Professional Behaviours, Expectations and Standards Policy

Policy Group:	**Staffing & HR**
Policy Ref:	**SHR/17**
Responsible Reviewing Officer and Job Title:	**Head of HR**
Date Written:	**July 2026**
Date Approved by the Board:	**21 October 2026**
Re-approval timetable	**Annually**
Date of Next Review:	**October 2027**

This document provides a guide for adults working and volunteering in Pickwick Academy Trust schools regarding acceptable and desirable conduct to safeguard children.

Wiltshire Council **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO):** **Children's Social Care referrals:** Integrated Front Door (IFD): Out of hours:	LADOservice@wiltshire.gov.uk 0300 456 0108 0300 456 0108 0300 456 0100
Dorset Council **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO):**	 01305 221122 email lado@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk
If you believe a child is **at immediate risk** of significant harm or injury, you **must** call the police on 999.	

1. Introduction

a. Pickwick Academy Trust is committed to providing positive academic, social and emotional outcomes for our children, underpinned by a strong safeguarding ethos. We are equally committed to the welfare of our staff, who are expected to adhere to the highest standards of professional behaviour to maintain confidence and respect of the general public and colleagues. All members of the workforce should be aware that failure to meet the requirements of this policy may result in disciplinary action.

b. The Trustees will make sure that this policy reflects national and local requirements to protect and support the children and adults in our school.

c. We will fulfil our local and national responsibilities as laid out in the following key documents:
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2026)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026)
- The procedures of Safeguarding Vulnerable People Partnership (SVPP) d. This policy:
- is based on the Guidance for Safer Working Practice for those working with children and young people in education settings (2022).
- aims to provide a guide for adults about acceptable and desirable conduct to ensure that staff maintain safe working practice and so safeguard both children and adults.

- does not provide a complete checklist of appropriate behaviour for staff in every circumstance. Staff must make judgements about their behaviour to secure the best interests and welfare of the children in their charge and, in so doing, will be seen to be acting reasonably.

e. In *very exceptional* circumstances where a member of staff or volunteer believes it is the best interest of a child to breach these guidelines, that person **must** tell the headteacher/CFOO/CEO of the justification for any proposed, or action already taken, at the earliest opportunity. The headteacher/CFOO/CEO will make a written record of that discussion including any areas of disagreement and actions taken.

f. This Professional Behaviours, Expectations and Standards Policy is an amalgamation of the Staff Behaviour Policy and the Professional Expectations and Standards Policy and provides guidance for adults working and volunteering in Pickwick Academy Trust schools and the Central Office in accordance with latest Safeguarding requirements.

g. This policy is reviewed annually or earlier as required by changes to legislation or statutory guidance.

2. Purpose and Scope

a. This policy is consistent with all other policies adopted by the Trustees and Local Governance Committee members and should be read alongside the **Trust's Overarching Statement for Safeguarding and Safeguarding policy** for their school as well as the following documents relevant to the safety and welfare of our children:

• School level Behaviour policy	• School level SEND policy	• Trust Online safety policy (including Mobile phone use)
• Trust Health and safety policy	• Trust Whistleblowing policy • Trust AI policy	• Trust Complaints policy •

b. **This policy applies to ALL staff, volunteers, pupils, trainee teachers, apprentices, visitors, Governors, Trustees and Members working in and supporting Pickwick Academy Trust schools.**

All of these groups of people will be made aware of the content of this policy and are required to adhere to the expectations and standards set out in it.

c. For the purposes of this policy:
- A 'volunteer' is a person who performs an activity that involves spending time, unpaid in one of the trust schools (except for approved expenses).
- A 'position of trust' is one in which one party is in a position of power or influence over another, due to their work or the nature of their activity.
- 'Child' refers to all children up to the age of 18. All adults are in positions of trust in relation to every child at our school.

d. If something only applies to one or more specific groups, these are specified by name, e.g. Trustees.

e. **The policy does not apply to** employees of external contractors and providers of services (e.g. contract cleaners). Such staff are covered by the relevant Code of Conduct of their employing body.

3. Responsibilities and Accountabilities

a. The Trust Board is responsible for approving and reviewing this policy, and ensuring it reflects the ethos of the Trust.

b. Members, Trustees, Governors and the Trust's central team are responsible for ensuring they comply with the content of the policy, particularly when visiting schools or attending meetings. Governors should also ensure they adhere to the Trust Code of Conduct for Governors set out the Pickwick Academy Trust Local Governance Committee Handbook.

c. The CEO is responsible for the broadcast of this policy across the Trust and for its promulgation through the CFOO, Directors of Education, Executive Headteachers and, Headteachers.

d. Headteachers/CFOO/CEO are responsible for implementing this policy within their area of responsibility and for monitoring compliance by their staff, pupils, volunteers and visitors.

e. e. All staff:

- Are responsible for ensuring they are familiar with this policy and have an opportunity to contribute to its review.
- Are expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct, inline with the 7 Principles of Public Life – Selflessness, Integrity, Objectivity, Accountability, Openness, Honesty, Leadership.
- understand their responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- are aware that failure to meet the standards of behaviour and conduct in this policy may result in disciplinary action. This includes dismissal, criminal action and/or other proceedings including barring by the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) from working in regulated activity.

f. Pupils, volunteers and visitors are responsible for complying with the requirements in this policy.

g. Trust and school staff induction leaders are responsible for ensuring this policy is shared with all staff as part of their Induction process.

4. Confidentiality

a. The sorting and processing of personal information is governed by GDPR (General Data Protection Regulations 2018) - see Trust Data Protection Policy.

b. Child records are shared with those who have a professional need to see them. When staff have access to confidential information about colleagues, children or their

parents/carers, the staff must treat such information in a sensitive and confidential way, sharing it only in the interests of a child and when legally permitted to do so.

c. Governors and Trustees should not routinely access child records. Exceptions to this would be for the purpose of an investigation in line with the school's complaint policy and procedures.

d. The Trust expects that everyone within the school or Trust community will maintain confidentiality at all times and not disclose any sensitive information about the school or staff.

e. Staff, Governors and Trustees will not use their position to gain access to information for their own advantage and/or a staff members, child's or family's detriment.

f. If a member of staff is concerned that a child is being abused, is at risk of being abused or may have been abused in the past, they should follow the agreed procedure for their school which is set out in a flow chart and available in key areas of their school.

g. If a member of staff is ever in any doubt about whether to share information or not, they should get advice from their Designated Safeguarding Lead.

5. Professional Behaviour and Conduct

The Trust maintains a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of harassment, sexual harassment, bullying, intimidation, victimisation and discrimination. All staff are expected to contribute to a working environment in which everyone is treated with dignity and respect. The Trust will take all reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment and other forms of inappropriate conduct and expects all employees to support this commitment. Prohibited behaviour includes, but is not limited to, unwanted comments, remarks, jokes, banter, messages, physical conduct, inappropriate or suggestive looks, staring, gestures, innuendo, or any other conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. Such behaviour may constitute misconduct, regardless of whether it was intended to cause offence, and may result in disciplinary action.

a) The Trust believes everyone who works in and supports its schools is responsible for their own actions and behaviour; they should avoid any conduct which would lead any responsible person to question their motives and intentions.

b) The Trust believes that everyone in the Trust's community and external contacts should be treated with dignity and respect.

c) The use of foul, offensive and abusive language will not be tolerated.

d) The use of language which is discriminatory and demeaning in any way will not be tolerated.

e) The Trust and its staff will be mindful of the use of language or vocabulary that has negative historical connotations in our society, and will discontinue the use of these words or phrases.

f) Loss of personal civility including, personal attacks or insults, displays of temper (such as throwing objects, shouting or aggressive language that falls below professional standards),

unwanted physical contact (pushing, shoving, hitting, grabbing or holding) or the threat of the same will not be tolerated.

g) Personal and political opinions must not interfere with the provisions of balanced professional advice or the duty to carry out those policies.

h) The Trust expects everyone to work in an open and transparent way; the same professional standards should always be applied regardless of individual characteristics which include age, disability, gender, language, race, religion or belief and/or sexual orientation.

i) The Trust expects everyone to monitor and review their personal practices and ensure they behave appropriately.

j) The Trust expects everyone to maintain the highest levels of honesty and integrity in their work. This includes the requirement to follow the Trust system of financial controls to ensure that Trust funds are safeguarded against fraud when handling and claiming money, in line with the Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy, and in the use of Trust property and facilities. Failure to do so may result in Disciplinary action, Civil and/ or Criminal Proceedings.

k) Members, Trustees and Governors should attend regular training specifically around governance in order that they can fulfil their roles and responsibilities effectively.

l) Trustees and Governors will to take on specific 'link' responsibilities within the Board or Local Governance Committee, for example Safeguarding Lead, Health and Safety Lead or Pupil Premium Champion.

m) Governors, Trustees and Members should also refer to the Trust Code of Conduct for Governors set out in the Pickwick Academy Trust Local Governance Committee Handbook.

n) Any breach of this policy could result in action being taken under the 'Disciplinary Policy', for any serious breach of policy the incident may be referred to the LADO and/or Police.

6. Close and Personal Relationships

a) From time to time, close and personal relationships may exist or develop between work colleagues. Close and personal relationships include spouses, civil partners, family relatives, romantic involvements, close friends, and business and commercial relationships.

b) A close or personal relationship at work will not necessarily advantage or disadvantage any employee. However, they can give rise to a conflict of interest or affect the credibility or objectivity of our operations. Therefore, where a close or personal relationship exists (or can be perceived to exist), this must be declared by the member(s) of staff to their line manager(s). If a close personal relationship exists or develops with a line manager, the staff involved must make a more senior manager aware.

c) Line managers will risk assess and take all reasonable steps to avoid actual and perceived conflicts of interest: line management responsibility between employees who are in a close

or personal relationship will be avoided, including performance reviews. No employee will be unfairly treated or discriminated against on the basis of a personal relationship, perceived or other. Line managers are responsible for dealing with these matters sensitively, effectively and in a confidential manner.

d) Staff should always behave in a professional manner. For example, romantic signs of affection, are not appropriate at work or around school premises. Equally, personal conflict should not be brought into the workplace.
e) Other staff members must not subject employees involved in a declared or perceived personal relationship to bullying, harassment, victimisation, exclusion, unreasonable scrutiny or any other detrimental treatment because of that relationship. Any concerns regarding potential conflicts of interest or professional conduct should be raised through the appropriate management channels or through the Grievance and Resolution Policy and not through personal comments, gossip, speculation or inappropriate behaviour. Such conduct will be taken seriously and may be dealt with under the Trust's Disciplinary or Bullying and Harassment policies.

f) Failure to declare a personal relationship that has or could be reasonably perceived to have given rise to a conflict of interest or any workplace advantage could be considered as a disciplinary matter. Where there has been a declaration of interest, but the employee(s) allow the personal relationship to impact adversely on others in the workplace, this could also be considered a disciplinary matter.

7. Staff relationships with children and parents

a) Staff must maintain appropriate professional boundaries with pupils and parents at all times and avoid speaking or placing themselves in situations that could give rise to concerns, allegations or misunderstandings.

b) Except where there is a legitimate safeguarding, medical, welfare or supervisory reason, staff should not use pupil toilets, changing facilities or other areas designated solely for pupils, and should exercise particular care when entering any area where pupils may reasonably expect privacy. Where entry is necessary, staff should ensure that this is appropriate, proportionate and, where practicable, known to or witnessed by another member of staff.

c) All staff should know that:

- they are in positions of trust in relation to all children on roll. They must ensure that the power imbalance is never used for personal advantage or gratification. They must avoid behaviour which might be interpreted by others as an abuse of the position of trust and report any incident with this potential to the manager. This includes sharing personal contact details with children or families.
- They have a legal duty to protect the interests of children and accept the obligations inherent in that responsibility.

- it is important that they determine how best to build trusted relationships with children and young people which facilitate communication, using professional curiosity and speaking to the DSL if they have concerns about a child.
- they must not establish or seek to establish social contact with children to secure a friendship or to pursue or strengthen a relationship.
- they must inform the Headteacher of any pre-existing (prior to the member of staff or child starting at the school) or new relationship with a child or close family member, which they feel, might compromise the school or their own professional standing.
- they should disclose any relationship or association (in the real world or online) that may impact on the school's ability to safeguard pupils.
- it is an offence (Sexual Offences Act 2003) for a member of staff in a position of trust to engage in **any** form of sexual activity with a child under the age of 18.

Certain behaviours are at odds with a position of trust. These include, but are not limited to:

- Harassment or discrimination based on any characteristic protected by the Equality Act 2010
- Loss of personal civility including, personal attacks or insults, displays of temper (such as throwing objects, shouting or aggressive language that falls below professional standards), unwanted physical contact (pushing, shoving, hitting) or the threat of the same either towards or in front of children or parents
- Staff must not swear, blaspheme or use offensive language in front of pupils, nor use language which is discriminatory and demeaning in any way.

Such behaviours are disciplinary offences and may be referred to Local Authority or the police.

8. Conduct outside of the workplace

a. Staff may undertake work outside of school, either paid or on a voluntary basis provided that it does not conflict with the interests of the school or Trust. The nature of the work cannot be seen to bring the school or Trust into disrepute.

b. Staff must not engage in conduct outside of work, in person or on social media, which could damage the reputation and standing of the school or the Trust, the employee's own reputation, or that of other members of the Trust community. In particular, criminal offences that involve violence, possession or use of illegal drugs or sexual misconduct are unacceptable.

c. Staff must ensure that their conduct, both in and outside of work, including online and on social media, does not undermine their suitability to work with children, compromise professional boundaries, bring the Trust or its schools into disrepute, or otherwise damage the confidence that pupils, parents, colleagues and the wider community place in them. Staff must be mindful that behaviour outside of work may have safeguarding implications and may be relevant when considering an individual's ongoing suitability to work with children. In particular, conduct involving violence, abuse, harassment, sexual misconduct, inappropriate relationships, exploitation, safeguarding concerns,

dishonesty, or the possession, use or supply of illegal drugs is wholly unacceptable and may be treated as a disciplinary matter, and referred to relevant external agencies where appropriate.

d. Staff must use their professional judgement when requesting or accepting any social contact (including through social media). This means that they must:

- not accept any request from pupils for contact via any social media platform.
- make a judgement about whether to maintain the connection in any cases where contacts were made before the child started at the school (e.g. teacher being friend with a parent). Staff must discuss any decision to maintain such contact with the headteacher.

e. We acknowledge that staff may have friendships and social contact with parents of children outside of school. Staff will not engage in conduct outside work that could damage their professional reputation or the reputation of the school community.

f. Any contact between staff and children and/or parents that is deemed to bring the school into disrepute or that might lead a reasonable person to question the staff member's motivation or intentions will always be investigated and could lead to disciplinary action.

g. Staff must not make sexual innuendos or any comments of a sexual nature to any pupil (other than in the context of sex and relationship education in the PSHE curriculum), nor make any comments trivialising alcohol or drug abuse.

h. Occasionally, pupils may develop an infatuation for a member of staff. In such situations, the advice of the Headteacher/Deputy Head must be sought. Staff should deal with these situations sensitively and appropriately to maintain the dignity and safety of all concerned. They should remain aware, however, that such infatuations carry a high risk of words or actions being misinterpreted and should therefore make every effort to ensure that their own behaviour is beyond reproach.

i. Staff must inform the Headteacher of any proposed or pre-existing arrangements between them and the families of children on roll that take place outside school e.g. baby-sitting, sports coaching, music tuition.

j. Staff are strongly advised to wait until after an ex-pupil's 18th birthday before accepting any request on social media.

9. Gifts, rewards, favouritism and exclusion

a. All staff and volunteers are required to declare their interests, both personal and financial, where the group or organisation they are affiliated with would be considered to be in conflict with the ethos of the Trust (see Trust Gifts and Hospitality Policy).

b. Staff must:

- declare any gift they receive from a parent or child. This does not include small tokens of appreciation such as at Christmas or the end of the year but does include gifts exceeding the value of £25, for which permission to accept the gift is required . (see Trust Gifts and Hospitality Policy)
- not give gifts to individual children. Any rewards or treats will be given only as part of the school's agreed Gifts and Hospitality policy.

- advise the Headteacher/ CFOO about the offer of any gift or hospitality, from outside or inside the school, which might be interpreted as an attempt to influence staff conduct towards children, parents or other employees.

10. Physical contact including intimate/personal care and behaviour management (See Intimate Care Policy)

a. It is not possible to be specific about the appropriateness of each physical contact, since an action that is appropriate with one child, in one set of circumstances, may be inappropriate in another, or with a different child. Any physical contact will be in response to the child's needs, of limited duration and appropriate to their age, stage of development, gender, background and any agreed support or care plan.

b. The use of physical intervention including the use of reasonable force will always be in line with the Trust or individual school's following policies (Special Needs policy, Supporting children with medical needs policy, Behaviour policy, Use of Restrictive Interventions policy).

c. Staff understand that:
   - on a daily basis, it may be entirely appropriate and proper for staff to have physical contact with children and that they do so in ways appropriate to their professional role and in relation to the child's individual needs.
   - some children are more comfortable with touch than others and/or may be more comfortable with touch from some adults than others. Whenever possible, adults seek the child's permission before initiating contact and are sensitive to any signs that the child may be uncomfortable or embarrassed.
   - they have a responsibility to ensure the way they offer comfort to a distressed child is age appropriate.
   - they must never touch a child in a way which may represent a misuse of authority or considered indecent.
   - physical contact must never be secretive, or for the gratification of the adult.
   - they should be aware of cultural or religious views about touching and be sensitive to the issues of gender.

d. If a member of staff believes that an action by them or a colleague could be misinterpreted, or if an action is observed which is possibly abusive, the incident and circumstances will be immediately reported to the Headteacher/DSL and recorded in writing. If appropriate, the Headteacher will consult with the Local Authority Designated Officer for allegations (LADO).

e. Staff understand that a child who has suffered previous abuse or neglect may associate physical contact with such experiences. They recognise that such a child may seek out inappropriate physical contact and know to deter the child sensitively to help them to understand the importance of personal boundaries. Staff know that they must never indulge in play that involves rough-and-tumble or fun fights.

f. Children with disabilities may require more physical contact to assist their everyday learning. The arrangements are understood and agreed by all concerned, justified in terms of the child's needs, consistently applied and open to scrutiny. Staff always allow/encourage children, where able, to undertake self-care tasks independently.

g. If a child's behaviour presents a serious risk to themselves or others, a robust risk assessment and, where relevant, a physical intervention plan is always put in place and reviewed regularly. In all cases where physical intervention takes place, or seclusion and non-force related restraint, including blocking of doors staff must record the incident and subsequent actions and report these in line with the school's behaviour and safeguarding policies. Only staff trained by their setting in restraint may use physical intervention strategies.

h. Where a child is experiencing high levels of emotional or behavioural dysregulation and their behaviour presents a serious risk to themselves or others, seclusion may be used as a safety measure to protect others from harm. The pupil must be always supervised during the period of seclusion. As soon as the immediate risk of harm has reduced, the pupil should be allowed to leave. Seclusion is not a disciplinary response to deliberate or wilful misbehaviour. There are disciplinary measures that are similar, such as removal from the classroom. Staff should refer to the school's behaviour policy.

i. Incidents must be recorded as soon as practicable after the event. It should be recorded by the staff member(s) involved and they should endeavour to do this no later than the same day (Education and Inspections Act 2006). A robust risk assessment and, where relevant, a physical intervention plan is always put in place and reviewed regularly.

11. First aid

a. Staff adhere to the Trust Health and Safety policy, the policy for Supporting Children with Medical Conditions, Allergy and Anaphylaxis policy and First Aid and Accident Reporting Policy.

12. One to one situations

a. Staff carefully consider the welfare needs of children when with them in a one to one situation. All spaces in the school are set up to allow any activity to be easily observed by other staff in the school. Windows and doors are kept clear from display materials to allow rooms to be overlooked. Internal doors remain open when practicable. See Lone Working Policy.

b. Children are provided with age/developmentally appropriate advice about managing distressing feelings that may arise during 1-1 situations in school. Staff will record any time a child has appeared upset/angry during a 1-1 session and will report this to their line manager.

13. Home visits and transporting children (See Trust Lone Working Policy).

a. All work with children and parents/carers is whenever possible undertaken in the school. There are however occasions where it may be necessary to arrange a home visit e.g. as part of child's induction programme, during changes in operating practice such as due to a pandemic.

b. In such situations, these activities will only be undertaken with the knowledge and consent of senior leadership and parents/carers (unless there is a good reason not to, e.g. safeguarding concern). Where possible staff will work in pairs. A risk assessment

will be undertaken and school will ensure staff understand the purpose and limitations of their home visit.

c. Any member of staff transporting a child in their own vehicle will:
   - Do so in line with the Trust Driving policy,

14. Educational Visits and After-School Activities

a. Staff remain in a position of trust during school activities that take place off the school site or out of school hours and so, they will ensure that their behaviour cannot be interpreted as seeking to establish an inappropriate relationship or friendship.

b. Organisers will conduct risk assessments and adhere to Health and Safety guidelines. Staff/child ratios will be specified and where overnight stays are involved, and the composition of groups of children and the supervising staff will be carefully planned to keep all children and staff safe.

c. Where out of school activities include overnight stays, careful consideration will be given to sleeping arrangements as part of the planning process. Children, staff and parents will be informed of these arrangements prior to the start of the trip and any proposed changes to the plans will be agreed with senior staff in the school in advance. Staff will not smoke in the vicinity or sight of pupils or consume alcohol on any school trip, including overnight residentials.

d. Health and Safety arrangements require members of staff to keep colleagues aware of their whereabouts, during an out of school activity. This means staff will always have another adult present in out of school activities, unless otherwise agreed with senior staff in the school.

15. Dress Code and Appearance (Also applies to online and virtual teaching)

a. Members of staff represent their school and the Trust, and their appearance will have an impact on the image the school/Trust portrays to pupils, parents, visitors and the local community. It is therefore important to set a standard of appropriate dress.

b. It is recognised that employees represent a wide range of backgrounds, cultures, ages and tastes and staff should exercise considered judgement when choosing the clothing they wear for work.

c. This dress code has taken account of:
   - 'Article 9 of the Human Rights Act': Freedom of thoughts, conscience and religion Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change their religion or belief and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest their religion or belief, in worship, teaching, practice and observance.
   - Freedom to manifest one's religion or beliefs shall be subject only to such limitations as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of public safety, for the protection of public order, health or morals, or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.
   - The Equality Act (2010)

It shall be the duty of everybody to

- Eliminate harassment, discrimination and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relationships between persons of the same and different protected characteristics

d. Working in a school environment is a professional vocation and high standards of professionalism are required. Adhering to this dress code:

- Helps set and maintain reasonable standards of practice that are also enshrined in the Teachers' and Headteachers' Standards
- Ensures staff are seen to support (by setting a good example) the school's uniform policies and expectations, and helps staff to act as suitable role models for children
- Ensures that staff appearance does not compromise the Trust's reputation
- Supports and maintains good health and safety practice
- Helps the Trust comply with relevant legislation
- Limits the likelihood of causing embarrassment to pupils, parents, colleagues or other stakeholders

e. Staff are expected to dress professionally and appropriately for the role they are undertaking. This may vary according to the role of the individual and the duties being performed on particular occasions (e.g. an EYFS teacher is likely to dress differently to a caretaker) in order to comfortably complete the work, but in all cases, the individual should appear well presented, clean and tidy, and clothing and footwear should be suitable for safe working in a school.

f. No aspect of an employee's dress or appearance should be politically motivated, sexually provocative or revealing, discriminatory, insensitive or offensive.

g. Jewellery and piercings must not create an unacceptable risk either to the employee or to the pupil.

h. Nails should be kept at a length where they are unlikely to amount to a risk, prevent completion of tasks or cause harm to pupils.

i. If visible, tattoos must not cause offence to others; if tattoos are likely to cause offence or give rise to misunderstanding, they must be covered up whilst on duty.

j. High standards of personal cleanliness and hygiene should be maintained at all times.

k. The dress code may be relaxed in certain circumstances such as outdoor/adventure visits, staff training days, charity days etc (at the Headteacher's or CEO's discretion).

16. Smoking, Vaping, Alcohol and Other Substances

a. Staff must not smoke or vape on or in the vicinity of the school premises where they are visible to pupils and visitors.

b. Staff must not smoke or vape whilst working with or supervising children off-site such as when on educational trips and visits.

c. The taking of illegal drugs or alcohol during working hours is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Staff members must never attend work under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.

d. Please also refer to the Trust's substance abuse section in the Managing Absence and Ill Health Policy.

17. Health and Safety

a. The Trust requires that everyone is familiar with the Trust's Health and Safety Policy.

b. The Trust requires that everyone complies with health and safety regulations and legislation, including accident reporting requirements.

18. Attendance

a. The Trust expects that staff members will:

- 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 where possible;
- Refer to the Trust's Managing Absence and Ill-Health Policy if they need time off for any reason other than personal illness;
- Follow the Trust's absence reporting procedure when they are absent from work due to illness, injury or caring for dependants;
- Attend staff training and professional development sessions as required by their line manager.

b. Trustees and Members are expected to attend Board meetings, and send apologies in the event of not being able to attend.

c. Governors are expected to attend Local Governance Committee meetings (and send apologies in the event of not being able to attend) and carry out Link Governor visits to their schools.

19. The acceptable use of technologies

a. Personal mobile phones, devices, and apps on smart watches should only be used in designated staff areas and during approved break times unless there is an emergency or operational requirement. Pop-up notifications must be disabled.

b. Staff, Governors, Trustees and Members must not download data regarding the Trust, an individual school, staff or pupils onto their personal devices. Trustees, Governors and Members must make use of provided software (M365 accounts and Governorhub) to view documents and to store any relevant notes of visit.

c. Staff **must only use** provided IT equipment for work purposes, in line with the trust Online Safety Policy and Acceptable Use Agreement. Failure to do this will invalidate Cyber Insurance cover under the DFE Risk Protection Arrangement.

d. Staff must not engage in inappropriate use of social network sites which may bring themselves, the Trust, or school community into disrepute. Staff should ensure that they adopt suitably high security settings on any personal profiles they may have.

e. Staff must be circumspect in their use of **all** social media or any other web-based presence that they may have, including written content, videos or photographs, and views expressed directly or by association with websites/pages or posts established by others (e.g. 'liking', reposting or forwarding). This includes the use of dating websites where staff could encounter parents or pupils either with their own profile or acting covertly.

f. They must consider the long-term implications of any content published by them online, specifically how it might ever have an adverse effect:
   - on their reputation as an individual working in an education setting
   - their ability to maintain good professional boundaries with parents and with children
   - on the reputation of the school.

g. Staff must not access any content from the internet on personal device during school hours, on the school site, or on a school computer or device at any time that could bring the school into disrepute or that might lead to questions about the staff member's motivation, intentions or use of work time.

h. All staff are aware of their part in ensuring the DFE Filtering and monitoring standards and cyber security standards are upheld. If staff become aware of misuse by another member of staff (in or out of school), they must report those concerns using the 'Concerns and Allegations against staff (including supply teachers, third party & self-employed staff, volunteers, contractors)' procedures. These procedures now include adults from other organisations or individuals using school premises.

i. Staff may use AI as a tool to support their work, but remain accountable for all content, decisions and actions. AI must never replace professional judgement, compromise confidentiality, or be used in a way that places children at risk. Staff must not enter identifiable pupil, family or staff information into publicly available AI systems unless explicitly approved by the school and compliant with data protection requirements.

j. Please refer to the Trust's Data Protection Policy, AI Policy and Online Safety Policy for further information.

20 . Exceptional operating circumstances

a. If the school is required to change the way we offer our provision to children due to exceptional circumstances
e.g. during a pandemic lockdown, staff safeguarding responsibilities to children will continue to apply, in line with the school's Safeguarding policy.

b. The DSL will ensure staff, children, and families are provided with written:
- temporary changes to procedures for working with children e.g. online.
- timescales for such changes so that all children, families and staff understand when such arrangements will end, and arrangements revert to those in place prior to the events leading to the need for the temporary changes.

21. Photography and recording

a. Staff are only permitted to use their mobile phone in line with the Trust Online Safety Policy. Outside of this use, phones must be stored securely out of sight, or kept in the schools designated area. unless use for a specific purpose is approved in advance by the Headteacher. Any pictures taken of children will be in accordance with the Trust's Online Safety Policy.

b. Staff will not:
- take images of a child's injury, bruising or similar (e.g. following a disclosure of abuse)
- make audio recordings of a child's disclosure.

22. Concerns and allegations against staff (including supply teachers, trainee teachers, third-party & self-employed staff volunteers and contractors, and adults from organisations or individuals using the school premises)

a. If a member of staff is concerned about the behaviour of a person working or volunteering at the school (including contractors), they will following the agreed procedure set out in the Allegation flowchart. (See school Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy).

b. The Trust operates a 'low-level' concerns policy in accordance with KCSIE. 'Low-level' refers to behaviour that is: inconsistent with expectations set out in this policy, including inappropriate conduct outside of work, and/or does not meet the allegations threshold, or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

c. All concerns, no matter how small, must be logged in writing and shared responsibly and with the Headteacher and/or DSL, who will then recordand deal with the concern promptly and appropriately. This will serve our commitment to create and embed a culture of openness, trust, and transparency in which the school's values and expected behaviour set out in this policy are constantly lived, monitored and reinforced by all staff.

d. 'Low-level' concerns could include, but are not limited to:
- being over friendly with children;
- having favourites;
- taking photographs of children on their mobile phone;
- engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door;

- using sarcasm, ridicule, belittling humour, inappropriate banter or joking with children, or speaking to children in a manner that fails to take reasonable account of their age, understanding, SEND, vulnerability, emotional wellbeing or individual needs or,
- using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language.

e. We also encourage all staff to self-refer to their line manager or DSL where they have found themselves in a situation which could be misinterpreted, might appear compromising to others, and/or on reflection they believe they have behaved or spoken in such a way that they consider falls below the expected professional standards.

22. Whistleblowing

All staff and volunteers are expected and encouraged to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school/Trust's safeguarding regime. All staff within the school/Trust who wish to raise an issue relating to the organisation with someone in confidence can use the following whistleblowing procedures (see Trust Whistleblowing Policy)In the first instance, concerns about poor or unsafe practice within must be raised with the Headteacher/CFOO/CEO.

Where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with the Headteacher/CFOO/CEO or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, other whistleblowing channels may be open to them:

- The Chair of the Local Governance Committee.
- Members of the Executive Team, such as Directors of Education, CFOO or CEO
- The Chair of the Trustee Board
- The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call: 0800 028 0285 or email: help@nspcc.org.uk if:
- they think the concern will not be dealt with properly or
- may be covered up or if they raised a concern but it has not been acted upon or if they are worried they are being treated unfairly.

23. Training

a. All members of staff and volunteers must read this policy and sign the form in the Appendix or have completed an online form to confirm they understand this Professional Behaviour, Expectations and Standards Policy.

b. The welfare of all children on roll is of paramount importance. All staff including volunteers are informed of this policy at induction and given the chance to question and discuss the expectations set out.

c. Work in schools is both rewarding and demanding. We support staff by prioritising time to discuss the challenges of their role linked to any aspect of this Professional Behaviour, Expectations and Standards Policy with their line manager and seek further support as appropriate.

24.Equal Opportunities

a. An Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment has been completed in order to ensure it complies with equality obligations outlined in discrimination legislation. The policy positively reflects the aims and ambitions of Pickwick Academy Trust.

25. References, acknowledgements and associated documents

a. This policy will be implemented in conjunction with other Pickwick Academy Trust polices in this group:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy (school level policy)
- Complaints Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- AI Responsible Use Policy
- Gifts and Hospitality Policy
- Intimate Care Policy
- Supporting Children with Medical Needs Policy
- Allergy and Anaphylaxis Policy
- First Aid and Accident Reporting Policy
- Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy
- Lone Working Policy
- Recruitment Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Driving Policy
- Managing Absence and Ill-Health Policy
- Staff Disciplinary Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Behaviour Policy (school level policy)
- Use of Restrictive Interventions Policy (school level policy)

And
Keeping Children Safe in Education

- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- The procedures of Safeguarding Vulnerable People Partnership (SVPP)
- Safer Working Practice for those working with children and young people in education settings

2. Appendices

a. Appendix 1: Compliance form for signature

Appendix 1:

Professional Behaviours, Expectations and Standards Policy 2026-27- Compliance form for signature

Every adult working for and/or supporting the work of Pickwick Academy Trust is required to read and adhere to the Professional Behaviours, Expectations and Standards set out in this policy.

Please complete and return this slip as soon as possible to the Headteacher/CFOO/CEO or confirm you have read it when prompted to do so through the online document sharing system used by your school.

I confirm that I have read and understood the Professional Behaviours, Expectations and Standards Policy for Pickwick Academy Trust and agree to abide by the contents.

Signed:

Date:

Print Name:

Role within the Trust: