



# **Code of Conduct 2019/2020**

## Our Vision

*A Beacon of Excellence for Catholic Education*

## Our Mission

*We are a Christ centred community dedicated to faith formation, academic excellence and individual growth for all our young people, all rooted in the Gospel message of Jesus Christ.*

## Our Values

*Respect, Integrity, Service and Excellence*

## Our Aims

*Spiritual Growth, Formation of the Whole Person, Academic Excellence, Family Partnership, Vibrant Communities, Global awareness and Stewardship.*

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This model code of conduct, as adopted, applies to all those employed in the Romero Catholic Academy (The 'Academy Company') working in one of the Academy Schools (The 'School')
- 1.2 This code is designed to set out required standards and help employees understand the working relationship between themselves, their managers, colleagues, pupils and members of the public to whom they deliver a service.
- 1.3 This policy details the main standards of behaviour that you need to adhere to and also details the behaviours that the Academy Company would normally regard as gross misconduct. The standards of behaviour and the examples of gross misconduct (listed in the Disciplinary Policy) should not be considered exhaustive. The Academy Company believe that employees are responsible for their actions. Principals/LACs /Line Managers will ensure that staff are fully briefed on the content and have access to a copy of the Code of Conduct, it is however the responsibility of all employees to read the Code. If any of the provisions contained within the Code of Conduct, related Codes of Practice or Policies are not fully understood, then the employee must, in their own interest, seek clarification from their Line Manager or from HR by emailing [hr@romeromac.com](mailto:hr@romeromac.com)
- 1.4 Principals must ensure that current HR policies and other advice/guidance referred to throughout this document are accessible for all staff employed within the Academy Company. The current HR policies are available on [www.romeromac.com](http://www.romeromac.com) or via the HR Team in the Shared Services Office. Policies are reviewed annually, to ensure the most appropriate employment legislation is adhered too.
- 1.5 If an employee's actions or behaviour fall below the standards set out in this Code, then The Academy Company may take formal disciplinary action which may include the full range of disciplinary sanctions. Serious misconduct, criminal offences or other acts committed outside of working hours, which bring the Academy Company into disrepute or impact on the employee's ability to carry out their role, may also result in formal disciplinary action being taken, in accordance with the Academy Company's procedures.

## 2. General Principles

- 2.1 All employees are expected to perform their duties with honesty, integrity, impartiality and objectivity in order to give the highest possible standards of service and avoid any conduct which could compromise them and The Academy Company and the School. Therefore, this code sets out required standards for all employees.
- 2.2 Employees should comply with the rules and procedures set by the Academy Company/School in relation to actions and behaviours. These can be found in school documents and the HR Policies.
- 2.3 Employees working with children, young people or vulnerable adults are in a position of great trust. Serious breaches of that trust; assault or sexual misconduct or deliberate disregard of policies and procedures meant to safeguard children, young people or vulnerable adults and other recipients of Academy Company/School services will be regarded as potential gross misconduct.
- 2.4 Employees have a responsibility for ensuring a safe learning environment for children and young people within the School.
- 2.5 Employees who believe that a colleague is acting in a way which might be harmful to the school or individual pupils, should raise the matter with the Principal/Line Manager/designated person for child protection.
- 2.6 Employees should have regard to the School's Behaviour Management Policy to provide guidance and support in dealing with behaviour issues as they arise.

- 2.7 Employees should not demean or undermine pupils, their parents, carers or colleagues or display any discriminatory behaviour.
- 2.8 Employees should comply with statutory provisions, which support the well-being and development of pupils.
- 2.9 Employees must not enter into a personal relationship with pupils at the school or conduct improper relationships with pupils through, for example, but not limited to, mobile phone, e-mail, and social media and Internet chat rooms/websites.
- 2.10 Employees should not bring the reputation and standing of the Academy Company/School into disrepute.

## **General behavioural standards**

You must:

- maintain satisfactory standards of performance at work
- comply with all reasonable management instructions
- co-operate fully with your colleagues and with management
- ensure the maintenance of acceptable standards of politeness
- take all necessary steps to safeguard the company's public image and preserve positive relationships with all persons and organisations connected to the company
- ensure that you behave in a way that does not constitute unlawful discrimination
- comply with the Academy Company/Schools Operating Policies and Procedures.

## **Attendance and timekeeping**

You must:

- comply with the rules relating to notification of absence set out in the Academy Company's absence procedure
- arrive at work promptly, ready to start work at your contracted starting time
- remain at work until your contracted finishing time
- obtain management authorisation if for any reason you wish to arrive later or leave earlier than your agreed normal start and finish times

2.11 Personal calls and text messages should be made during your normal break times only. In an emergency you should speak with your manager about taking or receiving personal calls.

2.12 Personal mobile phones and devices with cameras must not be used for taking pictures of children/young people unless you have prior permission from your Principal/Line Manager. If permission is granted, pictures and or videos must be uploaded onto a school computer and deleted from any personal device within 48 hours. Sharing of files is not permitted. Please refer to eSafety Policy for further information.

2.13 Employees must always wear their ID badge whilst representing the Academy Company/School.

2.14 You are solely responsible for the safety of your personal possessions on company premises and should ensure that your personal possessions are kept in a safe place at all times. If you find an item of lost property on the premises, you are required to inform management immediately.

### **3. Working Relationships**

3.1 All employees have a right to be treated with dignity at work. Staff should always respect their colleagues, the pupils and the reputation of the Academy Company/School.

3.2 The Academy Company is committed to promoting equality and diversity among our workforce, and eliminating unlawful discrimination. We believe that excellence will be achieved through recognising the value of every individual. We aim to create an environment that respects the diversity of staff, enabling them to achieve their full potential, contribute fully and derive maximum benefit and enjoyment from their involvement in the life of the Academy.

3.3 To this end, we acknowledge the following basic rights for all members and prospective members of our community:

3.4 No individual will be unjustly discriminated against. This includes, but is not limited to, discrimination because of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation.

3.5 All forms of bullying, including threats or verbal aggression towards colleagues is unacceptable and will be dealt with seriously by the Academy Company.

3.6 If there are work related issues, which cannot be resolved informally with another colleague, the Line Manager should be advised. Also refer to the Academy Company's Grievance Procedure.

3.7 Employees should not be involved in decisions relating to any discipline, promotion, performance development review, or pay progression of any employee who is a relative, or with whom they have a close personal relationship. If an employee develops a close personal relationship where a conflict of interest might arise they should notify their Line Manager/HR.

3.8 Employees should maintain an effective and professional working relationship with their colleagues and Line Manager.

3.9 Employees should participate in initiatives designed to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery.

3.10 Academy Company /Statutory policies, procedures and codes of practice should be followed at all times.

3.11 An employee should never conceal a matter that should be reported, or damage, alter or falsify any document, form or record. Please see Whistleblowing Policy.

3.10 It is the responsibility of the employee that if their personal circumstances change, i.e. change of address or home telephone number, they must inform a member of the school's Administrative team and their Line Manager who will make the relevant changes.

## 4. Working with Children and Young People

### 4.1 Infatuations

- Occasionally, a child or young person may develop an infatuation with an adult who works with them. When this does occur, words or actions may be misinterpreted. An employee, who becomes aware that a child or young person is developing an infatuation, should discuss this at the earliest opportunity with their line manager so appropriate action can be taken to avoid any hurt, distress or embarrassment.

### 4.2 Social Contacts

- Employees should not seek to have social contact with a child or young person or their families unless the reason for this contact has been firmly established and agreed with their Principal/Line Manager. If a parent or child seeks to establish social contact, or if this occurs coincidentally, the employee should exercise their professional judgement in making a response but should always discuss the situation with their Line Manager. Such examples could be related to internet social networking sites (i.e. being asked to be a 'friend' on 'Facebook')
- Employees should gain permission from their Principal/Line Manager if there is a need for them to give their personal details such as home/mobile phone number; home or email address to a child or young person. Under normal circumstances this would be discouraged because of the potential implications from such an action. The process of gaining permission examines the reason for the need and allows it to be 'noted' - in the interest of seeking to protect the employee.

### 4.3 Physical Contact

- There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate for employees to have some physical contact with the child or young person with whom they are working, for example those who teach PE, Games, Drama or who offer music tuition. However, it is crucial that in all circumstances, employees should only touch children in ways which are appropriate to their professional or agreed role and responsibilities.
- When physical contact is made with a child this should be in response to their needs at the time, of limited duration and appropriate to their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background.
- In all circumstances where a child or young person initiates inappropriate physical contact, employees should sensitively deter the child and help them understand the importance of personal boundaries and must always report such circumstances to their Principal/Line Manager.

### 4.4 Sexual Contact

- It is an offence for a person over 18 to have a sexual relationship with a child under 18 where that person is in a position of trust in respect of that child, even if the relationship is consensual. This applies where the child is in full-time education and the person works in the same establishment as the child, even if s/he does not teach the child. The sexual activity referred to does not just involve physical contact it may also include non-contact activities.
- Any sexual activity between an employee and a child or young person with whom they work may be regarded as a criminal offence and will always be a matter for disciplinary action.

## 5. Working and Contact with the Media

- 5.1 There may be occasions where the press will contact an Employee for information about the Academy. Employees must refer requests for this type of 'information' to the Academy's Escalation for Media Protocol which details the process employees should follow. This policy can be located through your Business Manager.
- 5.2 Employees who write or give interviews must ensure that they make it clear that they are not representing the Academy Company/School's view and do not bring the Academy Company/School into disrepute. Also refer to the Whistleblowing Policy.
- 5.3 Employees should not publicise material which is confidential or against the Academy Company/School/any employee's interest.

## 6. Working with Neutrality

- 6.1 If an employee develops a close personal relationship with a Board Director/Colleague where a conflict of interest might arise they should notify their Principal/Line Manager or HR
- 6.2 Employees must not allow their personal or political opinions to interfere with their work.

## 7. Working and the Law

- 7.1 Employees have a duty at all times to uphold the law.
- 7.2 Teaching is a notifiable occupation, which means that the police report any conviction or caution given to a teacher to the Department for Education (DFE). Offences involving a risk of harm to children or to vulnerable adults are considered by the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA). All other convictions and cautions are passed to the National College for Teaching & Leadership under section 141D of the Education Act 2011, which has a role in determining if a caution or criminal offence is relevant to a teacher's registration.
- 7.3 If an employee is charged with any offence, including driving offences and if they receive any criminal conviction they must inform their Principal/Line Manager the next available working day. The Principal/Line Manager will then consider if any follow up action is necessary and decide if the matter should be referred and considered at a disciplinary hearing. Some offences would be classed as serious and would fall under the definition of gross misconduct. (Also refer to the Disciplinary Procedure.)
- 7.4 Employees must comply with the requirements of statutory bodies relating to the examination, assessment and evaluation of pupil achievement and attainment. They must not alter, falsify or add to: scripts for SAT's, coursework or moderating marks submitted for GCSE examination, and should not provide unauthorised photocopies of forthcoming examination papers to students.

## 8. Working Safely

- 8.1 It is the duty of all employees to take reasonable care of their health and safety and that of others who are affected by what they do or do not do. They should also ensure that they keep up to date with health and safety guidance as provided by the employer. (Also refer to the Health and Safety Policy within the School)
- 8.2 Employees working in one to one situations with children and young people may be more vulnerable to allegations. They should therefore assess the need to have another adult present, and consider the location and facilities to ensure their own security and safety and that of the child/young person.
- 8.3 An employee should use any safety clothing and equipment provided by the employer that is needed in their role and ensure that the equipment is not misused, neglected or damaged.
- 8.4 An employee must report any accident or “near misses” they have at work as soon as possible and accurately complete an accident report form, this includes verbal and physical assaults.
- 8.5 Employees must take reasonable care of pupils under their supervision with the aim of ensuring their health and safety. (Also refer to 'Policy & Guidance on Educational Visits' available within the School).
- 8.6 The Academy Company/School prohibits:
  - alcohol consumption on school premises without prior consent
  - illegal substance/drug use
  - being under the influence of drugs or alcohol while at work
  - encouraging others to misuse alcohol or drugs.Drug and alcohol use may become a matter for disciplinary action in accordance with the disciplinary or capability procedure.
- 8.7 Prescribed drugs may be taken but if a GP gives an employee any medication that may have a negative effect on their performance, they should tell their Line Manager in confidence. Possession of and dealing in illegal substances will be immediately reported to the police in all cases and may result in formal disciplinary action, including the possibility of summary dismissal.
- 8.8 The Academy Company/School operates a No Smoking Policy which includes e-cigarettes. This applies to all Academy Company premises, including the grounds, and those where Academy Company services are provided. It also applies when transporting children/young people in Academy Company or private vehicles and to visits to children/young people in their own homes or other establishments.

## 9. Gifts and Hospitality

- 9.1 An employee's actions must not be influenced by offers of gifts or hospitality and must not give the impression to another member of staff, parent, pupil or service user that they are influenced in this way. (Also see Gifts and Hospitality Policy)
- 9.2 All personal gifts should be refused or donated to charity unless they come within the categories set out below.
- Gifts of the following type may be accepted:
  - Modest gifts of a promotional character, eg calendars, diaries and other similar articles.
  - Gifts on the conclusion of any courtesy visit to an outside organisation of a sort normally given by that organisation.
  - Gifts up to £50 in value.
  - Gifts which are intended for the Academy as a corporate body or intended for the Academy can be accepted but must not be retained by the individual who receives them. Such gifts should be passed to the Academy as appropriate.

Staff must, within 28 days of accepting any gift or hospitality with an estimated value in excess of £50, provide written notification to the Principal using the 'Declaration of Gifts and Hospitality' form (Appendix B).

All offers accepted should be recorded in case of any queries, in particular through FOI requests. The Declaration of Gifts and Hospitality forms must be completed in full, setting out full details of the offer or the gift and or hospitality received as well as:

- estimated or actual value;
- an indication from the Principal as to why acceptance of the offer is authorised;
- the employee's/Director/Academy Representative's printed full name and signature; and
- the Principal's printed full name and signature.

- 9.3 Staff and Directors/Academy Representatives should ask themselves whether members of the public, knowing the facts of the situation, could reasonably think that they might be influenced by the hospitality offered. If the answer is yes, the hospitality should be declined. In making judgements, relevant facts to take into account include the person organisation offering the hospitality, its scale and nature, and its timing in relation to decisions to be made by the Academy.

Examples of when it may be proper to accept hospitality (always depending upon the particular circumstances) are as follows:-

- attendance at conferences, events and demonstrations of equipment organised by outside bodies where there is a service interest;
- attendance at events or functions where there is a demonstrable need for the Academy to be represented to either give or to receive information or to participate as part of the Academy's corporate image;
- attendance at events or functions which are part of the civic, cultural or sporting life of the Academy;
- working lunches where this is an appropriate and effective way of conducting business and the refreshments provided are on a reasonable level.

- 9.4 If employees accept any bribes from an individual (e.g. parent) that provides either the School or Academy with goods or services, they may be guilty of corruption. Employees should inform their Principal/Line Manager if anyone tries to bribe them or if there is evidence of improper behaviour by others.

- 9.5 The giving of gifts or rewards to children or young people should be part of an agreed policy for supporting positive behaviour or recognising particular achievements. The giving of a personal gift for a specific reason is only acceptable practice where, in line with the agreed policy, the employee has first discussed this with their Principal/Line Manager. (Refer to school policy on supporting positive behaviour)
- 9.6 Employees should be cautious when selecting children and/or young people for specific activities or privileges to avoid perceptions of favouritism or unfairness. Methods and criteria for selection should always be transparent and subject to scrutiny.

## 10. Working with Integrity

- 10.1 If a school wishes to sponsor an event or service, no employee, relative or friend should benefit from such sponsorship in a direct way without there being full disclosure to, and prior approval by the Principal/ LAC Chair/Line Manager
- 10.2 Employees are required to declare to the Line Manager, any pecuniary interests which could conflict with the Academy Company/School's interests, including any Directorships or equivalent position, which they may hold
- 10.3 Deliberately giving false information on claims such as mileage, travel/subsistence allowances, self-certification forms or attendance records will be deemed as fraud. All documents/forms/records should be completed honestly
- 10.4 Activities/private interests/outside employment, which employees may participate in when they are not at work, must not bring The Academy Company/School into disrepute. Employees should not put themselves in a position which could result in public confidence in the The Academy Company/School being weakened
- 10.5 As a general rule, behaviour outside of normal working hours is a personal matter and does not directly concern the company. However, there are some exceptions to this rule. The company will become involved when incidents occur:
- at office parties or other work related social occasions or gatherings
  - at social occasions or gatherings organised by a third party, where you have been invited in your capacity as an employee
  - at work related conferences
  - while working away on business on behalf of the company.
- 10.6 On these occasions you are expected to behave in an appropriate and responsible manner, keeping in mind that you are representing the Academy Company/School. You are instructed specifically not to consume any alcohol at such events if you are driving.
- 10.7 Any employee whose conduct brings the Academy Company/School into disrepute will be subject to the Academy Company/School's disciplinary procedure. Such behaviour may be viewed as gross misconduct and could result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal without notice.

## 11. Working with Money and Property

- 11.1 Employees should ensure that they use school funds entrusted to them in a responsible and lawful manner.
- 11.2 Financial and Accounting procedures within the School and The Academy Company/School should be followed at all times.
- 11.3 The Academy Company/School property such as stationery, photocopiers etc. may be used for Academy Company/School business only, unless permission has been given for other use. Facilities such as telephones, mobile phones, Internet, email and other ICT facilities can only be used in accordance with the School's policies, e.g. use of facilities by recognised trade unions and/or with the permission of the Principal/Line Manager.

You must adhere to The Academy Company/School's policy on internet and email use. In particular:

- no obscene or offensive language should ever be used in emails
- emails of a discriminatory, derogatory or defamatory nature must never be sent
- email must never be used as a form of communication which could cause harassment or be abusive to someone
- emails should not be copied to people inappropriately
- if an employee receives an offensive email this should be reported to his/her line manager and should not be passed on to other employees
- internet sites should only be accessed if they are appropriate to the work that is being carried out.

- 11.4 Proposals to use any social media applications as part of your role within the company must be approved by your Principal or Line Manager Use of social media for personal reasons does not need to be approved by the company, but your conduct while using social media for personal reasons may lead to disciplinary action if it affects your role.
- 11.5 Employees should follow The Academy Company/School policy and procedures on computer virus protection. A virus, which is maliciously hidden in a programme, can corrupt and damage computer files and discs. Employees need to be made aware that if they knowingly introduce a computer virus, this is not just a contravention of expected behaviour within their employment, they are breaking the law.
- 11.6 Employees should ensure that they follow the schools security procedures in relation to the use of computers and the proper management of computer held information. Particular care must be taken to observe established procedures when using passwords and logging on and off. Employees should never share a password or similar security device that may lead to unauthorised access to the Schools systems or property.
- 11.7 Employees should gain proper prior approval from the owner of the copyright before copying computer programmes (software) and other literature for personal use as it is an offence (Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988).
- 11.8 Employees should return any property or equipment which they have been allowed to borrow by the school as soon as they leave their job or when requested by their Line Manager.

## 12. Recruitment and Selection and Other Employment Matters

- 12.1 If employees are involved in recruitment and selection they are expected to ensure that all appointments are made strictly on the basis of merit in accordance with the Academy Company/School recruitment and selection process. Employees should not be involved in an appointment where they are related to an applicant, or have a close personal relationship outside work with him/her
- 12.2 Any reference provided by the Principal in relation to another employee on behalf of the Academy Company/School, should be factual and give an honest representation of the experience, skills, abilities and/or other qualities of that employee.
- 12.3 Employees must not misuse or misrepresent their professional position, qualifications or experience, nor should they falsify a reference.

## 13. Outside Commitments and Private Work

- 13.1 Employees should notify their Line Manager before taking up any outside employment. The Line Manager should assess if the nature of the work might be seen to conflict with the interests of the Academy Company/School and advise accordingly.
- 13.2 Any secondary employment cannot be carried out by employees during the time the school employs them (i.e. when they should be in attendance at the school/undertaking work for the school under their contract of employment for those specific hours), which includes periods of sickness absence.
- 13.3 Employees should follow the appropriate guidance as referred to in section 11 the ownership of intellectual property or copyright created during their employment. Any paid work carried out on behalf of the Academy outside your contracted hours, must paid to the Academy.

## 14. Disclosure of Information and Confidentiality

- 14.1 Employees may have access to confidential information about children and young people in order to undertake their responsibilities. In some circumstances they may have access to or be given highly sensitive or private information. These details must be kept confidential at all times and only shared when it is in the interests of the child to do so. They should gain the permission of the Principal/Line Manager before disclosing this information to any unauthorised party, in order to protect the employee from any accusations of inappropriate use.
- 14.2 Information held by the Academy Company/School in relation to staff and pupils may be subject to the provision of the Data Protection Act. Employees should never put themselves in the position where the disclosure of information puts themselves, a colleague, a pupil or the reputation of the Academy Company/School at risk.
- 14.3 Employees should respect the confidentiality of Academy Company/School meetings and the contents of any confidential Academy Company/School documents and work within Data Protection Legislation. (see Data Protection Policy.)

## 15. Being a Member of an Organisation

- 15.1 Employees should ensure that their membership or involvement with any external organisation does not lead to an actual or perceived (maybe because of its nature and maybe because it is in the 'public domain') conflict of interest with their position as an employee of the Academy Company/School, or conflict with the Academy Company/School policies/objectives or damage to the Academy Company/School reputation. It is important to avoid any perception that advice, guidance, or decisions for which they are responsible could be influenced by their membership of a particular organisation. This does not apply to membership of a trade union.

## 16. Whistleblowing

- 16.1 Under the Whistleblowing policy and procedure, if an employee believes that there has been any fraud, irregularity, improper behaviour towards a pupil, corruption or the law has been broken, they should report such incidents under this policy. (Also see the Whistleblowing Policy)
- 16.2 The Whistleblowing policy is intended to encourage and enable employees to raise concerns safely and without fear of retribution within the Academy Company/School rather than overlooking a problem. The Academy Company/School will not tolerate harassment or victimisation and will take action to protect any employee when they have raised a concern in good faith. Similarly no employee must treat another employee less favourably on the grounds that that employee has, intends, or is suspected of doing anything under the Whistleblowing procedures.

## 17. Dress Code

- 17.1 As a general principle, staff should dress according to their professional judgement, unless this is detrimental to their capacity to do their job or is deemed unsafe or inappropriate for some other good reason.  
Employees should dress in a way that presents the Academy Company in a positive and professional manner.
- 17.2 No aspect of an employee's dress or appearance should be politically motivated, sexually provocative, discriminatory, insensitive or offensive. Employees should dress appropriately for a school setting and take care to consider what the child can see, in terms of length of skirt and the exposure of chest area.
- 17.3 No denim should be worn whilst an employee is carrying out their duties.
- 17.4 Jewellery and piercings should not be worn excessively nor amount to an unacceptable risk either to the employee or to the pupil.
- 17.5 Staff to be conscious of health and safety when choosing appropriate footwear. Open toed high heeled shoes, backless footwear and flip-flops are worn at the risk of each individual.
- 17.6 If visible, tattoos must not cause offence to others; if tattoos are likely to cause offence, they must be covered up whilst on duty.
- 17.7 Hair should be kept tidy and out of an employee's face and nails should be kept at a length where they are unlikely to amount to a risk or cause harm to pupils.
- 17.8 Dress codes may be relaxed in certain circumstances such as outdoor/adventure visits, training days and charity days— in these circumstances, common sense should prevail at the Principal/line manager's discretion.

- 17.9 All staff will be supplied with a school identity security badge that should be worn and visible at all times both when in school or outside the premises on school business and should only be removed for safety reasons. Staff working within the community must carry their school I.D. badges with them at all times. It is the responsibility of the member of staff to inform their manager if their I.D. badge is lost/stolen or if details on the badge need altering e.g. for a name change.
- 17.10 Staff should ensure that they are dressed safely and appropriately for the tasks they undertake and wear clothing appropriate to their work area. If you are supplied with a uniform or protective clothing for your role with the school then you must wear these whilst carrying out your duties. Facilities staff may wear practical clothing as appropriate to their role as determined and provided by the Academy

## **18. Review**

This code of conduct will be kept under review in the light of recommendations and guidance issued nationally in relation to standards of conduct in public life and revised as necessary.