



FINHAM PARK
MULTI ACADEMY TRUST

FPMAT Staff Code of Conduct

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Document History

Version	Date	Author	Summary Changes
V1	September 2023	M. Bailie	New Policy

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1. Aims, scope and principles

A Code of Conduct is designed to give clear guidance on the standards of behaviour all school staff are expected to observe. The school should notify staff of this code and the expectations therein. School staff are role models and are in a unique position of influence and must adhere to behaviour that sets a good example to all the pupils/students within the school. As a member of a school community, each employee has an individual responsibility to maintain their reputation and the reputation of the school, whether inside or outside working hours.

This Code of Conduct applies to:

- all staff who are employed by the Multi Academy Trust
- all staff in units or bases that are attached to Schools

The Code of Conduct does not apply to:

- peripatetic staff who are centrally employed by the LA;
- employees of external contractors and providers of services

(Such staff are covered by the relevant Code of Conduct of their employing body)

By creating this policy, we aim to ensure our school is an environment where everyone is safe, happy and treated with respect.

Many of the principles in this code of conduct are based on the Teachers' Standards.

We expect that all teachers will act in accordance with the personal and professional behaviours set out in the Teachers' Standards.

We expect all support staff, governors and volunteers to also act with personal and professional integrity, respecting the safety and wellbeing of others.

Failure to follow the code of conduct may result in disciplinary action being taken, as set out in our staff disciplinary procedures.

Please note that this code of conduct is not exhaustive. If situations arise that are not covered by this code, staff will use their professional judgement and act in the best interests of the school and its pupils

2. Legislation and guidance

In line with the statutory safeguarding guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#), we should have a staff code of conduct, which should cover low-level concerns, allegations against staff and whistle-blowing, as well as acceptable use of technologies (including the use of mobile devices), staff/pupil relationships and communications, including the use of social media.

This policy also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

3. General obligations

Staff set an example to pupils. They will:

- Maintain high standards in their attendance and punctuality
- Never use inappropriate or offensive language in school
- Treat pupils and others with dignity and respect
- Show tolerance and respect for the rights of others
- Not undermine fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
- Not express personal beliefs in a way that exploits pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law
- Understand the statutory frameworks they must act within
- Adhere to the Teachers' Standards

4. Safeguarding

Staff have a duty to safeguard pupils from harm, and to report any concerns they have. This includes physical, emotional and sexual abuse, and neglect.

Staff will familiarise themselves with our child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures, and the Prevent initiative, and ensure they are aware of the processes to follow if they have concerns about a child.

Our child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures are available [On each school website under 'Policies'. All policies can also be found on each school intranet. New staff will also be given copies on arrival.

Adjust according to your own procedures.

4.1. Allegations that may meet the harm threshold

This section applies to all cases in which it is alleged that anyone working in the school, including a supply teacher, volunteer or contractor, has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child, and/or
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, and/or
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children, and/or
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children – this includes behaviour taking place inside or outside of school

We will deal with any such allegation quickly and in a fair and consistent way that provides effective child protection while also supporting the individual who is the subject of the allegation.

A 'case manager' will lead any investigation. This will be a senior member of staff at the Trust, the chair of governors where the headteacher is the subject of the allegation, or the chair of Trustees where the Executive Headteacher is the subject of the allegation.

4.2. Low-level concerns about members of staff

A low-level concern is a behaviour towards a child by a member of staff that does not meet the harm threshold, is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, and may be as simple as causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt'. For example, this may include:

- Being over-friendly with children
- Having favourites
- Taking photographs of children on a personal device
- Engaging in 1-to-1 activities where they can't easily be seen
- Humiliating pupils

Low-level concerns can include inappropriate conduct inside and outside of work.

All staff should share any low-level concerns they have using the reporting procedures set out in our child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures. We also encourage staff to self-refer if they find themselves in a situation that could be misinterpreted. If staff are not sure whether behaviour would be deemed a low-level concern, we encourage staff to report it.

All reports will be handled in a responsive, sensitive and proportionate way.

Unprofessional behaviour will be addressed, and the staff member supported to correct it, at an early stage.

This creates and embeds a culture of openness, trust and transparency in which our values and expected behaviour are constantly lived, monitored and reinforced by all staff, while minimising the risk of abuse.

Reporting and responding to low-level concerns is covered in more detail in our child protection and safeguarding policy. This is available on each school website under 'Policies'. All policies can also be found on each school's intranet. Our procedures for dealing with allegations will be applied with common sense and judgement.

4.3. Whistle-blowing

Whistle-blowing reports wrongdoing that it is “in the public interest” to report. Examples linked to safeguarding include:

- Pupils’ or staff’s health and safety being put in danger
- Failure to comply with a legal obligation or statutory requirement
- Attempts to cover up the above, or any other wrongdoing in the public interest

Staff are encouraged to report suspected wrongdoing as soon as possible. Their concerns will be taken seriously and investigated, and their confidentiality will be respected.

Staff should consider the examples above when deciding whether their concern is of a whistle-blowing nature. Consider whether the incident(s) was illegal, breached statutory or school procedures, put people in danger or was an attempt to cover any such activity up.

Staff should report their concern to the headteacher. If the concern is about the headteacher, or it is believed they may be involved in the wrongdoing in some way, the staff member should report their concern to chair of the Local Governing Body.

Concerns should be made in writing wherever possible. They should include names of those committing wrongdoing, dates, places and as much evidence and context as possible. Staff raising a concern should also include details of any personal interest in the matter.

For our detailed whistle-blowing process, please refer to our whistle-blowing policy.

5. Staff-pupil relationships

Staff will observe proper boundaries with pupils that are appropriate to their professional position. They will act in a fair and transparent way that would not lead anyone to reasonably assume they are not doing so.

If staff members and pupils must spend time on a one-to-one basis, staff will ensure that:

- This takes place in a public place that others can access
- Others can see into the room
- A colleague or line manager knows this is taking place
- Staff should avoid contact with pupils outside of school hours.
- Personal contact details should not be exchanged between staff and pupils. This includes social media profiles.
- While we are aware many pupils and their parents may wish to give gifts to staff, for example, at the end of the school year, gifts from individual members of staff to individual pupils, outside of an agreed reward system, are inappropriate and could be misinterpreted.
- If a staff member is concerned at any point that an interaction between themselves and a pupil may be misinterpreted, or if a staff member is concerned at any point about a fellow staff member and a pupil, this should be reported in line with the procedures set out in our child protection and safeguarding policy.

6. Communication and social media

School staff's social media profiles should not be available to pupils. If they have a personal profile on social media sites, they should not use their full name, as pupils may be able to find them. Staff should consider using a first and middle name instead, and set public profiles to private.

Staff should not attempt to contact pupils or their parents via social media, or any other means outside school, in order to develop any sort of relationship. They will not make any efforts to find pupils' or parents' social media profiles.

Staff will ensure that they do not post any images online that identify children who are pupils at the school without their consent.

7. Acceptable use of technology

Staff will not use technology in school to view material that is illegal, inappropriate or likely to be deemed offensive. This includes, but is not limited to, sending obscene emails, gambling and viewing pornography or other inappropriate content.

Staff will not use personal mobile phones and laptops, or school equipment for personal use, in front of pupils. They will also not use personal mobile phones or cameras to take pictures of pupils.

We have the right to monitor emails and internet use on the school IT system.

8. Confidentiality

In the course of their role, members of staff are often privy to sensitive and confidential information about the school, staff, pupils and their parents.

This information should never be:

- Disclosed to anyone unless required by law or with consent from the relevant party or parties
- Used to humiliate, embarrass or blackmail others
- Used for a purpose other than what it was collected and intended for

This does not overrule staff's duty to report child protection concerns to the appropriate channel where staff believe a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm, as detailed further in our child protection and safeguarding policy.

9. Honesty and integrity

Staff should maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their role. This includes when dealing with pupils, handling money, claiming expenses and using school property and facilities.

All staff must comply with the Bribery Act 2010. A person may be guilty of an offence of bribery under this act if they offer, promise or give financial advantage or other advantage to

someone; or if they request, agree or accept , or receive a bribe from another person. If you believe that a person has failed to comply with the Bribery Act, you should refer to the Whistleblowing procedure for schools.

Gifts from suppliers or associates of the school must be declared in the Trust Gift Register, within our declarations survey, with the exception of “one off” token gifts from students or parents. Personal gifts from individual members of staff to individual students are inappropriate and could be misinterpreted.

Staff will ensure that all information given to the school is correct. This should include:

- Background information (including any past or current investigations/cautions/criminal activity related to conduct outside of school)
- Qualifications
- Professional experience

Where there are any updates to the information provided to the school, the member of staff will advise the school as such as soon as reasonably practicable. Consideration will then be given to the nature and circumstances of the matter and whether this may have an impact on the member of staff's employment.

10. Dress code

The Trust places considerable emphasis on high standards of dress as it wishes to ensure that a professional image of the Trust is presented to visitors and the community and that a sense of pride is instilled in both pupils and staff in respect of their personal presentation.

The Trust requires pupils to be smart in their uniform in accordance with schools' uniform policies.

Staff should attend work looking smart and professional, using judgement and common sense to wear suitable clothing and to be presented appropriately. Appearance is an important aspect of Trust policy which applies to all staff irrespective of status.

This policy is not intended to be exhaustive in defining acceptable and unacceptable standards of dress and appearance. Priority will be given to modelling professionalism, health and safety and safeguarding requirements. Staff are expected to use their common sense in adhering to the principles underpinning this Trust dress code and being role models for professional dress/image.

Unless specific activities require formal dress or sporting attire, staff should dress smartly, decently, appropriately and safely and for avoidance of doubt should not wear:

- clothing that may be viewed as offensive, revealing, sexually provocative, which may distract, cause embarrassment or give rise to misunderstanding or any other extremes of fashion. Examples may include:
 - Denim
 - Trainers, Flip flops or crocs unless medically advised by doctor and evidenced to the Trust
 - PE clothing: “only when teaching or leading a PE lesson”
 - Clothing with large logos, political symbols or contentious slogans
- Any offensive or inappropriate tattoos that are visible must be covered without exception.

- Jewellery/piercings must be discreet and appropriate and must not be a health and safety hazard.

Where personal protective equipment is required, it will be issued free of charge and staff are required to wear/use the equipment.

The Trust is happy to support staff in wearing items which relate to culture or religion. It will be appreciated that there cannot be endless arguments about dress, and the Trust's decision on whether appearance is appropriate for work or not must be the final one.

11. Conduct outside of work

Staff must not engage in conduct outside work which could damage the reputation and standing of the school or the employee's own reputation or the reputation of other members of the school community. This covers conduct including but not limited to relevant criminal offences, such as violence or sexual misconduct, as well as negative comments about the school on social media.

In particular, criminal offences that involve violence or possession or use of illegal drugs or sexual misconduct are likely to be regarded as unacceptable. Staff must exercise caution when using information technology, including social media sites and be aware of the risks to themselves and others.

Staff may undertake work outside school, either paid or voluntary, provided that it does not conflict with the interests of the school nor be to a level which may contravene the working time regulations or affect an individual's work performance.

Staff must not engage in inappropriate use of social network sites which may bring themselves, the school, school community or employer into disrepute.

12. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually, but can be revised as needed. It will be approved by the Trust Board.

The school's Local Governing Body will ensure this code of conduct is implemented effectively, and will ensure appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard children and deal with any concerns.

13. Links with other policies

This policy links with our policies on:

- Staff disciplinary procedures, which will be used if staff breach this code of conduct. It also sets out examples of what we will deem as misconduct and gross misconduct
- Staff grievance procedures
- Child protection and safeguarding
- Gifts and hospitality – see section 15 of our Finance Policy
- Computing & E-Safety
- Whistle-blowing

Reviewed by:

E Bench

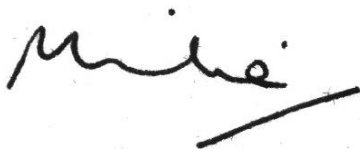
September 2024

Next review date:

November 2025

Approved by Trustees:

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'm. bailie', with a long horizontal stroke extending from the end.

MARK BAILIE
Executive Headteacher

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Burns', with a stylized, cursive script.

PETER BURNS MBE
Chair of Board of Trustees