

## Close Personal Relationships at Work Policy

**Last amended 17.07.17 by Heather Watson**

**Reviewed by Vicky Elsworth November 2019**

**Ratified by Board of Trustees 04.12.19**

**Next review date November 2021**

*This policy has been reviewed in line with the 8 principles set out in the Single Equality Policy and an initial screening Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out.*

Within this policy the term Headteacher refers to the Headteacher of the school,. When the close personal relationship involves a member of the Twynham Learning Trust staff or a Headteacher, the term Headteacher should be substituted with CEO (Chief Executive Officer).

The governors of the Twynham Learning Academy Trust (the Trust) are charity trustees and company directors and for the purpose of this policy these terms are interchangeable.

This policy reflects the legislation at the time that it was last reviewed. Any changes in legislation will take precedence over anything printed in this policy.

## **Introduction**

The Trust is committed to promoting and maintaining high standards of conduct and integrity amongst all staff. As part of this it is necessary to distinguish between personal relationships and professional ones and to have arrangements in place that safeguard all parties in circumstances where these have the potential to overlap.

The Trustees will delegate authority to the Headteacher (or his/her representative) to take action under the procedure outlined below, and will monitor the use of this procedure for effectiveness and fairness.

## **The Policy**

An employee/governor must declare to the Trust any close personal relationship that could involve a potential conflict of interest for the employee or otherwise conflict with the employees' responsibilities at work.

The Trust will act upon such a declaration to ensure that any potential conflict of interest is avoided and/or to ensure that the employee is not compromised in their work with the Trust.

The Close Personal Relationships at Work Policy applies to all employees and Governors of the Trust.

An employee/governor who does not declare a close personal relationship at work in accordance with the requirements of the policy may be subject to appropriate action in accordance with the Trust's disciplinary procedure.

## **Operation of the Policy**

Examples of close personal relationships that could involve a potential conflict of interest for an employee or otherwise conflict with the employee's responsibilities at work include but are not limited to:

- Family relationships
- Sexual or other intimate relationships
- Business, financial and commercial relationships

The circumstances in which personal relationships at work must be declared, include, but are not limited to:

- Any close personal relationship between an interview panel member and an applicant for employment within the Trust
- Any close personal relationship between a manager or a senior manager and an employee responsible to that manager or to a senior manager on the same management line

- Any close personal relationship between a Governor and an employee of the Trust
- Any close personal relationship between an employee and an existing or potential (i.e. through the operation of the Trust tendering processes) supplier of goods or services to the Trust.

The Trust regards as wholly unacceptable any close personal relationship between an employee/governor and a child/young person who is under the age of 18 (19 if still at school) whom they meet as a result of their employment. If this type of relationship exists/develops, it is highly likely to represent an abuse of the employee/governor's position of trust, a breach of the standards of propriety expected in the post and a compromise of professional standards.

The Headteacher must invoke the Trust's child protection procedure immediately, before potentially taking action under the disciplinary procedure for alleged gross misconduct.

In addition to the particular cases set out above, it is the responsibility of the employee/governor to assess any other circumstances in which there could be a requirement in accordance with this policy to declare a personal relationship at work.

If an employee/governor is in any doubt about the circumstances when a close personal relationship should be disclosed they must seek guidance from their Line Manager or the Headteacher or take advice from their Trade Union Representative. The expectation is that if an employee/governor is in doubt about the requirement to declare a close personal relationship at work the employee/governor should declare the relationship in accordance with this policy.

An employee/governor who needs to declare a personal relationship at work should set out the relevant circumstances in writing to the Headteacher. In respect of the Headteacher or Governor the declaration should be provided to the Chair of Governors.

Upon receipt of a declaration the Headteacher (Chair of Governors or other senior leader as appropriate) will meet with the employee/governor. In accordance with the policy the purpose of the meeting will be to agree the actions that are necessary to avoid any potential conflict of interest and/or to ensure that the employee/governor is not compromised in their work with the Trust. The agreed actions will be recorded and placed on the employee's personnel file and a copy will be given to the employee/governor. If it is considered unavoidable to inform other members of staff about the relationship in order to explain a change in management arrangements, this will be discussed with the individuals concerned, before it is disclosed.

If the circumstances of the personal relationship change the employee must so advise the Headteacher. The previously agreed actions will be reviewed in discussion between the employee/governor and Headteacher and an updated note will be produced and attached to the original.

Equality Impact Assessment – Initial Screening Record

1. What policy is being reviewed?	Close Personal Relationships at Work Policy
2. Upon whom will this impact?	All School Based Employees

3. How would the work impact upon groups; are they included and considered?

<b>The Equality Strands</b>	Negative impact	Positive impact	No impact
Minority ethnic groups			
Gender			
Disability			
Religion, faith or belief			
Sexual orientation			
Transgender			
Age (N/A to pre-school and school children)			
Rurality			

4. Does data inform this work, research and/or consultation, and has it been broken down by the equality strands?

	NO	YES	Uncertain
Minority ethnic groups			
Gender			
Disability			
Religion, Faith or belief			
Sexual Orientation			
Transgender			
Age			
Rurality			

Does the initial screening highlight potential issues that may be illegal? NO

Further comments:-

Do you consider that a full Equality Impact Assessment is required? NO

Initial screening carried out by Staffing Committee 20<sup>th</sup> June 2017

Comment by CEO: