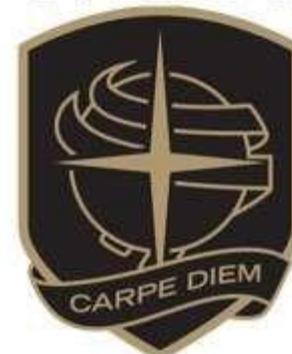


# Staff Code of Conduct

**Developed by:** Linden Lodge Human Resources

**Date:** September 2020

Southfields  
Multi-Academy  
**TRUST**



Southfields  
Academy



Linden Lodge  
School

A Specialist Sensory & Physical College

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## Staff Behaviour Policy (Code of Conduct)

### 1. Introduction

- This policy sets out clear guidance on the standards of behaviour expected from all staff at Linden Lodge. The principles underlying the guidance aim to encourage staff to achieve the highest possible standards of conduct and minimise the risk of inappropriate conduct occurring.
- School staff are in a unique position of trust and influence as role models for students. Therefore, staff must adhere to behaviour that sets a good example to all students within the school.
- Staff also have an individual responsibility to maintain their reputation and the reputation of the school, both inside and outside working hours and work setting.

- This policy applies to all staff in the school regardless of their position, role or responsibility. References to 'staff' throughout the policy relate to all of the following groups:
  - 1 All members of staff including teaching and support staff
  - 2 Casual workers
  - 3 Temporary and supply staff, either from agencies or engaged directly
  - 4 Student placements, including those undertaking initial teacher training and apprentices.
- Linden Lodge require that all staff have read and agree to comply with this policy.
- Breach or failure to observe this policy will result in action being taken under the school disciplinary procedures including, but not limited to, dismissal.
- This code of conduct is not an exhaustive list of acceptable and unacceptable standards of behaviour. In situations where guidance does not exist in this policy staff are expected to exercise their professional judgement and act in the best interests of the students and the school.

In addition to this code of conduct, teachers are also expected to meet the standards outlined in the Teachers' Standards published by the Teaching Agency ('Personal and Professional Conduct').

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/301107/Teachers\\_Standards.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/301107/Teachers_Standards.pdf)

*Employees refers to all staff employed by Linden Lodge School. Students refers to children and young adults within Linden Lodge School.*

## **2. Professional Behaviour and Conduct**

- Staff are expected to demonstrate the highest possible standards of personal and professional conduct and behaviour and consistently act with honesty and integrity. Linden Lodge expect that staff treat each other, students, parents and the wider community with dignity and respect at all times.
- Employees must ensure that they comply at all times with the Linden Lodge Equal Opportunities Policy and other employment policies in relation to equality issues. The bullying or harassment of other work colleagues, students or other members of the community is considered to be unacceptable and could lead to

disciplinary action. Employees are expected to report any concerns or suspicions they may have about the treatment of others to their line manager, Headteacher or the HR department. For further information and guidance please refer to the Bullying and Harassment Policy.

- Staff have a duty of trust in relation to students, parents and the local community.
- Staff must act in accordance with their duty of care to students and ensure that the safety and welfare of students are accorded the highest priority.
- Staff should show fairness in their treatment of students and avoid behaviours such as embarrassing or humiliating students, making jokes at the expense of students, discriminating against or favouring students and sarcasm.
- Staff must have regard for the ethos and values of Linden Lodge School and must not do or say anything which may bring the School into disrepute. Care should be taken by staff to avoid any conflict of interest between activities undertaken outside school and responsibilities within school. Staff should act in accordance with the school's policies and procedures at all times.
- Staff must not conduct themselves in any way which might create doubt about their suitability to work for Linden Lodge School.
- Staff should not be involved in a staffing appointment, or in any decision relating to the discipline, promotion or pay and conditions of another employee (or prospective employee) to whom they are related or have a close personal relationship.
- Staff should ensure that their own personal or political opinions do not interfere with any policy of the School, or bring the school into disrepute.
- Staff have a shared duty to help prevent injuries or accidents occurring at work by complying with the Health and Safety Policy and instructions relating to safety and security procedures.

### **3. Dress and Appearance**

- Linden Lodge School recognises that dress and appearance are matters of personal choice and self-expression. However, all staff must dress in a manner that is appropriate to a professional role and that promotes a professional image.
- Staff should dress in a manner that is not offensive, revealing or sexually provocative and in a manner that is absent from political or contentious slogans.

- Staff should dress safely and appropriately for the tasks they undertake.
- Discreet earrings are acceptable but all other body piercings should be removed while on school premises.
- Consider your fingernail length carefully if you will be handling our young people.
- Flip-Flops and open-toed shoes are not suitable footwear at Linden Lodge.
- It is each Line Manager's responsibility to advise on appropriate clothing; if you are unsure, please seek their advice.
- These standards also apply whenever you are representing Linden Lodge School at outside venues.
- For further details please also refer to the Staff handbook

#### **4. Smoking, alcohol and other substances**

- Linden Lodge School and buildings are non-smoking sites. Staff must not smoke on school premises or directly outside the school gates.
- Staff must not smoke whilst working with or supervising students, offsite.
- Staff must not consume or be under the influence of alcohol, illicit drugs or other illegal substances on or near school premises.
- Staff must refrain from the consumption of alcohol and other substances at school/student events both within the school premises and outside the school setting.

#### **5. Relationships with Students**

- Staff must maintain professional boundaries with students appropriate to their position and must always consider whether their actions are warranted, proportionate, safe and applied equitably. Staff should act in an open and transparent way that would not lead any reasonable person to question their actions or intent. Staff should think carefully about their conduct so that misinterpretations are minimised.

- Staff must not establish or seek to establish social contact with students for the purpose of securing a friendship or to pursue or strengthen a relationship. If a young person seeks to establish social contact you should exercise your professional judgement in making a response and be aware that such social contact could be misconstrued.
- Staff must not develop personal or sexual relationships with students and should not engage in any sexual activity with a student. Sexual activity does not just involve physical contact including penetrative and non-penetrative acts.
- Working Together to Safeguard students defines sexual abuse as 'forcing or enticing a student or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the student is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or nonpenetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving students in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging students to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a student in preparation for abuse (including via the internet).
- Staff should be mindful of section 16 of The Sexual Offences Act 2003.
- Staff must not make sexual remarks to a student, discuss their own sexual relationships with, or in the presence of, students or discuss a student's sexual relationships in an inappropriate setting or context.
- Contact with students should be through Linden Lodge School' authorised mechanisms (school phone, school email). Personal phone numbers, email addresses or communication routes via all social media platforms should not be used and staff should not share their home address with students. If contacted via an inappropriate route the member of staff must inform the Headteacher immediately.
- Linden Lodge School staff must not accept friend invitations or become friends with any student of Linden Lodge School on any social media platform. Staff should also refrain from following the Twitter or other similar social media accounts of students or their parents. Staff must read the E-safety policy carefully and follow all advice and guidance contained within it.

## 6. Infatuations

- It is not unusual for students or, sometimes, their parents to develop infatuations towards members of staff. All such situations must be responded to sensitively to maintain the dignity of those concerned.
- Staff should also be aware that such circumstances carry a high risk of words or actions being misinterpreted and for allegations to be made against staff. Any indications of an infatuation towards yourself or another member of staff must be reported to your line manager.
- Seeking advice in circumstances where concerns arise. Examples of situations which must be reported are given below:
  - Where a member of staff or volunteer is concerned that he or she might be developing a relationship with a student which could have the potential to represent an abuse of trust,
  - Where a member of staff or volunteer is concerned that a student is becoming attracted to him or her or that there is a developing attachment or dependency.
  - Where a member of staff or volunteer is concerned that actions or words have been misunderstood or misconstrued by a student such that an abuse of trust might be wrongly suspected by others.
  - Where a member of staff or volunteer receives information about such a relationship.

## 7. Gifts/Hospitality

- Staff need to take care that they do not accept any gifts/offer of hospitality that might be construed as a bribe by others, or lead the giver to expect preferential treatment. However, there may be occasions where students or parents wish to give a small token of appreciation to staff, for example at religious festivities or at the end of the year.
- It is unacceptable to receive gifts on a regular basis or to suggest to students that gifts are appropriate or desired. Money must not be accepted as a gift. If you are unsure whether to accept a gift you should consult your line manager.
- Staff must not accept significant gifts (a sum to be assessed by the school) or hospitality from students, parents, carers, actual or potential contractors or outside suppliers. All such gifts/offers of hospitality should be reported to your line manager and recorded.

- You should never accept any gratuities, gifts or favours from contractors, suppliers or outside agencies that might impair or appear to impair your professional judgment.
- Personal gifts must not be given by staff to students and any reward to students should be in accordance with Linden Lodge School' behaviour policy, recorded and not based on favouritism.

## **8. Physical Contact with Students**

- There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate and proper for staff to have physical contact with students, but it is crucial that they only do so in ways appropriate to their professional role. A 'no touch' approach is impractical for most staff and may in some circumstances be inappropriate. When physical contact is made with students it should be in response to their needs at that time, of limited duration and appropriate to their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background.
- Where feasible, staff should seek the student's permission before initiating contact. Staff should listen, observe and take note of the student's reaction or feelings and, so far as is possible, use a level of contact which is acceptable to the student for the minimum time necessary.
- It is not possible to be specific about the appropriateness of each physical contact, since an action that is appropriate with one student in one set of circumstances may be inappropriate in another, or with a different student. Staff should therefore, use their professional judgement at all times.
- Staff should be aware that even well intentioned physical contact may be misconstrued by the student, an observer or by anyone to whom this action is described. Staff should never touch a student in a way which may be considered indecent. Always be prepared to explain actions and accept that all physical contact be open to scrutiny. Staff must not engage in rough play, tickling or fun fights with students.
- Extra caution should be exercised where a student is known to have suffered previous abuse or neglect. Such experiences may sometimes make a student exceptionally needy and demanding of physical contact and staff should respond sensitively by deterring the student through helping them to understand the importance of personal boundaries.
- Staff supervising PE and games or providing musical tuition should demonstrate the use of a particular piece of equipment/instrument on another member of staff if possible. However, they may be required to initiate physical contact with students to support a student to perform a task safely, to

demonstrate the use of a particular piece of equipment/instrument or to assist them with an exercise. Contact under these circumstances should be done with the student's agreement, for the minimum time necessary and in an open environment. Staff should remain sensitive to any discomfort expressed verbally or non-verbally by the student.

- Physical contact must never be secretive, for the gratification of the adult or represent a misuse of authority.
- If a member of staff believes that an action could be misinterpreted, the incident and circumstances should be reported to your line manager, recorded and, if appropriate, a copy placed on the student's file.

## **9. Behaviour Management and Physical Intervention**

- The circumstances in which staff can physically intervene with a pupil are covered by the 1996 Education Act. Staff may legitimately intervene to prevent a pupil from committing a criminal offence, injuring themselves or others, causing damage to property, engaging in behaviour prejudicial to good order and to maintain good order and discipline. Staff should have regard to the health and safety of themselves and others. Under no circumstances should physical force be used as a form of punishment. The use of unwarranted physical force is likely to constitute criminal offence.
- Staff should refer to the Intimate Care Policy and the Schools' Physical Intervention/Positive Handling Policies and Behaviour Policy.

## **10. Use of Reasonable Force**

Reasonable in the circumstances 'means no more than is needed.' All members of school staff have a legal power to use reasonable force to maintain good order and discipline in the classroom and to prevent students from:

- Hurting themselves or others
- Damaging property
- Causing disorder

We acknowledge that staff must only ever use physical intervention as a last resort, when a child is endangering him/herself or others, and that at all times it must be the minimal force necessary to prevent injury to others. Such events should be recorded and signed

by a witness and parents will be informed of such incidents (this is considered good practice).

Staff must refer to the behaviour policy and forms. The school have staff trained in both Team Teach and MAPA.

## **11. Student in distress**

- There may be occasions when a student is in distress and in need of comfort as a reassurance. This may include age appropriate physical contact. Staff should remain self-aware at all times in order that their contact is not threatening, intrusive or subject to misinterpretation.
- Such incidents should always be recorded and shared with your line manager. If you have a particular concern about the need to provide this type of care and reassurance you should seek further advice from your line manager.

## **12. Showers and changing**

- Students are entitled to respect and privacy whilst they are changing or showering after PE/games or swimming. However, there needs to be an appropriate level of supervision in order to safeguard young people, meet health and safety requirements and to ensure that bullying does not take place. The supervision should be appropriate to the needs and age of the students and sensitive to the potential for embarrassment.
- Staff should be vigilant about their own behaviour and announce their intention of entering a changing room. Staff must not change or shower in the same place as student.
- When tending to personal care of a student staff must always work in pairs, in line with safeguarding principles you must not undertake these duties alone.

## **13. One to one situations**

- Staff working individually with students should be aware of the potential vulnerability of students and staff in such situations. Staff should manage these situations with regard to the safety of the student and to themselves.
- Individual work with students should not be undertaken in isolated areas or rooms where there is no external viewing panel. Where it is necessary to close doors for reasons of confidentiality a colleague should be made aware of this and asked to remain vigilant.

- Pre-arranged meetings with students away from the school premises or on the school site when the school is not in session are not permitted unless approval is obtained from their parent/guardian and the Headteacher or other senior colleague with delegated authority.

#### **14. Transporting students**

- In certain circumstances it may be appropriate for staff to transport students offsite, for example sports fixtures, swimming lessons or other out of school activities. A designated member of staff should be appointed to plan and provide oversight of all transport arrangements and to respond to any difficulties that may arise.
- Staff should ensure that the transport arrangements and the vehicle meet all legal requirements. Staff should ensure that the driver has the appropriate license for the vehicle, that the vehicle is roadworthy, has a valid MOT certificate and is appropriately insured and that the maximum capacity is not exceeded.
- Staff should ensure that the driver is not distracted while the vehicle is in motion for any reason other than an emergency and should also ensure all passengers are wearing correctly fastened seatbelts. Staff should never transport students while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Prior to transporting students offsite consent must be obtained from students' parent/carer and staff should be aware that the safety and welfare of the students is their responsibility until this is safely passed back to their parent/carer.

#### **15. E-Safety**

- Staff should follow Linden Lodge School' E-Safety policy for staff at all times and have regard for the School's E-Safety policy for students.
- Staff must not engage in inappropriate use of social network sites which may bring themselves, the school or the school community into disrepute. Staff should adopt the highest security settings on any personal profiles they have.
- Staff should remain mindful of their digital footprint and exercise caution in all their use of social media or any other web based presence they have. This includes written content, videos or photographs and views expressed either directly or by 'liking' certain pages or posts or following certain individuals or groups. Staff should exercise care when using dating websites where staff could encounter students.

- Staff must not make contact with students, must not accept or initiate friend requests nor follow students' accounts on any social media platform. Staff must not communicate with students via social media, websites, instant messenger accounts or text message. The only acceptable method of contact is via the use of school email accounts or telephone equipment.
- Staff should not make contact with students' family members, accept or initiate friend requests or follow students' family member's account on any social media platform.
- Staff must be aware of the safeguarding issues around the use of mobile technologies and their associated risks and should adhere to their own school policy on the use of mobile phones and mobile devices in school.
- Mobile phones and personally-owned devices should not be used during lessons for personal use. They should be switched off (or silent) at all times. The Bluetooth functionality of a mobile phone should be switched off at all times and may not be used to send images or files to other mobile phones. Mobile phones and personal devices are not permitted to be used in certain areas within the school site such as changing rooms and toilets.
- Mobile phones and personally-owned mobile devices brought in to school are the responsibility of the device owner. Linden Lodge School accepts no responsibility for the loss, theft or damage of personally-owned mobile phones or mobile devices.

## **16. Photography, video and images of students**

- Many school activities involve recording images as part of the curriculum, extra school activities, publicity or to celebrate an achievement. In accordance with The Data Protection Act 2018 the image of a student is personal data. Therefore, it is a requirement under the Act for consent to be obtained from the student if of legal age or parent/carer of a student for any images made. It is also important to take into account the wishes of the student, remembering that some students do not wish to have their photograph taken or be filmed.
- Using images for publicity purposes will require the age-appropriate consent of the individual concerned and their parent/carer. Images should not be displayed on websites, in publications or in a public place without their consent. Staff should also be clear about the purpose of the activity and what will happen to the photographs/images/video footage when the lesson or activity is concluded.
- Photographs/stills or video footage of students should only be taken using school equipment for purposes authorised by the school and should be

stored securely and only on school equipment and deleted once it has been used for the purpose taken.

- All photographs/stills and video footage should be available for scrutiny and staff should be able to justify all images/video footage made.
- Staff should remain aware of the potential for images of students to be misused to create indecent images of students and/or for grooming purposes. Therefore, careful consideration should be given to how activities which are being filmed or photographed are organised and undertaken. Particular care should be given when filming or photographing young or vulnerable students who may be unable to question how or why the activities are taking place. Staff should also be mindful that students who have been abused through the use of video or photography may feel threatened by its use in a teaching environment.

## **17. Secondary Employment**

- Employees are able to take up additional employment other than at Linden Lodge School and their base school provided the employment concerned does not constitute a conflict of interest or adversely affect their employment at the School. Employees should, however, keep the School informed of other employment they undertake so that the School may ensure that the 48-hour weekly working time limit under the Working Time Regulations 1998 is adhered to. In the event that your combined working hours are likely to exceed this figure you be asked to sign a working time 'opt out' agreement.

## **18. Confidentiality**

- Members of staff may have access to confidential information about students, their parents/carers or their siblings. Staff must not reveal such information except to those colleagues who have a professional role in relation to the student on a need to know basis, this includes life limiting conditions and the medical status of students. Should a member of staff require support, HR are able to signpost to the relevant services available.
- Staff should never use confidential or personal information about a student or her/his family for their own, or others' advantage (including that of partners, friends, relatives or other organisations). Information must never be used to intimidate, humiliate, or embarrass the student.
- All staff are likely at some point to witness actions which need to be confidential. For example, where a student is bullied by another student, this needs to be reported and dealt with in accordance with the appropriate

school procedure. It must not be discussed outside the school, including with the student's parent or carer, nor with colleagues in the school except by a senior member of staff with the appropriate authority to deal with the matter.

- Staff have a statutory obligation to share with Linden Lodge School' Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead any information which gives rise to concern about the welfare or safety of a student or that might suggest a student is in need or at risk of significant harm. Staff should pass on information without delay in accordance with Linden Lodge School safeguarding policy and procedures and this should be recorded. Staff must never promise a student that they will not act on or pass on any information that they are told by the student.
- Staff should refer to the Department of Education's document Information Sharing: Advice for Practitioners Providing Safeguarding Services for further guidance on information sharing. If you are in any doubt about whether to share you should seek guidance from a member of the senior leadership team.
- Any media or legal enquiries should be passed to the senior leadership team and only approved staff and Governors should communicate to the media about the school.
- Staffroom/office doors must be closed when using the telephone or discussing information of a confidential nature either related to pupils and their families or staff.
- Confidential records/ papers must not be taken off the School site without the permission of the Headteacher.
- Confidential records/papers should not be left exposed to casual view.
- Computer screens should not be left open for others to see if displaying confidential information.
- You must not use confidential or sensitive information about a pupil or their family for your own benefit or to humiliate or embarrass a child.
- If you are in any doubt about sharing information you hold or which has been requested of you, you should seek advice from your Line Manager or a senior member of staff.

## **19. Care of the Environment**

- Dirty crockery should be washed up or placed in a dishwasher once it has been used, and should not be left for others to deal with.
- The last person to leave a room should ensure that appropriate electrical equipment and lights are switched off, doors and windows are locked and alarms are set when necessary.
- If you cause any damage to any school property you must report it to your Line Manager.
- You must not make personal use of school facilities e.g. telephones, washing machines, etc. without the prior consent of a member of the Leadership Team.

## **20. Whistleblowing**

- Whistleblowing is the mechanism by which staff can voice their concerns, without fear of repercussion. Linden Lodge School is committed to achieving the highest possible standards of honesty, openness and accountability and relies on its members of staff to help maintain these standards. In pursuit of these aims, Linden Lodge School encourages all individuals to raise concerns which they may have about the conduct or practices of others.
- All school staff have a duty to report any behaviour by a colleague which raises concern. Staff should refer to the School whistleblowing policy for further guidance. This is particularly important where the welfare of students may be at risk.

## **21. Criminal Charges or Convictions**

- All employees must inform the Headteacher or the HR Department immediately if they are issued with any criminal conviction, caution, reprimand or final warning or are the subject of a police investigation during the course of their employment with Linden Lodge School. The Headteacher will discuss the matter with the employee in the context of the role they perform and the duty to safeguard students.

## 22. Compliance

- All staff must complete the form in Appendix 1 to confirm they have read, understood and agree to comply with this policy. This form should be signed and dated and a copy retained on the member of staff's file.

### Appendix 1

#### Confirmation of compliance

##### SUMMARY

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are working in accordance with the School's Aims and Values, see Staff Handbook.

You are responsible for recording and reporting to a Manager whenever you consider that there has been poor practice or malpractice by a member of staff, volunteer or visitor to the School site. The School has a Whistleblowing policy that is readily available to staff and explains the procedure that will be followed.

It is your responsibility to keep up to date with any changes in policy that may affect your practice at work. All School policies can be found on the iDrive/Policies folder.

##### AS A FINAL REMINDER

Appropriate disciplinary action may be taken if you are in breach of any of the above.

Any member of staff bringing the School or Multi-academy Trust into disrepute will be subject to disciplinary action.

Any member of staff should feel able to challenge any of the areas mentioned in this Policy.

You are required to inform your Line Manager of any matter concerning you which may have implications for the safety or the wellbeing of the pupils in your care or of yourself.

I hereby confirm that I have read, understood and agree to comply with Linden Lodge School' Staff Code of Conduct Policy.

Employee Name

.....

Position/Post

.....

Signed

.....

Date

.....