Tas Valley Church Schools Federation

Staff Code of Conduct and AUP

Formally adopted by the Governing Board of:	**Tas Valley Federation**
On:	**21 September 2026**
Chair of Governors:	**Diane Perry-Yates**
Last updated:	**August 2026**

Staff Code of Conduct and AUP

Name of school:	Tas Valley Federation
Date of Policy:	September 2026
Next Review:	September 2027
Members of staff Responsible:	SLT

1. Statement of intent

1.1 The Tas Valley Federation expects all its pupils to receive the highest possible quality of teaching and learning within a positive and respectful environment.

1.2 Employees at the Federation should understand that their own behaviour, and the way they conduct themselves with their colleagues, pupils, parents/carers and other stakeholders, sets an example.

1.3 The Tas Valley Federation recognises that most staff members act appropriately and treat each other with dignity and respect.

1.4 This document forms part of a staff member's contract of employment and failure to comply with it, and with the associated Federation policies, may result in disciplinary action being taken, including legal action where this is warranted.

1.5 This document applies to all staff members who are employed by the Federation, including the Executive Headteacher.

1.6 This document does not apply to:

- Peripatetic staff members who are centrally employed by the LA.
- School catering staff employed by Norse.
- Employees of external contractors.

1.7 These employees are governed by their employment contracts and any relevant laws pertaining to their activities within the Federation, for example, the Data Protection Act 1998.

2. Related policies

2.1 This Code of Conduct should be read and adhered to in conjunction with the following Federation policies:

- Bullying and Harassment Policy.
- Capability Policy (teachers).
- Capability Policy (support staff).
- Clear Desk Policy.
- Confidentiality Policy.
- Computing and E-Safety Policy (including Student AUP).
- Data Protection Policy.
- Disability Equality Policy.
- Disciplinary Procedure.
- Drugs Policy.
- Equal Opportunities Policy.
- Gender Equality Policy.
- Grievance Procedure.
- Health and Safety Commitments and Health and Safety Organisation, Responsibilities and Arrangements.
- Lone Working Policy.
- Race Equality Policy.
- Safe Touch Policy.
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- Single Equality Policy.
- SEMH Policy.
- Social Media Policy.
- Whistleblowing Policy.

3 Appearance and dress

3.1 The expectations of the governing board are that staff members:

- Ensure that their appearance is clean and neat when at work or representing the Federation.
- Dress in a manner that is appropriate to their role.
- Remember that they are role models for pupils, and that their dress and appearance should reflect this.
- Do not dress in a way that would cause embarrassment to pupils, parents/carers, colleagues or other stakeholders.

4 Attendance

4.1 The Federation's expectations are that staff members:

- Attend work in accordance with their contract of employment and associated terms and conditions in relation to hours, days of work and holidays.
- Make routine medical and dental appointments outside of their working hours or during holidays, wherever possible.
- Discuss with the Executive Headteacher if they need time off for any reason other than personal illness – requests should be put into writing.
- Follow the Federation's absence reporting procedure when they are absent from work due to illness or injury.

5 Professional behaviour and conduct

5.1 Staff members are expected to treat other colleagues, pupils, parents/carers, and external contacts with dignity and respect.

5.2 The use of foul and abusive language will not be tolerated.

5.3 Discrimination, bullying, harassment or intimidation, including physical, sexual and verbal abuse, will not be tolerated.

5.4 Staff members must not misuse or misrepresent their position, qualifications or experience, or bring the Federation into disrepute.

5.5 Staff members must inform their line manager if they are subject to a criminal conviction, caution, ban, police enquiry, investigation or pending prosecution.

6 Conduct outside of work

6.1 Staff must not engage in outside work if it could seriously damage the reputation and standing of the Federation or the employee's own reputation, or the reputation of other members of the school communities. Criminal offences that involve violence, possession or use of illegal drugs or sexual misconduct are unacceptable.

6.2 Staff may undertake work outside Federation, either paid or voluntary, if it does not conflict with the interests of the Federation. The nature of the work cannot be seen to bring the Federation into disrepute, nor be at a level that may contravene the working time regulations or affect an individual's work performance.

6.3 Staff must not engage in inappropriate use of social network sites which may bring themselves, the Federation, school community or employer into disrepute. This is explored further in paragraph 16.

7 Safeguarding children

7.1 Our expectations are that staff members will:

- Act in an open and transparent way that does not lead to any suspicion about their actions or intent.
- Respect their duty to protect children and young people from harm and to maintain professional boundaries.
- Complete annual Safeguarding Training and read and understand Federation policies on child protection and safeguarding, including their obligations to undertake a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. These documents include:
    - Safeguarding Policy and Leaflet.
    - Whistleblowing Policy.
    - Behaviour Policy.
    - Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 Part 1 and Annexe;
    - Staff Safeguarding Handbook (training materials).
    - Social Media Policy.

  All staff are required to report concerns using the Federation's reporting system CPOMS.

8 Declaration of interests

8.1 Staff members are required to declare their interests, both personal and financial, where the group or organisation they are affiliated with would conflict with the ethos of the Federation schools.

8.2 A financial conflict of interest is one where there is or appears to be opportunity for personal financial gain, financial gain for close relatives or friends, or where it may be reasonable for a third party to take the view that financial benefits may affect an individual's actions.

8.3 The term 'financial interest' means anything of monetary value, including:

- Payments for services
- Equity interests
- Intellectual property rights
- Hospitality or gifts

8.4 Examples of financial interests that must be declared include but are not limited to equity interests in services considered for use by the Federation.

8.5 Non-financial conflicts of interest can also come into conflict, or be perceived to come into conflict, with an individual's obligations or commitments to the Federation. These interests may include any benefit or advantage, including but not limited to, direct or indirect enhancement of an individual's career, or gain for immediate family or someone with whom the individual has a close relationship.

8.6 Examples of situations that could give rise to non-financial conflicts of interest include:

- Pressure or temptation to accept gifts, inducements or hospitality.
- Participating in the appointment, hiring, promotion, supervision or evaluation of a person with whom the individual has a close personal relationship.
- Where a member of staff has or develops a close personal relationship with a colleague.

8.7 Membership to a trade union or staff representative group does not need to be declared.

8.8 Staff members should also carefully consider whether they need to declare their relationship with any individual where this might cause a conflict with the Federation's activities.

8.9 Failure to make a relevant declaration of interests is a very serious breach of trust and, therefore, if employees are in doubt about a declaration, they are advised to contact their line manager or seek advice from a trade union.

8.10 All declarations, including nil returns, should be submitted in writing to the Executive Headteacher for inclusion on the Register of Business Interests.

9 Probity of records

9.1 The deliberate falsification of documents, such as references, academic qualifications or legal documents, is unacceptable. Where a staff member falsifies records or other documents, including those held electronically, this will be regarded as a serious disciplinary matter and potentially a criminal offence.

10 Financial inducements

10.1 Staff members must:

- Familiarise themselves and comply with the Federation's financial regulations.
- Declare to the governing board, in writing, any gifts received, except for:
  - Low cost, functional items suitable for business rather than personal use and displaying the supplier's logo. These items may be accepted.
  - Gifts, including vouchers, offered by parents/carers or pupils to Federation staff to express their gratitude, e.g. at Christmas or at the end of the academic year. Monetary gifts would need to be considered by the Governing Board.
  - Hospitality in the shape of meals and drinks where it forms part of a normal business meeting.
  - Authorised visits to exhibitions, demonstrations, conferences, business meals and social functions in connection with the Federation's business, which shall be at the Federation's expense.

- Not accept a personal gift, payment, or other incentive from a business contact. Any such gifts should be returned.
- Declare any gift that cannot be returned to the governing board, who will decide how it will be used.
- Only accept offers to specific events after authorisation from the governing board.

11 Contacts

11.1 Staff members shall not use Federation business contacts for acquiring materials or services at trade/discount prices for non-school activities, unless participating in concessionary schemes arranged by trade unions or other such groups.

12 Health and safety

12.1 Staff members must:

- Be familiar with and adhere to the Federation's Health and Safety Commitments and Health and Safety Organisation, Responsibilities and Arrangements, and ensure that they take every action to keep themselves and everyone in the school environment safe and well.
- Comply with health and safety regulations and use any safety equipment and protective clothing which is supplied to them.
- Comply with hygiene requirements.
- Comply with accident reporting requirements.
- Inform their line manager of any paid work which is undertaken elsewhere, for compliance with Working Time Regulations.
- Follow the agreed procedure for signing in and signing out when entering or leaving the school premises.

13. Alcohol and illegal drugs

13.1 The taking of illegal drugs or consumption of alcohol during working hours is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Staff members must never attend work under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.

13.2 If alcohol or drug usage impacts on a staff member's performance, the Federation has the right to discuss the matter with the employee and take appropriate action in accordance with the Federation's disciplinary procedures, including referral to the police.

14 Premises, equipment and communication

14.1 Federation equipment and systems are available only for school-related activities and should not be used for the fulfilment of another job or for personal use, unless specifically authorised by the Executive Headteacher.

14.2 Illegal, inappropriate or unacceptable use of Federation equipment or communication systems may result in disciplinary action and, in serious cases, could lead to an employee's dismissal.

14.3 Employees receiving inappropriate communication or material, or who are unsure about whether something he/she proposes to do might breach this policy, should seek advice from the Executive Headteacher.

14.4 The Federation reserves the right to monitor emails, phone calls, internet activity or document production, principally to avoid offensive or nuisance material and to protect systems from viruses, but also to ensure proper and effective use of systems.

14.5 Communication systems may be accessed when the Federation suspects that the employee has been misusing systems or facilities, or for the investigation of suspected fraud or other irregularity. Access will be secured by the systems manager, only with the permission of the Governing Board.

14.6 Passwords should not be shared and access to computer systems must be kept confidential except on the express request of the Executive Headteacher or systems manager. Breach of this confidentiality may be subject to disciplinary action.

14.7 Federation equipment that is used off premises, for example laptops, should be returned to the Federation when the employee leaves employment, or if requested to do so by the Executive Headteacher.

15 GDPR, data protection and confidentiality

15.1 Staff members are required, under the General Data Protection Regulation (2018), to collect, maintain and dispose of sensitive or personal data in a responsible manner.

15.2 Staff members should not disclose sensitive information about the Federation, its employees, or the LA, to other parties.

15.3 The only exception whereby it is acceptable for a staff member to disclose information which would otherwise be considered confidential is when the confidential information gives rise to concerns about the safety or welfare of a pupil.

15.4 Staff members have the right to request access to data that is held about them. Such requests should be made according to the procedure laid out in the Federation's Data Protection Policy.

16 Acceptable Use

16.1 Technology is now entwined in our modern lives with everyday use of social media and web-based communication as standard practice. It is a critical resource for pupils, staff, governors, volunteers and visitors. It is therefore important to ensure good awareness of the opportunities to learn, create and share ideas AND the risks that these freedoms bring both to the welfare of staff and students and to the integrity of the IT systems that the Federation relies on to provide teaching and learning.

16.2 All users who access our Federation systems should be always entitled to safe access to the internet and IT systems.

16.3 IT Systems are defined as all facilities, technologies, systems and services including, but not limited to, network infrastructure, desktop computers, laptops, tablets, phones, music players, software, websites, web applications or services, and any device system or service that may become available in the future which is provided as part of the Federation's ICT services.

16.4 Staff must ensure that they are responsible users of the IT systems provided and that they make sound judgements while using the internet and other communications technologies for educational and personal use. Staff should also take reasonable steps to ensure they are protected from potential risk in their use of technology.

17. Unacceptable Use

17.1 The following is considered unacceptable use of the Federation's ICT facilities and systems. Any breach of policy may result in disciplinary or behaviour proceedings:

- Using the Federation's facilities to breach intellectual property or copyright.
- Using the Federation's ICT facilities to bully (including cyber bullying) or harass someone else, or to promote unlawful discrimination.
- Breaching the Federation's policies or procedures.
- Illegal activity or statements which advocate illegal activity.
- Online gambling, inappropriate advertising or scams, including phishing.
- Using inappropriate language.
- Accessing material that is pornographic, obscene or inappropriate or harmful. Including creating, accessing, storing, linking or sending the material.
- Sharing of any kind of nude image/videos whether consensual or non-consensual.

- Any activity which might bring the Federation into disrepute.
- Sharing confidential data about the Federation, pupils or other members of staff.
- Causing a data breach.
- Connecting an unauthorised device to the Federation's networks or devices without approval from Executive Headteacher.
- Helping others gain unauthorised access to the Federation's computer systems.
- Causing damage to any computer hardware, systems or devices.

17.2 The Federation and the local authority will provide safe and secure access to IT systems and services and maintain the availability and integrity of the systems in support of learning and teaching. However, any use of personal mobile devices (such as but not limited to, laptops/tablets/ mobile phones) in school, must be in accordance with rules set out in this agreement, as per any school-managed equipment.

17.3 Actions for all staff:

- Staff should use the Federation's network and technology resources in a responsible, ethical and lawful manner
- Staff are responsible for any passwords issued to them and ensure that these are not shared.
- Staff must not use the Federation's ICT facilities to bully or harass someone else, or to promote unlawful discrimination.
- Staff should utilise the Federation's network resources for educational purposes and activities relating to the school. Excessive use of network bandwidth, such as streaming media or downloading large files, that interferes with the network's performance is prohibited.
- Staff should take reasonable steps to ensure that all devices are protected by up-to-date security patches and anti-virus software and are free from viruses. Any virus or ransomware messages should be immediately reported to the Executive Headteacher immediately, and the device removed from the network.
- Staff should be vigilant when accessing emails. Never click on any hyperlinks in emails or any attachments to emails, unless the sender is known and trusted. Any phishing emails that are clicked on should be reported to the Executive Headteacher.
- Staff should be aware of who is present when viewing their emails and private documents and should take extra precaution if the device is connected to an interactive whiteboard in the classroom so as not to share private information in the classroom environment.
- Staff members should ensure that they have had appropriate training on all equipment to support the requirements of acceptable use.

- Any concerns about emails or communication received on any other school or personal IT system must be flagged to the Executive Headteacher.
- Staff should ensure that they are emailing the correct person, chosen from the address list, so as not to cause a data breach by sending data to the wrong person. BCC should be used when emailing external groups of people not known to each other.
- All professional work must be stored in the appropriate, provided locations on the school network or systems to guarantee appropriate levels of backup and malware scanning. It is the staff member's responsibility to ensure their work is backed up if it is not stored in the cloud.
- Staff will not try to upload, download or access any materials which are illegal (child sexual abuse images, criminally racist material, adult pornography covered by the Obscene Publications Act) or inappropriate material which may cause harm or distress to others. Staff should not sign up to any subscriptions without the appropriate authority.
- Staff will not try to use any applications, such as VPN, that might allow them to bypass the filtering/security systems in place to provide a safe learning and teaching environment.
- Staff should not install any applications on Federation devices without consultation and support from the Executive Headteacher. Neither should they change settings put in place by the Federation to ensure appropriately managed devices.
- Staff must report any damage to or faults in Federation equipment. The staff member should not attempt to fix the Federation equipment themselves.
- Staff must ensure that their ICT equipment is stored securely when not in use. If it is lost or stolen, the Executive Headteacher must be provided with a police crime number.
- Staff will only share personal information collected and managed by the school with others as their role permits or when required by law or by Federation policy to disclose such information to an appropriate authority. Any data sharing must be by approved and encrypted communication services (where appropriate) provided by the Federation or their business partners.
- Staff should exercise responsible behaviour while using social media platforms or engaging in online discussions related to the Federation. Posts, comments or activities that may harm the reputation of the Federation are strictly prohibited. Staff must not access social networking sites for personal use during class time. Access to journals, blogs and social networking sites is only permitted during school time for the purposes of undertaking job-related duties only. Staff members should not 'friend' or 'follow' pupils on social networking websites.
- Staff must ensure that copyright resources are only used or shared with appropriate permissions. Copyrighted work will not be downloaded or shared including music and videos unless an exemption applies for teaching purposes. These purposes include:

- the copying of works in any medium if the use is solely to illustrate a point, it is not done for commercial purposes, it is accompanied by a sufficient acknowledgement, and the use is fair dealing. This means minor uses, such as displaying a few lines of poetry on an interactive whiteboard, are permitted, but uses which would undermine sales of teaching materials are not.
- performing, playing or showing copyright works in a school, university or another educational establishment for educational purposes. However, it only applies if the audience is limited to teachers, pupils and others directly connected with the activities of the establishment. It will not generally apply if parents are in the audience. Examples of this are showing a video for English or drama lessons and the teaching of music. It is unlikely to include the playing of a video during a wet playtime purely to amuse the children.
- Terms of conditions of any live streaming channels should be adhered to, such as Netflix, Disney Plus who each have different regulations for audiences. Personal accounts should not be used.
- by recording a TV programme or radio broadcast for non-commercial educational purposes in an educational establishment, provided there is no licensing scheme in place. Generally, a licence will be required from the Educational Recording Agency.
- making copies by using a photocopier, or similar device on behalf of an educational establishment for the purpose of non-commercial instruction provided that there is no licensing scheme in place. Generally, a licence will be required from the Copyright Licensing Agency.

These and other, exemptions to copyright are listed here:
https://www.gov.uk/guidance/exceptions-to-copyright

18. Policy review

18.1 This policy is reviewed annually by the governing board and the Executive Headteacher.