike other forms of employment, working within the public sector and at MITRE means that an employee's conduct outside of work could have an impact on their role.

19.1 Employees must not engage in conduct outside work which could seriously damage the reputation and standing of MITRE, the academy, the employee's own reputation or the reputation of other members of MITRE's community. Employees should be aware that any conduct that MITRE became aware of that could impact on their role within the Trust or affect MITRE's reputation will be addressed under our disciplinary procedures. This includes the use of social media even where comments are not publicly available.



## Conflict of interest

20.0 Employees should declare any personal interest that could bring about conflict with MITRE's interests. Employees must declare to their Head Teacher or Chair of Governors any financial interests or non-financial interest presenting a potential or perceived conflict.

20.1 Employees are required not to take outside employment which conflicts with the school's interests, contravenes the working time regulations or affects an individual's work performance. Any employee intending to work for outside organisations should seek permission from their Head Teacher or Chair of Governors, as appropriate.

## Gifts

Please refer to the Gifts and Hospitality Policy for full details

21.0 It is reasonable for an employee to accept modest gifts from pupils, especially at the end of a school year or at Christmas. Where gifts of a more significant value are received employees should inform the Head Teacher at the earliest opportunity. Gifts of more significant value will be logged in the Trust's gift register.

21.1 The giving of gifts or rewards to pupils should be part of an agreed policy for supporting positive behaviour or recognising particular achievements. The giving of gifts as rewards to a group of children is reasonable where the gifts have little financial value.

21.2 Employees may not give personal gifts to pupils. It is acceptable for employees to offer prizes or rewards of small value for tasks or competitions such as 'end of year' prizes.

## Bribery

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

22.1 Any employee concerned that they may be at risk of giving or receiving a bribe should contact either the Head Teacher or the Chair of the Local Governing Body.

## Dress code

23.0 When working for MITRE, employees are expected to consider the manner of dress and appearance appropriate to their professional role. As is expected with our pupils, our expectation is that employees are decently, appropriately and professionally dressed in work at all times.

23.1 We do not permit the wearing of clothes that are revealing, allow underwear to be seen, have offensive logos or writing, or are intentionally ripped or torn. If an employee is unsure whether any item of clothing is inappropriate then they should not wear it to work. Employees can always speak to their line manager if they are unsure. Where it is identified that an employee is wearing clothing that it not acceptable they will be informed.

23.2 Please see individual school guidelines for further detail.



## Leaving the site during working hours

24.0 School-based employees are expected to be on site during their normal working hours. Individual schools will make their own arrangements for the granting of permission to be off site during normal working hours.

## Raising concerns

25.0 MITRE encourages employees to raise promptly any serious concerns they may have about the activities of employees, members, trustees, local governors or external organisations in relation to their dealings with the school or MITRE. Employees should normally raise their concerns with the Head Teacher although, in cases whereby employees do not feel able to approach the Head Teacher, they may raise concerns with the Chair of Governors or, if applicable, trade union representatives. Concerns can be raised orally or in writing, providing as much detail as possible. Employees who raise an issue in good faith are protected by the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 from any repercussions on their present position or future career. The Act does not protect anyone who is acting maliciously, making false allegations or who is seeking personal gain.

25.1 Concerns relating to the safety and welfare of a pupil should be reported to the respective school's Designated Senior Safeguarding Lead.

***There will be other instances that occur in school life that will need referral to the Head Teacher or governing body.***



## APPENDIX A : The Seven Principles of Public Life

The 7 principles of public life apply to anyone who works as a public office-holder. This includes people who are elected or appointed to public office, nationally and locally, and all people appointed to work in:

- the civil service
- local government
- the police
- the courts and probation services
- non-departmental public bodies
- health, education, social and care services

**Selflessness:** Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

**Integrity:** Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

**Objectivity:** Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

**Accountability:** Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

**Openness:** Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

**Honesty:** Holders of public office should be truthful.

**Leadership:** Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.