



# Staff Code of Conduct

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| <b>Policy Code:</b>        | HR5           |
| <b>Policy Start Date:</b>  | February 2025 |
| <b>Policy Review Date:</b> | February 2026 |

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### **Statement of Intent**

The Community Inclusive Trust expects all pupils to receive high-quality teaching and learning in a positive and respectful environment.

All Trust employees should understand that their own behaviour, and the manner in which they conduct themselves with their colleagues, pupils, parents and other stakeholders, sets an example.

We recognise the majority of staff members act appropriately and treat each other with dignity and respect; however, we consider it important to clarify the expected standards.

This policy does not form part of any employee's Statement of Main Terms of Employment and is not intended to have any contractual effect. The Trust reserves the right to amend this policy at any time. Failure to comply with this policy, and with the associated Trust or school policies, may result in disciplinary action being taken, including legal action where this is warranted.

## **1. Legal Framework**

1.1 This policy has due regard to all legislation including, but not limited to, the following:

- The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Education Act 2002
- The Children Act 1989
- The Working Time Regulations 1998 (as amended)
- Sexual Offences Act 2003

1.2 This policy also has due regard to statutory guidance including, but not limited to:

- DfE 'Keeping children safe in education' (KCSIE)
- DfE 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'
- DfE 'Staffing and employment advice for schools'

1.3 This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies and documents:

- Safeguarding Statement – Trust-wide
- School Child Protection and Safeguarding policies
- Health and Safety Policy
- Health & Safety Staff Handbook
- Data Protection Policy
- Allegations of Abuse Made Against Staff Policy
- Low-level Concerns Policy
- Absence Management Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Acceptable Use of IT Systems Policy
- Disciplinary Policy
- Photography Policy
- Social Media Policy
- Annual Leave and Leave of Absence Policy

## **2. Scope**

2.1 This Code of Conduct applies to all employees regardless of length of service including those in their probationary period. It also applies to consultants, contractors, casual and agency staff and volunteers (collectively referred to as staff in this policy although, unlike employees, breaches of the Code of Conduct will not be managed through the disciplinary procedure).

## **3. Professional Behaviour and Conduct**

3.1 Staff are expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct such that public confidence in their integrity is sustained.

3.2 CIT staff are expected to demonstrate the CIT values of Honesty, Integrity, Aspiration, Professionalism and Inclusivity at all times.

3.3 Staff will:

- Have proper and professional regard for the ethos, values, policies and practices of the Trust.
- Take care of themselves and others affected by their activity at work.
- Co-operate with school leaders in meeting their duties under the relevant regulations.
- Treat pupils, parents, colleagues and external contacts with dignity and respect.
- Observe proper boundaries appropriate to their professional position, showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others.
- Inform the Headteacher if they are subject to a criminal conviction, caution, ban, Police enquiry, investigation or pending prosecution.
  - Central staff will inform the Director of HR.
  - The Director of HR will inform the CEO.
  - The CEO will inform the Chair of the Trust Board.
- Be aware that professional behaviour and conduct is expected to be extended to extracurricular trips and visits. All staff attending a trip or visits will act in accordance with this policy.
- Avoid any conduct that could amount to discrimination or harassment.
- Act appropriately in terms of the views they express – in particular, political views – and the use of school resources at all times.
- Ensure all conduct concerns witnessed relating to other staff are reported through the appropriate reporting channels.

3.4 Staff will not:

- Use foul or abusive language.
- Perpetrate discrimination, bullying, harassment, or intimidation, including physical, sexual and verbal abuse.
- Misuse or misrepresent their position, qualifications, or experience.
- Seek to bring the Trust or their school into disrepute.
- Use school resources for political purposes.

#### **4. Safeguarding Pupils**

- 4.1 In accordance with KCSIE, all staff members have a responsibility to safeguard pupils and protect and promote their welfare.
- 4.2 All staff members have a responsibility to ensure they provide a learning environment in which pupils feel safe, secure and respected.
- 4.3 Effectively safeguard pupils, staff members are required to follow the procedures outlined in this Staff Code of Conduct, the Low-level Concerns Policy, and the relevant school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Behaviour Policy, ensuring they do not act in a way that may put pupils at risk of harm, or lead others to question their actions.
- 4.4 In accordance with the school's Behaviour Policy and Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, all staff members will be prepared to identify pupils who may be subject to, or at risk of, the following types of abuse and neglect:
- Physical abuse
  - Emotional abuse

- Sexual abuse
  - Neglect
  - Child-on-child abuse
  - Serious violence
  - Female genital mutilation (FGM)
  - Child sexual exploitation (CSE)
  - Child criminal exploitation
  - Domestic abuse
  - Any other type of abuse
- 4.5 Copies of policies and a copy of Part One (or, where appropriate Annex A for staff not working directly with children) of KCSIE will be provided to staff at induction. Staff will have a clear understanding of the Trust's policies and procedures with regards to safeguarding issues, e.g. abuse, and the important role they play in preventing harm against pupils.
- 4.6 In accordance with the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, all staff will also be aware of the factors that could increase a pupil's risk of being subject to safeguarding issues, including but not limited to:
- Pupils who need a social worker (Child in Need and Child Protection Plans).
  - Pupils requiring mental health support.
  - Children missing from education.
  - Elective Home Education (EHE).
  - CLA, previously LAC and care leavers.
  - Pupils with SEND or health issues.
  - Pupils who identify as or are perceived to be LGBTQ+.
  - Any other factor as identified by the Local Authority as part of their annual training.
- 4.7 If a member of staff has any concerns regarding a pupil's welfare, they will act on them immediately. They will follow the necessary reporting and referral procedures outlined in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and speak to the DSL, ideally within 15 minutes. This must be done before the end of the school day or the child leaves to go home. Staff will be aware of the procedures to follow if a pupil tells them they are experiencing abuse, exploitation, or neglect.
- 4.8 In all cases, if a member of staff feels unsure as to whether an incident or pupil would be classed as a safeguarding concern, they will speak directly to the DSL. Staff will not assume a colleague will take action and share information that might be critical in keeping children safe.
- 4.9 Staff will recognise, acknowledge, and understand that even if there are no reports of child-on-child abuse in the school, this does not mean it is not happening. Staff will understand the scale of harassment and abuse and challenge inappropriate behaviours between peers that are abusive in nature and report any concerns regarding any form of abuse to the DSL without undue delay.
- 4.10 Any staff member that has concerns about another staff member's (including volunteers and supply staff) actions or intent that may lead to a pupil being put at risk of harm will report this in line with the Low-Level Concerns Policy, Allegations of Abuse Made Against Staff Policy or Whistleblowing Policy immediately so appropriate action can be taken.

- 4.11 If the concern is regarding a Headteacher or the CEO, staff will report this to the Director of HR.
- 4.12 If a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with the school, they will use other whistleblowing channels, including contacting the NSPCC's helpline on 0800 028 0285 (between the hours of 8:00am and 8:00pm Monday to Friday) or email [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk). Staff members can also access guidance at [www.gov.uk/whistleblowing](http://www.gov.uk/whistleblowing). Fear about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils.
- 4.13 All staff will partake in the appropriate safeguarding and child protection training; additionally, all staff will receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates in line with the Trust's yearly schedule.
- 4.14 Staff will recognise that, when teaching pupils about safeguarding and online safety, a one-size-fits-all approach may not be appropriate for every pupil, and a more personalised or contextualised approach may be needed for pupils who are vulnerable, victims of abuse and/or have SEND.
- 4.15 Staff will be aware of their local early help process and understand their role in it.
- 4.16 Staff will be aware of the process for making referrals to children's social care service (CSCS) and for statutory assessments under the Children Act 1989, together with the role they may be expected to play in such assessments.
- 4.17 Staff will be aware that confidentiality will never be promised to a pupil – staff will understand the procedure for if a pupil discloses a potential safeguarding issue, in accordance with the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.
- 4.18 Staff will be aware of the Trust's legal duty to refer anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm to, a child or vulnerable adult to the DBS – this includes where:
- The harm test is satisfied in respect of that individual.
  - The individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant offence, or if there is reason to believe the individual has committed a listed relevant offence.
  - The individual has been removed from working in regulated activity or would have been removed if they had not left their post.

## **5. Tackling Discrimination and Harassment**

- 5.1 Employees are required to understand the types of discrimination, harassment and bullying that students and colleagues may be subject to. Employees are required to have read and understood our Equal Opportunities and Diversity policies, Anti-Harassment and Bullying Policy and Preventing Sexual Harassment at Work Policy.
- 5.2 The law protects employees, workers, those involved in governance, contractors, self-employed staff, apprentices, those undertaking vocational training, volunteers, former workers and job applicants from sexual harassment and the Trust has a duty to take reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment of its staff at work.
- 5.3 Examples of sexual harassment include, but are not limited to:
- Flirting, gesturing, making sexual remarks about someone's appearance in any means of communication.

- Asking questions about someone's sex life.
- Telling sexually offensive jokes/pranks and or sharing pornographic or sexual images.
- Unwanted touching, kissing or assault.

5.4 To report an incident of sexual harassment or to raise a concern, staff are encouraged to raise the matter with their line manager and/or CIT HR. Alternatively, concern can be raised in line with the CIT Grievance Policy. Please refer to the Preventing Sexual Harassment at Work Policy for details of how the Trust responds to a report of sexual harassment.

5.5 Employees must not ignore any form of discrimination or harassment. Employees must positively promote equality and diversity and inclusion at all times and not display any behaviour that constitutes any form of discrimination, bullying or harassment.

## **6. Appearance and Dress**

6.1 The Trust expects staff members will:

- Ensure their appearance is clean and neat when at work or representing the Trust.
- Adopt a smart but casual dress code but always dress in a manner that is appropriate to their role. The Trust will make reasonable adjustments to dress code expectations to suit disabilities, medical conditions, and religious and cultural beliefs.
- Remember they are role models for pupils, and their dress and appearance should reflect this.
- Not dress in a way that would cause embarrassment to pupils, parents, colleagues or other stakeholders.
- Cover any visibly inappropriate tattoos or body art whilst in school.
- Not have any piercings that could present a health and safety concern to either the wearer or other staff/pupils.
- Refrain from dying hair an unnatural colour i.e. blue, pink, green, etc. unless for a charity event where prior permission has been granted.

6.2 Unacceptable articles of clothing for employees include, but are not limited to, any type of ripped clothing, low cut vests, shorts, leggings, jeans or open footwear (unless prior agreement has been obtained from your line manager e.g. dress down days, sports duties, extreme hot weather, etc).

6.3 The requirements of particular faiths to wear specific types of clothing or to dress modestly will be respected so long as the item of clothing does not pose a hazard to the health and safety of employees, does not contravene any reasonable and legitimate requirements of the Trust, and does not have a negative impact on any other person.

6.4 If you have been issued with any Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) by the Trust, this must be worn at all appropriate times.

## **7. Attendance**

7.1 The Trust expects staff members will:

- Maintain high standards in their attendance and punctuality.
- Attend work in accordance with their contract of employment and associated terms and conditions in relation to hours, days of work and holidays.
- Make routine medical and dental appointments outside of their working hours or during holidays where possible.
- Refer to the Trust's Annual Leave and Leave of Absence Policy if they need time off for any reason other than personal illness.
- Follow the Trust's absence reporting procedure as set out in the Absence Management Policy when they are absent from work due to illness or injury.

## **8. Conduct outside of Work**

- 8.1 Staff may undertake work outside of the Trust, either paid or voluntary, provided they have declared this to the Trust and it does not conflict with the interests of the Trust.
- 8.2 Staff will not engage in activities, work (paid or voluntary) or hobbies outside of work which could seriously damage the reputation and standing of the Trust, the employee's own reputation, or the reputation of other members of the Trust community. Staff will also not engage in outside work at a level which may contravene The Working Time Regulations 1998 or affect an individual's work performance.
- 8.3 Staff committing offences that involve violence, possession or use of illegal drugs, or sexual misconduct is unacceptable, and will result in disciplinary procedures in line with the Trust's Disciplinary Policy.
- 8.4 Staff will not engage in inappropriate use of social network sites which may bring themselves, the Trust or the Trust community into disrepute. This is explored further in section 14.

## **9. Smoking, Vaping, e-cigarettes, Alcohol and Other Substances**

- 9.1 All Trust premises are non-smoking areas. Any reference to smoking also includes 'vaping'.
- 9.2 The CIT No Smoking Policy must be followed at all times. Staff will not smoke within the sight of pupils, parents or visitors.
- 9.3 Staff will not smoke whilst working with or supervising pupils off-site, such as when on educational visits and trips, including residentials.
- 9.4 The taking of illegal drugs or alcohol during working hours is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.
- 9.5 Staff are expected to arrive at work fit to carry out their job and to be able to perform their duties safely without any limitations due to the use or aftereffects of alcohol or drugs. In this policy drug use includes the use of controlled drugs, psychoactive (or mind-altering) substances formerly known as "legal highs", and the misuse of prescribed or over-the-counter medication.
- 9.6 If an employee arrives at work and a manager reasonably believes they are under the influence of alcohol or drugs, the employee shall immediately be taken to a private room so that an investigation of the circumstances can be undertaken. This may be due to smelling alcohol on the member of staff, a deterioration in work

performance and/or changes in patterns of behaviour.

- 9.7 If alcohol or drug usage impacts on a staff member's performance, the Trust has the right to take appropriate action in accordance with the Trust's Disciplinary Policy, including referral to the police.

## **10. Health and Safety**

10.1 Staff members will:

- Be familiar with and adhere to the Trust's Health & Safety Policy and Health & Safety Staff Handbook, and ensure they take every action to keep themselves and everyone in the Trust environment safe and well.
- Comply with health and safety regulations, adhering to any rules, routines and procedures in place, and cooperate with leaders and colleagues on matters relating to health and safety.
- Use the correct equipment and tools for the job and any protective clothing supplied.
- Comply with hygiene requirements.
- Comply with accident reporting requirements.
- Inform the Headteacher (schools) or Director of HR (Central staff) of any paid work which is undertaken elsewhere, for compliance with The Working Time Regulations 1998 (as amended).
- Adhere to their common law duty to act as a prudent parent would when in charge of pupils.

## **11. Relationships with Pupils**

11.1 The Trust expects staff will:

- Maintain professional boundaries and relationships with pupils at all times, and will consider whether their actions are warranted, proportionate, safe and necessary.
- Act in an open and transparent way that would not lead to others questioning their actions.
- Ensure they do not establish social contact with pupils for the purpose of securing a friendship, or to pursue or strengthen a relationship.
- Ensure they do not develop personal or sexual relationships with pupils: this includes sexual remarks and discussing their own sexual relationships with, or in the presence of, pupils.
- Only contact pupils via the Trust's established mechanisms. Personal phone numbers, email addresses or social media platforms will not be used to contact pupils.

11.2 The Trust expects staff will not:

- Discuss personal information with pupils, such as concerning their lifestyle or marital status, unless it is directly relevant to the topic being taught.
- Correspond through any medium with pupils, e.g. phone calls, text messages, social media platforms or communication and dating apps, unless it is within the staff member's role and via an approved communication method, e.g. school emails.
- Adopt an ongoing support role beyond the scope of their position.
- Use personal equipment for approved activities, such as a personal camera,

unless approved in writing by the site lead. See the Mobile Device Policy for more information.

- Save images, videos or audio recordings of pupils on personal devices, unless authorised by the site lead or parents.
- Discuss or share information regarding other pupils or members of staff; staff should be aware of their surroundings when speaking to others, as their conversations may be overheard.
- Ignore instances of sexual harassment and inappropriate behaviour amongst pupils.
- Invite or allow pupils to visit their home.
- Allow pupils to access staff members' personal devices.
- Attend pupils' homes or their social gatherings, unless approved by the site lead.
- Be alone with a pupil outside of teaching responsibilities, unless approved by the SLT.
- Enter changing rooms or toilets occupied by pupils, when supervision is not required or appropriate, use toilet facilities allocated to pupils, or undress in facilities intended for use by pupils.
- Give personal gifts or special favours, or disproportionately single specific pupils out for special duties or responsibilities.
- Offer overnight, weekend or holiday care as a respite to parents without the approval of the Headteacher.

11.3 Under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, it is an offence for a person aged 18 or over to have a sexual relationship with a child under 18 where that person is in a position of trust in respect to that child, even if the relationship is consensual.

11.4 If a pupil is consistently attempting to befriend or contact a member of staff on social media, the member of staff will inform the Headteacher or ELT as soon as possible.

11.5 Staff are strongly discouraged from forming personal relationships with former pupils, including on social media, as well as with the parents of any pupils on social media.

11.6 In the event of the Trust becoming aware of a close relationship between a member of staff and a former pupil which may raise concerns about their suitability to work with children, the Headteacher will contact the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) for advice and guidance.

11.7 Any inappropriate contact made with former pupils will be handled in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Staff Code of Conduct.

## **12. Appropriate Language**

12.1 Staff will be informed that pupils should not be treated as friends. Staff will not:

- Use inappropriate names or terms of endearment.
- Allow inappropriate conversations or enquiries of a sexual nature to occur.
- Comment on a pupil's appearance, including personal flattery or criticism.
- Treat pupils disrespectfully or discriminatorily, based upon their perceived or actual protected characteristics.
- Subject pupils to humiliation, profanity, or vilification.
- Allow or partake in suggestive humour, banter, jokes or innuendos of a sexual nature.

- Use obscene or inappropriate gestures and language.
- Partake in personal conversations, including on the phone, where this may be overheard by pupils and/or parents.

### **13. Physical Contact with Pupils**

- 13.1 All staff members will respect the personal space and privacy of all pupils and will avoid situations which unnecessarily result in close physical contact.
- 13.2 The Trust understands there are circumstances in which it is entirely necessary for staff to have physical contact with pupils, e.g. when applying first aid and assisting with intimate care, but staff will only do so in a professional and appropriate manner in line with relevant school policies.
- 13.3 When physical contact is made with pupils, it is imperative it is conducted in a way which is responsive to the pupil's needs, is of limited duration and is appropriate to their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background.
- 13.4 Staff will seek the pupil's permission, where possible and appropriate, before initiating contact.
- 13.5 Staff will always use their professional judgement when determining what physical contact is appropriate, as this may differ between pupils. As such, the pupil's feelings and wishes will be taken into account where appropriate and possible.
- 13.6 Staff will never touch a pupil in a way which is indecent and will always be prepared to explain their actions.
- 13.7 Staff will be aware that even well-intentioned physical contact may be misconstrued by a pupil, an observer or by anyone to whom this action is described and, therefore, will be prepared to justify their actions.
- 13.8 Staff will not engage in rough play or play fights with pupils.
- 13.9 Extra caution will be taken where it is known a pupil has previously suffered from abuse or neglect.
- 13.10 Physical contact will never be secretive; if a member of staff believes an action could be misinterpreted, this will be reported to the Headteacher or relevant DSL and appropriate procedures will be followed.
- 13.11 If a child is in distress and in need of comfort as reassurance, staff may use age-appropriate physical contact, such as placing their hand on the pupil's shoulder. Staff will remain self-aware of their actions at all times and ensure their contact is not threatening, intrusive or subject to misinterpretation.
- 13.12 Staff may also use reasonable force as a means of physical contact with pupils for physical management purposes, such instances will always be in accordance with the DfE's Use of Reasonable Force in Schools Policy.

### **14. Transporting Pupils**

- 14.1 When it is necessary to transport pupils off-site, staff will ensure the transport arrangements of the vehicle meet all legal requirements, they have an appropriate

licence and the vehicle is roadworthy, has a valid MOT certificate and is insured.

- 14.2 Staff will gain consent from parents before transporting pupils and will be aware the welfare of all pupils in the vehicle is their responsibility.
- 14.3 Staff will ensure any school transport policy, i.e. lone transport, or risk assessment are followed at all times.
- 14.4 Staff will ensure they:
- Hold a full valid driving licence for the category of vehicle being driven and provide their licence details to the Headteacher where required.
  - Drive in accordance with the laws of the road and Highway Code.
  - Check before each journey that the vehicle is roadworthy, e.g. tyres are properly inflated and meet legal requirements.
  - Are fit to drive; where their fitness to drive may be impaired, e.g. due to a medical condition or taking medication, they inform their line manager as soon as possible and notify the DVLA where required.
  - Notify the Headteacher where there is any change in their circumstances in relation to driving at work, e.g. if they acquire penalty points on their licence for motoring offences outside of work.
  - Comply with requests from the Trust for annual driving licence checks.

## **15. Financial Inducements**

- 15.1 Staff members will familiarise themselves and comply with the Trust's financial regulations.

## **16. Acceptable Use of Technology**

- 16.1 Staff will adhere to the procedures outlined in the Trust's Acceptable Use of IT Systems Policy, Mobile Device Policy and Social Media Policy at all times.
- 16.2 Staff will ensure their use of social media is inline with the CIT Social Media Policy. Where a member of staff's web-based presence including written content, videos or photographs, and views expressed directly or indirectly may bring themselves, the Trust or the Trust community into disrepute it may be investigated under the CIT Disciplinary Policy.

## **17. Premises, Equipment and Communication**

- 17.1 Staff are responsible for:
- Securing windows and doors when rooms are not in use.
  - Ensuring visitors sign in and out at the school office.
  - Challenging any unidentified individuals and notifying the Headteacher or DSL of any unauthorised person.
  - Securing valuable equipment after use.
  - Ensuring the security of Trust equipment when taken off the school premises, such as laptops.
  - Acting in accordance with the Trust's Data Protection Policy ensuring data and information is secure.
  - Reporting any minor security concerns to the Headteacher or ELT.
  - Reporting major security concerns directly to the police or emergency

- services, where appropriate.
- Carrying their Trust ID with them at all times.

- 17.2 Trust equipment and systems are available only for Trust-related activities and will not be used for the fulfilment of another job or for inappropriate personal use.
- 17.3 Illegal, inappropriate or unacceptable use of Trust equipment or communication systems may result in disciplinary action and, in serious cases, could lead to an employee's dismissal.
- 17.4 Employees receiving inappropriate communication or material, or who are unsure about whether something they propose to do might breach this policy, should seek advice from their Headteacher or ELT.
- 17.5 The Trust reserves 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.
- 17.6 Communication systems may be accessed when the Trust suspects the employee has been misusing systems or facilities, or for the investigation of suspected fraud or other irregularity. Access will be secured by the ICT Strategic Lead, only with the permission of the ELT.
- 17.7 Passwords should not be shared and access to computer systems must be kept confidential except on the express request of a Headteacher, ICT Strategic Lead or ELT. Breaches of this confidentiality may be subject to disciplinary action.
- 17.8 Trust equipment used outside the premises, e.g. laptops, will be returned to the Trust when the employee leaves employment or if requested to do so by their Headteacher or ELT.

## **18. Photography and Videos**

- 18.1 All staff must familiarise themselves and comply with all terms of the Trust's Photography Policy.

## **19. Data Protection and Confidentiality**

- 19.1 All staff must familiarise themselves and comply with all terms of the Trust's Data Protection Policy.
- 19.2 Staff members have the right to request access to data that is held about them. Such requests will be made to the Headteacher or ELT in writing in accordance with the Trust's Data Protection Policy.

## **20. Probity of Records**

- 20.1 The deliberate falsification of documents, such as references, academic qualifications or legal documents, is unacceptable. Where a staff member falsifies records or other documents, including those held electronically, this will be regarded as a serious disciplinary matter and potentially a criminal offence.

**21. Contacts**

- 21.1 Staff members will not use Trust business contacts for acquiring materials or services at trade/discount prices for non-Trust activities, unless participating in concessionary schemes arranged by trade unions or other such groups.

**22. Monitoring and Review**

- 22.1 This document will be reviewed on an annual basis and any changes made will be communicated to all members of staff.
- 22.2 All members of staff are required to familiarise themselves with this document as part of their induction.