

# **ST OSWALD'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL**



## **Staff Code of Conduct Policy**

**Headteacher Mrs J Hassan**

**Chair of Governors Dr A Wilkinson**

**Date of Agreement September 2021**

**Date for Review September 2022**

## **INTRODUCTION**

As a Catholic School, all adults in school are expected to actively follow and live out our mission statement: "Love Jesus, Love Learning, Love each other- We are a learning community promoting the Gospel values of mutual trust, care and respect." This reflects how the family of St Oswald's is to conduct itself at all times. All communication and interaction between members of the family of St Oswald's - staff, children, parents, carers and visitors must reflect our mission statement.

Furthermore, as part of the Catholic Education Service terms and conditions, staff are expected to be conscientious and loyal to the aims and objectives of the School.

In addition, staff are required to develop and maintain the Catholic character of the School. Staff are to have regard to the Catholic character of the School and not do anything in any way detrimental or prejudicial to the interests of the same at any time, at work or at home. All staff employed under Teachers' Terms and Conditions of Employment have a statutory obligation to adhere to the 'Teachers' Standards 2012' and in relation to this policy, Part 2 of the Teachers' Standards - Personal and Professional Conduct.

Staff should be aware that a failure to comply with the following Code of Conduct could result in disciplinary action including dismissal.

### **1 PURPOSE, SCOPE AND PRINCIPLE**

A Code of Conduct is designed to give clear guidance on the standards of behaviour all school staff are expected to observe, and the school should notify staff of this code and the expectations therein. School staff are in a unique position of influence and must adhere to behaviour that models the highest possible standards for all the pupils within the school. As a member of a school community, each employee has an individual responsibility to maintain their reputation and the reputation of the school, whether inside or outside working hours.

This document should be read alongside Staff safe working practice guidelines 2015 (safer Recruitment consortium adapted and updated from original DfE document) in conjunction with the most recent version of Keeping Children Safe in Education. Staff must also to adhere to Lone Working Procedures 2017 available in the school office.

### **2 SETTING AN EXAMPLE**

2.1 All staff who work in schools set examples of behaviour and conduct which can be copied by pupils/students. Staff must therefore avoid using inappropriate or offensive language at all times.

2.2 All staff must, therefore, demonstrate the highest standards of conduct in order to encourage our pupils/students to do the same.

2.3 All staff must also avoid putting themselves at risk of allegations of abusive or unprofessional conduct.

2.4 Attendance

Creating and maintaining a healthy and productive workforce is a key priority for our school. We are committed to supporting all staff through the sickness management process ensuring fairness and consistency alongside a range of health and wellbeing initiatives.

You are expected to attend work in line with your contract of employment and associated terms and conditions and follow the school's absence reporting procedure in the Sickness Management policy when you are absent from work due to illness or injury. If you have a routine medical or dental appointment, we ask that you arrange this outside of your working hours or during holidays where possible. Please refer to the school's Leave of Absence policy if you need time off for any other reason than personal illness.

## 2.5 Alcohol and substance misuse

We all have a responsibility to keep pupils and each other safe in school. Alcohol and substance misuse occurs in all occupational sectors, including education, and raises welfare and health and safety issues. You are in a position of trust and are required to take reasonable care of pupils who are under your supervision and are expected to maintain appropriate standards of professional conduct ensuring you report fit for work and can perform your duties.

We encourage you to confide in a member of the leadership team or someone you can trust if you have an alcohol or substance dependency. This will be treated sensitively and in confidence and will enable us to support you through Occupational Health or the Employee Assistance Programme.

2.6 This Code helps all staff to understand what behaviour is and is not acceptable.

## **3 SAFEGUARDING PUPILS/STUDENTS**

3.1 Staff have a duty to safeguard pupils/students from:

- physical abuse
- sexual abuse
- emotional abuse
- neglect

3.2 The duty to safeguard pupils/students includes the duty to report concerns about a pupil/student to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for Child Protection.

3.3 The school's DSL is Mrs Hassan

The school's Deputy DSLs are Mr Goulding (AHT and Pastoral Manager) and Mrs Atherton.

3.4 Staff are provided with personal copies of the school's Safeguarding Policy and Whistleblowing Procedure and staff must be familiar with these documents. Copies of these are available in the shared area.

3.5 Staff must not demean or undermine pupils, their parents or carers, or colleagues.

3.6 Staff must take the upmost care of pupils/students under their supervision with the aim of ensuring their safety and welfare.

3.7 Staff must not use their mobile phone as a camera in school. Any photograph/video must be taken using school equipment. Staff must only save images on school equipment.

3.8 Staff who are in contact with pupils should not use their mobile phones in school during their contact time with pupils. Mobile phones should only be used in areas of the school where pupils are not present.

3.9 If staff receive an ID badge for official purposes they mustn't allow anyone to use it. ID badges must always be displayed if staff are on school premises or when at other schools or external premises. Staff are also encouraged to be courageous and question anyone on school premises who isn't displaying an ID or visitors badge. If staff lose their ID they must report it to the school office as soon as possible. If staff leave the school they are required to return their ID and any other security devices and school equipment they have.

#### 3.10 Relationships with pupils

One of the strongest factors in learning relates back to the relationship you have with your pupils. Establishing positive relationships is both important and valuable in the classroom. It is important that you always maintain professional boundaries and consider whether your actions are warranted, proportionate, safe, and necessary. You must ensure that you act in a fair and transparent way, treat all pupils as individuals and not show favouritism to anyone. You must only contact pupils via the school's established mechanisms. In your position of trust, you must not develop personal or sexual relationships with pupils; this includes sexual remarks and discussing your own sexual relationships with, or in the presence of, pupils. Under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, it is an offence for a person aged 18 or over to have a sexual relationship with a child under the age of 18 where that person is in a position of trust or respect to that child, even if the relationship is consensual.

#### 3.11 Equality and diversity

We are committed to celebrating diversity and promoting equality throughout our school. We want it to be a place where pupils are supported to live healthy, fulfilling lives in thriving communities. We believe in treating everyone who works at [Insert school name] equally and fairly as individuals and expect the same in return from our staff.

### **4 PUPIL/STUDENT DEVELOPMENT**

4.1 Staff must comply with school policies and procedures that support the wellbeing and development of pupils/students.

4.2 Staff must co-operate and collaborate with colleagues and with external agencies where necessary to support the development of pupils/students.

4.3 Staff must follow reasonable instructions that support the development of pupils/students.

### **5 HONESTY AND INTEGRITY**

5.1 Staff must maintain the highest standards of honesty and integrity in their work. This includes the handling and claiming of money and the use of school property and facilities.

5.2 All staff must comply with the Bribery Act 2010. A person may be guilty of an offence of bribery under this act if they offer, promise or give financial advantage or other advantage to someone; or if they request, agree or accept, or receive a bribe from another person. If you believe that a person

has failed to comply with the Bribery Act, you should refer to the Whistleblowing procedure for schools.

5.3 Gifts from suppliers or associates of the school must be declared to the Headteacher, or to the Chair of Governors if the Headteacher is the recipient, with the exception of “one off” token gifts from students or parents. Personal individual gifts from individual members of staff to students are inappropriate and could be misinterpreted.

5.4 Staff must ensure that all information given to the school in relation to their qualifications and professional experience is true and correct.

## **6 CONDUCT OUTSIDE WORK**

6.1 Staff must not engage in conduct outside work which could seriously damage the reputation and standing of the school or the employee’s own reputation or the reputation of other members of the school community. Any such conduct could lead to dismissal.

6.2 In particular, criminal offences that involve violence or possession or use of illegal drugs or sexual misconduct are likely to be regarded as unacceptable and could lead to dismissal.

6.3 Staff must exercise caution when using information technology and be aware of the risks to themselves and others. Staff must not use social media e.g. Facebook with pupils or former pupils. (See Social Media Policy).

6.4 Staff must not engage in inappropriate use of social network sites which may bring themselves, the school, school community or employer into disrepute.

6.5 Staff must only use their school email account or school learning platform account when communicating electronically with pupils, parents and colleagues.

6.6 Staff may undertake work outside school, either paid or voluntary, provided that it does not conflict with the interests of the school and is not to a level which may contravene the working time regulations or affect an individual's work performance.

6.7 All members of staff must declare any business interests outside of school that may be connected either to the supply of goods / services to the school or be rewarded through association with the school.

6.8 Staff must inform a member of SLT of any relationship with a parent where this extends beyond the usual parent professional relationship.

## **7 CONFIDENTIALITY**

7.1 Where staff have access to confidential information about pupils/students or their parents or carers, staff must not reveal such information except to those colleagues who have a professional role in relation to the pupil/student.

7.2 All staff are likely at some point to witness actions which need to be confidential. For example, where a pupil/student is bullied by another pupil/student (or by a member of staff), this needs to be reported and dealt with in accordance with the appropriate school procedure. It must not be discussed outside the school, including with the pupil’s/student’s parent or carer, nor with colleagues in the school except with a senior member of staff with the appropriate role and authority to deal with the matter.

7.3 However, staff have an obligation to share with their manager or the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead any information which gives rise to concern about the safety or welfare of a pupil/student. Staff must never promise a pupil/student that they will not act on information that they are told by the pupil/student.

## **8 DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

8.1 All staff need to recognise that failure to meet these standards of behaviour and conduct may result in disciplinary action, including dismissal.

### **Appendix 1 – aide memoire for all staff**

When we speak to others we will:

- use a positive statement rather than a negative one so that children can learn what we expect of them in any situation.
- use a calm tone of voice at all times, to explain something to or instruct the children, so that they can follow our words without feeling threatened or uncomfortable.
- avoid using sarcastic words or phrases as these demean children and prevent them from developing high self-esteem.
- speak respectfully to other adults at all times, even if we disagree with them. As professionals we will:
  - avoid workplace gossip and negativity as it breeds resentment and becomes a roadblock to effective communication and collaboration.
  - We all have a duty to take active steps to divert conversations away from this if we come across it.
  - maintain confidentiality about anything that we see or hear in the school, so that parents and children can trust us, and as a way of showing respect to our fellow professionals.
  - work as part of a team, contributing as well as learning from others and helping to build up a strong workforce so that we can provide the best possible learning opportunities for the children.
  - work within the school's policies and practices, so that what we do is consistent with what has been agreed between all members of the staff and the governors.
  - treat everyone with respect.
- dress appropriately, so that we set a good example for the children and to show that we are here to work.
- behave in a positive way despite any personal problems that we may have, especially in front of the children.

### **Appendix 2- from Teachers' Standards Effective from 1 September 2012 (DfE)**

## **PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT**

All adults are expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct. The following statements define the behaviour and attitudes which set the required standard for conduct throughout a teacher's career.

- Teachers and teaching assistants uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, by: treating pupils with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to a teacher's professional position
- having regard for the need to safeguard pupils' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions
- showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others
- not undermining fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
- ensuring that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways which exploit pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law.
- Teachers and teaching assistants must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they teach, and maintain high standards in their own attendance and punctuality.
- Teachers must have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities.

#### Information and support

If you are concerned about anything you see in school that you believe conflicts with the code of conduct or any other school policy, you must raise it with the Head Teacher or a member of the Senior Leadership Team. In addition, you can also contact your HR or Trade Union representative for further advice and guidance.

The school's policies provide you with advice and guidance that you need to further support you in your role. It's important that you read and understand these policies. The code of conduct references some school policies; however, these are not exhaustive, and copies of all policies can be obtained from the school office via the Employment Handbook on the Hub.