

SAET Staff Code of Conduct & Grievance Policy

Contents

1. Introduction	2
2. Principles	2
3. Scope of this Policy	3
4. Who does this code apply to?	3
5. Summary of expectations	3
6. What happens if the content of the Code changes?	5
7. Where can you find details of the policies and standards that apply to you?	5
8. Safeguarding children and young people	5
9. Grievances	5
10. Misconduct	5
11. Health, Safety and Well Being	6
12. Equality & diversity	6
13. Attendance at work	6
14. Acceptable Usage of ICT and E-Safety	6
15. Finance	6
16. Criminal charges and convictions	7
17. Conduct outside work	7
18. Conflict of interest	7
19. Information disclosure and confidentiality	8
20. Intellectual property	8
21. Security	8
22. Public comment on SAET activities or policies	9
23. Managerial roles and responsibilities	9
24. Undertaking legitimate management requests	9
25. Dress standards	10
26. Other employment	10

1. Introduction

1.1 The Severn Academies Educational Trust (SAET) believes the public are entitled to expect the highest standard of behaviour from anyone employed by and that the conduct of people working for SAET (and its academies) must be exemplary because of the position of trust and the influence, in relation to students. In addition, this includes promoting the good name and positive profile of all of our academies and the trust as whole.

1.2 SAET fully endorses the Department for Education's (DfE) Code of Practice for registered teachers as part of our whole school Code of Conduct.

1.3 The aim of this Code is to establish a common understanding of the standards of behaviour expected of all staff at the Severn Academies Educational Trust (SAET). The Code does not attempt to provide an exhaustive list of what to do in every aspect of your work, but represents a broad framework within which staff are expected to conduct themselves.

1.4 The Code is supported by a number of individual policies, which outline your obligations and provide guidance on standards of behaviour. Up to date versions of all SAET policies can be found on the SAET website and/or academy Local Governing Body (LGB) website. If in doubt, please refer to these policies or your Headteacher or Principal

1.5 All members of staff in SAET are expected to perform their duties with efficiency, fairness, impartiality, integrity, honesty and compassion. They should also dress in keeping with a school community (see staff Dress Code).

1.6 If a member of staff is unclear about how they should act or react in any particular instance, advice should be sought from their immediate line manager and if the issue is still unresolved, they should seek the advice of a senior member of staff and ultimately the Principal/Headteacher and/or senior SAET staff.

1.7 All staff should ensure they are familiar with the essential reading from the 'Safe Working Practices Guidance', which can be found in the following locations:

- SAET website
- Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children
www.worcestershiresafeguarding.org.uk
- Working Together to Safeguard Children: www.education.gov.uk/publications

2. Principles

2.1 Anyone working for SAET has an inescapable duty to put the interest, well-being, safety and consideration of the students in their charge before all other concerns of any kind. It is recognised that the precise conduct of professional response to any given situation is not easily susceptible to prior or detailed prescription. All professional relationships depend upon the highest standards of integrity, responsibility and sensitivity. The adult in particular has a unique relationship with students, parents/carers and colleagues. This is reflected, even in law, by the Common Law recognition of teachers and support staff as being in loco parentis in respect of students in their charge, including when on school trips and educational visits.

3. Scope of this Policy

3.1 This Code of Conduct is designed to give clear guidance on the standards of behaviour

ALL STAFF are expected to observe, and managers / leaders should notify and regularly refresh and help staff to grow and embed this code and the expectations therein within their own practice and approach.

3.2 This policy has been devised in line with recommendations set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2016, DfE and must be understood, used and applied alongside the SAET/academy policies for teaching, learning and curriculum, also for:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- Complaints
- Online Safety
- Staff conduct
- Whistleblowing
- Anti-Bullying
- SAET Recruitment Policy & Safer Recruitment Guidance
- Equality

4. Who does this code apply to?

4.1 This Code of Conduct applies to all SAET staff (including those on TUPE contracts of employment) who are employed by SAET.

4.2 Although the Code does not directly apply to contractors, consultants, employees working for third party organisations or volunteers, the Academy's continued association with these individuals and/or their organisations requires them to observe and comply with the Code. These values and principles for work in our trust are also outlined and articulated for governors and Directors in the expectations set out for them in specific documents to their role.

4.3 Breaches of the Code and standards set by SAET will ordinarily result in disciplinary action. If you are unsure about any aspect of the Code, please raise it with your line manager quickly.

5. Summary of expectations

5.1 In summary, all employees are expected to work within the scope of their contract of Employment. Your contract of employment is essentially based on trust. Together we must work hard to build that trust. Trust is damaged if you as the employee to do any of the following:

- attend work in a condition where you are unable to carry out your duties safely and effectively.
- act dishonestly
- act without dignity and treat all others without dignity and respect.
- fail to work in accordance with the terms and conditions of your contract of employment and job description and fail to go above and beyond these expectations where reasonably required to do so
- fail to carry out the reasonable instructions of their supervisors, managers, Principals, and to work to the requirements of the job
- fail to understand and apply the SAET's ethos, rules, policies and procedures.
- fail to be committed to delivering quality services to our pupils
- fail to be truthful and honest in your dealings with the Academy/SAET, its pupils, parents/carers, your colleagues and your supervisor/manager and Principal/Headteacher

- fail to ensure that your relationships with your fellow employees and with students are always conducted in a professional and courteous manner
- censure other employees or criticise their work in the hearing of a student
- fail to observe high standards of behaviour, attendance and punctuality as befits a professional person
- if in a teaching role fail to adhere to the professional standards set out nationally
- disclose information to anyone whom SAET may consider has no right to receive it, or say or write anything that would constitute a breach of confidence or promotes our trust in a negative light.
- fail to take all reasonable precautions for the health and safety of yourself, other employees, students, or anyone else who might be harmed or placed in danger by their actions when at work;
- fail to comply with the law and with the SAET rules (finance policy) regarding the declaration of any direct or indirect financial interest in any contract or other matter involving SAET. If in doubt speak to your Headteacher / Principal, SAET finance director or CEO.
- solicit or accept any gift, loan, fee, hospitality or other reward which is, or could reasonably be suspected as being, meant to influence the way in which you carry out your duties. Nor should you buy or trade items with students.
- allow yourself to be influenced significantly in the way you carry out your duties by ties of kinship or friendship, or by some other association or loyalty, or behave in any way in which you may reasonably be suspected of having been so influenced, whether in a SAET academy or when taking educational visits, trips or exchanges.

5.2 Trust would also be damaged if you did any of the following acts:

- seek to deceive SAET by withholding information or giving false information
- destroying, damaging or altering any records or documents without proper authorisation
- misrepresent SAET in your dealings with others or make any statement on behalf of SAET which you are not authorised to do
- commit any act of misconduct or breach of your employment terms
- not carry out a properly authorised instruction
- theft - unauthorised use of SAET property or unauthorised removal of SAET property from the SAET premises
- improper use of public or SAET funds
- improper use of ICT equipment or internet connections during SAET school hours
- discriminated on the grounds of sex, marital status, disablement, colour, race, creed, nationality or ethnic origin (including sexual or racial harassment)
- gross sexual misconduct of any kind
- fraud or dishonesty in connection with work or the violation of the integrity of examinations or their invigilation
- dereliction of duty
- having personal relationships with colleagues which conflict with their role as a teacher, whether in and academy setting or when on school trips or educational visits or exchanges
- committing any act, including a criminal offence, which is incompatible with their status as a SAET employee, even when not at work, or unconnected with work
- inciting another employee to misconduct
- other than where reasonable, necessary and lawful for the proper performance of duties:
- using the authority inherent in their position in an intimidating or overbearing manner;
- assaulting another person at or in connection with their work
- deliberate damage to property

- failure to comply with the national teacher standards in relation to personal and professional conduct
- bringing SAET into disrepute
- other actions that SAET could be considered as not upholding the good name or principles of our trust

6. What happens if the content of the Code changes?

6.1. SAET will take every reasonable step to ensure that the Code of Conduct is kept up to date.

7. Where can you find details of the policies and standards that apply to you?

7.1 Staff can find all SAET policies on the SAET website or associated policies on academy web sites. If you are unable to access the SAET website for any reason, please inform your line manager and request a hard copy.

7.2 The following HR policies apply to all staff:

- SAET Pay Policy
- SAET Performance Appraisal Policy
- SAET Allegations Against a Member of Staff Policy
- SAET Safeguarding Policy
- SAET Health and Safety Policy

8. Safeguarding children and young people (please also see spate policies for Safeguarding and Child Protection, E-Safety and Safer Recruitment)

THE SAFEGUARDING OF ALL CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WITHIN OUR CARE IS OF HIGHEST IMPORTANCE, in line with the requirements set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2016. THEREFORE

8.1 Staff are obligated to understand and adhere to SAET's safeguarding policy, which includes the procedure to follow when concerns are raised about any member of staff.

9. Grievances

9.1 SAET seeks to give all staff a coherent way to raise issues or concerns with their line managers about any their working environment or work relationships and help resolve these issues in a fair, consistent and effective manner.

9.2 More information and guidance on grievances can be found in the appropriate SAET policy.

10. Misconduct

10.1 SAET take matters of misconduct extremely seriously. We aim to provide clear guidance on what is expected from all staff in terms of standards of performance or conduct and the likely consequences of continued failure to meet these standards.

10.2 More information on your obligations and guidance on issues of misconduct can be found in the appropriate SAET Disciplinary Policy and Procedure

11. Health, Safety and Well-being

11.1 SAET recognises and accepts its responsibility for providing a safe and healthy environment for all staff, students and visitors who attend our premises. You are responsible for ensuring the health and safety of yourself and others who may be affected by your actions.

11.2 More information on your obligations can be found in the SAET Health and Safety Policy.

12. Equality and Diversity Policy

12.1 SAET is committed to developing, maintaining and supporting a culture of equality and diversity. All staff must treat colleagues and the public in a fair and equitable way, avoiding unfair discrimination.

12.2 More information on your obligations and guidance on equality and diversity can be found in the SAET Equality and Diversity Policy.

13. Attendance at Work

13.1. Individuals have a responsibility for their own health and attendance at work. SAET will support, advice and help where any underlying health or welfare issues are identified which may be contributing to levels of absence.

13.2 More information on your obligations and guidance on attendance can be found in the following documents:

- Managing Absence Policy and Procedure
- Sickness Reporting Procedure
- Return to Work Interview Guidance Notes

14. Acceptable Usage of Technologies and E-Safety

14.1 SAET requires safe and responsible use of network resources including any online SAET systems and/or Microsoft Office 365 and/or Google online learning, the internet, e-mail, instant messaging, social media, media publications, file transmission and voice communications from all staff.

14.2 More information on your obligations and guidance on acceptable usage of ICT and E-Safety be found in the following documents:

- Acceptable Usage of ICT Policy
- E-Safety Policy

15. Finance

15.1 SAET operate strong financial decision-making and procedures in order to maximize financial effectiveness of the organisation and encourage future growth. All staff, particularly leaders, managers and those working in finance roles, should familiarise themselves with the financial policies applicable to them. If in doubt ask your Headteacher/Principal finance director or CEO.

16. Criminal Charges and Convictions

16.1 SAET requires all applicants for jobs to disclose all criminal convictions whether committed in the UK or elsewhere, unless the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act applies and the rehabilitation period has expired. Posts with SAET are considered as 'excepted' under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975. As such, you are required, before appointment, to disclose any spent or unspent conviction, caution, reprimand or warning, other than those deemed 'protected' under the Exceptions Order 2013.

16.2 SAET requires all employees to undertake an enhanced DBS check. Non-disclosure may lead to termination of employment. However, disclosure of a criminal background will not necessarily debar you from employment - this will depend upon the nature of the offence(s) and when they occurred.

16.3 Once you are an employee/volunteer/Governor/Director you must notify SAET in writing if you are subsequently charged or convicted of any new offence.

16.4 If you are charged with an offence, the notice must be given immediately after you are charged (i.e. next working day). If you are convicted of any offence, the notification must be given immediately after you are convicted (i.e. next working day). Failure to notify SAET in either case will constitute grounds for disciplinary action and may lead to dismissal from employment.

17. Conduct outside Work

17.1 SAET Employees must not engage in conduct outside work which could damage the reputation and standing of the SAET, any of its academies or the staff member's own reputation or the reputation of other members of the academy community.

17.2 In your official capacity (as an SAET employee) or personal capacity, you must not allow your personal interests to conflict with SAET requirements or use your position to improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person. If you are not sure whether or how this may affect you in your role, then you should speak to your line manager immediately.

17.3 Staff are prohibited from forming 'friendships' with students on social networks. Staff should never make contact with students via a private/personal phone and/or email account

17.4 Staff must not engage in inappropriate use of social network sites/mediums, which may bring themselves, the academy, any SAET academy, academy community or employer into disrepute.

17.5 Staff should not make contact with students outside of official working hours or Academy sanctioned extra-curricular activities unless in exceptional circumstances and if needed should do so in the knowledge of their line manager.

18. Conflict of Interest

18.1 If a conflict occurs between your private interests and SAET duties you must resolve the conflict in favour of your SAET duties.

18.2 You must advise your manager in writing of any personal or immediate family private interests that may give rise to a conflict of interest with your official duties.

18.3 You should comply with any reasonable request from SAET to provide information relating to your personal interests or the interests of a dependent or spouse.

18.4 Examples of conflicts (or perceived conflicts) between personal interests and SAET duties that should be declared and in some cases avoided include but are not limited to the following:

- when purchasing a product or service on behalf of SAET liaising with a supplier who employs one of your close relatives
- employees being contracted to provide services to the Academy/SAET outside of their paid employment.
- generating work, which involves travel to provide an opportunity to visit friends / family / relatives etc.
- a supervisor who is in a position to approve higher duties or provide other benefits to a subordinate where a close personal relationship exists (such as a partner or family member or close personal friend).
- involvement with an interview panel when a relationship exists with one of the applicants.

19. Information Disclosure and Confidentiality

19.1 As an SAET employee, you may obtain information that is confidential. You must never disclose information given in confidence by anyone, or information acquired which you believe is of a confidential nature to any unauthorised third party (such as a colleague, parent, student, member of the public etc.), without the consent of a person authorised to give it or unless you are required to by law.

19.2 When you leave your employment with SAET, you must still respect the confidentiality of official information that may have been available to you in the course of your duties and not use this information for private, commercial or political gain

19.3 Staff should never remove confidential information off site without the express consent of a member of the senior leadership team preferably in writing.

19.4 If you are authorised to take documentation or equipment off site then you must ensure that you keep such items secure at all times. Failure to comply with this duty would ordinarily be treated as a serious disciplinary offence, which could result in dismissal from employment.

20. Intellectual Property

20.1 Intellectual property is a legal term that refers to the rights and obligations received and granted, including copyright. Ownership of intellectual property is determined by considering the circumstances in which it was conceived and developed. SAET owns the copyright in material made by, or under its direction. Whether you are an employee, volunteer or a contractor, copyright in material you produce in the course of your work belongs to SAET, unless otherwise explicitly provided for in your contract of employment.

21. Security

21.1 You must visibly display your Identification Badge at all times while you are on any SAET site. All employees are required to challenge anyone on an SAET site without either an Employee ID or Visitor's Badge. You must not allow any individual not displaying an ID Badge to follow ("tailgate") you into any area of the Academy/SAET site. If you come to work without your badge, you must collect and use a temporary replacement. If you lose your ID Badge, you must report it immediately to your line manager. You may be required to pay for a replacement. You must accompany at all times any visitors who have not been DBS checked.

22. Public Comment on SAET Activities or Policies:

22.1 This section includes public speaking engagements, comments on radio and television, letters to newspapers, expressing views in books, journals, community notice boards, online forums and via any other public forum. You must obtain permission from the Principal/Headteacher/CEO before publishing or disclosing any articles, processes or materials that you have produced as part of your employment. You must ensure that consultants and contractors engaged to provide a service for the Academy/SAET are aware that this work is the intellectual property of SAET. All media requests for information and enquiries that relate to policy and procedures or operational activities must be referred to the Principal/Headteacher or the SAET CEO. When making an authorised public comment in an official capacity, you must:

- ensure it is part of your official role.
- not misrepresent the facts concerning SAET policy or administration.
- comply with the confidential information provisions of the Data Protection Act.
- respect the confidentiality of information that has not been approved for release

23. Managerial Roles and Responsibilities

23.1 It is the job of all those within leadership roles in SAET to set the very best example they can.

23.2 As a manager, you have a responsibility to set a good example for employees through your own behaviour and attitudes, especially in relation to upholding the obligations and standards as set in this Code of Conduct.

23.3 You should ensure that you understand your responsibilities under all relevant financial, IT, HR, safeguarding, teaching and learning, relevant legislation, policies and procedures.

23.4 You should ensure your leadership and management style:

- is based on open, honest and thorough communication.
- provides for optimum working conditions within the resources available to you.
- supports positive performance management processes, including access to related learning and development opportunities for appraises
- supports the right of employees to engage in open dialogue with you, and to pursue relevant conflict and management options when issues arise

24. Undertaking legitimate management requests

24.1 As an employee you are obligated to follow all reasonable and lawful request related to your work given by a person with the authority to issue such requests. You should accept that you may not personally agree with all decisions made by your manager.

24. You may refuse to comply with an instruction that appears to be unlawful and report the matter to an appropriate senior leader Headteacher or Principal. You should tell the person giving an unreasonable instruction that the instruction is, in your view, unreasonable and allow them the opportunity to respond. In the interim, you are generally required to carry out the instruction unless:

- there is a danger to your health and safety
- or a conflict of interest may exist
- or there is a very real likelihood that this would constitute a criminal offence

25. Dress Standards

26.1 Your dress style must reflect appropriate workplace health, safety and security considerations applicable to your job and a professional work environment. Please refer to guidance and instructions given by your Headteacher/principal if in doubt.

26. Other Employment

27.1 It is important that you ensure that any additional employment does not conflict with the interests of SAET or affect your ability and credibility to do your job.

27.2 You must also ensure that SAET time and/or resources are not utilised in connection with any approved private employment. If in doubt, the best thing to do is to discuss the circumstances Principal/Headteacher.