

Staff Code of Conduct

St Thomas Becket Catholic Primary School

INTRODUCTION

As an employer, the Governing Body is required to set out a Code of Conduct for all school employees.

As a Catholic School, all adults in school are expected to actively follow and live out our mission statement: “to foster and deepen the children’s faith through a genuine partnership between the home, school and parish.”

The mission statement reflects how the St Thomas Becket School family is to conduct itself at all times. All communication and interaction between staff, children, parents, carers and visitors must reflect our mission statement and reflect our Catholic character.

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 Principles

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 our school community, each employee has an individual responsibility to maintain their reputation and the reputation of the school, whether inside or outside working hours.

2. Setting an Example

- All staff who work in schools set examples of behaviour and conduct which can be copied by adults and children. Staff must therefore avoid using inappropriate or offensive language at all times. Staff must demonstrate the highest standards of conduct in order to encourage our pupils to do the same.
- All staff must also avoid putting themselves at risk of allegations of abusive or unprofessional conduct.

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

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN

Teachers and other education staff are accountable for the way in which they exercise authority; manage risk; use resources; and protect pupils from discrimination and avoidable harm.

All staff, whether paid or voluntary, have a duty to keep young people safe and to protect them from physical and emotional harm. This duty is in part exercised through the development of respectful, caring and professional relationships between staff and pupils and behaviour by staff that demonstrates integrity, maturity and good judgement.



POWER AND POSITIONS OF TRUST

As a result of their knowledge, position and/or the authority invested in their role, all adults working with children and young people in education settings are in positions of trust in relation to the young people in their care. A relationship between a member of staff and a pupil cannot be a relationship between equals. There is potential for exploitation and harm of vulnerable young people and staff have a responsibility to ensure that an unequal balance of power is not used for personal advantage or gratification.

Staff should avoid behaviour which might be misinterpreted by others, and report and record any incident with this potential.

Child Protection:

Staff have a duty to safeguard children from:

- physical abuse
- sexual abuse
- emotional abuse
- neglect

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

The school's DSP is Anne Harper (DHT)

The school's Deputy DSP is Noel Campbell (HT)

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 school office.

Matters relating to child protection are strictly confidential. They should only be discussed with the appropriate persons. They should never be discussed in general staff room conversations or outside the school.

E- safety:

Staff are responsible for ensuring that:

- they have an up to date awareness of the current school e-safety policy and practices
- they have read, understood and signed the Staff Acceptable Use Policy
- they report any suspected misuse or issue to the Head teacher or E-Safety Coordinator for investigation, action or sanction
- all digital communications with students, pupils, parents, carers should be on a professional level and only carried out using official school systems.

Staff must exercise discretion when using social networking websites in order to avoid potentially compromising situations arising where a child attending school makes contact with them (e.g. through Facebook) or has access to inappropriate content related to them.

Inappropriate use of the internet that compromises the professional reputation of a member of staff or the image of the school will result in a warning, and may result in disciplinary action. What is deemed to be inappropriate will be judged by the Headteacher with the support of the Governing Body.



It is important to remember that all staff are in a position of trust in the school and as such must be above reproach. An appropriate level of confidentiality and professionalism in terms of behaviour and conduct must be maintained in any contact with parents and children within and outside of contracted hours

Mobile phones and cameras

Staff must not use their mobile phones during lesson times.

Camera facilities on mobile phones may not be used in school and on school visits. All photographs must be taken using a school camera. Staff must only save images on school computers.

School Staff are permitted to have their mobile phones about their person; however there is a clear expectation that all personal use is limited to lunch and/or tea breaks during the school day.

Staff must not use their mobile phones in any areas accessible to children within the school. Mobile phones must be switched off / silenced between 8:55 am and 3:15 pm (break times excepted) unless there has been an agreed arrangement with the head teacher because of an emergency situation. This is in order to avoid any unnecessary disturbance or disruption to others.

Parents, governors, visitors and contractors are respectfully requested not to use their mobile phones in any areas accessible to children within the school unless there has been an agreed arrangement with the head teacher because of an emergency situation.

General

Any individual bringing a mobile phone onto the school site must ensure that it contains no inappropriate or illegal content.

4. Pupil/Student Development

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

Staff are expected to work alongside school governors to support their strategic and monitoring roles e.g. link governors' visits to the school to liaise with subject leaders.

5. Honesty and Integrity

- 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.
- All staff must comply with the Bribery Act 2010 (see school anti-bribery policy). 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.



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

6. Conduct Inside School

STAFF MEETINGS

Staff meetings are scheduled for every Tuesday after school in term time from 3.35pm to 4.35pm or one hour after commencement. Every member of teaching staff is expected to attend unless an agreement with the Deputy Headteacher or Headteacher has been made in advance. Teaching Assistants are welcome to attend staff meetings.

Senior Leadership Meetings are scheduled as required and will be called by the Headteacher.

Weekly briefings take place for all teaching staff on Friday mornings at 8.30am (we need to start promptly at 8.30 as late starts have an implication for teachers on playground duty). Non-teaching staff are welcome to attend.

STAFF ABSENCES

If staff are sick please telephone the school office and leave a message **before 7.15am**. The school will then arrange cover for classes as appropriate.

Staff will be required to complete a return to work form when returning after an absence. Staff members must speak to the Headteacher (or Deputy Head if Head is not on-site) as soon as possible on the morning of their return in order to have a brief ‘return to work’ conversation.

It is important for the Senior leadership Team to be fully informed regarding absences or changes in timetable for whatever reason. Staff are expected to advise a Senior Member of Staff if they will be out of the classroom for any purpose and to consult with them with regard to any cover arrangements that are put in place.

STAFF DRESS CODE

All staff are expected to dress to a professional standard. Staff should set an example to the children, which reflects the high standard of dress and appearance demanded of them. It is expected that staff will wear appropriate clothes designed for a specific purpose, for example PE lessons.

Smoking

All staff – teaching, support and peripatetic, may not smoke tobacco or e-cigarettes while on school premises and grounds.

EXPECTATIONS

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.
- speak to each other in a calm manner so that we model our expectations for the children. **All adults should speak calmly to children and under no circumstances should any adult shout at children.**



- 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 barrier 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.

7. Conduct Outside Work

- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- Staff must not engage in inappropriate use of social network sites which may bring themselves, the school, school community or employer into disrepute.
- Staff must only use the school email account or MLE account when communicating electronically with pupils and parents. They should never provide their personal email or phone number.
- 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.
- 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.

All staff **must** immediately inform the Head Teacher (or Chair of Governors if it is the Head Teacher that is the worker) of all police cautions, warnings, reprimands, arrests and/or convictions received; or if they have, as a parent or carer become subject to child protection procedures themselves during their period of employment/engagement with the School. This information will be treated in confidence and used to assess any impact on the member of staff's job, including the appropriateness for the member of staff to continue in their role. A caution, warning, reprimand, arrest or conviction will not automatically mean



that they are unable to continue in their job. Whether there is a conflict with the member of staff's job will depend on a number of factors including the nature of the offence, the type of job, the seniority of the member of staff and the extent to which the School's reputation or interests are damaged.

8. Confidentiality

- Where staff have access to confidential information about pupils 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.
- Where staff have access to confidential information about other staff members (e.g. NQT/Student mentors, performance management reviewers) staff must not reveal such information except to those colleagues who have a professional role in relation to the staff member.
- All staff are likely at some point to witness actions which need to be confidential (e.g. where a child is upset due to a playground incident), 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 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.
- Staff have an obligation to share with their line manager or the school's Designated Senior Person any information which gives rise to concern about the safety or welfare of a pupil. Staff must never promise a pupil that they will not act on information disclosed by a pupil.

9. DISCIPLINARY ACTION

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

