



The
Rise
Partnership
Trust
Love • Learn • Laugh

RPT Code of Conduct Policy

September 2023

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Introduction

This code is binding on all Rise Partnership Trust (RPT) employees. It sets out the expected standards of behaviour of all employees. It provides a framework for employees that will help to maintain and improve standards. The code also protects employees from misunderstanding or criticism.

It does not replace other employment policies, procedures, regulations and rules and codes of practice operating within RPT.

The code is not a complete list of what you can and cannot do. Its aim is to set out clearly the basic ground rules that all employees must observe.

We must all:

- Give our communities in RPT the highest standards of service.
- Work in partnership with trustees, governors, staff and colleagues, fostering excellent working relationships.
- Do nothing to harm RPT's or an individual RPT school's reputation, in and out of work.
- Work consistently and in support of RPT's/and individual RPT school's policies and procedures.
- Abide by the following seven guiding principles: ***selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.***

The RPT and all its schools place great value on the key contribution of all employees in achieving these aims, and is committed to creating a working environment where staff are highly motivated and able to provide excellent education to the pupils of Brent and other placing authorities. In return, employees can expect to be treated courteously and with respect by trustees, governors, senior staff, colleagues and members of the public.

Breaches of the code and the standards it sets down may result in disciplinary action being taken against the employee. We expect all employees to operate within the law, both inside and outside of the workplace. Unlawful or criminal behaviour at work will result in disciplinary action; and even away from work may lead to disciplinary action being taken against the employee.

Staff working on behalf of the school who are not employees (e.g. agency, supply, contractors etc.) should have due regard to these standards of behaviour since they are representing the school. However, it is recognised that such staff are not bound by the school's employment policies/procedures in the same way as the school's employees. Nonetheless, any such staff whose behaviour falls below the expected standards of behaviour outlined in this Code could have an impact on the continuation of their contractual relationship with the school.

Misconduct and Gross Misconduct

The RPT and all its schools have in place a disciplinary procedure, which gives examples of the types of breaches of standards of behaviour that are considered to be misconduct, and therefore would result in disciplinary action being taken against the employee. Some breaches are so serious that they are considered to be gross misconduct. If proven, this can result in the employee's dismissal from the school's service. The disciplinary procedure also gives examples of gross misconduct.

Working for our RPT school community

Schools have a real impact on the quality of life of the communities that they serve. It is vital that we get it right and our standards have to take into account the special requirements of staff in our schools. Our work is often politically sensitive and open to public scrutiny. The

public is interested in what we do and how we do it. Success can depend on public confidence in our staff honesty, professionalism and hard work.

Our work is publicly funded; by the DfE, Brent and other placing local authorities. If we are to be above suspicion, any payments or other benefits we personally receive must be properly due to us, and any expenditure we incur on behalf of the school must be lawful and justifiable.

We are employed to work with and for our pupils, their families and our communities. This requires a positive commitment to public service and means putting pupils, parents and communities first.

We have a duty to give our best at all times, to be open, helpful and professional in our approach. Our parents and carers are entitled to have confidence in our provision and services, which depends on all of us being considerate, responsible, sensitive and mindful of the need to respect confidentiality. Of course, The RPT and our schools are also committed to protecting employees from aggressive, abusive or bullying behaviour which may come from members of the public, including parents and carers.

While working within The RPT it is important that:

- You are polite, responsive and helpful.
- You comply with any dress code that is applicable.
- You never make remarks that are racist, sexist, ageist, homophobic, offensive to people who are disabled or other religions.
- You do not harass or discriminate against any member of the public or anyone you meet in the course of your work. RPT treats very seriously complaints of harassment or discrimination on grounds of race, gender, disability, religion or belief, ethnic or national origin, sexuality or age.
- You avoid any conduct in public areas of our schools or out in the community which may discredit The RPT and its schools.
- You follow risk assessment intended for the safety of the community..

Political neutrality

Employees serve their trust board as a whole and must treat all trustees and governors equally and make sure that their individual rights are respected.

Employees must not allow their own political opinions to interfere with their work.

Employees may not display political posters, including election material, in any areas within our schools premises or other buildings which we use and the public has access to. Trade union representatives may display trade union/association views on current issues on the appropriate authorised notice boards within the school, or in other places with the permission of the Head Teacher / CEO.

Where political views are brought to the attention of pupils within the school or during extra-curricular activities, they should be in the form of a balanced presentation of opposing views and be relevant to the subject being taught.

You must disclose to your Head Teacher or CEO any family, business or personal relationships with trustees or governors where this may, or may appear, to put you in a position to exercise improper influence over the workings of the school.

You must not canvass members on employment related matters nor seek to influence trustees and governors prior to any meetings of the Staffing, Appointments or Appeals Committee other than in the context of giving proper professional advice. This does not

include Trade Union representatives who may wish to make representations about relevant issues.

Working with your senior leaders and line managers

You are expected to show loyalty to The RPT and its schools and to support its leaders and managers.

A climate of mutual trust, confidence and respect between leaders, managers and staff is essential to achieving The RPT's and individual school's aims and objectives; meet our performance targets; and provide the highest quality of education for all.

In performing your duties, make sure that you:

- Work diligently and reliably, and never neglect your duty.
- Co-operate with leaders, managers.
- Always be polite, helpful and respectful.
- Never lie to, deceive, abuse or undermine.
- Carry out any reasonable leadership team/management instructions.
- Fill in honestly any document, form or record your leadership team/managers need for work.
- Never falsify any document.
- Never wilfully destroy any document that you know is needed by your leadership team/managers.
- Be at work on time.
- Tell your leadership team/manager if you will be late for work.
- Agree in advance with your leadership team/manager and obtain their approval for any leave of absence/time off you want to request.
- Follow The RPT's rules on reporting any absence, including absence due to sickness.
- Never claim sick leave when you are not sick.
- If you are on sick leave, act sensibly to speed your recovery and return to work, and do nothing deliberately that you know would delay your recovery or worsen the problem.
- Never take illegal drugs or any banned substance.
- Do not drink alcohol or take medicines/ drugs to the extent that it adversely affects your work, performance, attendance or behaviour. You should not be under the influence of alcohol, including having alcohol on your breath during the school day (even if pupils are not present).
- Never drink alcohol on school property unless at an approved social function, e.g. a leaving do, or official school function.
- Ensure that when using alcohol at approved school functions you are responsible for your behaviour and you continue to treat your colleagues with respect.
- Comply with the school's 'Access to Information Policy'.
- Comply with the No smoking/ No vaping on school premises. '.
- Follow risk assessment guidance

In performing your duties make sure that you do not display any of the following behaviours:

- aggressive behaviour, shouting or threatening, impolite or discourteous behaviour
- unwelcome, sexual advances including touching, standing too close or circulating/ displaying offensive material (including via IT/social media)
- spreading malicious rumours or insulting someone (including via IT/social media)
- ridiculing or demeaning someone or setting them up to fail (including via IT/social media)
- exclusion or victimisation (including via IT/social media)
- behaviour or decision-making which is based on improper prejudice
- making unjustified, persistent criticisms (including via IT/social media)
- intimidating or undermining any member of staff (including via IT/social media)

- making threats or comments which are without foundation, about job security or intentionally blocking off promotion or training opportunities (including via IT/social media)
- making someone the butt of jokes (including via IT/social media)

Leading and managing staff

For The RPT, the people it employs and the way they work are the key to its successes. The RPT wants its senior leaders, and leaders at all levels, to provide staff with sound leadership, clear direction, support which is appropriate to the employee's needs, and the opportunity to develop their skills and abilities to enable them to properly fulfil their role. The RPT also believes that everyone is a leader and it is essential we all develop skills and abilities to fulfil our roles.

When leading, supervising or managing staff, ensure that you:

- Manage in accordance with The RPT's policies and procedures.
- Set acceptable standards of conduct at work.
- Support and assist staff to carry out their work properly.
- Consider the training and development needs of your staff to enable them to meet the current and future RPT/school need.
- Deal with staff fairly and consistently, and in accordance with the principles of equality of opportunity.
- Accept responsibility for the work you and other staff do.
- Provide for all staff a working environment that is free from any form of discrimination, unfair treatment, bullying or harassment.
- Be alert to and correct unacceptable behaviour.
- Raise any concerns in a private and confidential place wherever possible.
- Ensure staff can seek advice when raising harassment problems.
- Take all complaints seriously and thoroughly investigate them.
- Report unacceptable behaviour to senior leadership/management.
- Deal with complaints fairly, thoroughly and confidentially.
- **do not:**
 - act in an overbearing manner (ie using unwarranted excessive supervision)
 - wilfully neglect to supervise your employees properly
 - misuse your 'power' or position.

Respecting your colleagues, pupils and parents and carers

When dealing with your colleagues, pupils, parents and carers make sure that:

- You set a good example by treating all your colleagues, pupils and parents and carers with politeness, courtesy, respect, fairness, consistency and confidentiality. (However, confidentiality will only be maintained where this does not impact on The RPT's school's vicarious liability).
- You never make remarks that are ageist, homophobic, racist, sexist, belittling of a person's religion, offensive to the disabled or are otherwise improper.
- You do not harass, bully or discriminate against any colleague. RPT and all its schools treat very seriously complaints of harassment or bullying, or discrimination on grounds of race, gender, disability, religion or belief, ethnic or national origin, sexuality or age.
- You are polite, responsive, helpful and professional at all times.

Working honestly

We expect you to use public money and resources with complete honesty and be able to demonstrate that at all times.

Ensure that you:

- Avoid corruption and the suspicion of it.
- Do not ask for or accept bribes of any sort.
- Never seek or take any reward or favour for providing services apart from your pay.
- Do not take a reward from anyone who has, or might have a business relationship with The RPT or one of its schools, or anyone who stands to lose or gain from a RPT/school decision.
- Do nothing that could be seen as likely to improperly influence your work, your decisions or your impartiality.
- Comply with The RPT's policy on gifts and hospitality.
- Tactfully refuse any gifts of more than token value from an organisation or individual with which The RPT/a school does, or may do business.
- Do not accept hospitality exceeding a minimum level of common courtesy from an organisation or individual with which the school does, or may do business, other than in accordance with The RPT's policy on gifts and hospitality.
- Record any offers of gifts and hospitality in The RPT's Gifts and Hospitality Register.
- Do not use improper influence to get people you meet through your work to leave you things in their will.
- Report to your line manager/senior leader if people you meet through work leave you things in their will.
- Never obtain RPT/school property or money when you are not lawfully entitled to it (this includes subletting a school's property without approval).
- Do not fraudulently claim housing benefit, or any other benefit from the council, or any administered by the Department of Work and Pensions or Inland Revenue.
- Do not commit fraud or theft against any organisation or individual, including when claiming housing benefit or income support.
- Do not falsify documents to claim pay including overtime or sick pay.
- Do not make personal use of school property, facilities, IT/printing or other equipment unless you are properly authorised to do so.
- If employed on a full time basis, do not engage in private work i.e. business or take up an appointment outside RPT/s school (paid or unpaid) unless you have prior consent from your senior leadership team.
- do not engage in private work where this may impact on your role with the School i.e. business or an appointment outside the school (paid or unpaid). If you have any doubt you should discuss any private work and its potential impact on the school with your line manager or Head Teacher. – also see below section
- Never do private work when you should be working for The RPT/a school or are on sick leave (consent will not be unreasonably withheld).
- Never abuse your own position with RPT/a school to benefit yourself, your family, your friends or any outside organisation or political party.

Declare conflicts of interest and be transparent

All Members, Trustees, Governors, staff, workers and volunteers have a responsibility to declare any actual, potential and perceived conflicts of interest as they arise. If individuals are unsure, they should err on the side of caution and declare the potential conflict. If individuals become aware of another individual's undeclared conflict of interest, they must raise the issue with their line manager or the Director of HR and Governance in the first instance.

The following list is not intended to be viewed as an exhaustive list, but purely provides some examples of potential conflicts of interest:

- Where an employee works for another organisation
 - Any directorships, partnerships and employments with businesses
 - Voluntary or remunerated positions, such as trusteeship, local authority positions and other public positions
 - Membership of professional bodies or mutual support organisations, including political parties
 - Trusteeships and governorships at other educational institutions and charities
- The Education Alliance Declarations and Conflicts of Interest Policy v2.5 5

- Investments in unlisted companies, partnerships and other forms of business, major shareholdings and beneficial interests
- Gifts or hospitality offered by external bodies (declined or accepted in the last 12 months)
- Where a family member or close personal relationship exists with an external body or somewhere where the individual may be in a position to award services or collaborate with A perception of wrongdoing, impaired judgement or undue influence can be as detrimental as any of them actually occurring. If there is any doubt as to whether or not a conflict of interest exists, the individual should assume it does and declare it (see Appendix A – Declaration of Interest Form)

Working with integrity

We expect you to do whatever is needed to protect your own reputation and standing with the public and to build respect for The RPT and the school you are working in. There should be no reason to suspect that any of us are seeking opportunities for private gain. The relationships that The RPT and its schools have with its partners, contractors, consultants, community groups, suppliers and others must be responsibly managed so as to ensure there can be no suspicion of corruption or dishonesty with public money.

Ensure that you:

- Do nothing away from work, which might damage public confidence in RPT and its schools, or make you unsuitable for the work you do.
- Never, without good cause, wilfully withhold any payments you owe to The RPT/a RPT school such as rent, or salary/wages overpayment.
- Be fair and impartial in dealing with all parents, competitors, suppliers, contractors and sub-contractors.
- Inform your Head Teacher /CEO if you have links with a firm or organisation, which may get money, grant awards, contracts or work from The RPT/a RPT school.
- Inform your Head Teacher /CEO if you have a relationship with someone, which might appear to improperly influence a decision one might make about the other in connection with the work of The RPT or one of the RPT schools. This includes things like being someone's landlord, being in debt to someone, or having a close personal relationship with a trustee, governor, council member, parent/carer or employee where this might lead to a conflict of interest.
- Never use your work to further the aims of any group whose ideas are in conflict with The RPT and its school's values and policies.
- Inform your senior leader if you are charged with or convicted of a crime.

Working with sensitive information

We expect you to use sensitive information properly and to have due respect for confidentiality and the integrity and availability of information generally. RPT and its schools are required to make appropriate information available to trustees, governors, LA, internal and external auditors, DfE, government departments, parents and carers and the general public. Information you gather while working for RPT and its schools should not be used for commercial or personal gain or be otherwise misused.

Ensure that you:

- Know what information, to which you have access, The RPT treats as sensitive. The information may be marked to inform you of this, or you will be briefed appropriately. If you are unsure then seek clarification from your senior leaders.
- Know who else is entitled to have access to information that you have access to.
- Do not discuss sensitive information in public places, and never gossip about or misuse sensitive information; this includes misuse of IT/email/social media.

- Protect information when it is in your care. This includes when you are in possession of information away from school buildings; this includes misuse of IT/email/social media.
- Are responsible and professional in using and allowing access to personal information on pupils, parents and carers, staff and others; this includes misuse of IT/email/social media.
- Never create or amend information records or other information whether held on paper record or on computer system which relates to yourself, your family, relatives or friends without prior authorisation from your manager; this includes misuse of IT/email/social media.
- Use personal information held on computer in line with the principles of the Data Protection Act/acceptable use of IT policy.

Working within the law

The RPT and all its schools expect you to work within the law. A framework of laws and regulations set The RPT/individual school powers. In order for its decisions and actions to be held to be reasonable in law, The RPT and all its schools must carry out its business in a way that is within its powers, and is rational, proper and fair. Unlawful or criminal behaviour at, or even away from work; including misuse of IT/email/social media (may result in a loss of trust and confidence in the employee, Trust or a RPT school.

Ensure that you:

- Uphold the law at work.
- Comply with the school's standards and the rules set out in the school's constitution.

Using Social Media (for example Facebook, Twitter)

Individuals employed by The RPT are entitled to use whatever system they like outside of their working time and working persona, to engage in the social aspects of the media – both broadcasting and receiving. However great care should be taken to ensure the private/work line is not crossed. It is good practice to follow the practise of never mentioning work; your opinions of your colleagues or processes and projects on your own private Social Media Networks; see RPT Policy.

You must be aware that posting information about The RPT or a RPT school cannot be isolated from your working life. Any information published online can be accessed around the world within seconds and will be publicly available for all to see; often permanently.

It is generally unacceptable and inappropriate for school staff to have contact with pupils on social media sites; if in doubt ask advice from a senior leader.

Any inappropriate comments postings or correspondence with pupils, parents, carers or other members of staff could lead to disciplinary action being taken against you.

Working with the media

The RPT expects all staff to promote the work of RPT and its schools and to act as ambassadors. Relations with the media require specific skills and expertise and staff should not discuss The RPT/school business with the press without prior permission.

Ensure that in relation to your school you:

- Refer appropriate enquiries from the press to the Head teacher/ CEO.
- Seek advice from the Head Teacher or CEO and get permission from a senior leader before you speak to, write to, or give interviews to the media.
- Never bring RPT or its schools into disrepute by publicising material, which is confidential, or against the interests of RPT and its schools, or criticises its employees.
- Do not bring The RPT or an RPT school name into disrepute in any other way through the press or media.

It is acknowledged that Trade Union representatives will on occasion give interviews to the media on relevant subjects.

Applying for a job within The Rise Partnership Trust

RPT is committed to a fair and open approach to recruitment and selection. Appointments are made without bias and on the basis of the candidate's ability and suitability for the job.

As an interview candidate you must make sure that you:

- Are open and honest when completing the application form and at interview; including providing a full employment history (no 'gaps' in employment history should be unaccounted for) – falsification may lead to dismissal.
- Disclose any criminal offence you have been convicted of– falsification/misinformation may lead to dismissal.
- Disclose any criminal charges you face, which, if convicted would make you unfit for your job – falsification/misinformation may lead to dismissal. We treat this information confidentially and fairly.
- Disclose if you are a friend or relative of (or have other links with) a trustee, governor or another member of staff who may appear to be in a position to influence your appointment.
- Disclose if you are the tenant or landlord of someone who may influence your appointment, or if you have any other personal, financial or business relationship with them.

Appendix A

Declaration of Financial Interests Form

Declaration of Interest I declare that I have the following interests that may be viewed as an actual/potential/perceived conflict of interest:

Name of Company, Partnership, Body, Organisation, or Person	Nature of Interest (e.g. shareholder, director, partner, advisor, employee, investor, friend)	Type of Interest (e.g. direct or indirect; financial)	Date of Appointment	Date of Resignation

I confirm I have read and I understand the trust’s Code of Conduct and in declaring the above interest(s) I am complying with the Code of Conduct. I accept that in submitting this declaration I remain personally responsible for ensuring I do not place myself in a position or situation which may result in a potential or perceived breach of this the Trust Code of Conduct

Signed:

Name:

Date: