

MATT+FIONA

Code of Conduct for Staff, Volunteers and Contractors

(Aligned with UK Safeguarding Guidance)

1. Scope and Purpose

This Code of Conduct applies to all **MATT+FIONA staff, volunteers, and freelance/contract workers** who have contact with children and young people, including those involved in design, learning, and construction-based activities. Where matters apply to MATT+FIONA staff only, this is identified.

The purpose of this Code is to:

- Safeguard and promote the **welfare of children and young people**
- Clarify **expected standards of professional behaviour**
- Reduce the risk of harm or allegations by promoting **safer working practice**

All adults working with children are responsible for acting in a way that promotes children's safety, wellbeing, and dignity at all times.

2. Safeguarding Principle

All staff, volunteers, and contractors must:

- **Have regard to the welfare of children as paramount.**
- Act in accordance with MATT+FIONA's **Child Protection and Safeguarding Policies.**
- Understand that safeguarding is **everyone's responsibility.**

Children's welfare must take precedence over:

- Project deadlines or outcomes.
 - Organisational or personal interests.
 - Loyalty to colleagues or adults.
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3. Professional Standards of Conduct

Adults working with children must:

- Treat all children **fairly, equally, and with respect**, recognising their individual needs and abilities.
 - Promote an **inclusive, non-discriminatory environment** and actively challenge discrimination based on race, religion, gender, disability, or social background.
 - Build **positive, professional relationships** with children based on trust, openness, and clear boundaries.
 - Communicate with children in a way that is **age-appropriate, respectful, and supportive**.
 - Encourage children to develop confidence, independence, and responsibility for their own behaviour.
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4. Safer Working Practice and Supervision

To minimise risk, adults must:

- Maintain appropriate **levels of supervision** at all times.
 - Ensure activities are **properly planned and risk-assessed**, particularly where tools or construction methods are involved (M+F Staff).
 - Never leave a child **unsupervised with tools, equipment, or on a work site**.
 - Ensure that, wherever possible, **two DBS-checked adults are present** when working with children.
 - **Avoid one-to-one situations** in isolated or private spaces, including toilets or enclosed areas.
 - **Remain visible** when working with children, and work in open or observable environments wherever possible.
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5. Behaviour Management and Role Modelling

All adults must:

- Be positive role models, demonstrating **appropriate behaviour, language, punctuality, and commitment**.
- Promote positive behaviour through encouragement and clear expectations.
- Not permit **rough play, unsafe behaviour, bullying, or inappropriate language**.
- **Never use humiliation, intimidation, or punitive measures** to manage behaviour. Behaviour management is not the responsibility of volunteers or contractors. Volunteers and contractors must report any behavioural issues to a member of the MATT+FIONA team who will manage or escalate to accompanying group responsible adult.
- **Refrain from smoking, vaping, or consuming alcohol** during activities or in the presence of children.

6. Physical Contact and Personal Boundaries

Staff, volunteers, and contractors must:

- **Avoid unnecessary physical contact** with children.
- Ensure that any physical contact is **appropriate, proportionate, and in response to the child's needs** (e.g. preventing injury).
- **Maintain professional boundaries** at all times.
- **Avoid undertaking personal care tasks** for children that they can reasonably do themselves.

7. Prohibited Conduct

Adults working with children must not:

- Use abusive, offensive, sexualised, or discriminatory language.
- Engage in bullying, threatening, or coercive behaviour.
- Act in a way that is, or could be perceived as, **sexually provocative or inappropriate**.
- Shame, humiliate, belittle, or deliberately undermine a child.
- Engage in illegal activity related to children.
- Allow their behaviour to place themselves or others at risk of allegation.

8. First Aid, Accidents, and Incidents

All staff and volunteers must:

- Be aware of the **designated first aiders** on site.
- Refer **all injuries or incidents**, however minor, for appropriate first aid.
- Ensure access to a **telephone for emergency services** at all times.
- Report all accidents and incidents to a MATT+FIONA member of staff / first aider, in line with MATT+FIONA procedures. MATT+FIONA staff will then record the incident in line with MATT+FIONA procedures.
- Inform the **designated safeguarding lead, director or project manager** as soon as practicable following any incident.

9. Safeguarding Concerns and Reporting

All adults must:

- Be alert to signs of abuse, neglect, or poor practice.
 - Never ignore, dismiss, or investigate independently a safeguarding concern.
 - Report any concern, disclosure, or allegation immediately to the **designated safeguarding lead** or director or project manager).
 - Record concerns accurately and promptly in line with safeguarding procedures.
 - Understand that **failure to report concerns is itself a breach of safeguarding duties**.
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10. Rights and Support for Staff and Volunteers

MATT+FIONA recognises that staff and volunteers have the right to:

- Receive guidance and support when reporting safeguarding concerns.
 - Be treated fairly, consistently, and respectfully.
 - Be protected from abuse, intimidation, or harassment by children, adults, or parents/carers.
 - Raise concerns about unsafe practice (whistleblowing) without fear of reprisal.
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11. Compliance and Breaches

- All staff, volunteers, and contractors are required to comply with this Code of Conduct and Safeguarding Policy.
- Minor breaches will be addressed promptly by the designated person.
- Serious or persistent breaches will result in removal from projects (everyone) and disciplinary action (M+F Staff only), and or referral to external authorities where appropriate.