



EQUA
Multi Academy Trust

CODE OF CONDUCT

FOR ALL STAFF, GOVERNORS, TRUSTEES AND VOLUNTEERS

Equa Multi Academy Trust is committed to positive academic, social and emotional outcomes for our pupils underpinned by a strong safeguarding ethos. We are equally committed to the protection and welfare of our staff, who are expected to adhere to the highest standards of professional behaviour. Accordingly, and without limitation to this code of conduct, staff, governors, trustees and volunteers shall conduct themselves in a safe, positive and professional manner at all times.

Policy Lead	CEO
Committee	Resources
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Aim of this code of conduct

Equa Multi Academy Trust is committed to positive academic, social and emotional outcomes for our pupils underpinned by a strong safeguarding ethos.

Employees at the Trust should ensure that their own behaviour, and the manner in which they conduct themselves with colleagues, pupils, parents and other stakeholders, sets a positive and professional example for pupils.

We recognise that 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 forms part of a staff member's contract of employment and failure to comply with it, along with the associated school policies, may result in disciplinary action being taken, including legal action where this is warranted.

This document applies to staff members who are:

- Employed by the school, including the headteacher and volunteers.
- Employed in units or bases that are attached to the school.

This document does not apply to:

- Peripatetic staff members who are centrally employed by the LA.
- Employees of external contractors.

These employees are governed by their employment contracts and any relevant laws pertaining to their activities within the school, for example, the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.

PLEASE NOTE: This document also applies to all governors, trustees and volunteers. Throughout the policy any references to 'staff' also applies to these groups.

1. Safeguarding pupils

In accordance with Keeping children safe in education (KCSIE) 2022, or latest version, staff members have a responsibility to safeguard pupils, and protect and promote their welfare.

Staff members have a responsibility to ensure that they provide a learning environment in which pupils feel safe, secure and respected.

To effectively safeguard pupils, staff members are required to follow the procedures outlined in this Staff Code of Conduct, the Behaviour Policy and the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, ensuring that they do not act in a way that may put pupils at risk of harm, or lead others to question their actions.

In accordance with each school's Behaviour Policy and Equa's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, staff members will be prepared to identify pupils who may be subject to, or at risk of, various types of abuse and neglect, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect
- Child-on-child abuse
- Serious violence
- FGM
- Child sexual exploitation (CSE)
- Child criminal exploitation (CCE)
- Bullying; this includes cyberbullying, and prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying

Copies of policies and a copy of Part one (or Annex A for staff members not working directly with children) of KCSIE will be provided to staff at induction. Staff will have a clear understanding of the school's policies and procedures with regards to safeguarding issues, e.g. abuse, and the important role they play in preventing harm against pupils.

In accordance with the Equa's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, 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.
- LAC and previously LAC.
- Pupils with SEND.
- Pupils who identify as LGBTQ+.
- Pupils perceived to be LGBTQ+.
- Pupils struggling with mental health needs.
- Pupils who have a family member in prison, or who are affected by parental offending.
- Pupils that are frequently absent or permanently excluded from school.

If a staff member identifies a pupil who is subject to, or at risk of, abuse and neglect, they will follow the necessary reporting and referral procedures outlined in the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. Staff will be aware of the procedures to follow if a pupil tells them they are experiencing abuse, exploitation or neglect.

In all cases, if a staff member feels unsure as to whether an incident or pupil would be classed as a safeguarding concern, they will speak directly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). Staff will not assume a colleague will take action and share information that might be critical in keeping children safe.

Staff will understand that even if there are no reports of peer-on-peer abuse in the school, this does not mean it is not happening. Staff will report any concerns regarding any form of abuse to the DSL without undue delay. Staff will understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between peers that are abusive in nature.

Any staff member that has concerns about another staff member's (including volunteers and supply staff) actions or intent, or believes these actions may lead to a pupil being put at risk of harm, will report this in line with the Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy or Whistleblowing Policy immediately so appropriate action can be taken.

Upskirting is not tolerated by the school and any incidents of upskirting must be reported to the DSL who will decide on the next steps to take, which may include involving the police.

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 address help@nspcc.org.uk. Staff members can also access guidance at 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.

If the concern is regarding the headteacher, staff will report this to the chair of the governing board and the CEO will be informed.

Staff will partake in the appropriate safeguarding and child protection training, which will include online safety; additionally, staff will receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates at least annually.

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.

Staff will be aware of their local early help process and understand their role in it. Staff will also be aware of the process for making referrals to children's social care service (CSCS) and for statutory assessments under the Children Act 1989, along with the role they may be expected to play in such assessments.

Staff will reassure victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe by the school. Staff will never give the impression that pupils are creating a problem by reporting

abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment, nor should a pupil ever be made to feel ashamed for reporting an incident.

Staff will be aware that confidentiality must never be promised to a pupil – staff will understand the procedure for if a pupil discloses a potential safeguarding issue, in accordance with Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Staff will be aware of the school'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 that 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.

2. Appearance and dress

The school expects that staff members will:

- Ensure that their appearance is clean and neat when at work or representing the school.
- Dress in a manner that is appropriate to their role – schools will make reasonable adjustments to uniform expectations to suit disabilities, medical conditions, and religious and cultural beliefs.
- Remember that they are role models for pupils, and that their dress and appearance should reflect this.
- Not dress in a way that would cause embarrassment to pupils, parents, colleagues or other stakeholders.
- Any tattoos or body art deemed inappropriate for a school setting, e.g. inappropriate language/symbolism, must be covered. All piercings to be subtle in appearance.

3. Attendance

The school 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 or during holidays where possible.
- Refer to Equa's Staff Attendance Management Policy if they need time off for any reason other than personal illness.
- Follow the school's absence reporting procedure when they are absent from work due to illness or injury.

4. Professional behaviour and conduct

Staff members are expected to treat other colleagues, pupils, parents, and external contacts with dignity and respect.

The use of foul and abusive language will not be tolerated. Discrimination, bullying, harassment or intimidation, including physical, sexual and verbal abuse, will not be tolerated.

Staff members will not misuse or misrepresent their position, qualifications or experience, or bring the school into disrepute.

Staff members will inform the headteacher if they are subject to a criminal conviction, caution, ban, police enquiry, investigation or pending prosecution.

Staff will be aware that professional behaviour and conduct is expected to be extended to extra-curricular trips and visits. Staff attending a trip or visit will act in accordance with this Code of conduct.

Staff will act appropriately in terms of the views they express (in particular political views) and the use of school resources at all times and will not use school resources for party political purposes.

5. Conduct outside of work

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

Staff will not engage in outside work or activities which could seriously damage the reputation and standing of the school, the employee's own reputation, or the reputation of other members of the school community. In particular, criminal offences that involve violence, possession or use of illegal drugs, or sexual misconduct are unacceptable.

Staff will not engage in inappropriate use of social network sites which may bring themselves, the school, school community or employer into disrepute. This is explored further in the [Acceptable use of technology](#) section of this policy.

Some staff may have genuine friendships and social contact with parents of students independent of the professional relationship. These staff should also be aware that this is one way that some people choose to 'groom' – 'grooming' the adult to gain access to a child.

Staff must advise the Designated Safeguarding Lead of any regular social contact they have with a student which could give rise to a concern and inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead if the relationship with a parent extends beyond the usual parent/professional relationship.

Staff must Inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead of any requests or arrangements where parents wish to use their services outside of the workplace e.g. babysitting, tutoring.

Generally, staff should not invite any students into their living accommodation unless the reason to do so has been firmly established and agreed with their manager and the student's parents or carers. Staff should not ask students to undertake jobs or errands for their personal benefit e.g. gardening.

There will be situations where staff have children in their school, and therefore the child's friends visit the home. Staff are to be mindful of the need to maintain appropriate personal and professional boundaries to avoid placing themselves in vulnerable situations.

6. Smoking, alcohol and other substances

Staff will not smoke or vape on the school premises. *(Schools may wish to add a distance from school e.g. Staff will not smoke or vape within a 200 metre distance from the school premises).*

Staff will not smoke or vape whilst working with or supervising pupils off-site, such as when on educational visits and trips.

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. Staff must not consume alcohol or take illegal drugs on school trips and residential visits.

If alcohol or drug usage impacts on a staff member's performance, the school has the right to discuss the matter with the employee and take appropriate action in accordance with the school's disciplinary procedures, including referral to the police.

7. Health and safety

Staff members will:

- Be familiar with, and adhere to, Equa's Health and Safety Policy and ensure that they take every action to keep themselves and everyone in the school environment safe and well.
- Comply with health and safety regulations and use any safety equipment and protective clothing which is supplied to them.
- Comply with hygiene requirements.
- Comply with accident reporting requirements.
- Inform the headteacher of any paid work which is undertaken elsewhere, for compliance with The Working Time Regulations 1998 (as amended).

8. Declaration of interests

Staff members are required to declare their interests, both personal and financial, where the group or organisation they are affiliated with could be considered to be in conflict with the ethos of the school.

For the purposes of this policy, a financial conflict of interest is one where there is, or appears to be, opportunity for personal financial gain, financial gain for close relatives or friends, or where it may be reasonable for a third party to take the view that financial benefits may affect an individual's actions.

The term 'financial interest' means anything of monetary value, including the following:

- Payments for services
- Equity interests
- Intellectual property rights
- Hospitality or gifts

Examples of financial interests that must be declared include, but are not limited to, equity interests in services considered for use by the school.

Non-financial conflicts of interest can also come into conflict, or be perceived to come into conflict, with an individual's obligations or commitments to the school. These interests may include any benefit or advantage including, but not limited to, direct or indirect enhancement of an individual's career or gain for immediate family or someone with whom the individual has a close relationship.

Examples of situations that could give rise to non-financial conflicts of interest include the following:

- Pressure or temptation to accept gifts, inducements or hospitality
- Participating in the appointment, hiring, promotion, supervision or evaluation of a person with whom the individual has a close personal relationship
- Where a member of staff has or develops a close personal relationship with a colleague

Membership to a trade union or staff representative group does not need to be declared.

Staff members will also carefully consider whether they need to declare their relationship with any individual where this might cause a conflict with school activities.

Failure to make a relevant declaration of interests is a serious breach of trust and, therefore, if employees are in doubt about a declaration, they are advised to contact the school or trade union.

All declarations, including nil returns, will be submitted in writing to the headteacher for inclusion on the Register of Business Interests.

9. Relationships with pupils

The school expects that 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 that they do not establish social contact with pupils for the purpose of securing a friendship, or to pursue or strengthen a relationship.
- Ensure that 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 school's established mechanisms: personal phone numbers, email addresses or social media platforms will not be used to contact pupils.

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.

It is not uncommon for students to become strongly attracted to member of staff and/or develop a 'crush' or infatuation. When this is reported, the Senior Leadership Team will put actions into place in order to safeguard the member of staff and student. It should be noted that crushes can also occur between staff and staff. If a staff member feels uncomfortable about the behaviour of another member of staff, they should report this to a member of SLT.

The following refers to crushes involving students. Staff must report any indications (verbal, written or physical) that suggest a student may be infatuated with a member of staff to the Headteacher or Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Staff must always maintain professional boundaries and should not behave in a way which could suggest that they are encouraging an infatuation.

10. One to one situations

Staff working in one to one situations with students can be more vulnerable to allegations or complaints. It is always important to consider the needs and circumstances of the student involved.

For staff to protect themselves they should:

- Only work one to one with a child where it is absolutely necessary and with the knowledge and consent of senior leaders and parents/carers.
- Ensure that wherever possible there is visual access and/or an open door in one to one situations.
- Be aware of relevant risk assessments, policies and procedures.
- Always report any situation where a student becomes distressed, anxious or angry.

Staff should not block windows or panels in doors, or use signs such as 'engaged' or 'do not enter' on doors of offices or similar spaces.

11. Abuse of power

As a result of the knowledge, position and/or authority invested in their role, all staff are in a position of trust in relation to all the students on roll. Staff maybe in a position of power with other staff, whether determined by their role, position, status or interactions.

Staff should understand that the relationship between a person working with a child/ren is one in which the adult has a position of power or influence.

They must always maintain appropriate professional boundaries in both schools and online.

They should recognise that the relationship cannot be one between equals and the responsibility they must exercise as a consequence.

Staff must not

- Use their position to gain access to information for their own advantage and/or to a student's or family's detriment.

- Use their position to gain access to staff information which is used to undermine a colleague.
- Use their power to intimidate, threaten, coerce or undermine students or members of staff
- Use their status and standing to form or promote relationships with students or staff which are of a sexual nature, or which become so.

12. Physical contact with pupils

Schools understands that 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.

When physical contact is made with pupils, it is imperative that 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.

Staff will seek the pupil's permission, where possible, before initiating contact. 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 always be taken into account. Staff will never touch a pupil in a way which is indecent and will always be prepared to explain their actions. 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.

Staff will not engage in rough play, tickling or play fights with pupils.

Extra caution will be taken where it is known that a pupil has previously suffered from abuse or neglect.

Physical contact will never be secretive; if a member of staff believes an action could be misinterpreted, this will be reported to the headteacher and appropriate procedures will be followed.

Where it is necessary in PE classes for teachers to demonstrate use of equipment, this will be conducted with another member of staff if possible. If a pupil is required to participate, their consent will be given before doing so.

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 that their contact is not threatening, intrusive or subject to misinterpretation.

Staff may also use reasonable force as a means of physical contact with pupils for restraint purposes, such instances will always be in accordance with the DFE's guidance on the use of reasonable force.

13. Showering and changing

Pupils are entitled to respect and privacy whilst they are changing, e.g. before and after PE; however, a level of supervision is required to ensure that pupils are safe, and that they are not subjected to bullying.

The supervision will be appropriate to the needs and ages of the pupils, and sensitive to the potential for embarrassment.

At primary level, where possible, female staff will supervise girls and male staff will supervise boys. At secondary level, only female staff will supervise girls and only male staff will supervise boys.

Staff will announce their intention of entering the changing room to allow pupils to maintain their privacy and will only remain in the changing room for as long as is necessary.

Staff will never change or shower in the same area as pupils.

14. Transporting pupils and home visits

When it is necessary to transport pupils off-site, staff will ensure that 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.

Staff will gain consent from parents before transporting pupils and will be aware that the welfare of all pupils in the vehicle is their responsibility.

Two or more staff will be present in the vehicle to avoid any discrepancy regarding safeguarding concerns.

In the case of an emergency, the headteacher, DSL or DDSL may give permission for a member of staff or nominated parent to transport a child where it is considered this is in the child's interests. Every effort will be made to seek permission from a parent or appropriate family member and a record will be kept.

Whilst most work is completed in the school setting, there may be occasions in response to an urgent, planned or specific situation where it is necessary to make one-off or regular home visits. Two or more staff will be present for a home visit to avoid any discrepancy regarding safeguarding concerns.

Staff should:

- Agree the purpose for any home visit with a member of SLT and the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Have a clear understanding of the actions that should be taken if it is believed that a child or parent is at immediate risk of harm, including when to contact emergency services and/or partner agencies.
- Observe social distancing at all times.
- Except in an emergency, never enter a home without the parent or carer's consent or when the parent is absent.
- Adhere to any risk management strategies.
- Ensure there is visual access and/or an open door in one to one situations.
- Always make detailed records including times of arrival and departure.

15. Financial inducements

Staff members will:

- Familiarise themselves and comply with the school's financial regulations.
- Declare to the Local Governing Body, in writing, any gifts received, with the exception of:
 - Low cost, functional items suitable for business rather than personal use and displaying the supplier's logo – these items may be accepted.
 - Non-excessive gifts offered by parents or pupils to school staff to express their gratitude, but staff members should always refuse monetary gifts.
 - Hospitality in the form of meals and drinks where it is part of a normal business meeting.
 - Authorised visits to exhibitions, demonstrations, conferences, business meals and social functions in connection with the school's business, which shall be at the school's expense.
- Not accept a personal gift, payment, or other incentive from a business contact – any such gifts should be returned.
- Declare any gift that cannot be returned to the governing board, who will decide how it will be used.
- Only accept offers to specific events after authorisation from the governing board.

16. Acceptable use of technology

Staff will adhere to the procedures outlined in the Equa's Online Safety Policy and Technology Acceptable Use Agreement at all times.

Staff will be aware of how the use of technology can impact safeguarding and wellbeing issues, e.g. online abuse. Staff will be vigilant to ensure their own behaviour is respectful and that pupils are using technology appropriately while under their care.

Staff are required to employ the highest security settings on any personal profiles they may have.

Staff will not engage in inappropriate use of social networking sites including contacting pupils or their family members, accepting or inviting friend requests from pupils or their family members, or following pupils or their family members on social media.

Equa schools understand that some staff members are also parents of pupils at the school and, therefore, may wish to contact other parents. When doing so, staff will exercise their professional judgement and will not contact family members on social media if this would lead to a conflict of interest.

Staff will remain mindful of their use of social media and their web-based presence including written content, videos or photographs, and views expressed directly or indirectly which may bring themselves, the school or the school community into disrepute.

Online and virtual teaching

Online and virtual teaching have grown significantly and the detailed requirements are in the Remote Learning Policy for each school.

Staff must:

- Adhere to the Remote Learning Policy.
- Be fully dressed.
- Ensure that a senior member of staff is aware that an online lesson / meeting is taking place and for what purpose.
- Avoid one to one situations – request that a parent is in the room for the duration or ask a colleague or member of SLT to join the session.
- Only record a lesson or online meeting with a pupil where this has been agreed with the headteacher or other senior staff, and the pupil and their parent / carer have given explicit written (email) consent to do so.
- Be able to justify images of pupils in their possession.

Staff should not

- Contact pupils outside the operating times defined by senior leaders.
- Take or record images of pupils for their personal use.
- Record virtual lessons or meetings using personal equipment (unless agreed and risk assessed by senior staff).
- Engage online while children are in a state of undress or semi-undress.

17. Premises, equipment and communication

School equipment and systems are available only for school-related activities and will not be used for the fulfilment of another job or for personal use, unless specifically authorised by the headteacher.

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

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 the headteacher.

The school reserves the right to monitor emails, phone calls, internet activity or document production on school-owned equipment, principally in order to avoid offensive or nuisance material and to protect systems from viruses, but also to ensure proper and effective use of systems.

Communication systems may be accessed when the school suspects that the employee has been misusing systems or facilities, or for the investigation of suspected fraud or other irregularity. Access will be secured by the systems manager, only with the permission of the governing board.

Passwords should not be shared and access to computer systems must be kept confidential except on the express request of the headteacher or systems manager. Breaches of this confidentiality may be subject to disciplinary action.

School equipment that is used outside the premises, e.g. laptops, will be returned to the school when the employee leaves employment or if requested to do so by the headteacher.

18. Photography and videos

Photographs and videos will only be taken using school equipment – using personal mobile phones for this purpose is prohibited, in accordance with the school's photography policy/procedure.

Consent for taking photographs will be obtained from parents, or the pupil themselves, if they are deemed old enough and able to make the decision for themselves.

The age of consent that is legislated is 13 and above; however, this is only applicable for online services provided directly to children. For everything else, an appropriate age of consent is considered on a case-by-case basis by the Data Protection Officer, headteacher and a pupil's parents (where appropriate).

Pupils who have not provided consent, either personally or via their parents, to have their photograph taken or be filmed will have their wishes respected, in line with the Photography Policy.

The headteacher will be notified of the proposed use of the imagery or video and the equipment and ensure that the use of such is included in lesson plans where this is necessary.

All photographs and videos will be available for scrutiny, and staff will be prepared to justify the images or footage taken.

Careful consideration will always be given to the activities which are being filmed or photographed, to ensure that images or videos are not indecent and cannot be misused.

19. Data protection and confidentiality

Regarding personal and sensitive data, staff members are required, under the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018, to:

- Consider the legal basis for collecting the data, ensuring that this is documented.
- Ensure that the data is stored on a GDPR-compliant server, and that the data is not held for any longer than necessary.
- Securely dispose of the data when the relevant retention period ends.

Staff members will not disclose sensitive information about the school, its employees or the LA to other parties.

The only exception whereby it is acceptable for a staff member to disclose information that would otherwise be considered confidential is when the confidential information gives rise to concerns about the safety or welfare of a pupil.

Staff members have the right to request access to data that is held about them. Such requests will be made to the headteacher in writing in accordance with the school's Data Protection Policy.

20. Probity of records

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

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

22. Concerns and allegations against staff (including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors)

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

Equa schools operate 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 DOfA.

All concerns, no matter how small, will be shared responsibly and with the right person, recorded and dealt with promptly and appropriately. This will serve our commitment to create and embed a culture of openness, trust and transparency in which the Trust's values and expected behaviour set out in this policy are constantly lived, monitored and reinforced by all staff.

'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; or,
- using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language.

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 in such a way that they consider falls below the expected professional standards.

23. Monitoring and review

This document will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Trust Board and any changes made will be communicated to all members of staff within Equa.

All members of staff are required to familiarise themselves with this document as part of their induction programme.