

## CODE OF CONDUCT

### Policy Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

This policy is effective for all academies within The Mead Educational Trust, the Teaching School, the SCITT and all other activities under the control of the Trust and reporting to the Trust Board.

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### Revision History:

Version	Date	Author	Summary of Changes:
3.0	March 2019	TMET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Added clause re. incidents off site (p6)</li> <li>• Added clause to provide clarity on processing personal data on personal mobile devices (p8)</li> <li>• Updated references to Trust policies</li> <li>• Updated references to RMET to TMET and governors to academy councillors</li> <li>• Added clause about use of mobile phones/devices (p11)</li> </ul>
4.0	June 2019	TMET	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incorporated guidance from Safer Recruitment Consortium May 2019</li> <li>• Added guidance on when employees have children in TMET schools (p13)</li> </ul>

## **Code of Conduct**

This code of conduct enables staff at The Mead Educational Trust to be clear about expectations and issues around professional conduct to guide and ensure a positive working atmosphere for all.

### **Purpose**

This code is designed to give clear guidance of behaviour that all staff working within The Mead Educational Trust (TMET) are expected to observe and adhere to.

Employees should note that this policy is not exhaustive in defining acceptable and unacceptable standards of conduct and employees must use common sense in adhering to the underpinning principles. If any employee is ever unsure what the expectations are in any given circumstance, they should speak to their line manager or the Principal.

This Code does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and it may be amended at any time.

The purpose of this code is to protect and promote the interests of staff 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 sexual, physical and/or emotional 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 people is paramount.

### **Underpinning principles**

- The welfare of the child is paramount.
- Staff should understand their responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils.
- Staff are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should avoid any conduct which would lead to questions about their motivation and intentions.
- Staff should work, and be seen to work, in an open and transparent way.
- Staff should acknowledge that deliberately invented/malicious allegations are extremely rare and that all concerns should be reported and recorded.
- Staff should discuss and/or take advice promptly from their line manager if they have acted in a way which may give rise to concern.
- Staff should apply the same professional standards regardless of culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and sexual orientation.
- When working, staff should not consume or be under the influence of alcohol or any substance, including prescribed medication, which may affect their ability to care for children.

- Staff should be aware that breaches of the law and other professional guidelines could result in disciplinary action being taken against them, criminal action and/or other proceedings including barring by the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) from working in regulated activity, or for acts of serious misconduct prohibition from teaching by the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA).
- Staff and managers should continually monitor and review practice to ensure this guidance is followed.
- Staff should be aware of and understand their establishment's child protection policy, arrangements for managing allegations against staff, staff behaviour policy, whistle blowing procedure and the procedures of the relevant Multi-agency Partnership (MAP).

### **Scope**

The Code applies to all employees of TMET 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.

As recognisable figures in the local community the behaviour and conduct of staff of TMET 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 *TMET Disciplinary Policy*).

TMET is responsible for notifying staff of this policy and the expectations contained within it. All new staff to the Trust are required to read/be acquainted with this policy as part of their induction.

### **Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children**

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.

Each employee has an individual responsibility for referring child protection concerns. Employees must report disclosures, or concerns received from other sources, to the respective Academy'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.

All employees must read/be acquainted with the Trust's *Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy*, be aware of the Trust systems for keeping children safe and must follow the guidance in these policies at all times. Employees must attend any Child Protection training organised by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

The duty to safeguard pupils includes the duty to report concerns about a pupil to the Academy's DSL.

All employees must cooperate with colleagues and with external agencies where necessary.

## Teaching Standards

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 interests of their pupils.

Taken directly from the DfE Teaching Standards May 2012 updated June 2013 and the EYFS Teaching Standards September 2013, a teacher must:

- Set high expectations which inspire, motivate and challenge pupils
- Promote good progress and outcomes by pupils
- Demonstrate good subject and curriculum knowledge
- Plan and teach well-structured lessons
- Adapt teaching to respond to the strengths and needs of all pupils
- Make accurate and productive use of assessment
- Manage behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe learning environment
- Fulfil wider professional responsibilities as set out in their Job Description

(An unabridged version of this document can be found at: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/teachers-standards](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teachers-standards))

In addition, all teaching staff at TMET are required to:

- Make a positive contribution to the wider life and adhere to the ethos of the Trust;
- Develop effective professional relationships with colleagues, knowing how and when to draw on specialist advice;
- Take responsibility for improving teaching through appropriate professional development;
- Communicate effectively with parents with regard to pupils' achievements and well-being.

### Professional boundaries and relationships

TMET employees are in a position of trust in relation to our pupils which means that the relationship between an employee and a pupil is not one of equals.

Employees must ensure that they avoid behaviour which might be misinterpreted by others. This includes any type of communication that they may have with pupils.

Employees must not make sexual or discriminatory remarks to any pupil or discuss their own sexual relationships with, or in the presence of pupils. Employees must not discuss a pupil's sexual relationships in inappropriate settings or contexts. Any sexual behaviour by a member of staff towards any pupil is unacceptable and illegal.

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 behaviour that could be seen to be inappropriate. Pupils are not employees or friends and should not be treated as such.

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 member of staff becomes aware of an infatuation they should discuss it with the Principal immediately so that they can receive support on the most appropriate way to manage the situation sensitively and tactfully.

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

### **Physical contact with pupils**

There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate and proper for staff to have physical contact with a pupil, but it is crucial they only do so in ways appropriate to their professional role.

Employees should always be able to explain why they have made physical contact with a pupil. In all cases where physical intervention is deemed necessary the incident and subsequent actions should be documented and reported.

A “no touch” approach is impractical and in certain circumstances inappropriate for most staff particularly with young children, boarders and especially in the EYFS. When physical contact is made with pupils, this should be in response to their needs at that time, of limited duration and appropriate to the child.

There may be occasions when a distressed pupil needs comfort and reassurance. This may include age-appropriate physical contact. Staff should be self-aware at all times in order that their contact is not threatening, intrusive or subject to misinterpretation.

Staff may legitimately intervene to prevent a pupil from committing a criminal offence, injuring themselves or others or causing damage to property. Staff may also intervene 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, in accordance with The Human Rights Act 1998 and the European Convention of Human Rights, particularly Article Three on protection against torture, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

Any sexual behaviour, including grooming patterns of behaviour, by a member of staff with or towards a pupil is both inappropriate and illegal.

### **Contact with pupils (including social contact)**

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

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. Employees should use their work provided equipment for communicating electronically with pupils via school emails only.

Communications with ex-pupils who are over 18 is left to staff discretion but the Trust highlights to staff that ex-pupils may be in contact with current pupils and communication may be passed on.

Our Trust is part of our community and we recognise that, as members of the community, employees will come into contact with pupils outside of the Trust. We expect staff to use their professional judgement in such situations and to report to their line manager any contact that they have had with a pupil, outside of school, that they are concerned about or that could be misinterpreted by others.

TMET recognises that staff, parents and pupils utilise social media within personal and professional contexts. *TMET's Social Media Policy*, which staff should refer to, sets out guidelines staff must adhere to for both professional and personal use in order to maintain control and present a professional profile on online platforms. Staff should also refer to the Trust's *ICT User and Online Safety (E-Safety) policies*.

### **One to one situations and home visits**

There will be times where an employee is working one to one with a pupil and this is acceptable. Employees need to understand that this means that they may be more vulnerable to allegations being made against them. Every attempt should be made to ensure the safety and security of both staff and pupils are met. Therefore, it is important that employees:

- Ensure that, when lone working is an integral part of their role, full and appropriate risk assessments have been agreed;
- Never conduct meetings with pupils in remote or secluded areas of the Trust's academies;
- Ensure there is visual access and/or an open door in one to one situations;
- Avoid the use of engaged or equivalent signs, wherever possible, as these create an opportunity for secrecy or the interpretation of secrecy;
- Inform a colleague or line manager of the meeting, preferably beforehand;
- Always report any situation where a pupil becomes distressed or angry to their line manager;
- Agree the purpose for any home visit with a member of the senior leadership team unless it is an acknowledged and integral part of their role;
- Never put themselves into a one to one situation when little or no information is available about the pupil.

### **Confidentiality**

The storing and processing of personal information is governed by the General Data Protection Regulations 2017 (GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018. Staff are given advice about their responsibilities under this legislation so that, when considering sharing confidential information, those principles should apply.

Staff may have access to special category personal data about pupils and their families which must be kept confidential at all times and only shared when legally permissible to do so and in the interest of the child. Records should only be shared with those who have a legitimate professional need to see them.

Staff should never use confidential or personal information about a pupil 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 child. Confidential information should never be used casually in conversation or shared with any person other than on a need-to-know basis. In circumstances where the pupil's identity does not need to be disclosed the information should be used anonymously.

There are some circumstances in which a member of staff may be expected to share information about a pupil, for example when abuse is alleged or suspected. In such cases, individuals have a responsibility to pass information on without delay, but only to those with designated safeguarding responsibilities or to statutory services.

If a child – or their parent / carer – makes a disclosure regarding abuse or neglect, the member of staff should follow the academy's procedures. The adult should not promise confidentiality to a child or parent, but should give reassurance that the information will be treated sensitively.

If a member of staff is in any doubt about whether to share information or keep it confidential, he or she should seek guidance from the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Any media or legal enquiries should be passed to senior management.

### **Transporting pupils**

Staff should not offer lifts to pupils unless the need for this has been agreed by a manager.

When transporting pupils and young people, 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. If in a one to one situation then ensure the pupil is in the back of the car and, if applicable appropriate arrangements are made for booster seat use.

Employees are responsible for the safety of the pupil until they pass the pupil over to the parent/carer.

Employees must not offer 'lifts' outside normal working duties unless this has been brought to the attention of a member of the senior leadership team and agreed with parents/carers.

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

### **Health & Safety**

All staff will make themselves familiar and ensure compliance with the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and any other health and safety legislation and codes of practice relevant to the work of the Academy and also the particular area in which they work. They will, so far as is reasonably practicable:

- Be familiar with *TMET's Health and Safety Policy* and all safety arrangements including those for fire, first aid and other emergencies set out by the academy.
- Ensure that health and safety regulations, rules, routines and procedures are being applied effectively.
- Promote and achieve high standards of health and safety and suggest improvements and ways and means of reducing risks.
- Take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of any other persons (staff, pupils, visitors, etc.) who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work.
- Only undertake tasks for which they have been trained and are competent or confident of undertaking safely. If they are in any doubt, they must seek further advice.

### **Communication with children (including the use of technology)**

In order to make best use of the many educational and social benefits of new and emerging technologies, pupils need opportunities to use and explore the digital world. Online risks are posed more by behaviours and values than the technology itself.

Staff should ensure that they establish safe and responsible online behaviours, working to local and national guidelines and acceptable use policies which detail how new and emerging technologies may be used.

Communication with children both in the 'real' world and through web based and telecommunication interactions should take place within explicit professional boundaries. This includes the use of computers, tablets, phones, texts, e-mails, instant messages, social media such as Facebook and Twitter, chat-rooms, forums, blogs, websites, gaming sites, digital cameras, videos, web-cams and other hand-held devices. (Given the ever-changing world of technology it should be noted that this list gives examples only and is not exhaustive.) Staff should not request or respond to any personal

Information from children other than which may be necessary in their professional role. They should ensure that their communications are open and transparent and avoid any communication which could be interpreted as 'grooming behaviour'

Staff should not give their personal contact details to children for example, e-mail address, home or mobile telephone numbers, details of web-based identities. If children locate these by any other means and attempt to contact or correspond with the staff member, the adult should not respond and must report the matter to their manager. The child should be firmly and politely informed that this is not acceptable.

### **Infatuations and 'crushes'**

All staff need to recognise that it is not uncommon for pupils to be strongly attracted to a member of staff and/or develop a 'crush' or infatuation. They should make every effort to ensure that their own behaviour cannot be brought into question, does not appear to encourage this and be aware that such infatuations may carry a risk of their words or actions being misinterpreted.

Any member of staff who receives a report, overhears something, or otherwise notices any sign, however small or seemingly insignificant, that a young person has become or may be becoming infatuated with either themselves or a colleague, should immediately report

### **Incidents offsite**

There may be occasions when staff are made aware of an incident off site before/after school in the close proximity of the school. Staff should discuss the issue and decide whether to escalate to the police or not. Staff are not expected to intervene but have a duty of care to act and make decisions on information received from children. Staff may go and observe what is happening but should be mindful of their own safety, however, if they feel young people are at risk, they should notify the police immediately. Any consequences arising from inappropriate behaviour off site will be discussed at Senior Leadership level and parents may be notified.

### **Confidentiality**

Most of the information held by the Trust about individuals is confidential. This does not mean that it is secret, but that it is shared only 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 Data Protection Act (the UK's implementation of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)).

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.

All staff are likely at some point to witness actions which need to be confidential, for example, where a pupil is bullied by another pupil (or by a member of staff), which needs to be reported and dealt with in accordance with the appropriate Trust or academy procedure. It must not be discussed outside the Trust, including with the pupil's parent or carer, nor with colleagues in the Trust except with a senior member of staff with the appropriate role and authority to deal with the matter.

However, staff have an obligation to share with their manager or the academy's DSL any information which gives rise to concern about the safety or welfare of a pupil. Staff must never promise a pupil that they will not act on information that they are told by the pupil.

When discussing sensitive issues relating to a pupil or other member of staff colleagues should be aware of their surroundings. Conversations of this nature should not be held in public areas of the Trust, the wider community or where there is a risk of being overheard.

For further information please refer to *TMET's Data Protection Policy* and also *TMET's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy*.

### **Honesty and personal integrity**

Employees are expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct.

Employees are expected to demonstrate the Seven Principles of Public Life, see appendix A.

Employees must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of The Mead Educational Trust and maintain high standards in their own attendance and punctuality.

Staff must maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their work. This includes the handling and claiming of money and the use of TMET's property and facilities.

### **Keeping within the law**

All staff 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.

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 TMET 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
- sexual offences which will render them unfit to work with children or vulnerable adults
- crimes of dishonesty which render them unfit to hold a position of trust.
- Write and tell the Principal (or Chair of Academy Council if they are the Principal,) immediately if they are questioned by the police, charged with, or convicted of, any crime whilst they are employed at TMET (this includes outside of their working hours). The Principal and/or Academy Council will then need to consider whether this charge or conviction damages public confidence in the Trust or makes the employee unsuitable to carry out their duties.
- Notify the Principal if they live with a person who is disqualified under the Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009.

### **Conduct outside of work**

All staff have a responsibility to maintain public confidence in their ability to safeguard the welfare and best interests of children. They should adopt high standards of personal conduct in order to maintain confidence and respect of the general public and those with whom they work.

There may be times where an individual's actions in their personal life come under scrutiny from the community, the media or public authorities, including with regard to their own children, or children or adults in the community. Staff should be aware that their behaviour, either in or out of the workplace, could compromise their position within the work setting in relation to the protection of children, loss of trust and confidence, or bringing the employer into disrepute. Such behaviour may also result in prohibition from teaching by the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) a bar from engaging in regulated activity, or action by another relevant regulatory body.

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

We therefore expect employees to make us aware immediately of any such situations that have happened outside of TMET.

Staff may undertake work outside Trust, either paid or voluntary, provided that it does not conflict with the interests of the Trust and is not to a level which may contravene the working time regulations or affect an individual's work performance.

All members of staff must declare any business interests outside of Trust that may be connected either to the supply of goods / services to the Trust or be rewarded through association with the Trust. Please refer to *TMET's Finance Policy* for further information on declaring business and pecuniary interests.

### **Raising concerns**

TMET encourages employees to raise promptly any serious concerns they may have about the activities of employees, Members, Trustees, Academy Councillors, or external organisations in relation to their dealings with the Academy or Trust. Employees should normally raise concerns with the Principal, however, in cases whereby employees do not feel able to approach the Principal, employees are encouraged to contact the Chair

of the Academy Council or, if applicable, Trade Union representative. Concerns can be raised orally or in writing. Employees should provide as much detail as possible. Employees who raise an issue in good faith under this policy 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.

Concerns relating to the safety and welfare of a pupil should be reported to the respective Academy's DSL.

All staff should read/be acquainted with the *Trust's Safeguarding and Child Protection* and *Whistleblowing* policies.

### **Gifts**

The Trust has a policy and register on the acceptance of gifts, hospitality, awards, prizes and any other benefit which might be seen to compromise their personal judgment or integrity, which is located within the TMET Finance Policy. When giving gifts, the Trust must ensure that the value of the gift is reasonable, the decision is fully documented, and has due regard to propriety and regularity in the use of public funds.

There are occasions when pupils or parents wish to pass small tokens of appreciation to staff, for example at Christmas or as a thank you, and this is acceptable. However, any member of staff in receipt of gifts or hospitality over a value of £25.00 must declare this to the Finance Office for inclusion on the Gifts and Hospitality Register, even if they are not from direct/current trading links.

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

### **Bribery**

All staff must comply with the Bribery Act 2010. A person may be 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 *TMET's Whistleblowing Policy*.

Any member of staff concerned that they may be at risk of giving or receiving a bribe should contact either the Principal or Trust Chief Financial Officer.

### **Dress and Appearance**

Staff should consider the manner of dress and appearance appropriate to their professional role. As is expected with our pupils, our expectation is that staff are decently, appropriately and professionally dressed in work at all times.

We do not permit the wearing of clothes that are revealing, allow underwear to be seen, have offensive logos or writing, or are ripped or torn at any times. 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 we identify that an employee is wearing clothing that we do not find acceptable they will be informed.

Please see individual academy policies for more detail.

## **Security and identification**

All staff should ensure that they have their ID card with them at all times, and, if challenged, should show the ID card to confirm their identity.

## **Use of mobile phones/devices**

Staff are not permitted to use their own mobile devices whilst students are present. This includes making or receiving calls, or sending texts. Use of personal mobile devices must be restricted to non-contact time, and to areas of the school where students are not present (such as a staff room).

There may be circumstances in which it's appropriate for a member of staff to have use of their mobile device during contact time e.g. for emergency contact by their child/their child's school or in the case of acutely ill dependents or family members. In such cases, staff members must seek permission from the principal to allow for special arrangements in advance. If special arrangements are not deemed necessary, staff can use the school office number as a point of emergency contact.

Staff must not use their mobile devices to take photographs or recordings of pupils, their work, or anything else which could identify a pupil. If it's necessary to take photos or recordings as part of a lesson/school trip/activity, this must be done using school equipment.

Please refer to TMET's *IT User Policy* for information for supplementary information about usage of mobile devices.

## **Photography, videos and other images / media**

Under no circumstances should staff be expected or allowed to use their personal equipment to take images of pupils at or on behalf of the school or setting.

At TMET we expect any images to be taken only where consent is explicit and using a TMET device. See our ICT user policy for more details.

Whilst images are regularly used for very positive purposes, adults need to be aware of the potential for these to be taken and/or misused or manipulated for pornographic or 'grooming' purposes. Particular regard needs to be given when images are taken of young or vulnerable children who may be unable to question why or how the activities are taking place.

Pupils who have been previously abused in a manner that involved images may feel particularly threatened by the use of photography, filming etc. Staff should

For the protection of children, it is recommended that when using images for publicity purposes that the following guidance should be followed:

- if the image is used, avoid naming the child, (or, as a minimum, use first names rather than surnames)
- if the child is named, avoid using their image

## **Exposure to inappropriate images**

Staff should take extreme care to ensure that children and young people are not exposed, through any medium, to inappropriate or indecent images.

There are no circumstances that will justify adults: making, downloading, possessing or distributing indecent images or pseudo-images of children (child abuse images). Accessing these images, whether using the setting's or personal equipment, on or off the premises, or making, storing or disseminating such material is illegal.

If indecent images of children are discovered at the establishment or on the school or setting's equipment an immediate referral should be made to the Designated Officer (DO) and the police contacted if relevant. The images/equipment should be secured and there should be no attempt to view or delete the images as this could jeopardise necessary criminal action. If the images are of children known to the school, a referral should also be made to children's social care in line with local arrangements.

Under no circumstances should any adult use school or setting equipment to access pornography. Personal equipment containing pornography or links to it should never be brought into or used in the workplace. This will raise serious concerns about the suitability of the adult to continue working with children and young people.

Staff should keep their passwords confidential and not allow unauthorised access to equipment. In the event of any indecent images of children or unsuitable material being discovered on a device the equipment should not be tampered with in any way. It should be secured and isolated from the network, and the DO contacted without delay. Adults should not attempt to investigate the matter or evaluate the material themselves as this may lead to a contamination of evidence and a possibility that they will be at risk of prosecution themselves.

### **Staff as Parents / Parents as Staff**

Once you become a member of staff, your standing as a member of the wider community is open to scrutiny and criticism by members of the Trust, other parents and the general public who you may come into contact with. This makes it very difficult to engage in some social activities as a Parent and Teacher. Colleagues who fall into this category should:

- Evaluate each social situation sensibly and with caution
- Never put themselves in a position where their actions could be misconstrued by others.

It is seen as a positive endorsement of the Trust's approach when TMET employees opt to send their children to Trust schools or indeed the school at which the employee works. When this is the case, it is important to maintain levels of professionalism as an employee and make a clear distinction between the parenting role and that of an employee.

Staff with children in Trust schools should ensure they follow the procedures set out for all parents, in terms of raising concerns informally or formally or in making appointments to speak to staff. It is important that pupils of employees are seen to be treated in the same way as other pupils and parents who are employees do not have preferential access to school staff.

In order to ensure no conflict of interest, TMET will endeavour where possible to ensure that children will not be taught directly by their parent, or managed directly within departments.

Any colleagues in doubt should speak to their line manager or a member of the senior leadership team for advice.

## **Whistleblowing**

Whistleblowing is the mechanism by which staff can voice their concerns, made in good faith, without fear of repercussion. We have a clear and accessible whistleblowing policy that meets the terms of the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998. Staff who use whistle blowing procedures will have their employment rights protected.

Staff should recognise their individual responsibilities to bring matters of concern to the attention of senior management and/or relevant external agencies and that to not do so may result in charges of serious neglect on their part where the welfare of children may be at risk.

## 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. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends.

**Integrity** - Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.

**Objectivity** - In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

**Accountability** - Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

**Openness** - Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

**Honesty** - Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

**Leadership** - Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.