

St Mary's Catholic Primary School

'Learning together in Faith and Love'

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Staff code of conduct

Mission Statement

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St. Mary's Catholic Primary School exists to serve the Roman Catholic families of the Parish of Our Lady of the Holy Souls, Kensal New Town and other local parishes.

The aims of our schools are:

- To promote Christian values where pupils live, learn and celebrate the teaching of Christ.
- To provide a curriculum which is broad, balanced and meaningful and where pupils can experience enjoyment and fulfilment.
- To promote the highest standards of teaching and learning within the framework of the National Curriculum
- To develop in each pupil a sense of achievement, value and self worth and to achieve the standards of which they are capable.
- To help our pupils acquire the skills of independent learning and make sufficiently rapid progress.
- To provide a safe and secure environment where pupils feel valued, and where they respect, help and care for each other.
- To involve parents in all aspects of their pupil's education and promote good home/school partnership.
- To develop in our pupils awareness and respect for the different cultures and religions represented in society and their responsibility to the wider community.
- To foster the continuing development of staff, parents and governors in serving the community.

St. Mary's Values- these are the values that underpin all areas of our school community:

- Kindness
- Respect
- Tolerance
- Honesty
- Responsibility (for ourselves and our world)
- Co-operation

Introduction

This policy sets out the expectations of the School in relation to dress code. We believe that staff are role models for our pupils and should dress accordingly.

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All staff should be mindful that their dress sets an example to pupils. If staff dress smartly, pupils are more likely to follow suit.

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1. Aims, scope and principles

This policy aims to set and maintain standards of conduct that we expect all staff to follow. By creating this policy, we aim to ensure our school is an environment where everyone is safe, happy and treated with respect.

Many of the principles in this code of conduct are based on the [Teachers' Standards](#).

School staff have an influential position in the school and will act as role models for pupils by consistently demonstrating high standards of behaviour.

We expect that all teachers will act in accordance with the personal and professional behaviours set out in the Teachers' Standards.

We expect all support staff, governors and volunteers to also act with personal and professional integrity, respecting the safety and wellbeing of others.

Failure to follow the code of conduct may result in disciplinary action being taken, as set out in our staff disciplinary procedures.

Please note that this code of conduct is not exhaustive. If situations arise that are not covered by this code, staff will use their professional judgement and act in the best interests of the school and its pupils.

2. Legislation and guidance

We are required to establish procedures for the regulation of staff conduct under regulation 7 of [The School Staffing \(England\) Regulations 2009](#).

In line with the statutory safeguarding guidance **Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023**, we should have a staff code of conduct, which should cover low-level concerns, allegations against staff and whistle-blowing, as well as acceptable use of technologies (including the use of mobile devices), staff/pupil relationships and communications, including the use of social media.

3. General obligations

Staff set an example to pupils. They will:

- Maintain high standards in their attendance and punctuality
- Never use inappropriate or offensive language in school
- Treat pupils and others with dignity and respect
- Show tolerance and respect for the rights of others
- Not undermine fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
- Not express personal beliefs in a way that exploits pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law
- Understand the statutory frameworks they must act within
- Adhere to the Teachers' Standards

4. Safeguarding

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Staff have a duty to safeguard pupils from harm, and to report any concerns they have. This includes physical, emotional and sexual abuse, and neglect.

Staff will familiarise themselves with our child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures, and the Prevent initiative, and ensure they are aware of the processes to follow if they have concerns about a child.

Our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and procedures are available on our website, Staff server and on request in the school office.

New staff will also be given copies on arrival.

4.1 Allegations that may meet the harm threshold

This section is based on 'Section 1: Allegations that may meet the harm threshold' in part 4 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

This section applies to all cases in which it is alleged that anyone working in the school, including a supply teacher, volunteer or contractor, has:

- 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 they 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 – this includes behaviour taking place inside or outside of school

We will deal with any such allegation quickly and in a fair and consistent way that provides effective child protection while also supporting the individual who is the subject of the allegation.

A 'case manager' will lead any investigation. This will be the Headteacher, or the Chair of Governors. where the headteacher is the subject of the allegation.

4.2 Low-level concerns about members of staff

A low-level concern is a behaviour towards a child by a member of staff that does not meet the harm threshold, is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, and may be as simple as causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt'. For example, this may include:

- Being over-friendly with children
- Having favourites
- Taking photographs of children on a personal device
- Engaging in 1-to-1 activities where they can't easily be seen
- Humiliating pupils

Low-level concerns can include inappropriate conduct inside and outside of work.

All staff should share any low-level concerns they have using the reporting procedures set out in our child protection and safeguarding policy. We also encourage staff to self-refer if they find themselves in a situation that could be misinterpreted. If staff are not sure whether behaviour would be deemed a low-level concern, we encourage staff to report it.

All reports will be handled in a responsive, sensitive and proportionate way.

Unprofessional behaviour will be addressed, and the staff member supported to correct it, at an early stage.

This creates and embeds a culture of openness, trust and transparency in which our values and expected behaviour are constantly lived, monitored and reinforced by all staff, while minimising the risk of abuse.

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Reporting and responding to low-level concerns is covered in more detail in our Safeguarding and Child Protection policy. This is available on our website, Staff server and on request in the school office.

Our procedures for dealing with allegations will be applied with common sense and judgement.

4.3 Whistle-blowing

Whistle-blowing reports wrongdoing that it is "in the public interest" to report. Examples linked to safeguarding include:

- Pupils' or staff members' health and safety being put in danger
- Failure to comply with a legal obligation or statutory requirement
- Attempts to cover up the above, or any other wrongdoing in the public interest

Staff are encouraged to report suspected wrongdoing as soon as possible. Their concerns will be taken seriously and investigated, and their confidentiality will be respected.

Staff should consider the examples above when deciding whether their concern is of a whistle-blowing nature. Consider whether the incident(s) was illegal, breached statutory or school procedures, put people in danger or was an attempt to cover any such activity up.

Staff should report their concern to the **Executive Headteacher, Ann Slavin or Head of School, Magdalena Tusting.**

If the concern is about the Executive Headteacher or the Head of School or it is believed they may be involved in the wrongdoing in some way, the staff member should report their concern to **Co-Chairs of Governors: Marie Costigan and Simon Enright.**

Concerns should be made in writing wherever possible. They should include names of those committing wrongdoing, dates, places and as much evidence and context as possible. Staff raising a concern should also include details of any personal interest in the matter.

For our school's detailed whistle-blowing process, please refer to our Whistle-Blowing Policy.

5. Staff-pupil relationships

Staff will observe proper boundaries with pupils that are appropriate to their professional position. They will act in a fair and transparent way that would not lead anyone to reasonably assume they are not doing so.

If staff members and pupils must spend time on a one-to-one basis, staff will ensure that:

- This takes place in a public place that others can access
- Others can see into the room
- A colleague or line manager knows this is taking place

Staff should avoid contact with pupils outside of school hours if possible.

Personal contact details should not be exchanged between staff and pupils. This includes social media profiles.

While we are aware many pupils and their parents may wish to give gifts to staff, for example, at the end of the school year, gifts from staff to pupils are not acceptable.

If a staff member is concerned at any point that an interaction between themselves and a pupil may be misinterpreted, or if a staff member is concerned at any point about a fellow

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staff member and a pupil, this should be reported in line with the procedures set out in our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

6. Communication and social media

School staff's social media profiles should not be available to pupils. If they have a personal profile on social media sites, they should not use their full name, as pupils may be able to find them. Staff should consider using a first and middle name instead, and set public profiles to private.

Staff should not attempt to contact pupils or their parents via social media, or any other means outside school, in order to develop any sort of relationship. They will not make any efforts to find pupils' or parents' social media profiles.

Staff will ensure that they do not post any images online that identify children who are pupils at the school without their consent.

Staff are expected to be aware of St Mary's E-Safety Policy.

7. Acceptable use of technology

Staff will not use technology in school or belonging to the school to view material that is illegal, inappropriate or likely to be deemed offensive. This includes, but is not limited to, sending obscene emails, gambling and viewing pornography or other inappropriate content.

Staff will not use personal mobile phones and laptops, or school equipment for personal use, in school hours or in front of pupils. They will also not use personal mobile phones or cameras to take pictures of pupils.

We have the right to monitor emails and internet use on the school IT system.

8. Confidentiality

In the course of their role, members of staff are often privy to sensitive and confidential information about the school, staff, pupils and their parents.

This information should never be:

- Disclosed to anyone unless required by law or with consent from the relevant party or parties
- Used to humiliate, embarrass or blackmail others
- Used for a purpose other than what it was collected and intended for

This does not overrule staff's duty to report child protection concerns to the appropriate channel where staff believe a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm, as detailed further in our child protection and safeguarding policy.

9. Honesty and integrity

Staff should maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their role. This includes when dealing with pupils, handling money, claiming expenses and using school property and facilities.

Staff will not accept bribes.

Staff will ensure that all information given to the school is correct. This should include:

- Background information (including any past or current investigations/cautions related to conduct outside of school)
- Qualifications
- Professional experience

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Where there are any updates to the information provided to the school, the member of staff will advise the school as such as soon as reasonably practicable. Consideration will then be given to the nature and circumstances of the matter and whether this may have an impact on the member of staff's employment.

10. Dress code

Implementation of the Dress Code Policy

The Policy and Dress Code is designed to guide line managers and employees on the school standards of dress and appearance. All employees' appearance must be professional at all times both within the workplace and when representing the school.

The Policy is not exhaustive in defining acceptable and unacceptable standards of dress and appearance and staff must use common sense in adhering to the principles underpinning the policy.

The school recognises the diversity of cultures, religions and disabilities of its employees and will take a sensitive approach when this affects dress and uniform requirements. However, priority will be given to health and safety, security and professional considerations. Risk assessment will take place as appropriate.

It is intended that all employees will be supplied with a School identify security badge. This must be worn and visible at all times when on duty or acting in an official capacity representing the School.

General guidance

Staff are expected to have a neat, clean, smart and professional appearance at all times. If staff are unsure about the appropriateness of their dress, they should speak with their line-manager.

It is expected that staff will initiate their discretion and common sense in their manner of dress. Presenting a bodily appearance or wearing clothing which is considered inappropriate, offensive or obscene, or which endangers the health and safety of children or others are prohibited whilst on duty.

Examples of prohibited dress or appearance include, but are not limited to:

- attire with messages or illustrations that are indecent or vulgar
- advertise any product or service not permitted by law to minors
- very low cut, see-through or midriff tops and very tight clothing
- any adornment such as chains or spikes that reasonably could be perceived as or used as a weapon
- any symbols, styles or attire frequently associated with intimidation, violence or violent groups
- piercings that could be considered unsightly or threatening to children or which are a health and safety risk
- tattoos on display

Dress Code

The following items of clothing are examples of unacceptable clothing, either on the grounds of health and safety or for the school's public image:

- Miniskirts
- Lycra cycling shorts or leggings (which are worn without tunics or dresses)
- Leisure shorts
- Transparent or "see-through" blouses, dresses or shirts

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- Tracksuits
- Denim jeans
- Clothing with tears, holes and rips
- Low-cut T shirts or blouses
- Spaghetti/shoestring strapped tops
- Crop-tops
- Political badges or emblems
- Items of clothing bearing logos, slogans or graphics, which could cause offence
- Baseball caps/hats
- Any jeans or denim clothing (unless on specified Dress-down days)

Tattoos

Visible tattoos are to be discouraged and where present must not be offensive to others. Where they are deemed to be offensive or unsightly they must be appropriately covered.

Jewellery and Piercing

Jewellery must be discreet and appropriate and not cause offence or be a health and safety hazard. In a classroom environment, any items of jewellery that creates the potential for a health and safety risk or the possibility for entanglement (e.g. large hoops in earlobes) the item must be covered or removed during working hours. No visible facial/body piercing is permitted and studs must be removed before coming to work. This includes tongue studs. If staff have piercing for religious or cultural reasons, these must be covered.

Hair

Hair must be neat and tidy at all times. Headscarves worn for religious purposes are permitted.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Employees

Employees are individually responsible for their general presentation, appearance and personal hygiene and have a responsibility to consider how their appearance may be perceived by others. Employees are responsible for following the standards of dress and appearance laid down in this policy and must understand how this policy relates to their working environment, particular role and duties and contact with others during the course of their employment.

Line Managers

Line Managers are responsible for ensuring the Policy and Dress Code is adhered to at all times in respect of the employees they manage. Managers must also ensure that all new employees are aware of the required standards of this Policy during the Induction process. Failure to adhere to the school's standards of dress and appearance may constitute misconduct and result in formal disciplinary proceedings.

11. Conduct outside of work

Staff will not act in a way that would bring the school, or the teaching profession, into disrepute. This covers conduct including but not limited to relevant criminal offences, such as violence or sexual misconduct, as well as negative comments about the school on social media.

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12. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed every two years, but can be revised as needed. It will be approved by the Full Governing Board.

Our Governing Board will ensure this code of conduct is implemented effectively, and will ensure appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard children and deal with any concerns.

13. Links with other policies

This policy links with our policies on:

- Staff Disciplinary procedures, which will be used if staff breach this code of conduct.
- Staff Grievance procedures
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- E-Safety
- Whistle-blowing

This Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy has been approved by the Governing Body in September 2023 and will be reviewed in the Autumn term 2025, and then every two years.

Signed by Chair of Governors:



Signed by Headteacher:

