



# St Matthias ACADEMY



## **Staff Code of Conduct 2020-2021**

**We will provide a learning environment that empowers, challenges and encourages individual success and social responsibility.**

St Matthias Academy actively promotes the principles of equality and inclusion for all its students.

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## 1. Introduction

All employees have personal and legal responsibilities, including; treating others with dignity and respect; acting honestly, using public funds and St Matthias Academy equipment appropriately, adhering to health and safety guidelines and practicing equal opportunities at all times. The Code of Conduct applies to all employees of St Matthias Academy and Learn@ MAT.

This document is not a prescriptive guide to what employees should and should not do. It highlights the principal areas where employees need to be aware of their responsibilities when working in Learn@ MAT and is a framework for behaviour. Employees should ensure they are familiar with the specific policies that underpin these behaviours through reference to the documents highlighted in the “Required Reading” throughout the code. If these documents are not supplied at induction, the employee should ask Learn@ MAT for copies.

**The Academy Council for St Matthias Academy is responsible for operating and implementing this document.**

The Chair of the Academy Council, Eileen Flynn, or nominated Councilor will manage and monitor the Head Teacher`s conduct and inform the Academy Council as appropriate.

The Head Teacher is responsible for the day to day operation of this document.

## 2. Compliance with the Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct forms part of an employee`s contract. Failure to comply with it and with the associated Learn@ MAT policies (“Required Reading”) may result in disciplinary action being taken and Learn@MAT reserves the right to take legal action against employees where breaches of the Code warrant such action.

### 3. Professional behaviour and conduct

#### 3a. Treating other people with dignity and respect

All employees are expected to treat other colleagues, pupils and external contacts, such as parents, with dignity and respect.

Staff are required to comply with the Learn@ MAT's equality policies in respect of colleagues, students and other contacts such as parents. Unacceptable behaviour such as discrimination, bullying, harassment or intimidation will not be tolerated in Learn@ MAT. This includes physical and verbal abuse and use of inappropriate language or unprofessional behaviour with colleagues, pupils and parents.

#### 3b. Appropriate relationships with children

Learn@ MAT employees are expected to act in an open and transparent way that would not lead any reasonable person to suspect their actions or intent. Employees in Learn@ MAT are in a position of trust and have a duty to protect young people from discrimination and harm and to maintain appropriate professional boundaries. It is equally important for staff to avoid behaviour that might be misinterpreted by others in order to protect both young people and themselves. Staff are required to read and understand Learn@ MAT policies on safeguarding.

#### 3c. Professional behaviour

Employees must not misuse or misrepresent their position, qualifications or experience or bring the reputation of Learn@ MAT into disrepute. Such behaviour may lead to disciplinary action and where relevant, referral to the Department for Education.

#### 3d. Criminal actions

Learn@ MAT employees must inform the relevant Academy Head teacher (Chair of Academy Council and CEO if the employee is the Head Teacher) immediately if they are subject to a criminal conviction, caution, ban, police enquiry, investigation or pending prosecution. A discussion with the employee will take

place in the context of their role and responsibilities in order to help safeguard children and other employees within Learn@ MAT.

3e. Required reading

Learn@ MAT's Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy and Procedure

Equalities Policy

(Teachers only) Teachers' standards – available on the DFE web-site

4. Declaration of interests

An employee is required to declare this where the group or organization would be considered to be in conflict with the ethos of Learn@ MAT. Membership of a trade union or staff representative group would not need to be declared.

Employees should also consider carefully whether they need to declare to Learn@ MAT their relationship with any individual(s) where this might cause a conflict with activities. For example, a relationship with a Learn@ MAT Councillor, Trustee, another staff member or a contractor who provides services to Learn@ MAT.

Failure to make a relevant declaration of interests is a very serious breach of trust and therefore if employees are in doubt about a declaration, they are advised to take advice from their Line Manager or union.

All declarations, including nil returns, should be submitted in writing to the Line Manager on a Learn@ MAT register of business interests (Appendix B).

5. Probity of records and other documents

The deliberate falsification of documents is not acceptable. Where an employee falsifies records or other documents, including those held electronically, this will be regarded as a serious disciplinary matter and potentially a criminal offence.

Where an employee who has claimed any benefit, including housing benefit, either directly or indirectly and has failed to disclose their full earnings, this will be treated as gross misconduct and the employee may be dismissed and referred to the police.

6. Financial inducements

6a. Financial Regulations

All Learn@ MAT employees must comply with the Learn@ MAT's Financial Regulations. Employees should familiarize themselves with the regulations but some of the principle employee requirements are summarized below.

6b. Business Contacts

In this section, "business contact" refers to any person, body or organization with which Learn@ MAT is involved on a financial or charitable basis (including contractors; developers; consultants; regional or national charities). This also includes business contacts who are potential suppliers (e.g. they are tendering for future business).

6c. Declaration of gifts

Any gifts that are received should be declared in writing on the *Register of Gifts and Hospitality* (Appendix C) with the exception of those items specifically identified in section 6d below. This document shall remain available for inspection by the Board of Trustees' Finance and Audit Committee.

6d. Gifts or hospitality to an employee

Where a business contact offers a personal gift, personal payment or other incentive such as secondary employment to an employee,

these should not be accepted and should be returned with a suitable official letter. Such offers should be declared and recorded in the *Register of Gifts and Hospitality*.

If it is not possible to return gifts then the employee who deals with that supplier should declare the gift to the Head Teacher who will keep a record of it and decide how it is to be used. Such gifts remain the property of Learn@ MAT and should be included in the *Register of Gifts and Hospitality*.

The only exceptions to these are:

- low cost, functional items suitable for business use rather than personal use and displaying the supplier's logo e.g. diaries, calendars and pens. These items may be accepted and do not have to be included in the *Register of Gifts and Hospitality*;
- gifts offered by parents or students to Learn@ MAT staff to express their thanks, such as boxes of chocolates, however, only gifts with an individual value of £25 or less may be accepted. Such gifts do not have to be declared in writing or be included in the Register of Gifts and Hospitality. For the avoidance of doubt employees must always refuse gifts of money.

Where hospitality in the form of meals and drinks is offered by a business contact, this is only acceptable where it forms part of a normal business meeting (for example, refreshments at training events or meals at evening meetings). Offers of hospitality to specific events, such as a dinner or sporting event, should only be accepted after authorization from the Head Teacher. These would normally only be approved where there is a clear and demonstrable benefit to Learn@ MAT and the hospitality would not expose Learn@ MAT to criticism that the business contact was exerting undue influence. These should be recorded in the *Register of Gifts and Hospitality*.

Visits by employees to exhibitions, demonstrations, conferences, business meals and social functions in connection with Learn@ MAT's

business and authorized by Learn@ MAT, shall be at Learn@ MAT's expense.

6e. Gifts or hospitality to Learn@ MAT

Where a business contact sends a gift to Learn@ MAT (for example, a stationery supplier sending a gift), these should not be accepted and should be returned to the supplier. Such offers should be declared and recorded in the *Register of Gifts and Hospitality*.

If it is not possible to return the gift, the employee who usually deals with the supplier should declare the gift to the Head Teacher who will keep a record of it and decide how it is to be used. Such gifts remain the property of Learn@ MAT and should be included in the *Register of Gifts and Hospitality*.

The only exceptions to this are low cost, functional items suitable for business use (as opposed to personal use), such as diaries, calendars or pens, which may be accepted and do not have to be declared on the *Register of Business Interests*.

7. Use of Learn@ MAT contacts

Apart from participating in concessionary schemes arranged by trade unions or other such groups for their members, employees shall not use Learn@ MAT business contacts for acquiring materials or services at trade / discount prices for non- Learn@ MAT activities.

7a. Required reading:

- Learn@ MAT Financial Handbook

8. Other employment

Employees are permitted to take up secondary employment outside Learn@ MAT, as long as the activity does not constitute a conflict of interest, adversely affect their primary employment at Learn@ MAT or exceed the legal maximum working week of 48 hours as defined by the Working Time Regulations.

The secondary employment must be undertaken outside the working hours of the employee's normal post and employees are required to keep the Head Teacher (Chair of Academy Council and CEO if the

employee is the Head Teacher) informed of their employment at other organizations.

9. Health and safety

Employees must adhere to St Matthias Academy's Health and Safety policy, procedure and guidance and must ensure that they take every action to keep themselves and everyone in Learn@ MAT environment safe and well.

This includes taking immediate safety action in a potentially harmful situation (either at Learn@ MAT or off-site) by complying with statutory and Learn@ MAT guidelines and collaborating with colleagues, agencies and the local authority.

9a. Required reading:

Learn@ MAT's Health and Safety Policy

10. Use of alcohol and illegal drugs

The taking of illegal drugs during working hours is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. All employees are expected to attend work without being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs and without their performance being adversely impacted by the consumption of alcohol or illegal drugs.

If alcohol or drug usage impacts on an employee's working life, Learn@ MAT has the right to discuss the matter with the employee and take appropriate action, having considered factors such as Learn@ MAT's reputation and public confidence.

11. Use of St Matthias Academy premises, equipment & communication systems

St Matthias Academy equipment and systems (phone, email and computers) are available only for St Matthias Academy - related activities and should not be used for the fulfilment of another job or for personal use. This is unless authorized by the Head Teacher (NB for the Head Teacher this is the chair of the Learn@ MAT Council and CEO); in case of an emergency, or where used for brief periods outside of working

hours. This includes photocopy facilities, stationery and premises. It also applies to access provided for remote use (e.g. hand held portable devices etc.) and to staff working outside of St Matthias Academy premises and using their own IT equipment.

Illegal, inappropriate or unacceptable use of St Matthias Academy equipment or communication systems may result in disciplinary action and in serious cases could lead to an employee's dismissal. This list is not exhaustive and includes;

- creating, sending or forwarding any message that would reasonably be considered inappropriate or unacceptable;
- committing or implying commitment to any contractual arrangements;
- accessing, publication or circulation of illegal, offensive, unacceptable, inappropriate or non-work related material;
- any illegal activities;
- posting confidential information about St Matthias Academy and/or other employees, children or parents;
- gambling or gaming;
- unauthorized use of St Matthias Academy facilities (or employee's personal IT equipment), for personal use during employee's working time

Employees receiving inappropriate communication or material or who are unsure about whether something he/she proposes to do might breach this policy should seek advice from their Head Teacher.

St Matthias Academy has the right to monitor e-mails, phone-calls, internet activity or document production, principally in order to avoid offensive or nuisance material and to protect systems from viruses, but also to ensure proper and effective use of systems.

Communication systems may be accessed when St Matthias Academy suspects that the employee has been misusing systems or facilities or for the investigation of suspected fraud or other irregularity.

Accredited Trade Union representatives can use St Matthias Academy communication systems for the purposes of undertaking trade union duties and these will be treated as confidential.

Passwords must not be shared and access to computer systems must

be kept confidential. Breach of this confidentiality may be subject to disciplinary action. Where appropriate St Matthias Academy should consider a system of proxy access.

Any St Matthias Academy equipment that is used outside the premises, for example laptops, should be returned to St Matthias Academy when the employee leaves employment or upon request by the Head Teacher.

## 12. Social networking websites

St Matthias Academy employees must not access social networking websites for personal use (i.e. non- job related use) during work time.

Access to some journals, blogs and social networking sites is permitted during work time for the purposes of undertaking job related duties only. St Matthias Academy employees must act in the best interests of St Matthias Academy and not disclose personal data or information about any individual including staff, young people or children. This includes images. Access may be withdrawn and disciplinary action taken if there is a breach of confidentiality or defamatory remarks are made about St Matthias Academy, staff, young people or children.

St Matthias Academy respects an employee's private life. However, it must also ensure that confidentiality and its reputation are protected.

Employees using social networking websites in their private life;

- must refrain from identifying themselves as working for St Matthias Academy, in a way which has, or may have, the effect of bringing St Matthias Academy into disrepute;
- must not identify other St Matthias Academy employees, children or young people without their consent;
- must not make any defamatory remarks about St Matthias Academy, its employees, children or
- young people, or conduct themselves in a way that is detrimental to St Matthias Academy;
- disclose personal data or information about the St Matthias Academy, employees, children or young people, that could breach the Data Protection Act 1998, for example, posting photographs or images of children or young people;

- must not allow pupils to access their personal social networking accounts and where they are contacted by a pupil they should bring it to the Head Teachers attention.

### 13. Personal Websites and Blogs

Employees who wish to set up personal web-forums, weblogs or 'blogs' must do so outside of work, not using St Matthias Academy equipment and adhere to the points detailed in the paragraph above.

### 14. Confidentiality

All employees at St Matthias Academy come into contact with a significant volume of data and information in relation to pupils, staff, St Matthias Academy activities and many other matters. There is an obligation to read and to observe the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998.

#### 14a. Required reading:

- Data Protection Guide

#### 14b. Managing data

Under the Data Protection Act, staff are required to collect, maintain and dispose of sensitive or personal data in a responsible manner.

#### 14c. Disclosing data

Staff should not disclose sensitive information about St Matthias Academy, its employees or the Trust to other parties, for example, parents or colleagues. There are particular exceptions to this; for example disclosure of suspected or alleged abuse of a pupil to Child Protection officers; discussion with a person accompanying or representing an employee in a formal meeting or disclosure under the Whistleblowing Procedure. All communication with the media must be directed through the Head teacher or their nominee. There are circumstances in which staff are obliged to release pupil data, for example, parents seeking information about pupil progress or other colleagues in St Matthias Academy.

Staff should be aware that, from time to time, information about employees' salaries is matched with other public sector information

(for example housing benefits) in order to prevent fraudulent claims.

14d. Access to data

Everyone has the right to request access to data that is held about them and such requests should be made to the Head teacher who will address the request in conjunction with the St Matthias Academy Data Protection Officer.

15. Copyright

Copyright legislation should be adhered to.

15a. required reading:

- Copyright in Education and Teaching

16. Appendix A

Employee Declaration Form

I declare that I have read and understood the Code of Conduct for Learn@ MAT  
Employees and the associated "Required Reading".

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

17. Appendix B

Register of Business Interests

St Matthias Academy Councillors, Trustees, Members and staff declaration form

I wish to declare the following information in accordance with St Matthias Academy requirements that a Register of Business Interests should be maintained.

Name:

Post:

Signature

: Date:

You should provide full details of your declaration below, including a nil return:

Declaration of relationships or contracting arrangements	
<i>Relationships or links with businesses. Contracts or proposed contracts (or any activity which would cause potential conflict) in which you are involved/interested.</i>	<i>State whether the interest is direct or indirect, and the nature of the interest.</i>

18. Appendix C

Register of Gifts and Hospitality

St Matthias Academy Councillors, Trustees,  
Members and staff declaration form

I wish to declare the following information in accordance with St Matthias Academy requirements that a Register of Gifts and Hospitality should be maintained.

Name:

Post:

Signature

Date:

You should provide full details of your declaration below, including a nil return:

Declaration of gifts and hospitality		
<i>Date gift received</i>	<i>From whom</i>	<i>Gift or hospitality</i>