William Austin Junior School
Policy for Code of Conduct for Employees

Adoption of LBC policy

1. Purpose

This Code sets out the principles relating to the manner, approach and behaviours that should be observed by all employees of William Austin Junior School, in order to ensure conduct of the highest order and that pupils, parents, the community and colleagues have and maintain confidence and trust in the integrity of those working for the school. This Code **forms part of the terms and conditions of service of employment** for all employees in the school.

2. General Principles

2.1 The adoption of a Code of Conduct means that the standards and expectations of all school employees are transparent and equitable. The Code constitutes part of employees' terms and conditions of employment, and will therefore be monitored and enforced, if necessary, through normal procedural arrangements agreed by the Governing Body. This Code, therefore, is designed to set out standards of conduct and behaviour in order that employees themselves and the school community can be sure of the parameters and standards required of employees in such a manner that there will be confidence and trust in the employee working practices.

2.2 This Code identifies those key areas of conduct and behaviour, setting out standards and guidance for employees. It is supported by all employment procedures, protocols and the Staff/Personnel Handbook as adopted by the Governing Body/ Trust Board. The areas highlighted in this Code are not exhaustive, and employees should endeavour to be seen as setting the highest standards of conduct in a way that does not bring any disrepute on themselves as a school employee, the service they work within, or the school/Academy/Trust/Luton Borough Council in general.

2.3 All employees in the school/trust are undertaking a professional role, for those based in a school this includes supporting the education of young people. As such they are all role models and are expected to act accordingly. This includes relationships and communication with colleagues, the local community and the school, adherence to the dress code as appropriate for the job, and activities in the community outside school.

2.4 All employees should ensure that their behaviour and performance meet work place standards at any time that the school/Trust/Council is being represented or is likely to be identified or associated with the role.

3. Responsibilities of Employees

3.1 It is the responsibility of all employees to ensure that they are not placed in a position which risks, or appears to risk, conflict between their private interests and their contractual duties. It is for the employee to always be impartial and honest in the conduct of their official business and with their own dealings with the school/trust, and to notify the Governing Body/Trust Board of any change in their circumstances/interests that may impact in any way upon their employment, within the school/Trust, or upon the Council. Examples of situations may be:

- where the employee recommends a contractor for services without declaring any potential pecuniary interest
- where an employee has been involved in some criminal conviction or arrest in relation to his/her private life/interests that may have a connection/bearing upon the job he/she does
- where an employee has a close relationship with, or is known to associate with, an individual that has a criminal conviction that may have a connection/bearing upon the employee's job (see section 8.5)

3.2 Employees are subject to adherence to the school's policies and procedures. For maintained schools, employees are subject to adherence to Luton Borough Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations and are expected to use any public funds that are entrusted to them in the best way possible for the school and its community. For academy schools employees are subject to adherence to Education and Skills Funding Agency.

3.3 Teachers are reminded that they must adhere to the Teachers' Standards (updated June 2013), and these form part of teachers' terms and conditions of employment.

3.4 It is also the responsibility of the Headteacher to monitor, where practical, that employees are conforming to this Code and to ensure that employees are fully aware of its contents.

4. General Standards in Dealing with People

4.1 In the course of carrying out their duties, employees are required and expected to treat all people, with whom they have dealings, in a courteous, polite, unbiased and respectful manner. It is recognised that given certain circumstances, there will be occasions where dialogue may become strained. Employees should then bring the discussion to a close and seek support from the Headteacher/colleagues in accordance with the relevant procedure (e.g. Behaviour Policy, Complaints Procedure). Employees who are faced with abusive/violent situations are always advised, particularly where there is potential danger to themselves or others, to politely withdraw or disengage themselves from the situation.

4.2 Employees are required to maintain a good standard of dialogue and must refrain from using abusive, derogatory, offensive or socially unacceptable language in the course of their duties and dealings with all people, including pupils, parents and colleagues. In addition, body language that may be construed as aggressive, threatening or offensive must be avoided at all times.

4.3 This Code must be read in conjunction with the school's **Disciplinary Procedure** that sets out standards that will be treated as misconduct and liable for action to be taken under that procedure.

5 Relationships with colleagues, pupils, parents, governors/trustees and third parties

5.1 Employees are required to maintain professional relationships at all times.

5.2 The School will take all reasonable steps to protect staff safety and mental wellbeing. The school will not tolerate abuse, bullying or harassment directed at its employees by non-employees of the school, that includes parents, carers, guardians, pupils, contractors, members of the public or any other visitors to the school site. This also includes online abuse, bullying or harassment. Appropriate action will be taken by the school should conduct of this nature take place.

5.3 All employees within the school have a responsibility:

- for ensuring that the school is a safe environment.
- to treat their colleagues, pupils, parents, governors and any third parties with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to a professional position.
- for the safeguarding of pupils' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions.
- to maintain good relationships with pupils.
- for showing tolerance of and respect for the rights and beliefs of others.
- to ensure that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways which exploit pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law.

5.4 All employees are expected to follow the policy and procedures adopted by the Governing Body/Trust.

5.5 The following school policies particularly apply, and all employees must ensure that they have read and understood them:

1) Social Media and Internet Acceptable Use Policy
2) Bullying and Harassment Policy
3) Whistleblowing Policy
4) The school's guidance on physical intervention
5) Supporting Pupils at School with medical conditions & Administration of Medicine Policy

5.6 Employees with a grievance against a work colleague, or Headteacher, must not seek to influence the outcome by making advance representations to the Governing Body, but will follow the school's **Grievance Procedure**, adopted by the Governing Body.

6. Child Protection

6.1 There are two key aspects to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children:

- To take all reasonable measures to ensure that risks of harm to children's welfare are minimised, and
- To take all appropriate actions to address concerns about the welfare of a child, or children, working to agreed local policies and procedures in full partnership with other local agencies, as soon as the issue comes to your attention.

6.2 Staff have a duty to report any child protection concerns to the Headteacher, Designated Child Protection Officer or to the Chair of Governors if the concern is about the Headteacher. Where the concern is about a professional, employees must follow the **"Procedure for dealing with Allegations of abuse against Teachers and other Staff".** Failure by workers in the school to report abuse, or suspected abuse, in accordance with this and other school child protection procedures, constitutes a breach of their 'duty of care'.

6.3 The school has adopted a **Whistleblowing Procedure** which enables workers in the school to report concerns that are in the public interest, including those relating to child protection issues, and those workers are protected, in certain circumstances, under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.

6.4 Failure to carry out duties in compliance with arrangements made by the Local Authority or Governing Body will invoke the school's disciplinary procedure.

7. Prevent

7.1 All workers are expected to have due regard for the statutory provision under the Prevent Duty, July 2015. Under the duty, workers must build pupils' resilience to radicalisation by promoting fundamental British values and enabling pupils to challenge extremist views.

7.2 Workers in the school should report concerns regarding any pupil, or other workers (including volunteers, visitors etc.) who are demonstrating extremist views and/or behaviours or are suspected of becoming radicalised. Staff must report their concern, as per the Safeguarding Procedure, to the Headteacher/Designated Child Protection Officer, or to the Chair of Governors or Chief Executive Officer if the concern is about the Headteacher. Failure to do so may constitute a breach of the 'duty of care' and the employee may face disciplinary action.

8. Position of Trust

8.1 A relationship of power and trust exists between all staff and pupils, their families or carers. Employees represent the powers and duties of the school. They are placed in a position of trust to assist in the delivery of education to pupils who may be vulnerable. It is the responsibility of all staff to ensure they do not abuse or appear to abuse that position of trust in the way they conduct their relationships with service users, their families or carers. Relationships that are thought to be at risk of, or have already extended beyond, what may be considered professional are not acceptable.

8.2 Power imbalances may also exist between senior and junior members of staff. Employees at all levels of the school or trust should be treated with respect and dignity. Managers and senior leaders should ensure they model respectful behaviour at all times. Where an abuse of power in relation to a junior colleague is found to have occurred, this will be taken into account in considering whether any disciplinary action is taken.

8.3 The key characteristic of the professional relationship is that the sole objective is meeting the assessed needs of pupils within agreed school policies that prevail at any given time. At no point must the needs of the employee, unrelated to professional practice, take precedence. Emotional involvement or behaviour that is, or may be seen to be (by a reasonable person), primarily in employee interests, rather than meeting the assessed needs of pupils or service users, may be defined as extending beyond the professional role.

8.4 Unless there is sound reason to do so, and the action is taken with the express knowledge and approval of the Headteacher, and the decision is officially recorded:

- an employee must not make personal arrangements to see pupils, service users, their carers or families outside directed or contracted hours
- an employee must not take pupils, service users, their carers or families to their home
- an employee must not give their telephone number or address to pupils, service users, their carers or families
- an employee must not give their mobile telephone, laptop or other electrical appliance to a pupil, service user, their carer or family for them to use.
- an employee must neither sell nor buy property from pupils, service users, their families or carers (the school will identify what this might reasonably include)*

8.5 Some examples of specific behaviour that will not be allowed and which may lead to disciplinary action include:

- sexual contact
- lending/borrowing money or property
- witnessing wills or acting as a named executor
- arranging extra help for a fee
- giving or receiving gifts

Whether motivated by a desire to support pupils, or less well intentioned or illegal motives, all such behaviour presents a risk to the professional relationship.

8.6 This position of trust also has consequences for actions and behaviours outside of working hours. Examples could be where an employee working with children:

- engages in activity or associates with individuals or people, whose current or past behaviours could raise doubts or concerns about an employee's own integrity or ability to be in a 'position of trust' with regard to children. This could have a direct consequence on their ability to continue in employment/role.
- has a current relationship with an individual, or is known to associate with individuals, who have convictions for child abuse. The employer may not have raised any concern regarding their activity at work but their out of work relationships would call into question their position of trust and may be considered as bringing the school/Trust/Local Authority into disrepute.
- has communicated with children, in a manner that could be deemed to be inappropriate.

8.7 It is difficult to give the full list of potential conflicts of interest, but the simple test is to ask the question:

"if this issue became public knowledge could it raise questions about my integrity and could it bring the school/council into disrepute?"

If the answer is “yes” or “possibly” or “I’m not sure” the employee is obliged to raise it with the Headteacher so that this matter can be given further consideration

9. Equality of Opportunities

9.1 The school/trust, and Luton Borough Council, are committed to ensuring people receive equal treatment in all aspects of service delivery and employment activities. Employees, therefore, in all aspects of their work, must ensure that they treat no individual less favourably than any other. Colleagues, employees, service users, Luton citizens and the general public must be treated with dignity and respect.

9.2 Employees should make sure that they are familiar with the school’s policy in respect of **Equal Opportunities**, which can be found in the Safer Recruitment and Selection Policy, Appendix 1 and in relation to the **policy and procedure for Harassment and Bullying for all employees,** these must be read in conjunction with this Code.

9.3 Everyone should make reasonable efforts to develop and maintain appropriate skills in valuing diversity.

10. Conflicts of Interest & Work outside the School

10.1 All employees, no matter what level of pay, are advised not to engage in outside activities whether paid or unpaid that may conflict with their school work, or be detrimental to it. All employees are advised to seek permission from the Headteacher in relation to undertaking such activities, and it will be for the Headteacher/Governing Body to determine whether the interest of the school is likely to be harmed.

10.2 It is difficult to give a definitive list of potential conflicts of interest, but the simple test is to ask the question; “If this issue became public knowledge could it raise questions about my integrity and could it bring the school into disrepute?” If so, permission should be sought, if not permission will not be required.

10.3 Where the activity is paid the employee should ensure they notify the Headteacher so that the school can meet its responsibilities regarding the Working Time Directive and Health & Safety and any other legal responsibilities. Once the Headteacher has considered the likely impact, if it is detrimental to the school permission will not be given.

11. Awarding Contracts

11.1 The school/Trust/Council wishes to ensure that in awarding contracts, fair and open competition prevails at all times. This means therefore that:

- No private, public or voluntary organisation or company which may bid for school business should be given any advantage over its competitors, such as advance notice of the school’s requirements. This applies to potential contractors, whether or not there is a relationship between them and the school, such as a long running series of contracts.
- Each new contract must be awarded on merit, taking into account the requirements of the school and the ability of the contractor to fulfil them.
- No special favour should be shown to current or former employees or their close relatives, friends or associates, or governors in awarding contracts to private or other businesses run by them or employing them in a senior or managerial capacity. Contracts may be awarded to such businesses where they are won in fair and open competition against other tenders or quotations, but scrupulous care must be taken to ensure that the selection process is conducted impartially, and that employees/governors who are known to have a relevant interest play no part in the selection.
- The Governing Body/Trust will ensure that all invitations to potential contractors to tender for business include a notice, warning tenderers of the consequences of engaging in any corrupt practices involving employees of the school/trust.

11.2 Employees therefore should ensure that where they believe that there may be a potential conflict of interest in the selection of any contractor, that they should inform the Headteacher/Chair of Governors/Chief Executive Officer to determine/clarify the level of their involvement in the selection process.

11.3 Employees' attention is also drawn to the issue of influencing, or potentially attempting to influence, the decision as to whether a person who is related, or known to an employee, is offered a contract of employment with the school. In the event that a relative applies for a post with the school, the applicant must record their relationship as a part of the application form. Likewise, the employee is required to inform the Headteacher/Chair of Governors in writing of his/her relationship and should ensure that they do not take part in, or attempt to influence in any way, the selection recruitment process. Employees are advised, that where anyone who is "closely" known to them outside of work, applies for a post at the school/trust, that they should not become involved in any way with the selection process for that particular post.

12. Hospitality and the Acceptance of Gifts

12.1 The Local Government Act 1972 states that an employee shall not under colour of his office or employment accept any fee or reward other than their proper remuneration (i.e. salary/pay).

12.2 Recognising that the interest of the school/Council/trust must remain paramount at all times and that employees should not use their official position for private gain, employees should not accept gifts, inducements or promotional offers for their personal use or that of colleagues. Casual gifts from pupils or offered by contractors or others, for example at Christmas or the end of term time, which may not in any way be connected with the performance of duties so as to constitute an offence under the Prevention of Corruption Acts, need not necessarily be refused, but if there is any concern that the donor (for example a parent, supplier or contractor) may be trying to gain favour then they should be politely and firmly refused or employees should seek guidance from their Headteacher.

12.3 Employees should not, for personal gain or benefit, solicit, accept or request payment by way of money, goods, services, discounts or any other means from any school/Council agent, contractor, supplier, colleague or a member of the public. Nor should an employee accept or request payment from any pupil at the school, unless this arrangement is agreed by the Headteacher/Governing Body/Chief Executive Officer and is for the financial benefit of the school.

12.4 No employee is entitled to retain on a personal basis any goods, gifts, money or service discounts which are a normal purchase or promotional offer to the school. Where gifts are received which are the subject of a normal purchase or promotional offer, or where a gift is made and the donor refuses to take the gift back, these must be reported immediately to the Headteacher. The employee must ensure that these gifts have been recorded as received in the appropriate "Gifts and Hospitality" record book held within the school. If any employee is unsure whether the acceptance of hospitality is likely not to be in the school's interest they should seek the advice of the Headteacher/Chair of Governors/Chief Executive Officer in the first instance.

12.5 Any employee who is approached by a firm offering inducements, or who believes that they have inadvertently committed the school contractually for supplies and services that are not in the best interests of the school, must immediately notify the Headteacher.

12.6 The school's budget must not be used for hospitality which is lavish, extravagant or exceeds modest proportions. The Governing Body/Board of Trustees has agreed parameters within which the Headteacher may take financial decisions. Any employee likely to incur such expenditure must seek the approval of the Headteacher/Finance Director first. Any expenditure outside the limit set by the Governing Body/Finance Director must be referred to the appropriate committee of the Governing Body for ratification.

13. Commercial Confidentiality/General Data Protection Regulations 2018

13.1 Employees must not make public, without the express agreement of the Headteacher/Chair of Governors/Chief Executive Officer as part of the normal processes of the school/trust, any internal information that they may be aware of as part of their employment with the school/Council/trust, whether or not this is for personal gain, or the personal or financial gain of others. This is particularly important where it may prejudice the principle of a purchasing or contracting system based on fair competition. Employees are also bound by the General Data Protection Regulations 2018 in not releasing to a third party, other than for internal purposes as part of normal work requirements, any information held in respect of any employee or person who has dealings with the school/Council/trust for any reason.

14. Criminal Offences

14.1 In many instances the conviction of an employee for a criminal offence remains a matter between the individual and the Criminal Justice System. However, where the conduct may affect the employee's suitability to carry out their role, their position of trust, or the reputation of the School / Trust or Council, it may also have employment implications. In respect of teachers, serious misconduct may also be referred to the Teaching Regulation Agency in accordance with statutory requirements.

14.2 Examples of crimes that are likely to fall into this category include:

- any crime against Luton Borough Council/School/Trust or a Public Body e.g. Housing Benefit fraud, damage to the Council's/School/Trust property, or abuse of, or assault upon any Council/School/Trust employee (whether or not they are undertaking their duties at the time)
- any crime involving dishonesty/fraud if the employee's post involves responsibilities for budgets/cash/non-cash monies/assets or where s/he has access to vulnerable people in a lone-working situation or manages contracts
- any crime or spent crime if the employee is working directly with, or has regular unsupervised contact with children or young people under 18 years of age; those with mental impairment or those with a sight, hearing or speech impediment. (Note: disclosing all convictions does not necessarily mean action will be taken against the employee, as it will need to be viewed against the relevance or otherwise for the employee to be considered suitable to continue to undertake the particular job).
- crimes of assault where the employee is working directly with vulnerable clients
- any crime that is deemed to bring the school/Council/trust into disrepute

This list of examples is not exhaustive.

14.3 Employees **must** inform the Headteacher/Chair of Governors/Chief Executive Officer as soon as they receive a reprimand, warning, caution or are investigated, or arrested, or charged, or convicted of such crimes (on the next working day) and if arrested, must notify the Headteacher/Chair of Governors/Chief Executive Officer of the development and outcome of the case immediately e.g. on the next working day.

14.4 In addition, employees should always notify the Headteacher/Chair of Governors/Chief Executive Officer if there is any doubt as to whether or not they fall into such a category. In certain circumstances, employees should notify their line manager if an immediate family member who resides at the same address is also investigated, arrested, charged or convicted. One example could be where an employee working with children has a current relationship with an individual or is known to associate with individuals who have convictions for child abuse. The employer may not have raised any concern regarding their activity at work but their out of work relationships could call into question their position of trust and may be considered as bringing the school/Trust/Council into disrepute.

14.5 It should be noted that the term "conviction" includes a finding of guilt regardless of whether or not a conviction is recorded.

14.6 Failure to notify the Headteacher/Chair of Governors/Chief Executive Officer of a Police Investigation, arrest, charge or conviction will constitute ground for disciplinary action.

14.7 Where it is deemed that there is an adverse impact on their employment, the disciplinary procedure will be invoked. The school/trust is not required to wait for the Criminal Justice or other legal system to run its course before commencing disciplinary investigations.

15. Driving Disqualification

15.1 Employees, or whose job requires a driving licence, **must immediately** inform the Headteacher/Chair of Governors/Chief Executive Officer if they are disqualified from driving for medical or criminal reasons.

15.2 For those employees disqualified from driving on the grounds of medical reasons, reasonable efforts will be made to redesign the job to exclude the requirement to drive (temporarily or indefinitely). Where this means redeployment is to a job on lower remuneration, pay protection will be in accordance with the current policy or conditions of service and the school/trust will make every effort to identify equivalent, alternative responsibilities regarding this.

15.3 For those employees disqualified from driving on the grounds of criminal reasons, reasonable efforts will be made to redesign or redeploy the employee role. Where this is possible, but results in a lower paid job, no pay protection will apply.

16. Use of Facilities

16.1 Facilities that are provided by the school/trust and used by employees as part of their normal duties, must not be used, or abused by employees for their own private use or gain. This will cover all school property, for example telephones, computers, vehicles, safety equipment/clothing, tools, fax machines, franking machines, paper. etc. School/trust property should not be taken home, or taken away from the normal place of work, unless prior permission has been given by an employee's immediate supervisor/manager or unless these are acceptable resources to fulfil the contractual requirements of the job at home (for example planning, preparation and marking).

16.2 This school anticipates the following resources may be used at home, by the **employee only:**

- Laptop computer allocated to SMT
- School Mobile phone (allocated to Premises Manager, Site Agent and Family Workers) for school business
- iPads allocated to SMT
- Visualiser – if directed by SMT for the purposes of home schooling, for example

16.3 Arrangements do exist for employees, in certain situations, and without overly abusing the privilege, to use school/trust telephones to make private calls. This will be at the discretion of the Headteacher/line manager.

17 Dress Code

17.1 Following consultation with staff the following dress code as appropriate, in a professional capacity. This takes into account equality legislation.

All staff (teachers and non-teaching staff) should endeavour to maintain a professional appearance and to wear appropriate clothing. See the following guidelines.

- Tops should be modest e.g. no revealing straps, no gaps etc.
- Trousers should be <u>smart</u> and full or three-quarter length e.g. no jeans, no combats, no leather etc.
- No denim or sportswear should be worn.

- An exception to this will be for PE and Games lessons. Appropriate clothing and footwear must be worn for these lessons for health and safety reasons.

- Shoes should be sensible, smart (no trainers) and should have a back (no flipflops or backless sandals for health and safety)

  The dress code should be adhered to on out of school trips when pupils are expected to wear school uniform. On trips where pupils are permitted to wear casual clothes then staff accompanying them may also do so e.g. adventure parks, camping or the zoo etc.

18 Sanctions for the Breach of the Code

18.1 This Code of Conduct forms part of all employee's terms and conditions of appointment. Any breach of this Code therefore will be dealt with under the agreed disciplinary procedures, and may, subject to the seriousness of the breach, lead to a dismissal from the school/trust. In cases where the breach is the subject of police investigation, the school/trust will not wait for the Criminal Justice or other legal system to run its course before commencing disciplinary investigations.

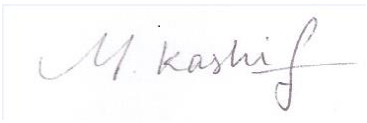
18.2 Where inappropriate behaviour is by an individual engaged on a contract of services, or employees not subject to a disciplinary procedure, e.g. those during their probationary period, then their services with the school/trust will be terminated following the probationary procedure or other relevant procedure.

19. Where to Obtain Further Advice

Any queries in respect of this Code should be raised with the headteacher.

This policy has been agreed with the relevant trades unions and adopted by the Governing Body.

This policy will be monitored and reviewed by the Governing Body every two years.
Policy updated: September 2026
Staff responsible: Head Teacher
This policy was ratified by the Governing body on: 16th September 2026



Signed on behalf of the Governing Body:

(signature)
M. Kashif - Chair of Governors (printed)