

Saint Martin's Catholic Academy



Staff Code of Conduct

*'Knowing the best that has been thought
and said and knowing that we are loved by God'*

Approved by:

Jim Connolly

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Next review due by:

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Statement of Intent

Saint Martin's Catholic Academy (SMCA) expects all of its pupils to receive the highest possible quality of teaching and learning within a positive and respectful environment.

Employees of SMCA should understand that their own behaviour and the manner in which they conduct themselves with their colleagues, pupils, parents and other stakeholders, sets an example.

The Senior Leaders and Governors of SMCA recognises that the majority of staff members act appropriately and treat each other with dignity and respect; however, we consider it important to clarify the expected standards.

This document forms part of a staff member's contract of employment and failure to comply with it, and with the associated SMCA and School policies, may result in disciplinary action being taken, including legal action where this is warranted.

This document applies to all staff members who are employed by the SMCA, including the Headteacher.

This document does not apply to:

- Peripatetic staff members who are centrally employed by the LA.
- School catering staff employed by companies or organisations that are not SMCA.
- Employees of external contractors.

These employees are governed by their employment contracts and any relevant laws pertaining to their activities within the school, for example, GDPR.

Other policies

This Code of Conduct should be read and adhered to in conjunction with the following SMCA and/or School policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Special Leave Policy

Principles of Professional Practice

All staff, governors and volunteers as appropriate to the role and/or job description of the individual, must:

- place the well-being and learning of pupils at the centre of their professional practice.
- have high expectations for all pupils, be committed to addressing underachievement, and work to help pupils progress regardless of their background and personal circumstances.
- treat pupils fairly and with respect, take their knowledge, views, opinions and feelings seriously, and value diversity and individuality.

- model the characteristics they are trying to inspire in pupils, including enthusiasm for learning, a spirit of enquiry, honesty, tolerance, social responsibility, patience, and a genuine concern for other people.
- respond sensitively to the differences in the home backgrounds and circumstances of pupils, recognising the key role that parents and carers play in pupils' education.
- seek to work in partnership with parents and carers, respecting their views and promoting understanding and cooperation to support the young person's learning and wellbeing in and out of school.
- reflect on their own practice, develop their skills, knowledge and expertise, and adapt appropriately to learn with and from colleagues.

This Code of Conduct cannot provide a complete checklist of what is, or is not, appropriate behaviour for staff. However, it does highlight behaviour that is illegal, inappropriate or inadvisable in relation to pupils. There will be occasions and circumstances in which staff have to make decisions or take action in the best interests of the pupil where no specific guidance has been given. Adults are expected to make responsible and informed judgements about their own behaviour in order to secure the best interests and welfare of the pupils in their charge.

Currently all teachers must by law comply with the Code of Conduct and Practice for Registered Teachers and the Statement of Professional Values and Practice which therefore form part of this Code of Practice. The document Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education Settings March 2009 is also incorporated into this should be also be adhered to as part of the Code of Conduct.

Where an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff the governing body will follow the guidance set out in Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education published by the DCFS and in force from January 2007. This guidance is about managing allegations that might indicate that a person is unsuitable to continue to work with children in their present position, or in any capacity. It will be used where it is alleged that a member of staff or a volunteer or a governor has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;

or,

- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates s/he is unsuitable to work with children.

Section 1 of the Policy relates to general staff behaviour. Section 2 relates directly to working with children.

SECTION 1

Propriety, Behaviour, Reputation and Appearance

All staff have a responsibility to maintain public confidence in their ability to safeguard the welfare and best interests of pupils. They should adopt high standards of personal conduct in order to maintain the confidence and respect of their peers, pupils and the public in general. An individual's behaviour, either in or out of the workplace, should not compromise her/his position within the work setting or bring the school into disrepute.

All staff of the Trust have a responsibility to treat colleagues with dignity and respect irrespective of; – sex, race, marital status, age, health, disability, sexual orientation, religious belief, political conviction membership or non-membership of a Trade Union, real or suspected HIV/AIDS, their state of physical/mental health or perceived state of physical mental health, their appearance, exerting a statutory right or whistle-blowing, or unrelated criminal conviction. Staff who do not treat their colleagues appropriately could be disciplined under the Trust Disciplinary Policy,

A person's dress and appearance are matters of personal choice and self-expression. However, staff and volunteers should recognise that they are role models to the children and their choice of dress should uphold the school's expectations for the children.

All staff must:

- dress in a manner that is appropriate to a professional role and promoting a professional image.
- dress in a manner that is not offensive, revealing or sexually provocative.
- dress in a manner that is absent from political or other contentious slogans.

Those who dress or appear in a manner which could be considered as inappropriate could render themselves vulnerable to criticism or allegations of misconduct.

Whilst it is not possible to list every possible clothing option here, it is hoped that staff will support the safer code of professional conduct and will dress in a way that reflects the high esteem we are held in by children and their families.

Staff should wear PE clothes and trainers when teaching PE and Games lessons. To be consistent with the expectations for the children, staff should change into these for the morning or afternoon period whenever the lesson is taught and PE clothes should not be worn throughout the day.

Teaching assistants attending to support the learning of pupils in a PE or Games lesson should at a minimum have a change of appropriate shoes.

Whenever in school, including when undertaking PPA or subject leadership responsibilities, staff should maintain a high standard of professional dress

Attendance

The Trust's expectations are that staff members:

- Attend work in accordance with their contract of employment and associated terms and conditions in relation to hours, days of work and holidays.
- Make routine medical and dental appointments outside of their working hours or during holidays, where possible.

- Refer to the Trust's policy on special leave if they need time off for any reason other than personal illness.
- Follow their school's absence reporting procedure when they are absent from work due to illness or injury.

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.

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

Staff may undertake work outside school, either paid or voluntary, provided that it does not conflict with the interests of the school nor be to a level which may contravene the working time regulations or affect an individual's work performance in the school. Staff must Inform their line manager of any paid work which is undertaken elsewhere, for compliance with Working Time Regulations.

Disclosure of Criminal Convictions

If you receive a reprimand, formal warning, conditional caution, bind-over or conviction for any reason during your employment, or you are arrested or charged with a criminal offence by the Police, you must notify your line manager immediately. The bearing of the offence on your employment in your current post will be fully and objectively considered and, if necessary, an investigation may be carried out. Appropriate action would then be taken based on the outcome of the investigation. Should you be arrested, there is the expectation that you provide the Police with full details of your role within the Trust and the setting in which you work.

Honesty and Integrity

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

The use of personal loyalty cards whilst making purchases on behalf of schools within the Trust, or the Trust itself is unacceptable

Staff members are required to declare their interests where the group or organisation they are affiliated with would be considered to be in conflict with the ethos of the school or Trust. Membership to a trade union or staff representative group does not need to be declared.

Staff members should also carefully consider whether they need to declare their relationship with any individual where this might cause a conflict with School or Trusts activities.

Failure to make a relevant declaration of interests is a very serious breach of trust and, therefore, if employees are in doubt about a declaration, they are advised to contact the Trust Business Manager or trade union.

All declarations, including nil returns, should be submitted in writing to the headteacher on the Register of Business Interests.

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 2010, you should refer to your schools Whistleblowing procedure. Staff need to take care that they do not accept any gift that might be construed by others as a bribe, or lead the giver to expect preferential treatment. You should tactfully refuse offers of gifts or services from organisations or person who do, or might, provide work or services to the schools within the Trust or the Trust itself. However, if refusal of a small gift e.g. a small box of chocolates or bottle of wine would cause offence or upset the relationship with a client you should consult your manager and where it is felt appropriate the gift can be kept and put in the staffroom or used for a raffle prize.

There are occasions when pupils or parents wish to pass small tokens of appreciation to staff e.g. at Christmas or as a thank-you and this is acceptable. However, it is unacceptable to receive gifts on a regular basis or of any significant value.

Personal gifts must not be given to pupils. This could be misinterpreted as a gesture either to bribe, or single out the young person. It might be perceived that a 'favour' of some kind is expected in return. Any reward given to a pupil should be consistent with the school's behaviour policy, recorded, and not based on favouritism.

Social Contact and Social Networking

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

For your own protection, the Trust advises that you:

- Ensure all electronic communication with pupils, parents, carers, staff and others is compatible with your professional role and in line with school policies. Staff must not post material which damages the reputation of the school or which **causes concern about their suitability to work with children and young people**. Those who post material which could be considered as inappropriate could render themselves vulnerable to criticism or allegations of misconduct or disciplinary action.
- Do not talk about your professional role in any capacity when using social media such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and You Tube, et cetera. When conducting your own social media activities, other users should be in no doubt that all opinions are your own and not that of the school in which you work or the Trust.
- Do not engage in any inappropriate mobile phone communication via instant messaging sexting with pupils, parents or other staff. Staff in school should not establish or seek to establish social contact with pupils for the purpose of securing a friendship or to pursue or strengthen a relationship. This includes social networking sites such as MySpace and Facebook and blogging. Even if a pupil seeks to establish social contact, or if this occurs coincidentally, the member of staff should exercise her/his professional judgment in making a response and be aware that such social contact in person, by phone or on the internet could be misconstrued and may place the member of staff in a very vulnerable position. (Some schools in the Trust have more specific detailed rules regarding Facebook and the friending of parents of pupils of the school – please check in your staff handbook)
- Staff should be mindful that messages to other staff members delivered through texting or social media potentially could be misinterpreted. Social networking can “muddy the water” between a working and a social relationship – staff should ensure that all communication with other staff made through social platforms is professional and leaves no room for misinterpretation.
- Staff and volunteers must not give their personal details such as home/mobile phone number; home or e-mail address to pupils unless the need to do so is agreed with senior management.

- Use school ICT systems and resources, not personal resources, for all school business. This includes your school email address, school mobile phone and school video camera/camera. Only take images of pupils and/or staff for professional purposes, in accordance with school policy, with the knowledge of SLT and using school equipment only.

Do not disclose any passwords and ensure that personal pupil held data is kept secure and used appropriately

Your school e mails should be checked daily, as a minimum on working days or every other day if one day is particularly busy.

You have a duty to report any E Safety incident which may impact on you, your professionalism or the school to your DSL or SLT.

The Trust will treat “electronic behaviour” in the same way it would treat “non-electronic” behaviour and any breaches of policy will be dealt with under the Disciplinary Procedure.

Health and Safety

Staff members must:

- Be familiar with and adhere to the Trust’s Health and Safety Policy and must ensure that they take every action to keep themselves and everyone in the school environment safe and well.
- Comply with health and safety regulations and use any safety equipment and protective clothing which is supplied to them.
- Comply with hygiene requirements.
- Comply with accident reporting requirements.

Alcohol and illegal drugs

The taking of illegal drugs or alcohol during working hours is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Staff members must never attend work under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.

If alcohol or drug usage impacts on a staff member’s performance, the School and/or Trust has the right to discuss the matter with the employee and take appropriate action, including referral to the police.

Personal Relationships within the workplace

If you are involved in appointments, you should ensure that those appointments are made only on the basis of merit. In order to avoid any possible accusation of bias, you should not be involved in an appointment where you are related to an applicant, or have a personal relationship with them outside of work.

Similarly, you should not be involved in decisions relating to discipline, promotion, recruitment or pay and conditions for any other employee who is a relative, partner or someone with whom you have a personal relationship. There is an existing requirement for all job applicants to declare any relationship with an employee of the Trust. Failure to do so could result in disciplinary action.

Where an employee who is involved in any part of the recruitment process identifies that they are related to, or has a close personal relationship with an applicant they should take no further part in the recruitment process and should inform their line manager accordingly. They should also not act as a referee for that person.

There is no general bar on the appointment of anyone to a post where they would manage, or be

managed by someone to whom they are related or with whom they have a close personal relationship. As far as is reasonably practicable, alternative management arrangements will be put in place to ensure compliance with the Code of Conduct and to address other potential problems. If the Head Teacher considers that it is not practicable to make alternative management arrangements such appointments will not be allowed. It is important that the rationale for such a decision is clear and in writing in case a challenge is made to that decision.

Where such an appointment is made the Head Teacher must document the alternative management arrangements which have been put in place. Such arrangements should be reviewed on a regular basis.

Any personal relationship which develops during the course of employment between an employee and his/her manager must be declared by both parties in writing using a form that can be obtained from the Trust Business Manager. This must be sent to the Head Teacher and details will be recorded on the individuals' personal files. Failure to report the relationship may result in disciplinary action. Similarly, where a relationship ends during the course of employment this should also be declared using the form. The pro forma should be submitted to the Board of Governors if the relationship involves the Head Teacher.

Wherever possible alternative management arrangements (which will be documented on the pro forma) will be put in place to ensure compliance with the Code of Conduct and address other potential issues, such as how the situation may affect team dynamics, thus enabling both employees to remain in their posts. In cases where this is not practicable the resolution of the situation will be discussed with the employees concerned.

Employees who wish to discuss a relationship that exists within their team should be able to do so with an independent and/or more senior manager where the relationship involves the manager.

The managerial relationship will be monitored and, in the event of inappropriate conduct, disciplinary action will be taken.

SECTION 2

Pupil Care and Well-Being

It is expected that staff will maintain a professional relationship with children at all times and conduct themselves in a proper and acceptable way in their dealings with children. Staff must exercise judgement in deciding upon the difference between open, honest, friendly, and caring involvement with children based upon trust and good humour as against overfamiliarity, which might lead to a breakdown of what is universally accepted as appropriate staff/child relationships.

At times an adult may need to make physical contact with a child dealing with first aid matters or when comforting a child who is in distress. The school accepts this as normal practice. However, staff must not place themselves in a position where accusations of improper conduct could be made.

An adult of the appropriate sex and in the presence of a second adult may carry out any examination of a child who is hurt or injured which may be of an intimate nature. The Headteacher or Assistant Headteacher should be informed immediately. The better preferred course of action in this instance would be to phone the parent to request they attend to deal with their child's injury. Teachers need to exercise extreme caution in placing themselves in any situation with children where accusations of improper conduct could be made.

Personal property of a sexually explicit nature such as books, magazines, DVDs or such material on any electronic media must not be brought onto or stored on the school premises.

Confidentiality and Security

We expect staff to have an awareness and high regard for the confidential, sensitive and important nature of their role and will be mindful of this at all times including formal and informal discussions with parents, other members of staff, children and the wider school community. Particular attention should be paid in public areas of the school such as corridors, the playground and the team room.

A “need to know” approach should be adopted to safeguard this principle and to ensure no child or group of children is unfairly stereotyped or unnecessarily spotlighted. Where possible no names should be explicitly mentioned whether for positive, negative or information purposes in public areas, unless it is on a need to know basis for all present to hear.

Staff should avoid being ‘drawn’ into discussions which relate to school matters or matters regarding an individual child, group of children or their families. If there are any concerns in this matter please refer them to the Headteacher or governors. Details relating to children are confidential and should only be shared with staff as part of their professional role or with the parents/guardians of the child in question.

Confidential records including those in hard copy, on a laptop or on a memory stick should be kept in a safe place at all times and should not be left in open places in school or at home, or left in cars.

Confidentiality

Members of staff, volunteers and governors may have access to confidential information about pupils in order to undertake their responsibilities. In some circumstances the information may be highly sensitive. Confidential or personal information about a pupil or her/his family must never be disclosed to anyone other than on a need to know basis. In circumstances where the pupil’s identity does not need to be disclosed the information should be used anonymously. Information must never be used to intimidate, humiliate, or embarrass the pupil.

There are some circumstances in which a member of staff may be expected to share information about a pupil, for example when abuse is alleged or suspected. In such cases, individuals have a duty to pass information on without delay to those with designated pupil protection responsibilities.

Confidential information about pupils must be held securely. Confidential information about pupils must not be held off the school site other than on security-protected school equipment. Information must only be stored for the length of time necessary to discharge the task for which it is required.

If a member of staff is in any doubt about the storage of, or sharing of information s/he must seek guidance from a senior member of staff. Any media or legal enquiries must be passed to senior management.

Sexual Contact with Children and Young People and Abuse of Trust

Any sexual behaviour, whether homosexual or heterosexual, by a member of staff, volunteer or governor with or towards a child or young person is illegal. Children and young people are protected by the same laws as adults in relation to non-consensual sexual behaviour. They are additionally protected by specific legal provisions regardless of whether there is consent or not. All adults working in the school who have contact with pupils are in positions of trust. The Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act 2000 specifically established a criminal offence of the abuse of trust in relation to teachers and others who are in relationship of trust with 16 -18 year olds.

Sexual behaviour includes non-contact activities, such as causing a child or young person to engage in or watch sexual activity or the production of indecent images of children. 'Working Together to Safeguard Children', defines sexual abuse as "forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening".

There are occasions when adults embark on a course of behaviour known as 'grooming' where the sole purpose is to gain the trust of a child or young person, and manipulate that relationship so that sexual abuse can take place. Staff and volunteers should be aware that conferring special attention without good reason or favouring a pupil has the potential to be construed as being part of a 'grooming' process, which is a criminal offence.

A relationship between a member of staff, a volunteer or a governor and a pupil cannot be a relationship between equals. There is potential for exploitation and harm of pupils and all adults have a responsibility to ensure that the unequal balance of power is not used for personal advantage or gratification. It is important to recognise that women as well as men may abuse a position of trust.

Infatuations and Crushes

Adults must recognise that a pupil may be strongly attracted to a member of staff or volunteer and/or develop a heterosexual or homosexual infatuation. A member of staff or volunteer, who becomes aware that a pupil may be infatuated with him/herself or a colleague, must report this without delay to a senior colleague so that appropriate action can be taken. The situation will be taken seriously and the adult should be careful to ensure that no encouragement of any kind is given to the pupil. It should also be recognised that careless and insensitive reactions may provoke false accusations. Whilst the risk of infatuation is not limited to younger members of staff, newly qualified teachers must recognise their particular vulnerability to adolescent infatuation.

Seeking advice in circumstances where concerns arise. Examples of situations which must be reported are given below:

- Where a member of staff or volunteer is concerned that he or she might be developing a relationship with a pupil which could have the potential to represent an abuse of trust,
- Where a member of staff or volunteer is concerned that a pupil is becoming attracted to him or her or that there is a developing attachment or dependency.
- Where a member of staff or volunteer is concerned that actions or words have been misunderstood or misconstrued by a pupil such that an abuse of trust might be wrongly suspected by others.
- Where a member of staff or volunteer is concerned about the apparent development of a relationship by another member of staff or volunteer, or receives information about such a relationship

Physical Contact and Personal Privacy

There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate and proper for staff to have physical contact with pupils, but it is crucial that they only do so in ways appropriate to their professional role. When physical contact is made with pupils this should be in response to their needs at the time, of limited duration and appropriate given their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background. It is not possible to be specific about the appropriateness of each physical contact, since an action that is appropriate with one pupil in one set of circumstances may be inappropriate in another, or with a different pupil.

Physical contact should never be secretive or casual, or for the gratification of the adult, or represent a

misuse of authority. If a member of staff or volunteer believes that an action could be misinterpreted, the incident and circumstances should be reported.

Physical contact, which occurs regularly with a pupil or pupils, is likely to raise questions unless the justification for this is part of a formally agreed plan (for example in relation to pupils with SEN or physical disabilities). Any such contact should be the subject of an agreed and open school policy and subject to review. Where feasible, staff should seek the pupil's permission before initiating contact. Staff should listen, observe and take note of the pupil's reaction or feelings and – so far as is possible - use a level of contact which is acceptable to the pupil for the minimum time necessary.

There may be occasions when a distressed pupil needs comfort and reassurance. This may include age-appropriate physical contact. Staff should remain self-aware at all times in order that their contact is not threatening, intrusive or subject to misinterpretation. Where a member of staff has a particular concern about the need to provide this type of care and reassurance s/he should seek further advice from a senior manager.

Some staff, for example, those who teach PE and games, or who provide music tuition will on occasions have to initiate physical contact with pupils in order to support a pupil so they can perform a task safely, to demonstrate the use of a particular piece of equipment/instrument or assist them with an exercise. This should be done with the pupil's agreement. Contact under these circumstances should be for the minimum time necessary to complete the activity and take place in an open environment. Staff should remain sensitive to any discomfort expressed verbally or non-verbally by the pupil

Pupils are entitled to respect and privacy when changing clothes or taking a shower. 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 supervision should be appropriate to the needs and age of the pupils concerned and sensitive to the potential for embarrassment.

Staff with a job description which includes intimate care duties will have appropriate training and written guidance.

Behaviour Management and Physical Intervention

All pupils have a right to be treated with respect and dignity. Corporal punishment is unlawful in all schools. Staff and volunteers must not use any form of degrading treatment to punish a pupil. The use of sarcasm, demeaning or insensitive comments towards pupils is not acceptable in any situation. Shouting aggressively or hectoring is not acceptable in any situation. Deliberately intimidating pupils by overweening physical presence is not acceptable in any situation.

The circumstances in which staff can physically intervene with a pupil are covered by the 1996 Education Act. Staff may legitimately intervene to prevent a pupil from committing a criminal offence, injuring themselves or others, causing damage to property, engaging in behaviour prejudicial to good order and to maintain good order and discipline. Staff should have regard to the health and safety of themselves and others. Under no circumstances should physical force be used as a form of punishment. The use of unwarranted physical force is likely to constitute a criminal offence.

All schools must have trained first aiders/appointed persons. Staff must have had the appropriate training before administering first aid or medication except in an emergency.

One to One Situations and Meetings with Pupils

Staff working in one to one situations with pupils are more vulnerable to allegations. Staff must recognise this possibility and plan and conduct such meetings accordingly. Every attempt should be made to ensure that the safety and security needs of both staff and pupils are met. Managers should undertake a risk assessment in relation to the specific nature and implications of one to one work for each worker and pupil. Where such a meeting is demonstrably unavoidable it is advisable to avoid remote or secluded areas of the school and to ensure that the door of the room is left open and/or visual/auditory contact with others is maintained. Any arrangements should be reviewed on a regular basis.

Pre-arranged meetings with pupils away from the school premises or on the school site when the school is not in session are not permitted unless approval is obtained from their parent/ guardian and the Headteacher or other senior colleague with delegated authority.

Transporting Pupils

In certain situations, e.g. out of school activities, staff, volunteers or governors may agree to transport pupils. Wherever possible transport arrangements should be made in advance by a designated member of staff. Wherever possible and practicable transport should be provided other than in private vehicles, with at least one adult additional to the driver acting as an escort.

Adults should ensure that their behaviour is safe and that the transport arrangements and the vehicle meet all legal requirements. They must ensure that the vehicle is roadworthy and appropriately insured and that the maximum capacity is not exceeded

Educational Visits and School Clubs

Staff and volunteers should take particular care when supervising pupils in the less formal atmosphere of an educational visit, particularly in a residential setting, or after-school activity. Staff and volunteers remain in a position of trust and the same standards of conduct apply. Each school has a policy on educational visits which forms part of this Code of Conduct.

Curriculum

Many areas of the curriculum can include or raise subject matter which is sexually explicit, or of an otherwise sensitive nature. Care should be taken to ensure that resource materials cannot be misinterpreted and clearly relate to the learning outcomes identified by the lesson plan. This plan should highlight particular areas of risk and sensitivity.

The curriculum can sometimes include or lead to unplanned discussion about subject matter of a sexually explicit or otherwise sensitive nature. Responding to pupils' questions can require careful judgement and staff must take guidance in these circumstances from a senior member of staff.

The governing body is required by law to have a policy on sex and relationships education and it forms part of this Code of Conduct.

Photography, Videos and other Creative Arts

Many school activities involve recording images. These may be undertaken as part of the curriculum, extra school activities, for publicity, or to celebrate achievement. GDPR affects the use of photography. An image of a child is personal data and it is, therefore, a requirement under the Act that consent is obtained from the parent of a child for any images made such as those used for school web sites, productions or other purposes.

Staff need to be aware of the potential for such images to be misused to create indecent images of children and/or for 'grooming' purposes. Careful consideration should be given as to how these activities are organised and undertaken. Particular regard needs to be given when they involve young or vulnerable pupils who may be unable to question why or how the activities are taking place. Pupils who have been previously abused in this way may feel threatened by the use of photography, filming etc. in the teaching environment.

Staff should remain sensitive to any pupil who appears uncomfortable and should recognise the potential for misinterpretation. It is also important to take into account the wishes of the child, remembering that some children do not wish to have their photograph taken.

Using images of pupils for publicity purposes will require the age-appropriate consent of the individual concerned and their legal guardians. Images must not be displayed on websites, in publications or in a public place without such consent. The definition of a public place includes areas where visitors to the school have access.

When using a photograph the following guidance must be followed:

- if the photograph is used, avoid naming the pupil
- if the pupil is named, avoid using the photograph
- images must be securely stored and used only by those authorised to do so.
- be clear about the purpose of the activity and about what will happen to the photographs when the lesson/activity is concluded
- ensure that a senior member of staff is aware that the photography/image equipment is being used and for what purpose.
- ensure that all images are available for scrutiny in order to screen for acceptability
- be able to justify the images made
- do not make images in one to one situations.
- do not take, display or distribute images of pupils unless there is consent to do so.

The school has additional guidance on the use of images which includes a consent form. The guidance forms part of this Code of Conduct.

Internet Use and Electronic Communication

Under no circumstances should adults in school access inappropriate images. Deliberately accessing pornography on school equipment will be treated as gross misconduct and may be a criminal offence. Accessing indecent images of children on the internet, and making, storing or disseminating such material, is illegal and is likely lead to criminal prosecution and may result in barring from work with children and young people.

Sharing Concerns and Recording Incidents

All staff, volunteers and governors must be vigilant and share concerns and report incidents. Whistle blowing is the mechanism by which staff can voice their concerns, made in good faith, without fear of repercussion. The following “Red Flag Behaviours” give indications of the kinds of situations which should be shared with a senior member of staff.

An adult who:

- Allows a pupil/young person to be treated badly; pretends not to know it is happening
- Gossips/shares information inappropriately
- Demonstrates inappropriate discriminatory behaviour and/or uses inappropriate language
- Dresses in a way which is inappropriate for the job role
- Does not treat pupils fairly - demonstrates favouritism
- Demonstrates a lack of understanding about personal and professional boundaries
- Uses his/her position of trust to intimidate, threaten, coerce or undermine
- Appears to have an inappropriate social relationship with a pupil or pupils
- Appears to have special or different relationships with a pupil or pupils
- Seems to seek out unnecessary opportunities to be alone with a pupil

Child Safeguarding Competences for staff and volunteers who work with Children and Young People

The following competences are necessary:

Emotional Awareness

- Aware of the range of emotions in self and others
- Demonstrates empathy for the concerns of others
- Listens to and understands directly and indirectly expressed feelings
- Encourages others to express themselves openly
- Manages strong emotions and responds constructively to the source of problems
- Listens to personal comments without becoming defensive
- In highly stressful situations, keeps own feelings in check, takes constructive action and calms others down
- Has a range of mechanisms for dealing with stress, can recognise when to use them and does so
- Shows respect for others’ feelings, views and circumstances

Working within Professional Boundaries

- Demonstrates professional courtesy
- Accepts responsibility and accountability for own work and can define the responsibilities of others
- Recognises the limits of own authority within the role
- Seeks and uses professional support appropriately
- Understands the principle of confidentiality

Self-awareness

- Has a balanced understanding of self and others
- Has a realistic knowledge of personal strengths and weaknesses
- Can demonstrate flexibility of approach
- Shows a realistic appreciation of the challenges of working with this client group

Ability to Safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people

- Appreciates the significance of safeguarding and interprets this accurately for all individual children and young people whatever their life circumstances
- Has a good understanding of the safeguarding agenda
- Can demonstrate an ability to contribute towards a safe environment
- Is up-to-date with legislation and current events
- Can demonstrate how s/he has promoted 'best practice'
- Shows a personal commitment to safeguarding children

Safeguarding Children, Child Protection, Vulnerable Child & Whistleblowing Procedures

Dane Carton, Carmel Jones, Caroline Abela-Georg and Tony Del-Busso are the designated personnel for child protection. If you have any concern about a child you should bring it to the immediate attention of one of the designated personnel for child protection. Each school will have their own procedures for action once you have spoken to the DSL – please see your school safeguarding policy. Having taken advice you may be required to complete a logging form. You will be given advice on how to complete this form. These are located in the Headteachers office and once completed the form should be passed on to one of the designated staff. Once you have passed on your concerns and you are satisfied that this has been picked up by one of the DPCP in the school your responsibility has been fulfilled and you may not be included or informed in the next stage of the process.

Not all child protection information results in a referral; small pieces of information may not be significant on their own, but can help to contribute to a 'jigsaw' of abuse.

If, however, you continue to have concerns for the child and are not satisfied that the child protection procedure is being followed, it is your duty to challenge the Headteacher and if you continue to have concerns you should follow the Trust Whistle Blowing Policy, bring your concerns to the immediate attention of the Governor for Child Protection or go directly to Duty and Advice at your relevant Local Authority.

Case Conferences

From time to time teachers may be required to attend case conferences. Advice should be sought from the Headteacher on written and verbal reporting at such meetings.