



# STAFF BEHAVIOUR POLICY

## (CODE OF CONDUCT FOR SAFE PRACTICE)

### Record of updates

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR SAFE PRACTICE	
Date Created	August 2014
Date updated	Feb 2016
Revision Due	Feb 2019
Revision Due	March 2020
Revision Due	September 2021
Revision Due	December 2022
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DOCUMENT VERSION CONTROL		
Issue No.	Issue Date	Summary of changes
1	August 2014	Original draft policy
2	Feb 2016	New LA guidance included
3	Feb 2018	Local Authority guidance for schools
4	March 2019	Combined the existing Code of Conduct policy with the LA policy on Staff behaviour
5	November 2020	Updated from SVPP site
6	June 2021	Updated with CP policy date 2021 and added RISE Trust social media clause
7	December 2021	Updated SMT names
8	December 2022	KCSIE 2022 references, banter, professional curiosity added
9	June 2024	Contact names changed
10	September 2023	Updated KCSIE/ policy dates. Reviewed in line with Wiltshire policy
11	September 2024	Updated KCSIE/ policy dates. Reviewed in line with Wiltshire policy

## Staff Behaviour Policy

This document provides a guide for adults working and volunteering in The RISE Trust regarding acceptable and desirable conduct to **safeguard adults, children and young people**.

<b>Key Safeguarding Personnel</b>			
<b>Role</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Tel.</b>	<b>Email</b>
<b>CEO/ Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)</b>	Lynn Evans	01249-463040 07803-406822	lynne@therisetrust.org
<b>Deputy DSL(s) (DDSL)</b>	Danielle Blake (youth)	07715-681950	danielleb@therisetrust.org
	Debbie White	07715-681959	debbiew@therisetrust.org
	Nicola Trollope	07858-365568	nicolat@therisetrust.org
<b>Nominated Trustee</b>	Mo Simmons	01249-463040	mos@therisetrust.org
<b>The key safeguarding responsibilities within each of the roles above are set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023)</b>			
<b>Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO):</b> <b>Children’s Social Care referrals:</b> <b>Integrated Front Door (IFD):</b> Out of hours:			0300 456 0108  0300 456 0108 0300 456 0100
If you believe a child is <b>at immediate risk</b> of significant harm or injury, you <b>must</b> call the police on 999.			

## Introduction

The RISE Trust is committed to providing positive academic, social and emotional outcomes for our children, underpinned by a strong safeguarding ethos. We are equally committed to the welfare of our staff, who are expected to adhere to the highest standards of professional behaviour to maintain confidence and respect of the general public and colleagues.

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

We will fulfil our local and national responsibilities as laid out in the following key documents:

- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024)
- The procedures of Safeguarding Vulnerable People Partnership (SVPP)

This policy:

- is based on the Guidance for Safer Working Practice for those working with children and young people in education settings (2022)
- aims to provide a guide for adults about acceptable and desirable conduct to ensure that staff maintain safe working practice and so safeguard both children and adults.
- does not provide a complete checklist of appropriate behaviour for staff in every circumstance. Staff must make judgements about their behaviour to secure the best interests and welfare of the children in their charge and, in so doing, will be seen to be acting reasonably.

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

## Scope

This policy is consistent with all other policies adopted by The RISE Trust Trustees and should be read alongside the **Child Protection and Safeguarding policy** as well as the following documents relevant to the safety and welfare of our children:

- Behaviour policy
- Health and safety policy
- Child protection and safeguarding
- SEND policy
- Whistleblowing policy
- IT policy – inc Photography, video and other images
- Lone Working policy
- Confidentiality and Information Sharing
- Acceptable Use

**This policy applies to all staff and volunteers working at The RISE Trust.**

For the purposes of this policy:

- 'Staff' refers to all those working for the Trust, full time, or part time, on a temporary basis, or permanent, in a paid or regular voluntary capacity.
- A 'volunteer' is a person who performs an activity that involves spending time, unpaid in this Trust (except for approved expenses).
- A 'position of trust' is one in which one party is in a position of power or influence over another, due to their work or the nature of their activity.
- 'Child' refers to all children up to the age of 18. All adults are in positions of trust in relation to every child (and student over the age of 18) supported by The RISE Trust.

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

## Expectations

All staff:

- are familiar with this policy and have an opportunity to contribute to its review.
- understand their responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- are aware that failure to meet the standards of behaviour and conduct in this policy may result in disciplinary action. This includes dismissal, criminal action and/or other proceedings including barring by the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) from working in regulated activity.

**The RISE Trust Charter** has been written through consultation with staff and Trustees and is shared with all staff as part of the induction process.

## Mandatory Procedures

### Confidentiality

The sorting and processing of personal information is governed by GDPR (General Data Protection Regulations 2018) - see Data Protection Policy (2022).

Child records are shared with those who have a professional need to see them. When staff have access to confidential information about colleagues, children or their parents/carers, the staff must treat such information in a sensitive and confidential way, sharing it only in the interests of a child and when legally permitted to do so.

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

Staff, governors, and trustees will not use their position to gain access to information for their own advantage and/or a child's or family's detriment.

If a member of staff is concerned that a child is being abused, is at risk of being abused or may have been abused in the past, they will follow the agreed procedure set out in the flowchart 'What to do if you are worried about a child', displayed in The RISE trust offices/ venues See Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy (2024).

If a member of staff is ever in any doubt about whether to share information or not, they should get advice from the designated safeguarding lead.

### Staff relationships with children and parents

#### Staff responsibilities

All staff know that:

- they are in positions of trust in relation to all children (and students over the age of 18) on our registers. They ensure that the power imbalance is never used for personal advantage or gratification. They avoid behaviour which might be interpreted by others as an abuse of the position of trust and report any incident with this potential to their line manager. Staff must not share personal contact details with children or families.

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

Certain behaviours are not acceptable for any member of staff or volunteer in a position of trust. These include, but are not limited to:

- Harassment or discrimination based on any characteristic protected by the Equality Act 2010
- Loss of personal civility including, personal attacks or insults, displays of temper (such as throwing objects), unwanted physical contact (pushing, shoving, hitting), inappropriate banter or the threat of the same.
- Staff must not swear, blaspheme or use offensive language in front of families/ colleagues/ other professionals/children/ young people, nor use language which is discriminatory and demeaning in any way.
- Sarcasm or 'jokes' to children of personal, sexual, racist, intimidating or otherwise offensive nature.

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

### **Communication with children and parents, including social contact outside of the workplace**

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

- not accept any request from children/ young people/ parents for any personal contact via any social media platform (The RISE Trust has organisational sites that may be used)
- make a judgement about whether to maintain the connection in any cases where contacts were made before the child started at a RISE preschool (eg staff member being friend with a parent). Staff must discuss any decision to maintain such contact with the CEO.

We acknowledge that staff may have friendships and social contact with parents of children outside of The RISE Trust. Staff will not engage in conduct, eg. anti-social behaviours, outside work that could damage their professional reputation or the reputation of The RISE Trust community.

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

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

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

Staff must inform the CEO of any proposed or pre-existing arrangements between them and the families of children on our registers that take place outside The RISE Trust e.g., babysitting, sports coaching, music tuition.

Staff are advised not to accept friend requests from an ex-clients on social media.

### **Gifts, rewards, favouritism, and exclusion**

*(See Anti-fraud and corruption policy 2022)*

Staff must:

- declare any gift they receive from a parent or child. This does not include small tokens of appreciation such as at Christmas or the end of the year or when a staff member finishes working with a family.
- not give gifts to individual children. Any rewards or treats will be given only as part of The RISE Trust's agreed Staff behaviour policy.
- advise the CEO about the offer of any gift or hospitality, from outside or inside The RISE Trust, which might be interpreted as an attempt to influence staff conduct towards children, parents, or other employees.

*Gifts that are never acceptable* - Circumstances which are never permissible include examples that involve:

- A 'quid pro quo' (offered for something in return)
- Gifts in the form of cash/or cash equivalent vouchers

*Gifts that are usually acceptable* - Possible circumstances that are usually acceptable include:

- Modest/occasional meals with someone with whom we do business
- Occasional (i.e. no more than twice per year) attendance at ordinary sports, theatre and other cultural events
- Gifts of nominal value, such as pens, or small promotional items

### **Physical contact including intimate/personal care and behaviour management**

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

The use of physical intervention including the use reasonable force will always be in line with the following RISE policies Special Needs policy, Supporting children with medical needs policy, and Behaviour policy.

Staff understand that:

- on a daily basis, it may be entirely appropriate and proper for staff to have physical contact with children and that they do so in ways appropriate to their professional role and in relation to the child's individual needs.
- some children are more comfortable with touch than others and/or may be more comfortable with touch from some adults than others. Whenever possible, adults seek the child's permission

before initiating contact and are sensitive to any signs that the child may be uncomfortable or embarrassed.

- they have a responsibility to ensure the way they offer comfort to a distressed child is age appropriate.
- they must never touch a child in a way which may represent a misuse of authority or considered indecent.
- physical contact must never be secretive, or for the gratification of the adult.
- they should be aware of cultural or religious views about touching and be sensitive to the issues of gender.

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

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

Children with disabilities may require more physical contact to assist their everyday learning. The arrangements are understood and agreed by all concerned, justified in terms of the child's needs, consistently applied and open to scrutiny. This can be through My Support Plans, EHCPs and/ or risk assessments (see Special Educational Needs policy). Staff always allow/encourage children, where able, to undertake self-care tasks independently.

If a child's behaviour presents a serious risk to themselves or others, a risk assessment is put in place and reviewed regularly. All children have a right to be treated with respect and dignity even in challenging situations (see our Positive behaviour policy). In all cases staff must record the incident and subsequent actions and report these to the CEO/DSL as well as the child's parents/ carers.

### **First aid**

Staff adhere to The RISE Trust Health and Safety policy, the policy for supporting children/ young people with medical conditions and for administering first aid or medication.

Parental permission must be obtained in writing for administering of medicines (See Administering Medicines policy), and parents/ carers must be informed of and sign for any first aid administered to a child.

Appropriate training will be provided before an individual takes on a role that requires administering medication, first aid or medical care procedures eg feeding tubes, epipens.

### **One to one situations**

Staff carefully consider the welfare needs of children when with them in a one-to-one situation. All spaces in the pre-schools are set up to allow any activity to be easily observed by other staff. Windows and doors are kept clear from display materials to allow rooms to be overlooked. Internal doors remain open when practicable. See The RISE Trust Lone Working procedures/ policy 2022.

**Home visits and transporting children/ families** See The RISE Trust lone working procedures/policy 2022.

There are occasions where staff arrange a home visit.

In such situations, a risk assessment will be undertaken. Any member of staff transporting others in their own vehicle will:

- have prior written permission from parents
- have the appropriate vehicle insurance for business use
- have the correct ratio of children/adults
- ensure that all passengers wear seat belts and children are in car seats with signed parental permission
- ensure booster/ car seats are used according to the current legislation

### **The RISE Trust visits**

Staff are in a position of trust during activities that take place off The RISE Trust sites so they will ensure that their behaviour cannot be interpreted as seeking to establish an inappropriate relationship or friendship.

Organisers will conduct risk assessments and adhere to Health and Safety guidelines. Staff/child ratios will be specified, and the composition of groups of children and the supervising staff will be carefully planned to keep all children and staff safe. Staff will not smoke or consume alcohol on any RISE Trust trip.

Health and Safety arrangements require members of staff to keep colleagues aware of their whereabouts, during such activities.

### **Staff appearance**

Staff must dress smartly, and in accordance with our Dress Code policy 2023.

### **The acceptable use of technologies** (see The RISE Acceptable Use policy 2023)

Staff, students and volunteers are not permitted to use mobile phones in teaching areas (pre-school) or whilst working with children. Personal phones must be left in lockers or staffrooms/ offices during working hours.

Staff must not engage in inappropriate use of social network sites which may bring themselves, The RISE Trust, the RISE community, or employer into disrepute. Staff should ensure that they adopt high security settings on any personal profiles they may have. The RISE Trust has its own social media pages and staff are encouraged to share these posts to promote the Trust's services – should any member of staff see any detrimental comments on our website or social media they should report this to a line manager immediately.

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

They must consider the long-term implications of any content published by them online, specifically how it might ever have an adverse effect:

- on their reputation as an individual working in an education setting
- their ability to maintain good professional boundaries with parents and with children
- on the reputation of The RISE Trust

Staff must not access any content from the internet on personal device, inc mobile phones and Smart watches, during their working hours, and on RISE Trust sites, at any time that could bring The RISE Trust into disrepute or that might lead a reasonable person to question the staff member's motivation or intentions.



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

### **Photography and recording**

Staff are not permitted to not use their own phones, cameras or any device that can be used for photographing or recording children, when on duty for any purpose. Any pictures taken of children by The RISE Trust staff will be in accordance to the Trust's published procedures. **Personal phones are kept in the staff lockers or offices.** Any pictures taken of children by RISE staff will be taken on RISE equipment and deleted once they have been used.

Staff will not:

- take images of a child's injury, bruising or similar (eg following a disclosure of abuse)
- make audio recordings of a child's disclosure.

### **Whistleblowing**

All staff and volunteers are expected and encouraged to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the Trust safeguarding regime. All staff within the Trust who wish to raise an issue relating to the organisation with someone in confidence can use the following whistleblowing procedures:

In the first instance, concerns about poor or unsafe practice within must be raised with Lynn Evans, CEO. Where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with the CEO or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, other whistleblowing channels may be open to them:

- A member of the governing body: Claire Hayes, [claireh@therisetrust.org](mailto:claireh@therisetrust.org)
- The [NSPCC whistleblowing helpline](#) is available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally. Staff can call: 0800 028 0285 or email: [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk) if:
  - they think the concern will not be dealt with properly or
  - may be covered up or
  - if they raised a concern but it has not been acted upon or if they are worried they are being treated unfairly.

### **Concerns and allegations against staff (including supply teachers, third-party & self-employed staff volunteers and contractors, and adults from organisations or individuals using the Trust premises)**

If a member of staff is concerned about the behaviour of a person working or volunteering at the Trust (including contractors), they will follow the agreed procedure set out in the flowchart 'Allegation against adults', displayed in RISE offices and appropriate venues. See Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy (2024).

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

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.

## Training

All members of staff and volunteers have read and signed to confirm they understand this Staff Behaviour Policy.

## Induction

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

## Staff support

Work in The RISE Trust is both rewarding and demanding. We support staff by prioritising time to discuss the challenges of their role linked to any aspect of this Staff Behaviour Policy with their line manager and seek further support as appropriate.

## Monitoring and review

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