

May Blossom Farm CIC
Alternative Provision

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Staff Code of Conduct Policy

Approved by:	Gill Press
Last reviewed on:	01/09/2025
Next review due by:	31/08/2026
Head of Alternative Provision	Gill Press
Deputy Head of Alternative Provision	Hannah Priest
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Gill Press
Deputy DSL (DDSL)	Hannah Priest
Designated Safeguarding Trustee	Russell Breyer

This policy was ratified in Sept 2025 and will be reviewed in September 2026

1. Statement of Intent

May Blossom Farm (MBF) expects all students to receive high-quality support and education in a nurturing, safe, and respectful environment. The conduct and professionalism of every member of staff directly influence the wellbeing and progress of our students.

This Code of Conduct sets out the standards expected of all adults working at MBF. It supports our commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people, in line with the **MBF Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy** and statutory guidance including *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE, 2025)* and *Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)*.

2. Scope

This Code applies to:

- All employees of May Blossom Farm CIC (including permanent, temporary, and sessional staff)
- Volunteers, contractors, consultants, and agency staff
- Anyone working on behalf of MBF Alternative Provision

All individuals have a duty to uphold MBF's safeguarding principles and professional standards at all times, both within and outside the workplace.

3. Professional Behaviour and Conduct

MBF staff are expected to:

- Demonstrate honesty, integrity, compassion, professionalism, and inclusivity.
- Act as positive role models for students.
- Treat students, parents/carers, colleagues, and partners with respect and dignity.
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries at all times.
- Report any concerns about another member of staff's conduct to the **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** or **Deputy DSL (DDSL)** in accordance with Keeping Children Safe 2025 harms thresholds.
- Avoid conduct, in or out of work, that could damage MBF's reputation or compromise student welfare.

4. Safeguarding Students

All staff share responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people.

Staff must:

- Be familiar with and follow MBF's **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy** at all times.
- Complete all required safeguarding training, including annual updates.
- Report any concern about a student's welfare or safety immediately to the **DSL (Gill Press)** or **DDSL (Hannah Priest)**.
- Record concerns on **CPOMS** if **CAP MBF staff intranet** within 24 hours.
- Never promise confidentiality to a student who makes a disclosure.
- Challenge inappropriate behaviour between peers and report all instances of child-on-child abuse.
- Understand that all students at MBF are potentially vulnerable due to the nature of alternative provision, and exercise professional curiosity in all interactions.

If concerns relate to the DSL, staff must contact the **Designated Safeguarding Trustee (Russell Breyer)** or, if necessary, the **Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)**.

5. Relationships with Students

Staff must:

- Maintain professional boundaries at all times.
- Avoid any behaviour that could be misinterpreted as grooming or favouritism.

- Never initiate or engage in personal, sexual, or intimate relationships with students.
- Use only MBF-approved communication channels; never use personal phones, email, or social media to contact students.
- Avoid physical contact except where necessary for safety or approved physical intervention (in accordance with the **Searching Students & Physical Restraint Policy**).
- Never invite students to their home, give personal gifts, or meet students outside of work without prior written permission from the Head of Provision.

6. Equality, Diversity and Respect

MBF promotes a culture of inclusion and zero tolerance for discrimination, harassment, or bullying. All staff must:

- Treat everyone fairly and with respect, regardless of race, gender, sexuality, disability, religion, or background.
- Challenge and report discriminatory language or behaviour.
- Model positive attitudes towards equality, diversity, and inclusion at all times.

7. Appearance and Presentation

Staff should dress in a way that is professional, practical, and suitable for a farm-based, therapeutic environment.

Clothing should:

- Be clean, modest, and appropriate to role and activity.
- Reflect MBF's ethos of respect and safety (e.g. no ripped clothing, inappropriate slogans, or open footwear during practical sessions).
- Allow for movement and outdoor activity, while maintaining professionalism.

Reasonable adjustments will be made for medical, cultural, or religious reasons.

8. Health, Safety, and Wellbeing

Staff have a duty to:

- Follow MBF's **Health and Safety Policy** and risk assessments.
- Use personal protective equipment (PPE) where required.
- Report accidents, incidents, or near misses promptly.
- Take reasonable care for their own health and that of others.
- Support students in learning and practicing safe behaviour.

9. Use of Technology and Social Media

Staff must:

- Follow MBF's **Acceptable Use of IT and Mobile Phones Policy**.
- Use MBF devices and systems for work-related purposes only.
- Never share or post information about students or colleagues on social media.
- Never take or share images of students on personal devices.
- Report any online safeguarding concerns or incidents to the DSL immediately.

10. Conduct Outside of Work

Staff must:

- Conduct themselves in a way that upholds MBF's values and reputation.
- Inform the Head of Provision if they are subject to any police investigation, caution, or conviction.
- Avoid any behaviour, association, or activity that could call their suitability to work with children into question.

11. Confidentiality and Data Protection

Staff must:

- Respect the confidentiality of information obtained in their role.
- Share safeguarding information only with relevant professionals on a "need to know" basis.

- Handle personal data in line with the **Data Protection Act 2018, UK GDPR**, and MBF's **Data Protection Policy**.
- Report any data breach or misuse immediately to management.

12. Substance Use and Smoking

MBF operates a **no-smoking, no-vaping, and no-alcohol** policy on its premises.

Staff must not:

- Attend work under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or medication that impairs performance.
- Consume alcohol or substances during working hours or on off-site visits.

Breaches will result in disciplinary action.

13. Attendance and Reliability

Staff are expected to:

- Maintain good attendance and punctuality.
- Follow MBF's absence reporting procedures.
- Arrange personal appointments outside working hours wherever possible.

Persistent lateness or absence may lead to formal review.

14. Reporting Concerns about Staff Conduct

Concerns about staff behaviour must be reported immediately to the DSL or Head of Provision. If the concern involves the DSL, report directly to the Designated Safeguarding Trustee or the LADO.

Staff may also use MBF's **Whistleblowing Policy** or the **NSPCC Whistleblowing Helpline (0800 028 0285)**.

15. Harms Threshold

Part four of KCSIE '25 details the two levels of concerns and allegations:

1. Concerns/allegations that may meet the harm threshold
2. Concerns/allegations that do not meet the harm threshold – referred to for the purposes of this guidance as 'low-level' concerns.

Meet harms threshold

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child and/or
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, and/or
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children, and/or
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

The last bullet point above includes behaviour that may have happened outside of the AP setting, that might make an individual unsuitable to work with children, this is known as transferable risk.

MBF will follow the procedures as detailed in KCSIE '25 for an initial response to an allegation.

Does not meet harms threshold

Low-level concerns

As part of MBF approach to safeguarding, we will ensure that we promote an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about all adults working in or on behalf of MBF (including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors) are dealt with promptly and appropriately.

The term 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant. 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 working in or on behalf of the school or college may have acted in a way that: is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work, and does not meet the harm threshold or is otherwise not serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:

- being over friendly with children
- having favourites
- taking photographs of children on their mobile phone, contrary to AP policy
- engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door, or
- humiliating children.

Such behaviour can exist on a wide spectrum, from the inadvertent or thoughtless, or behaviour that may look to be inappropriate, but might not be in specific circumstances, through to that which is ultimately intended to enable abuse.

Low-level concerns may arise in several ways and from a number of sources. For example: suspicion; complaint; or disclosure made by a child, parent or other adult within or outside of the organisation; or as a result of vetting checks undertaken.

The low-level concern form (found in Appendix 1) should be used to capture low-level concerns and must be submitted to the Head of Alternative Provision without delay.

16. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if national guidance changes.

All staff will confirm in writing that they have read, understood, and agree to comply with this Code of Conduct as part of their induction and annual safeguarding training.

Linked Policies

- Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Positive Relationships Policy
- Acceptable Use of IT and Mobile Phones Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Student Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

APPENDIX 1

Low-Level Concerns Form (2-sided document)

Logging a concern about the behaviour of a member of staff or volunteer

About the member of staff or volunteer whose behaviour is causing concern or is subject to an allegation:	
Name (print):	
Job Title (print):	
Date of writing this record:	Time of writing this record:
N.B. it is not necessary to complete this form before speaking to the Head of Alternative Provision – the circumstances may mean you need to speak to the Head of Alternative Provision first as a matter of priority	
About the person reporting the concern/allegation and completing this form:	
Name (print):	
Job Title (print):	
Signature:	
What is the nature of the specific allegation or concern about behaviour (brief headline)?	
Record the following factually: When? (date and time of incident) What exactly has raised your concern? What did you see/hear/find out or what were you told? Where did your concerns arise? Who else? Were any students or other staff involved?. N.B. Please record any direct disclosure/statements/allegations/comments using the student or staff's exact words in quotation marks.	
(if additional paper is required this must be securely attached to this form)	
Did you do anything or speak to anyone else before reporting the incident/concern to the Head of Alternative Provision. If so please provide their names/details:	
Re-read this form to ensure it is clear and that it would make sense to someone else reading this next year. Now please pass to the Head of Alternative Provision without delay.	

<p>In the event this allegation is about the Head of Alternative Provision, this form must be passed to Board of Trustees Safeguarding Lead.</p> <p>Following section to be completed by the Head of Alternative Provision</p>	
Time & date information received by Alternative Provision Lead, and from whom	
Action taken (eg. Discussion with LADO; PoT MARF submitted to LADO; advice taken from Board of Trustees	
Date, time, name, role, organisation advice provided by	
If decision not to refer to LADO, state reason	
Parents informed? Yes/No? State reasons if no	
Outcome (e.g. Referral to LADO, PoT meeting convened, HR advice taken, Police investigation, internal investigation, informal management advice given and recorded or no further action)	
Signed	
Printed Name	
Date	
Signature, date and time when member of staff submitting this form received confirmation of receipt of report/allegation from Head of Alternative Provision	