

# *St Matthew's Catholic Primary School*

Love, Learn and Shine Together With Jesus – September  
2023



## **Code of Conduct for Employees**

### **Rationale**

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: “Through respect we will work together in Christ to develop the whole person.”

The mission statement reflects how the family of St Matthew’ is to conduct itself at all times. All communication and interaction between members of the family of St Matthew’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 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 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. Confidentiality is vital in all aspects of school and information should only be shared on a needs to know basis. Staff must ensure that they remain professional at all times, friendships with parents and carers should be avoided. Any friendship/ family links etc must be declared. It is important that all children are treated the same.

## **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 This Code helps all staff to understand what behaviour is and is not acceptable.
- 2.5 All staff are expected to familiarise themselves and comply with all school policies and procedures.
- 2.6 All staff should refrain from engaging in unprofessional conversations about other members of staff. If a member of staff feels they have any concerns they should follow the school policies and speak to a senior leader
- 2.7 All staff should avoid entering another classroom and disturb teaching unless necessary or an emergency

## **3 SAFEGUARDING PUPILS/STUDENTS**

### **SAFEGUARDING IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL SCHOOL STAFF**

- 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.
- 3.3 The school's Designated Safeguarding Lead is Mrs. Claire Sime (HT)  
The school's Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads are Mrs. Lynn Evans, Mrs. Jayne Walsh and Mrs. Gaskell. Mrs Dunbar is the staff lead
- 3.4 Staff are provided with personal copies of the school's Child Protection Policy and Whistleblowing Procedure and staff must be familiar with these

documents. Copies of these are available on the staff shared drive.

- 3.5 Staff must not demean or undermine pupils, their parents or carers, or colleagues.
- 3.6 Staff should not demonstrate behaviours that may be perceived as sarcasm, making jokes at the expense of students, embarrassing or humiliating students, discriminating against or favouring students.
- 3.7 Staff must take the upmost care of pupils/students under their supervision with the aim of ensuring their safety and welfare.

#### **4. PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS WITH STUDENTS/PARENTS/STAFF**

- 4.1 Staff must declare any relationships that they may have with members of the school community outside of school; this may include mutual membership of social groups, tutoring, or family connections. Staff should not assume that the school are aware of any such connections. The declaration form in Appendix 3 of this document must be completed, signed and returned to Mrs. Helen McCowen (SBM).
- 4.2 Relationships with students must be professional at all times, physical relationships with students are not permitted and may lead to a criminal conviction.
- 4.3 Contact with students must be via school authorised mechanisms. At no time should personal telephone numbers, email addresses or communication routes via personal accounts on social media platforms be used to communicate with students.
- 4.4 If contacted by a student by an inappropriate route, staff should report the contact to the Headteacher immediately.

#### **5. PUPIL/STUDENT DEVELOPMENT**

- 5.1 Staff must comply with school policies and procedures that support the well-being and development of pupils/students.
- 5.2 Staff must co-operate and collaborate with colleagues and with external agencies where necessary to support the development of pupils/students.
- 5.3 Staff must follow reasonable instructions that support the development of pupils/students.

#### **6. ACCEPTABLE USE OF ICT EQUIPMENT**

- 6.1 This policy should be read in conjunction with the E-Safety Policy and the Data Protection Policies.

- 6.2 Staff, Governors and Visitors should read and sign the ‘Acceptable Use Agreement’ annually. See Online Safety Policy. School work should only be completed on school devices. Access to school shared drive and school email should only be through school devices.
- 6.3 Staff will not use personal electronic devices (including smart watches and phones) in public areas of the school. These should be stored safely away from children and not on your person – staff are provided with school lockers. In an emergency the Head Teacher can authorise the use of your phone. Personal mobile phone calls should be made offsite or at lunchtime if you are on your own in your class.
- 6.4 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 computers.

## **7. DRESS AND APPEARANCE**

- 7.1 All staff must dress in a manner that is appropriate to a professional role and promoting a professional image. School dress and presentation policy should be followed and details the appropriate dress.
- 7.2 Staff should dress in a manner that is not offensive, revealing or sexually provocative
- 7.3 Staff should dress in a manner that is absent from political or other contentious slogans.

## **8. HONESTY AND INTEGRITY**

- 8.1 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.
- 8.2 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. (Further information is available from our Anti-Bribery policy on our website.)
- 8.3 Gifts with a value of over £20 should be reported to the business manager who will record it in the Staff Gift Register. This does not include ‘one off’ token gifts from students or parents with a value less than £20. Personal gifts from individual members of staff to students are not allowed.

## **9. CONDUCT OUTSIDE WORK**

- 9.1 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.

- 9.2 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.
- 9.3 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. Staff can use the school Twitter account to update parents/pupils about life in school but must be conducted in a professional manner.
- 9.4 Staff must not engage in inappropriate use of social network sites which may bring themselves, the school, school community or employer into disrepute.
- 9.5 Staff must only use their school email account when communicating electronically with parents and colleagues.
- 9.6 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.
- 9.7 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. This is to be updated and signed annually. The school should be informed of any changes throughout the year.

## **10. CONFIDENTIALITY**

- 10.1 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.
- 10.2 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.
- 10.3 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.

## **11. DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

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

## **12 COMPLIANCE**

- 12.1 All staff must complete the form in appendix 4 to confirm they have read, understood and agreed to comply with the code of conduct. This form should then be signed and dated and returned to Mrs. McCowen (SBM).

## **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:**

- Ensure we are professional at all times and we act as role models.
- 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. (Leggings should only be worn for PE lessons. The length of dress / skirt should be considered. Staff should dress in a professional manner and ensure that they are able to carry out all of the duties of their post in an safe, respectable manner).
- Behave in a positive way despite any personal problems that we may have, especially in front of the children.

## **PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

When using any form of ICT, including the Internet, in school and outside school

For your own protection we advise that you:

- Ensure all electronic communication with students, parents, carers, staff and others is compatible with your professional role and in line with school policies.
- Do not talk about your professional role in any capacity when using social media such as Facebook and You Tube.
- Do not put online any text, image, sound or video that could upset or offend any member of the whole school community or be incompatible with your professional role.
- Use school ICT systems and resources for all school business. This includes your school email address, school mobile phone and I-pads.
- Do not disclose any passwords and ensure that personal data (such as data held on SIMS software) is kept secure and used appropriately.
- Only take images of students and/or staff for professional purposes, in accordance with school policy and with the knowledge of SLT.
- Do not browse, download, upload or distribute any material that could be considered offensive, illegal or discriminatory.
- Ensure that your online activity, both in school and outside school, will not bring the school or professional role into disrepute.
- Emails should be checked daily as a minimum. Please refer to the Communications Policy.
- You have a duty to report any online safety incident which may impact on you, your professionalism or the school.



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

**PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT**

A teacher is 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 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 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.

**Appendix 3**

**Relationships with Members of the School Community outside of work declaration**

It is recognised that there may be circumstances whereby employees of the school are known to students outside of work. Examples include membership of sports clubs, family connections, or private tutoring. Staff must declare any relationship outside of school that they may have with students. Please see below and delete as appropriate.

**A – I have no relationships with any member of the school community outside of school.**

**B – I declare the following relationships:**

Name of Member of School Community	Relationship

I can confirm that I am fully aware of the code of conduct relating to contact out of school with members of the school community in line with this policy. I understand and accept that all school matters are confidential and must not be shared.

If I am tutoring a student outside of school I am aware that the following must be adhered to:-

- I do not, at any point, teach the child in question as part of my daily timetable - this is a stipulation of such tutoring
- I emphasise to parents that this is done completely independently of the school
- No monies come through the school at any point, informally (e.g. via the child) or formally
- No private tutoring is to take place on the school premises

I confirm that if these circumstances change at any time I will complete a new form to ensure the school are aware of any relationships.

Signed .....

Date .....

**Once completed, signed and dated, please return this form to Mrs. McCowen**

**Appendix 4**

**Confirmation of compliance**

I hereby confirm that I have read, understood and agree to comply with the school's code of conduct.

Name .....

Position/Post Held.....

Signed .....

Date .....

**Once completed, signed and dated, please return this form to Mrs. McCowen**