



Parents and Friends of St Johns (PAFS)

Conflict of Interest Policy

As the officers/ committee members and trustees of PAFS, we understand that it is our duty to make decisions that are in the best interests of PAFS and the school. We know that where any of us hold a personal or other interest, this will stop us from achieving this duty and acting in the best interests of our PAFS and the school.

The PAFS officers/ committee/ trustees take the following steps to identify and deal with any conflicts of interest:

1. We make all new committee members aware of this policy and the advice on conflicts of interest from PTA UK and the Charity Commission for England and Wales. (appendix A)
2. We ask all committee members to declare any conflict of interest
 - when they are newly appointed
 - at the start of every committee meeting and
 - in addition to this, whenever a committee member becomes aware of the possibility of a conflict of interest.

This will be noted in the committee meeting minutes and then used to update a separate register of conflicts of interest. This is available to all our committee members from the Compliance Officer.

3. In line with clause 9.3 in our constitution, any committee member with an identified conflict, is asked to withdraw from any discussion of and/or vote on that issue.
4. Where conflicts of interest arise, we detail in the minutes of the committee meeting how this is addressed.
5. PAFS works to make sure there is a good mix of parents and staff from across the school involved. This stops any one part of the school from being overly represented.
6. Where decisions may favour one year group, subject area or particular aspect of the school over others, we ensure that:
 - a. We have specifically consulted (i.e.: with the school, parents and pupils) to ensure this is appropriate; and/or
 - b. Over a period of time, we ensure that all aspects of the school benefit and that this benefit is close to being equal.

7. We review this policy annually (in advance of our AGM) and make it available to our members so they understand how the committee is operating in the best interests of the PAFS

Appendix A

Examples for potential conflicts of interest.

You would have a conflict of interest if the charity is thinking of making a decision that would mean:

- you could benefit financially or otherwise from your charity, either directly or indirectly through someone you're connected to
- your duty to your charity competes with a duty or loyalty you have to another organisation or person

Almost all PTA members are parents of children that are beneficiaries of the PTA's activities. Care needs to be taken that parents are not putting the interests of their children first when making decisions about how the PTA operates. This can also apply to members of school staff who are part of the PTA committee when decisions may benefit their class or subject area.

The committee may also contract a committee member for the supply of goods and services (see clause 9.2 of the PAFS constitution). For example, a parent who runs a fencing firm who is contracted by PAFS to mend the school fence, paid for by PAFS as requested/agreed by the school. This is a conflict of interest for this member; they cannot vote on appointing themselves to do work on behalf of PAFS.

Procedure:

PAFS will follow a 3 step approach (identify, prevent, record) to comply with our legal your duty and avoid:

- making decisions that could be overturned
- risking the charity's reputation
- having to repay the charity if we make unauthorised payments to trustees

Once a conflict of interest is identified, PAFS will prevent it from affecting decision-making by:

- finding an alternative way forward which doesn't involve the conflict of interest (particularly if the issue is serious)
- taking appropriate steps to manage the conflict (if it's less serious), which will usually mean that the person affected doesn't take part in discussions about the issue
- Follow the PAFS constitution