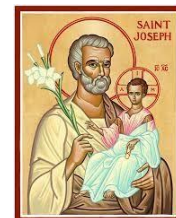




# St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School

## Staff Code of Conduct



St Joseph's is a joyful community which follows the example of Jesus, helping, accepting and respecting everyone, as we learn and grow together, safe in His love.

<b>Policy review date</b>	<b>Autumn 2023</b>
<b>Date of next review</b>	<b>Autumn 2026</b>
<b>Who reviewed this policy?</b>	<b>Personnel Committee &amp; FGB</b>

### Contents

1. Aims, scope and principles .....	1
2. Legislation and guidance .....	2
3. General obligations .....	2
4. Safeguarding .....	2
5. Staff-pupil relationships .....	3
6. Communication and social media.....	4
7. Acceptable use of technology.....	4
8. Confidentiality .....	4
9. Honesty and integrity .....	5
10. Dress code.....	5
11. Conduct outside of work.....	5
12. Monitoring arrangements.....	5
13. Links with other policies.....	5

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## 1. Aims, scope and principles

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

Many of the principles in this code of conduct are based on the [Teachers' Standards](#). School staff have an influential position in the school and will act as role models for pupils by consistently demonstrating high standards of behavior. We expect that all teachers will act in accordance with the personal and professional behaviours set out in the Teachers' Standards. We expect all support staff, governors and volunteers to also act with personal and professional integrity, respecting the safety and wellbeing of others.

As a Catholic school, all adults in school are expected to actively follow and live out our mission statement. (see above) The mission statement reflects how the family of St. Joseph's is to conduct itself at all times. All communication and interaction between members of the family of St Joseph'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.

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

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

## 2. Legislation and guidance

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

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

## 3. General obligations

Staff set an example to pupils. They will:

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

## 4. Safeguarding

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

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

Our child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures are shared with all staff via email and are available on the public drive (see policies folder) New staff will also be emailed copies on arrival.

### 4.1 Allegations that may meet the harm threshold

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

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

- › Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child, and/or
- › Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child, and/or
- › Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children, and/or
- › Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children – this includes behaviour taking place inside or outside of school.

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

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

## 4.2 Low-level concerns about members of staff

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Reporting and responding to low-level concerns is covered in more detail in our child protection and safeguarding policy. This is available on the public drive. (folder – policies)

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

## 4.3 Whistle-blowing

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

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

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

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

Staff should report their concern to the headteacher. If the concern is about the headteacher, or it is believed they may be involved in the wrongdoing in some way, the staff member should report their concern to the chair of the governing board.

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

For our school's detailed whistle-blowing process, please refer to our whistle-blowing policy.

## 5. Staff-pupil relationships

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

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

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

Staff should avoid contact with pupils outside of school hours if possible. Personal contact details should not be exchanged between staff and pupils. This includes social media profiles.

While we are aware many pupils and their parents may wish to give gifts to staff, for example, at the end of the school year, gifts from staff to pupils are generally not acceptable. A small gift might be given at Christmas or at the end of the school year but this is optional and should be given to all members of the class and of small value. If a member of staff believes that an individual pupil or family need greater support, they should speak to the Wellbeing Lead.

If a staff member is concerned at any point that an interaction between themselves and a pupil may be misinterpreted, or if a staff member is concerned at any point about a fellow staff member and a pupil, this should be reported in line with the procedures set out in our child protection and safeguarding policies.

## **6. Communication and social media**

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

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

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

Staff should be aware of the school's online safety procedures.

## **7. Acceptable use of technology**

This guidance should be read in conjunction with the Online Safety Policy

Staff and governors should read and sign the 'Acceptable Use Agreement' annually. Visitors will also be issued with guidance.

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

Staff will not use personal mobile phones and laptops, or school equipment for personal use, in school hours in front of pupils. If staff are waiting for an urgent message or information, they should give the school telephone number and the office staff will give staff the message or, where appropriate, come to get them to take the call. If this is not possible, access to mobile phones for this reason should be agreed by a member of the SLT in advance. This applies equally to worn smart devices; consider setting theatre/airplane modes whilst working with children.

Staff will also not use personal mobile phones or cameras to take pictures of pupils. If a situation arises where this is not the case, staff must inform SLT immediately, explaining the reason.

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

## **8. Confidentiality**

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

This information should never be:

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

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

## **9. Honesty and integrity**

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

Staff will not accept bribes. If staff are approached and feel they are being offered a bribe, they must immediately report this to SLT.

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

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

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

## **10. Dress code**

Staff will dress in a professional, appropriate manner. Footwear should be appropriate for school and for being able to move around safely. On days when staff are engaged in sporting activities, either during the day or as part of a school club or team, it would be acceptable to dress in appropriate sporting clothes. On theme or non-uniform days, staff are welcome to take part if they would like to. Outfits will not be overly revealing, and we ask that as practically as possible, tattoos are covered up. Clothes will not display any offensive or political slogans.

Any jewellery that is worn should not be restrictive or create any Health and safety issues. If staff wear any smart technology, they should be mindful to restrict access to calls and emails (See section 7)

## **11. Conduct outside of work**

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

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.

## **12. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years but can be revised as needed. It will be approved by the full governing body. Our governing body will ensure this code of conduct is implemented effectively, and will ensure appropriate action is taken in a timely manner to safeguard children and deal with any concerns.

## **13. Links with other policies**

This policy links with our policies on:

- Staff disciplinary procedures, which will be used if staff breach this code of conduct. It also sets out examples of what we will deem as misconduct and gross misconduct
- Staff grievance procedures
- Child protection and safeguarding
- Whistle-blowing
- Online safety