Respect Reflection Responsibility Resilience

Green Shoots Partnership

Code of Conduct Policy 24-25

Our Vision

Green Shoots Partnership is a nurturing federation with a strong sense of pride and belonging, with the belief that all have the potential to thrive.

Our Purpose

We exist to cultivate a love of learning by broadening horizons and opening minds to new possibilities. Through our Federation Values, we grow confident individuals who aspire to shape the future.

Last Updated: August 2024

Meadowside Primary School

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1. Introduction

1.1 This Code of Conduct is designed to give clear guidance on the standards of behaviour of all partnership staff and as such:

- Makes a clear statement about the standards of conduct expected of employees of, and those working with, The Green Shoots Partnership
- Ensures all employees and associated persons understand their obligations regarding safeguarding and promoting the welfare of pupils
- Ensures the highest standards of conduct by identifying the partnership's standards which sit alongside professional codes and guidelines
- Helps all employees to act in a way which upholds the partnership's standards and, at the same time, protects them from criticism, misunderstanding or complaint
- Helps build trust between the partnership and the people who come into contact with those working for it.

1.2 All individuals working in partnership are expected to comply with the law as it applies to their work in partnership, particularly in matters such as health and safety, safeguarding of children and data protection. They are also expected to carry out their duties in accordance with the relevant policies, procedures, rules and guidance adopted by the Governing Body.

1.3 In addition to this Code of Conduct, all employees engaged to work under teachers' terms and conditions of employment have a statutory obligation to adhere to the Teachers' Standards (England) and in relation to this policy, Part 2 of the Teachers' Standards – Personal and Professional Conduct.

2. Scope

2.1 This Code of Conduct applies to:

- **Employees -** all employees of the partnership, including apprentices and temporary and casual staff
- **Associated persons -** individuals providing services for the partnership but who are not employed, e.g. contractors and their sub-contractors, supply and agency staff, students, volunteers, secondees from other establishments and self-employed consultants

2.2 This Code does not apply to Governors when they are fulfilling their statutory role, including as a link governor and when attending meetings with senior staff and/or the Governing Body. However, should a Governor take a volunteer role within the partnership, then they should be considered to be an associated person under this policy whilst undertaking that role.

2.2 Disregarding this Code will, in certain circumstances, result in disciplinary action being taken in the case of employees. For associated persons failure to follow the code may result in the cessation of contractual arrangements.

2.3 All employees will be supplied with a copy of this Code, against which their conduct will be measured. Associated persons will also be issued with a copy of this Code and will be expected to comply with it whilst engaged to work with the partnership.

2.4 Some provisions contained within this code will continue after employment or the contractual relationship has ended e.g. the requirement to maintain confidentiality. Where this is the case, it will be highlighted within the relevant section of the code.

2.5 For ease of reading, and from this point onwards, the term 'employee' will be used for both directly employed staff and associated persons working within the partnership. Should the arrangements for each group differ then this will be highlighted accordingly.

3. Standards and Attitude

3.1 All employees of the partnership are expected to give the highest possible standard of service to pupils, parents and carers, fellow employees, Governors and members of the public. The following principles exemplify the standards that are required:

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children

3.2 Safeguarding is at the heart of the work of the partnership and all employees must undertake their work in support of the partnership's duties for safeguarding children and young people. Further information is given in section 4 below.

Honesty and integrity

3.3 All employees must perform their duties with integrity and be open and honest in their dealings and communications with others. They should strive to deliver on the commitments they have made and observe high ethical standards. Employees must not disclose information given to them in confidence or share confidential information where it is inappropriate or unlawful to do so. They must not allow their own personal or political opinions to interfere with their work and must at all times perform their duties in an objective manner. For further information regarding confidentiality please see section 6.

Responsibility

3.4 All employees must take responsibility for their own actions and be accountable for these. They should use any partnership funds or resources entrusted to, or handled by, them in a responsible and lawful manner. In addition, they should not make personal use of resources, property or facilities of the partnership unless properly authorised to do so. Employees must not put themselves in a situation where there is a conflict between their personal and professional interests. Please see sections 7 and 8 below for further information regarding relationships, conflict of interest and outside commitments.

Respect for others

3.5 The partnership believes that every employee has the right to work in a safe environment without the fear of discrimination, harassment or abuse. All employees must treat others with dignity and respect and should value the contribution that others can make. They should not discriminate unlawfully or inappropriately against any person and must always act in a professional and courteous manner. Employees should strive to maintain positive relations with all parties and must not act in a way which could be perceived as bullying.

3.6 Employees should recognise and respect the work demands of, and contributions made by, others within the workplace. This respect can be demonstrated by completing tasks to agreed deadlines, attending calendared meetings promptly and communicating effectively with others. Employees are expected to take direction and leadership from senior staff within the partnership.

3.7 The partnership aims to ensure that everyone who comes into contact with it is treated in line with the provisions of the Equality Act 2010, and not in any way disadvantaged by factors which could prevent the implementation of fair policies and operations.

3.8 The partnership takes a zero-tolerance approach to aggressive and violent behaviour towards its staff and, in serious cases, the Executive Head Teacher may ban an individual or individuals from the partnership site.

4. Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children

4.1 Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's mental and physical health or development

- Ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care, and
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

4.2 Everyone who comes into contact with pupils and their families has a role to play in safeguarding children. The role played by partnership employees is particularly important as they are able to identify concerns early and potentially prevent concerns from escalating.

4.3 All employees have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn. In addition, employees have a responsibility to identify children who may need extra help or who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm. All employees then have a responsibility to take appropriate action, working with other services as needed.

4.4 All employees within the partnership are required to remain vigilant around pupils, be mindful of the indicators of possible abuse or neglect and act on issues of concern immediately should they arise. Such issues should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Deputy DSL in their absence.

4.5 The partnership has a Safeguarding Policy which all employees must read and act in accordance with at all times. Induction training on safeguarding and the Safeguarding Policy will be made available to all new staff within the Partnership. This training will be updated for all staff at least annually. Failure to attend this training without good reason will be considered a serious issue which may result in further action being taken. Associated persons may fulfil their safeguarding training requirements through alternative provision e.g. through their own employer, however, they must be able to provide evidence of such training to the partnership.

4.6 Employees of the partnership must maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned. Should they have any concerns regarding the welfare of a pupil, employees should always follow the partnership's procedures and act in the interests of the child.

4.7 When allegations are made against a member of staff regarding a safeguarding issue, then the formal policy for dealing with allegations will be invoked, in line with local Safeguarding Partnership guidance. For associated persons an appropriate process will be followed, involving that person's employer, if relevant. In all cases the partnership will make referrals to the DBS in line with its statutory obligations.

4.8 Failure to report issues of concern and/or failure to act in the best interests of a child will be considered as a serious issue which may, if proven, constitute gross misconduct. For associated persons an alternative process will be followed which may result in cessation of their contractual arrangements.

5. **Behaviour Management and Restrictive Physical Intervention**

5.1 Staff must ensure they fully understand the partnership's policies on behaviour management, pupil discipline and restrictive physical intervention guidance and training and always follow these, using strategies appropriate to the circumstances and situation. Staff should not use any form of degrading or humiliating treatment to punish a pupil.

5.2 There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate and proper for staff to have physical contact with children; however, it is crucial that staff only do so in ways appropriate to their professional role and in relation to the pupil's individual needs and any agreed care plan.

5.3 Any physical contact should be in response to the child's needs at that time, of limited duration and appropriate to their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background. Employees should, therefore, always use their professional judgement.

6. **Confidentiality, Disclosure and Security of Information**

6.1 The partnership recognises the importance of an open, transparent culture with clear communication and accountability. It is the partnership's aim to be as open as possible about its activities. The law requires that certain types of information must be available to auditors, inspectors, the Police, children's services, government departments, parents and the public. If an employee is in any doubt as to whether they can release any particular information, they should always check with the Head of School first.

6.2 The confidentiality of information received during an employee's, duties should be respected and must never be used for personal or political gain or to cause damage to the interests and reputation of the partnership, its employees and its pupils. Employees must not knowingly pass information on to others who might use it is such a way. If they believe that information should be disclosed in the public interest, they should follow the partnership's whistle-blowing policy before doing so. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action being taken or the cessation of contractual arrangements.

6.3 Employees must not communicate confidential information or documents to others who do not have a legitimate right to know. Furthermore, information which is stored on computer or manual systems must only be disclosed in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018.

6.4 When an employee leaves the employment of the partnership, or an associated person ceases to work with the partnership, then the requirement to maintain confidentiality regarding the information gained during their employment/ association will continue. In addition, on ending their employment/association with the partnership individuals must ensure all confidential documentation and records are returned and copies are not retained.

6.5 Employees must ensure that confidential information is stored securely, whether it be in documents and files, or held electronically and whether this information is held on the partnership premises or taken off site.

6.6 Further information is available in the partnership's data protection policy, which employees must ensure that they understand and always follow.

7. **Outside Commitments**

7.1 The partnership recognises that employees are entitled to their private lives. In general, the choices and actions of employees outside of their role are not the partnership's concern. However, to protect all parties and the partnership there are exceptions to this.

Conduct

7.2 Whether in or outside the partnership environment, employees must not conduct themselves in any way which creates doubt as to their suitability for their post or which brings the partnership into disrepute. This includes conduct which would bring into question their suitability to work with children.

7.3 All adults working with children and young people have a responsibility to maintain public confidence in their ability to safeguard the welfare and best interests of children and young people. It is, therefore, expected that they will adopt high standards of personal conduct in order to maintain the confidence and respect of the public in general and all those with whom they work.

7.4 There may be times, for example, when an adult's behaviour or actions in their personal life come under scrutiny from local communities, the media or public authorities. This could be because their behaviour is considered to compromise their position in a partnership setting or indicate unsuitability to work with children or young people. Misuse of drugs or acts of violence would be examples of such behaviour.

7.5 Adults working with children and young people should therefore understand and be aware that safe practice also involves using judgement and integrity about behaviours in places other than the work setting.

7.6 The behaviour or actions of an adult's partner or other family members may raise similar concerns. The partnership may take action if it believes that this behaviour may be a potential risk to pupils or if it impacts on the suitability of an employee to work with the partnership.

Additional work

7.7 Employees are able to take on work in addition to their existing contract of employment, providing it does not conflict with the performance of their duties in the role for which they are employed.

7.8 An employee who wishes to take on addition work must ensure that:

1. the additional hours worked do not contravene the Working Time Regulations or otherwise give the partnership cause for concern about health and safety at work, and
2. the outside work does not place the employee in a position where their duties and private interests conflict, and
3. the outside work does not damage, or potentially damage, public confidence in the partnership's conduct or business.

7.9 All teaching staff, and support staff employed on spinal column point 23 and above, are required to obtain the consent of the Head of School prior to accepting additional work. The partnership will not unreasonably refuse any requests and each will be considered on a case-by-case basis taking into account the particular circumstances. If the additional work involves pupils of the partnership, for example babysitting, then the employee must inform the Head of School regardless of their salary grade. Such notifications should be made to help protect the employee and to ensure that relevant safeguarding information can be shared if appropriate (also see paragraph 12.20 below).

7.10 Associated persons are not required to obtain consent before accepting additional work. However, they should bring to the attention of the Head of School, any other work or

activities which they undertake which may constitute a conflict of interest with the work of the partnership.

7.11 Employees must not undertake private or personal work, paid or unpaid, of any description during working hours or on the partnership premises or using partnership equipment unless that have been given specific permission by the Head of School. Even if approval is granted, any fees received, e.g. lecture fees or examination board payments, would be passed over to the partnership, or unpaid leave must be taken.

Intellectual Property and Copyright

7.12 All intellectual property rights, (that is copyright, design rights and the right to patent inventions) relating to anything created or invented by staff in the course of his/her duties automatically belongs to the partnership, unless otherwise agreed; staff cannot exploit the rights to any such thing without the written permission of the Head of School. Any income raised through the use or sale of these products belongs to the partnership.

7.13 The Executive Head Teacher may agree to the partnership collaborating with other partnerships to create or invent intellectual property to be shared with other partnerships.

Personal interests

7.14 Employees may have a variety of personal interests, which may, from time-to-time, impact on their role for the partnership. To protect the partnership and the employee from any accusations of wrongdoing the partnership has in place a number of safeguards which demonstrate that these interests are not allowed to influence the way the partnership operates.

7.15 Whatever an employee's role within the organisation, they must declare to the Head of School and or the Executive Head Teacher in writing any financial or non-financial interests which could bring about conflict with the partnership's interests. Employees must not make, or become involved with, any official or professional decision about matters in which they have a personal interest.

Gifts and Hospitality

7.16 A potential source of conflict between public and private interests is the offer of gifts, hospitality or benefits in kind to employees in connection with their official duties. It is important to avoid any suggestion of improper influence and ensure that the partnership operates in accordance with the highest standards of integrity, probity and openness.

7.17 Employees must not accept gifts, hospitality or any benefits in kind from a third party which might be seen to compromise their personal judgement or integrity or be seen as an inducement.

7.18 Casual gifts offered by contractors, organisations, firms, parents and carers or individuals such as calendars, diaries, pens, food, drink, flowers and other small gifts need not be declared provided their value does not exceed £20.

7.19 Small gifts from pupils to their class teacher are acceptable and can be retained by employees provided that they do not exceed the £20 limit.

7.20 Hospitality is sometimes offered to representatives of the partnership in an official or formal capacity. Hospitality can take many forms and could include attending exhibitions, seminars, sporting events, shows or concerts. Training events with very low training content and free catering, drink or transport may also be hospitality.

7.21 The following are examples of gifts or hospitality which should be refused by staff:

- gifts of money or vouchers
- free membership or subscriptions
- free goods, services or equipment which are normally provided by a supplier to the partnership at a charge
- any gifts/hospitality which exceed £20

7.22 These gifts and hospitality should be tactfully and courteously refused. If a gift is simply delivered to the partnership and cannot be returned, or cannot reasonably be refused without causing offence, then this gift must be declared to the Head of School and recorded in the Register of Gifts and Hospitality. These items should not be retained by the individual and, where suitable, these items should be used for partnership purposes e.g. fundraising, raffles, etc.

Sponsorship

7.23 Where an outside organisation wishes to sponsor a partnership activity or project, whether by invitation, tender, negotiation or voluntarily, the basic conventions concerning acceptance of gifts and hospitality apply. Particular care must be taken when dealing with contractors or potential contractors.

7.24 Where the partnership wishes to sponsor an event or services, neither an employee nor their partner, spouse or relative must benefit from such sponsorship in a direct way with there being full disclosure to the Head of School of any such interest.

Cautions, Charges, Convictions and Court Orders

7.25 An employee must notify the Executive Head Teacher if charged with, or convicted of, any criminal offence, or accepts a formal police caution, and should do so as soon as possible after the charge, caution or conviction. If the Head of School is the subject of the charge, they must inform the Executive Head Teacher and the Executive Head Teacher to the Chair of Governors.

7.26 The partnership acknowledges that a caution is not a criminal conviction, but employees must be aware that cautions must be declared during Disclosure and Barring checks unless they meet the filtering rules of the Disclosure and Barring Service.

7.27 The partnership acknowledges that an employee charged with an office is innocent until proven guilty. However, special considerations will apply if the offence is one of those which is on the list of offences relevant to safeguarding (a full list is available on the Disclosure and Barring Service's website) or if an employee is imprisoned on remand pending trial.

7.28 Information given to the partnership will be treated as confidential and stored securely in the same way as other confidential personal information, having regard to the guidance from the Disclosure and Barring Service on the length of time for which particular kinds of information should be stored.

7.29 Employees must also notify the Head of School if they are subject to a court order or any other conditions which may affect their suitability to work with children or any circumstances which could lead to disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 if they are employed in relevant childcare.

8. **Relationships and Conflicts of Interest**

8.1 It is unlawful for appointments to be made on the basis of anything other than the ability of the candidate to undertake the duties of the post. Employees and governors involved in making appointments should do everything possible to ensure that these are made based on merit and in accordance with the partnership's policy on recruitment and selection and the prevailing regulations on safer recruitment.

8.2 In order to avoid any possible accusations of bias, employees and governors must not become involved in any appointment or any other decision relating to the discipline, promotion, pay or conditions of another employee, or prospective employee, if they are a relative of an applicant or have a close personal relationship with him or her, nor where they have the opportunity to benefit, directly or indirectly, from an appointment without the express prior approval of the Head of School, Executive Head Teacher or Chair of Governors in the case of the Executive Head Teacher.

8.3 In this section 'relative' means a spouse, partner, parent, parent-in-law, son, daughter, stepson, stepdaughter, child of a partner, brother, sister, grandparent, grandchild, uncle, aunt, nephew, niece or the spouse or partner of any of the preceding persons.

8.4 'Partner' means a couple who live together or who are involved in a romantic relationship.

8.5 'Close personal relationship' would include a person not employed by the partnership with whom an employee has a close business connection.

8.6 Personal relationships between colleagues who work together can give rise to conflicts of interest. Therefore, employees who have entered into a close personal or romantic relationship with a colleague are required to disclose this fact to their Head of School. Any information declared or disclosed should be recorded on both employees' personal files and treated in strict confidence.

8.7 This information should only be considered to ensure that the existence of the relationship does not impact on the smooth running of the partnership.

8.8 All relationships of a business or personal nature with external contractors or suppliers, or potential contractors or suppliers, must be declared to the Head of School (or Executive Head Teacher in the case of the Head of School or Chair of Governors in the case of the Executive Head teacher) at the earliest opportunity.

9. **Financial and Tendering Procedures**

9.1 Employees should exercise fairness and impartiality when dealing with all customers, contractors and subcontractors. Tendering processes must always be carried out in line with the partnerships' financial policies and procedures, the Council's standing orders and financial regulations, including the Partnerships Financial Values Standard (SFVS).

9.2 Employees responsible for engaging or supervising contractors and who have previously had, or currently have, a relationship in a private or domestic capacity with a particular contractor, must declare that relationship to the Head of School (or Executive Head Teacher in the case of the Head of School or Chair of Governors in the case of the Executive Head teacher) at the earliest opportunity.

9.3 If employees become privy to confidential information on tenders or costs relating to external contractors they must not disclose that information to any unauthorised person or organisation.

9.4 All employees must ensure that special favour is not shown to current or recent former employees or their partners, close relatives or associates in awarding contracts to businesses run by them or employing them in any capacity.

9.5 All employees involved in financial activities and transactions on behalf of the partnership, including budgetary control, payments of accounts, payments of salaries and wages, petty cash and orders of works, goods or services must follow the financial regulations detailed in paragraph 9.1 above.

10. **Dress and Appearance**

10.1 The Partnership recognises that dress and appearance are matters of personal choice and self-expression. However, all employees must dress in a manner that is appropriate to a professional role and which promotes a professional image.

10.2 Employees should dress in a manner that is not offensive, revealing or sexually provocative and in a manner that is free from political or contentious slogans. They should dress safely and appropriately for the tasks they undertake and pay regard to any health and safety considerations. For safety reasons appropriate footwear should be worn.

10.3 Offensive tattoos and body art should be covered while employees are in partnership. Discreet earrings and body piercings are acceptable, however, those which could pose a health and safety risk whilst undertaking the tasks of the role should be removed while on partnership premises.

10.4 No caps or hats may be worn in partnership, except where necessary for hygiene reasons, on health and safety grounds, or have been permitted on religious or racial grounds. Head dress in line with beliefs and traditions of various religions and sects are allowed, with the exception of those that cover a substantial part of a person's face such that their identity cannot be confirmed. The reasons for this are:

- the partnership takes the view that in an institution where verbal communication and body language form an important and significant part of the work with children and young persons, it is not appropriate for any employee who comes into contact with pupils in teaching and learning situations to have a substantial part of their face covered; and
- the partnership wishes to ensure that it remains vigilant about the safety and security of staff and pupils, and that no person employed by the partnership should have their faces covered and therefore conceal their identity.

11. Transporting pupils during and outside of normal working duties

11.1 In certain circumstances employees may be required or offer to transport pupils in their own vehicle e.g. sporting events, visits to other partnerships. As with any other activity undertaken at work this should not be undertaken without the knowledge and permission of the Head of School. To help safeguard this action, it is also recommended that more than one staff member be present in such a scenario.

11.2 Employees should ensure that their vehicle meets all legal requirements, ensuring the vehicle is roadworthy and appropriately business insured and that the maximum carrying capacity is not exceeded.

11.3 Employees should never offer to transport pupils outside of their normal working duties, other than in an emergency or where not doing so would mean the child may be at risk. In these circumstances the matter should be recorded and reported both to the Head of School and the child's parent(s) / carer.

12. **Use of information systems**

Green Shoot Partnership systems

12.1 The partnership wants employees to use information systems to the full and to feel competent and comfortable about doing so. However, it is essential that such systems are used appropriately. Any reference to information systems should be taken to mean computer equipment, associated technology and internet access.

12.2 The misuse of information systems is a serious matter and may result in employees being subject to disciplinary and, where appropriate, legal action.

12.3 Guidance documents are available within the partnership in relation to the use of computers and information technology. Employees must be familiar with, and abide by, the partnership's policies on the acceptable use of information systems.

12.4 Private use of partnership facilities, such as computers (including use of the internet), stationery and photocopiers are governed by these documents. Employees should not arrange to receive correspondence, telephones calls or emails in partnership related to outside work or private interests.

12.5 The partnership will monitor the use of information systems without notice. A record of any websites accessed by employees is recorded by the partnership's system and may be examined later if misuse is suspected.

Personal devices

12.6 The partnership accepts that employees will bring their own devices into the workplace and may use them for work purposes e.g. sending and receiving work e-mails on a mobile phone or tablet. When employees are using personal devices for work purposes, including accessing WiFi whilst on partnership premises, then the standards contained in this code will apply to their use.

12.7 The personal use of mobile phones during working hours should be undertaken with discretion and be primarily restricted to dealing with emergencies. Employees should not make or receive calls or texts during work time where pupils are present. Mobile phones should be on silent at all times whilst in partnership and should not be left on display, with the exception of places determined by the partnership.

12.8 Employees are not permitted to use their personal devices for making voice or video recordings within partnership or taking photos of pupils. If there is a requirement in the individual's role to take photographs of children for partnership purposes, this should be carried out using partnership equipment which will be provided with the agreement of the Headteacher/senior manager and in line with the agreed partnership procedures and where appropriate permissions have been sought.

Use of social networking sites

12.9 Employees should ensure that they do not bring the partnership into disrepute or breach their obligations in relation to confidentiality and appropriate behaviour when using social media.

12.10 Employees should not access social networking/media sites during working hours. When accessing such sites outside working hours employees are advised not to write about their work or make reference to the partnership or employer on external web pages. Where an employee chooses to do so he/she should make it clear that the views expressed are their own and do not reflect the views of the partnership.

12.11 In addition, employees must not:

- Disclose any information that is confidential to the partnership to any third party or disclose personal data or information about any individual, colleague, pupil or parent/carer which could be in breach of data protection legislation
- Disclose any information which is not yet in the public arena
- Post illegal material, e.g. material which incites racial hatred
- Link their own personal web pages to the partnership's website
- Include any information, sourced from the partnership, which breaches copyright
- Make defamatory remarks about the partnership, colleagues, Governors, pupils and parents/carers
- Publish any material or comment that could undermine public confidence in the individual as a representative of the partnership or in their position of trust within the community
- Misrepresent the partnership, by posting false or inaccurate statements about the work of the partnership

12.12 In circumstances where an employee makes an inappropriate comment in relation to the partnership or an employee of the partnership but does not actually name them, then the partnership may still consider taking action if it believes that the comment is damaging to the partnership.

Communicating with pupils

12.13 Employees work in a position of trust with pupils and it is therefore vital that this position is not abused. Individuals also need to ensure that they do not put themselves in a position where they can be accused of abusing that trust.

12.14 In support of this, employees must not have any communication with pupils through personal information and communication systems including personal e-mail accounts, social media sites, mobile phones, text messaging, etc.

12.15 All electronic communication with pupils must be through partnership e-mail accounts, for both pupils and staff, and should be appropriate to the staff/pupil relationship.

12.16 Employees must not give out their personal mobile phone numbers or e-mail addresses to any pupils or request and/or retain the personal phone numbers or e-mail addresses of pupils.

12.17 The above guidance regarding communication with pupils continues to apply when the pupils have left partnership and/or the employee has left the partnership.

- It is recognised that there may be circumstances where employees of the partnership are known to pupils outside of work e.g. family relationships, private tutoring, membership of clubs, etc.
- When employees are related to pupils within the partnership, they are required to inform the Headteacher and this will be recorded on partnership systems. Electronic communication with pupils to whom an employee is related should take place out of working hours.

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20.18 When employees interact with pupils from the partnership as a result of any additional employment they hold or volunteering they undertake, they are required to inform the Head of School. (or Executive Head Teacher in the case of the Head of School or Chair of Governors in the case of the Executive Head teacher).

20.19 A declaration form is attached at appendix 1. In these circumstances all electronic communications regarding these arrangements should take place out of working hours.

12.20 Exceptions to paragraphs 12.14 and 12.16 above may be agreed in writing by the Head of School in certain circumstances, for example, for the duration of an educational visit to ensure effective communication between staff and pupils.

13. **Whistleblowing**

13.1 Employees are often the first to realise that there may be something seriously wrong within an organisation. However, they may not express their concerns because they feel that speaking up would be disloyal to their colleagues or to the partnership. They may also fear harassment or victimisation.

13.2 The partnership is committed to the highest possible standards of openness, probity and accountability. In line with that commitment, employees, and those associated with the partnership, who have serious concerns about any aspect of the partnership's work are expected to come forward and voice those concerns. It is recognised that most cases will have to proceed on a confidential basis.

13.3 In order to ensure that this can happen the partnership has adopted a whistle-blowing policy which is available in the staff room. This policy is intended to encourage and enable employees to raise serious concerns within the partnership rather than overlooking a problem or 'blowing the whistle' outside.