



STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT

October 2025

MOORLAND FEDERATION

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Sept 2025-2026

Version and Status

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Consultation

This code of conduct has been subject to consultation with recognised schools trade unions and formally agreed with a recommendation that this framework code of conduct be adopted by Somerset Schools & Academies. Whilst not itself amounting to a disciplinary code, any failure to follow the code of conduct set in this document may, depending upon circumstances, give rise to disciplinary action.

Updates

- Information added on school culture & key principles
- Information added on behaviour & conduct when at work & outside of work
- Information added on confidential information
- Information added on relationships with parents
- Information added on use of electronic technologies and personal communication devices
- Information added on the use of ICT including emails and social media sites
- **New Section added on Sexual Harassment**
- **New Section added on Whistleblowing**
- **Additional Requirement updated to include Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures**

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Pre-Amble (This does not form part of the Code of Conduct)

Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2025) makes specific reference to Staff Codes of Conduct and requires that all staff are aware of systems within their school or college which support safeguarding, including the child protection policy, the staff behaviour policy, and the role of the designated safeguarding lead.

Governing Bodies must ensure appropriate policies and procedures are in place to safeguard and promote children's welfare. The Staff Behaviour Policy (sometimes called the Code of Conduct) should include low-level concerns, allegations against staff, whistleblowing, acceptable use of technologies, and staff/pupil communications including social media.

This document provides a framework for Moorland Federation staff and volunteers to understand the expectations and professional standards that underpin the Federation's ethos and safeguarding culture.

1. Introduction

The school's reputation and the trust and confidence of the community in its integrity are of vital importance. This Code of Conduct assists employees and volunteers (including Governors) in carrying out their duties in accordance with statutory and professional standards.

Objectives of a safe school culture:

- To safeguard pupils and protect employees.
- To make explicit expectations of performance and conduct.
- To minimise opportunities for abuse.
- To ensure staff feel confident to report concerns.
- To create and maintain mutual respect, openness, and fairness.

Failure to follow this policy may result in disciplinary action, including dismissal.

2. Status of the Code of Conduct

This Code applies to all employees and volunteers within the Moorland Federation. Where reference is made to the Headteacher, this includes the Executive Headteacher; in such cases, the Chair of Governors will act as the escalation point.

3. General Behaviour and Conduct at Work and Outside Work

Employees must act as positive role models and demonstrate the highest standards of behaviour and integrity at all times. They must:

- Avoid inappropriate or offensive language.
- Uphold British Values and the Federation's ethos.
- Be objective, professional, and impartial.
- Maintain courtesy and respect towards pupils, parents, colleagues, and the wider community.

Outside Work:

Staff are representatives of the Federation even beyond working hours. Conduct that could bring the Federation into disrepute (including criminal behaviour, antisocial acts, or substance misuse) is prohibited.

4. Confidentiality & Openness

Staff may access sensitive or confidential information. Such information must not be disclosed except to authorised persons. Confidentiality applies particularly to child protection disclosures, safeguarding investigations, and personal data.

5. Relationships

Mutual respect between all staff, governors, and parents is vital. Relationships must remain professional and not compromise impartiality.

Pupils: Staff must not engage in any relationship with a pupil that could be construed as exploitative or unprofessional. Communication via social media is prohibited unless expressly authorised for educational purposes.

1-to-1 Contact: When working alone with pupils, staff should:

- Ensure visibility of the interaction (e.g., door open, visible space).
- Notify a colleague or line manager.
- Report any incident or concern immediately.

Contractors: Any personal or financial relationship must be declared to the Headteacher or Chair of Governors.

6. Political Neutrality

Staff must not allow political views to influence their work or teaching. Balanced presentation must be given when political topics arise.

7. Personal Interests

All financial or personal interests that could create a conflict must be declared to the Executive Headteacher or Chair of Governors.

8. Business or Financial Interests

A register of interests will be maintained for staff and governors, recording business connections, governance roles, or close relationships relevant to school operations.

9. Other Employment

Secondary employment is allowed only where it does not conflict with Federation duties or damage public confidence.

10. Honesty & Integrity

All staff must uphold honesty in financial dealings, timekeeping, and resource use.

Any suspected bribery or corruption must be reported under the Whistleblowing Policy.

11. Gifts & Hospitality

Token gifts (under £30) may be accepted. Significant or repeated gifts from suppliers or parents must be declared. Personal gifts to pupils are discouraged and require Headteacher approval.

12. Use of Electronic Technologies and Personal Communication Devices

Personal phone use is prohibited during work hours except in emergencies or designated areas. Federation devices must be used professionally and safely. Staff must never use personal devices for photography or pupil contact.

13. Use of ICT including emails and Social Media sites

Staff must maintain the same professional standards online as in person. Privacy settings must be strong. No posts, comments, or media that could damage the Federation's reputation may be shared.

14. Equal Opportunities

The Federation is committed to equality under the Equality Act 2010. Discrimination, harassment, or victimisation will not be tolerated and may result in disciplinary action.

15. Health & Safety

All employees must comply with the school's Health and Safety Policy and report any hazards or incidents promptly.

16. Dress Code

Staff must dress professionally and appropriately for their duties. Clothing and footwear should promote safety, modesty, and professional presentation. Political or offensive slogans are not permitted.

17. Sexual Harassment (New Section)

The Moorland Federation promotes a working environment free from sexual harassment. All staff share responsibility for preventing and challenging inappropriate behaviour.

- Sexual harassment of any kind will not be tolerated.
- All staff are expected to call out, challenge, or report harassment that they witness or experience.
- Reports should be made to the Head of School or Executive Headteacher. If the concern involves the Executive Headteacher, the report should go to the Co-Chairs of Governors.
- The Federation will take all complaints seriously and handle them in line with the *Dignity at Work Policy* and *Safeguarding procedures*.

- Staff who report or witness harassment will be supported and protected from victimisation.

18. Whistleblowing (New Section)

The Moorland Federation encourages all staff to report concerns “in the public interest,” including but not limited to:

- Safeguarding failures
- Criminal acts or fraud
- Breaches of law, statutory duty, or policy
- Misuse of public funds or gross misconduct

Reports should be made to the Head of School or Executive Headteacher. If the concern involves them, reports should go directly to the Co-Chairs of Governors. All disclosures will be handled confidentially under the *Whistleblowing Policy*.

Staff will not suffer detriment or retaliation for raising genuine concerns. Anonymous disclosures will be considered where possible.

19. Post-Employment

Confidentiality obligations continue after employment ends. Former staff must not disclose confidential information or use intellectual property belonging to the Federation without permission.

20. Additional Requirement

In addition to this Code, all staff and volunteers must be familiar with and adhere to the following policies and standards:

- *Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2025)* – Section 1 (mandatory reading)
- Child Protection Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- Dignity at Work Code of Practice
- National Standards of Excellence for Headteachers

- Teachers' Standards
- Professional Standards for Teaching Assistants
- Governance Handbook
- ICT Acceptable Use & Social Media Policy
- **Disciplinary Procedure** *(newly added)*
- **Grievance Procedure** *(newly added)*

Individual schools within the Federation must ensure these policies are adopted, accessible, and known to all employees and volunteers.