

Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy



Meadowfield

To inspire and motivate all pupils and staff who learn
and work together to aspire to endless possibilities.

Policy Statement

All schools must have a robust system of controls to safeguard themselves against fraud, bribery or improper use of public money and assets.

Meadowfield School is committed to the prevention of fraud, bribery and corruption and the promotion of an anti-fraud, bribery and corruption culture.

Meadowfield School takes a risk-based approach to fraud, bribery and corruption and requires all staff, governors and volunteers to act honestly and with integrity at all times, and to report all suspicions of fraud or financial wrongdoing.

Meadowfield School will investigate all instances of actual, attempted or suspected fraud, bribery and corruption and will seek to recover any losses and pursue appropriate sanctions against the perpetrators. This may include criminal prosecution, disciplinary action, legal proceedings and professional sanctions.

This policy applies to all staff (full time, part time, temporary and casual), consultants, volunteers and the school's Governing Body.

Definition of Fraud

Fraud is deception carried out in order to gain an unfair advantage or to disadvantage another. It may involve the misuse of funds or other resources, or the supply of false information.

Examples might include:

- Creating fake invoices for goods and services and paying the money into a personal account
- Use of the school's purchase card to make personal purchases.
- Submitting false claims for sickness or expenses.
- Using school equipment and resources in order to run a personal business

Individuals caught committing fraud can be prosecuted under the Fraud Act 2006 if they make a false representation, fail to disclose information or abuse their position.

Definition of Bribery and Corruption

Meadowfield School defines corruption as the abuse of entrusted power for private gain; involving the offering, giving or soliciting of an inducement or reward which may influence a person to perform a function or activity improperly. This may involve:

- The offence of bribing another person;
- The offence of being bribed;
- Bribery of a foreign public official;
- A corporate offence of failure to prevent bribery.

Other forms of corruption include:

- Cronyism or nepotism, where someone in public office exploits their authority to provide a job or favour to a friend, associate or family member;
- Collusion, where a secret agreement between parties, in the public and/ or private sector conspire to commit actions aimed to deceive or commit fraud;
- Conflict of interests, where someone in a public office faces a conflict between the duties and demands of one or more positions that they hold and their private lives;

- Gifts and Hospitality, the provisions of gifts, entertainment or other hospitality that could affect or perceived to affect the outcome of business transactions and are not reasonable and bona fide;
- Lobbying, any activity carried out by companies, associations, organisations and individuals to influence a government or institution's policies and decisions in favour, cause or outcome.

Key Responsibilities

The Governing Body are responsible for:

- Overseeing the financial performance of the school, including its assets, making sure the school's money is well spent and measures are in place to prevent losses or misuse, including arrangements for preventing and detecting fraud.
- Obtaining assurances (including independent assurance) the schools' policies and procedures are being adhered to, in particular around financial policies / procedures and cyber security
- Reviewing the school's fraud, bribery and corruption risk assessment.

The Principal is responsible for:

- Developing, implementing and maintaining adequate systems of internal control that prevent and detect fraud.
- Testing the system of internal control and seeking independent assurance when appropriate.
- Regularly reviewing the school's anti-fraud, bribery and corruption policy and compliance with it to ensure it remains effective and relevant to the needs of the school.
- Reporting compliance with the policy on at least an annual basis to the Governing Body.
- Reporting allegations of actual, attempted or suspected fraud to the Full Governing Body and Kent County Council's Section 151 Officer via internal.audit@kent.gov.uk .
- Ensuring all allegations of fraud are investigated appropriately, in compliance with relevant policies, procedures and legislation and commencing disciplinary and/or legal action where appropriate.
- Maintaining and reporting the fraud, bribery and corruption risks to the governing body and staff.
- Ensuring relevant staff are provided financial control and fraud awareness training (including whistle blowing and cyber security).

Staff are responsible for:

- Familiarising themselves with the types of fraud, bribery and corruption risks that might affect the school.
- Ensuring they adhere to the agreed policies and procedures, thereby protecting the school's reputation and assets from fraud.
- Reporting allegations of actual, attempted or suspected fraud to the Principal, and/or the Governing Body and/or Kent County Council's Section 151 Officer.
- Assisting in the investigation of suspected fraud when requested to do so, for example by providing witness statements.

The Seven Principles of Public Life

Selflessness – Holders of public office should take decisions solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family or their friends.

Integrity – Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might influence them in the performance of their official duties.

Objectivity – In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

Accountability – Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

Openness – Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

Honesty – Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

Reporting Suspicions

The Governing Body and staff are an important element in the school's stance on fraud and are required to raise any concerns that they may have. The Principal and Governors will deal with any financial irregularities robustly.

Staff should immediately report any concerns about actual, attempted or suspected fraud to the Principal. However, if the concerns relate to the Principal, staff should report their concerns to the Chair of Governors.

Under no circumstances should staff investigate the matter themselves.

Members of staff, including the Principal and/or Governors should seek advice about how to deal with an allegation of fraud, and report the matter to Kent County Council Whistleblowing helpline which is operated by Internal Audit. Alternatively, staff can email Kent County Council's Internal Audit team.

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 protects employees who raise concerns about certain matters of public interest in good faith. Staff can obtain free independent advice from the charity Protect by following <https://protect-advice.org.uk/>.

A copy of the school's Whistleblowing Policy can be found on the school's website or can be obtained from the school office.

KCC Contact Details:

Telephone: Kent County Council Whistleblowing Helpline **03000 414 500**

Email: internal.audit@kent.gov.uk

Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Response Plan

Meadowfield School has established guidelines for senior staff and the Governing Body on the immediate actions to be taken in the event of a fraud being discovered or suspected. It covers how and when to seek professional advice, securing evidence and preventing further losses (see Appendix 1).

It is important that allegations of actual, attempted and suspected fraud aren't ignored. Even seemingly insignificant concerns may later reveal a larger, previously unknown problem.

Step 1. Report

The first step to make if you suspected fraud or financial wrongdoing is to contact the Counter Fraud Team, in Internal Audit at Kent County Council. They are responsible for the investigation of fraud and financial irregularities that occur against Kent County Council and Schools.

They will listen to your concerns and advise on the best course of action to take in order to minimise the risk of the suspect being tipped off and destroying the evidence.

You can report the concerns by;

- Email; internal.audit@kent.gov.uk
- Phone: 03000 414 500
- Online: [Fraud Reporting](#)

Step 2. Securing Evidence

You may be asked to provide a witness statement so ensure that any concerns are recorded fully. Whenever possible keep written notes that cover:

- Names, addresses and dates of birth.
- Descriptions (height, build, hair colour, ethnicity, clothing, distinctive features)
- Dates and times of key events.
- Vehicle registration numbers and descriptions.
- Details of any conversations had or overheard.
- Details of any actions or incidents that were observed.
- Telephone numbers
- Company and/or business details

Never remove any physical evidence such as original invoices, receipts, letters, cheques and application forms unless you have sought advice from the Counter Fraud Team as this could alert the suspect and tip them off.

Under no circumstances discuss the matter with colleagues as this could be discussed with the suspect.

If an investigation is undertaken without following the appropriate policies, procedures and legislation, or if individuals are accused without sufficient evidence, it may lead to the perpetrators avoiding a disciplinary, criminal or civil sanction.

Step 3. Preventing Further Losses

It is important to minimise any additional losses. For example, if the allegations concern the theft or loss of banking passwords, PIN's or similar credentials notify the bank immediately.

Equally, if the losses relate to a weak process, for example cash is routinely kept unsecured in a drawer, ensure that the process is changed, at least temporarily, until more permanent and improved processes can be implemented.

Support for Witnesses

Members of staff, Governors and the public may be feeling vulnerable before, during and after they have brought an allegation of fraud to the attention of the school.

Reassure witnesses that they have acted appropriately by raising their concerns. Members of staff should be provided with a copy of the **Whistleblowing Policy** and reminded that the school does

not tolerate reprisals, victimisation or harassment and will take all reasonable action to protect them.

In addition, the school will take steps to minimise any difficulties members of staff may experience as a result of raising a concern. For instance, if they are required to give evidence in criminal or disciplinary proceedings, the school will advise or arrange for them to receive advice and support about the process being followed.

 School Policy Approved by Leadership Team	
Policy Adopted	September 2026
Policy Approved	Awaiting Approval
Next Review	Academic Year 2027/28

School Fraud Risks – Appendix 1

Type of Risk: Staffing	Example Risks
Recruitment	A senior member of staff recruits family member or friend, or friends or family members are recruited through an agency rather than as a direct appointment. This may result in the best individual not being recruited for the post, reputational damage to the school, and a lack of objectivity in future decision making by senior staff.
Application	An applicant applies for a post and either fails to declare something they are legally required to declare - for example, a relationship or criminal record or declares something that is untrue, e.g. they are allowed to work in the UK when they are not, or have a qualification which they do not have. This may result in the best individual for the job not being recruited, children's safety being put at risk, and/or the school potentially being liable for a fine. Whilst checks on teacher qualifications are more common and therefore easier to do, it is the checks on nonteaching staff and teaching assistant qualifications that can cause problems.
Working contracted hours	Members of staff not working their contracted hours. This may result in financial loss to the school, loss of productivity, breach of contracts and loss of trust with Management.
Inappropriate Pay Awards including: • Increments • Honorariums • Bonuses • Allowances	A member of staff falsifies information in order to obtain an excessive pay award which may include those elements listed opposite. This type of fraud may also include conspiracy or collusion between the Principal, governing body and financial managers and may result in financial and reputational damage to the school. This also happens as a result of poor judgement by the school's management team or governors, and it is not necessarily fraud.
Off Payroll Payments	Payments to staff are made through petty cash or by other means in order to avoid the individuals and the school's duty to pay tax or national insurance. This may result in reputational damage and/or a fine from HM Revenue and Customs. In addition, if unpaid tax / national insurance cannot be recovered from the individual, the employer will be liable, in addition to any fines imposed by HMRC.
Long Term Sickness	A member of staff represents themselves as sick and finds employment elsewhere whilst continuing to receive payment from the school. This may result in financial loss as the school may need to appoint extra resources to cover the absence.

Type of Fraud Risk: Procurement	Example Risks
Collusion / corruption in supplier selection can be described as „an illicit agreement between two or more parties, typically to limit open competition in the procurement process“	A member of staff with responsibility for the award of a contract colludes with the contractor in order to benefit the contractor, sometimes in return for a bribe or favours. Alternatively, the organisation or contractor breaches procurement regulations in order to win or rollover a contract. This may result in a breach of procurement regulations which may not represent value for money, reputational damage and potential legal action by other contractors.
Leasing (particularly ICT hardware such as whiteboards and photocopiers)	A company approaches the school with what appears to be a reasonable scheme for the leasing of IT equipment. However, the agreement is over-priced, and the school is duped into purchasing more equipment than they need at a price higher than they can afford and, in some cases, using hire purchase arrangements which schools are forbidden from entering into. The companies that create the lease agreement then sell the debt on to other agencies for collection. As a result, the school may be left with debts it is unable to service and ICT equipment that is not fit for purpose.
Inappropriate Personal Use of Goods or Services	A staff member uses school money to procure goods or services for their own use, rather than for the benefit of the school. As a result, the school may suffer financial loss and reputational damage.

Type of Fraud Risk: Theft	Example Risks
Cash and Assets: - Assets e.g.: ICT equipment and inventory, lead flashing, stationery items e.g. from catalogues - printer cartridges, projector bulbs - Cash e.g.: Voluntary funds, petty cash, income (e.g. trips, uniform)	There are many areas of school business where there is a risk of theft - The areas listed to the left are typically high risk areas. Some are at risk of internal theft, while other assets are at a greater risk of external theft or collusion. As a result of IT theft, the school may also lose confidential information and may suffer financial loss through penalties and reputational damage.
Premises Rental	A member of school staff rents out part of the school building for an event without following the schools lettings policy and procedures, for a lesser fee or no fee at all. As a result of the inappropriate use of school premises, the school could lose revenue and the users of the premises may possibly be uninsured.

Type of Fraud Risk: False Accounting	Example Risks
False Records	Records are falsified or fabricated to disguise theft of school assets and cash.
Moving Monies between years Delaying Payments	Goods or services that should be bought and paid for in one financial year are attributed to another financial year, resulting in a misrepresentation of accounts. This is often used to disguise fraud or theft in other areas.
Staff Loans	The school gives a loan to a member of staff, which fall outside of regulations and does not arrange a repayment plan. The same applies if a senior staff member allows a member of staff, to work less than their contracted hours and owe the time back at a later date or not make arrangements to work their contracted hours of work. As a result, the school may suffer financial loss and reputational damage.
Inappropriate increase in finance through falsely stating SEN numbers, student numbers, or free school meals	The school exaggerates the number of pupils receiving free school meals, or incorrectly accounts for pupils that leave during the year, and as a result receives funding to which the school is not entitled. This may cause reputational and financial damage to the school.
Misuse of Public Money	The school pays for gratuities - for example, flowers or entertainment e.g. staff parties using school funds. This may result in financial loss and reputational damage to the school and is never a proper use of school funds.

Type of Fraud Risk: Bribery	Example Risks
The Bribery Act 2010 defines bribery broadly as giving or receiving a financial or other advantage in connection with the „improper performance“ of a position of trust, or a function that is expected to be performed impartially or in good faith. Areas that may be of particular risk within school are: • Exam • Procurement	The risk that building contractor offers the Principal a significant discount on building an extension at their own home (or other inducements) in return for appointing the contractor to deliver work for the school. This may result in reputational damage to the school and may result in a contract that does not represent value for money for the school.

Fraud Risk Assessment – Appendix 2

Risk Type	Cause or Source of the risk	Risk Event	Consequence	Overall Risk Owner (accountable manager)	Controls in place	Control Owner(s)
Corporate Card	Staff Misuse	There is a risk that staff issued with a Corporate Card will use the card for personal purchases	Financial Reputational	Principal	For detailed explanation of internal controls see Finance Policy. Limited number of credit cards and spending limits set by FGB. All purchases carried out following the completion of a requisition form / PO/ CPD form Separation of duties, controls in place. Reconciliation checked and signed monthly by 2 individuals – 1 being a SLT. Discrepancies are investigated immediately.	DFBS/ Finance & Contracts Manager / Finance Officer

Risk Type	Cause or Source of the risk	Risk Event	Consequence	Overall Risk Owner (accountable manager)	Controls in place	Control Owner(s)
Cyber Security	Email	There is a risk a member of staff will open an email with document malware/ ransomware	Financial Operational Safeguarding	Principal	New and improved anti-virus and phishing systems in place, which will attempt to track and block content and emails. Cybersecurity training on MyAko, compulsory for all staff. Frequent reminders to all staff regarding potential risks with methods of mitigation. Random phishing test emails sent to staff with the ability to report on who has clicked on links. This leads to in-school training. Termly updates provided to the Governing Body from the DFBS and IT dept of monitoring	DFBS/ ICT CONSULTANCY

Risk Type	Cause or Source of the risk	Risk Event	Consequence	Overall Risk Owner (accountable manager)	Controls in place	Control Owner(s)
					incidents and actions.	
Cyber Security	Spear-phishing Smishing	There is a risk a member of staff will respond to targeted communication trying to obtain money or data from the school.	Financial Operational Safeguarding	Principal	As above. Additional control, staff are reminded of data protection expectations of not sharing information without prior consent.	DFBS/ ICT CONSULTANCY
Procurement	Intercepted invoices	There is a risk that invoices received via email for suppliers are intercepted and bank account details changed.	Financial loss	Principal	Finance staff attend anti-fraud training. Updates provided via Finance Information Group (FIG) Finance staff aware of potential scams and instructed to call supplier when setting up bank details for the first time. Bankline verifies account details match supplier credentials.	DFBS/ Finance & Contracts Manager / Finance Officer

Risk Type	Cause or Source of the risk	Risk Event	Consequence	Overall Risk Owner (accountable manager)	Controls in place	Control Owner(s)
					Spot checks carried out for large invoices.	
Procurement	Bribery/ Corruption	There is a risk that contracts are awarded to friends/ family members. Which could cost the school more, or the job may not be completed to a good standard.	Reputational	Principal	Separation of duties. Clear and well communication policy and process adhered to. Relevant contracts subject to a competitive tendering process. Separation of duties in business case approval and the procurement process. Separation of duties for approval of requisitions. Tender limits adhered to. Consultants only employed, where there is a clear	DFBS/ Finance & Contracts Manager/ Finance Officer/ HR Manager/ Facilities Manager/ Office Manager

Risk Type	Cause or Source of the risk	Risk Event	Consequence	Overall Risk Owner (accountable manager)	Controls in place	Control Owner(s)
					need for the business of the school. Staff associated with procuring contracts / purchasing are asked to declare any interests. If they indicate an interest, then they are asked to step back from decision making. Register of business interest for Governors, retained by Clerk to Governors.	
Recruitment	Nepotism	There is a risk that senior members of staff recruit family members or friends. The best person for the job might not be recruited with the correct qualifications.	Reputational	Principal	All new posts advertised on Kent-Teach. Clear, robust recruitment processes in place which are followed / recruitment grids and scoring tables utilised at shortlisting.	DFBS/ HR Manager / HR Administrator / HR Assistant

Risk Type	Cause or Source of the risk	Risk Event	Consequence	Overall Risk Owner (accountable manager)	Controls in place	Control Owner(s)
					Interview panels – duties shared amongst senior staff. Clear separation of duties. Safer recruitment training. Relatives declared on an application form.	
Recruitment	CV/ Job Application	There is a risk a person may fail to declare or enter information that is untrue or misleading on the CV/job application	Safeguarding Reputational	Principal	As above Strict vetting processes adhered to. Right to work in the UK requested. All identity documents and qualifications checked prior to recruitment. References checked. Enhanced DBS.	DFBS/ HR Manager / HR Administrator / HR Assistant

Risk Type	Cause or Source of the risk	Risk Event	Consequence	Overall Risk Owner (accountable manager)	Controls in place	Control Owner(s)
					Contracts issued and signed by both parties, prior to employment. All documentation retained / disposed of in accordance with GDPR requirements. Onboarding and induction training provided. SCR fully compliant.	
Payroll	Pay awards	There is a risk that members of staff may award themselves bonus pay awards without approval of the governing body or falsify information in order to obtain the award.	Financial	Principal	Payroll functions are suitably segregated. Salaries conform to STP&C document for teaching staff and KCC procedures for support staff. Finance and HR Teams cross-check payroll information and pay award details prior to passing	DFBS/ HR Manager / Finance & Contracts Manager / / HR Administrator / HR Assistant

Risk Type	Cause or Source of the risk	Risk Event	Consequence	Overall Risk Owner (accountable manager)	Controls in place	Control Owner(s)
					information to payroll provider. Pay award lists checked by HR Manager and Director of Finance to ensure budgets are checked, consistency of awards and appropriate justifications are in place. FGB approve additional payments above £500 and the Executive Principal and Principal's pay. SLT approve less that £500. Payroll portal access is only granted to approved staff associated with this task. Data matching checks completed at recruitment.	

Risk Type	Cause or Source of the risk	Risk Event	Consequence	Overall Risk Owner (accountable manager)	Controls in place	Control Owner(s)
					Individual staff are only permitted to change their own bank details on the payroll portal. All expense claims are accompanied with receipts and supporting documentation. Payroll reconciliation checks.	
Income	Theft	There is a risk members of staff could divert income intended for the school into their own bank account or accept cash and not record it using it for their personal items.	Financial Reputational	Principal	Segregation of duties. Recording of income / cash received by the Finance Team on FMS (Finance MIS) All enquiries directed to the Finance Team. Monthly reconciliation of petty cash / receipts completed. Checked and	DFBS/ Finance & Contracts Manager/ Office Manager / Facilities Manager

Risk Type	Cause or Source of the risk	Risk Event	Consequence	Overall Risk Owner (accountable manager)	Controls in place	Control Owner(s)
					signed by senior staff member. Cashless system in place (Weduc) to encourage parents to pay online, securely.	
False accounting	Theft/ Fraud	There is a risk that members of staff responsible for finance with the capability are able to enter false accounting records in order to mislead senior staff and the governing body to obtain financially.	Financial loss	Principal	As above. Segregation of duties. Monthly reconciliations carried out and checked and signed by senior staff member. All orders authorised by Exec Principal / Principal. Budget monitoring carried out monthly. Finance workload matrix ensures scheme of delegation is followed to ensure	DFBS/ Finance & Contracts Manager/ Facilities Manager

Risk Type	Cause or Source of the risk	Risk Event	Consequence	Overall Risk Owner (accountable manager)	Controls in place	Control Owner(s)
					segregation of duties.	
Assets	Theft	There is a risk that members of staff use the school's resources or take-home assets purchased and belonging to the school without returning them.	Financial loss	Principal	ICT and general asset registers maintained and updated. Completion of annual asset register monitoring and checks. Acceptable Use of Policy in place. Leaver template completed details return of school equipment prior to leaving.	DFBS/ Finance & Contracts Manager/ ICT CONSULTANCY
Premises rental	Loss of income	A member of staff might rent out the school or facility to family/ friend without charging them causing a loss of revenue to the school.	Financial loss	Principal	Lettings fee published on the website. Lettings fees invoiced and recorded on FMS (Finance MIS)	DFBS/ Finance & Contracts Manager / Office Manager

Risk Type	Cause or Source of the risk	Risk Event	Consequence	Overall Risk Owner (accountable manager)	Controls in place	Control Owner(s)
					Payments received, receipted on FMS. Segregation of duties. Lettings forms initially signed by Finance & Contracts Manager, followed by the Principal / Exec Principal.	