



SEAX TRUST Code of Conduct



Code of Conduct

Approved by the Board of Trustees &
Effective Date of Adoption:

19th October 2022

Amendments October 2022:

Throughout		Unnecessary wording has been removed in order to make the policy clearer and more concise.
1	Introduction	Terminology added for clarity purposes
5.1	Safeguarding	Link to updated "Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings February 2022" Raising safeguarding concerns amended to "reporting" safeguarding concerns Restructure of paragraph to make it clear when and to whom all concerns should be reported.
5.2 – 5.4 5.8		New sections added on: Relationships with Students, Dealing with Safeguarding Allegations against Adults, Health & Safety, Attendance at Work, Professional Conduct & Conflicts of Interest.
5.14	Dress Code	Section removed and replaced with referral to individual School Handbooks Section on tattoos reworded
Appendix A	ICT Acceptable Use Policy	Removed – to become a separate template policy

This policy is based on a model originally provided by Juniper (Essex) HR. Trade Unions/Professional Associations are consulted by Juniper and their feedback considered in the development of the template document. It was updated following a review by Judicium Education and full staff consultation in 2022.

The **SEAX Trust** is committed to being a fair and reasonable employer and to ensuring that it provides a professional and ethical environment which serves and protects the whole education community.

Through the **Scheme of Delegation**, the SEAX Trust is responsible for determining HR policies in accordance with all appropriate regulations:

- Setting Terms and Conditions of Employment
- Establishing Trust-wide policies, including Pay, Performance Management, Code of Conduct, Recruitment, Capability, Discipline & Dismissal, Grievance, Leave of Absence, Sickness Absence, Redundancy & Restructuring
- Appointing the CEO
- Appointing cross-Trust staff
- Dismissing the CEO, local Headteachers, Deputy Headteachers and senior cross-Trust staff, in accordance with the Trust's Disciplinary and Capability Policies

Through effective **HR management**, the SEAX Trust will:

- Establish and maintain an effective organisational structure in which all staff are clear about their roles
- Recruit, deploy and retain staff flexibly, to meet the establishment's priorities and future plans, making the best use of individual skills
- Induct and develop staff in line with their individual needs and those of the establishments' improvement plans
- Establish and maintain constructive and harmonious staff relationships through good channels of communication, consultation and feedback
- Ensure equal opportunities in recruitment, staff development, training, management and pay
- Develop, maintain and operate policies and procedures which motivate and support staff, facilitate the early resolution of disputes and promote attendance
- Allocate appropriate resources to HR management and equip managers at all levels to effectively manage HR issues
- Regularly monitor, measure, evaluate and review all aspects of HR management
- Have in place appropriate administrative systems to support the management of HR issues.

The SEAX Trust is responsible for determining the Pay Policy and Performance Management Policy, following consultation with staff.

The **Resources Audit & Risk Committee** is responsible for reviewing and proposing amendments to the Pay Policy and the Performance Management Policy, in consultation with staff.

The **Academy Committees** are responsible for implementing the Pay Policy and Performance Management Policy and making pay decisions following Performance Management Reviews.

All **Appeal Panels** have representation from independent cross-Trust Academy Committee members and/or Trustees.

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1. Introduction

The SEAX Trust is committed to providing a professional and ethical environment, which serves and protects the whole SEAX community. This Policy underpins the expectations for good conduct described in other SEAX procedures (e.g. **Disciplinary Procedure**) and the professional expectations set out in conditions of service and by relevant professional bodies.

This Code applies to all individuals employed or engaged by the Trust/Trust schools, including:

- Relief/casual and supply staff
- Third parties providing services to the Trust/Trust schools (including self-employed individuals)
- Voluntary workers

For the purpose of this Policy, all individuals set out above are collectively referred to as '**employees**'. Similarly, the SEAX Trust, its schools, colleges, central team and other provisions and services are collectively referred to as '**the Trust**'.

The term '**Leader**' is used to refer to any of the following designations: Headeachers, members of SLT, the CEO, Trustees and members of the ACs.

2. Policy Context

The Trust aims to be an employer of choice and expects all employees to conduct themselves in a way that reflects its vision and values.

The Trust is committed to raising standards. In abiding by the Code of Conduct, following the Trust Vision and Values and behaving in a manner that reflects these values, our aim to create a better place for all to work and study.

The overriding expectation is that employees and those engaged to work in the Trust will adopt high standards of personal conduct in order to maintain the confidence and respect of their colleagues, pupils or students, the public in general and all those with whom they work or come into contact with in the course of their employment or engagement by the individual academy.

This means that employees and those engaged to work in the Trust **should not**:

Behave through words, actions, or in a manner which would lead any reasonable person to question their suitability to work with children or act as a role model

The Trust expects employees and those engaged to work in the Trust to be professional and to ensure that their conduct reflects:

The Seven Principles of Public Life:

- **Selflessness:**
Holders of public office should act solely in terms of public interest.
- **Integrity:**
Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests or friendships.
- **Objectivity:**
Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.
- **Accountability:**
Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.
- **Openness:**
Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for doing so.
- **Honesty:**
Holders of public office should be truthful.
- **Leadership:**
Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

SEAX Trustees

The SEAX Trust, through its Trustees and Committees, determines and monitors compliance with the Code of Conduct.

Local Governance Groups (LGGs)

The LGGs establish and monitor standards of conduct and behaviour within each academy, including the establishment of relevant policies and procedures.

Trustees and LGG members are subject to their own Code of Conduct, available from the Trust's Company Secretary.

Headteachers and Line Managers

Headteachers and Line Managers must promptly address any breaches of good conduct and behaviour, using informal procedures where possible, but implementing formal procedures where necessary.

Employees

All employees must familiarise themselves with, and comply with, this Code. Any breaches of this Code will be regarded as a serious matter, which could result in disciplinary action, and in certain circumstances could potentially lead to dismissal.

Engaged workers/Volunteers

Engaged workers and volunteers must familiarise themselves, and comply, with this Code, in so far as it is relevant to their role. Any breaches of this Code may result in the engagement of the worker/volunteer being terminated, in accordance with any applicable terms of engagement.

4. Reporting conduct which falls short of expectations

The Trust wishes to promote an open environment which enables individuals to raise issues in a constructive way, with the confidence that they will be acted upon appropriately and without fear of recrimination.

All employees are expected to bring to the attention of an appropriate leader any impropriety, deficiency in the provision of service or breach of policy or this Code. Where appropriate, individuals should also refer to the Trust's **Whistleblowing Policy**, which is available from the Trust office.

Safeguarding Concerns regarding other members of staff

Where there is a concern about the conduct of a member of staff which may lead to a **safeguarding** issue, staff should report it **immediately** and not discuss it with other staff. See 'Reporting Safeguarding Concerns' below.

Safeguarding Concerns regarding Headteachers

If the concern is in relation to the **Headteacher**, then staff should report it immediately to the **Trust's CEO** either by:

- a. **Telephoning** the Trust Office **immediately** on **01245 963000** and explaining to the member of staff who answers the phone that they need to speak to the CEO urgently regarding a safeguarding matter. Staff must not give any other details to the person answering the phone and neither should they discuss the matter with other central team staff, or other staff at their own provision.

OR by:

- b. **Emailing** the CEO **immediately** via: **ruthsturdy@seaxtrust.com** and marking the email '**URGENT: SAFEGUARDING**'. Staff should not include any details of the matter in the email, which should simply include a contact number whereby the CEO can telephone the staff member back and where a

confidential conversation can be held. If, due to exceptional circumstances, no response is received within **1 hour**, staff should telephone the Trust Office for further instructions.

In all cases, if, due to exceptional circumstances, the CEO is unavailable, staff will be advised by central team staff of the next most suitable person with whom they can discuss their concern. The concern should not be discussed with anyone else, either in their own provision or within the central team. Concerns of this nature are of the utmost importance and staff are expected to act immediately and in line with the instructions set out above.

5. The Code of Conduct

5.1 Safeguarding and Child Protection

Adults must be completely clear about appropriate and safe behaviours for working with children in paid or unpaid capacities, in all settings and in all contexts, including outside work.

The relevant requirements specific to safeguarding and child protection are set out in:

- The DfE's Statutory Guidance, '**Keeping Children Safe in Education**' (as amended). This is the key statutory guidance which all employees must follow and all employees must, as a minimum, read Part 1 of that document annually.
- Each individual provision's **Child Protection** and **Behaviour Management Policies** and Procedures

- '**Guidance for Safer Working Practice for those working with Children and Young People in Education Settings**' issued by the Safer Recruitment Consortium sets out key expectations for adult interactions with children and young people – the full guidance is available at:

<https://cscp.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Guidance-for-safer-working-practice-for-adults-who-work-with-children-and-young-people-DCSF.pdf>

In addition, individuals must be aware that it is criminal offence (S.16. Sexual Offences Act 2003) for a person aged 18 or over 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.

Individuals should familiarise themselves with these documents, in conjunction with the body of the Code of Conduct and other relevant Trust and individual provision's policies and procedures.

Reporting Safeguarding Concerns

Safeguarding concerns cover a wide spectrum from serious issues where a child is harmed or at risk to lower level concerns where practice or behaviour is inappropriate, undesirable or not in keeping with usual expectations. This will include cases of self-reporting of inadvertent or accidental conduct where individuals find themselves in situations which could be misinterpreted or make them vulnerable to allegations.

Who to report to

Concerns should be reported to the Headteacher (or where the concerns relate to the Headteacher, to the CEO, as detailed above in Section 4) or to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (who will share

the information with the Headteacher or CEO). In a situation where there is a conflict of interest in reporting the matter internally, it should be reported directly to the Safeguarding Trustee or Local Authority Designated Officer(s) (LADOs).

All issues raised will be recorded confidentially and dealt with in a sensitive and proportionate manner with the Trust's objective being to protect its young people and adults, by identifying and tackling issues early and providing advice, direction and support to improve collective and individual practice.

5.2 Relationships with Students

Employees must at all times:

- maintain professional boundaries with students appropriate to their position and must always consider whether their actions are warranted, proportionate, safe and applied equitably;
- act in an open and transparent way that would not lead any reasonable person to question their actions or intent;
- think carefully about their conduct so that misinterpretations are minimised;
- be mindful of section 16 of The Sexual Offences Act 2003.

Employees must never:

- establish or seek to establish social contact with students for the purpose of securing a friendship or to pursue or strengthen a relationship. If a young person seeks to establish social contact, staff should exercise professional judgement in making a response and be aware that such social contact could be misconstrued;
- develop personal or sexual relationships with students and must never engage in any sexual activity with a student;
- make sexual remarks to a student, discuss your own sexual relationships with, or in the presence of students or discuss a pupil's sexual relationships in an inappropriate setting or context.

Contact with students should be through the Trust's authorised mechanisms only. Personal phone numbers, email addresses or communication routes via all social media platforms (NOTE: DfE guidance suggests the CoC should include the use of social media) should not be used and employees should not share their home address with students. If contacted via an inappropriate route employees must inform the Headteacher/CEO immediately.

Employees must not accept 'friend' invitations or become 'friends' with any student of the Trust on any social media platform. Employees should also refrain from following any student on Twitter, Instagram or other similar social media accounts of students or their parents.

5.3 Dealing with Safeguarding Allegations against Adults

At SEAX Trust, we all have a duty to promote and safeguard the welfare of children. In line with this duty, we have a policy for dealing with allegations of abuse against staff. All employees are required to comply with the Trust's **Dealing with Safeguarding Allegations against Adults Policy**, which includes sections on:

- Procedures where the Harm Threshold is met

- Low-level Concerns:
 - Definition
 - How they arise
 - How they should be reported
 - Responding to reports
 - Recording them
 - References

5.4 Health and Safety

Employees should always observe the Trust's Health & Safety rules and guidance.

Employees should never:

- breach Trust Health & Safety policies;
- act in a manner likely to endanger themselves, other members of the SEAX community or the Trust's property or that of a third party;
- ignore anything that has the potential to cause harm. It should be immediately brought to the attention of a leader;
- misuse any item provided for health & safety purposes;
- smoke in enclosed and substantially enclosed premises in the workplace. This includes vehicles and the student areas.

5.5 Attendance at Work

Employees should attend for work at all agreed times and should obtain prior authorisation for any absence.

Employees should:

- observe any designated hours of work;
- always observe the Trust's requirements on the notification of absence by reason of sickness (outlined within the **Sickness Absence Procedures**);
- never work elsewhere when absent from the Trust without Leadership authorisation. Examples of absence in this case include sickness, suspension and leave related to work and families;
- comply with the Trust's **Leave of Absence Policy** and Annual Leave procedures policies
- never leave work during designated/ agreed working hours without leadership permission.

5.6 Professional Conduct

We expect all Staff to behave in a professional manner at all times, in line with the Seven Principles of Public Life (see 1.3 above) and to comply with their relevant professional codes of practice.

Employees should always:

- be honest,
- follow all reasonable and lawful instructions;

- conduct themselves in a manner that does not bring the Trust's name into disrepute;
- act in a manner that is not abusive towards another person, this includes indirect abuse; for example where abusive comments are made to others out of the hearing of the target;
- treat everyone with respect and not undermine them, bully or harass them or act towards them in a manner which is discriminatory;
- adhere to professional requirements to attend relevant training and submit monitoring information in relation to employees and students where relevant;
- advise leaders if professional status is ever removed by a relevant professional body or if subject to any disciplinary investigation/action by that professional body;
- take reasonable care of students under their supervision and follow the Trust's required guidelines and safeguarding policies;
- comply with all relevant statutory provisions;
- cooperate with leadership in complying with Trust policies and procedures to the extent they apply to individual positions;
- comply with the requirements of statutory bodies relating to the examination, assessment and evaluation of student achievement and attainment;
- comply with the Codes of Conduct of professional bodies to which they may belong;
- not bring members of their family, dependants or other visitors onto Trust premises whilst conducting normal working duties without prior leadership permission

Employees must not:

- post, distribute or display inappropriate literature at any of the Trust's premises or other premises whilst on Trust business;
- behave in a violent manner or threaten violence towards another person;
- use social media in such a manner that may bring the reputation of the Trust or the employee themselves into disrepute;
- make false allegations against another person or the Trust
- behave in an insubordinate or inappropriate manner;
- behave in a persistent careless and/or negligent manner;
- behave in a manner that is likely to disrupt working relationships.

5.7 Conduct outside work

The Trust recognises and respects individuals' rights to a private life without interference. However, individuals connected with the Trust must not act in a way that would bring the Trust, or their profession, into disrepute or which calls into question their suitability to work with children. This covers relevant criminal offences, such as violence or sexual misconduct, inappropriate behaviour such as lewd or offensive action, as well as negative comments about the Trust or its community.

Employees must disclose to their Headteacher (and in the case of the Headteacher, to the CEO; and in the case of the CEO, to the Chair of Trustees) immediately, any wrongdoing or alleged wrongdoing by themselves (regardless of whether they deny the wrongdoing/alleged wrongdoing). This includes any incidents arising from alternative employment or events occurring outside work which may have a bearing on their employment or engagement with the Trust.

Employees should also refer to the expectations set out in their contract of employment and the disciplinary procedures.

In addition, any worker engaged in a post covered by the Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009 (“the Regulations”) must immediately inform the school/Trust of any events or circumstances which may lead to their disqualification from working in the post by virtue of the Regulations. The statutory guidance relating to Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 can be found at the following link:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/414345/disqualification-guidance_Feb_15_3_.pdf

Secondary employment

The Trust does not seek to unreasonably preclude employees from undertaking additional employment, but employees are required to devote their attention and abilities to their duties at the Trust during their working hours and to act in the best interests of the Trust at all times. The Trust also has a duty to protect health and safety in relation to employee working hours. Accordingly, employees must not, without the written consent of the Trust, undertake any employment or engagement which might interfere with the performance of their duties. In addition, employees should avoid engaging in business or employment activities that might conflict with the Trust’s interests.

5.8 Confidentiality

Confidential information can take various forms and be held and transmitted in various ways e.g. manual records (files, reports and notes), verbal discussions and electronic records. As a general rule, all information received in the course of employment/engagement, no matter how it is received, held or transmitted, should be regarded as sensitive and confidential and must not be disclosed or divulged within or outside the Trust, other than in accordance with the requirement of the role and/or where specific leadership permission has been provided.

NOTE: All employees must be aware that they are obliged to disclose information relating to child protection issues and should make it clear to the individual either that confidentiality cannot be guaranteed and/or decline to receive the information and direct them to a more appropriate person e.g. the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The Trust is committed to being transparent about how it collects and uses the personal data of its workforce, and to meeting its data protection obligations. The **Data Protection Policy** sets out the Trust's commitment to data protection, and individual rights and obligations in relation to personal data.

Any actual or suspected/potential breach of data protection must be reported immediately to the Trust’s Data Protection Officer.

Preserving anonymity

The Education Act 2011 contains reporting restrictions preventing the publication of any material which could lead to the identification of a teacher in the event of an allegation against them made by a pupil at the same school. Any individual who publishes material which could lead to the

identification of the employee who is the subject of an allegation of this kind may be subject to criminal and disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

'Publication' includes any speech, writing, relevant programme or other communication in whatever form, which is addressed to the public at large or any section of the public. For the avoidance of doubt, this includes publishing details of an allegation or other information on a social media site which could lead to the identification of the teacher.

Media queries

Employees must not speak to the press or respond to media queries on any matter relating to the Trust. All media queries should be referred immediately to the Headteacher, who will discuss with the CEO, in line with the Trust's **Managing the Media Policy**.

5.9 Use of computers, email and the internet and social media

The Trust recognises that electronic devices and media are important tools in an educational context and can save time and expense.

Those using the Trust's equipment and networks are expected to do so responsibly and to comply with all applicable laws, policies and procedures, and with normal standards of professional and personal courtesy and conduct.

Personal use of social media and other on-line applications which may fall into the public domain should not be such that it could bring the Trust into disrepute or call into question an individual's suitability to work with children.

Detailed expectations are set out in the Trust's **Acceptable Use Policy** which Trust provisions may adapt to support their own individual circumstances.

Any employee who is unsure about whether or not something they propose to do might breach that policy, or if something is not specifically covered in the policy, should seek advice from leadership.

5.10 Conflicts of Interest

Conflicts of interest should be avoided at all times. Any issues of conflict or potential conflict should be raised with leadership at the first possible opportunity.

Employees should:

- act in the best interests of the Trust at all times;
- complete a declaration of pecuniary interests form, as required
- not work for other employers while employed by the Trust if there is any possibility of a conflict of interest.

Examples of a personal interest that should be declared are:

- a directorship, a large shareholding, promise of future employment or the employment of a close relative or friend in a position of influence in an organisation which may compete or do business with the Trust
- receipt of compensation (except remuneration from the Trust for services provided to any person or organisation on the Trust's behalf);
- outside activities that adversely affect job performance, either through excessive demands on working time or through conflicting commitments;
- activities that involve the unauthorised use of the Trust's time, equipment or information which could adversely affect the Trust's reputation or relations with others or could otherwise conflict with the interests of the Trust.

5.11 Relationships

The internal Trust community

All employees are expected to treat other members of the Trust community with dignity and respect and to work co-operatively and supportively. Bullying, Harassment and Victimisation will not be tolerated (see also the Trust's **Grievance Procedure**).

The wider community and service users

All employees have a responsibility to ensure courteous, efficient and impartial service delivery to all groups and individuals within the wider community. No favour must be shown to any individual or group of individuals, nor any individual or group unreasonably excluded from, or discriminated against, in any aspect of Trust business.

Contracts

All relationships of a business or private nature with external contractors, or potential contractors, must be made known to the LGG/Board of Trustees. Orders and contracts must be in accordance with standing orders and financial regulations of the Trust. No special favour must be shown to businesses run by, for example, friends, partners or relatives in the awarding of contracts, tendering process or any other business transaction.

Gifts and Hospitality

Employees may not accept any gift or hospitality from a person intended to benefit from their services (or those whom they supervise) or from any relative without the express permission of the Trust.

Where an outside organisation wishes to sponsor or is seeking to sponsor a Trust activity, whether by invitation, tender, negotiation or voluntarily, the sponsorship must always be related to the Trust's interests and never for personal benefit.

The Trust's **Gifts & Hospitality Policy** is available from the Trust office. Any breaches of this policy may lead to disciplinary action.

Neutrality

Employees must not allow their own personal, political, religious or other views and opinions to interfere with their work. They are expected to be neutral in their views in the course of their work at the Trust and to present a balanced view when working with pupils.

5.12 Close personal relationships at work

Close personal relationships are defined as:

- employees who are married, dating or in a partnership or co-habiting arrangement;

- immediate family members for example parent, child, sibling, grandparent;
- other relationships for example extended family (cousins, uncles, in-laws), close friendships, business associates (outside the school/Trust).

Applicants

Applicants are required to disclose on their application form if they have a close personal relationship with any person connected with the Trust.

Applicants are asked to state the name of the person and the relationship. Failure to disclose such a relationship may disqualify the applicant.

Employees should discuss confidentially, with Leadership, any relationships with an applicant. It is inappropriate for any employee to sit on an appointment panel, for those with whom they have a close personal relationship.

References

It is expected that, for those working with children, professional references, and not personal references, are sought and provided. All references provided on behalf of the Trust must be signed by an appropriate Leader, as set out in the Trust's **Reference Procedure**.

Anyone agreeing to act as a personal referee must make it clear in the reference that it is provided as a personal or colleague reference and is not a reference on behalf of the Trust. Personal or colleague references must not be provided on school/Trust headed paper.

Relationships at work

It is also recognised that situations arise where close personal relationships can be formed at work. Such relationships should be disclosed, in confidence and without prejudice, to an appropriate Leader by the individuals concerned, as this may impact the conduct of the school/Trust.

Whilst not all such situations where those in close personal relationships work together raise issues of conflict of interest, implications can include:

- effect on trust and confidence;
- perception of service users, the public and other employees on professionalism and fairness;
- operational issues e.g. working patterns, financial and procurement separation requirements;
- conflicting loyalties and breaches of confidentiality and trust.

Open, constructive and confidential discussion between employees and Leaders essential to ensure these implications do not occur and that all parties can be protected.

No-one should be involved in discipline, promotion, pay or other decisions for anyone where there is a close personal relationship.

It may be necessary in certain circumstances to consider transferring employees that form close personal relationships at work. Any such action will be taken, wherever possible, by agreement with both parties and without discrimination.

Employees related to pupils

Any employees related to, or who are the carer of a pupil are expected to separate their familial and employment role.

Employees related to pupils must not show or provide any preferential treatment to them or become involved in their education or care beyond their specific role as an employee.

5.13 Recreational Drugs

The following guidance is statutory and relates to all Trust provisions:

- a. It is **never** acceptable for employees to be under the influence of recreational drugs when they are professionally active and are responsible for pupils and/or Trust property or for communication of any kind with parents/carers, outside agencies and/or other colleagues. The term 'professionally active' can be defined as all times when employees are representative of their employer, including throughout their working day or night shift, whilst 'on call' and whilst attending any external events as a representative of the employer.
- b. It is **never** acceptable for any members of the Trust community to bring recreational drugs onto Trust premises for any reason.

Definition of Recreational Drugs

For the purposes of this policy, the term 'recreational drugs' refers to all and any substances and includes volatile substances, illegal drugs, psychoactive substances, 'legal highs' and any other unauthorised substances. It does not refer to medicines which are either prescribed by a medical practitioner to a specific individual or purchased by an individual from a reputable pharmacy in relation to that individual's own health needs. Such medicines may be administered or self-administered on Trust premises in accordance with the terms of the prescription or directions. All medicines should, however, be stored in accordance with local First Aid/Medicines/ H&S Policies whilst on Trust premises.

5.14 Alcohol on Trust Premises

The following guidance is statutory and relates to all Trust provisions:

- a. It is **never** acceptable for employees to be under the influence of alcohol when they are professionally active and are responsible for pupils or Trust property or for communication of any kind with parents/carers, outside agencies and/or other colleagues. The term 'professionally active' can be defined as all times when employees are representative of their employer, including throughout their working day or night shift, whilst 'on call' and whilst attending any external events as a representative of the employer.
- b. Social activities which are held out of hours on Trust premises must be planned in advance by the Headteacher and agreed with the CEO, to ensure that they promote sensible alcohol consumption.

5.15 No Smoking Policy

It is illegal in the UK to smoke in any enclosed workspace or public building. All SEAX Trust sites adhere to a no-smoking policy and smoking is not permitted by individuals, either within the parameters of the site or within a distance of **five metres** from the boundaries.

Vehicles: This legislation also covers work vehicles, including mini-buses, and places duties on:

- The driver
- Any person who has management responsibilities for the vehicle and
- Any person on a vehicle who is responsible for order or safety on it.

The SEAX Trust takes its responsibility for employee wellbeing seriously and this includes the harmful effects of smoking on the smoker and others who may become affected by passive

smoking. Employees seeking help to give up smoking should speak to an appropriate Leader for further details on Trust initiatives which may support them. Initiatives will be discussed on a case-by-case basis, but might include:

- arranging advice on giving up smoking from a doctor or health professional;
- provision of self-help guides for giving up smoking;
- limited time off to attend relevant courses.

At SEAX Trust, smokers are subject to the same legal regulations relating to breaks as other employees, which is that employees can be asked to work for a period of up to six hours before being given a break of 20 minutes. In practice, it is likely that employees will have allocated lunch or break times, during which they are at liberty to smoke, within the constraints of the no-smoking policy and providing they are not subject to being 'on duty'. Smoking at other times is viewed as a breach of the Code of Conduct and can result in formal disciplinary action being taken. Smokers who might consider themselves unable to adhere to the regulations set out above should speak to their Headteacher in the first instance.

School/College Trips

Clear guidance must be set out to employees, parents/carers and pupils regarding smoking and the use of recreational drugs and alcohol on school trips and holidays. Such guidance should be planned in advance by the Headteacher and agreed with the CEO.

5.16 Dress Code

Religious and Cultural Dress

The Trust recognises and respects that employees may wish to dress/display symbols of faith according to their individual religious or cultural beliefs. The wearing of religious and cultural dress (including clerical collars, head scarves, skull caps and turbans) is allowable and will not be discouraged. The exception to this protocol is where health, safety and/or welfare will be compromised by the wearing of such dress and/or where this is likely to enhance the risk to other persons or prevent complete and effective communication.

The following points should be borne in mind:

- some religions and cultures require a certain mode of dress; for example, the wearing of compulsory items, such as bangles (kara) as worn by Sikh men and women
- priority will be given to health and safety requirements, as laid down by national legislation

Any queries relating the wearing of cultural or religious dress should be directed to the Headteacher/Trust's CEO.

Tattoos

Any tattoos which may be considered offensive, inappropriate or potentially discriminatory must be covered at all times during working hours. Employees should seek clarification from the Headteacher/CEO if they are in doubt as to whether their tattoo should be covered. The Trust reserves the right for any employees with visible tattoos to be asked to cover them at work, at the discretion of the Headteacher/CEO.

Dress Codes for provisions within the Trust are set out in the individual provisions' handbooks and staff should familiarise themselves with specific requirements for their own/other provisions and comply with these, as required.

5.17 Use of financial resources

Employees must ensure that they use public and any other funds entrusted to them in a responsible and lawful manner. They must strive to ensure value for money and ensure rigorous adherence to Financial Regulations.

5.18 School property and personal possessions

Employees must ensure they take due care of Trust property at all times, including proper and safe use, security, appropriate maintenance and reporting faults. If employees are found to have caused damage to Trust property through misuse or carelessness this may result in disciplinary action.

Employees are responsible for the safety and security of their personal possessions while on Trust premises. The Trust will not accept responsibility for the loss or damage of personal possessions.

5.19 Conduct during Pandemics

The SEAX Trustees expect the whole Trust community to behave responsibly during any Pandemics, and act in a way which protects and minimises the risk to themselves and others and enables maximum attendance by both staff and pupils.

Throughout pandemics, there will be strict measures in each Trust provision, governed by risk assessments and guidelines, with which all employees of the Trust are expected to familiarise themselves, including any updates as they occur. Any individuals who require clarification of any aspect of the measures/risk assessments must seek guidance/clarification from leadership without delay.