Status: FINAL Approval Date: 11th September 2023 Review Period: Three Years Next Review Due: September 2026 Delegation: Resources Committee

EMPLOYEE CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY 2023 - 2026

Ralph Sadleir School

Approved by: Julia Tye **Date:** 25.9.23

Last reviewed on: September 2022
Next review due by: September 2024

1 INTRODUCTION

The Board of Directors expectations are that all pupils receive the highest possible quality of teaching and learning within a positive and respectful environment. It is important, therefore, that staff understand that their own behaviour and the manner in which they conduct themselves with their colleagues, pupils, parents and other stakeholders sets an example and affects the school environment.

As a member of a school community, each member of staff has an individual responsibility to maintain their reputation and the reputation of the school, whether inside or outside working hours.

It is recognised that the majority of staff always act in an appropriate manner and treat others with dignity and respect. However, we consider it important to make clear the standards we expect from staff so that misunderstandings and/or misinterpretations are kept to a minimum.

The code is intended to set out our expected standards of conduct and values. It applies to all staff including Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team. It is expected also that those staff deployed within the school who are employed by external Agencies or the Local Authority will adhere to its principals.

This code helps all staff to understand what behaviour is and is not acceptable, and regard should also be given to the disciplinary rules set out in the Disciplinary Policy and Procedure which may be found on the Teaching shared drive.

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This document is not a prescriptive guide to what employees should and should not do. It highlights the principal areas where employees need to be aware of their responsibilities when working in the school and is a framework for behaviour. Employees should ensure that they are familiar with the specific policies that underpin these behaviours through reference to the documents highlighted in the "Required Reading" section of this policy. It is the responsibility of the employee to seek a copy of these additional policies from their line manager.

By signing your contract of employment you are agreeing to abide by the conditions within the Staff Code of Conduct Policy and all other policies for the School.

Breaches of the Code and the standards expressed in it could result in disciplinary action, including dismissal for serious offences

2 DUTY OF CARE

All staff, whether paid or voluntary, have a duty to keep young people safe and to protect them from physical and emotional harm. This duty is in part exercised through the development of respectful, caring and professional relationships between staff and pupils and behaviour by staff that demonstrates integrity, maturity and good judgment.

3 SETTING AN EXAMPLE

All staff must set examples of behaviour and conduct which can be copied by pupils. Staff must therefore:

- Provide a high standard of service in your dealings with colleagues, pupils, parents and other stakeholders whether this is in person, by telephone, letter or e-mail.
- Always be polite, responsive and treat people with respect and consideration. Be as clear as possible about any decisions and actions you take and the reasons for them.
- Always use appropriate language and never demean, distress or offend the decency of others. This may happen, for example, by displaying material or pictures that could be seen as offensive, or by making degrading, suggestive or insensitive comments or remarks, or telling of jokes.
- Respect the rights of others and treat them with dignity. Never threaten, bully or assault anyone.
- Never steal, damage or take items that belong to others.
- Do not discriminate against, harass or victimise anyone you meet in the course of your work, on any grounds.

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- Ensure that you are not under the influence of alcohol during working hours. (The Headteacher will decide if it is appropriate for alcohol to be made available at staff parties/social events).
- Do not abuse drugs.

- Keep within the law, both at work and outside of work.
- Do not disclose or misuse confidential information.
- Do not engage in, or encourage, gossip, rumour or innuendo.
- Promote the School's vision, ethos and values.
- Comply with School policies and any other rules, regulations or codes that apply to your work and the workplace.
- Do not make public statements about the school without first obtaining authorisation from the Headteacher.
- Avoid actions that may discredit the school or bring it into disrepute.

This Code helps all staff to understand what behaviour is and is not acceptable.

4 MANAGEMENT AND STAFF RELATIONS

An atmosphere of mutual confidence, trust and respect between managers and staff is essential to providing a high quality of teaching and learning.

Staff must declare any relationships that they may have with pupils, staff, clients, contractors, suppliers or parents outside of the Trust. This may include mutual membership of social groups, tutoring, and/ or family connections.

Existing or new personal relationships at work between colleagues should be declared to the line manager where there is a potential for this to impact upon the work of either (for example: a risk of allegations of bias or conflict of interest). The line manager will treat declarations in confidence in accordance with the GDPR/ HR policy which may be found on the shared drive.

Staff should not assume that the Trust is aware of any such connections and should use Appendix B and/or C to make a declaration.

As a member of staff you should:

- Promote the School in a positive manner.
- Work reliably and in accordance with the school's policies and practices as well as any other rules and regulations that apply to your work and/or the workplace.

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- Carry out any reasonable instructions given to you by your manager and/or Headteacher.
- Recognise that you are part of a team and that everyone should be working together to achieve

similar aims for the overall benefit of the pupils.

As a Line manager you should, in addition:

- Support and assist staff to carry out their work properly.
- In your dealings with our staff, act in accordance with their relevant local and national conditions of employment/service.
- In consultation with staff, set standards of work and objectives, as appropriate to their role.
- Give feedback and advice on areas for further development to assist staff in meeting objectives
- Aim to continually develop staff to meet current and future needs of the school.
- Ensure compliance with the Working Time Regulations 1998, as amended, recognise the need for staff to pursue interests outside work and, therefore, be able to enjoy a reasonable work/life balance.
- Consider constructive suggestions for improvements to working practices and standards.
- Treat all staff fairly, consistently and with dignity.
- Provide a working environment free from discrimination and harassment.
- Provide a safe and healthy working environment.

5 RELATIONSHIPS WITH PUPILS

Relationships with pupils must be professional at all times. Physical relationships with pupils are not permitted and may lead to criminal conviction.

Encouraging a relationship to develop in a way which may lead to a sexual relationship, or any other inappropriate relationship will be viewed as a grave breach of trust.

Contact with pupils must be via a trust-authorised mechanisms and solely for educational purposes. At no time should a personal telephone number, text, email address or communication routes via personal accounts on social media platforms be used to communicate with pupils.

If contacted by a pupil by an inappropriate route, staff should report the contact to their line manager immediately

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Behaviour giving rise to concern should also be reported which includes pupils seeking affection, being sexually provocative or exhibiting overly familiar behaviour.

As a member of staff you are expected to:

- Work towards and encourage the highest possible level of achievement for all pupils.
- Value and respect all pupils equally, treating them in a polite, positive, responsive and considerate manner.
- Apply the School's Behaviour Policy as situations demand in order to encourage and develop appropriate behaviours.
- Ensure that items confiscated from pupils are left in a safe place, ideally labelled and locked away. Parents/guardians should be informed about when items will be returned.
- Act in accordance with the School's Child Protection Policy.
- Ensure that you do not breach professional boundaries and do not act in a way that could be misinterpreted or otherwise leave you vulnerable to allegations of inappropriate behaviour.

6 REPORTING MALPRACTICE AND IMPROPER CONDUCT ('WHISTLEBLOWING) POLICY

Most problems and concerns within the workplace can be fairly easily resolved, often informally. Sometimes it is necessary to use a more formal route, such as the school's Grievance Procedure. Very occasionally, however, more serious issues may arise involving, for example, unlawful conduct, financial malpractice, corruption, health and safety issues or other actions, which are not in the best interests of the pupils or the school.

You may be worried about raising serious issues, perhaps concerned that you may be mistaken, it's only a suspicion, that you may lose your job or otherwise suffer some form of retribution as a result. However, there is a 'Whistleblowing Policy' available to enable you to raise concerns about malpractice at an early stage, in the right way. The Policy sets out how you should raise such a concern. Provided that you are acting in good faith, it will protect you from victimisation or other detriment, even if you are mistaken about the matter. However, you must never raise unfounded allegations maliciously. This would be viewed as a disciplinary matter.

Remember though, the Whistleblowing Policy is for raising concerns about serious malpractice. If you are aggrieved about your own personal position or have a complaint covered by another policy, such as the Grievance Procedure, then you should refer to that instead.

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Where you have concerns relating to a child protection issue, you should take action in accordance with the Child Protection.

7 SAFEGUARDING PUPILS/STUDENTS

All staff have a duty to safeguard pupils from:

- physical abuse
- sexual abuse
- emotional abuse
- neglect

Staff must not seriously demean or undermine pupils, their parents or carers, or colleagues and they must take reasonable care of pupils/students under their supervision with the aim of ensuring their safety and welfare.

The duty to safeguard pupils includes the duty to report concerns about a pupil to the school's Designated Senior Person (DSP) for Child Protection.

The school's DSP is:

Mrs V Wilson

SENDCO and DSL Lead

The school's Deputy DSP's are:

Mr S Morgan – Head of PE

Miss K Devonshire -Assistant Head Teacher

All staff have access to copies of the school's Child Protection Policy and Whistleblowing Procedure and staff must be familiar with these documents. These documents can be accessed on the shared network drive.

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8 PUPIL DEVELOPMENT

All staff must comply with school policies and procedures that support the well-being and

development of pupils.

They must:

 Co-operate and collaborate with colleagues and with external agencies where necessary to support the development of pupils.

 Follow reasonable instructions that support the development of pupils/students.

9 HONESTY AND INTEGRITY

All staff must maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their work. This includes:

- The handling and claiming of money
- The use of school property and facilities.

They 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 the Whistleblowing procedure for schools.

Gifts from suppliers or associates of the school must be declared to the Headteacher, with the exception of "one off" token gifts from pupils or parents. Personal gifts from individual members of staff to pupils are inappropriate and could be misinterpreted.

If you believe that a person has failed to comply with the Bribery Act, you should refer to the Whistleblowing Policy which may be found on the shared drive.

9 CONDUCT OUTSIDE WORK

All staff must not engage in conduct outside work which could seriously damage the reputation and standing of the school or the employee's own reputation or the reputation of other members of the school community.

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In particular, criminal offences that involve violence or possession or use of illegal drugs or sexual

misconduct are likely to be regarded as unacceptable.

Staff may undertake work outside school, either paid or voluntary, provided that it does not conflict with the interests of the school nor be to a level which may contravene the working time regulations or affect an individual's work performance.

10 INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

All staff must exercise caution when using information technology and be aware of the risks to themselves and others.

School equipment and systems (phone, email and computers) are available for school-related activities and should not be used for the fulfilment of another job or for personal use. This is unless authorised by the Headteacher (N.B. for the Headteacher this is the Chair of Board of Directors), in case of an emergency, or where used for brief periods outside of working hours.

This includes photocopy facilities, stationery and premises. It also applies to access provided for remote use (e.g. hand held portable devices, VPN etc.) and to staff working outside of school premises and using their own IT equipment.

Illegal, inappropriate or unacceptable use of school equipment or communication systems may result in disciplinary action and in serious cases could lead to an employee's dismissal.

Any school equipment that is used outside school premises, for example laptops, should be returned to the school when the employee leaves employment or upon request by the Headteacher.

All staff must not engage in inappropriate use of social network sites which may bring themselves, the school, school community or employer into disrepute.

The school has the right to monitor emails, phone-calls, internet activity or document production, principally in order to avoid offensive or nuisance material and to protect systems from viruses, but also to ensure proper and effective use of systems. Communication systems may be accessed when the school suspects that the employee has been misusing systems or facilities, or for the investigation of suspected fraud or other irregularity.

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All staff have access to the ICT Acceptable Use Policy and staff must be familiar with this document.

This document can also be accessed on the shared network drive.

11 CONFIDENTIALITY

All employees and Board of Directors at the school come into contact with a significant volume of data and information in relation to pupils, parents, staff, school activities and many other matters. There is an obligation to read and to observe the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998.

Under the Data Protection Act, staff are required to collect, maintain and dispose of sensitive or personal data in a responsible manner.

It is expected that staff will use sensitive information properly and have due respect for confidentiality. You should ensure that you:

- Know what information the school treats as confidential (check with your line manager if you are unsure).
- Know who is entitled to have access to what information (check with your line manager if you are unsure).
- Are responsible and professional in using and allowing access to personal information on pupils, parents, staff, Board of Directors and any others.
- Use personal information in line with the principles of the Data Protection Acts. Such data must:
 - Be obtained lawfully and fairly.
 Be held only for specified and lawful purposes.
 Be relevant and just sufficient for those purposes.
 Be used or disclosed for no other purpose.
 Be accurate, up to date, and kept only as long as is necessary.
 Be held securely to prevent unauthorised access or tampering.
 Be available for inspection and correction by the person it is about.
 Not be transferred to countries outside the European Economic Area without adequate protection.

Furthermore, where staff have access to confidential information about pupils or their parents or carers, staff must not reveal such information except to those colleagues who have a professional role in relation to the pupil.

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However, staff have an obligation to share with the school's Designated Senior Person 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.

12 DISCLOSING DATA

Information about pupils is confidential to the school and to the individual student. Any member of staff except for good, duly considered reason, should not disclose information to a third party.

Decisions about the release of information should be authorised by relevant person responsible for the information concerned.

There are particular exceptions to this; for example disclosure of suspected or alleged abuse of a pupil to Child Protection officers; discussion with a person accompanying or representing an employee in a formal meeting or disclosure under the Whistleblowing Procedure.

There are circumstances in which staff are obliged to release pupil data, for example, parents seeking information about pupil progress or other colleagues in the school.

All communication with the media must be directed through the Headteacher.

Staff should be aware of involving themselves in conversations that occur inside and outside of school i.e. conversations in public areas (staffroom, corridors etc.) social events; where they may become vulnerable to unwittingly disclosing sensitive information.

Under no circumstances should a member of staff discuss or share information with other staff members, Board of Directors, parents or members of the public outside of school i.e. in their private time, which has been obtained or gleaned through their work in school.

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13 APPEARANCE AND DRESS CODE

It is expected that:

- When at work, or representing the school, you ensure that your appearance is neat and clean.
- You always dress in a manner which is appropriate to your role and the circumstances or setting in which you work.
- You remember that you are a role model for pupils and your appearance and dress should reflect this important and unique position.
- You do not dress in a way that may cause embarrassment to pupils, parents, colleagues, other stakeholders or visitors. (for example: consider appropriateness of T-Shirts with slogans, revealing clothing i.e. low tops, short skirts / dresses, the wearing of casual clothing i.e. denim).
- Ultimately, it will be for a member of the Senior Leadership Team to decide whether a member of staff's appearance and/or dress is appropriate or not.

14 HOURS OF WORK AND ATTENDANCE

It is important that all staff are in school at their agreed starting time and do not leave before their agreed finishing time. Bad timekeeping and poor attendance increases costs, causes disruption for others and has an adverse effect on pupils' education.

The Board of Directors recognise that the majority of staff are punctual and do not take time off without good cause or obtaining prior permission.

Our expectations are that:

- You attend work in accordance with your contract of employment and associated terms and conditions in relation to hours, days of work and holidays.
- Wherever possible, you make routine medical and dental appointments outside of your working hours or during holidays. The only exceptions to this requirement will be in the event of an emergency or particular difficulty, in relation to hospital appointments (which are rarely negotiable) or to attend for ante-natal care if you are pregnant. Pregnant employees are entitled to paid time off for ante-natal appointments. In any circumstances, however, you should agree time off with your line manager at the earliest opportunity to ensure that adequate cover arrangements can be made.
- Prior to making any request, you refer to the School's policy on Leave of Absence and Health and Attendance if you need time off. Any member of staff taking such leave without permission will be subject to disciplinary action.

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In the event of sickness absence, all staff are expected to follow the School's absence reporting procedure when they are absent from work due to illness or injury. This procedure includes notification as early as possible of the first day of absence, keeping the school informed where absence continues, requirements for the provision of medical certificates and procedures on return to work.

15 HEALTH & SAFETY

The Board of Directors aim is to promote good health and ensure safe working practices for staff, pupils, parents, other stakeholders and visitors. Staff of the school also have a legal responsibility to contribute to a safe working environment. Failure to accept this responsibility may put themselves and/or others at risk.

You should ensure that you:

- Read and understand the School's Health and Safety Policy.
- Comply with Health and Safety Regulations and use any safety equipment and protective clothing which is supplied to you by the School.
- · Comply with any hygiene requirements
- Comply with any accident reporting requirements
- Never act in a way which might cause risk or damage to any other members of the school community, or visitors.
- Inform your line manager of any paid work you undertake elsewhere. This is to comply with the Working Time Regulations, which are a Health and Safety initiative. In addition, if you are a member of the Support Staff on scale 6 or above you are required, as part of your conditions of service, to seek written agreement from your Headteacher to undertake work elsewhere. Any member of staff asked to undertake private tutoring of pupils within the school must first discuss the situation with the Headteacher.

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16 E SAFETY AND INTERNET USE

Staff must exercise caution at all times both inside and outside of work when using information technology. Staff should be aware of the risks to themselves and others.

Staff must not engage in appropriate use of social media sites which may bring themselves, the Trust and the Trust's community or employer into disrepute. Staff should ensure that they adopt suitably high security settings on any personal profiles that they may have.

Staff should exercise caution in their use of all social media use. This includes creating, endorsing, liking, posting, retweeting, sharing direct messaging or sending any statements, photo's, video's, audio's or messages. This also includes speaking and/ or lip syncing to other creators' content and or music used.

This may also include the use of dating websites where staff could encounter pupils either with their own profile or acting covertly.

Contact with pupils should only be made via the use of the Trust email accounts or telephone equipment when appropriate and strictly for educational reasons.

Photographs or video footage of pupils should only be taken using Trust equipment, for purposes authorised by the Trust. Any such use should always be transparent and only occur where parental consent has been given. The resultant files from such recording or taking of photographs must be stored in accordance with the Trust's procedure on Trust equipment.

17 SCHOOL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

All members of staff must comply with the School's policies and procedures. Policies are filed on the shared network drive.

The following Policies and Laws underpin the Code of Conduct Policy and all staff must familiarise themselves with these Policies.

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Law:

- Bribery Act 2010
- Children Act 1979
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Equality Act 2010
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Human Rights Act 1998

In addition, **teachers registered with the Department for Education (DfE)** are expected to uphold:

- The Code of Conduct and Practice for Registered Teachers. (This sets minimum standards for the regulation of the profession).
- The Statement of Professional Values and Practice for Teachers. (This sets out the beliefs, values and attitudes that make up teacher professionalism. It shows that teachers use high levels of individual judgement and skill to meet the challenges of their profession).

Further details can be found at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teachers-standards

18 DISCIPLINARY ACTION

All staff need to recognise that failure to meet these standards of behaviour and conduct may result in disciplinary action, including dismissal.

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If there is anything in this Code that you do not understand, you should speak to your Line Manager or the Headteacher.

Compliance - All staff must complete the form in Appendix B to confirm that they have read, understood and agreed to comply with the code of conduct. This form should then be signed and dated on an annual basis and/ or each time the code is amended.

20 POLICY REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed every three years by the Resources Committee. The committee has delegated to the Headteacher and Chair/Vice Chair of Resources Committee the authority to make updates in light of any changes in legislation or advice received from Hertfordshire / Essex Governance Services, Department of Education (DFE) and/or by the Senior Leadership Team. The Board of Directors have delegated the ratification of the policy to the Resources Committee (a subcommittee of the Local Governing Body).

Personnel Committee Next Review Date Update

Review Date 06th September 2023 - 16th September 2023

Updated 6th September 2023 Update of document content in part and name updates

Signed: Date:

(Chair of Resources Committee)

21 CONCLUSION

By adhering to this code of conduct staff can be assured they are playing their part in safeguarding pupils and protecting themselves.

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Appendix A

Listed below are the school policies that should be read in conjunction with the Staff Code of Conduct Policy. It is the staff members' responsibility to keep themselves up to date with amendments to existing policies and the introduction of new policies.

Board of Directors

Admissions Policy

Child Protection Policy

Local Governing Body

British Values

Resources Committee

Accounting Policies

Charging and Remissions Policy

Complaints Policy

Data Protection Policy

Employee Discipline Policy

Equality Policy

Freedom of information Publication Scheme

Health and Safety Policy

Pay & Appraisal Policy

Preventing Extremism & Radicalisation Policy

Pupil Anti Bullying Policy

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Pupil Behaviour Policy

Schedule of Financial Delegation

Staff Harassment at Work Policy

Alcohol, Drugs and Gambling Policy

Asbestos Policy

Anti-Fraud, Corruption and Bribery Policy

Assets Disposal Policy

Critical Incident Plan

Debt Recovery Policy

Employee Capability Policy

Employee Code of Conduct Policy

Employee Handbook

Employee Induction Policy

Employee Leave of Absence Policy

Employee Personal Record File Policy (including Retention of Documents Schedule)

Gifts & Hospitality Policy

Grievance Policy and Procedures

Health & Attendance Policy and Procedures

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Hiring's Policy

Minibus Policy

Risk Policy & Register

Safer Recruitment Policy

Severe Weather Policy & Procedures

Shared Parental Leave Policy

Staff Expenses Policy

Under the Counter Terrorism & Security Act Policy

Volunteers in School Policy

Whistle Blowing Policy

Young Carers Policy

Curriculum & Achievement Committee

Accessibility Plan

Collective Worship Policy

Drugs and Substance Abuse Policy

International Policy

Target Setting for Schools Policy

Sex Education Policy

Assessment, Recording and Reporting Policy

Marking and Feedback Policy

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Special Educational Needs, Disability & Inclusion Policy.
Home-School Agreement
Marketing, Communications & Media Policy
Parents Handbook
Pupil Attendance Policy
Religious Education Policy
Website Policy
ICT Acceptable Use Policy
English & Literacy Policy
Teaching and Learning Policy
Appendix A - Confirmation of compliance
I hereby confirm that I have read, understood and agree to comply with the Trust's code of conduct
Full name
Current Position
Signed by:
Date:
Once completed, signed and dated; please return this form to Mrs <u>E Morrison</u> - Business Manager

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Appendix B - Relationships with pupils outside of work declaration

It is recognised that there may be circumstances whereby employees of the Trust are known to pupils outside of work.

Staff must declare any relationship outside of the Trust that they may have with pupils.

Employee Name	Pupil Name	Relationship

I can confirm that I am fully aware of the code of conduct relating to conduct out of the Trust with pupils in line with this policy.

If I am tutoring a pupil outside of the trust, i am aware that the following must be adhered to:

- I do not, at any point, teach the child in question as part of my daily timetable- this is a stipulation of such tutoring.
- I emphasize to parents that this is done completely independently on the Trust.
- No monies come through the Trust at any point, either informally (e.g via the pupil) or formally
- No private tutoring has/will take place on the Trusts premises.

I confirm that if these circumstances change at any time, I will complete a new form to ensure the Trust is aware of any relationships.

Full Name	
Current Position	
Signed By	
Date	

Once completed, signed and dated, please return to Mrs E Morrison.

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Appendix C - Relationships outside of work declaration

It is recognised that there may be circumstances whereby employees of the Trust are known to others connected with the Trust outside of work.

Staff must declare any relationship outside of the Trust that they may have with others that could create a conflict of interest.

Employee Name	3rd Party Name	Relationship

I can confirm that I am fully aware of the code of conduct and relationships at work policy, and I am not in breach of these.

I can confirm that is these circumstances change at any time, I will complete a new form to ensure the Trust are aware of any relationships.

Full Name		
Current Position	 	
Signed By	 	
Date		

Once completed, signed and dated, please return to Mrs E Morrison.

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