



# FRAYS

*Academy Trust*

## **Frays Academy Trust Code of Conduct**

**Date Ratified: March 2022  
Review Date: March 2025**

## Approval

<b>Signed by Chair of Directors</b>	
<b>Date of Approval/Adoption</b>	March 2022
<b>Date of Review</b>	<b>March 2025</b>

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This policy will be subject to ongoing review and may be amended prior to the scheduled date of the next review in order to reflect changes in legislation, statutory guidance, or best practice (where appropriate).

To enable continuous improvement, all readers are encouraged to notify the author of errors, omissions and any other form of feedback.

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## 1 Scope

This policy applies to all employees of the Frays Academy Trust and should also be observed by agency staff, volunteers, contractors, directors and governors.

Under this policy, the Headteacher will be required to make any declarations to the Executive Headteacher/CEO. The Executive Headteacher/CEO will be required to make any declarations to the Chair of the Board of Directors. For staff employed centrally, where the policy states Headteacher, this should be replaced with the Chief Operating Officer (COO).

## 2 Introduction

The Frays Academy Trust is committed to the highest standards of honesty and accountability; and this Code of Conduct ("Code") provides the values and framework within which all staff, volunteers, contractors, governors and directors are required to adhere to in their work environment.

This Code cannot cover every eventuality and is not an exclusive or exhaustive list of acceptable conduct at work.

All employees have personal and legal responsibilities, including; treating others with dignity and respect; acting honestly, using public funds and school equipment appropriately, adhering to health and safety guidelines and practising equal opportunities at all times.

Various professional and technical bodies may have their own code of conducts e.g. the [Department for Education's Teachers' Standards](#), these should work in tandem with this document, and where any anomalies arise this should be raised with the Headteacher at the earliest opportunity.

Employees should also seek guidance if they are unsure about the contents of this document or if there are any questions as to whether particular conduct or behaviour is acceptable.

Frays Academy Trust is a Church of England Multi-Academy Trust. Frays is committed to delivering excellent primary education for children and to enabling them, their families and our staff to flourish and realise their God-given potential.

Frays will enable all pupils to achieve and develop the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary for secondary education and beyond. We will inspire excellence through high quality leadership, good and outstanding teaching as well as a highly creative curriculum.

At the foundation of our vision is a commitment to providing the highest quality, individualised, professional development for staff. We will invoke high quality leaders of learning in order to provide an enriched curriculum for our pupils of today and tomorrow.

Our founding principles are Christian, based on the teachings of Jesus and the core belief that every person is loved and accepted by God, uniquely created in his image, and given gifts and talents to be nurtured. The Bible (Proverbs 22:6) states 'Train a child in the way they should go; even when they are old they will not depart from it.'

We will realise these principles in an inclusive and open way, and we will welcome both church schools and schools without a religious foundation into full membership of the Trust. In all our schools, every child will be given the opportunity to flourish in a healthy, safe and secure environment and to have their individual skills, talents and spiritual development nourished so that they bloom and prosper.

### **3 Compliance with the Code of Conduct**

This Code of Conduct forms part of an Employee's contract of employment. As such this code must be read, understood and adhered to. Any failure to do so will lead to action in line with the Disciplinary Policy and Procedures and, if warranted, legal action. Ignorance of these guidelines will not be seen as a valid excuse.

Appropriate action will be taken with volunteers and contractors as required, where it is considered that the actions of a volunteer or contractor are in breach of this code, the Trust will consider not using their services.

### **4 Professional behaviour and conduct**

#### **4.1 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, in compliance with the schools' equality policies. Unacceptable behaviour such as discrimination, bullying, harassment or intimidation will not be tolerated. This includes physical and verbal abuse and use of inappropriate language or unprofessional behaviour with colleagues, pupils and parents etc.

#### **4.2 Appropriate relationships with children**

All 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 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.

##### **4.2.1 Physical contact with children**

There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate and proper for staff to have physical contact with children, however, it is crucial that they only do so in ways appropriate to their professional role and in relation to the pupil's individual needs and any agreed care plan.

Not all children feel comfortable about certain types of physical contact; this should be recognised and, wherever possible, adults should seek the pupil's permission before initiating contact and be sensitive to any signs that they may be uncomfortable or embarrassed. Staff should acknowledge that some pupils are more comfortable with touch than others and/or may be more comfortable with touch from some adults than others. Staff should listen, observe and take note of the child's reaction or feelings and, so far as is possible, use a level of contact and/or form of communication which is acceptable to the pupil.

It is not possible to be specific about the appropriateness of each physical contact, since an action that is appropriate with one pupil, in one set of circumstances, may be inappropriate in another, or with a different child.

Any physical contact should be in response to the child's needs at the time, of limited duration and appropriate to their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background. Adults should therefore, use their professional judgement at all times.

Physical contact should never be secretive, or for the gratification of the adult, or represent a misuse of authority. If a member of staff believes that an action by them or a colleague could be misinterpreted, or if an action is observed which is possibly abusive, the incident and circumstances should be immediately reported to the Headteacher, in line with the Child Protection Policy, and

recorded. Where appropriate, Headteacher should consult with the Local Authority Designated Officer (the LADO).

Extra caution may be required where it is known that a child has suffered previous abuse or neglect. Staff need to be aware that the child may associate physical contact with such experiences. They also should recognise that these pupils may seek out inappropriate physical contact. In such circumstances staff should deter the child sensitively and help them to understand the importance of personal boundaries.

A general culture of 'safe touch' should be adopted, where appropriate, to the individual requirements of each child. Pupils with special educational needs or disabilities may require more physical contact to assist their everyday learning. The arrangements should be understood and agreed by all concerned, justified in terms of the pupil's needs, consistently applied and open to scrutiny.

#### **4.2.2 Other activities that require physical contact with children**

In certain curriculum areas, such as PE, drama or music, staff may need to initiate some physical contact with children, for example, to demonstrate technique in the use of a piece of equipment, adjust posture, or support a child so they can perform an activity safely or prevent injury.

Physical contact should take place only when it is necessary in relation to a particular activity. It should take place in a safe and open environment i.e. one easily observed by others and last for the minimum time necessary. The extent of the contact should be made clear and undertaken with the permission of the pupil. Contact should be relevant to their age/understanding and adults should remain sensitive to any discomfort expressed verbally or non-verbally by the pupil.

It is good practice that all parties clearly understand at the outset, what physical contact is necessary and appropriate in undertaking specific activities.

#### **4.2.3 Providing intimate/personal care for children**

Our approach to intimate care is set out in each schools' intimate care policy. Pupils should be encouraged to act as independently as possible and to undertake as much of their own personal care as is possible and practicable. Any roles which may include carrying out intimate care will have this set out in their job description. No other staff members can be required to provide intimate care.

Pupils are entitled to respect and privacy at all times and especially when in a state of undress, including, for example, when changing and toileting. However, there needs to be an appropriate level of supervision in order to safeguard pupils, satisfy health and safety considerations and ensure that bullying or teasing does not occur. This supervision should be appropriate to the needs and age of the children concerned and sensitive to the potential for embarrassment.

#### **4.2.4 Further guidance**

For further guidance employees should refer to the Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education Settings (available on the [Safer Recruitment Consortium](#) website) which sets out appropriate and safe behaviours for all adults working with children in paid or unpaid capacities.

Conduct that may be considered in this way may include personal arrangements to see pupils, service users, their carers or families and exchanging personal contact details such as email, texts and communicate using social media.

Employees must refrain from conduct of this nature unless there is a sound business reason to do so, and the action is taken with the express approval of the Headteacher, and the decision is officially recorded (see your school's Child Protection Policy and Procedures).

#### **4.3 Associating with people outside work**

Employees who engage in any activity or associate with individuals or people outside work, whose current or past conduct could raise doubts or concerns about an employee's own integrity or ability to be in a 'position of trust' with regard to children or vulnerable adults, could have a direct consequence on their employment via the disciplinary procedures.

Staff who are covered by [The Childcare \(Disqualification\) and Childcare \(Early Years Provision Free of Charge\) \(Extended Entitlement\) \(Amendment\) Regulations 2018](#) must make an accurate disclosure and notify the school if their circumstances change. The Regulations prohibit anyone who is disqualified under the Regulations, from working in a relevant setting, including in schools. For further information and guidance see the Childcare Disqualification Check procedures.

#### **4.4 Misuse of position**

Employees must not misuse or misrepresent their position, qualifications or experience or bring the reputation of the Trust into disrepute. Such behaviour may lead to disciplinary action and where relevant, referral to the relevant professional body e.g. Teaching Regulation Agency.

Similarly employees should not put themselves in a position where their job and personal interests conflict.

#### **4.5 Dealing with media enquiries**

Employees must not deal directly with the press or the media in relation to anything related to school business unless required to do so as part of their duty, or authorised by the Chief Operating Officer (COO).

Employees who speak as a private individual directly to the press or at a public meeting or other situation where remarks may be reported to the press must ensure that reasonable steps are taken to ensure nothing is said that might lead the public to think they are acting in the capacity as an employee of the Frays Academy Trust.

#### **4.6 Criminal actions**

Employees must inform their manager if they are arrested/convicted/cautioned of a crime and, if arrested, must notify the manager of the development and outcome of the case as soon as it happens. Employees do not need to disclose fixed penalty notices for minor driving offences, such as speeding tickets, defective light etc., unless driving is a requirement of an employee's role or the conviction results in disqualification. The Headteacher will discuss this with the employee in the context of their role and responsibilities in order to help safeguard children and other employees at the school.

Disclosing a conviction does not necessarily mean disciplinary action against an employee.

The extent to which a criminal offence may affect employment depends on whether the conduct:

- Makes the employee unsuitable for their type of work; and/or
- May reflect adversely on the Trust's reputation or ability to perform its function.



Employees should always notify their manager if there is any doubt as to whether or not they need to share information about an arrest or conviction.

Failure to disclose such information may lead to disciplinary action.

## **5 Declaration and conflict of interest**

An employee is required to declare this where the situation e.g. group or organisation would be considered to be in conflict with the ethos of the Trust. 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 the school their relationship with any individual(s) where this might cause a conflict with school activities, for example, a relationship with a governor, another staff member or a contractor who provides services to the school.

Failure to make a relevant declaration of interest is a serious breach of trust and therefore, if employees are in doubt about a declaration they are advised to take advice from the school or union.

All declarations, should be submitted in writing to the Headteacher on a school Register of Business Interests (Appendix 1). Declarations for central staff should be submitted to the COO.

### **5.1 Transparency**

Employees must declare in writing to the Headteacher any relatives or partners, or friends who are engaged in a business, which either currently provides services to the Trust, or schools with which a school collaborates or is federated to, or may do so in the future. This is in order to minimise the risk of suspicion that some influence may be exerted over a particular customer as to the choice of provider, or that the provider gained advantage in terms of information received.

### **5.2 Conflicts of interest**

Employees who have a connection in a private, social or domestic capacity with someone who also sits on a school's Local Governing Body or the Board of Directors that may potentially create, or be thought to create, a conflict of interest will need to declare this to the Headteacher, for them to consider (see appendix 2).

Employees must not work privately for personal gain unless written consent from the Headteacher has been obtained. For Headteachers and the central team permission must be obtained from the Executive Headteacher/CEO. For the Executive Headteacher/CEO, permission must be sought from the Chair of the Board of Directors.

### **5.3 Intellectual property**

The Frays Academy Trust is entitled to ownership of intellectual property e.g. copyright of material created by the employee in the course of duties carried out by the employee of the Trust.

Employees must not use any information obtained in the course of employment for personal gain nor pass it on to others who might use it in such a way or for any purpose for which it was not originally intended.

## **6 Confidentiality**

## **6.1 Information protected by the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018**

No confidential information, politically or commercially sensitive information, or personal information protected by the [UK General Data Protection Regulation \(GDPR\)](#) and [Data Protection Act 2018](#) should be released to anyone, including governors or Directors, without authorisation from the Headteacher/COO. If there is any doubt about disclosing information then guidance from the Headteacher/COO must be sought.

Employees at the Frays Academy Trust come into contact with a significant volume of data and information in relation to pupils, staff, school activities and many other matters. There is an obligation to read and to observe the requirements of the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018. Please see the Data Protection Policy for full details.

## **7 Appointment, pay and conditions, and other employment matters**

Employees responsible for the appointment, pay and conditions or any other employment matters must ensure that decisions are fair, open and based on merit and not on anything other than an individual's ability to do the job and in accordance with the relevant Frays Academy Trust policies and procedures.

If an employee is put in a position of being the line manager to a relative, close friend or partner this must also be immediately disclosed.

Employees must not be involved in the recruitment and selection for anyone with whom they are in a close personal relationship with outside of work. See the Safer Recruitment and Selection Policy.

### **7.1 Investigations by Professional bodies**

Employees must inform their manager if they are being investigated by any professional body and any sanction imposed.

If employees are in doubt about any of the above, advice from the Headteacher must be sought, in the first instance.

### **7.2 Financial conduct**

Employees must inform the Headteacher if they are declared bankrupt or are involved as a Director of a company which is wound up or put into voluntary liquidation if it may impact upon their role and duties. Bankruptcy may impact on the duties of employees who have a financial responsibility. Heads of School and central staff must inform the COO.

Such information will be treated in the strictest confidence. The purpose of this is to ensure that a proper framework of support is in place.

### **7.3 Tendering for business**

Employees who wish to tender for a contract from the Trust must declare such an intention to the Chief Operating Officer as soon as intent has been formed; and at the earliest possible opportunity.

### **7.4 Holding multiple positions**

All staff employed by the Frays Academy Trust in any capacity must be mindful of the local conditions of service and requirements placed upon them in holding multiple positions.

Staff must ensure that any additional posts held do not interfere with employment at the Trust or have any conflict of interest with the Trust or bring it into disrepute.

Staff must be mindful of their responsibility under the [Working Time Regulations 1998](#); Staff cannot lawfully be required to work more than an average of 48 hours per week. Where staff work in excess of an average of 48 hours per week they will be required to write to the Headteacher, confirming that they agree to opt out of the working time regulations.

Employees who are permitted to engage in any other business or take up any additional employment must not undertake any work in connection with their additional employment during the time in which they are scheduled to be working for the Trust. It is the responsibility of each individual employee to declare any additional personal income to Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC).

Employees who have any doubt whatsoever should make a declaration, so that the Headteacher can make a judgement as to whether a conflict exists. For the central team, a declaration should be made to the COO. For the Executive Headteacher/CEO a declaration should be made to the Chair of the Board of Directors.

## **7.5 Dress and appearance**

The Trust recognises the diversity of cultures and religions of its employees and will take a sensitive approach when this affects dress and uniform requirements. However, priority will be given to health and safety, security and other similar considerations.

All employees must present a positive image of the Trust and are therefore required to present a professional appearance and dress appropriately for the role that they perform. Examples of inappropriate clothing and appearance can include:

- Scruffy/torn trousers;
- Short skirts;
- Low cut t-shirts, blouses and transparent clothing;
- Sweatshirts or t-shirts with slogans or symbols that could cause offence.
- Visible tattoos are discouraged.

## **8 Probity of records and other documents**

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.

## **9 Financial inducements**

### **9.1 Financial Regulations for schools**

All employees must comply with the Frays Academy Trust's Financial Regulations. Employees should familiarise themselves with the regulations; some of the principal employee requirements are summarised below.

### **9.2 Business Contacts**

Business contact refers to any person, body or organisation with which the Trust 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).

### **9.3 Declaration of gifts and hospitality**

Staff should avoid accepting gifts as it can be construed as a bribe by others or may lead the giver to expect preferential treatment.

Any gifts that are received should be declared in writing to the Headteacher on the Register of Gifts and Hospitality (Appendix 3) with the exception of those items specifically identified in the Gifts and Hospitality Policy. The Headteacher and central staff are required to make any declarations to the Chief Operating Officer. For further information on gifts or hospitality to an employee please see the Gifts and Hospitality Policy.

#### **9.4 Gifts to children**

Under no circumstance must staff offer or give gifts to children. This could be misinterpreted as a gesture either to bribe, or single out the young person. It might be perceived that a 'favour' of some kind is expected in return. Any reward given to a young person should be in accordance with agreed practice within the Trust.

#### **10 Use of school contacts**

Apart from participating in concessionary schemes arranged by Trade Unions or other such groups for their members, employees shall not use school business contacts for acquiring materials or services at trade/discount prices for non-school activities unless authorised by the Headteacher.

#### **11 Health and safety**

Employees must adhere to the Frays Academy Trust Health and Safety policy, procedure and guidance and must ensure that they take every action to keep themselves and everyone in the school environment safe and well. This includes taking immediate safety action in a potentially harmful situation (either at school or off-site) by complying with statutory and Trust guidelines and collaborating with colleagues, agencies and the local authority where required. Please see the Health and Safety policy for further information.

#### **12 Use of alcohol and drugs**

The taking of illegal drugs and 'legal highs' is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. All employees are expected to attend work without being under the influence of alcohol or drugs and without their performance being adversely impacted by the consumption of alcohol or drugs. If alcohol or drug usage impacts on an employee's working life, the Trust has the right to discuss the matter with the employee and take appropriate action, having considered factors such as the Trust's reputation and public confidence. Further details are available in the Frays Academy Trust Alcohol & Drug Abuse policy.

#### **13 Use of school premises, equipment & communication systems**

Frays Academy Trust equipment and systems (telephone, email, computers etc.) are available only for school-related activities and should not be used for the fulfilment of another job or for personal use, unless authorised by the Headteacher.

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 school premises and using their own IT equipment. Illegal, inappropriate or unacceptable use of school equipment or communication systems may result in disciplinary action and in serious cases could lead to an employee's dismissal. The following list sets out some examples but is not an exhaustive list:

- Creating, sending or forwarding any message that would reasonably be considered inappropriate or unacceptable.
- Accessing, publication or circulation of illegal, offensive, unacceptable or inappropriate material.
- Any illegal activities.
- Posting confidential information about the school, the Trust and/or other employees, children or parents etc.

- Gambling or gaming.
- Unauthorised use of school facilities.
- Use of Social Media on school-owned devices unless it is in accordance with the school's policies and procedures.

Employees receiving inappropriate communication or material, or who are unsure about whether something they propose to do might breach this policy, the Trust's ICT Usage Policy, Social Media Policy or other related policy should refer to these policies for guidance or seek advice from the Headteacher.

The Trust has the right to monitor e-mails, telephone 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 and equipment.

Communication systems may be accessed when the Trust suspects that the employee has been misusing systems or facilities, or for the investigation of suspected fraud or other irregularity. Passwords should not be shared and access to computer systems must be kept confidential. Breach of this confidentiality may be subject to disciplinary action. Where appropriate the Trust will consider a system of proxy access. The Trust will deal with breaches in line with the appropriate policy.

Any school equipment that is used outside school premises, for example laptops, should be returned to the school when the employee leaves employment or upon the Headteacher/COO's request.

#### **14 Social networking websites, personal websites and blogs**

Only official school sites must be used for communicating with pupils or to enable pupils to communicate with one another. There must be a strong pedagogical or business reason for creating official school sites to communicate with pupils or others, and written consent from the Headteacher must be obtained. Sites created must not breach the terms and conditions of social media service providers, particularly with regard to minimum age requirements. Staff must not create sites for trivial reasons which could expose the school to unwelcome publicity or cause reputational damage. The Frays Academy Trust Social Media Policy and ICT Usage Policy provide further advice and guidance.

#### **15 Obligations under the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018**

##### **15.1 Managing data**

Where staff are required to collect, maintain and dispose of sensitive or personal data it is done so in line with the [UK General Data Protection Regulation \(GDPR\)](#) and [Data Protection Act 2018](#). Please see the Data Protection Policy for further information.

##### **15.2 Disclosing data**

Staff should not disclose sensitive information about the Frays Academy Trust, its employees or pupils 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 Chief Operating Officer (COO). There are circumstances in which staff are obliged to release pupil data, for example, parents seeking information about their child.

Staff should be aware that, from time to time, information about employees' salaries is matched with other public sector information in order to prevent fraudulent claims. For example, claims for state benefits which are means tested against household income.

## **16 Related policies**

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy & Procedures
- Childcare Disqualification Check guidance
- Data Protection Policy
- Disciplinary Policy & Procedures
- Gifts and Hospitality Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- ICT Usage Policy
- Safer Recruitment and Selection Policy
- Social Media Policy
- Disciplinary Policy and Procedures

**Appendix 1 – Declaration form**

I declare that I have read and understood the Code of Conduct and the associated required reading as follows:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy & Procedures
- Data Protection Policy
- Disciplinary Policy & Procedures
- Gifts and Hospitality Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- ICT Usage Policy
- Social Media Policy
- Disciplinary Policy and Procedures

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

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Job Title: \_\_\_\_\_

This form should be signed on appointment and a copy kept on the employee’s HR file.

## Appendix 2 – Register of Business Interests Form

### Declaration Form

I wish to declare the following information in accordance with the Frays Academy Trust’s requirements that a Register of Business Interests should be maintained.

Name:

Post:

Signature:

Date:

You should provide full details of your declaration below:

<b>Name of Business</b>	<b>Nature of Business</b>	<b>Nature of Interest</b>	<b>Date of Appointment or Acquisition</b>	<b>Date of Cessation of Interest</b>



### Appendix 3 – Declaration of Gifts and Hospitality received

#### Declaration Form

I wish to declare the following information in accordance with the Frays Academy Trust’s requirements that a Register of Gifts and Hospitality should be maintained.

Name:

Role:

School (where applicable):

Signature:

Date:

You should provide full details of your declaration below:

Date	From whom	Description of gift/hospitality and approximate value	Party offering gift/hospitality	Accepted/rejected	Approved by

This information will be added to the gifts and hospitality register.

*This form is also included in the Gifts and Hospitality Policy where further guidance can also be found.*