

SHEFFORD LOWER SCHOOL

Ethical Leadership Policy



Written by	Adopted by staff	Ratified by governors	Review date
Polly Ross (Deputy Head)	November 2021	November 2021	October 2025

1. What is ethical leadership?

- a. Ethical leadership is leadership that is directed by ethical beliefs and values. It embraces the **Seven Principles for Public Life**: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership. In education there is now a need to re-examine ethical leadership.
- b. In a school-led, self-improving system, it is right that the profession convened and appointed such a panel. ASCL therefore convened and appointed the ELC to consider matters of ethical leadership and public life as these relate to education leadership in the context of a highly diversified and increasingly autonomous landscape.
- c. Ethical leadership is firstly a matter of the values and behaviours of those appointed to hold positions in public life and lead our educational organisations. It is therefore intrinsic to leadership standards, development, and qualifications. It is also clearly a matter for governing boards in the appointments they make, the monitoring they undertake, and for the regulation and inspection of the system.
- d. As a set of words, concerning values and virtues, which are recognised in educational discourse. These words act as a counterpoint to the language about measurement of schools and colleges and pupils that is commonly used. They are designed to make us stop and think.

2. THE FRAMEWORK FOR ETHICAL LEADERSHIP IN EDUCATION

- a. **Selflessness** School and college leaders should act solely in the interest of children and young people.
- b. **Integrity** School and college leaders must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. Before acting and taking decisions, they must declare and resolve openly any perceived conflict of interest and relationships.
- c. **Objectivity** School and college leaders must act and take decisions impartially and fairly, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias. Leaders should be dispassionate, exercising judgement and analysis for the good of children and young people.
- d. **Accountability** School and college leaders are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.
- e. **Openness** School and college leaders should expect to act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from scrutiny unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.
- f. **Honesty** School and college leaders should be truthful.
- g. **Leadership** School and college leaders should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles, and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs. Leaders include both those who are paid to lead schools and colleges and those who volunteer to govern them.
- h. Schools and colleges serve children and young people and help them grow into fulfilled and valued citizens. As role models for the young, how we behave as leaders is as important as what we do. Leaders should show Leadership through the following personal characteristics or virtues:
 - i. **Trust** | *leaders are trustworthy and reliable*
We hold trust on behalf of children and should be beyond reproach. We are honest about our motivations.
 - j. **Wisdom** | *leaders use experience, knowledge and insight*
We demonstrate moderation and self-awareness. We act calmly and rationally. We serve our schools and colleges with propriety and good sense.
 - k. **Kindness** | *leaders demonstrate respect, generosity of spirit, understanding and good temper* We give difficult messages humanely where conflict is unavoidable.
 - l. **Justice** | *leaders are fair and work for the good of all children*
We seek to enable all young people to lead useful, happy and fulfilling lives.
 - m. **Service** | *leaders are conscientious and dutiful*
We demonstrate humility and self-control, supporting the structures, conventions and rules which safeguard quality. Our actions protect high-quality education.

- n. **Courage** | *leaders work courageously in the best interests of children and young people*
We protect their safety and their right to a broad, effective and creative education. We hold one another to account courageously.
- o. **Optimism** | *leaders are positive and encouraging*
Despite difficulties and pressures, we are developing excellent education to change the world for the better.

3. Why is ethical leadership important?

- a. School and college leaders face ethical dilemmas every day but have never had an agreed Framework that enables us to explore and test these dilemmas against ethical principles. Members of the Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL) expressed concern that there was little specifically about ethics in the discourse on education leadership. They felt this lack was particularly noteworthy in a school leadership climate where structures are diverse, accountability measures and their consequences are severe, and in which decisions are often taken under great pressure with competing demands in play. They felt that a clear set of principles, owned by the profession, was needed to help everyone navigate the educational moral maze. In April 2017, ASCL called together an independent commission of opinion-formers from across education The ELC met nine times between June 2017 and September 2018.

4. How will the framework be used?

- a. In training, induction and reflection for leaders, teachers, governors, trustees and anyone concerned with how we educate the nation's young people.
- b. In participation in the Pathfinder Project and the development of explicitly ethical reflection in teacher and leadership training and development. In the use of CPD and the creation of ethical scenarios (case studies).
- c. In participation in an Ethics Forum at the Chartered College of Teaching which will keep language and discussion about ethics live, grounded and relevant.
- d. All staff will read the *Framework* for ethical leadership and it will be an ongoing part of the induction process.
- e. Staff understanding of the values and virtues will be supported through CPD and through the use of ethical language throughout policies.
- f. Practical ethical leadership and management requires working practices which build up the ethos of the school and the values and virtues you have espoused.
- g. The school's staff code of practice will be written with the ethical framework in mind

h.

Fairness	Rules are applied equally to all
Clarity	Rules are simple and as clear as possible
Discretion	Rules allow for the appropriate expression of discretion
Agreement	Rules are widely shared so that their purpose is clear
Workability	Rules can be realistically followed and enforced
Authority	Rules are based on the legitimate exercise of authority