

**St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Worcester**

**'Following Jesus in all we do'**

**Staff Code of Conduct**

**Contact Details**

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**Shared with staff September 2020 at Whole Staff Safeguarding Training**

**Signed to say adhered to by Friday 11<sup>th</sup> September**

## **THE VALUES & CATHOLIC ETHOS OF ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

The school was founded by and is part of the Catholic Church. The school is to be conducted as a Catholic school in accordance with canon law and teaching of the Roman Catholic Church, and in accordance with the Trust Deed of the Archdiocese of Birmingham and in particular –

- a) Religious education is to be in accordance with the teachings, doctrines, discipline and general and particular norms of the Catholic Church;
- b) Religious worship is to be in accordance with the rites, practices, discipline and liturgical norms of the Catholic Church; and at all times the school is to serve as a witness to the Catholic faith in Our Lord Jesus Christ.

To this end, as part of the provision within the Archdiocese of Birmingham, St Joseph's Catholic Primary School is committed to:

- Upholding the uniqueness of the individual in which each person is seen as made in God's image and loved by him.
- Promoting the search for truth and excellence in which pupils are given every opportunity to develop their talents to the full.
- Forming pupils' consciences, nurturing their relationship with God through prayer and fostering a sense of social responsibility.

All the above is done in accordance with the teachings of the Catholic Church.

## **THE AIMS & INTRODUCTION TO THE ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT**

- St Joseph's School Code of Conduct clearly describes the standards of conduct and behaviour expected from our staff and any staff seconded or engaged from other organisations to undertake work within our school. It also highlights some types of behaviour or conduct which are considered incompatible with being a member of our Catholic Learning Community.
- Please take time to read it and ensure your conduct meets these requirements. If you are at all uncertain about what is expected please seek further clarification from your Headteacher or Performance Manager so that you do not unwittingly contravene this Code or otherwise act against the school, Diocese or county council's interests.
- Contravening or failing to act within the spirit of the Code, or behaving in a manner which could bring the good name of the school or county council into disrepute, whether or not within the workplace or working time, might be seen as a breach of discipline and could lead to action being taken against you under the appropriate procedure.
- While workers who are not employees of the school or County Council are expected to comply with the spirit of the Code, any action that may be taken in response to a breach will depend on the precise nature of their working relationship with the county council.

- This code relates to all staff working in our school. Teachers must be aware that there are also published *Teachers' Standards* (DfE 2012) and are advised to familiarise themselves with the requirements of these.

## 1. Guiding Principles

- 1.1 All working at St Joseph's should put the well-being, development and progress of children and young people first. You should recognise that you are in a position to influence children and young people through your slightest actions, comments or behaviour.
- 1.2 To the public you are a representative of the school. You are expected to maintain the highest standards of professional competence, knowledge, integrity, confidentiality, financial propriety and personal conduct. Contact with all members of the school community, including parents and outside visitors, should be courteous, efficient and impartial to all groups and individuals. You must also familiarise yourself with, and adhere to any rules or codes of conduct or policies relating to your particular school and role and you should comply with all reasonable requirements or instructions from the Headteacher.
- 1.3 It is not appropriate for you when working within your role as an employee to oppose the stated aims and policies of the school or county council or to undermine the performance of its duties and responsibilities. It is important for all employees to present a unified image to the public.
- 1.4 You should ensure that your relationships with your fellow employees and with pupils are always conducted in a professional and courteous manner; you should not censure other colleagues or criticise their work in the hearing of a pupil or parent/carer. It is not acceptable to use sarcasm or make jokes at the expense of pupils, embarrass or humiliate pupils, or discriminate against or favour pupils. It is also not acceptable to discuss personal or sexual issues with pupils outside of agreed curriculum parameters.
- 1.5 It is not acceptable for you to publicly criticise or blame school management, colleagues or the county council through any medium including internet 'blogs', websites or social networking tools such as Facebook or Twitter and you must be aware that the laws governing defamation, breach of copyright, etc. apply equally to 'blogging' as to other forms of communications. Offensive, defamatory, discriminatory or otherwise inappropriate comments will not be tolerated and may constitute a disciplinary and/or criminal offence, as could the disclosure/publication of any confidential or personal information about the school, its staff, pupils or other members of the school community.
- 1.6 Staff wellbeing affects student wellbeing. As a school we support all staff to be the best that they can be and pride ourselves on understanding that how we speak to and treat each other makes a difference. It is important therefore that all staff feel listened to and appreciated. Our Staff Wellbeing Policy provides further detail.
- 1.7 Any disagreement involving the interpretation or application of the Code as it applies to you should be discussed with your Headteacher or Performance Manager in the first instance. However, if you feel the Code is being applied unreasonably you may be able to seek redress through the school's Grievance Procedure.
- 1.8 All adults must never:
  - Use inappropriate language to, or in the presence of, pupils

- Make, or encourage others to make, unprofessional personal comments which scapegoat, demean or humiliate children, parents or another member of staff
- Enter into, or encourage, inappropriate discussions which may offend or harm other people

## **2. Staff/Student Relationships**

- 2.1 You are expected to treat pupils with dignity and fairness, building relationships rooted in mutual respect and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to a person in a position of trust. Each person is seen as made in God's image and loved by him. As a member of school staff you have 'duty of care' to the pupils of our school and you should comply with safe working practices, *outlined in the guidance document "Safe Working Practice for Staff Working in Education Settings (September 2015)"*
- 2.2 You must not communicate personally with students via email, mobile phone or internet other than on school-related matters in line with school policy.
- 2.3 You must not arrange to meet students outside of the school day or off the school site at any time without the express permission of the Headteacher.
- 2.4 Any physical contact with pupils should be in accordance with school procedures, such as the Behaviour policy or positive physical intervention\*. Any inappropriate physical contact, such as tickling, rough play, cuddling or sitting a child on your lap may be viewed as misconduct and lead to disciplinary procedures, dependant on circumstances. We ensure that all staff where possible are 'Team Teach' trained, renewed every 4 years

## **3. Personal Interests**

- 3.1 The interests of the school or the way you do your job must not be influenced by personal interests or those of relatives, friends or membership of external organisations or societies. There should be no grounds for suspicion that you are using your position with or knowledge of the school for personal gain or that you could be influenced by improper motives. If you belong to outside organisations, including voluntary organisations, there must be no conflict with your job or other school, Diocese or county council interests. You should advise your Headteacher or Performance Manager in writing about anything which could give this impression.
- 3.2 As a professional working with children your job entails a certain level of professional judgement. There will be rare occasions and circumstances in which staff have to make decisions or take action in the best interest of a pupil which could contravene other guidance within this Code of Conduct, or where no guidance exists. Individuals are expected to make judgements about their behaviour in order to secure the best interests and welfare of the pupils in their charge and, in so doing, will be seen to be acting reasonably. These judgements should always be recorded and shared with a manager.
- 3.3 Staff at St Joseph's will always consider whether their actions are warranted, proportionate, safe and applied equitably. They must be reflective of their emotions on being able to deal with difficult situations. If staff feel that their own emotions will impact on the way they interact with children or adults, they must seek support. This shows professional strength.

#### **4. Private work**

- 4.1 School or Council premises, equipment, working time or other resources must not be used to undertake private work.
- 4.2 The school needs to be aware if its employees undertake private work or voluntary activities in their own time to ensure that there is no conflict of interests with the school and to meet its obligations under Health and Safety legislation. Therefore, to protect yourself, the school, the Diocese and the Council from potential criticism you should not put yourself in a position where there is an actual or perceived conflict of interests. You should be aware that outside work or activity, whether or not you receive payment, could reduce your ability to safely and effectively carry out your employment with the school or county council, e.g. through tiredness, and would be considered unacceptable.
- 4.3 You must advise your Performance Manager before engaging in any other work especially if it could reasonably be seen to conflict with your employment with the school or lead to misunderstanding or criticism (for example, private tutoring of students from your school).
- 4.4 You must not undertake private work for any individual, organisation, department or establishment which otherwise would be undertaken as part of your normal duties. Any charge raised as a result of undertaking work within another school or other establishment whilst in your normal working hours should be paid to your employing school.
- 4.5 You must not undertake private work when on sick leave without the express knowledge and prior written approval of your Headteacher and subject to appropriate medical advice.
- 4.6 You must not undertake private work for any Worcestershire County Council school or establishment during a period of paid leave or suspension.

#### **5. Expressing Concern about Irregularities and Tackling Malpractice**

- 5.1 At St Joseph's if you feel there is something seriously wrong at work please tell an appropriate person as a 'voice of concern'. It might be, for example, the conduct of another employee, the way a contractor is behaving, a work practice, something that is endangering the safety of pupils or staff. You might be the first to notice it and your intervention could stop things getting worse.
- 5.2 No matter how reticent you may feel, you should raise any serious concern e.g.- a suspicion of fraud or corruption or reasonable belief that a child or adult's health, safety or well-being are in danger with- your Headteacher so that potentially serious problems or malpractice can be addressed without undue delay. If this is not appropriate, then you should contact either the Chair of Governors or Children's Services Human Resources. If the matter relates to fraudulent activity, you may inform the Audit Division. If you do raise a genuine concern in good faith all reasonable steps will be taken to respect your confidence and protect you from possible reprisals (*see the Whistleblowing Policy*). Remember it is your legal responsibility to uphold the safety of all of our children.
- 5.3 The school, Diocese or county council take this issue very seriously and will investigate and address any problems genuinely raised. However, any frivolous, malicious or mischievous use of the Confidential Reporting Policy will be treated as a serious disciplinary matter.

## **6. Copyright**

- 6.1 You should be aware that 'intellectual property' such as software, ideas, documents, etc. created during your employment belongs to the school. All files, materials, the media upon which they are located and all software programmes or packages which are utilised or developed solely for or in connection with your job remain the property of the school.

## **7. Confidentiality**

- 7.1 The county council is committed to open government and, in law, certain information must be made available to councillors, government departments, service users and the public. However, you must make sure you know whether information is 'public' or confidential and treat it accordingly.
- 7.2 You may sometimes acquire information at work which has not been made public or is confidential. Examples include information about a pupil or family, a colleague, information on tenders or costs, the proceedings of confidential meetings.
- 7.3 You must ensure that sensitive and/or confidential information is properly secured and safeguarded at all times especially if being transported in paper or electronic formats. Particular care must be taken with information stored on portable electronic media such as laptops and memory devices which are often targeted for theft due to their high intrinsic value.
- 7.4 Confidential Information which comes into your possession must not be used for personal benefit or divulged to other parties except in the proper course of duty, for example to other professionals working with the same child. If you have any doubt whether or not disclosure is appropriate, you must check with your Headteacher, DSL or Performance Manager before releasing confidential information.
- 7.5 Some information can be extremely valuable in business and commerce and its publication loss or misuse could seriously disadvantage the school or county council and its employees. Therefore, it is important that you do not, deliberately or inadvertently, pass on information, including software, during or after your employment with the school, to anyone who has no right to receive it. You must not discuss, disclose, publicise or use such information for your own or anyone else's personal interest or advantage.
- 7.6 You must decline any approaches or offers made asking for information which could be detrimental to, or help others to gain a contract, grant or any other advantage from the school or county council and/or its employees, e.g. a potential contractor could offer a financial reward for information leading to the award of a major contract. Approaches or offers of this kind must be declared to your Headteacher without delay.
- 7.7 You must not criticise the school, its policies or staff in open media such as internet 'blogs', websites, social networking sites, etc. where it may be seen by parents, children or others in the school community.

## **8. Contact with the Media**

- 8.1 Unless you are properly authorised to speak with, write or give interviews to the media you should refer any enquiries from the media on work related matters to your Headteacher. *Advice is available to school through the county council's Communications Unit.*

## 9. Information Technology, Social Media and Data Protection

9.1 Everyone using computing equipment has a duty of care to use it according to prescribed arrangements, e.g. to avoid introducing computer viruses, to comply with the Data Protection Act, and to safeguard and ensure the security of information.

9.2 **All staff must familiarise themselves with the schools' policies on Internet Safety, E Safety, Acceptable User Policies (new remote learning user agreement).** In particular, all use of the internet and email facilities must be authorised, legal, appropriate and in accordance with the provisions of the school policies. Personal use of any facilities – including laptops – must be authorised and only undertaken at times deemed appropriate by your Headteacher.

Users shall not use the internet or email for the following:

- to knowingly break the law
- to fail to comply with existing school or county council policy
- to compromise the integrity of any network of system
- to access, display or transmit any kind of sexually explicit material or any offensive or discriminatory material of any kind
- to make unauthorised contact with outside bodies
- to download software or play games
- to bet or gamble
- to disclose private or confidential information.

Failure to comply with the policies in force or any unauthorised use of such facilities will be dealt with in accordance with relevant disciplinary procedure. *Employees should also take account of policies on cyber bullying.*

9.3 Employees should also be aware when they are using personal IT equipment for undertaking school related business that the same rules apply. Please refer to your Headteacher *for a copy of your school's full policy on appropriate use of IT Equipment.*

9.4 You must not photograph pupils using your own photographic equipment or mobile phone. *(As referred to in our Mobile Phone Procedures)*

9.5 You should not use social media in any way that might bring your professional status or your school into disrepute or undermine the policies or ethos of the school. You must not share confidential information or mention specific students or members of staff on a social media site. You should not accept pupils as 'friends' or 'followers' and should not 'follow' or have any personal connections with pupils on any social media or other internet sites. If you are a 'friend' of a parent of a pupil at your school, you should be particularly careful not to share information about pupils, staff or working practices. You should ensure that full privacy settings are applied to all your social media accounts.

9.6 Staff should take extreme care to ensure that children and young people are not exposed, through any medium, to inappropriate or indecent images. There are no circumstances that will justify adults: making, downloading, possessing or distributing indecent images or pseudo-images of children (child abuse images). Accessing these images, whether using the setting's or personal equipment, on or off the premises, or making, storing or disseminating such material is illegal.

9.7 Under no circumstances should any adult use school or setting equipment to access pornography. This will raise serious concerns about the suitability of the adult to continue working with children and young people.

## **10. Gifts, Inducements, Hospitality and Sponsorship**

10.1 You must not accept any commission, discount, allowance, direct or indirect profit, inducement, payment, perk or benefit in connection with any professional work undertaken, other than any fee recoverable on behalf of the school or county council.

10.2 Minor gifts and hospitality are sometimes part of the normal courtesies of life: the parent of a pupil may offer a modest gift, especially at Christmas or as a token of appreciation, and in an office situation simple items such as diaries and calendars are often distributed as advertising matter. As a guideline, any gift or hospitality with a value of £25.00 or more is highly unlikely to be viewed as a 'token'. With the exception of these 'tokens' and any special schemes (e.g. travel or discount schemes) arranged by the county council, all gifts, vouchers, fees, special discounts, rewards or preferential treatment must be refused. Collection of reward card points such as Nectar and Clubcard on a personal account in respect of school or council purchases is a benefit in kind which should be reported to HMRC and subjected to deduction of Income Tax. In situations where refusal of a gift is difficult or might offend you must inform your Headteacher or Performance Manager who will decide on the appropriate action.

10.3 Where an outside organisation wishes to sponsor any activity or make a donation to the school, the basic principles relating to personal interests and the acceptance of gifts or hospitality apply.

10.4 You must not give gifts to particular pupils other than as part of an agreed reward strategy or given to all pupils equally, with the knowledge and permission of your Headteacher or Performance Manager.

## **11. Infatuations and 'Crushes'**

11.1 All staff need to recognise that it is not uncommon for pupils to be strongly attracted to a member of staff and/or develop a 'crush' or infatuation. All staff should make every effort to ensure that their own behaviour cannot be brought into question, does not appear to encourage this and be aware that such infatuations may carry a risk of their words or actions being misinterpreted.

11.2 Any member of staff who receives a report, overhears something, or otherwise notices any sign, however small or seemingly insignificant, that a young person has become or may be becoming infatuated with either themselves or a colleague, should immediately report this to the Headteacher or member of SLT. In this way appropriate early intervention can be taken which can prevent escalation and avoid hurt, embarrassment or distress for those concerned.

11.3 The Headteacher will give careful thought to those circumstances where the staff member, pupil and their parents/carers should be spoken to and will ensure a plan to manage the situation is put in place. This plan should respond sensitively to the child and staff member and maintain the dignity of all.

## **12. Use of School / Council Resources and Equipment**



12.1 Facilities, equipment, vehicles, materials and other resources provided by the school or county council for use in your work must not be used for any other purpose without permission or appropriate payment, e.g. photocopying, private telephone calls. Mobile telephones are provided exclusively for business use and must not be used to make private calls. In this context a call 'home' to advise that you have been unavoidably delayed because of work would not be considered a private call.

### **13. Transporting Pupils**

13.1 When transporting pupils in your own vehicle the *EVC policy* should be adhered to at all times. Circumstances where it is appropriate to transport pupils, e.g. for sports' matches, should always take place with the full knowledge and consent of the Headteacher and the pupils' parents/carers.

13.2 Any legal requirements must be adhered to, such as ensuring the vehicle is roadworthy, business insurance is in place, seat belts are worn, car seats are used for younger children and the maximum capacity is not exceeded.

13.3 Wherever possible, there should always be at least one adult additional to the driver as an escort and children should be seated in the back of the vehicle.

13.4 It is inappropriate for adults to offer lifts to pupils outside their normal working duties, unless this has been previously arranged with the parent/carer and the Headteacher is aware of the arrangement.

13.5 Permission needs to be given to any parent or member of staff to walk off the school premises with someone else's child. Under no circumstances should any child be escorted off the premises without consent from the headteacher or the parent.

*(For any other guidance on educational visits please see the Educational Visits Policy)*

### **14. Overseas Travel on Official Business**

14.1 Any proposal to travel overseas on official business must be approved by the Governing Body before the travel takes place.

### **15. Equality Issues**

15.1 All members of the community, including pupils, families and other employees have a right to be treated fairly and with dignity. *You must make yourself aware of and comply with the school's Policies and procedures.*

### **16. Standards of Appearance**

16.1 All staff (including office staff) at St Joseph's are expected to present a reasonable and professional appearance and to dress appropriately to the circumstances within their working environment, bearing in mind that they are working with children and young people. Dress should not be offensive, revealing or sexually provocative and should not display political or other contentious slogans.

Guidelines:

- Skirts and dresses are to be of an acceptable length ie. Not way above the knee
- No shorts are to be worn

- No denim
- No sheer tops which can be seen through
- No low cut revealing tops.
- SLT reserve the right to ask staff to change. If any staff are unsure they can ask for clarification.

16.2 All St Joseph's Staff are required to wear PE tops when teaching PE and only when teaching PE and when accompanying any children in sporting events. Navy or black jogging bottoms or leggings are to be worn; sport shorts (of a reasonable length) can be worn during the summer. When wearing uniform or other items which identify you as a member of the school team (employee), you must maintain appropriate standards of conduct whether or not on duty, e.g. when travelling to and from work.

16.3 During the unprecedented Covid 19 pandemic, staff have been allowed to wear PE tops due to the need to wash clothing in line with health and hygiene measures. From September 2020 this can continue for those staff who prefer to. Emphasis will be on the wearing of appropriate tracksuit bottoms or plain leggings as mentioned above.

16.4 Non- teaching Staff

Kitchen staff: in line with health and hygiene, overalls are provided (see health and hygiene code of conduct.

Cleaners and site staff: working in the school out of school hours. Dress is of a more casual nature, respectable and appropriate for the job.

SLT reserve the right to ask staff to change. If any staff are unsure they can ask for clarification.

16.5 Dress codes may be relaxed in certain circumstances such as outdoor/adventure visits, training days, charity days and hot weather – in these circumstances, common sense should prevail at the head teacher's discretion.

**17. Staff Team Work**

17.1 St Joseph's prides itself on its 'family' feel. Staff are able to plan and work as teams within the requirements of the curriculum. While participating in these important times, staff must conduct themselves in a fair and appropriate manner, being seen to be open and honest in their work together, giving no staff a cause for concern. Meeting rooms are made available for these purposes to avoid giving the wrong impression and instead promoting openness and honesty.

**18. Relatives and Close Personal Relationships within the Workplace**

18.1 In order to avoid any possible accusation of bias you should endeavour not be directly involved in the appointment, promotion, discipline or other employment decision relating to another employee to whom you are related or with whom you have a close personal relationship. If a situation arises in which you feel you may be in such a position, *please seek the advice of Children's Services Human Resources.*

18.2 If you work in close proximity with other employees or pupils to whom you are related or have a close personal connection you must maintain a strictly professional relationship at

work. You should also be aware that if any relationship leads to disruption in the workplace, unacceptable conduct or performance or situations involving undue favouritism or detriment, action will be taken under the appropriate procedure which could lead to you being redeployed or your contract terminated.

## **19. Smoke Free Environment**

- 19.1 All county council buildings, workplaces and vehicles are smoke free areas. Since July 2007, it has been against the law to smoke in workplaces; failure to comply is now a criminal offence.

## **20. Drugs and Alcohol**

- 20.1 Employees must not take illegal drugs, alcohol or any other illegal substance before work, during a break or at lunch time that is capable of causing their behaviour, judgement or performance at work to be affected. (N.B. It is equally inappropriate for those working in close proximity to children and vulnerable adults to have alcohol on their breath even though this may not amount to drunkenness.)

## **21. Health and Safety**

- 21.1 Unsafe working can endanger you, your colleagues and members of the public. You must familiarise yourself with the school's and *Council's Health and Safety Policy* and guidelines for your particular work. Please speak to your Headteacher for further information. You must follow the rules, codes and safe practices they describe including reporting any accidents, incidents or near misses you have at work.

## **22. First Aid and Medication**

- 22.1 The SLT will ensure there is an adequate number of qualified first-aiders in all areas of the school during school hours. Parents should be informed when first aid has been administered and the first aid record books need to accurately filled in. We have a number of qualified first aiders on the staff however we accept that in the case of a graze, a member of staff will, out of duty of care, use a medi-wipe and / or apply a plaster. Any pupils with allergies are clearly listed and communicated.

Staff should receive sufficient and suitable training and achieve the necessary level of competency before they take on responsibility to support children with specific medical conditions.

In circumstances where a pupil needs medication regularly, this would usually be recorded in their individual healthcare plan as per policy.

- 22.2 First aid records are filled in accurately by the first aiders and are monitored regularly by the safeguarding team.

*For more guidance on first aid and medication please see the Medical Conditions / Health and Safety Policy*

## **23. One to One Situations**

- 23.1 Staff working in one to one situations with pupils at the setting, including visiting staff from external organisations can be more vulnerable to allegations or complaints. To safeguard both pupils and adults, a risk assessment in relation to the specific nature and implications of one to one work should always be undertaken. Ensure that, wherever possible, there is visual access and/or an open door in one to one situations with pupils
- 23.2 Arranging to meet with pupils from the school or setting away from the work premises should not be permitted unless the necessity for this is clear and approval is obtained from a member of SLT, the pupil and their parents/carers.

## **24. Home Visits**

- 24.1 All work with pupils and parents should usually be undertaken in the school or setting or other recognised workplace. There are however occasions, in response to an urgent, planned or specific situation or job role, where it is necessary to make one-off or regular home visits. E.g. Visits may be made as part of the Family Support Role. Staff should agree the purpose for any home visit with their manager, adhere to agreed risk management strategies, and always make detailed records including times of arrival and departure.
- 24.2 A risk assessment should be undertaken prior to any planned home visit taking place. The assessment should include an evaluation of any known factors regarding the pupil, parents/carers and any others living in the household. Consideration should be given to any circumstances which might render the staff member becoming more vulnerable to an allegation being made e.g. hostility, child protection concerns, complaints or grievances. Following the assessment, appropriate risk management measures should be put in place, before the visit is undertaken. In the unlikely event that little or no information is available, visits should not be made alone.

## **25. Physical Contact**

- 25.1 Physical contact with a pupil should only take place if it is crucial and should only take place in ways appropriate to your professional role and in relation to the pupil's individual needs and any agreed care plan.
- 25.2 Not all children feel comfortable about certain types of physical contact; this should be recognised and, wherever possible, adults should seek the pupil's permission before initiating contact. Staff should listen, observe and take note of the child's reaction or feelings and, so far as is possible, use a level of contact and/or form of communication which is acceptable to the pupil. Any physical contact should be in response to the child's needs at the time, of limited duration and appropriate to their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background. Adults should therefore, use their professional judgement at all times.
- 25.3 Staff should be aware that even well intentioned physical contact may be misconstrued by the pupil, an observer or any person to whom this action is described, so staff should never touch a pupil in a way which may be considered indecent. Staff should ensure the way they

offer comfort to a distressed pupil is age appropriate. As a member of school staff, always explain to the pupil the reason why contact is necessary and what form that contact you will take.

- 25.4 Following any physical contact staff should always report and record situations which may give rise to concern. If a member of staff believes that an action by them or a colleague could be misinterpreted, or if an action is observed which is possibly abusive the incident and circumstances should be immediately reported to the DSL and recorded.
- 25.5 A general culture of 'safe touch' should be adopted, where appropriate, to the individual requirements of each child. Pupils with disabilities may require more physical contact to assist their everyday learning. The arrangements should be understood and agreed by all concerned, justified in terms of the pupil's needs, consistently applied and open to scrutiny.

## **26. Intimate / Personal Care**

- 26.1 Pupils should be encouraged to act as independently as possible and to undertake as much of their own personal care as is possible and practicable. When assistance is required, this should normally be undertaken by one member of staff, however, they should try to ensure that another appropriate adult is in the vicinity who is aware of the task to be undertaken and that, wherever possible, they are visible and/or audible. Intimate or personal care procedures should not involve more than one member of staff unless the pupil's care plan specifies the reason for this.
- 26.2 A signed record should be kept of all intimate and personal care tasks undertaken and, where these have been carried out in another room, should include times left and returned.
- 26.3 Any vulnerability, including those that may arise from a physical or learning difficulty should be considered when formulating the individual pupil's health and education care plan. The views of parents, carers and the pupil, regardless of their age and understanding, must be actively sought in formulating the plan and in the necessary regular reviews of these arrangements.
- 26.4 Pupils are entitled to respect and privacy at all times and especially when in a state of undress, including, for example, when changing, toileting and showering. However, there needs to be an appropriate level of supervision in order to safeguard pupils, satisfy health and safety considerations and ensure that bullying or teasing does not occur. This means that adults should not:
- change or toilet in the presence or sight of pupils
  - shower with pupils
  - assist with intimate or personal care tasks which the pupil is able to undertake independently

## **27. Criminal Charges, Cautions and Convictions**

- 27.1 You must advise your Headteacher immediately if you are charged with or cautioned or convicted of any criminal offence whilst you are an employee of the school or county council. While such proceedings will not necessarily affect your employment, the school and Council needs to be sure there are no implications for the school, its reputation, the safety of children or in relation to the role you undertake.

- 27.2 You must also advise your Headteacher immediately if you have been arrested or appeared in court and released on bail in circumstances where bail conditions have been applied which could have consequences for your work e.g. you are constrained from having contact with children. If you are in any doubt about whether you should report bail conditions, especially where safeguarding could be an issue, you must discuss it with your Headteacher so that any concerns can be addressed from the outset. Failure to report such conditions would be considered as serious misconduct and could potentially lead to breach of bail.
- 27.3 If you live with anyone who is on the sex offenders' register; has any offences against or involving children or is being investigated for offences against children, you must report this to your Headteacher immediately, who will seek further advice from the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).

## **28. Personal Interests**

- 28.1 The interests of the school and county council must not be undermined by personal interests. The way you do your job must not be influenced by personal interests or those of relatives, friends or membership of external organisations or societies. There should be no grounds for suspicion that you are using your position with or knowledge of the school or county council for personal gain or that you could be influenced by improper motives. If you belong to outside organisations, including voluntary organisations, there must be no conflict with your job or other school or county council interests.
- 28.2 All orders, contracts and grants must be awarded on merit following fair competition. No favour should be shown because of personal interests and no part of the community should be discriminated against.
- 28.3 You must advise your Performance Manager in writing about anything which could give the impression that you may be acting for personal gain, financial or otherwise, or in the interests of another person or organisation; or you are involved as an employee in matters which might reasonably be regarded as affecting the well-being or financial position of yourself, your spouse, partner, relative, a close friend or any person with whom you have a close association, e.g. if any of those persons
- hold an office or employment with
  - have any connection or influence with
  - have any financial interest in
- any company or organisation doing or seeking to do business with, or requesting grants or other funding from the school or county council.
- 28.4 You should avoid being involved as an employee in matters which might reasonably be regarded as affecting the well-being or financial position of yourself (or the persons, companies or organisations referred to above) so significant that it is likely to prejudice your judgment of the school/county council or public interest. (N.B. Holding shares in a company with which you know the county council is likely to be dealing, or acting as an agent for them, could be regarded as a financial interest.)
- 28.5 You must advise your Headteacher who will notify the Head of Legal & Democratic Services in writing of any direct or indirect pecuniary interest in a contract or proposed contract with the county council as soon as practicable after becoming aware of it so that it can be recorded in the 'Register of Officers' Interests'. Failure to do so may be a criminal offence as well as a disciplinary matter.

- 28.6 You must advise your Performance Manager of any personal dealings of a business or private nature with existing or potential suppliers, consultants or contractors who you know (or could reasonably be expected to know) to have dealings with the school or county council.
- 28.7 If you engage or supervise contractors or consultants on behalf of the school or have any other official relationship with them you must advise your Performance Manager, prior to any contractual relationship beginning or work being undertaken, if you have or intend to have any private or domestic relationship with them or any of their employees.

## **29. Personal Purchases**

- 29.1 You should be aware of possible conflicts of interest when you buy goods or use the services of firms which have dealings with the school and follow any school procedures relating to the disclosure of any such transactions. You should neither seek, because of your position, nor accept, because of an organisation's dealings with the school, preferential rates, reductions or any other favourable treatment in the purchase of goods and services. This does not apply to generally available schemes or discount schemes arranged by the county council for all staff.
- 29.2 Procurement procedures must be strictly adhered to and you must not accept any inducement or preferential treatment if you are responsible for procuring goods or services for the school or disposing of surplus property.
- 29.3 In addition, staff should always be in a position to demonstrate that 'Best Value' has been sought and achieved. Detailed guidance on procurement and tendering is set out in the council's Financial Regulations and Procurement Code.

## **30. Conduct and Performance**

- 30.1 A 'low level concern' is any minor breach of this Code of Conduct, which could potentially bring into questions the member of staff's professionalism, but does not meet the threshold by which the breach of the Code of Conduct would harm a person or put a person at risk of harm significant harm set down by external agencies. In this case the member of staff would be approached by a member of the SLT regarding the minor breach of the Code of Conduct. This conversation would be recorded and added to the staff member's personnel file and will be kept confidentially.
- 30.2 Unacceptable behaviour and/or failure to maintain satisfactory standards of conduct or performance will lead to action being taken against you under the appropriate procedure. This includes specifically the failure to behave at all times in accordance with the Teachings of the Catholic Church.
- 30.2 You must ensure you understand the requirements of this Code of Conduct, *the Safe Working Practice for Staff guidance* and any terms and conditions, rules, standards and requirements that apply to you and your job. Any of the examples of unacceptable behaviour listed below may be considered as misconduct or gross misconduct depending on the relevance to your role, your seniority, the seriousness of the act and particular circumstances. Those underlined normally will be considered as gross misconduct. The list is not exhaustive and other unacceptable behaviour not specifically listed nevertheless may be considered as misconduct or gross misconduct:

- a) any form of unjustifiable discrimination, harassment, threatening or bullying behaviour, e.g. on the grounds of race, sex/gender, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, age, religion or belief; whether or not the subject of current legislation;
- b) any physical, emotional or sexual abuse of a child or other vulnerable person
- c) possession, displaying, viewing or downloading of offensive or extremist materials, playing or downloading games, accessing 'unacceptable' websites, e.g. websites of a sexual nature, gambling, betting or gaming, in the workplace or via any portable device, e.g. laptop, mass storage, which is the property of the school or county council and has been provided in connection with the postholder's work;
- d) undertaking private activities during working hours;
- e) unpunctuality, misuse of time and time recording, unauthorised absence from work;
- f) refusing to comply with reasonable orders and instructions;
- g) deliberately causing damage to school or council property;
- h) harming or endangering other persons or property, e.g. by contravening safety rules;
- i) neglect of duty/lack of due care or diligence, disruptive behaviour, poor attitude;
- j) failing to uphold legal responsibility to safeguard all children in our care by not reporting concerns about pupils or staff conduct;
- k) fighting, threatening or actual violence towards, physical assault or abuse of another person whilst at work (NOTE: this does not include reasonable physical restraint necessarily carried out in the course of duty);
- l) theft, unauthorised removal, misappropriation, improper or unauthorised use of school or council property, systems (including telephones, IT, email and internet), vehicles, equipment, name or other resources. This may include loss by failing to properly secure or safeguard;
- m) failure to report criminal convictions, particularly those which may be relevant to the type of work undertaken, e.g. driving convictions where the work necessitates driving on school business, indecent assault where working with children or vulnerable adults;
- n) fraudulent or misleading practices and/or omissions in connection with official duties, e.g. deliberately falsifying school or council documents, reports, etc;
- o) fraudulent or false claims for payment of salary, expenses and/or allowances, etc. or seeking financial gain by deception;
- p) acts involving bribery or corruption;



- q) any action for which it would be appropriate for the school or council as an employer to take legal proceedings (irrespective of whether such proceedings are taken);
- r) sexual misconduct at work;
- s) wilfully breaching any school or county council policy or procedure;
- t) drunkenness, being unable to carry out duties through the influence of any substances including drugs, whether or not prescribed, and alcohol, or for any other avoidable reason. (N.B. It is equally inappropriate for those hosting visitors or working in close proximity to service users such as children and vulnerable adults to have alcohol on their breath even though this may not amount to drunkenness.);
- u) possession, buying or selling of weapons, illegal substances or materials at work;
- v) any breach of trust or security in respect of information or procedures;
- w) obtaining or attempting to obtain access to any information (including information held or stored by electronic means) to which the employee is not entitled;
- x) any action which may bring the good name of the school or county council into disrepute;
- y) as an employee, public opposition to the stated aims and policies of the school or county council, criticism or blame of colleagues, council departments or county councillors through any medium including internet 'blogs' , websites, social networking sites, etc.;
- z) any action unconnected with work which brings in to question your suitability as an employee of the school or county council;
- aa) failing to report serious misconduct, aiding or inciting another employee to undertake any of the above actions or other act of wrongdoing.

Reviewed September 2018 in line with Whole Staff Safeguarding Training.

Key developments discussed highlighted in yellow.

Agreement Register signed

Code of conduct will be shared and signed for with any new staff who join the school during the academic year in line with Safeguarding procedures.

Louise Bury  
Headteacher  
September 2020