‘Every opportunity to educate everyone forever’

This Code of Conduct has been consulted on and agreed with the unions recognised in Nottingham City schools, as follows: UNISON, GMB, UNITE, National Association of Head Teachers (NAHT), the National Education Union (NEU), the National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers (NASUWT) and the Association of School and College Lecturers (ASCL).

The HR Advisory Service wishes to thank the Primary 6 Group for their initial work on a Code of Conduct for use by their member schools which, although revised, forms the basis of this model document. The HR Advisory Service contributed to this and led the consultation with the trade unions through the HR Working Party.

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1. Introduction

Key points

All staff:

- Are role models for children and as such aspire to model high standards of behaviour, in and outside school
- Are committed to actively safeguarding the interests of children and promoting their wellbeing
- Work proactively to uphold principles of equality and diversity
- Demonstrate high levels of personal integrity, honesty and confidentiality in their professional relationships.

1.1 The governing body of the Federation of Mellers Primary School and Nottingham Nursery have set out this Code of Conduct for all school employees. Responsibility for day-to-day implementation will fall to the headteachers. It has been consulted on and agreed with the trade unions recognised in Nottingham City schools.

1.2 In addition to this policy, all staff have an obligation to adhere to all relevant statutory legislation and the national and local terms and conditions for both teaching and support staff. Staff are expected to observe their Federation equality policy and ensure that they treat everyone with respect, oppose any forms of discrimination and bullying and are sensitive to other people's needs, attitudes and lifestyles.

1.3 Employees should be aware that a failure to comply with the following Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action, which could lead to dismissal.

2. Purpose, scope and principles

2.1 A Code of Conduct is designed to give clear guidance on the standards of behaviour all school staff are expected to observe, and the school should notify staff (including supply staff) of this code and the expectations therein. School and nursery staff are role models and are in a unique position of influence and must adhere to behaviour that sets a good example to all the pupils within the Federation. As a member of a school community, each employee has an individual responsibility to maintain their reputation and the reputation of the school and nursery, whether inside or outside working hours.

2.2 This Code of Conduct applies to:

- All staff who are employed by the Federation, including the headteachers and any supply staff.
- All staff in units or bases that are attached to the school and nursery.

2.3 The same expectations will be shared with, and apply to, regular visitors to the school and nursery such as peripatetic staff and regular volunteers; though it is acknowledged that external staff are covered by the relevant Code of Conduct of their employing body.

2.4 Where employees have complied with the Code of Conduct, the school and nursery (and City Council where in a maintained school), will protect employees against unjustified allegations of wrongdoing.

2.5 This Code of Conduct cannot cover every eventuality, and further guidance should be sought from the headteachers or, in the case of headteachers, from the Chair of Governors and/or the Federation's HR advisor, if they are unsure of the standards expected of them.

3. Setting an example

3.1 All staff who work in schools will set good examples of behaviour and conduct which can be copied by pupils. Therefore, they must demonstrate high standards of conduct in order to encourage our pupils to do the same, for example, staff must not use offensive language.

3.2 All staff must also avoid putting themselves at risk of allegations of abusive or unprofessional conduct.

4. Safeguarding pupils, staff and visitors

4.1 Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play in safeguarding children. Federation staff are particularly important as they are in a position to identify concerns early on and provide help for children, to prevent situations from escalating, by working with other agencies to protect them from harm.

4.2 Staff have a duty to safeguard pupils from:

- physical abuse
- sexual abuse
- emotional abuse, including verbal assaults
- neglect
- unequal treatment or discrimination

4.3 The duty to safeguard pupils includes the duty to report concerns about a pupil to the school and nursery's Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) for child protection. The headteachers must ensure that all staff are familiar with, and have received appropriate training annually on, the school's Safeguarding Policy, and understand the provisions of the Whistleblowing Procedure. In addition, all staff should read the Department for Education's (DfE) statutory document *Keeping children safe in education: Information for all school and college staff*, which is available on the DfE's website and from the headteacher.

4.4 Staff must not demean or undermine pupils, their parents or carers, colleagues or visitors to the school or nursery.

4.5 Staff should ensure they comply with the school and nursery's IT and social media policies, particularly regarding the use of personal equipment. For example, the use of personal mobile phones or devices to record or photograph children is prohibited and staff should only use school and nursery equipment for this purpose. Staff are expected to keep mobile phones switched off during staff meetings and for the periods of the working day when they are in contact with children. Similarly, staff are expected to ensure that any smart watches with web connectivity are disabled for the duration of contact time so that

notifications are not disruptive or distracting to others. Emails and text messages should not be responded to during this time, unless there are mitigating circumstances as outlined above and agreed with the Headteachers. In exceptional circumstances (such as critical illness of a family member) the headteachers should be notified if a phone needs to be used. This includes watches with a camera; they must not be worn while providing intimate care to children. Where staff are in any doubt about the school or nursery's expectations regarding their behaviour, they should seek guidance immediately from a member of the senior leadership team.

4.6 Staff must ensure the highest standards of safety and welfare are taken in respect of pupils under their supervision and other colleagues and visitors to the school and nursery.

4.7 Staff have a duty to inform the headteachers (or suitable senior person in their absence) if they believe that a colleague or visitor is behaving in a way that compromises the safety or wellbeing of any child, group of children or a member of staff. Where staff have concerns about the headteachers, this should be referred to the chair of governors or chair of the management committee.

4.8 Staff can report their concerns about child protection directly to the appropriate external agency if they consider the circumstances warrant this; however, they are encouraged to raise this with the school and nursery's DSLs and/or headteachers initially.

4.9 If staff have concerns about safeguarding or child protection practice in the Federation, they should raise this with the headteachers or chair of governors wherever possible. Staff can also use the Federation's Whistleblowing Policy, where they consider this to be more appropriate. Further advice and support can be obtained from other agencies including trade unions, professional bodies or the independent whistleblowing charity Public Concern at Work (www.pcaw.org.uk).

4.10 All staff members must be mindful of pupil safety at all times. In this respect, hot drinks must be carried in a cup with a secure lid at all times to avoid spillages and burns. Hot drinks in lidded cups can only be carried before and after school, and during breaktimes, and there should be no hot drinks consumed during lesson time.

4.11 All staff members must sign in with the Inventry electronic sign-in system, and then sign out whenever they leave the premises. This is for health and safety, fire and safeguarding reasons.

5. Allegations, criminal charges and changes to status

5.1 Staff facing allegations, criminal charges and changes to status must disclose this, without delay, to their headteachers. They must do this in all circumstances, whether they personally feel the matter is relevant or not. If in doubt, staff should seek advice from the headteachers.

5.2 Examples of changes could include revisions to registration status, receiving a conviction, warning, reprimand, caution or awaiting sentence or whilst any criminal allegations made against the employee are being investigated. Such offences include motoring convictions. In all cases these must be declared

as soon as practically possible to allow the school/nursery to assess the potential risks to their employment. Staff may be suspended if this is felt appropriate in the circumstances, for example, if their clearance status changes or is under review.

5.3 Staff are expected to disclose immediately any incidents or allegations of wrongdoing arising from alternative employment, voluntary work, incidents outside of work, or from previous employment which may or may not be covered by pre-employment checks that could affect their suitability to work with children, such as allegations of sexual misconduct or violence. Failure to do this may result in disciplinary action which could lead to dismissal.

5.4 Staff in posts covered by the disqualification requirement under the Childcare Act 2006, must ensure that they comply with the requirement to disclose information relevant to themselves by making a Staff Suitability Declaration annually, and that they keep this information up to date throughout the year. They are expected to provide current and past information in relation to: cautions or convictions for offences against children; caution or conviction for any violent or sexual offences against anyone of any age; any barring from working with children; any prohibition from teaching; care, protection or court orders relating to a child under their care; refusal or cancellation of registration in relation to child care, a children's home or private fostering; and cautions, reprimands, warnings or convictions for any similar offence in another country. The headteachers and the Federation's HR advisor can provide further guidance in relation to this and, where in any doubt, all working at the school or nursery should seek further advice.

5.5 The DBS policy provides more detail on the school/nursery and Council's (or Academy Trust's) position and approach to safeguarding vulnerable groups.

5.6 The implications of any disclosures will need to be considered and could result in disciplinary action, possibly leading to dismissal if employees are no longer able to fulfil their role in the school.

5.7 Failure to disclose information may result in disciplinary action which could lead to dismissal.

6. Pupil development

6.1 Staff must comply with all school and nursery policies and procedures, paying particular attention to those that support the well-being and development of pupils.

6.2 Staff must co-operate and collaborate with colleagues and with external agencies where necessary to support the development of pupils.

6.3 Staff must follow reasonable instructions that support the development of pupils.

7. Honesty and integrity

7.1 Staff must maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their work. These are reflected in The Nolan Seven Principles of Public Life (appendix 1). This includes the handling and claiming of money and the use of school property and facilities. All staff should therefore familiarise themselves with the relevant school polices, including those in relation to financial procedures.

7.2 All staff must comply with the Bribery Act 2010. A person may be guilty of an offence of bribery under this act if they offer, promise or give financial advantage or other advantage to someone; or if they request, agree or accept, or receive a bribe from another person. If you believe that a person has acted in a corrupt way, you should refer to the Federation's Whistleblowing Procedure. (Further details of the Bribery Act 2010 can be found at: http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/ 2010/23/contents)

7.3 Gifts from suppliers or associates of the school or nursery must be declared to the headteachers and recorded. This does not include "one off" token gifts from pupils or parents (e.g. at the end of the term or year). However, it could include offers of hospitality and invitations to events. Individual gifts from members of staff to individual pupils should not be given as they are inappropriate and could be misinterpreted.

7.4 Any personal interests, financial or otherwise, which could be seen to conflict with a member of staff's role at the school or nursery must be registered with the headteachers. This could include where a close personal relationship exists with a potential supplier tendering for a contract with the school or nursery. Staff are expected to complete a form declaring any pecuniary interests on an annual basis.

7.5 Staff must declare any membership of any organisation classed as a secret society. This should be made in writing and sent to the headteachers, who will record it.

7.6 The advice of the headteachers should be sought wherever doubt exists about the status of gifts, offers of hospitality or a potential situation of conflict of interest.

8. Professional attire

8.1 Whilst it is acknowledged that appearance is a matter of personal taste, it is expected that staff will present themselves in a professional manner which sets a good example to students and exhibits the importance of the job they undertake. However, clothes should be practical for the tasks required.

In this respect for all staff members:

- Blue jeans and blue denim clothing are not acceptable
- Trainers and sportswear are acceptable if worn to teach PE in school. When undertaking work of a more physical nature e.g. outdoor learning, supporting children in Early Years or a child with additional needs, it is acceptable to wear trainers (see appendix 2)
- Flip-flops, pool shoes and sliders are not acceptable footwear and must not be worn to work.

For female staff members:

- Skirts should be worn at a reasonable length, (to the knee)
- Shorter dresses or skirts should be worn with leggings
- Tops should not expose underwear or bra straps; they should cover the shoulders and not expose the chest. Strappy vest tops are not acceptable

For male staff members:

- Smart casual attire is required
- Polo shirts and short sleeved shirts with a collar are permitted
- Ties are optional

8.2 Staff members should be mindful of the health and safety implications, for example, when wearing jewellery, ensuring appropriate footwear, etc. In this respect, any nails (including false nails) must be no longer than 3mm above the fingertip and should not be too sharp. This will prevent accidentally injuring children.

8.3 Staff members are expected to dress regarding the audience, particularly when representing the school or academy at external events.

8.4 Staff members should not dress in a manner which could cause offence or embarrassment to others.

8.5 No dress code can cover all contingencies so staff members must exert a certain amount of judgement in their choice of clothing and if in doubt this should be discussed with their line manager.

9. Attendance and punctuality

9.1 Staff must follow the Attendance Management policy if they are unable to attend work due to sickness or on compassionate grounds.

9.2 If staff are requesting time off for appointments or on compassionate grounds, a 'Leave of Absence' form must be completed and submitted to the line manager and School Business Manager. If staff are requesting time off for religious observance, they must inform the phase lead at the beginning of the school year including completing a 'Leave of Absence' form with dates as accurate as possible.

9.2 Staff must inform their phase lead and the headteachers between 7 – 7.15 a.m. if they are unable to attend work that day. This will be communicated via a text message. During the period of self-certification, staff must inform their phase lead and headteachers by 4 p.m. on the day of sickness to inform whether they will return to work the next day or not. This can be communicated either by phone call or text message.

9.3 All staff (teachers and TAs) should be in school and nursery and ready to start work at 8 a.m. unless their contracted hours dictate otherwise.

10. Conduct and professional relationships within work

10.1 All members of staff should arrive and sign in at reception by using the Inventry system, at a time which enables them to begin their contracted hours promptly and should wherever possible attend the staff briefing meetings. If in doubt, staff members should clarify this with their line manager.

10.2 Staff are expected to take professional responsibility for fulfilling their role in school or nursery and, whatever that role, it is essential to the overall success of the Federation. This includes the professional courtesy of meeting deadlines that have been set and having a proactive dialogue with colleagues/line managers at the earliest opportunity if there are issues which prevent a task being completed on time. Therefore, staff will be positive in their thinking and approach, seeking constructive solutions to problems and by de-personalising issues.

10.3 Staff will communicate effectively and fairly with all stakeholders and operate under the Nolan principles for those in public life (see Appendix). They will treat all colleagues and visitors with professional respect and courtesy, showing appreciation for the contributions of others. This applies to informal conversations and in formal meetings such as staff meetings or briefings.

10.4 Where an employee's role involves the potential oversight of their own child or children, or wider family (e.g. nieces/nephews), the member of staff should not routinely be directly responsible for their care, or involved in incidents of conflict resolution, unless otherwise expressly directed. Every effort should be made by the employee to ensure clear boundaries are agreed and maintained. This is likely to apply to supervision of pupils at midday or pre/post school/nursery provision. The exception to this expectation is that all staff should respond to any emergency where a child was at significant risk of harm, irrespective of their relationship to that child at the time.

10.5 There are occasions (including supporting children with SEND) when it is entirely appropriate and proper for staff to have physical contact with pupils, but it is crucial that they only do so in ways appropriate for their professional role.

Staff supervision of children during changing should be appropriate to the needs and age of the children concerned and sensitive to the potential for embarrassment.

If a distressed pupil needs comfort and reassurance, then age-appropriate physical contact may be provided by staff, but this contact must not be threatening, intrusive or subject to misinterpretation.

Staff must adhere to the Federation's safety policy, First Aid Policy and Administration of Medicines Policy.

All children have a right to safety, privacy and dignity when contact of an intimate nature is required (e.g. assistance with toileting). Children who require intimate care on a regular basis should have a Care Plan drawn up and agreed with parents.

Wherever possible and practicable it is advisable that transport is undertaken with at least one additional adult to the driver. Staff should ensure that their behaviour is safe and that the vehicle is roadworthy and appropriately insured.

11. Conduct outside work

11.1 Staff should not engage in conduct outside work which could seriously damage the

reputation and standing of the Federation. This includes via a variety of methods of communication, e.g. social media, word of mouth, written, phone, text, etc.

11.2 Staff must notify the headteachers of any criminal charges brought against them, regardless of whether they consider these to be relevant to their working life (see also section 5 above). In some circumstances, criminal offences may need to be referred to the relevant disciplinary body by the headteachers, and staff need to be aware that this could result in removal of QTS. Offences that involve violence, possession or use of illegal drugs, or sexual misconduct are regarded as unacceptable and will usually result in loss of QTS. Disciplinary action within a school context could also lead to referral to other agencies.

11.3 Staff must exercise caution when using information technology and be aware of the risks to themselves and others. Staff must not engage in inappropriate use of social networking sites which may bring themselves, the school, the nursery, school community, or employer into disrepute. Staff must not access illegal, adult or other inappropriate sites using school/nursery computers, nor should they use IT equipment for activities that are not related to work, during their paid working hours (e.g. internet shopping).

11.4 If staff are intending to undertake additional work outside of their school day, it is expected that they will discuss this with their headteachers, who will review the Working Time Regulations, health and safety implications and the potential effects on their work performance, and carry out a risk assessment, as necessary.

11.5 The school will not unreasonably preclude any of its employees from undertaking additional employment, taking into consideration the personal circumstances of the employee in question, but any such employment must not, in the headteachers' and governing body's view, conflict with or react detrimentally to the school's interests or endanger the health and safety of themselves or others.

11.6 No personal business activity or outside work of any sort may be undertaken by employees during their normal working hours for the school or nursery. Similarly, no school equipment, accommodation or resources may be used in connection with these activities.

11.7 On occasions, staff may undertake babysitting and home tutoring outside of school/nursery time. These are separate arrangements and are undertaken by staff in their private capacity and not as representatives of the school or nursery and, therefore, no liability will rest with the Federation as a result. It is the responsibility of staff to inform the school that they are doing such babysitting or tutoring duties so that the amount of hours being worked per week can be monitored to ensure compliance with the Working Time Regulations. Members of staff will be responsible for accounting to HMRC for any income received from such work.

12. Confidentiality

12.1 Staff must treat all information that they have access to within the school/nursery as confidential. Staff must ensure that they manage school/nursery data and information in line with data protection legislation and agreed school procedures.

12.2 Where staff have access to confidential information about pupils or their parents or carers, staff must not reveal such information except to those colleagues who have a professional role in relation to the pupil, in line with legislation and procedures.

12.3 All staff are likely at some point to witness actions which need to be confidential and handled sensitively and according to correct procedures. These must only be discussed in the appropriate forum and with the relevant individuals (whether school/nursery staff or third parties). Where in doubt, staff must seek the advice of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

12.4 However, staff have an obligation to share with their manager or the school or nursery's DSL any information which gives rise to concern about the safety or welfare of a pupil or colleague. Staff must never promise a pupil that they will not act on information that they are told by the pupil.

12.5 Staff who undertake more than one role in the school or nursery and, therefore, potentially report to an additional employer, should not share information gained in their capacity as a school/nursery employee without approval of the Head Teachers/Line Manager.

13. Disciplinary action

13.1 Failure to meet these standards of behaviour and conduct may result in disciplinary action, which could lead to dismissal.

Appendix One

Nolan Seven Principles of Public Life

Whilst not applicable to all aspects of school life, the general principles apply.

(Originally published by the Nolan Committee: The Committee on Standards in Public Life was established by the then Prime Minister in October 1994, under the Chairmanship of Lord Nolan, to consider standards of conduct in various areas of public life, and to make recommendations).

Selflessness

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends.

Integrity

Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.

Objectivity

In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

Openness

Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

Honesty

Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

Leadership

Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

Appendix Two



DOCUMENT ORIGINS			
Organisation	Mellers Primary School and Nottingham Nursery School	Version date	3
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		introduction 7.1 - Reference made to Appendix 1 9.2 - Details of how staff will communicate their absences 9.3 - All staff will start work by 8 am, unless contracted otherwise