



Cherry Tree  
EDUCATION

# CHERRY TREE SCHOOL CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY

DATE AGREED / REVIEWED: SEPTEMBER 2017, SEPTEMBER 2018, SEPTEMBER 2019, SEPTEMBER 2020, SEPTEMBER 2021, SEPTEMBER 2022, SEPTEMBER 2023

DATE OF NEXT REVIEW: SEPTEMBER 2024

HEADTEACHER SIGNATURE:

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE CHAIR SIGNATURE:

ALL STAFF MUST HAVE ACCESS TO THIS POLICY, AND SIGN TO CONFIRM THAT THEY HAVE READ, UNDERSTOOD AND WILL ADHERE TO ITS CONTENTS.

# Cherry Tree Conflict of Interest Policy

## Introduction

The aim of this policy is to provide guidance, procedures and processes on how to address the fundamental issues that arise from real and perceived conflict of interest.

## Why we have a policy

All Management Committee members / staff and volunteers have a legal obligation to act in the best interests of Cherry Tree School and to avoid situation where there may be a potential conflict of interest as well as the perception of conflicts of interest.

Conflicts of interests may arise where an individual's personal or family interests and/or loyalties conflict with those of Cherry Tree School. Such conflicts may create problems; they can:

- Inhibit free discussion;
- Result in decisions or actions that are not in the interest of Cherry Tree School; and
- Risk the impression that Cherry Tree School has acted improperly.

The aim of this policy is to protect both the organisation and the individuals involved from any appearance of impropriety.

## General

You must ensure that your individual private, personal interests or other interests do not influence decisions made on behalf of Cherry Tree and that you do not use your position to obtain personal gain of any sort.

Equally you must avoid creating any perception of a conflict of interest e.g. certain political activities or business interests might give rise to a perception of conflict of interests that could be anticipated– even though you may act entirely properly and not allow this to influence your behaviour with respect to Cherry Tree.

It is your responsibility to declare actual and/or the potential for perceived conflicts of interest, and to strive to ensure that they do not influence judgement or practice. You are expected to be meticulous about informing the appropriate person of any conflicts of interest or activities which may give rise to a perception of such.

## Staff and or Volunteer Relationships

Staff and or volunteer relationships must be declared to the headteacher and or Management Committee Chair. Where they exist, procedures must be in place for parties not to be managed and or disciplined by anyone in a relationship with them. It is also imperative that everyone is aware of who to go to should they wish to raise any concerns about anyone in a relationship that would normally be the person they report to. Marking and assessing work must be carried out by a member of staff or volunteer that is not in a relationship with the person producing the work.

## Gifts and hospitality

It is a criminal offence for employees to receive or to give any gift, loan, fee as a reward or to obtain advantage for doing or not doing so or showing favour or disfavour to any person in their professional capacity.

If an allegation is made against you that you have improperly given or received such a loan, gift or other benefit, it is for you to demonstrate that any such rewards have not been corruptly obtained.

Personal gifts, apart from occasional inexpensive items (costing no more than about £5) such as diaries, calendars, sweets or a bottle of wine or other items with no re-sale value, must not be accepted as they may give rise to a perception of obligation toward a particular supplier/party. In this context, occasional small gifts from learners or their parents/carers or parents' associations are acceptable but must be reported to the headteacher.

Hospitality must not be accepted if it could be seen as a way of exerting improper influence over the organisation and the headteacher must be informed of any hospitality that is accepted (aside from small items such as occasional soft drinks)

No gifts of significant monetary value are to be given or offered to other people or organisations. Modest gifts to learners are only acceptable in the context of the school offering incentives or rewards through a clearly defined written framework set by the school.

### **Additional Work**

Employees must discuss the possibility of taking up additional work with another employer, (including casual or temporary work for agencies) or pursuing a personal business interest/opportunity with the headteacher and obtain consent in writing before so doing. This is to ensure that the additional work/business interest does not conflict with Cherry Tree's interests or reasonably cause a perception of such; fail to comply with the Working Time Regulations, the responsibility for which is with Cherry Tree as the substantive employer; or cause detriment to the service being delivered by Cherry Tree.

### **Management Committee meetings**

At the beginning of meeting or activities, Management Committee Members and staff will disclose any interests in a transaction or decision where there may be a conflict between the organisations' best interests and the member / staff member best interests or a conflict between the best interests of two organisations that the member / staff member is involved with. If in doubt the potential conflict must be declared anyway, and clarification sought.

### **The declaration of Interests**

Accordingly, we are asking management Committee members / staff to declare their interest, and any gifts or hospitality received in connection with their role in Cherry Tree School.

To be effective, the declaration of interests needs to be updated at least annually, and also when any changes occurs.

If you are not sure what to declare, or whether / when your declaration needs to be updated, please err on the side of caution. If you would like to discuss this issue, please contact the Management Committee Chair for confidential guidance.

**This policy will be reviewed annually by the Headteacher  
and or the Management Committee**