



**ALL SAINTS  
MULTI ACADEMY TRUST**  
BIRMINGHAM  
GOD'S LOVE IN ACTION

# Staff Code of Conduct Policy

**All Saints Multi Academy Trust**

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## Mission Statement

**Teach children in the way they should go and when they are older, they will not depart from it**

Children are at the heart of everything we do. Through Christian values, relationships, living and learning together we celebrate the uniqueness and diversity of everyone in our family. We nurture a sense of self belief, mutual respect and belonging to build the foundations for happy and successful lives

### 1. Aims, Scope and principles

This policy aims to set and maintain standards of conduct that we expect all staff to follow. Everyone in our MAT has a valuable and important part to play regardless of their role, no-one is more or less important than another member of staff.

By creating this policy, we aim to ensure our school is an environment where everyone is safe, happy and treated with respect. Our mission statement underpins and forms the values of our MAT and we expect all staff to reflect this.

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

School staff have an influential position in the school and will act as role models for pupils by consistently demonstrating high standards of behaviour.

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, trustees, 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 acceptable use of technologies, 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 principles

All employees in the school are expected to behave professionally.

All employees are expected to comply with the law as it applies to their work in the school, particularly in matters such as health and safety, safeguarding of children, and data protection. They are also expected to carry out their duties in accordance with the relevant policies, procedures, rules and guidance adopted by the Trust Board.

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
- Express personal beliefs in a way that will not overly influence pupils, and will not exploit pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law
- Understand the statutory frameworks they must act within
- Adhere to the Teachers' Standards

### 4. General expectations

#### 4.1 Application and Intent

Employees will be expected to act in accordance with the Code of Conduct. Any breach of the Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action.

#### 4.2 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 in the All MAT Staff Teams Policy folder: General as well as in the policies section of the school website. New staff will also be given copies on arrival.

##### 4.2.1 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 the Executive Headteacher, or the chair to the board of trustees where the Executive Headteacher is the subject of the allegation.

#### **4.2.2 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. 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 in the All MAT Staff Teams Policy folder ‘General’ as well as in the policies section of the school website.

Our procedures for dealing with allegations will be applied with common sense and judgement.

#### **4.2.3 Whistle-blowing**

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

- Pupils’ or staff members’ 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 Executive Headteacher. If the concern is about the Executive Headteacher, or it is believed they may be involved in the wrongdoing in some way, the staff member should report their concern to chair to the board of trustees.

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 the trust's detailed whistle-blowing process, please refer to our whistle-blowing policy.

#### **4.2.4. 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 if possible.

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 staff to pupils are not acceptable.

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.

### **4.3 Personal Interest**

Employees should act professionally. They should not abuse their position in the MAT or school to confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person or obtain an advantage for themselves, whether financial or otherwise. They should not allow their personal interests to interfere with their work at the MAT.

Employees should not use their position in the MAT or school to prescribe any one religion, culture, political ideology to students. It is the direct responsibility of all employees to uphold British Values as defined in law from time to time.

To avoid any doubt or unwarranted suspicion employees should tell the MAT about a personal interest which might compromise or be seen as compromising their position in the school. If in doubt about what should be declared they should seek advice.

Examples of personal interests about which they should tell the school include:

- Situations in which the employee's job (for example, as head teacher or business manager) could unduly influence decisions on contracts into which the school has entered or is proposing to enter, or where an employee has a personal or financial interest in any of the contracts, either directly or indirectly (for example, through a partner or relative).

- Where an employee holds a position with an external company or organization, whether paid or unpaid, which may lead to a conflict of interest. (Examples include directorships of companies, serving on bodies such as charities, voluntary groups, governing bodies of other educational establishments.)
- If an employee has a close personal relationship with a person who has influence over the employee's employment with the school or whose employment the employee could influence or control.

#### **4.4 Gifts and hospitality**

The offer of any gift or hospitality, whether from outside or inside the MAT, which might be interpreted as an attempt to influence an employee in his or her conduct towards pupils, parents or other employees or influence a decision around provision of a service must be treated with caution. Employees should seek advice if in any doubt. The trust board acknowledges that pupils, parents or fellow-employees often wish to make small gifts (such as sweets) to employees on specific occasions (such as Christmas or at the end of the school year) and sees the spirit of giving as one to be nurtured in children. Any offer of a gift or inducement, whether made at specific occasions or casually, should be declared to the school if the gift is made by, or indirectly by, a person, firm or organization which, to the knowledge of the employee, has, or seeks to do, business of any kind with the MAT which maintains the MAT or to have an interest in its decisions.

The receipt of minor articles, often by way of trade advertisements, as unsolicited gifts for the school rather than for personal use (e.g. diaries, calendars, office requisites, etc., which are customarily distributed at Christmas and, occasionally, at other times) is acceptable.

Where there is any doubt, employees should seek guidance from the Executive Headteacher or Line Manager before accepting any gifts or hospitality offered. In relation to his or her own position the Executive Headteacher should seek guidance from the board of trustees (or an appropriate committee of the trust board) in a formal meeting.

Employees should also take advice before making any gifts to external organizations, or to the employees of such organizations, which either provide services to the school or which are potential providers of such services. They should recognize that gifts could put themselves and/or the employees of those organizations in a difficult or embarrassing position.

#### **4.5 Sponsorship**

The MAT is responsible for approving all sponsorship and should ensure that it gives guidance to employees on their involvement with the sponsorship, actual or proposed. Employees approached directly by actual or potential sponsors should refer the proposals to the head teacher for determination by the school.

#### **4.6 General Confidentiality**

Employees must comply with the law on data protection and freedom of information and observe the school's procedures for dealing with personal information about other employees, pupils or members of the public. Employees must ensure that they do not pass on any confidential, personal information received or obtained through their employment to anyone, whether inside or outside the school, or to any organization not entitled to that information, and must not use such information for personal advantage. Employees must prior to disclosing any such information seek guidance from the school if they are uncertain as to whether or not the information can be passed on to the person or organization. The MAT, as data controller in law, is responsible for ensuring that the necessary guidance on the MAT's procedures for complying with the law, including the eight data protection principles, is made available to, and brought to the attention of, employees, including the arrangements for storing confidential information, whether held on paper or electronically.

Employees may request all the information held about them by the MAT in accordance with legislation on the Freedom of Information. These Subject Access Requests cover all kinds of records, including e-mails.

Disclosures under the Public Interest Disclosure Act are covered in 2.7 below.

#### **4.7 Duty to report**

Employees should not conceal any matter which is their duty to report to the MAT or appropriate public body. This includes their duties in relation to the safeguarding and welfare of children – see:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/354151/Keeping\\_children\\_safe\\_in\\_education\\_Information\\_for\\_staff.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/354151/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_Information_for_staff.pdf)

#### **4.8 Dealing with School Money**

Employees must ensure that public funds are used in a responsible and lawful manner and in compliance with the school's procedures and in line with the Academies Financial Handbook.

#### **4.9 Criminal Charges and Convictions**

An employee must notify the Executive Headteacher if charged with, or convicted of, any criminal offence, or accepts a formal police caution, and should do so as soon as possible after the charge, caution or conviction. If the Executive Headteacher or member of the Leadership Team is the subject of the charge he or she must inform the Chair of Trustees. Depending on the circumstances, failure to inform may result in disciplinary action.

The MAT acknowledges that a caution is not a criminal conviction, but employees must be aware that cautions have to be declared during Disclosure and Barring checks unless they meet the filtering rules of the Disclosure and Barring Service.

The MAT acknowledges that an employee charged with an offence is innocent until proved guilty. However, special considerations will apply if the offence is one of those which is on the list of offences relevant to safeguarding (a full list is available on the Disclosure and Barring Service's website) or if an employee is imprisoned on remand pending trial.

Information given to the MAT will be treated as confidential and stored securely in the same way as other confidential personal information, having regard to the guidance from the Disclosure and Barring Service on the length of time for which particular kinds of information should be stored.

#### **4.10 Other Employment**

Employees should ensure that any additional employment does not conflict with the capacity to fulfil the employee's contract of employment with the MAT.

Staff are required to inform the Executive Headteacher if they work for another employer and the number of hours which they are required to work for that employer. If the contract of employment with the MAT is the primary employment contract then the Executive Headteacher may refuse permission for other employment where a conflict of interest exists, or the number of hours worked has implications for the health and safety of clients or pupils, or there are significant implications for the MAT and its duty of care to its employees.

Employees undertaking other employment must not use school time or equipment for that purpose without the permission of the Executive Headteacher. Employees in any doubt should ask for advice.

#### **4.11 Intellectual Property and Copyrights**

All intellectual property rights, (that is copyright, design rights and the right to patent inventions) relating to anything created or invented by employees in the course of their duties belong automatically to the school.



Unless otherwise agreed, employees cannot exploit the rights to any such thing without written permission from the head teacher.

The Executive Headteacher may agree to the school or MAT collaborating with other schools to create or invent intellectual property to be shared with other schools.

Employees may use and print one copy of items which are the school's intellectual property for their personal and non-commercial use only, provided that all copyright and proprietary notices remain intact. They should not share these items with people or organizations outside the school without the permission of the Executive Headteacher and they should be returned to the school on termination of employment.

#### **4.12 Publications and Dealing with the Press**

Employees must not make comments to the press or other media, including social networking sites, on behalf of the school or MAT unless specifically authorised to do so by a member of the Leadership Team. Where requests for comments are received they must be passed on to the Executive Headteacher, who may then seek further advice.

Employees should not publish any material which brings the school or MAT into disrepute. Employees may make disclosures of public interest to other appropriate organizations or the press (whistle-blowing) provided that those disclosures meet the legal requirements of the Public Interest Disclosure Act and should take advice from their union or [Public Concern at Work](#) before doing so.

If employees wish to publish an article unconnected with the school or MAT then the article should not link them to the school or MAT.

#### **4.13 Equipment and Materials**

Employees must not use the equipment and premises of the school, or of other places where they work during their contract of employment, for unauthorised purposes. If they are permitted to use equipment, premises or materials for private purposes, the use must not interfere with the work of the school and they must pay any costs incurred, including costs of paper and printing. They may make personal telephone calls if necessary in their own time, paying for the cost of the call if they use a telephone belonging to the school. Permission for use of any facilities will be on the understanding that the use is reasonable.

Union facility time agreements permit the use of telephone with reasonable privacy if available, with payment of outgoing calls, also use of printing and word processing equipment, where available, for union work within the school provided that this does not interfere with the work of the school and subject to payment for the materials used.

#### **4.14 Political Restrictions**

The legislation on political restrictions specifically exempts head teachers or principals of schools, colleges or other educational establishments maintained by local authorities and also teachers and lecturers in such establishments. Until January 2010 there was also a prohibition on support staff paid on spinal column 44 and above, but this provision of the Act was then repealed.

#### **4.15 Political, Philosophical or Religious Neutrality**

The MAT will not concern itself with the political, philosophical or religious beliefs of individuals.

Employees may not display party political posters, including party political election material, in the school, unless it is part of the curriculum or used as a teaching aid (for example, in a lesson on citizenship).

#### **4.16 Equal Opportunities**

The MAT is committed to the promotion and implementation of equal opportunities both internally and externally.

The MAT aims to ensure that everyone who comes into contact with it is treated equally, and with courtesy and respect, and not in any way disadvantaged by factors which could prevent the implementation of fair policies and operations.

The MAT will recognise the differences which exist and will seek to understand the needs of people within the groups which are afforded protection or assistance through this policy.

The MAT expects all its employees to uphold its Equal Opportunity in Employment Policy, which is available in school, and to accept the duty not to discriminate, either in employment practices or in the provision of facilities and services by reference to age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. For faith schools, special exemptions under the Equality Act apply.

#### **4.17 Recruitment and selection**

If involved in making appointments employees must:

- Ensure that such appointments are made on the basis of a fair recruitment and selection procedure.
- Ensure that their personal preferences should not influence judgements made.
- Declare their interest where related to an applicant or having a close personal relationship outside school with an applicant. If a member of the Leadership Team has a personal relationship outside school this interest should be declared to the Chair of Trustees in the first instance. The Chair of Trustees should report any declaration of interest to the full trust board.
- Recruitment procedures should take place in line with and follow the Safer Recruitment Policy.
- Adhere to the statutory guidance in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' – [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/372753/Keeping\\_children\\_safe\\_in\\_education.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/372753/Keeping_children_safe_in_education.pdf)

#### **4.18 Alcohol, illegal substances and medication**

The school accepts that alcohol is legally and freely available and acknowledges that some illegal substances are also readily obtainable. Employees must ensure that the use of alcohol out of school does not adversely affect their work performance, and that, in accordance with their obligations under health and safety legislation, they take reasonable care of the health and safety of themselves and other workers whilst at work. The school will not accept employees arriving at work under the influence of alcohol or illicit drugs and whose ability is impaired in any way by reason of the consumption of alcohol or illicit drugs or who consume alcohol in contravention of the school's policy on the consumption of alcohol or take illicit drugs. They should also have regard to the expectation that they will not bring the school into disrepute. The school has similar expectations around the use of illegal substances, but employees are reminded that any adverse publicity around such use is more likely to damage the school's reputation than are complaints about the employee's abuse of alcohol.

The trust board's alcohol policy recognises that alcoholism and other addictions are illnesses and that employees should be offered appropriate support through the Managing Attendance Procedure. Schools must also consider the effects of legally prescribed drugs or certain types of medication on the performance of employees and deal with these under the Managing Attendance Procedure, undertaking a risk assessment where necessary and taking occupational health or other specialist advice as appropriate.

Employees who are prescribed a type of medication which they have not taken before should make themselves aware of possible side-effects. In accordance with their duty to take reasonable care of their own and their colleagues' health and safety they should advise the school if the medication starts to affect their ability to do their job or travel safely to work, or if there is a likelihood that this will happen. The school should undertake risk assessments and take occupational health or other specialist advice as appropriate.

#### **4.19 Health and Safety**

Employees have a duty to take reasonable care of themselves and to cooperate with management under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. These responsibilities are identified in the school's Health and Safety policy.

Employees are required to act at all times in accordance with this policy and generally to act in such a way to take reasonable care of their own safety and that of others.

Any action which potentially puts at risk the health and/or safety of themselves or others will be viewed seriously and may be investigated under the disciplinary procedure. Employees and other individuals may also face criminal prosecution for breaches of health and safety legislation.

#### **4.20 Attendance**

Employees' contracts of employment contain the main terms and conditions of their employment with the MAT.

Employees must follow the MAT's requirements for reporting absence due to sickness and for helping the MAT ensure that it has a record of all persons on the premises and of any approved overtime working.

It is expected that employees are available for work during the hours specified in their contract and take an unpaid lunch break.

#### **4.21 Smoking**

The schools are non-smoking educational establishments.

No-one is permitted to smoke in any of the class rooms or educational space, or any other building owned or occupied by the MAT, at any time. In premises not controlled by the MAT, the board of Trustees may determine a dedicated smoking area. In premises controlled by the MAT the board of Trustees may determine a dedicated smoking area outside the main buildings provided that they undertake a risk assessment of the activity and location and consider providing bins for cigarette stubs.

Smoking in contravention of the above may result in disciplinary action.

#### **4.22 Dress**

There is a general expectation that dress will be appropriate to the nature of the duties and responsibilities of the job and to any health and safety considerations.

The MAT values and welcomes the ethnic diversity of all its teachers and support staff and therefore dress codes will take account of ethnic and religious dress preferences with sensitivity ensuring that employees are free to observe them, subject to the needs of pupils' education. The MAT should not impose a dress code requiring all staff to follow a much higher level of modesty than is normally accepted within British society.

#### **4.23 Identity Badges**

There is a general expectation that all employees issued with identity cards/badges will carry them at all times in school and when they represent the MAT and have them available for presentation or inspection

when required. The MAT may also expect employees to wear identity badges in order to assist pupils and visitors.

#### **4.24 Disciplinary, capability and grievance procedures**

The MAT has formal procedures for staff discipline, capability and grievances. The Executive Headteacher should ensure that these are made available to all employees.

#### **4.25 Following Instructions**

Employees are expected to follow all reasonable and proper instructions by a person with the authority in school to issue such instructions unless:

- There is a danger to a person's health and safety.
- They are in conflict with British Values as defined in law from time to time.
- There is good reason to believe that the instructions are improper, for example by conflicting with the safeguarding of children, the financial regulations or other aspects of the law.
- It does not comply with school policy and practice.

The Executive Headteacher, Head of school and leadership team within the school must be able to justify their instructions and decisions in line with their delegations, authority, and school policy and procedures, and be open and respond promptly to questions.

#### **4.26 Internet Usage and electronic communications**

Internet Users **must not** on any school system knowingly display, access, use, extract, store, distribute, print, reveal or otherwise process any kind of image, document or other material which is sexually explicit, or contravenes any other aspect of the MAT's policy on electronic communications (e-safety). This activity would be a violation of the school's policies, particularly those relating to conduct and discrimination, and may lead to disciplinary action.

If access to sexually explicit or other inappropriate material is required for educational purposes, the head teacher must be notified in advance, giving a reason for the access.

Employees should apply the same standards to electronic communications as the school expects from other kinds of communication. They must not post comments, photographs, images or conversations on social networking websites which clearly brings the school into disrepute. Any electronic communications must include the correct use of privacy settings, in order to prevent members including the public, colleagues, parents and pupils seeing any personal information. They must also comply with the law, in particular laws on discrimination, data protection and protecting the health of employees. Employees must also follow any specific policy which the school may have set on the use of social networking websites and telephones, whether mobile or landline, whilst at work. They should be aware that defamatory comments or comments which infringe the Equality Act may be regarded as a disciplinary matter.

#### **4.27 Conduct outside of work**

Staff will not act in a way that would bring the school, or the teaching profession into disrepute. This covers relevant criminal offences, such as violence or sexual misconduct, as well as negative comments about the school on social media.