Engineering UTC
Northern
Lincolnshire

STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT

1. INTRODUCTION AND POLICY ISSUES

All employees have personal and legal responsibilities, including: treating others professionally and with dignity; acting honestly, using public funds and academy equipment appropriately, adhering to health and safety policies and guidelines and practising equal opportunities at all times. These expectations are set out below and should be fully observed by all staff, including the Principal.

This document is not an exhaustive 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 academy, or representing the UTC, and is a framework for behaviour. Employees should ensure they are familiar with the specific policies that underpin these behaviours through reference to the documents highlighted throughout the Code.

In line with the statutory safeguarding guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education, we should have a staff code of conduct, which should cover low-level concerns, allegations against staff and whistle-blowing, as well as acceptable use of technologies (including the use of mobile devices), staff/pupil relationships and communications, including the use of social media.

This code shall be reviewed and updated as required.

2. COMPLIANCE WITH THE STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT

The Staff Code of Conduct forms part of an employee's contract. Failure to comply with it and with the associated UTC policies may result in disciplinary action being taken, and the UTC reserves the right to take legal action against employees where breaches of the Code warrant such action.

3. PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOUR AND CONDUCT

3.1 Standards of Behaviour

School staff have an influential position in the school and will act as role models for pupils by consistently demonstrating high standards of behaviour.

All employees are expected to give the highest possible standard of service to the public and where it is part of their duties, to provide appropriate advice to the UTC Board Members and fellow employees with impartiality. Employees will be expected, through agreed procedures and without fear of recrimination, to bring to the attention of the appropriate level of management any deficiency in the provision of service.

Staff set an example to pupils. They will:

- Maintain high standards in their attendance and punctuality
- Never use inappropriate or offensive language in school
- Treat pupils and others with dignity and respect
- Show tolerance and respect for the rights of others
- Not undermine fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
- Not express personal beliefs in a way that exploits pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law
- Understand the statutory frameworks they must act within
- Adhere to the Teachers' Standards

3.2 Treating other people with dignity and respect

All employees are expected to treat other colleagues, students and external contacts, such as parents, professionally and with dignity & respect.

Staff are required to comply with the UTC's equality policies in respect of colleagues, students and other contacts such as parents. Unacceptable behaviour such as discrimination, bullying, harassment or intimidation will not be tolerated by the UTC. This includes physical and verbal abuse and use of inappropriate language or unprofessional behaviour with colleagues, students and parents.

3.3 Appropriate relationships with children

UTC employees are expected to act in an open and transparent way that would not lead any reasonable person to suspect their actions or intent. Employees of the UTC have a duty to protect young people from discrimination and harm and to maintain appropriate professional boundaries. It is equally important for staff to avoid behaviour that might be misinterpreted by others in order to protect both young people and themselves. Staff are

required to read and understand UTC policies on child protection and should seek clarification on any points they are not clear on.

If staff members and pupils must spend time on a one-to-one basis, staff will ensure that:

- This takes place in a public place that others can access
- Others can see into the room
- A colleague or line manager knows this is taking place

Staff should avoid contact with pupils outside of school hours if possible.

Personal contact details should not be exchanged between staff and pupils. This includes social media profiles.

While we are aware many pupils and their parents may wish to give gifts to staff, for example, at the end of the school year, gifts from staff to pupils are not acceptable.

If a staff member is concerned at any point that an interaction between themselves and a pupil may be misinterpreted, or if a staff member is concerned at any point about a fellow staff member and a pupil, this should be reported in line with the procedures set out in our child protection and safeguarding policy.

See UTC guidelines: Safer working practice for working with Children and Young People.

3.4 Communication and social media

School staff's social media profiles should not be available to pupils. If they have a personal profile on social media sites, they should not use their full name, as pupils may be able to find them. Staff should consider using a first and middle name instead, and set public profiles to private.

Staff should not attempt to contact pupils or their parents via social media, or any other means outside school, in order to develop any sort of relationship. They will not make any efforts to find pupils' or parents' social media profiles.

Staff will ensure that they do not post any images online that identify children who are pupils at the school without their consent.

Staff should refer to the school's ICT Acceptable Usage Policy.

3.5 Professional behaviour

Employees must not misuse or misrepresent their position, qualifications or experience or bring the reputation of the UTC into disrepute. Such behaviour may lead to disciplinary action and where relevant, referral to the Debarring Service.

We expect that all teachers will act in accordance with the personal and professional behaviours set out in the Teachers' Standards.

We expect all support staff, governors and volunteers to also act with personal and professional integrity, respecting the safety and wellbeing of others.

3.6 Criminal actions

UTC employees must inform the Principal and the Chair of the Engineering UTC Northern Lincolnshire Board as appropriate, immediately if they are subject to a criminal conviction, caution, ban, police enquiry, investigation or pending prosecution. The Principal and the Chair of the Engineering UTC Northern Lincolnshire Board as appropriate will discuss this with the employee in the context of their role and responsibilities in order to help safeguard children and other employees of the UTC.

3.7 Conduct outside of work

Staff will not act in a way that would bring the school, or the teaching profession, into disrepute. This covers conduct including but not limited to relevant criminal offences, such as violence or sexual misconduct, as well as negative comments about the school on social media.

3.8 Required reading:

- UTC's Child Protection policy and procedure.
- UTC's Equality Policy
- UTC's Whistleblowing Policy
- UTC's Dignity at work policy

4. SAFEGUARDING

Staff have a duty to safeguard pupils from harm, and to report any concerns they have. This includes physical, emotional and sexual abuse, and neglect.

Staff will familiarise themselves with our child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures, and the Prevent initiative, and ensure they are aware of the processes to follow if they have concerns about a child.

Our child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures are available in the policies section of our school website.

4.1 Allegations that may meet the harm threshold

This section is based on 'Section 1: Allegations that may meet the harm threshold' in part 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

This section applies to all cases in which it is alleged that anyone working in the school, including a supply teacher, volunteer or contractor, has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child, and/or
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, and/or
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children, and/or

- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children – this includes behaviour taking place inside or outside of school

We will deal with any such allegation quickly and in a fair and consistent way that provides effective child protection while also supporting the individual who is the subject of the allegation.

A 'case manager' will lead any investigation. This will be the Principal, or the chair of governors where the Principal is the subject of the allegation.

4.2 Low-level concerns about members of staff

A low-level concern is a behaviour towards a child by a member of staff that does not meet the harm threshold, is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, and may be as simple as causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt'. For example, this may include:

- Being over-friendly with children
- Having favourites
- Taking photographs of children on a personal device
- Engaging in 1-to-1 activities where they can't easily be seen
- Humiliating pupils

Low-level concerns can include inappropriate conduct inside and outside of work.

All staff should share any low-level concerns they have using the reporting procedures set out in our child protection and safeguarding policy. We also encourage staff to self-refer if they find themselves in a situation that could be misinterpreted. If staff are not sure whether behaviour would be deemed a low-level concern, we encourage staff to report it.

All reports will be handled in a responsive, sensitive and proportionate way.

Unprofessional behaviour will be addressed, and the staff member supported to correct it, at an early stage.

This creates and embeds a culture of openness, trust and transparency in which our values and expected behaviour are constantly lived, monitored and reinforced by all staff, while minimising the risk of abuse.

Reporting and responding to low-level concerns is covered in more detail in our child protection and safeguarding policy. This is available in the policies section of our school website.

Our procedures for dealing with allegations will be applied with common sense and judgement.

4.3 Whistle-blowing

Whistle-blowing reports wrongdoing that it is "in the public interest" to report. Examples linked to safeguarding include:

- Pupils' or staff members' health and safety being put in danger
- Failure to comply with a legal obligation or statutory requirement
- Attempts to cover up the above, or any other wrongdoing in the public interest

Staff are encouraged to report suspected wrongdoing as soon as possible. Their concerns will be taken seriously and investigated, and their confidentiality will be respected.

Staff should consider the examples above when deciding whether their concern is of a whistle-blowing nature. Consider whether the incident(s) was illegal, breached statutory or school procedures, put people in danger or was an attempt to cover any such activity up.

Staff should report their concern to the Principal. If the concern is about the Principal, or it is believed they may be involved in the wrongdoing in some way, the staff member should report their concern to the Chair of Governors.

Concerns should be made in writing wherever possible. They should include names of those committing wrongdoing, dates, places and as much evidence and context as possible. Staff raising a concern should also include details of any personal interest in the matter.

For our school's detailed whistle-blowing process, please refer to our whistle-blowing policy.

5. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Employees should declare any financial or non-financial interests that may cause any conflict with the UTC or the UTC's interests.

When considering whether there may be a conflict of interest an employee shall apply the test "Would a reasonable member of the public knowing all the facts, think the employee might be influenced?" If the answer is yes, then the interest should be declared. If in doubt declare the interest.

Interests will include pecuniary interests, for example, land ownership, and involvement in contractual or employment relationships. Interests will also include indirect pecuniary interests, where known, i.e. pecuniary interests of your close relatives. A pecuniary interest is one, which has the potential for making you, your employer or your relative or friend gain or lose financially.

Non-pecuniary interests, where known, are just as important. Any potential for a good or a bad effect on employees, their family, close relations, friends, club or societies etc. and any of those they are associated with, will count.

6. PROBITY OF RECORDS AND OTHER DOCUMENTS

The deliberate falsification of documents is not acceptable. Where an employee falsifies records or other documents, including those held electronically, this will be regarded as a serious disciplinary matter and potentially a criminal offence.

Where an employee who has claimed any benefit, including housing benefit, either directly or indirectly and has failed to disclose their full earnings to the appropriate benefit agency, this will be treated as gross misconduct and the employee may be dismissed and referred to the Police.

7. FINANCIAL INDUCEMENTS

7.1 Financial Regulations

All UTC employees must comply with the UTC's and DfE Financial Regulations. Employees should familiarise themselves with the regulations but some of the principal employee requirements are summarised below.

7.2 Business Contacts

In this section, "*business contact*" refers to any person, body or organisation with which the UTC is involved on a financial or charitable basis (including contractors; developers; consultants; regional or national charities). This also includes business contacts who are potential suppliers (e.g. they are tendering for future business).

7.3 Declaration of gifts

Any gifts that are received in the course of your employment should be declared in writing on the Register of Gifts and Hospitality with the exception of those items specifically identified in sections 6.4 and 6.5 below. This document shall remain available for inspection.

7.4 Gifts or hospitality to an employee in the course of employment

As an employee of the UTC, you are personally responsible for all decisions connected with your acceptance of any gift or hospitality and for avoiding the risk of damage to public confidence in the UTC.

You should treat with extreme caution any offer of gifts or hospitality made to you personally or to partners/members of your family. You should refuse any gift or hospitality which might be perceived by the public as influencing your decisions or actions as an employee of the UTC. Acceptance in the context of your employment of any fee or reward, other than your proper remuneration, can constitute a criminal offence.

Gifts or hospitality of nominal value (e.g. lunch/refreshments or a token promotional gift) may be accepted but always declare them on the declaration form and remember to attach details of any gifts or hospitality accepted during conferences/events. If the value of the hospitality is substantial, e.g dinner to discuss business, get the approval of your Principal and the Chair of the Engineering UTC Northern Lincolnshire Board as appropriate first.

Tactfully refuse gifts or hospitality from any external commercial body where these might be seen by the public to compromise your integrity, e.g. complimentary tickets to sporting events, paid holidays etc. It may help to explain that this is UTC policy. If the gifts are sent to the UTC, return them if the sender can be identified. If it is not possible for you to return them, make arrangements for them to be officially appropriated to the benefit of the academy or to a charity nominated by the UTC.

Any cash payments made in the context of your employment, e.g. a token payment following a talk you have given or a training session, must either be refused or, if intended for charity, paid via the UTC. It is not appropriate to make the donation yourself.

Declare all offers of gifts or hospitality, whether you accept them or refuse them. Declarations must be made to the Business Manager.

Hand the completed form to the Principal and the Chair of the Engineering UTC Northern Lincolnshire Board as appropriate who will ensure that it is checked to see that it has been properly completed.

If you have any doubt about whether to accept a gift or hospitality, seek the advice of the Principal and the Chair of the Engineering UTC Northern Lincolnshire Board as appropriate

7.5 Gifts or hospitality to the UTC

Where a business contact sends a gift to the UTC (for example, a stationery supplier sending a gift), these should not be accepted and should be returned to the supplier. Such offers should be declared and recorded by the Business Manager.

If it is not possible to return the gift, the employee who usually deals with the supplier should declare the gift to the Principal and the Chair of the Engineering UTC Northern Lincolnshire Board as appropriate who will keep a record of it and decide how it is to be used. Such gifts remain the property of the UTC.

The only exceptions to this are low cost, functional items suitable for business use (as opposed to personal use), such as diaries, calendars or pens, which may be accepted.

7.6 Use of UTC contacts

Apart from participating in concessionary schemes arranged by trade unions or other such groups for their members, employees shall not use UTC business contacts for the purpose acquiring materials or services at trade / discount prices for non-UTC activities.

8. WHISTLEBLOWING

Whistle-blowing reports wrongdoing that it is "in the public interest" to report. Examples linked to safeguarding include:

- Pupils' or staff members' health and safety being put in danger
- Failure to comply with a legal obligation or statutory requirement
- Attempts to cover up the above, or any other wrongdoing in the public interest

Staff are encouraged to report suspected wrongdoing as soon as possible. Their concerns will be taken seriously and investigated, and their confidentiality will be respected.

Staff should consider the examples above when deciding whether their concern is of a whistle-blowing nature. Consider whether the incident(s) was illegal, breached statutory or school procedures, put people in danger or was an attempt to cover any such activity up.

Staff should report their concern to the Principal. If the concern is about the Principal, or it is believed they may be involved in the wrongdoing in some way, the staff member should report their concern to the Chair of Governors.

Concerns should be made in writing wherever possible. They should include names of those committing wrongdoing, dates, places and as much evidence and context as possible. Staff raising a concern should also include details of any personal interest in the matter.

For our school's detailed whistle-blowing process, please refer to our whistle-blowing policy.

9. USE OF UTC PREMISES & EQUIPMENT

UTC equipment and premises are available only for UTC related activities and should not be used in relation to another job or post or for excessive or regular personal use, unless authorised in writing and in advance by the Principal.

This includes photocopying facilities, stationery, telephones and computers and premises. Any UTC equipment that is used outside UTC premises, for example laptops, should be signed out of the UTC and returned to the UTC when the employee leaves employment or upon request by the Principal and the Chair of the Engineering UTC Northern Lincolnshire Board as appropriate

10. OTHER EMPLOYMENT

Employees are permitted to take up secondary employment outside the UTC, as long as the activity does not constitute a conflict of interest, adversely affect their primary employment at the UTC or exceed the legal maximum time as defined by the Working Time Regulations.

The secondary employment must be undertaken outside the working hours of the employee's normal post and employees are required to keep the Principal and the Chair of the Engineering UTC Northern Lincolnshire Board as appropriate, informed of their employment by other organisations.

11. HEALTH AND SAFETY

Employees must adhere to the UTC Health and Safety policy, procedure and guidance and must ensure that they take every action to keep themselves and everyone in the UTC environment safe and well.

Risk assessments must be in place for all activities involving children and young people undertaken both on and off the UTCs premises.

This includes taking immediate safety action in a potentially harmful situation (either at academy or off-site) by complying with statutory and UTC guidelines and collaborating with colleagues, agencies and the local authority.

11.1 Required reading:

- UTC Health and Safety Policy

12. USE OF ALCOHOL AND ILLEGAL DRUGS

The taking of illegal drugs during working hours is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. All employees are expected to attend work without being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs and without their performance being adversely impacted by the consumption of alcohol or illegal drugs.

If alcohol or drug usage impacts on an employee's working life, the UTC has the right to discuss the matter with the employee and take appropriate action, having considered factors such as the UTC's reputation and public confidence.

All UTC and UTC buildings and premises operate a no smoking policy, including the use of vapes/e-cigarettes.

13. USE OF UTC COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS

The UTC 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 by employees.

Employees should be aware that the UTC has the right to access employees' personal email and computer files if saved on UTC communication systems, if required for investigation of misuse.

It is recommended that employees do not use UTC systems (phone, email, computers) for excessive personal use. Inappropriate usage, which includes excessive or regular personal use may result in disciplinary action for the employee and in serious cases could lead to an employee's dismissal.

Inappropriate use of email and internet systems also includes viewing, publication or circulation of illegal or offensive material, viewing, publication or circulation of junk mail, including chain letters, jokes or large attachments, gambling or gaming; these will be treated as disciplinary matters.

Passwords should not be shared and access to computer systems must be kept confidential. Breach of this confidentiality may be subject to disciplinary action.

Employees who receive inappropriate communications are advised to inform their line manager immediately.

14. CONFIDENTIALITY

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

This information should never be:

- Disclosed to anyone unless required by law or with consent from the relevant party or parties
- Used to humiliate, embarrass or blackmail others
- Used for a purpose other than what it was collected and intended for

This does not overrule staff's duty to report child protection concerns to the appropriate channel where staff believe a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm, as detailed further in our child protection and safeguarding policy.

14.1 Managing data

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

14.2 Disclosing data

Staff should not disclose sensitive information about the UTC, its employees to other parties, for example, parents, colleagues or social networking sites and internet blogs. There are particular exceptions to this; for example disclosure of suspected or alleged abuse of a student to Child Protection officers and discussion with a person accompanying or representing an employee in a formal meeting or disclosure under the UTC's Whistleblowing procedure. All UTC communication with the media must be directed through the Principal and the Chair of the Engineering UTC Northern Lincolnshire Board as appropriate. Authorised representatives of trade unions may have communication with the media on behalf of the trade union.

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

Staff should be aware that from time to time, information about employees' salaries is matched with other public sector information to prevent fraudulent claims, for example housing benefits.

14.3 Access to data

Everyone has the right to access data that is held about them, including references written by your current employer, and such requests should be made to your Line Manager/ Principal who will address the request.

14.4 Required reading:

- UTC's Whistleblowing Procedure

15. COPYRIGHT

Copyright legislation should be displayed next to photocopier machines and employees are required to adhere to the guidance provided about use of educational resources.

16. DRESS AND APPEARANCE

The UTC has a Dress Code policy. It is a contractual obligation for all staff to comply with this policy.

Staff should ensure they are dressed decently, safely and appropriately for the tasks they undertake. Those who dress or appear in a manner which could be considered as inappropriate could render themselves vulnerable to criticism and allegations.

17. POWER AND POSITIONS OF UTC

As a result of knowledge, position and/or the authority invested in their role, staff working with children and young people are in positions of UTC in relation to those people in their care. It is vital for all staff to understand the power this can give them over those they care for and responsibility they must exercise as a consequence of this relationship.

Adults should always maintain appropriate professional boundaries and avoid behaviour which might be misinterpreted by others. They should report and record any incident with this potential to their Line Manager.

18. CONTACT WITH THE PRESS AND MEDIA

Unless specifically nominated and authorised by the Chair of the Board, employees are not permitted to give reports or speak to the press and media on matters relating to their employment by Engineering UTC Northern Lincolnshire or their business or decisions. The Principal is responsible for dealing with the press and media. Other employees may be specifically nominated by the Chair of the Board. Employees with this responsibility should guard themselves against declaring a view which is contrary to the position taken by the Engineering UTC Northern Lincolnshire and which may be deemed to be critical of that position.

Nothing in this Code is intended to inhibit or restrict the reasonable and legitimate role of trade union representatives but they are bound, in carrying out their role, to honour the intent of this Code. No representative should use unauthorised information in their union roles.

I declare that I have read and understood the Engineering UTC Northern Lincolnshire Code of Conduct for employees and have been made aware of the ''required reading'';

Signature:…… Date:……..

Print Name:……..

Approved June 2025

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