

**Amadeus Primary Academies Trust**  
**Code of Conduct**

Date: September 2023	Review: September 2024
Signed:	Signed:

**Introduction**

The aim of this Code of Conduct for employees is to set out the standards of conduct expected of all staff and to provide further information for Amadeus Primary Academies Trust (APAT) employees. This should be read in conjunction with the Amadeus Primary Academies Trust’s HR policies.

This Code should make it clear to employees the expectations the Trust has of them. Employees should note that this Code is not intended to be exhaustive in defining acceptable and unacceptable standards of conduct and employees must use common sense in adhering to the underpinning principles. If any employee is ever unsure what the expectations are in any given circumstance, they should speak to their line manager or Principal.

This Code does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and it may be amended at any time but will certainly be reviewed on an annual basis.

**Scope**

The Code applies to all employees regardless of length of service including those in their probationary period. It also applies to agency workers and self-employed contractors although, unlike employees, breaches of the Code will not be managed through the disciplinary procedure.

As recognisable figures in the local community the behaviour and conduct of staff of the Trust outside of work can impact on their employment. Therefore, conduct outside work may be treated as a disciplinary matter if it is considered that it is relevant to the employee’s employment.

**Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children**

All employees are responsible for safeguarding children and promoting their welfare. This means that employees are required to take action to protect children from maltreatment, prevent impairment of children’s health or development and ensure that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care. This will enable all children to have the best outcomes.

All employees must be aware of the signs of abuse and neglect and know what action to take if these are identified.

To do this all employees must have fully read and understood the Trust’s safeguarding and any other relevant policies, be aware of our systems for keeping children safe (by reading Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023), and always follow the guidance in these policies and in the relevant Government guidance.

All employees must cooperate with colleagues and with external agencies where necessary.

**Duty of care**

All staff must ensure that they:

- Understand their responsibilities, which are part of their employment or role, and be aware that sanctions will be applied if these provisions are breached
- Always act, and be seen to act, in our children’s best interests

- Avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and/or intentions
- Take responsibility for their own actions and behaviour.

### Health & Safety

All staff must ensure that they:

- Familiarise themselves with the Health and Safety policy for the Trust
- Read and understand the Health and Safety Policy
- Comply with Health and Safety Regulations and use any safety equipment and protective clothing which is supplied to you by the Trust
- Comply with any hygiene requirements
- Comply with any accident reporting requirements
- Never act in a way which might cause risk or damage to any other members of the Trust community or visitors
- Inform their line manager and Trust Human Resources of any paid work undertaken elsewhere. This is to comply with the Working Time Regulations, which are a Health and Safety initiative

### Honesty and personal integrity

Employees are expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct. The following statements define the behaviour and attitudes which set the required standard for conduct at our Trust.

Employees uphold public trust in our Trust and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside the Trust and their school, by:

- Treating pupils with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to their professional position
- Having regard for the need to safeguard children's well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions
- Showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others
- Not undermining fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
- Ensuring that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways which exploit children's vulnerability or might lead them to break the law
- Employees must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of our Trust and maintain high standards in their own attendance and punctuality
- Staff must maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their work. This includes the handling and claiming of money and the use of Trust's property and facilities

### Tackling discrimination

Employees are required to understand the types of discrimination, harassment and bullying that pupils and colleagues may be subject to.

Employees must not ignore any form of discrimination. This includes inappropriate jokes and banter. Employees must always positively promote equality and diversity and inclusion.

Employees should not ignore any form of retaliation against anyone who speaks up and who in good faith reports wrongdoing, and should report this in confidence to the appropriate channels. The Trust has a Whistleblowing Policy which all employees have access to.

### Professional boundaries and relationships

Employees in our Trust are in a position of trust in relation to our pupils which means that the relationship between an employee and a pupil is not one of equals.

Employees must ensure that they avoid behaviour which might be misinterpreted by others. This includes any type of communication that they may have with pupils.

Employees must ensure that professional boundaries are always maintained. This means that employees should not show favouritism to any pupil and should not allow pupils to engage in any type of behaviour that could be seen to be inappropriate. Pupils are not employees' friends and should not be treated as such. The Trust recognises that our primary schools are sometimes based in the community where an employee works so on occasion a pupil may be a family friend. In these instances, this should be flagged up to the Principal as soon as the child starts at the school, or at the point of employment.

Employees should be aware that it is not uncommon for pupils to become strongly attracted to a member of staff or to develop an infatuation. If any member of staff becomes aware of an infatuation, they should discuss it with their line manager immediately so that they can receive support on the most appropriate way to manage the situation.

For employees who are in a relationship with a colleague, parent or carer, or any other person associated with the Trust, we expect them to identify this to the Amadeus HR team ([amadeushr@apat.org.uk](mailto:amadeushr@apat.org.uk)) and ensure that this does not create a conflict of interest or affect their professional judgement or responsibilities in any way.

### Confidentiality and protection of data

Members of staff may have access to confidential information about pupils, colleagues or other matters relating to the Trust. This could include personal and sensitive data, for example information about a pupil's home life. Employees should never use this information to their own personal advantage, or to humiliate, intimidate or embarrass others. Employees should never disclose this information unless this is in the proper circumstances and with the proper authority.

If an employee is ever in doubt about what information can or cannot be disclosed, they should speak to their line manager / Principal.

The Trust holds and processes data that is protected under General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018. Employees are expected to comply with the Trust's systems for collecting, storing and using data. If any employee becomes aware that data is at risk of compromise or loss or has been compromised or lost, they must report it immediately to the Trust's Data Protection Officer.

Employees must ensure that they have read and understood all the Trust policies that relate to data protection and including our IT policies.

### Social media

Employees should ensure that they do not bring the school into disrepute or breach their obligations in relation to confidentiality and appropriate behaviour when using social media.

Employees should not access social networking/media sites during working hours unless engaged on Trust business. When accessing such sites outside working hours employees are advised not to write about their work or make reference to the school or employer on external web pages. Where an employee chooses to do so he/she should make it clear that the views expressed are their own and do not reflect the views of the school or Trust.

In addition, employees must not:

- Disclose any information that is confidential to the school or Trust to any third party, or disclose personal data or information about any individual, colleague, pupil or parent/carer which could be in breach of data protection legislation
- Disclose any information which is not yet in the public arena

- Post illegal material, e.g. material which incites racial hatred
- Link their own personal web pages to the school's website
- Include any information, sourced from the school, which breaches copyright
- Make defamatory remarks about the school, colleagues, Governors, pupils and parents/carers
- Publish any material or comment that could undermine public confidence in the individual as a representative of the school or in their position of trust within the community
- Misrepresent the school, by posting false or inaccurate statements about the work of the school or the Trust

In circumstances where an employee makes an inappropriate comment in relation to the school or an employee of the school or Trust but does not actually name them, then the school or Trust may still consider taking action if it believes that the comment is damaging to the school or Trust.

The use of social media is an important means of communication both to enhance the profile of the Trust and the professional profile of individuals. These guidelines are intended to advise and assist staff using social media either as part of their professional role, or in a private capacity where boundaries between work responsibilities and home life can get blurred. They are not intended to restrict scholarly, academic or pedagogic use of the media. Neither are they intended to restrict what staff say or do in a personal capacity, nor prevent staff from expressing critical comments.

- Ensure all privacy settings for all social media platforms are set to the highest level and review this settings on a regular basis as the platforms make changes without notifying you
- Consider using a 'nickname' or first and middle name to avoid pupils / parents finding you
- Report any unusual activity to your Principal/ HR Business Partner as soon as you become aware. For example cloning your account
- Never accept friends requests from pupils
- Be aware of parents that may be your friends on social media - if your privacy settings are not set properly it may be that pupils will have access to your posts
- Do not get drawn into conversations in community chats that may be discussing school / Trust. Even if the temptation is to present a defence, do not comment just report to the Principal at the earliest opportunity
- Be aware and vigilant of new apps that could pose a threat to your privacy, but may also pose a threat to pupils

#### Meeting with your line manager (1:1)

It is recommended that you meet with your line manager on a regular basis, often referred to as a 1:1. A summary of this discussion should be shared between both parties. This meeting can be as frequent as every other week, or you may decide once every half term is sufficient. Both parties should encourage openness and honesty. It is vital that 1:1s take place to:

- Strengthen relations between line managers and their team members
- Encourage performance check-ins and conversations
- Progress on goals, engagement, professional development
- Develop trust both with individuals and their teams
- Creates a safe environment for people to work in new and collaborative ways
- Leaves employees feeling energised, engaged, and prepared for work and performance reviews

A little structure for 1:1 meetings can go a long way. With preparation, a collaborative agenda, and thoughtful note taking 1:1s can be really effective and supportive for the employer / employee relationship.

### Raising concerns or issues (Employee Resolution)

At APAT we encourage our employees to look at resolving any concerns at school level by having open and honest conversations. Despite our best efforts, there are times when things may not be perfect. We would like to encourage our employees to speak about them and resolve them through dialogue. It is often the small issues that don't get addressed at an early stage that become big problems over a period of time and therefore have a far reaching impact on both employee and employer.

If an employee has a concern that involves another employee or other employees, we encourage you to try to resolve the matter by directly approaching the person (s) involved. If it can't be resolved you could take the matter to your line manager/ Senior Leader of the School, or Principal who can then help to resolve the problem personally or, by mutual agreement, with other member(s) of the staff. Similarly, if you have a grievance with the Principal, it is best to first raise it directly with the Principal to see if it can be resolved through discussion. If it is with a member of the Trust Leadership Team or Central Team the employee should try to raise with the concerned member of the Trust Leadership Team or Central team.

### Trust Leadership Team

Mr Peter Rhodes	CEO and Accounting Officer
Mrs Sabrina Bridges, Chief Finance and Operations Officer	HR, Finance, Compliance
Mrs Sarah Young, Director of Education	Teaching and Learning, standards and outcomes

### Central Team

Mrs Lee Natusch, Finance Business Partner  
Ms Kate Nineham, HR Business Partner  
Ms Raluca Costache, Finance Business Partner  
Ms Katie Elston, Payroll and Pensions Coordinator  
Mrs Joanne Dennis, Admin Support

At any point you can ask for a personal meeting with the Principal, School SLT, Trust Leadership Team or HR team to discuss a concern that has not been resolved. The intention will always be to meet within five working days. You can request that a member of the HR team is present at the meeting.

We would like to empower APAT employees to resolve concerns as informally and effectively as possible by making use of different strategies. These may be (but are not exhaustive): mediation, facilitated conversations, exploring alternate working arrangements, workload monitoring, seeking Occupational Health advice, and mentoring. The Trust's commitment is to ensure that all concerns are dealt with appropriately and as informally as possible to avoid distress for either party.

APAT recognises that there are situations when a formal grievance process may be necessary to resolve a grievance. There may be times when all avenues of informal resolution have been explored without success. The next step to resolution for an employee may be to raise a formal grievance.

### Physical contact with pupils

There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate and proper for staff to have physical contact with pupils. Employees must ensure that they only do so in ways that are appropriate to their professional role and in response to the pupil's needs at the time. This should be of limited duration and appropriate to the age, stage of development, gender and background of the pupil. Employees should always be able to explain why they have made physical contact with a student.

There may also be occasions where a student is in distress and needs comfort and reassurance which may include age appropriate physical contact. If an employee is in this position, then they should consider the way in which they offer comfort, ensuring that it is not open to misinterpretation and is always reported to their line manager.

Staff may legally physically intervene with pupils to prevent them from committing a crime, injuring themselves or others, or causing damage to property. Physical force should never be used as a form of punishment. Employees should report incidents when they have physically had to intervene with a student. Contact should always be made with the parents to ensure they are aware of the incident. Any physical intervention that has taken place with a pupil who has SEND should be communicated to the SENCo as well as logging the incident via the normal recording procedures. Staff working with these pupils should familiarise themselves with their individual needs and ensure the intervention is in line with these and the strategies school has in place to support the individual child.

Sexual contact, including grooming patterns of behaviour with pupils is unlawful and unacceptable in all circumstances. If you witness any forms of this behaviour or have concerns over another member of staff, you must report this immediately.

#### Social contact with pupils

Employees should not establish or seek to establish social contact via any channels (including social media), with pupils for the purposes of securing a friendship or to pursue or strengthen a relationship. Employees should use their work provided equipment only for communicating electronically with pupils (only when appropriate and via a school email address, never a personal email). If there are any circumstances in which an employee has had to provide their personal contact details, including phone numbers, email address to any student then they should report this to their line manager or Principal.

The Trust's advice to staff is not to connect to pupils or parents via social media or other communication channels unless this is for professional purposes and that the employee is always able to demonstrate that this is the case.

#### Working one to one with pupils

There will be times where an employee is working one to one with a pupil and this is acceptable. Employees need to understand that this means that they may be more vulnerable to allegations being made against them. Therefore, it is important that employees:

- Avoid meeting on a one to one basis in secluded areas of the School
- Ensure that the door to the room is open or that there is visual access into the room
- Inform a colleague or line manager of the meeting, preferably beforehand
- Reports to their line manager if the student becomes distressed or angry

#### Dress and appearance

APAT employees are role models to our pupils and how they present themselves is important. Our expectation is that staff dress reflects the professionalism of our Trust and our roles. Employees must follow the Trust Staff Dress Code. If an employee is unsure whether any item of clothing is inappropriate, then they should not wear it to work. Employees are advised to follow the Dress Code Policy or speak to their line manager if they are unsure. When we identify that an employee is wearing clothing / footwear that we do not find acceptable they will be informed, and may be sent home to get changed (unpaid).

### Gifts and hospitality

For many of our employees there will be a limited opportunity to accept gifts and hospitality, but all staff must be aware that it is not acceptable for staff to accept bribes. Any gift, promotional offer, or hospitality intended either for the employee or for the School that exceeds a nominal value of £20.00 must be recorded in the Trust's central Gifts and Hospitality Register as per APAT's Gifts and Hospitality Policy.

Where an employee is ever unsure whether the acceptance of such an item is appropriate, employees should decline the gift politely or refer the matter to the Chief Finance and Operations Officer, or a member of the Central Team.

Staff should not give gifts to pupils unless this is part of a recognised practice in line with our Behaviour Policy and safeguarding protocols.

### Keeping within the law

Staff are expected to operate within the law. Unlawful or criminal behaviour, at work or outside work may lead to disciplinary action, including dismissal being taken. However, being investigated by the police, receiving a caution or being charged will not automatically mean that an employee's employment is at risk.

### Employees must ensure that they:

- Uphold the law at work
- Never commit a crime away from work which could damage public confidence in them or the Trust, or which makes them unsuitable for the work they do. This includes, for example:
  - submitting false or fraudulent claims to public bodies (for example, income support, housing or other benefit claims)
  - breaching copyright on computer software or published documents
  - sexual offences which will render them unfit to work with children or vulnerable adults
  - crimes of dishonesty which render them unfit to hold a position of trust
- Write and tell the Amadeus HR Business Partner ([amadeushr@apat.org.uk](mailto:amadeushr@apat.org.uk)) immediately if they are questioned by the police, charged with, or convicted of any crime whilst they are employed at the Trust (this includes outside of their working hours). The Trust will then need to consider whether this charge or conviction damages public confidence in the Trust or makes the employee unsuitable to carry out their duties
- Write and advise the Chief Finance and Operations Officer or a member of the Central Team of the Trust if you have any suspicions of; any misconduct, malpractice, illegal or unethical behaviour within the School/ Trust. These concerns should be reported in confidence to the appropriate channels. Staff should also complete a confidential note on Staff Safe.

### Conduct outside of work and at work related functions

Unlike some other forms of employment working at our Trust means that an employee's conduct outside of work could have an impact on their role.

Staff must not engage in conduct outside work which could seriously damage the reputation and standing of the Trust or the employee's own reputation or the reputation of other members of the Trust community. Employees should be aware that any misconduct that is reported to the Trust may need to be addressed under our disciplinary procedure. We therefore expect employees to make us aware immediately of any such situations that have happened outside of the School premises.

Employees are required to demonstrate responsible behaviour at work-related functions and work-related social events that take place outside normal work hours, and to act in a way that will not have a detrimental effect on the Trust's reputation.

### Raising Matters of Concern: Confidential Reporting Procedure

Employees who become aware of activities which they believe, in good faith, are illegal, improper, unethical or otherwise inconsistent with this Code, may report the matter in confidence via the appropriate channels.

Any individual who raises such a concern in good faith will not suffer any detriment or be penalised in any other way. For further guidance on the issue and on the procedure, employees should refer to the APAT Whistleblowing Policy. Please contact [amadeushr@apat.org.uk](mailto:amadeushr@apat.org.uk) if you need any information regarding the Trust Whistleblowing Policy.



**Appendix A – Staff**

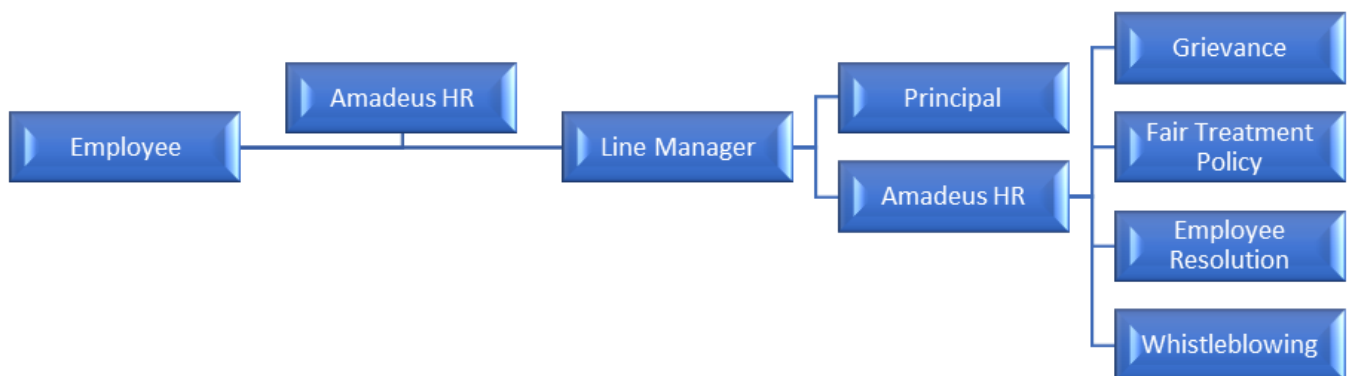
A member of staff is encouraged to raise their concern or issue with their line manager. In the event that they are not able to address the issue with a member of staff in school, they are entitled to contact a member of the Trust Leadership Team or central HR team.

The options available include:

- Mediation or facilitated conversations
- Exploring alternate working arrangements
- Workload monitoring
- Occupational Health advice and mentoring
- Grievance policy (individual/collective staff)
- Union discussions

If the matter is referred to the Trust Leadership Team and/or central HR team, we will support that member of staff and encourage mediation.

**Direction of concern/complaint**



**Trust Structure**

