Falkner House Staff Code of Conduct

Nursery - Year 6 including EYFS

General	2
Duty of Disclosure	2
Staff Dress Code	3
Confidentiality	3
Low Level Concerns, Whistleblowing, Defamation, Breach of Confidence	3
Staff Registration and Going Off Site	4
Staff Absence	5
Schemes of Work etc.	5
Contact with Parents/Pupils	5
Staff/Pupil Relationships and Communication	6
Gifts from Parents	7
Use of IT	7
Data protection	10
APPENDIX 1 - Utilising AI at Falkner House	11

Reviewed and approved by the LLP 20th June 2026 Date of next review - no later than 20th June 2027.

General

All staff must adhere to the highest professional standards of behaviour at all times when on the premises, offsite with school, or in the neighbourhood. They must not bring the school or teaching profession into disrepute. This means:

- no alcohol is to be consumed within school hours.
- no smoking or vaping on site or in close proximity to the school; staff should never smoke or vape anywhere in the presence of a pupil.
- All staff including agency and volunteer staff are required to have read, be aware of and comply with of all Falkner House policies and in particular the Falkner House Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, the Falkner House Behaviour Policy including Prevention of Bullying and Harassment, the Low Level Concerns Policy and the PHSE and RSE policies.
- Good humour and civility and non- discriminatory behaviour to colleagues and children alike
- Never making salacious/demeaning remarks to or in the presence of children.
- Never commenting on a child's physical characteristics, development, or making suggestive or derogatory remarks
- Acting and promoting Fundamental British Values (please see Falkner House PHSE and RSE policies)
- Staff must also avoid any behaviour that that could be considered inappropriate – this could include being over friendly with children or having favourites; or, of course, using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating, politicised or offensive language.
- Not having undue attachments - if staff suspect that a pupil is becoming inappropriately attached to them or another member of staff, or that your relationship with or feelings towards a child is placing you at risk of unprofessional behaviour they must share their concerns with a senior colleague. Please se the Low Level Concerns Policy. Staff are reminded that any sexual relationship with a child is illegal and that they are in a position of trust.

Duty of Disclosure

You are required immediately to notify the Headteacher in writing if you are:

- subject to any change in your circumstances that affects your right to work in the United Kingdom;
- barred from working with children or vulnerable adults;
- the subject of a prohibition order or an interim prohibition order from the National College of Teaching and Learning;
- the subject of a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service;
- charged or convicted of any criminal offence;
- in receipt of a police caution, reprimand or warning, or if there is a formal child protection investigation of you under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 as amended.

Staff Dress Code

Staff should dress smartly. Jeans, denim and excessively low cut, short or tight clothes should be avoided. Trainers/casual shoes should only be worn by PE staff. There are Falkner House track suits, polo shirts and cagoules available for the PE staff

Confidentiality

Staff are reminded that all information relating to pupils and their parents is confidential and protected under the Data Protection Act. Falkner House families should never be discussed with any third party or other Falkner House parent.

Low Level Concerns, Whistleblowing, Defamation, Breach of Confidence

(please see the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy where these are all outlined in greater detail)

If staff have any concerns about any member of staff who has contact with pupils they should immediately consult the Headteacher.

Whistleblowing

Falkner House staff are encouraged to raise any concerns however seemingly small (including allegations, low level concerns, poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school's safeguarding regime and financial irregularities) in accordance with the School's Whistleblowing Policy.

Low Level Concerns

A low-level concern is any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' – that an adult may have acted in a way that is inconsistent with Falkner House's staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work. The term 'low level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant, it means that the adult's behaviour towards a child or adult at risk does not meet the harm threshold.

Concerns could include staff being over-friendly with children, having favourites, taking photographs of children on their mobile phone, engaging with children on a 1:1 basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door, or using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating, politicised or offensive language.

Low Level Concerns may arise in several ways and from a number of sources including suspicion, complaint, or disclosure made by a child, parent or other adult within or outside of the organisation.

Falkner House encourages a culture of openness, trust and transparency in which the school's values and expected behaviour (as set out in the Staff Code of Conduct) are lived, monitored and reinforced every day.

Staff must share all concerns with the Headteacher without delay so they can be recorded and dealt with appropriately, sensitively and in a timely manner. The nature of the school means that staff know that they would be supported and assisted emotionally and practically through the process. Where a low-level concern is raised about the Headteacher or any LLP member, it should be referred to the LADO directly.

The Headteacher may choose to collaborate with the DSL regarding next steps, depending on the nature of the low-level concern (bearing in mind the ownership structure of Falkner House). If the headteacher / DSL is in any doubt as to whether the information which has been shared about a member of staff as a low-level concern meets the threshold or an allegation of harm, they would consult with the LADO and seek their advice.

Staff (and self referral is an important possibility) do not need to be able to determine whether their concern is a low-level concern, or if it should be referred to the local authority, or indeed whether it meets the threshold of an allegation. Once the concern has been shared, the determination about thresholds and appropriate action will be made by the headteacher who will follow the appropriate procedures in line with that decision.

If the concern has been raised via a third party, the headteacher should collect as much evidence as possible by speaking directly to the person who raised the concern, (unless it has been raised anonymously) and to the individual involved and any witnesses. The information collected will help them to categorise the type of behaviour and determine what further action may be required.

All reported Low Level Concerns are noted by the headteacher in the school Log with dates, details of the concern, the context in which the concern arose, rationale and action taken. The name of the individual sharing their concerns is noted and if the individual wishes to remain anonymous then that should be respected as far as reasonably possible. The Log is regularly reviewed by the Headteacher and the board so that patterns of inappropriate, problematic or concerning behaviour can be identified, and managed so as to avoid recurrences.

It is always important to consider whether there are wider cultural issues within the school that have enabled the behaviour to occur in which case appropriate policies might need to be revised, or extra training delivered to minimise the risk of it happening again. Lessons can and should be learnt from all cases and concerns even those that are found to be unsubstantiated. There is provision for mediation and dispute resolution where necessary as well as transparency and accountability in relation to how concerns are received and handled.

Staff Registration and Going Off Site

All staff must sign in and out on the register kept in the office. If staff need to go off site during breaks they must notify the office as they leave and sign in and out in the book provided. Absences should be kept to a minimum.

Staff Absence

In the case of ill health, the school should be called as soon as possible. Messages after hours may be left on the answer phone but either AG, FR or ED should also be contacted on 07813 700 971 (AG) 07967 154 218 (FR) or 07779 656 993 (ED). Short term teacher absence is generally covered in-house as the aim is to minimise disruption for the children. Individual music staff should also notify the Head of Music as soon as possible. The school must always be aware of any alteration in staffing so that appropriate security checks can take place.

Schemes of Work etc.

Staff are reminded that all planning and schemes of work, assessments etc are the property of the school and staff must not keep personal copies of such resources. The most up to date version must always be kept on the school IT system so that it is immediately clear what is planned for the children and what are the matching resources. If staff are in the process of creating resources, the final product must be uploaded in a timely fashion.

Contact with Parents/Pupils

- There should always be extreme politeness to parents
- Parents are always addressed formally i.e. "Mr or Mrs x" within the school context. Teachers who have connections with Falkner House families outside school need to be aware of the potential difficulties.
- Letters or written notices from staff to parents must be approved in advance by FR, ED or AG. Copies of individual correspondence with parents should be kept in the appropriate pupil's online record in pupil notes or section of purple file.
- Staff should use only the school telephone number to contact parents and not their personal mobile or home telephone. They should not give their private contact details
- Any email contact with parents should be via the office - staff are not permitted to email parents directly. Music staff are permitted to email parents but the office should be cc'd on any emails.
- If any parents cause difficulties to staff, FR, ED or AG should be contacted immediately so that appropriate action can be taken and advice and support given.
- Staff are not allowed to be in contact with parents, pupils or past pupils on any form of social media
- Staff should not have direct telephone/email contact with pupils outside school.
- Any such contact regarding homework/fixtures should be made via parents and done via the office email after prior approval from AG/ED/FR/VW/LD.
- If any staff wish to work outside of Falkner House as a nanny / additional help at home etc. for any Falkner House family, permission must be sought in advance from ED/ FR. The family will be asked to sign a document saying that all arrangements: financial, social, legal etc. are between the parents and the member of staff and have no connection with Falkner House. Tutoring at home of a Falkner House child is not permitted.

Staff/Pupil Relationships and Communication

- To protect children from abuse, and to mitigate against staff vulnerability to allegations of any harm/abuse, the natural inclination to comfort and reassure children through physical contact should be curbed, and impulse restrained, by a considered assessment of the situation. The same applies to physical contact as part of instruction within PE lessons or indeed personal care e.g. changing clothes and assisting with toilet accidents (inevitably in Early Years there will be more instances of this). Wheresoever possible, having another adult present is optimum. It is not that physical contact is never permissible, but adults touching children or monitoring clothes changing or supervising when on overnight trips must operate within understood limits (and potentially visible by other adults) and within age appropriate boundaries. Contact outside those limits must be a considered response which can be justified if necessary. When pupils are changing clothes e.g for PE they must know that they have the option of privacy.
- Rigid rules about what is and is not permissible are impractical and difficult to implement. The simplest advice is to try, as far as is possible, to avoid being alone with a child. Clearly though there are occasions when one-to-one / individual contact e.g. sports coaching, music lessons, tutoring, guidance or interviews is an essential. These situations should be arranged where possible so that other adults are within earshot or vision and whenever practicable, with the door open. Furthermore, it is imperative that staff understand that any such one-to-one lessons need to be conducted with the upmost care and professionalism always with the view that Falkner House safeguarding requirements and regulations are paramount.
- In the event that staff are meeting pupils outside school including home visits, permission from the headteacher should be sought in advance. Were there to be an unplanned encounter outside of school hours, we would expect staff to behave with the same professionalism that they would inside the school building, and for the headteacher to be informed after.
- If a member of staff is considering tutoring or giving additional academic support to a child outside of school (whether or not the child attends Falkner House) permission must be sought in advance from the headteacher. In general, tutoring of Falkner House children is prohibited.
- Corporal punishment is prohibited. Physical contact may be for the purpose of care/instruction/restraint. Restraint should involve only the minimum force necessary to protect children at imminent risk of harming themselves or others, or inflicting damage to property. Should such physical restraint appear necessary colleagues should, if at all possible, be summoned to assist. The incident must be noted in the pupil notes and the parents informed. Please see guidance in the Falkner House Behaviour Policy.
- Any unusual situation that might occur e.g. where a member of staff has had to be alone in a taxi with a child, should be immediately reported to the Headteacher.
- Members of staff should not transport a child in their own car without prior consent from the Headteacher.
- Staff should employ a pleasant tone of voice when speaking with pupils or staff - sarcasm or humiliation is unacceptable.

Gifts from Parents

If a parent gives a present to a member of staff it must be thanked for promptly at least in person or ideally by letter to the parent. Acknowledgment, if appropriate, should also be made to the child in a tactful fashion. If a present has clear child involvement e.g. is handmade, the child needs to be thanked in writing. Handmade presents or letter of thanks need particular acknowledgement and thanks. If an individual family gives a present to a teacher worth over c. £150 it should be mentioned to the headteacher and consent for the gift obtained. We must always be aware of the sensitivity of this issue and ensure that no parent feels obliged to give anything at all. Equally important is that staff are tactful with each other and generally discreet as regards presents received. Please see the comment under gifts in the parent handbook.

Use of IT

Staff may be issued with a school device which remains the property of the school.

Staff must:

- Create a secure password for their Google Workspace account and set up two-factor authentication.
- Log on to the school's computer network using their unique username and password and must not allow any other staff member to use their username and password or leave passwords physically written down near their workstation.
- Not give details of their username and password for Google Workspace to anyone else or utilise another user's account to misrepresent their identity for any reason.
- Ensure all school devices and equipment remains on school premises. In a few instances, devices may go home with staff if prior permission from the Head of IT or Headteacher is given. If a school device is lost, stolen, or damaged whilst off-site due to staff negligence or unauthorised usage, the staff member may be held personally liable for the full cost of its repair or replacement.
- Check the suitability of any website must be sent to the IT department before being used.
- Agree that whilst using school devices at school or at home only sites and material that are appropriate will be accessed and that only the staff user will use the device. Staff are expected to sign for the device's use on receipt. Staff may use school equipment for authorised business use only.
- Not use a USB stick on any school computer.
- Only use AI or generative AI tools on the School's devices/systems in specific circumstances using pre-authorised sites as approved by the head of IT. Please see Appendix 1 for more information on the use of AI.
- Staff retain absolute accountability for any AI-generated outputs used in lesson planning, reports, or school communications. All content must be verified by a human for factual accuracy, bias, and tone before use.
- Staff must not use personal, free, or consumer-grade AI accounts for school business. Only school-provided, enterprise-grade AI environments (which protect data within a secure, closed system and do not use inputs to train public models) may be utilised.

- Staff must never enter personal, confidential, or special category data regarding pupils, parents, or staff into any generative AI tool. This includes names, addresses, dates of birth, medical details, or safeguarding/pastoral notes. Generic placeholders (e.g., "Child A") must always be used instead. See Appendix 1 for full guidance.
- Not at any time to log on to any internet chat room or similar facility whilst within the school using either a personal or school device. Checking important communication via WhatsApp or text is acceptable, but is not allowed on any school devices.
- Agree that E-mail communication and any user data held on school equipment may be inspected by the Headteacher. Other Internet based communication, such as web browsing, is monitored using automated software.
- Not access (e.g. read, write, modify, delete, copy, move) another user's personal electronic documents (including email) without the owner's permission or as allowed by this policy or by law.
- If accessing the school shared files remotely through a school device, to sign out when finished.
- To not use ICT resources in violation of license agreements, copyrights, contracts or national laws.
- Not to load or download software on any device without the authorisation from the head of IT and Headteacher. Periodic audits of software held on ICT equipment are undertaken throughout the year.
- Not to knowingly create, install, run, or distribute any malicious code (e.g. viruses, Trojans, worms) or another destructive program on any ICT resource.
- Immediately report any suspected data breaches, accidental disclosure of pupil data, or instances where a phishing link may have been inadvertently clicked, to the Data Protection Lead and Head of IT.
- Immediately report to the Head of IT and DSL if any school web-filtering or monitoring software appears to be bypassed, failing, or if a pupil is observed accessing unvetted or harmful content that should have been blocked.
- If illegal, extremist, or inappropriate material is inadvertently accessed or discovered on any school device, staff must not attempt to clear the browser history, delete files, or investigate further. They must leave the device active and report the incident immediately to the DSL to preserve evidence.
- Not to knowingly or willingly interfere with the security mechanisms or integrity of ICT resources. No one may use ICT resources to attempt unauthorised use, or interfere with the legitimate use by authorised users, of other computers on internal or external networks. Access to networks will be monitored.
- For security purposes to log off or lock computers (whether used onsite or offsite) if absent from them for any length of time.
- Notify the school if any school devices are lost or stolen whilst offsite.

Mobiles and personal devices

Falkner House is a phone-free school for pupils. Staff set the example.

- Staff must not use personal phones, smart watches or other personal devices for personal reasons in front of pupils, in school or on trips. Devices are switched off or silent and kept in the staffroom/Nursery office during the school day (as set out in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy).

- The only exception is the school mobile, used on trips, at fixtures and during PE for contact with the School and parents.
- Staff must never use a personal device to photograph, film or record pupils (see Photographs below).
- Staff should keep personal calls brief and take them in private, away from pupils. Urgent family contact during the day can come through the school office.
- Staff must not share personal contact details, including personal mobile numbers, with parents or pupils.
- A member of staff who needs a personal device near them for a medical reason should agree this with the Headteacher in advance.
- Staff who see a pupil with a phone or smartwatch should remove it and hand it in to the office under section 7 of the Behaviour Policy.
- Breaching these rules may be treated as a low-level concern or a disciplinary matter, depending on the circumstances.
- If staff use a personal device while at school they may only access sites and material that are appropriate.
- When logging into Google Drive for the first time on school devices, staff will need to enter a two-factor authentication code which will be received on a personal mobile phone. Staff will try to ensure that they are logged onto any new devices before or after the school day begins to avoid carrying their phones around.
- Any personal mobile devices that may be brought into school will only contain material that is appropriate.
- If accessing the school shared files remotely through a school or personal device, to sign out when finished and ensure that no sensitive or personal data is downloaded locally onto the machine.
- Staff must ensure that any WhatsApp groups used for informal school coordination do not feature full pupil names alongside sensitive medical or behavioral data.
- Staff must not under any circumstances communicate with, add, or follow current pupils directly or indirectly via personal social media platforms, personal messaging apps, personal email, or online gaming environments.

Photographs

- Photographs of pupils by staff should only be taken using a school device in connection with normal school activities e.g. trips, sporting events, or for academic purposes. Any such 'school photograph' must immediately be deleted from the device once they have been promptly uploaded to the school website, the school's IT system or sent to the relevant parent.
- No 'school photograph' is to be uploaded to any social media site or to any website without authorisation from the Headteacher.
- If members of the public are observed photographing / videoing Falkner House pupils in the playground or off site staff should politely ask them to stop.

Procedures for staff leaving Falkner House:

- Any resources created whilst working at Falkner House are the intellectual property of Falkner House and any personal copies of these resources should be delete.

- Any school iPad, Apple pencil laptop and charger should be returned to the school on or before their last day at Falkner House.
- If staff had access to any other types of data during their time at Falkner House these should be deleted from all personal devices, local drives, and home computers. Staff may be required to sign a formal declaration confirming that all school-related data has been completely purged upon departure.
- After the termination of their employment staff must not attempt to access any of the Falkner House systems. Access to all Falkner House systems, networks, and cloud platforms will be centrally suspended and blocked at the close of business on the staff member's final day at Falkner House.

Data protection

- Staff must respect the privacy of the data that the school holds and understand the importance of keeping all information private.
- Staff must not copy or share school data without permission.
- Staff agree that all data created while they are employed by the school is the property of the school and cannot be tampered with.
- Staff acknowledge that within the terms of the Data Protection Act 2018, Human Rights Act 1998 and the Telecommunications (Lawful Business Practice) (Interception of Communications) Regulations 2000, Falkner House or the school may record or inspect any information transmitted through or stored in its computers, including e-mail communications and individual login sessions, without notice when:
- There is reasonable cause to believe the user has violated or is violating this policy, any guidelines or procedures established to implement this policy.
- An account appears to be engaged in unusual or unusually excessive activity.
- It is necessary to do so to protect the integrity, security, or functionality of ICT resources or to protect Falkner House or its partners from liability.
- Establishing the existence of facts relevant to the business.
- Ascertaining or demonstrating standards which ought to be achieved by those using the ICT facilities.
- Preventing or detecting crime.
- Investigating or detecting unauthorised use of ICT facilities.
- Ensuring effective operation of ICT facilities.
- Determining if communications are relevant to the business (for example, in the last resort where an employee is off sick or on holiday and business continuity is threatened).
- It is otherwise permitted or required by law.

Signed : _____ Name: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX 1

Utilising AI at Falkner House

Falkner House embraces the potential of artificial intelligence tools to enhance our educational practice and administrative efficiency. However, we recognise that AI technology requires thoughtful, responsible use to maintain our high standards of professionalism, safeguarding, and educational integrity.

Core Principles

We encourage AI use when it serves our educational mission and maintains our professional standards. Staff should approach AI as a valuable tool that requires careful consideration, not as a replacement for professional judgment or educational expertise.

Authorisation Requirement

No AI tools should be used without prior authorisation by the IT department. Staff must request and receive approval before adopting or trialling any AI platform or application to ensure compliance with school policies, safeguarding requirements, and data protection regulations.

Guidelines for Responsible Use

Information Verification and Critical Thinking

- **Always verify AI-generated content** before using it in any professional context
- **Cross-reference sources** and fact-check all information, particularly for lesson planning and student communications
- Remember that AI can produce plausible-sounding but inaccurate information
- Apply the same critical evaluation you would to any other source

Sensitive Topics Require Extra Care

- **Politics, religion, and historical events** require particular scrutiny when using AI assistance. For these subjects/topics, either avoid AI entirely or conduct thorough fact-checking through multiple authoritative sources
- When in doubt, consult subject matter experts or rely on established, peer-reviewed resources
- Be alert to potential bias in AI responses, including cultural, gender, racial, or ideological perspectives

Safeguarding and Data Protection

Strictly Prohibited

Never upload photographs of children, staff, or school premises to AI platforms
Never share personal information about students, families, or colleagues
Never input identifiable details such as names, addresses, specific locations, or other personal data

Required Practice

- **Anonymize all information** before using AI assistance
- Replace real names with generic terms (e.g., "a Year 5 student," "a parent," "a colleague")
- Remove or modify any details that could identify individuals or compromise privacy
- Use hypothetical scenarios rather than real situations when seeking AI guidance

Professional Boundaries

- Use AI to support, not replace, your professional expertise and judgment
- Maintain transparency about AI assistance when appropriate
- Ensure all AI-assisted work meets Falkner House standards before implementation
- Take responsibility for all content you create or share, regardless of AI involvement

Best Practices

- **Start with clear, specific prompts** to get more useful responses
- **Review and edit** all AI output before use
- **Combine AI assistance with professional resources** and colleague consultation
- **Document your verification process** for important decisions or content
- **Stay informed** about AI tool updates and limitations

When to Exercise Extra Caution

- Creating assessment materials or marking guidance
- Communicating with parents or external stakeholders
- Developing policies or procedures
- Handling sensitive student matters
- Working with confidential information

Support and Questions

If you're uncertain about appropriate AI use in any situation, consult with senior leadership or the designated AI coordinator. We encourage open dialogue about AI tools and their role in our educational environment.