

# *Marland School*

## **Code of Conduct for School Employees**

**This policy was adopted by the Governing Body of  
Marland School on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2025**

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## **Introduction**

This Code of Conduct is designed to give clear guidance on the standards of behaviour which are to be observed in Marland School and what behaviour is and is not acceptable. Regard should be given to the disciplinary rules set out in the Marland School Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

Every person working in our school is a role model and in a position of influence and must demonstrate behaviour that sets a good example to all those who come into contact with our school, especially the young people who attend the school. As a member of a school community, everybody has an individual responsibility to maintain their own reputation and the reputation of the school, whether inside or outside working hours.

The Governing Body of Marland School is committed to creating and maintaining an environment in which all those working in, or coming into contact with the school are treated fairly, with dignity and respect and where unacceptable behaviour will not be tolerated.

This Code of Conduct applies to all employees. Casual and self-employed workers, agency staff and volunteers working in the school are also expected to observe the standards of behaviour set out in this document. For the purpose of this policy, the term 'you' is used to apply to all of these groups.

In addition to this Code of Conduct, all teaching staff have an obligation to adhere to the 'Teachers' Standards' and particularly in relation to this policy, Part 2 of the Teachers' Standards - Personal and Professional Conduct.

This policy is provided following consultation with trade unions/professional associations.

### **1. Compliance**

All employees should confirm that they have read, understood and agree to comply with this Code of Conduct. A declaration is appended at Appendix 3

### **2. Disciplinary Action**

Failure to follow the code of conduct may result in further action being taken, as set out in the Disciplinary Policy.

### **3. Conduct Outside of Work**

- 3.1 Criminal offences of any sort, particularly those that involve violence or possession or use of illegal drugs or sexual misconduct, may be regarded as unacceptable and dealt with under the school's Disciplinary Policy.
- 3.2 Behaviour or activities that have the potential to make you unsuitable for the role you perform at the school will be dealt with under the Disciplinary Policy.
- 3.3 You should not engage in conduct outside work which could damage the reputation and standing of the school, your own reputation or the reputation of other members of the school community.

#### **4. Setting an Example**

- 4.1 You should set good examples of behaviour and demonstrate high standards of conduct in order to encourage our pupils to do the same. A non-exhaustive example set of standards can be found in Appendix 1.
- 4.2 It is unlawful to discriminate, harass or victimise someone because they have or are perceived to have a protected characteristic as defined by the Equality Act 2010 or are associated with someone who has a protected characteristic. Protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.
- 4.3 You should not use inappropriate, foul or offensive language to, or in front of, any member of the school community, which includes but is not limited to, pupils, parents/carers, colleagues, governors, visitors to the school.
- 4.4 You should not put yourself at risk of allegations of abusive or unprofessional conduct.

#### **5. Safeguarding Pupils**

- 5.1 You have a duty to safeguard pupils from physical, sexual, emotional and/or verbal abuse and neglect. This includes a duty to report concerns about a pupil or colleague to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for Child Protection.

##### **You must:**

- 5.2 Make yourself aware of who the school's current DSLs are. This information is available on notice boards in the staffroom and around the school.
- 5.3 Take reasonable care of pupils under your supervision with the aim of ensuring their safety and welfare.
- 5.4 Read and become familiar with the school's Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy and Whistleblowing Policy.
- 5.5 Read and become familiar with the DfE Statutory Guidance Document 'Keeping children safe in Education'.

##### **You must not:**

- 5.6 Promise a pupil that you will not act on information that you are told by them.
- 5.7 If given information by a parent/carer or other person which would reasonably cause concern for a young person's safety or wellbeing, agree to keep that information confidential. In these circumstances, you must advise the person that you may be obliged to report what they are telling you.

#### **6. Familial / Social Relationships with Pupils**

- 6.1 You should declare any familial or social relationship that you may have with pupils outside of school. This may include mutual membership of social groups, tutoring, or family/friendship connections. You should not assume that the school is aware of any

such connections. A declaration form is available at Appendix 2 of this document for declaration of such relationships. Where you have such connections with a pupil, you must maintain your professionalism during any contact and not act in any way which may bring yourself or the school into disrepute.

- 6.2 Be aware that physical relationships with pupils, regardless of their age, are strictly forbidden and may lead to a criminal conviction. This may also apply to former pupils and advice must be sought before commencing any such relationship.
- 6.3 You should not behave in a way that may be perceived as sarcastic, nor should you make jokes at the expense of pupils, embarrass or humiliate pupils, discriminate against or favour pupils.

## **7. Familial / Social Relationships between Staff (partners, spouses, family members)**

- 7.1 Relationships between members of staff are natural and accepted. However, to prevent potential abuse of power or perceived or real conflict of interest, staff must declare close personal or intimate relationships in either of the following situations:
  - Where a relationship begins that may give rise to a real or perceived conflict of interest, exploitation, favouritism or bias.
  - Where a relationship already exists and a new situation arises that may give rise to a real or perceived conflict of interest, exploitation, favouritism or bias. For example, two staff members in a relationship who work in different sites or parts of Marland but who now work in the same area / department.
- 7.2 Where staff are in an intimate or close personal relationship, consideration will be given on how to prevent conflict of interest, breach of confidentiality or unfair advantage gained (or perceived to be gained) from the overlap of a personal and professional relationship. This may include finding alternative line management arrangements.
- 7.3 The line manager will only inform other relevant members of staff about the relationship (e.g. in order to explain a change in management arrangements), if the individuals concerned agree.
- 7.4 Staff are reminded of possible power imbalances within intimate and close personal relationships. Relationships between employees in which one has direct or indirect authority over another are strongly avoided / discouraged.
- 7.5 To maintain appropriate relationships with colleagues/peers, and help reduce the risk of abuse of power or conflict of interest, staff should:
  - Maintain an appropriate physical and emotional distance from other staff while working.
  - Perform your professional working duties in the best interests of Marland School without favour towards any individual staff member over another.
  - Avoid paying undue special attention to a particular member of staff which may be seen as grooming.
  - Where possible staff should use their Marland email account, telephone (including Microsoft Teams) and internet access for work-related communications with staff and maintain professional communications.

- Be aware that any email sent to a staff member about a colleague may be disclosed to them or their advocate under the General Data Protection Regulations. All emails and work-related instant messages should be written in a professional manner.
- Establish boundaries between professional and non-professional communication with colleagues.
- Adhere to the same guidelines, where logistically possible, when you and the staff member are participating in any Marland School related activities away from your usual workplace.
- Where possible, ensure that meetings and discussions about Marland School related matters occur in school or other appropriate premises.
- Refer colleagues with support needs to a relevant Marland School commissioned support services, such as occupational health and/or employee assistance programme (available through our HR / Admin team), etc. Also be mindful to limit your role in providing personal support to a staff member where this is not part of your employment duties.

7.6 Where an intimate relationship ends it is expected that all parties will continue to conduct themselves in a professional manner at work and avoid personal disputes which impact on the working environment or other colleagues and students / pupils. It may also be appropriate for some of the actions put in place by Marland School during the relationship, to continue for a period of time following the end of the relationship. The staff members involved will be consulted and required to comply with reasonable actions.

## **8. Professional Relationships with Colleagues**

- 8.1 You must strive to create a positive working environment and behave in a manner which ensures and promotes acceptable behaviour. Examples of acceptable behaviour and unacceptable behaviour can be found in Appendix 1.
- 8.2 You should promote harmonious and professional relationships with all colleagues. It is understood that, at times, differences of opinions can occur and at such times it is expected that you will attempt to resolve matters informally in the first instance unless you feel unable to do so in which case you should refer the matter to your manager.

## **9. Honesty and Integrity**

- 9.1 Without fear of recrimination, you can report any impropriety or breach of procedures using the process laid out within the Marland School Whistleblowing Policy.
- 9.2 Maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in your work. This includes the handling and claiming of money and the use of school property and facilities.
- 9.3 You may be guilty of an offence of bribery under the Bribery Act 2010 if you offer, promise or give financial advantage or other advantage to someone; or if you request, agree or accept, or receive a bribe from another person. If you believe that a person has failed to comply with the Bribery Act, you should refer your concerns to the attention of the Executive Principal or Chair of Governors.

- 9.4 Make known to the Executive Principal or Governing Body all financial and non-financial interests that could bring you into conflict with the school's interests.
- 9.5 Make any personal relationships with contractors, or potential contractors known to the Executive Principal or Governing Body.
- 9.6 Do not accept gifts or hospitality from suppliers or associates of the school, with the exception of 'one off' token gifts from parents or at times such as Christmas or end of the school year. Personal gifts from any member of staff to pupils are potentially inappropriate and could be misinterpreted and may lead to disciplinary action. Any intention to provide gifts to pupils must be authorised by a senior leader. A record will be kept of all gifts received.
- 9.7 You should advise the Executive Principal or Chair of Governors if you have a personal relationship with someone applying to work at the school, so that you are not involved in that recruitment process.

## **10. Additional Employment Outside of School**

- 10.1 You may undertake work outside school, either paid or voluntary, provided that it does not conflict with the interests of the school and/or is not to a level which may contravene the working time regulations or affect your work performance in the school. You must seek the consent of the Executive Principal or Governing Body should you wish to take up other employment outside the school. This includes tutoring work.

## **11. ICT Use**

- 11.1 Exercise caution when using information technology and be aware of the risks to yourself and others. Regard should be given to the school's Online Safety Policy and Mobile Phone Safeguarding Policy at all times both inside and outside of work.
- 11.2 Only take photographs / still images or video footage of pupils using approved school equipment, for purposes authorised by the school and where parental consent has been given. The resultant files from such recording or taking of photographs must be stored in accordance with the school's procedures on school equipment.
- 11.3 You must not use school equipment to access or save any inappropriate material, including but not limited to pornographic, sexual or sexually explicit material.
- 11.4 Do not share your personal IT equipment, for example smartphone, iPad/tablet with a pupil unless with prior permission of the Headteacher and/or where this is agreed as part of lesson planning or educational provision.
- 11.5 Do not access any personal material stored on your computer, smartphone, tablet in the presence of pupils.

## **12. Social Media**

- 12.1 Be aware that anything you post online, either at work or outside of work, may be shared and/or viewed by those outside of your control and can potentially affect your reputation and/or the reputation of the school and is ultimately your responsibility.

- 12.2 You should exercise caution in your use of social media and/or any other web-based presence that you may have, your language and conduct on such sites, including written content, videos or photographs, and views expressed either directly or by 'liking' certain pages or posts established by others.
- 12.3 You should report to the Headteacher if you have any concerns in regard to social media, either via contact you have received, or material you have seen or been party to.
- 12.4 As a member of the school and wider education community, you should exercise caution in posting comments about or relating to other schools and/or persons connected to other schools.
- 12.5 Only contact pupils via school authorised mechanisms. At no time should personal telephone numbers, email addresses or communication routes via personal accounts on social media platforms be used to communicate with pupils.
- 12.6 Do not engage in any inappropriate use of social media sites which may bring yourself, the school, or the school community into disrepute. To this end, you should ensure that you adopt suitably high security settings on any personal profiles you may have.
- 12.7 Do not 'befriend' or accept 'friend requests' or invitations to 'like' or comment on pages or similar, from pupils or parents/carers of the school, other than in exceptional circumstances for staff who may have family members who are pupils or where there is a genuine relationship, such as family and/or close family friends.
- 12.8 It is not advisable to identify yourself as an employee of the school on any social network other than with prior permission of the Headteacher.
- 12.9 You should not respond to comments posted about the school or any persons connected to the school on any social media or online platform. In these circumstances you should bring such comments to the attention of the Headteacher.

### **13. Confidentiality**

- 13.1 It is contrary to the General Data Protection Regulations to reveal confidential information about pupils or their parents/carers except to colleagues who have a professional role in relation to the pupil.
- 13.2 You should not discuss any action or incident which you have witnessed during the course of your duties, and which needs to remain confidential, with parent/carers or members of the community outside of school, for example a pupil behaviour incident. In these circumstances, disclosure to colleagues should be where you have authorisation to do so and on a 'need to know' basis.
- 13.3 If you are in any doubt as to whether to share information you have become aware of, you must consult the Executive Principal or the school's Data Protection Officer.



#### 14. **Dress and Appearance**

This dress code is designed to guide managers and staff on the school standards of dress and appearance. School expectations are that appearance should be professional at all times both when in school and also when acting as a representative of the school at external venues.

This dress code applies to all adults in school, for the purposes of this code the term staff includes those on secondment, supply agency staff, governors, contractors and volunteers.

Staff are individually responsible for their general presentation, appearance and personal hygiene should consider how this may be perceived by others. This means that all staff should wear clothing which:

- Is appropriate to their role;
- Is not likely to be viewed as offensive, revealing or sexually provocative;
- Clothing with political or other contentious or offensive slogans is not permitted;
- Is not considered to be discriminatory and is culturally sensitive;
- Does not place themselves or others at risk and complies with any health and safety requirements.

#### **Dress Code**

Some examples of **unacceptable** clothing include a combination of;

- Mini skirts
- See through clothing
- Low cut t-shirts or tops
- Crop tops
- Offensive badges, emblems or logos on clothing
- Flip flops
- Underwear should not be visible

#### **Footwear**

Footwear must be safe, sensible, smart and clean. Staff should have regard to health and safety considerations as in an emergency situation; they may be required to move swiftly. School will accept no responsibility for injuries incurred as a result of wearing inappropriate footwear.

#### **Tattoos**

Visible tattoos, where they are deemed to be offensive or inappropriate must be appropriately covered.

Staff are responsible for following this dress code.

Managers are responsible for ensuring that the dress code is adhered to at all times in respect of the staff they manage.

School will not discriminate against staff on grounds of disability, gender, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation, gender reassignment or pregnancy.

This dress code will be reviewed on an annual basis.

### **POLICY HISTORY**

<b>Policy Date</b>	<b>Summary of change</b>	<b>Contact</b>	<b>Version / Implementation Date</b>
January 2016	New Policy	HR ONE	27 November 2013
July 2022	General update including reformat. New section specifically relating to Social Media and inclusion of reference to tutoring in s.9	HR ONE	July 2022
March 2025	Marland addition based of Ofsted inspection advice: added section 7. Familial / Social Relationships between Staff (partners, spouses, family members).	Marland	25.03.25

## Appendix 1

### **Examples of Acceptable Behaviour**

People behave acceptably when they:

- Afford dignity, trust and respect for everyone and themselves;
- Have awareness of the effects of their behaviour on others and only make reasonable and manageable demands;
- Communicate honestly and openly, clearly stating what they need and expect of others;
- Provide and are receptive to honest feedback based on evidence; and
- Challenge discriminatory language and behaviour in an appropriate way.

### **Examples of Unacceptable Behaviour:**

- Using aggressive language, threatening, ridiculing, ignoring people or repeatedly shouting;
- Telephoning people at home unnecessarily (for example, demanding work when the person is absent due to sickness or ill health);
- Focusing only on weaknesses;
- Bringing up details of someone's private life inappropriately;
- Leaving impossibly long lists of tasks and making unreasonable demands;
- Criticising people or maliciously gossiping about them in their absence;
- Ridiculing or demeaning someone – picking on them or setting them up to fail;
- Comments or jokes, about distinctive peoples and nationalities;
- Frequent comments about aspects of physical appearance or using forms of address that are demeaning;
- Threatening or implying, without reason, that, as a colleague, you will cause the person to lose his/her job or fail to get a promotion or suffer some other form of career difficulty or financial disadvantage;
- Coercing someone to join the harassment/bullying of another person;
- Excluding or marginalising someone or refusing to engage with them appropriately.

This list is not exhaustive. It is simply a guide to help individuals consider their own and others behaviour and gain understanding of what behaviours are unacceptable in the workplace.

### **Standards Expected of Employees**

The standards expected of all employees include but are not limited to:

- Maintaining standards of behaviour in keeping with the interests and standing of the school. This includes behaviour outside of working hours and in any form that is visible to the public, including social networking or any other electronic medium
- Devoting full attention while at work to the duties of their position and in doing so acting with responsibility, good judgement and in good faith
- Carrying out any reasonable instructions given by those with authority to do so
- Not divulging to any unauthorised person or making personal use of confidential information connected with the school, either intentionally or through negligent behaviour
- Observing the rules, regulations and instructions adopted by the school
- Following appropriate safeguarding procedures
- Participating fully in any investigation into alleged incidents and/or allegations including attending meetings as directed
- Using electronic communications appropriately

- Ensuring that information brought to light as a result of any investigation is treated with discretion
- Carrying out their role consistently with any standards set by their appropriate professional body
- Taking steps to address any unacceptable behaviour
- Treating colleagues and third parties with dignity and respect.

In addition to the above, the expectations of those employed in management roles are to:

- Ensure the standards expected from all employees are role-modelled, monitored and managed effectively
- Effectively manage all applicable statutory and non-statutory obligations
- Appropriately manage all alleged incidents and/or allegations.

This list is not exhaustive.

## Appendix 2

### **Relationships with pupils outside of work declaration**

It is recognised that there may be circumstances whereby members of staff are known to pupils outside of work. Examples include membership of sports clubs, family connections, or private tutoring.

You must declare any relationship outside of school that you have with pupils.

You are not required to declare that you know pupils through either living in the same area as the school or where your own child(ren) attends the school and is in a friendship group with particular pupils although you should make the Headteacher aware of this informally.

Employee's Name	Pupil Name	Relationship

I can confirm that I am fully aware of the code of conduct relating to contact out of school with pupils in line with this policy.

If I am tutoring a pupil outside of school I am aware that the following must be adhered to:-

- I do not, at any point, teach the child in question as part of my daily timetable - this is a stipulation of such tutoring
- I emphasise to parents that this is done completely independently of the school
- No monies come through the school at any point, informally (e.g. via the child) or formally
- No private tutoring is to take place on the school premises

I confirm that if these circumstances change at any time I will complete a new form to ensure the school are aware of any relationships.

Signed .....

Date .....

**Once completed, signed and dated, please return this form to the Headteacher**

## Appendix 3

### **Confirmation of compliance**

I confirm that I have read, understood and agree to comply with the school's code of conduct.

Name .....

Position/Post Held.....

Signed .....

Date .....

**Once completed, signed and dated, please return this form to the Headteacher**