

## ***INTEGRITY CODE***

### **Standards of Conduct in Schools - Teaching & Support Staff**

**(applicable to all Community and Controlled Schools, including maintained Special  
Schools)**

**Updated March 2016**

**Reviewed September 2017**

**Cheshire East Borough Council**

## INTEGRITY CODE

This is a revised copy of the leaflet which was published in August 2000 following consultations with the Cheshire Teachers' Panel. Apart from the addition of new guidance on information and communication technology, the changes are minor.

The Council and all its staff have important responsibilities for prudent use of public funds and for ensuring that the highest standards of conduct apply throughout the Authority.

Please read this leaflet carefully and keep it for future reference. It summarises the duty we all have to behave with the highest integrity. The rules within which we must work are well established but it is important to remind everyone of the basic principles, to help and protect staff in their day-to-day work. If you are in doubt about any action you need to take to comply with the standards in this leaflet, talk to your Headteacher (Headteachers should speak to their Chair of Governors).

You must not carry out personal activities during working hours, nor mix private business with official duties. Official equipment and materials, including photocopiers, PCs and phones, must not be used for private purposes without prior permission from your Headteacher/Governing Body.

Fortunately, irregularities are rare but we all need to be vigilant by reading this advice and being alert to misconduct. Staff have a vital role in preventing fraud and corruption and are positively encouraged to raise any concerns they may have, in the knowledge that concerns will be treated in confidence and properly investigated.

### ***Always act with integrity***

It is important for all of us to abide by the Council's rules, together with any extra requirements in your own school, and those of any professional body to which you belong.

### ***Avoid conflicts of interest***

Your official duties must always take precedence over your private interests. You must disclose to your Headteacher/Governing Body any financial interest or other connection that you, your partner or either of your families has with any firm, or organisation that has any involvement with the school/Council. This includes any organisation which is tendering for or already has a contract with the school/Council. You should also declare your membership of any organisation or club if people might think that your involvement could cause a conflict. If in doubt – disclose on the special form available from your Headteacher/manager.

Personal relationships should not be allowed to affect your work, influence staff appointments, or bring criticism on the school/Council. You must not use your job to gain a benefit or special treatment for yourself, your family or friends unless these are offered to school/Council staff generally.

Always refuse gifts or hospitality which you feel are intended to influence your judgement or to discredit the school/Council. (The position in relation to formal educational visits may be different e.g. where an employee is requested by the school to make an exploratory visit.) You must not benefit personally from any sponsorship arrangements in which the school/Council is involved.

Support staff graded above NJC Scale 7 (or equivalent) must have permission (reviewed annually) from their Headteachers before doing other paid work or being involved in a private business. Any approval will be reviewed each year. If you have another job it must not be allowed to affect your official responsibilities. Every employee (including teachers), at whatever level, who has another job or is involved in a business, must ensure that there is no conflict with their official duties.

Anything invented or created as part of your job (i.e. in the course of normal duties or in the course of duties falling outside normal duties, but specifically assigned to you, and the circumstances in either case were such that an invention might reasonably be expected to result in the carrying out of your duties) is described as "intellectual property" and normally belongs to the school/Council. You should not exploit it to your own advantage. This applies, for example, to information, reports, books, plays and other documents, systems designs and inventions. However, the school/Council does not wish to remove employees' rights to independent inventions or intellectual property that have been created outside the terms of employment.

### ***Work with information & communication technology safely and securely***

Schools and the Council are becoming increasingly reliant upon computerised information systems in support of current and future activities. Staff should be familiar with the ICT Acceptable use Policy and the ICT Security Code of Practice and observe the principles therein. Copies of these documents are held by schools.

### ***Deal properly with money***

All staff must act, and be seen to act honestly in handling and spending school/Council money. Staff should always adhere to the guidance on handling money set out in the Financial Management Standard for Cheshire Schools copies of which are held by all schools. They cover the use of bank accounts, official and unofficial funds.

### ***Whistleblowing***

If you know or suspect that someone is breaking these rules or acting wrongly, you are positively encouraged to raise your concerns. You can raise concerns with your Headteacher/manager/Governing Body, or if you prefer, with either of the following independent senior officers. They will support you and will treat your concerns seriously and in the strictest confidence.

### ***Finally ...***

More detailed rules are held by Headteachers and Schools' HR Consultancy. These include the Code of Conduct for Employees, Constitution of Cheshire East Borough Council, Financial Management Standard for Cheshire Schools, Scheme for Financing Schools, Finance Procedure Rules and the Code of Practice on Financial Management. You should ensure that you have an awareness and understanding of those aspects which are relevant to your job.