



The Downland Federation

Code of Conduct for

School Employees Policy

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Monitoring and Evaluation: An annual report will be given to Staff, Pay & Conditions on an annual basis.

The Downland Federation is committed to the safeguarding and welfare of its students and young people

Contents

1.	Introduction	3
2.	Compliance with the Code of Conduct	3
3.	Professional behaviour and conduct	3
4.	Declaration of interests	5
5.	Probity of records and other documents	5
6.	Financial inducements	5
7.	Use of school premises and equipment	7
8.	Other employment	7
9.	Health and Safety	7
10.	Use of alcohol and illegal drugs	7
11.	Use of school communication system	8
12.	Confidentiality	8
13.	Copyright	9
Appendix 1	Register of Business Interests Form	10
Appendix 2	Register of Gifts and Hospitality	11

I declare that I have read and understood the Code of Conduct for School Employees and the associated "Required Reading".

Name:

Date:

Signature:

The information contained within this policy and the appendix are of equal importance. For relevant information please ensure you review the policy in its entirety.

Status : Statutory**1. Introduction**

- 1.1 All employees have personal and legal responsibilities, including; treating others with dignity and respect, acting honestly, using public funds and school equipment appropriately, adhering to health and safety guidelines and practising equal opportunities at all times. These expectations are set out below and should be fully observed by all staff, including the Executive Headteacher, Director of Primaries, Head of School, Senior Leadership Teams, Governors and Volunteers.
- 1.2 Employees should ensure they are familiar with the specific policies that underpin the code through reference to the documents highlighted in the "Required Reading" throughout the code. If these documents are not supplied at induction, the employee should ask the school for copies.
- 1.3 It is an expectation that all employees will regularly review these policies as they are periodically updated.
- 1.4 General Conduct. All employees will apply the values of the schools in their conduct at work, demonstrating honesty and integrity at all times. In general terms, the school expects that the conduct of its employees is such that no justifiable complaint can be made by parents, pupils, colleagues, governors, other bodies or agencies or members of the community in relation to conduct and behaviour of school staff. Any complaints about inappropriate conduct will be dealt with fairly and reasonably, using the agreed procedures.
- 1.5 For the purposes of this procedure, any reference to a singular school applies to any one of the schools within the Federation.
- 1.6 Responsibilities that are stated as sitting with the Headteacher throughout this procedure, refer to the Executive Headteacher when the matter relates to the Downs School and the Director of Primaries where it relates to a Primary School as these posts assume the responsibilities of the 'Headteacher' as set out under the STCPD.
- 1.7 Required reading:
The Downland Federations Disciplinary Policy

2 Compliance with the Code of Conduct

- 2.1 Failure to comply with the code of conduct , associated school policies and documentation issued by the DFE, e.g. the Teachers Standards ("Required Reading") may result in disciplinary action being taken.

3 Professional behaviour and conduct

3.1 Treating other people with dignity and respect

Employees have the right to be treated with dignity and respect by other colleagues, students and external contacts, such as parents. In turn, all employees are expected to treat colleagues, students, external contacts (such as parents) in the same way.

Staff are required to comply with the school's equality policies in respect of colleagues, students and other contacts such as parents. Unacceptable behaviour such as discrimination, bullying, harassment or intimidation will not be tolerated in schools. This includes physical and verbal abuse and use of inappropriate language or unprofessional behaviour with colleagues, students and parents.

3.2 Appropriate relationships with children

School employees are expected to act in an open and transparent way that would not lead any reasonable person to suspect their actions or intent. Employees in schools are in a position of trust and have a duty to protect young people from discrimination and harm and to maintain appropriate professional boundaries. It is equally important for staff to avoid behaviour that might be misinterpreted by others in order to protect both young people and themselves. Staff are required to read and understand school policies on child protection, including part 1 of KCSIE and a record is kept to identify this has occurred.

3.3 Professional behaviour

Employees must not misuse or misrepresent their position, qualifications or experience or bring the reputation of their school into disrepute by action in or out of school. Such behaviour may lead to disciplinary action.

They must ensure that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways which exploit pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law.

The way in which staff present and conduct themselves on social networking sites can have an impact on the public perception of the school and influence the way in which those users are perceived by others. Staff should be aware that their online behaviour could affect their professional standing, integrity and dignity and that of the Federation. Staff should not be 'friends' with students or their parents on social media platforms.

Teachers are expected to comply with the Teachers Standards including part 2 of the standards 'personal and professional conduct'

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1007716/Teachers__Standards_2021_update.pdf

3.4 Professional relationships with parents

Communicating with parents who are also members of staff:

- A member of staff who is a parent of a student in the school must always use agreed parental contact procedures to communicate with a member of staff.
- Staff who teach/support the son/daughter of another member of staff must use agreed parental contact procedures to communicate with the parent of the child.

Communication with parents:

- At all times, communications with parents must be formal and use the parent's title.
- Communication on first name basis is considered too informal and can compromise professional dialogue.

The Schools recognise that there may be occasions where work with a family may necessitate less formal communication to maintain a positive relationship.

3.5 Dress Code

Employees are representatives of the school and the way in which they dress conveys important messages about the school. Employees are expected to dress in a professional manner as well as showing concern for health and safety. Unless there are specific dress requirements in the job (such as sports kit), formal professional dress is expected including shirt and tie, for Primaries, a tie is optional in class but expected for parents evening. Revealing clothes, for example, very low-rise trousers, strappy tops or very short skirts are not acceptable work attire. Earrings and nose studs are permitted, but other body piercings and tattoos are considered too informal and should be covered up. Flip flops, mules, trainers and jeans are also considered too informal (unless there are particular requirements such as field trips). Closed toe shoes are required in areas where there are dropping hazards. Smart, non-sport designed trainers are permitted however these must be plain and not have a logo. Personal protective equipment must be worn where applicable.

3.6 Criminal actions

School employees must inform the Headteacher or (Governing Board if the employee is the Headteacher) immediately if they are subject to a criminal conviction, caution, ban, police enquiry, investigation or pending prosecution. The appropriate leader or Governing Board will discuss this with the employee in the context of their role and responsibilities in order to consider ongoing suitability to work at the schools.

3.7 Required reading

- The Federation's Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy and procedures
- All School's Child Protection & Safeguarding Policies, EPEIRS, anti-bullying, complaints, behaviour, health and safety, special needs, staff discipline and grievance policy
- Part 1 of KCSIE
- Part 1 & 2 of the Teachers Standards (teachers only)

4 Declaration of interests

- 4.1 An employee is required to declare where their membership of a group or organisation would be considered to be in conflict with the ethos of the school. Membership of a trade union or staff representative group would not need to be declared.
- 4.2 Employees should also consider carefully whether they need to declare to the school their relationship with any individual(s) where this might cause a conflict with school activities. For example, a relationship with a Governor, another staff member or a contractor who provides services to the school.
- 4.3 Failure to make a relevant declaration of interests is a very serious breach of trust and therefore if employees are in doubt about a declaration, they are advised to take advice from their school or union.
- 4.4 All declarations, including nil returns, should be submitted in writing to the Headteacher on a school Register of Business Interests. (Appendix One).

5 Probity of records and other documents

- 5.1 The deliberate falsification of documents or information is not acceptable. Where an employee falsifies records or other documents, including those held electronically, this will be regarded as a serious disciplinary matter and potentially a criminal offence.

6 Financial inducements

6.1 Financial Regulations for schools

All school employees must comply with the school's and local authority's Financial Regulations. Employees should familiarise themselves with the regulations but some of the principal employee requirements are summarised below.

6.2 Business Contacts

In this section, "business contact" refers to any person, Board or organisation with which the school is involved on a financial or charitable basis (including contractors; developers; consultants; regional or national charities). This also includes business contacts who are potential suppliers (e.g. they are tendering for future business).

6.3 Declaration of gifts and discounts on personal purchases

Any gifts that are received should be declared in writing to the Governing Board on the Register of Gifts and Hospitality (Appendix 2) with the exception of those items specifically identified in sections 6.4 and 6.5 below. This document shall remain available for inspection by the authority's Internal Audit department.

6.4 Gifts, discounts on personal purchases or hospitality to an employee or to the school

Where a business contact offers a personal gift, discount, personal payment or other incentive such as secondary employment to an employee, these should not be accepted and should be returned with a suitable official letter. Such offers should be declared to the Governing Board and recorded in the Register of Gifts and Hospitality.

If it is not possible to return gifts, then the employee who deals with that supplier should declare the gift to the Governing Board who will keep a record of it and decide how it is to be used. Such gifts remain the property of the school and should be included in the Register of Gifts and Hospitality.

If an employee is not clear whether a discount a supplier offers is because of his position at school, then the transaction should be made known to the Headteacher or Head of School before the transaction occurs

The only exceptions to these are:

- Low cost, functional items suitable for business use rather than personal use and displaying the supplier's logo e.g. diaries, calendars and pens. These items may be accepted and do not have to be included in the Register of Gifts and Hospitality.
- Gifts offered by parents or students to school staff to express their thanks, such as boxes of chocolates, however, only gifts with an individual value of approximately £50 or less may be accepted. Such gifts do not have to be

declared in writing to the Governing Board or be included in the Register of Gifts and Hospitality. For the avoidance of doubt employees must always refuse gifts of money.

Where hospitality in the form of meals and drinks is offered by a business contact, this is only acceptable where it forms part of a normal business meeting (for example, refreshments at training events or meals at evening meetings). Offers of hospitality to specific events, such as a dinner or sporting event, should only be accepted after authorisation from the Governing Board. These would normally only be approved where there is a clear and demonstrable benefit to the school and the hospitality would not expose the school to criticism that the business contact was exerting undue influence. These should be recorded in the Register of Gifts and Hospitality.

Visits by employees to exhibitions, demonstrations, conferences, business meals and social functions in connection with the school's business and authorised by the school, shall be at the school's expense.

6.5 Use of school contacts

Apart from participating in concessionary schemes arranged by trade unions or other such groups for their members, employees shall not use school business contacts for acquiring materials or services at trade / discount prices for non-school activities.

6.6 Required reading:

The Downland Federations Finance Policy

7 Use of school premises & equipment

7.1 School equipment and premises are available only for school-related activities and approved lettings. They should not be used for fulfilment of another job or post or for excessive or regular personal use, unless authorised in writing and in advance by the Headteacher or Head of School.

7.2 This includes photocopy facilities, stationery, telephones and computers, furniture and premises. Any school equipment that is used outside school premises, for example laptops, should be returned to the school when the employee leaves employment or upon request by a senior leader.

8 Other employment

8.1 Employees are permitted to take up secondary employment outside the school, as long as the activity does not constitute a conflict of interest, adversely affect their primary

employment at the school or exceed the legal maximum working week as defined by the Working Time Regulations.

8.2 The secondary employment must be undertaken outside the working hours of the employee's normal post and employees are required to keep the Head of School / Headteacher (Governing Board if the employee is the Headteacher) informed of their employment at other organisations.

9 Health & Safety

9.1 Employees must adhere to the school's Health and Safety policy and must ensure that they take every reasonable action to keep themselves and everyone in the school environment safe and well.

9.2 This includes taking immediate safety action in a potentially harmful situation (either at school or off-site) by complying with statutory and school guidelines and collaborating with colleagues, agencies and the local authority.

9.3 This also includes Health and Safety procedures for all employees, such as:

- Requirement to wear ID badge at all times.
- Requirement to sign in at the start of the school day and that you sign out if you leave the school site during the school day.

9.4 Required reading:

- The Federations Health and Safety Policy
- School relevant Risk Assessments inc. COVID 19

10 Use of alcohol and illegal drugs

10.1 The taking of illegal drugs during working hours is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. All employees are expected to attend work without being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs and without their performance being adversely impacted by the consumption of alcohol or illegal drugs.

10.2 If alcohol or drug usage impacts on an employee's working life, the school has the right to discuss the matter with the employee and take appropriate action, having considered factors such as the school or federations reputation and public confidence.

10.3 Required reading:

- Substance Misuse Policy

11 Use of school communication systems

11.1 The school has 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 malware and malicious intent, but also to ensure proper and effective use of systems by employees.
- 11.2 Employees should be aware that the school has the right to access employees' individual personal school email accounts and computer files if required for investigation of misuse.
 - 11.3 It is recommended that employees do not use school systems (phone, email, computers) for personal use. Inappropriate usage, which includes excessive or regular personal use may result in disciplinary action for the employee and in serious cases could lead to an employee's dismissal. We do offer unlimited personal printing facilities using the MFDs where staff use their personal credit, which they can top-up as required.
 - 11.4 Inappropriate use of email and internet systems also includes viewing, publication or circulation of illegal or offensive material, viewing, publication or circulation of junk mail, including chain letters, jokes or large attachments, gambling or gaming is unacceptable and will be treated as disciplinary matters.
 - 11.5 Personal access credentials, including passwords or other forms of access, must only be used by the person for whom they have been allocated and must not be made available to others. Every care must be taken to keep personal access credentials private and not shared with others. Breach of this confidentiality may be subject to disciplinary action.
 - 11.6 Employees who receive inappropriate communications should inform their Head of School / Headteacher or Line Manager immediately.
 - 11.7 Required reading:
 - ICT Policy

12 Confidentiality

- 12.1 All employees at the school and the Governing Board come into contact with a significant volume of data and information in relation to students, staff, school activities and many other matters. There is an obligation to read and to observe the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018.
- 12.2 **Managing data**
Under the Data Protection Act, staff are required to collect, maintain and dispose of sensitive or personal data in a responsible manner.
- 12.3 **Disclosing data**
Staff who are/have been employed by the school should not disclose sensitive information about the school, its employees or the local authority to other parties, for example, parents, colleagues or electronic communications. There are particular exceptions to this; for example disclosure of suspected or alleged abuse of a student to

Child Protection officers; discussion with a person accompanying or representing an employee in a formal meeting or disclosure under the Whistleblowing procedure. All communication with the media must be directed through the Headteacher or their nominee.

There are circumstances in which staff are obliged to release student data, for example, parents seeking information about student progress or other colleagues in the school. This should be done following the agreed processors and procedures within the school. Staff should be aware that, from time to time, information about employees' salaries is matched with other public sector information (for example housing benefits) in order to prevent fraudulent claims.

12.4 **Access to data**

Everyone has the right to request access to data that is held about them and such requests should be made to their Headteacher or Head of School who will address the request in conjunction with the Data Protection Officer.

12.5 Required reading:

- Data Protection Policy

13 Copyright

13.1 Copyright legislation should be displayed next to photocopier machines and employees are required to adhere to the guidance provided about use of educational resources.

13.2 Required reading:

- Copyright notices in school

APPENDIX ONE

REGISTER OF BUSINESS INTERESTS FORM

Governors and staff declaration form

I wish to declare the following information in accordance with the Governing Board's requirements that a Register of Business Interests should be maintained.

Name:

Post:

Signature:

Date:

You should provide full details of your declaration below, including a nil return:

Declaration of relationships or contracting arrangements	
Relationships or links with businesses. Contracts or proposed contracts (or any activity which would cause potential conflict) in which you are involved / interested.	State whether the interest is direct or indirect, and the nature of the interest.

APPENDIX TWO

REGISTER OF GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY

Governors and staff declaration form

I wish to declare the following information in accordance with the Governing Board's requirements that a Register of Gifts and Hospitality should be maintained.

Name:

Post:

Signature:

Date:

You should provide full details of your declaration below, including a nil return:

Declaration of gifts and hospitality		
Date gift received	From whom	Gift or hospitality