



**STOUR VALE
ACADEMY
TRUST**

STAFFING POLICY STATEMENT

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1. Our Organisation

Stour Vale Academy Trust holds children and young people at the heart of all that we do. We recognise that as a multi-academy trust we exist in order to advance education for the public good. Our mission, therefore, is to improve life opportunities for children and young people by both providing the best possible education and care to pupils in Stour Vale member schools and by having a positive impact across the wider education system.

2. Ethos Statement

Our values are encapsulated in four words:

Integrity, Respect, Collaboration, Excellence

Our vision is to be a larger successful family of schools. Stour Vale member schools will serve their communities by providing the excellent education and care which ensures strong academic progress and a broad range of opportunities for personal development. Both individually and collectively, member schools will also have a significant positive impact on the wider education system. Further growth is key to realising our vision as it will increase our collective capacity to facilitate continuous school improvement and to provide high quality inclusive education.

3. Introduction

Stour Vale Academy Trust is committed to the employment of high calibre employees who support School improvement through exceptional work performance. It is expected that all employees will contribute towards the Trust's Strategic Priorities and clearly defined organisational standards and objectives. Employees will be supported in doing this by a set of Staffing Policies, all of which follow the guiding principles set out in this document.

Stour Vale Academy Trusts Strategic Priorities are to be:

- A Trust of continuously improving schools
- A Trust committed to investing in all staff.
- A sustainable trust with excellent finance, operations and communications systems.
- A Trust led ethically and strategically.

Stour Vale Academy Trust is committed to being a supportive culture of ongoing development for all staff, creating a difference together.

This Staffing Policy Statement should be read and implemented in conjunction with the appropriate Staffing Policy.

4. Staff Policy Statement and Policies

Stour Vale Academy Trust is committed to having Staffing policies that are:

- Supportive of school improvement
- Comprehensive and fit for purpose
- Legally compliant
- Clear, consistent and easy to understand
- Fair to the employer and employee
- Regularly reviewed with the review date clearly stated
- Supported by templates and guidance, as appropriate

This staffing policy statement and all policies to which it relates adhere to the principles under data protection law. For further information please review the Trust's data protection policy published on the Trust's website.

Staffing Policies are based on relevant Department for Education's model policies and guidance and ACAS guidance and code of practice.

All Staffing Policies comply with our funding agreement and articles of association.

This Statement, and staffing policies, are non-contractual and may be amended at any time, following consultation, unless it is stated otherwise in an individual policy.

This Statement, and staffing policies, apply to all employees of Stour Vale Academy Trust, unless it is stated otherwise.

The processes that are set out in this Statement, and staffing policies, including any time limits, may be varied as appropriate in any case.

5. Accountabilities

The Trust Board has overall accountability for Stour Vale Academy Trust's Staffing Policy Statement and policies.

The CEO is responsible for the implementation of the Staffing Policy Statement and policies, ensuring that they are applied consistently and communicated to employees appropriately.

The Head of HR will ensure that:

- The Staffing Policy Statement, and policies, are readily available

and accessible to all employees.

- New employees are given access to, and made aware of, the Staffing Policy States, and policies, during their induction period.

Cases against the Chief Executive Officer will be managed by the Trust Board in accordance with the process set out in the appropriate policy.

Cases against a headteacher will be managed by the CEO in accordance with the process set out in the appropriate policy.

6. Definitions

The following terms and definitions apply in all staffing policies in which they are used:

Trust Board: The Trustees of Stour Vale Academy Trust. This may refer to a Committee or panel of Trustees, formed to manage a process, rather than the full board.

Chief Executive Officer: The Chief Executive Officer of Stour Vale Academy Trust. This also refers to any other title used to identify the Chief Executive Officer, or other Senior Leader delegated to deal with a matter by the Chief Executive Officer, as appropriate and in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation.

Local Governing Board: The Local Representatives with responsibility for governance of an School within Stour Vale Academy Trust. This may refer to a sub-committee or panel of Local Governing Board representatives, formed to manage a process, rather than the full Local Governing Board.

Headteacher: The Headteacher of an School within Stour Vale Academy Trust. This also refers to any other title used to identify the Headteacher, including Head of School where this postholder has day-to-day management responsibility of the School. This may refer to a Senior Leader delegated to deal with the matter by the Headteacher.

Trust Senior Leadership Team: The Executive Leaders, Chief Financial Officer and Operations Director.

Head of Human Resources: Part of the Trust's Central Team with responsibility for staffing across Stour Vale Academy Trust.

Senior Leader: A member of a School, or Trust, leadership team. This may be a Deputy Headteacher, Assistant Headteacher, Head of Department, or other senior employee delegated to deal with a matter by the Headteacher or Trust Leadership Team.

Line Manager: An employee with line management responsibility for a member of staff.

Teaching Staff: Those employees employed by Stour Vale Academy Trust whose terms and conditions are covered by the Conditions of Service for School Teachers in England and Wales (the Burgundy Book).

Support Staff: Those employees employed by Stour Vale Academy Trust whose terms and conditions are covered by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services Conditions of Service (the Green Book).

Companion: A representative of a trade union or workplace colleague chosen by the employee to accompany them to a formal meeting, where this provision is stipulated in the relevant Staffing Policy. A companion may make representations and ask questions but should not answer questions on the employee's behalf.

HR Adviser: An HR professional appointed to support a process being followed. This may be a member of Stour Vale Academy Trust, or an external adviser.

Investigating Officer: A senior member of staff, or external person appointed by Stour Vale Academy Trust, to investigate an allegation.

7. Trade Union Officials

Stour Vale Academy Trust's Staffing Policies apply to all employees. Where an employee is a trade union representative, wherever possible, no formal action will be taken until the circumstances of the case have been discussed with the relevant professional trade union officer.

8. Probation

Concerns raised during an employee's probationary period may be considered when determining whether or not the probationary period is completed satisfactorily. Where this is the case, the matter will normally be dealt with in accordance with Stour Vale Academy Trust's Probation Policy and not the individual staffing policy to which the issue relates, for example Absence or Disciplinary.

9. Confidentiality

All parties must treat information relating to cases being dealt with in accordance with staffing policies as confidential unless there is recourse to legal action, or if there is police or LADO involvement, in which case appropriate information will be shared by Stour Vale Academy Trust in accordance with Data Protection policies.

Appropriate information will be shared within a reference when a

reference is requested by an employee.

An employee, or anyone accompanying an employee (including witnesses), must not make electronic recordings of any meetings or hearings conducted under any Staffing Policy, unless expressly authorised and agreed by all parties. Failure to observe confidentiality could be reason for disciplinary action un the Trust Disciplinary Policy.

10. Equalities

This Staffing Policy Statement and Staffing Policies will be operated in accordance with Stour Vale Academy Trust's Equality and Diversity Policy. The Trust is committed to developing, maintaining and supporting a culture of equality and diversity in employment. The impact of Stour Vale Academy Trust's Staffing Statement and Staffing Policies will be monitored in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

11. Formal Meetings - Definition

When a meeting, convened in accordance with a Staffing Policy, constitutes a Formal Meeting, specific arrangements apply in terms of how the meeting is arranged and conducted.

Where a meeting constitutes a Formal Meeting, this will be indicated in the Staffing Policy.

12. Formal Meetings - Arrangements

An employee invited to a formal meeting, convened in accordance with a Staffing Policy, will be provided with:

- a) 5 working days' notice of the meeting
- b) The date, time and location of the meeting
- c) Information about the purpose of the meeting, including detail of allegations, where appropriate
- d) Possible consequences of the meeting, including dismissal, where appropriate
- e) Notification of their right to be accompanied by their companion
- f) Copies of documents to be discussed
- g) Names of people attending the meeting and their role
- h) An additional copy of correspondence for the employee's companion where requested
- i) The opportunity to request special arrangements, e.g. relating to disability, language requirements

An employee invited to a Formal Meeting is required to confirm their attendance, provide the name of their companion where relevant, and

provide any other requested information at least three working days prior to the meeting.

An employee must take all reasonable steps to attend a meeting as requested. Failure to do so without good reason may be treated as misconduct.

If an employee is unable to attend a Formal Meeting at the scheduled time, with good reason, the Trust will attempt to re-schedule it on an alternative date. In the event that an employee is unable to attend a rescheduled Formal Meeting, the meeting may go ahead in the employee's absence. Where an employee has difficulty in attending a meeting, consideration will be given to alternatives, for example:

- Convening the meeting in an alternative venue.
- Convening the meeting via telephone, video conference, online.
- A companion attending to represent the employee, with the employee's written consent.
- A written submission from the employee.

Any member of staff visiting an employee's home for a meeting should always be accompanied by another member of staff, in an appropriate position.

A meeting may be adjourned if the chair of the meeting requires necessary further information or if time is required for consideration of further information received. All parties will be given a reasonable amount of time to consider any new information obtained before the meeting is reconvened.

If an employee's chosen companion is unavailable to attend a formal meeting at the scheduled time and is not be available for more than 5 working days afterwards, the employee will normally be required to find an alternative companion.

13. Formal Meetings - Procedure

The Chair of a formal meeting, hearing or appeal may be accompanied by an HR Adviser, including during any deliberations. The HR Adviser will not have a vote in any decision that is reached.

An employee's companion may make representations and ask questions but should not answer questions on the employee's behalf.

14. Formal Meetings - Outcome

The Chair of the meeting will confirm the outcome of a formal meeting

in writing to the employee as soon as possible and usually within 5 working days of the meeting.

The record of the meeting will include the outcome and the details of people present.

15. Dismissal

If a decision is taken to dismiss an employee, the decision maker (in line with the Trust's Scheme of Delegation) will inform the employee, and their companion, that the employee is dismissed, with the required contractual or statutory notice, whichever is the greater.

The written confirmation of the dismissal will include:

- Confirmation that the employee has been dismissed
- The grounds for the dismissal and the reasons
- The required contractual or statutory notice due (or payment in lieu of notice where applicable) and the date the dismissal will be effective
- The employee's right of appeal

Termination of employment will normally be with full notice or payment in lieu of notice. In some cases, it may not be appropriate for the employee to work during their notice. The contract may state that the employee remains at home on 'garden leave' or this may be agreed between the parties.

Where dismissal has been on the grounds of gross misconduct, the employee may be dismissed without notice or pay in lieu of notice and this will be confirmed in the outcome letter.

A Fit Note must be provided to cover the employee's notice period when they are absent due to sickness.

16. Appeals

Appeals constitute formal meetings and should be conducted in accordance with paragraph 11, 12, 13 and 14 above.

Appeals will be heard by a panel who have not had prior involvement with the case, in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation.

The purpose of an Appeal Hearing is to review the decision made during the formal process and to decide if the decision was reasonable in all the circumstances.

Individual Staffing Policies state where an employee has the right to appeal a decision that has been made.

An employee will be advised of their right to appeal a decision taken during a formal meeting, in writing, when the outcome is communicated to them.

Appeals should be made in writing, stating the grounds for appeal in full, within 5 working days of the date of the written decision.

All Appeal Hearings will be held as soon as possible and, in normal circumstances, usually within 10 working days after receipt of the appeal.

The date that any dismissal takes effect will not be delayed pending the outcome of an appeal. However, if an appeal is successful, the decision to dismiss will be revoked with no loss of continuity or pay.

Upon conclusion of the appeal process, there is no further right of appeal.

History of most recent Policy changes (must be completed)

Date	Page	Change	Origin of Change e.g. TU request, Change in legislation
May 2024		New Policy Statement	Review of Stour Vale Academy Trust policies New policy framework

Policy Owner	Central HR Team
Date Adopted	25 September 2024
Last Reviewed	
Next Review Date	
Category	A Policy
<i>Stour Vale Academy Trust Policy Categories</i>	
A policy	To be determined by Trust Board and adopted by LGB/IEB. Central Team will add to draft LGB/IEB agenda for adoption.
B policy	To be determined by Trust Board. HT and LGB/IEB discuss appendices to apply locally and consult staff locally on

	these. Central Team will add to draft LGB/IEB agenda for adoption.
C policy	Trust introduction and/or government guidance provided by Central Team. HT and LGB/IEB discuss draft policy and consult staff locally. Central Team will add to draft LGB/IEB agenda for adoption.
D policy	HT and LGB/IEB discuss draft policy and consult staff locally. Schools to decide at which meeting D policies are approved and add to LGB/IEB agenda.