



## **Staff/Governors/Volunteers Code of Conduct**

### **ST. AUGUSTINE OF CANTERBURY CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

#### **Mission Statement**

**"I called you by your name, you are mine." Isaiah 43**

*Our mission at St. Augustine of Canterbury Catholic Primary School is to provide a learning environment in which all children and staff reach their potential in an atmosphere of kindness, empathy, honesty, gratitude, courage and love.*

*All our work is inspired by the teachings of Christ and His Church. Working in partnership with parents and carers, we aim to enhance and celebrate the moral, physical, social and emotional development of all children entrusted to us.*

*We are an inclusive community, welcoming and accepting all who enter our school, regardless of ability or background; teaching children to be understanding of the world they are growing up in, together with learning how to live alongside and respect diversity within our society.*

#### **Equality Statement**

These staff policies have been equality impact assessed and we believe that it is in line with the Equality Act 2010 as it is fair, it does not prioritise or disadvantage any pupil or member of staff and it helps to promote equality at St. Augustine of Canterbury Catholic Primary School.

We have carefully considered and analysed the impact of these policies on equality and the possible implications for pupils and staff with protected characteristics, as part of our commitment to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

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### 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 behaviour.

We expect that all teacher will act in accordance with the personal and professional behaviours set out in the Teachers' Standards. Teaching Assistants will act in accordance with the Professional Standards for Teaching Assistants.

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.

The mission statement reflects how the family of St. Augustine of Canterbury is to conduct itself at all times. All communication and interaction between members of St. Augustine of Canterbury - 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 school 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.

## **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.

## **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

## **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 must 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/Safeguarding policy and procedures are emailed to all staff and available in the staff room, school office and the policies section of our school website. New staff will also be given copies on arrival/sent through email.

All staff are expected to follow Safeguarding/Child Protection and Whistle blowing procedures including training.

All staff are expected to follow monitoring and filtering processes including reporting and appropriate supervision. All staff have received training in regard to Monitoring and Filtering KCSIE updates.

## **Allegations that may meet the harm threshold**

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.
- 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 in consultation with the LADO. This will be the headteacher, or the chair of governors where the headteacher is the subject of the allegation.

### **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 harms 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 one-to-one activities where they can't easily be seen
- Using inappropriate language
- Humiliating children

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. 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.

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

The LADO will be consulted where appropriate. Staff must be satisfied that the Headteacher/Designated Safeguarding Lead will progress this, if they have any doubt that this may not happen or does not happen, staff should feel confident that they can refer and should know how to refer to the LADO.

**Telephone number for the LADO Service (01634 331 065) will be answered between 9am-5pm.**

**See also: Allegations Against Staff including Low Level Concerns Policy Procedures**

### **Whistle-blowing**

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

- Pupils' or staff's 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 Governors.

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.

### **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 in to 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 not acceptable on a one to one basis.

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 to the Headteacher in line with the procedures set out in our child protection and safeguarding policy.

### **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 policy and acceptable use policy.

### **Acceptable use of technology**

Staff will not use technology in 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 or in front of pupils. They will also not use personal mobile phones or cameras to take pictures of pupils. See School Acceptable Use Policy for Staff, Governors and Volunteers.

We have the right to monitor emails and internet use on the school IT system. Staff devices are monitored using SENSO.

### **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.

### **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. Gifts that are worth more than £100 must be declared and recorded on the gifts and hospitality register.

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.

### **Dress code**

Staff will dress in a professional, appropriate manner.

Outfits will not be overly revealing, and we ask that tattoos are covered up.

Clothes will not display any offensive or political slogans.

Staff/volunteers and Governors must wear their identification badge/lanyard at all times.

### **Conduct outside of work**

Staff will not act in a way that would bring the school, 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, families (past and present) on social media.

### **Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed annually, 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.

### **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
- Allegations against staff including low-level concerns policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- KCSIE 2024
- Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings February 2022
- Staff grievance procedures
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- DfE guidance PREVENT Duty - advice for schools

I have read and understood the Code of Conduct:

Name: .....

Signature: .....

Date: .....