



Drapers' Multi-Academy  
Trust

# Code of Conduct

## Contents

<b>1.</b>	<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Scope .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>3.</b>	<b>Roles and responsibilities .....</b>	<b>3</b>
3.1	MAT and Governors of Local Governing Body .....	3
3.2	Principal and Line Managers .....	4
3.3	Employees .....	4
3.4	Engaged workers/Volunteers .....	4
<b>4.</b>	<b>Reporting breaches of standards of good conduct .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>5.</b>	<b>The Code of Conduct .....</b>	<b>4</b>
5.1	Safeguarding and Child Protection .....	4
5.2	Conduct outside work .....	5
5.2.1	Secondary employment .....	5
5.3	Confidentiality .....	6
5.3.1	Preserving anonymity .....	6
5.3.2	Media queries .....	6
5.4	Use of computers, email and the internet and social media .....	7
5.5	Relationships .....	7
5.5.1	The internal school community .....	7
5.5.2	The wider community and service users .....	7
5.5.3	Contracts .....	7
5.5.4	Gifts and Hospitality .....	7
5.5.5	Neutrality .....	8
5.6	Close personal relationships at work .....	8
5.6.1	Applicants .....	8
5.6.2	References .....	8
5.6.3	Relationships at work .....	8
5.6.4	Workers related to pupils .....	9
5.7	Dress code .....	9
5.8	Use of financial resources .....	10
5.9	School Property and personal possessions .....	10

## **1. Introduction**

The overriding expectation is that employees, MAT Directors, Governors of Local Governing Bodies volunteers and all those engaged to work in the Drapers' Multi Academy Trust [the MAT] will adopt the highest standards of personal integrity and conduct both in and outside work. As role models they must behave, through their words and actions, at all times in a manner which demonstrates their suitability to work with children and which upholds the standards and reputation of the MAT.

This Code of Conduct provides an overall framework of the behaviours expected of individuals who work in the MAT. The Code is not intended to be exhaustive and individuals should use sound professional, ethical and moral judgement to act in the best interests of the MAT, its pupils and its community.

The Code of Conduct should be read in conjunction with:

- MAT policies and procedures;
- the terms of any employment or service contracts and agreements; and
- relevant professional standards (e.g. teachers' standards).

## **2. Scope**

This Code applies to all individuals employed by the MAT or those engaged by the MAT including:

The Code should be read in conjunction with:

- relief/casual staff;
- supply staff;
- third parties providing services to the MAT (including self-employed individuals); and
- voluntary workers.

For the purpose of elements of this Code applying to all individuals set out above, they are collectively referred to as "workers".

## **3. Roles and responsibilities**

### **3.1 MAT, Directors and Governors of Local Governing Bodies**

It is the responsibility of the MAT Board and Local Governing Bodies to establish and monitor standards of conduct and behaviour within the MAT, including the establishment of relevant policies and procedures.

## **3.2 Principals and Line Managers**

It is the responsibility of Principal and Line Managers to address promptly any breaches of good conduct and behaviour, using informal procedures (professional / management advice) where possible but implementing formal procedures where necessary.

## **3.3 Employees**

It is the responsibility of all employees to familiarise themselves with, and comply, with this Code.

Any breaches of this Code of Conduct will be regarded as a serious matter which may result in disciplinary action, and in certain circumstances could potentially lead to dismissal. The MAT's Disciplinary Policy provides the process for such action.

## **3.4 Engaged workers/Volunteers**

Engaged workers and volunteers are required to familiarise themselves, and comply, with this Code in so far as it is relevant to their role. Any breaches of this Code may result in the engagement of the worker/volunteer being terminated, in accordance with any applicable terms of engagement.

## **4. Reporting breaches of standards of good conduct**

The MAT wishes to promote an open environment that enables individuals to raise issues in a constructive way and with confidence that they will be acted upon appropriately without fear of recrimination.

All employees, engaged workers and volunteers are expected to bring to the attention of an appropriate manager/Governing Body/Director any impropriety, deficiency in the provision of service or breach of policy or this Code. Where appropriate, individuals should also refer to the MAT's Whistleblowing Policy.

## **5. The Code of Conduct**

### **5.1 Safeguarding and Child Protection**

It is essential that all adults working with children understand that the nature of their work and the responsibilities related to it, place them in a position of trust. Adults must be clear about appropriate and safe behaviours for working with children in paid or unpaid capacities, in all settings and in all contexts, including outside work.

The relevant requirements specific to safeguarding and child protection are set out in:

- the MAT's Safeguarding and Child Protection and Behaviour Policies
- the Department for Education Statutory Guidance "Keeping Children Safe in Education" (September 2016, as amended from time to time).  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

The above is key statutory guidance which all employees must follow and all employees and volunteers must, as a minimum, read Part 1 of that Document.

'Guidance for Safer Working Practice for those working with Children and Young People in Education Settings' issued by the Safer Recruitment Consortium sets out key expectations for adult interactions with children and young people – the full guidance is available at <https://www.safeguardingschools.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Guidance-for-Safer-Working-Practices-2015-final1.pdf>

In addition, individuals should be aware that it is criminal offence (s 16. Sexual Offences Act 2003) for a person aged 18 or over to have a sexual relationship with a child under 18 where that person is in a position of trust in respect of that child, even if the relationship is consensual.

Individuals should familiarise themselves with these documents, in conjunction with the body of the Code of Conduct and other relevant schools policies and procedures.

## **5.2 Conduct outside work**

The MAT recognises and respects individuals' right to a private life without interference. However, individuals connected with the MAT must not act in a way that would bring the MAT, or their profession, into disrepute or that calls into question their suitability to work with children. This covers relevant criminal offences, such as violence or sexual misconduct, inappropriate behaviour such as lewd or offensive action, as well as negative comments about the MAT, its schools or its community.

Workers must disclose to immediately any wrongdoing or alleged wrongdoing by themselves (regardless of whether they deny the wrongdoing/alleged wrongdoing), to their Principal or Line Manager, including any incidents arising from alternative employment or outside of work which may have a bearing on their employment or engagement with the MAT. Principals and Governors should disclose to the Chair of their Local Governing Body, MAT Central Services Staff should disclose to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), or in the case of the CEO, refer the matter to the Chair of the MAT.

Employees should also refer to the expectations set out in their contract of employment and the MAT's disciplinary policy.

In addition, any worker engaged in a post covered by the Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009 ("the Regulations") must immediately inform the MAT of any events or circumstances which may lead to their disqualification from working in the post by virtue of the Regulations. The statutory guidance relating to Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 can be found at the following link:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/528473/Disqualification\\_under\\_the\\_childcare\\_act\\_June2016.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/528473/Disqualification_under_the_childcare_act_June2016.pdf)

### **5.2.1 Secondary employment**

The MAT does not seek to unreasonably preclude employees from undertaking additional employment but employees are required to devote their attention and abilities to their duties at the MAT during their working hours and to act in the best interests of the MAT at all times. The MAT

also has a duty to protect health and safety in relation to employee working hours. Accordingly, employees must not, without the written consent of the MAT (normally the Principal or in the case of the Principal, the Chair of Governors), undertake any employment or engagement which might interfere with the performance of their duties. In addition, employees should avoid engaging in business or employment activities that might conflict with the MAT's interests.

### **5.3 Confidentiality**

Confidential information can take various forms and be held and transmitted in various ways e.g. manual records (files, reports and notes), verbal discussions and electronic records. As a general rule, all information received in the course of employment or whilst volunteering/being engaged by the MAT, no matter how it is received, held or transmitted, should be regarded as sensitive and confidential and must not be disclosed or divulged within or outside the MAT other than in accordance with the requirement of the role and/or where specific permission has been provided.

**NOTE:** All workers must be aware that they are obliged to disclose information relating to child protection issues and should make it clear to the individual either that confidentiality cannot be guaranteed and/or decline to receive the information and direct them to a more appropriate person e.g. the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

The MAT is committed to being transparent about how it collects and uses the personal data of its workforce, and to meeting its data protection obligations. The MAT's Data Protection Policy sets out the MAT's commitment to data protection, and individual rights and obligations in relation to personal data.

Any actual or suspected/potential breach of data protection must be reported immediately to the Data Protection Officer.

#### **5.3.1 Preserving anonymity**

The Education Act 2011 contains reporting restrictions preventing the publication of any material which could lead to the identification of a teacher in the event of an allegation against them made by a pupil at the same school. Any individual who publishes material which could lead to the identification of the employee who is the subject of an allegation of this kind may be subject to criminal and disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

'Publication' includes any speech, writing, relevant programme or other communication in whatever form, which is addressed to the public at large or any section of the public. For the avoidance of doubt, this includes publishing details of an allegation or other information on a social media site which could lead to the identification of the teacher.

#### **5.3.2 Media queries**

Workers must not speak to the press or respond to media queries on any matter relating to the MAT. All media queries should be referred immediately to the Principal/Chair of the Local Governing Body. In some circumstances such queries may need to be referred to the Chair of the MAT or the Chief Executive Officer.

## **5.4 Use of computers, email and the internet and social media**

The MAT recognises that electronic devices and media are important tools and resources in an educational context and can save time and expense.

Those using MAT equipment and networks are expected to do so responsibly and to comply with all applicable laws, policies and procedures, and with normal standards of professional and personal courtesy and conduct.

Personal use of social media and other on-line applications which may fall into the public domain should not be such that it could bring the MAT into disrepute and/or call into question an individual's suitability to work with children.

Any worker who is unsure about whether or not something he/she proposes to do might breach that policy or if something is not specifically covered in the policy they should seek advice from their Line Manager or a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

## **5.5 Relationships**

### **5.5.1 The internal school community**

All workers are expected to treat member of the MAT community with dignity and respect and to work co-operatively and supportively. Bullying, Harassment and Victimisation will not be tolerated.

### **5.5.2 The wider community and service users**

All workers have a responsibility to ensure courteous, efficient and impartial service delivery to all groups and individuals within the community. No favour must be shown to any individual or group of individuals, nor any individual or group unreasonably excluded from, or discriminated against, in any aspect of school business.

### **5.5.3 Contracts**

All relationships of a business or private nature with external contractors, or potential contractors, must be made known to the MAT Board or the Local Governing Body. Orders and contracts must be in accordance with standing orders and financial regulations of the MAT. No special favour should be shown to businesses run by, for example, friends, partners or relatives in the awarding of contracts, tendering process or any other business transaction.

### **5.5.4 Gifts and Hospitality**

Workers may not accept any gift or hospitality from a person intended to benefit from their services (or those whom they supervise) or from any relative without the express permission of the MAT.

Where an outside organisation wishes to sponsor or is seeking to sponsor a MAT activity, whether by invitation, tender, negotiation or voluntarily, the sponsorship should always be related

to the MAT's interests and never for personal benefit.

The MAT's policy on gifts and hospitality should be available from the MAT website. Any breaches of this policy may lead to disciplinary action.

### **5.5.5 Neutrality**

Workers must not allow their own personal, political, religious or other views and opinions to interfere with their work. They are expected to be neutral in their views in the course of their work at the school and to present a balanced view when working with pupils.

## **5.6 Close personal relationships at work**

Close personal relationships are defined as:

- workers who are married, dating or in a partnership or co-habiting arrangement;
- immediate family members for example parent, child, sibling, grandparent;
- other relationships for example extended family (cousins, uncles, in-laws), close friendships, business associates (outside the school).

### **5.6.1 Applicants**

Applicants are required to disclose on their application form if they have a close personal relationship with any person connected with the MAT.

Applicants are asked to state the name of the person and the relationship. Failure to disclose such a relationship may disqualify the applicant.

Workers should discuss confidentiality with their Principal/Line Manager, any relationships with an applicant.

It is inappropriate for any worker to sit on an appointment panel, for those with whom they have a close personal relationship.

### **5.6.2 References**

It is expected that, for those working with children, professional references, and not personal references, are sought and provided. All references provided on behalf of the MAT must be signed by the Principal (Chair of Governors for the Principal).

Anyone agreeing to act as a personal referee must make it clear in the reference that it is provided as a personal or colleague reference and is not a reference on behalf of the MAT. Personal or colleague references must not be provided on MAT headed paper.

### **5.6.3 Relationships at work**

It is also recognised that situations arise where close personal relationships can be formed at work. Such relationships should be disclosed, in confidence, to the Line Manager/supervisor by

the individuals concerned as this may impact on the conduct of the MAT.

Whilst not all such situations where those in close personal relationships work together raise issues of conflict of interest, implications can include:

- effect on trust and confidence;
- perception of service users, the public and other employees on professionalism and fairness;
- operational issues e.g. working patterns, financial and procurement separation requirements; and
- conflicting loyalties and breaches of confidentiality and trust.

Open, constructive and confidential discussion between workers and managers/supervisors is essential to ensure these implications do not occur and that all parties can be protected.

No-one should be involved in discipline, promotion, pay or other decisions for anyone where there is a close personal relationship.

It may be necessary in certain circumstances to consider transferring workers that form close personal relationships at work. Any such action will be taken wherever possible by agreement with both parties and without discrimination.

Colleagues who feel they are affected by a close personal relationship at work involving other colleagues should at all times feel that they can discuss this, without prejudice, with their Principal/Line Manager, other manager or the Chair of the Local Governing Body, the Chief Executive Officer or the Chair of the MAT.

#### **5.6.4 Workers related to pupils**

Any workers related to, or who are the carer of a pupil are expected to separate their familial and employment role.

Workers must not show or provide any preferential treatment to them or become involved in their education or care beyond their specific role as an employee/volunteer or their role as a parent/carer/relation.

#### **5.7 Dress code**

First impressions in life are important. The MAT requires all workers to dress appropriately as a role model to pupils.

The MAT recognises that religious beliefs can influence dress code – see below.

#### **Workers**

- Workers are expected to dress in a professional manner at all times whilst they are on the school premises, taking into account that they may need to wear specialist clothing related to their subject/role.

- Each school Staff Handbook will provide specific guidance, which includes:
  - Professional smart business dress to be worn.
  - Clothing must be modest and not revealing.
  - Jeans and leggings are not normally acceptable.
  - Shoes must be reflective of the work to be undertaken and staff should be mindful of any health & safety issues (e.g. working in a practical area). Flip flops or other similar style shoes would not be acceptable.
- Where specialist or protective clothing is required. The MAT will provide suitable protective clothing in such circumstances.
- Workers whose religion requires them to wear certain items of clothing may do so provided that it does not interfere with their ability to perform their professional and contractual duties; their face is not covered; pupils can understand workers and such dress does not conflict with the underlying principles of the dress code.
- There will be certain roles in the MAT where the specific guidance described above would be impractical e.g. site workers.

## **5.8 Use of financial resources**

Workers must ensure that they use public and any other funds entrusted to them in a responsible and lawful manner. They must strive to ensure value for money and ensure rigorous adherence to Financial Regulations.

## **5.9 School Property and personal possessions**

Workers must ensure they take due care of school property at all times, including proper and safe use, security, appropriate maintenance and reporting faults. If employees are found to have caused damage to MAT property through misuse or carelessness this may result in disciplinary action.

Workers are responsible for the safety and security of their personal possessions while on MAT premises. The MAT will not accept responsibility for the loss or damage of personal possessions.