



# **St John's CE Primary Academy**

## **Staff Conduct Policy**

**July 2026**

**Date of current policy:** July 2026

**Date of Next Review:** July 2027

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## **Rationale**

All adults who come into contact with children in their work have a duty of care to safeguard and promote their welfare. The purpose of this policy is to outline for all staff what is expected by the school in terms of correct professional behaviour and what constitutes illegal behaviour and what might be considered as misconduct.

Whilst every attempt has been made to cover a range of situations, it is recognised that no policy can cover all eventualities. There may be times when staff have to make professional judgements about situations not covered in this policy, or which could contravene the guidance given. It is expected that in these circumstances staff will always advise the Trust Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher of the justification for any such actions already taken or proposed.

## **Principles**

All staff are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should avoid any conduct, which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivations and intentions when working with children.

All teaching staff at this school are expected to adhere to the requirements of the Teachers' Standards (DFE) to uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school. This includes not undermining fundamental British values.

All staff are expected to uphold the Christian ethos of the school and model our core values of respect, aspiration, resilience, kindness and inclusion. All staff are expected to encourage respect for other people, cultures and religions. Staff are expected to work in an open and transparent way and to self-monitor and review their practice to ensure that their professional behaviour is of the expected standard at all times within and out of school.

## **Duty of Care**

All staff will be held accountable for the way in which they exercise authority; manage risk; use resources; and safeguard the children in their care. Staff are expected to take reasonable steps to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the children. Failure to do so may be regarded as neglect or breach of the professional duty of care.

The duty of care will in part be exercised through the development of respectful and caring relationships between staff and children in school, as well as through the implementation and explicit teaching of the St John's Way Behaviour Curriculum. In forming these relationships staff are expected to demonstrate integrity, maturity and good judgement. This includes maintaining appropriate professional boundaries and avoiding behaviour which might be misinterpreted by children or other adults. Staff should report and record any incident with this potential.

## **Confidentiality**

Staff may have access to confidential information about children in order to undertake their responsibilities in school. This information must be kept confidential and staff should only share this information when it is in the best interests of the child to do so. If a member of staff is in any doubt about whether

to share information or keep it confidential, they should seek clarification from the Designated Safeguarding Lead or one of the Deputy Designated Safeguarding lead's.

### **Propriety and Behaviour**

Staff have a professional responsibility to maintain public confidence in their ability to undertake their designated role in the school. It is therefore expected that they will adopt high standards of personal conduct both in and out of the workplace to maintain this professional integrity. There may be times, for example, when a staff member's behaviour or actions in their personal life come under scrutiny from local communities, the media or public authorities. This could be because their behaviour is considered to compromise their position in school or indicate an unsuitability to work with children. Misuse of drugs, alcohol or acts of violence would constitute examples of such behaviour.

The behaviour of a staff member's partner or other family member may also raise concerns. In such instances careful consideration will be given by this school as to whether the behaviour of a husband/wife/partner/other family member renders the adult working with children to pose a risk of harm.

### **Dress and Appearance**

All staff employed at the school are expected to dress appropriate to their role. In instances where personal protective clothing has been provided by the school staff are expected to use this at appropriate times.

Staff are required to dress so that their personal appearance is not likely to be viewed as offensive, revealing or sexually provocative. It must also be free of any political or otherwise contentious slogans and be culturally sensitive and not discriminatory.

### **Staff absence**

If a member of staff is not able to attend work for any reason they should contact (phone not text) the Trust Headteacher between 0630hr and 0730hr. Staff should then contact the school office by 1530hr the same day to discuss future intentions.

### **Personal Living Space**

All staff are expected to be vigilant in maintaining their privacy and be mindful of the need to avoid placing themselves in vulnerable situations. Pupils from the school should not be invited or be in the home of any staff member unless the staff member has paternal rights or is otherwise related to the child. Under no circumstances must pupils be used to undertake personal jobs or errands for members of staff.

### **Gifts, Rewards and Favouritism**

The giving of gifts or rewards to pupils must always be part of agreed school policy for supporting positive behaviour or recognising particular achievement. Staff are expected to exercise care and good judgement when selecting pupils for specific activities or privileges to avoid perceptions of favouritism or unfairness.

There may be occasions when pupils or parents wish to pass small tokens of appreciation to staff; for example, as a 'thank you' and this is acceptable. It is unacceptable however, to accept gifts on a regular basis or of any significant value. Staff must also take account when accepting gifts that this could be construed by others as a bribe, or lead the giver to expect preferential treatment in the future.

## **Infatuations**

Occasionally a pupil may develop an infatuation for a staff member. Staff are expected to report and record any incidents or indications to the Trust Headteacher. The staff member may also be required to discuss the matter with the parent/carer so appropriate action can be taken to avoid any hurt, distress or embarrassment and safeguard all those concerned.

## **Communication with Pupils (including use of technology)**

- Communication between pupils and staff, by whatever method, should take place within clear professional boundaries.
- Staff should not share any personal information with pupils, including home e-mail, home or mobile phone numbers. They should not request, or respond to, any personal information from the pupil, other than that which is appropriate as part of their professional role.
- Staff should not use any form of their own personal technology to communicate directly with a pupil. This includes mobile phones, text messaging, e-mails, digital cameras, iPad, videos, social media, websites, blogs etc.
- Staff should also ensure that personal social networking sites, which they access away from the work place, have high privacy settings so that their personal data is not accessible to pupils.

In the event that a pupil tries to initiate contact with a member of staff via a personal social networking site or other form of personal media, the staff member must not respond to this approach and the incident should be reported to the Trust Headteacher.

## **Mobile phones in school**

Staff should not use mobile phones whilst pupils are in the same room. Photographs of pupils must not be taken on personal mobile phones. Reception staff should use the lockers provided to lock mobile phones away. Mobile phones can be used in emergency situations. School mobile phones can be used for trips and photographs.

## **Social Contact**

Staff should not seek to have social contact with pupils or their families, unless the reason for this contact has been agreed with the Trust Headteacher. This does not prevent a member of staff from supporting a parent/carer who may be in particular difficulty, but this must not lead to this person becoming dependent for support outside the professional role.

## **Sexual Contact**

Given that St John's is a primary setting, and intimate or sexual relationships between staff and pupils will be regarded as a potential illegal offence and a grave breach of trust. Staff allowing or encouraging a relationship to develop which might lead to a sexual relationship is wholly unacceptable. Any sexual activity between staff and pupil will always be reported to the police for investigation immediately. Engaging in such activity will also prompt the instigation of disciplinary procedures. Either of the above may lead to the staff member being dismissed and referred to the Disclosure and Barring Service.

## **Physical Contact**

There are some occasions when it is considered appropriate for staff to have some physical contact with pupils as part of their professional role. However, it is crucial that in all circumstances staff must never touch a child in a way which may be considered indecent. Physical contact should never be secretive, or for the gratification of the staff member, or represent a misuse of authority. When staff make physical contact with a pupil this should be in response to their needs at the time, of limited duration and appropriate to their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background. It is not possible in this policy to be specific about the appropriateness of each physical contact, since an action that is appropriate with one child in one set of circumstances may be inappropriate in another, or with a different child. Staff should use their professional judgement at all times, observe and take note of pupil response and the general culture of 'limited touch'.

Staff are expected to know and follow the procedures in the school Behaviour and Discipline Policy where pupils display difficult or challenging behaviour. Staff are also expected to know and have read the guidance from the Department for Education around restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force (April 2026). The use of physical intervention can only be justified in exceptional circumstances and must be used as a last resort when other behaviour management strategies have failed. It should only be used to manage a pupil if it is necessary to prevent personal injury to the pupil, other pupils or adults, to prevent serious damage to property or in what would reasonably be regarded as exceptional circumstances. In such instances the school policy on Restrictive Physical Intervention should be followed by staff including the necessary reporting arrangements outlined in the policy.

### **Home Visits**

Staff are not permitted to make home visits unless prior approval has been given by the Trust Headteacher for that visit to take place. Under no circumstances should an adult visit a child in their own home outside agreed work arrangements or invite a child to their own home or that of a family member, colleague or friend.

### **Transporting Pupils**

There will be occasions when staff will be asked or volunteer to transport pupils in their own vehicles. If staff use their own vehicles for this purpose, they are expected to ensure that the vehicle is roadworthy, appropriately taxed/insured and that the maximum capacity is not exceeded. Staff have a duty to ensure that the legal requirement that all passengers wear seat belts is met. They are also required to be aware of and adhere to the use of car seats for younger children.

### **Trips and Outings (including residential visits)**

Staff are required to take particular care when supervising pupils on educational visits and other trips/outings beyond the work place. Staff remain in a position of trust throughout the duration of the activity and must ensure that their behaviour remains professional at all times. Health and Safety arrangements require staff to keep colleagues aware of their whereabouts when involved in activities outside the usual work place or normal working hours.

### **Access to Inappropriate Images and Internet Usage**

There are no circumstances that will justify staff possessing indecent images of children. Staff, who are known to access and possess links to such websites, will be viewed as a significant and potential threat to pupils. Staff accessing, making and/or storing indecent images of children on the internet are committing illegal

actions. This will lead to criminal investigation and the staff member being barred from working with children, if proven.

Staff are not permitted to use equipment belonging to the school to access adult pornography or to allow others to use it to do so. Staff are also not permitted to bring personal equipment into the work place containing these images or links to them. Should this occur serious concerns will be raised about the suitability of the staff member to continue working at the school. Staff must also ensure that any films or material shown to children are age appropriate and take all reasonable steps to ensure that unsuitable internet materials are not accessed in school.

If indecent images of children or other unsuitable materials are found on school equipment this must be reported to the Trust Headteacher. Staff must not look at the images. They are then responsible for reporting this to the police and Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) as soon as possible. School staff should not attempt to investigate the matter or evaluate the materials, as this may lead to evidence being contaminated, which in itself can lead to a criminal prosecution.

### **Sharing Concerns and Recording Incidents**

All staff are required to undertake safeguarding training and to complete updated training when directed to do so. All staff are expected to know the child protection procedures, including those in place for dealing with allegations against staff.

Staff are able to discuss with the Principal or Vice Principal any difficulties or problems that may affect their relationship with pupils so appropriate support can be provided or action can be taken.

### **Whistle Blowing and Low-Level Concerns**

The school has an agreed Whistle Blowing Policy, which is available from the school office. Whistle blowing is the mechanism by which staff can voice their concerns, made in good faith, without fear of repercussion. Staff who use whistleblowing procedures correctly will have their employment rights protected.

The school has a Low-Level Concerns policy, and staff should report any behaviour by colleagues that raises concern regardless of the source, as stated in the policy. They also have a responsibility to bring matters of concern to the attention of the Trust Headteacher. This is particularly important where the welfare of children may be at risk.

### **Declaration**

Staff must notify the Trust Headteacher immediately of anything that affects their suitability including and pending court appearances, cautions, warning, convictions, orders or other determinations made in respect of themselves or any member of their household that may render them disqualified from working with children.