



An Daras Trust  
Igniting Curiosity Growing Capabilities

# An Daras Multi-Academy Trust Staff Code of Conduct

The An Daras Multi Academy Trust (ADMAT) Company

An Exempt Charity Limited by Guarantee

Company Number/08156955

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## **Code of Conduct for Academy Employees**

### **1. Introduction**

All employees have personal and legal responsibilities, including; treating others with dignity and respect; acting honestly, using public funds and academy equipment appropriately, adhering to health and safety policy and practising equal opportunities at all times. These expectations are set out below and should be fully observed by **all** staff, including the Executive Head Teacher/Head teacher/Head of School and Senior Leadership Team.

This document is not a prescriptive guide to what employees should and should not do. It highlights the principal areas where employees need to be aware of their responsibilities when working in the Trust and is a framework for behaviour. Employees should ensure they are familiar with the specific policies that underpin these behaviours through reference to the documents highlighted in the “Required Reading” throughout the Code. If these documents are not supplied at induction, the employee should ask the academy for copies.

### **2. Compliance with the Code of Conduct**

The Code of Conduct forms part of an employee’s contract. Failure to comply with it and with the associated academy policies (“Required Reading”) may result in disciplinary action being taken and the academy reserves the right to take legal action against employees where breaches of the Code warrant such action.

### **3. Professional behaviour and conduct**

#### **3a. Treating other people with dignity and respect**

All employees must treat other colleagues, pupils and external contacts, such as parents/carers with dignity and respect.

Staff must comply with the academies equality policies /single equality scheme in respect of colleagues, students and other contacts such as parents. Unacceptable behaviour such as discrimination, bullying, harassment or intimidation will not be tolerated in academies. This includes physical and verbal abuse and use of inappropriate language, sarcasm or unprofessional behaviour with colleagues, pupils and parents.

#### **4. Appropriate relationships with children**

Trust employees must act in an open and transparent way that would not lead any reasonable person to suspect their actions or intent. Employees in academies are in a position of trust and have a duty to protect young people from discrimination and harm and to maintain appropriate professional boundaries. It is equally important for staff to avoid behaviour that might be misinterpreted by others in order to protect both young people and themselves. Staff must read and understand academy policies on child protection/safeguarding.

#### **5. Professional behaviour**

Employees must not misuse or misrepresent their position, qualifications or experience or bring the reputation of the academy into disrepute. Such behaviour may lead to disciplinary action and where relevant, referred to the appropriate professional body.

#### **6. Criminal actions**

Academy employees must inform the Executive Head teacher/Head of School (Local Governing Body if the employee is an Executive Head teacher/Head of School) immediately if they are subject to a criminal conviction, caution, ban, police enquiry, investigation or pending prosecution. The Executive

Head teacher/Head of School or Local Governing Body will discuss this with the employee in the context of their role and responsibilities in order to help safeguard children and other employees at the academy.

## **7. Required Reading**

- Academies Safeguarding policy and procedure / Handbook for staff: Child Protection
- Academy Best Endeavours for staff
- Guidance for safe working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings.
- Additional guidance/policies provided by the academy, in particular Behaviour Policy and positive handling /physical restraint.

## **8. Declaration of interests**

An employee is required to declare where the group or organisation to which the employee belongs would be considered to be in conflict with the ethos of the academy. Membership of a trade union or staff representative group would not need to be declared.

Employees must also consider carefully whether they need to declare to the academy their relationship with any individual(s) where this might cause a conflict with academy activities. For example, a relationship with a governor, another staff member or a contractor who provides services to the academy.

Failure to make a relevant declaration of interests is a serious breach of trust, therefore if employees are in doubt about a declaration, they are advised to take advice from their academy or union.

Prior to commencing employment Trust employers must complete a Pecuniary Interests form (including nil returns). All Trust employees will be required to complete the form on an annual basis (including nil returns). If an employees circumstances change in-year they must request a form from Central HR ([hr@andaras.org](mailto:hr@andaras.org))

## **9. Probity of records and other documents**

The deliberate falsification of documents is not acceptable. Where an employee falsifies records or other documents, including those held electronically, this will be regarded as a serious disciplinary matter and potentially a criminal offence.

Where an employee who has claimed any benefit, including housing benefit, either directly or indirectly and has failed to disclose their full earnings, this will be treated as gross misconduct and the employee may be dismissed and referred to the police.

## **10. Financial inducements**

### **10a. Financial Regulations for academies**

All academy employees must comply with the academies and local authority's Financial Regulations. Employees should familiarise themselves with these Regulations: some of the principal employee requirements are summarised below.

## **11. Business Contacts**

In this section, "*business contact*" refers to any person, body or organisation with which the academy is involved on a financial or charitable basis (including contractors; developers; consultants; regional or national charities). This also includes business contacts who are potential suppliers (e.g. they are tendering for future business).

## **12. Declaration of gifts**

Any gifts that are received should be declared in writing to the Governing Body on the Register of Gifts and Hospitality (Appendix 2) with the exception of those items specifically identified in the sections below. This declaration will be kept for internal and external audit purposes.

## **13. Gifts or hospitality to an employee**

Where a business contact offers a personal gift, personal payment or other incentive such as secondary employment to an employee, these should not be accepted and should be returned with a suitable official letter. Such offers should be declared to the Local Governing Body and recorded in the Register of Gifts and Hospitality.

If it is not possible to return gifts then the employee who deals with that supplier should declare the gift to the Local Governing Body who will keep a record of it and decide how it is to be used. Such gifts remain the property of the academy and should be included in the Register of Gifts and Hospitality.

The only exceptions to these are:

- Low cost, functional items suitable for business use rather than personal use and displaying the supplier's logo e.g. diaries, calendars and pens. These items may be accepted and do not have to be included in the Register of Gifts and Hospitality.
- Gifts offered by parents or students to academy staff to express their thanks, such as boxes of chocolates. However, only gifts with an individual value of £25 or less may be accepted. Such gifts do not have to be declared in writing to the Local Governing Body or be included in the Register of Gifts and Hospitality. For the avoidance of doubt employees must always refuse gifts of money.

Where hospitality in the form of meals and drinks is offered by a business contact, this is only acceptable where it forms part of a normal business meeting (for example, refreshments at training events or meals at evening meetings). Offers of hospitality to specific events, such as dinner or sporting event, should only be accepted after authorisation from the Local Governing Body. These should be approved where there is a clear and demonstrable benefit to the academy and the hospitality would not expose the academy to criticism that the business contract was exerting undue influence. These should be recorded in the Register of Gifts and Hospitality.

Visits by employees to exhibitions, demonstrations, conferences, business meals and social functions in connection with the academies business and authorised by the academy, shall be at the academies expense.

## **14. Gifts or hospitality to the academy**

Where a business contact sends a gift to the academy, (for example, a stationery supplier sending a gift), this should not be accepted and should be returned to the supplier. Such offers should be declared to the Local Governing Body and recorded in the Register of Gifts and Hospitality.

If it is not possible to return the gift, the employee who usually deals with the supplier should declare the gift to the Local Governing Body who will keep a record of it and decide how it is to be used. Such gifts remain the property of the academy and should be included in the Register of Gifts and Hospitality.

The only exceptions to this are low cost, functional items suitable for business use (as opposed to personal use), such as diaries, calendars or pens, which may be accepted and do not have to be declared on the Register of Business Interests.

### **15. Use of academy contacts**

Apart from participating in concessionary schemes arranged by trade unions or other such groups for their members, employees shall not use academy business contacts for acquiring materials or services at trade/discount prices for non-academy activities.

### **16. Required Reading**

- Financial Regulations for Academies

### **17. Use of academy premises and equipment**

Academy equipment and premises are available only for academy-related activities and must not be used for fulfilment of another job or post or for excessive or regular personal use, unless authorised in writing and in advance by the Executive Head teacher/Head of School.

This includes photocopy facilities, stationary, telephones and computers and premises. Any academy equipment that is used outside of academy premises, for example laptops, must be returned to the academy when the employee leaves employment or upon request.

### **18. Other employment**

Employees are permitted to take up secondary employment outside the academy, as long as the activity does not constitute a conflict of interest, adversely affect their primary employment at the academy or exceed the legal maximum working week of 48 hours as defined by the Working Time Regulations.

The secondary employment must be undertaken outside the working hours of the employee's normal post and employees are required to keep the Executive Head teacher/Head of School (Local Governing Body if the employee is the Executive Head teacher/Head of School) informed of their employment at other organisations.

### **19. Health and Safety**

Employees must adhere to the academies Health and Safety policy, procedure and guidance and must ensure that they take every action to keep themselves and everyone in the academy environment safe and well.

This includes taking immediate safety action in a potentially harmful situation (either at academy or off-site) by complying with statutory and academy guidelines and collaborating with colleagues, agencies and the local authority.

### **20. Required reading:**

Trust Health and Safety Policy

### **21. Use of alcohol and illegal drugs**

The taking of illegal drugs during working hours is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. All employees are expected to attend work without being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs and without their performance being adversely impacted by the consumption of alcohol or illegal drugs.

If alcohol or drug usage impacts on an employee's working life, the academy has the right to discuss the matter with the employee and take appropriate action, having considered factors such as the academy or local authority's reputation and public confidence.

## **22. Use of communication systems**

The academy has the right to monitor work emails, phone-calls, internet activity or document production, principally in order to avoid offensive or nuisance material and to protect systems from viruses, but also to ensure proper and effective use of systems by employees.

Employees should be aware that the academy has a right to access employees' personal email and computer files if required for investigation of misuse.

It is recommended that employees do not use academy systems (phone, email, and computers) for personal use. Inappropriate usage, which includes excessive or regular use may result in disciplinary action for the employee and in serious cases could lead to an employee's dismissal.

Inappropriate use of email and internet systems also includes viewing, publication or circulation of illegal or offensive material, viewing, publication or circulation of junk mail, including chain letters, jokes or large attachments, gambling, gaming; these will be treated as disciplinary matters.

### **Social media (personal & professional use)**

The Trust recognises that trust employees are likely to have personal social media accounts (eg: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat etc). The Trust accepts that employees can collaborate and network through their accounts. However, it does come with some risks especially around safeguarding, bullying, professional & personal reputation. It can also reflect on the employer (Trust and school).

When using social media employees must:

- Apply the same standards of conduct online as they are expected to offline
- Remember their online reputation can affect their professional & personal reputation offline
- Be familiar with privacy settings of the platforms, ensure they are used as appropriate
- Remember that social media is a public domain and, even with high privacy settings, material could be viewed, copied, re-posted publicly. It is also available indefinitely.
- Remember ownership of the information uploaded becomes that of the social media company, they are able to do what they like with it
- Remember colleagues, families, professional acquaintances could see their online activity
- Remember they are responsible for what they post, comment on, share and it could have a reflection on them professionally as well as personally

Trust employees must:

- Not share/post confidential information relating to the Trust
- Not accept 'friend' requests from pupils (all social media ages are above primary school age)
- Very carefully consider 'friend' requests, particularly if they are from former pupils, families connected to the school/Trust
- Not post messages, status updates or links to material or content which is deemed to be inappropriate by the Trust. Content includes: pornography, racial or religious slurs, gender-specific comments, information encouraging criminal skills or terrorism or materials relating to cults, gambling or illegal drugs. Inappropriate content or material also covers any text, images or other media that would reasonably offend someone on the basis of race, age, sex, religion or belief, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity or any other characteristic protected by law.

## **Communication - messaging services/applications & social media**

Senior Leaders may set up official work 'groups' on WhatsApp as part of the procedures for emergency evacuation procedures. These must only be used for the reason it was set up for. Employees must apply the same standards on the application as they are expected to offline. The Senior Leader who sets up the 'group' is the owner.

Employees are not permitted, under any circumstances, to use pupil names or acronyms on social media applications or messaging services/applications.

Employees should not use/rely on social media applications &/or messaging services as a way of communicating official work messages to each other. The official communication channels, face to face, phone call, work email or Microsoft Teams are the systems which should be used.

Passwords must not be shared and access to computer systems must be kept confidential. Breach of this confidentiality may be subject to disciplinary action.

Employees who receive inappropriate communications should inform their Executive Head teacher/Head of School or Senior Manager immediately.

### **23. Confidentiality**

All Trust employees and the Local Governing Body come into contact with a significant volume of data and information in relation to pupils, staff, academy activities and many other matters. There is an obligation to read and observe the requirements of the Data Protection Act.

### **24. Managing data**

Under the Date Protection Act, staff are required to collect, maintain and dispose of sensitive or personal data in a responsible manner. There is an obligation to read, familiarise and understand the Data Protection Policy which includes General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

### **25. Disclosing data**

Staff must not disclose sensitive information about the academy, its employees or the local authority to other parties, for example, parents, colleagues or internet blogs. There are particular exceptions to this; for example disclosure of suspected or alleged abuse of a pupil to Child Protection officers; discussion with a person accompanying or representing an employee in a formal meeting or disclosure under the Whistle blowing procedure. All communication with the media must be directed through the Executive Head teacher /Head of School or their nominee.

There are circumstances in which staff are obliged to release pupil data, for example, parents seeking information about pupil progress or other colleagues in the academy.

Staff should be aware that, from time to time, information about employees' salaries is matched with other public sector information (for example housing benefits) in order to prevent fraudulent claims.

### **26. Access to data**

Everyone has the right to request access to data that is held about them and such requests should be made in writing to the Data Protection Representative. See the Trust Data Protection Policy for full guidance on making a request.

### **27. Required Reading:**

Trust Data Protection Policy

**28. Copyright**

Copyright legislation should be displayed next to photocopier machines and employees are required to adhere to the guidance provided about use of educational resources.

**29. Required reading:**

Copyright notices in academy

**Appendix One**

**REGISTER OF GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY**

**Directors, Local Governors and Staff declaration form**

I wish to declare the following information in accordance with the Directors/Governing Body's requirements that a Register of Gifts and Hospitality should be maintained.

**Name:**

**Post:**

**Signature:**

**Date:**

You should provide full details of your declaration below, including a nil return:

Declaration of gifts and hospitality		
Date gift received	From whom	Gift or hospitality