
SAINT NICHOLAS SCHOOL

STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT

Note: This policy applies to all sections of the school including EYFS

Reviewed September 2016

Review Date September 2018

At Saint Nicholas School we believe in creating a whole school culture that is safe and inclusive. Our aims underpin the culture: principles of respect, understanding rights and responsibilities, fairness, tolerance and understanding for all. This code of conduct for all staff directly employed by Saint Nicholas School sets out key principles for the creation and maintenance of a safe school culture.

Objectives of a safe school culture:

- To safeguard pupils and protect staff
- To minimise opportunities for abuse
- For all staff to have confidence to report concerns with full confidentiality
- To respond promptly to concerns: we always investigate and address issues
- To exercise appropriate sanctions
- To make explicit expectations of performance and conduct
- To create and maintain an ethos of mutual respect, openness and fairness

Our Code of Conduct

- 1. All staff are expected to follow the school's policies including Behaviour; School Rules; Anti-bullying; Rewards and Sanctions.**

Pupils and staff are expected to work together to build a school whose relationships are characterised by mutual and appropriate respect and promoting British Values. Praise and building on the positive should always come first. The school Behaviour Policy and associated documents establish expectations and approved sanctions. All new staff should made aware of these policies, and any behaviour concerns should be dealt with in line with them.

Where a member of staff is having difficulties managing pupil behaviour, they should discuss this matter with their Head of School or the Head at the earliest opportunity.

- 2. All staff should be aware of what physical contact with pupils is appropriate**

Staff should only exercise physical restraint as a last resort to prevent injury or significant damage. (See Physical Restraints Policy) There is no Corporal Punishment at Saint Nicholas School.

A member of staff should never speak to or touch a pupil in a manner that could be construed as having sexual overtones or that could be interpreted as physical assault.

There are occasions when physical contact, other than reasonable force may be appropriate but every care should be taken so that this contact is not misconstrued. For example, staff may comfort a child who is hurt/distressed in a manner appropriate to the age of the child. However staff should not initiate any physical contact unnecessarily and there should be clear boundaries. Where possible

any demonstration of comfort should be given in a public place and/or in the presence of other colleagues.

Examples where physical contact may be appropriate:

- holding the hand of the younger child at the front/back of the line when going to assembly;
- when comforting a distressed pupil;
- when a pupil is being congratulated or praised;
- to demonstrate how to use a musical instrument
- to demonstrate exercises or techniques during drama including contact relevant to the exercise such as hand-holding;
- to demonstrate exercises or techniques during PE lessons or sports coaching including contact relevant
- to the activity such as supporting a pupil in gymnastics and supporting young swimmers in the pool; and
- to give first aid.

Physical restraint of pupils

A pupil may be physically restrained as a last resort only in the following cases:

- Where action is necessary in self defence or because there is imminent risk of injury. This could be direct physical danger, for example in laboratories or on the sports field or potential danger, such as preventing a 5 year old from running out of a classroom with the possibility of running out of the school grounds into the street.
- To prevent a pupil from committing a criminal offence.
- To prevent significant damage to property.
- To prevent a pupil from engaging in any behaviour that is prejudicial to maintaining good order and discipline at the school or among the pupils.
- To prevent a pupil leaving the classroom where allowing the pupil to leave would risk their safety or lead to behaviour that disrupts the behaviour of others; and
- To prevent a pupil from attacking a member of staff or another pupil, or to stop a fight in the playground.

Staff should use 'reasonable force' and ensure that physical contact is restricted to that which is absolutely necessary, depending on the age of the pupils and the circumstances. Staff should be aware that intervening in a fight could possibly lead to legal action, so great caution should be exercised.

Any member of staff involved in physically restraining a child should record the event in the Accident/Incident Book which is kept in the office and also report it to the Head, who will inform the parents.

Staff should be aware that under section 16 of The Sexual Offences Act 2003, it is an offence for a person aged 18 or over (e.g. teacher, youth worker) to have a sexual relationship with a child under 18, where that person is in a position of trust in respect of that child, even if the relationship is consensual. A situation where a person is in a position of trust could arise where the child is in full-time education and the person looks after children under 18 in the same establishment as the child, even if s/he does not teach the child.

3. Developing appropriate professional working relationships with pupils

Staff should be aware at all times of the need to develop and maintaining appropriate professional working relationships with pupils. Relationships between staff and pupils should be characterised by fairness, openness and respect. Politeness and respect are essential ingredients: where differences occur they should be dealt with calmly and fairly. Staff should recognise that they are the models for the pupils.

In general staff should avoid being in a room alone with a child where the door is closed and does not allow visual access e.g. through a built-in window. Where one to one teaching takes place eg. peripatetic music lessons every effort should be made to develop clear boundaries and a culture of professional practice.

If you need to talk to a child alone please take common sense steps to protect yourself and either leave a door open, position yourself within sight of the door or window or ask another adult to be present. In the event of an unforeseen situation, appropriate actions might include phoning a colleague to make them aware (and able to interrupt) or sitting behind a desk and agreeing to take notes as the interview progresses.

Conveying an individual child by car should be avoided if possible. In a situation where it is necessary, ensure the SLT are aware preferably beforehand or failing that, as soon after the event as is practicable.

Particular care should be taken to maintain professional standards and integrity away from the school and in particular away from other colleagues for example during an overseas study visit or a field trip.

4. All staff are expected to treat each other and pupils with respect

Relationships between staff should be characterised by fairness, openness and respect. This means valuing all contributions, acknowledging difference, and working together to build a climate of continuous improvement. Politeness and respect are essential ingredients: where differences occur they should be dealt with calmly and fairly. Staff should recognise that they are the models for the pupils.

5. All staff should treat resources responsibly and exercise due financial care

All staff have a responsibility to look after the resources of the school. This includes: not wasting resources unnecessarily (including physical resources and those such as heat/electricity); following the principles of 'reduce, re-use, recycle' where appropriate. All money handled should be sent as soon as practicable to the school office.

6. Confiscation of pupils' property

Where the property of a pupil is confiscated it should be treated with reasonable care and returned to the pupil or parent in reasonable time. Whilst the property is confiscated it is the responsibility of the member of staff to keep it safe.

Where the confiscated material is contraband or an item which, in any case, is not allowed in school the incident should be reported to a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

7. All staff are expected to behave professionally and exercise confidentiality

All staff are expected to behave thoughtfully and responsibly. Staff should be punctual and well-prepared, and should carry out tasks to the best of their ability, taking pride in their work. All absence should be genuine. Staff are expected to dress appropriately; all staff should set a good example in what they wear. They are expected to maintain a smart, professional appearance and to wear appropriate clothing at all times. Shorts and very short skirts (except when required for sporting activities) and revealing garments are not considered appropriate, nor is denim acceptable. Male staff are required to wear a tie. Staff should exercise due confidentiality towards matters that are either discussed or overheard.

8. All staff should be aware of the acceptable and appropriate use of digital and emerging technologies.

Staff are aware of the need to maintain professionalism on social media sites, where all information is potentially in the public domain and pupils or parents may gain access to information and comments posted.

Staff should not establish relationships on social media with students in the school. Staff should be cautious of communications by electronic means with pupils. If staff do communicate electronically with pupils they should ensure that the communication is necessary, appropriate and that it cannot be misconstrued. If using email, staff should use the school email rather than any private email account.

Staff should be take considerable care when photographing and videoing children to ensure that these images are only used for appropriate and agreed purposes. There is a record, updated each year, of pupils whose parents have not given permission for the school to take photographs of their children. Please ensure that you consult this list prior to capturing images of children. Under no circumstances should staff post photographs of pupils on any social media site with the exception of the school's official sites.

Staff should not use their personal mobile 'phones or cameras to store pictures of children. If there is a need to capture an image then these images must be transferred to the secure staff drive as soon as possible and deleted from the camera or 'phone.

Please be aware that staff visiting or working in the EYFS setting may not carry mobile phones.

Staff are subject to the Acceptable Use Policy pertaining to IT and emerging technologies.

9. Staff should seek to establish a good and open relationship with parents

Staff should aim to create a welcoming and open relationship with parents. All parental concerns should be treated seriously and dealt with promptly. Concerns and complaints should be reported to Heads of School and logged appropriately.

10. All staff need to be aware of the policy and procedures for Child Protection and Safeguarding

It is essential that all staff have regular training in Child Protection and Safeguarding issues, and know the procedures for dealing with and reporting concerns. All staff are given Safeguarding Training within school on an annual basis. New members of staff are trained by the Designated Safeguarding Lead on arrival in school and are provided with a copy of the Safeguarding/Child

Protection policy as well as part one of the KCSIE (2016), the Whistleblowing Policy and a copy of this Code of Conduct. Safeguarding updates are given at regular staff meetings.

All staff are responsible for safeguarding in the school and have a duty to follow the school's Safeguarding Policy referring concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Where an employee is disturbed about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school's safeguarding regime the Head may be contacted in the first instance. If, after exhausting the internal procedures the employee remains concerned with how a child protection / safeguarding issue has been dealt with, the Chair of Governors or the relevant external bodies should be contacted i.e. Essex Local Safeguarding Board. Please refer to the Safeguarding and Whistleblowing policy for further guidance.

11. All staff need to be aware of how to record/report concerns (“whistleblowing”).

Where staff have any concerns about another member of staff, these should be reported immediately to the Head teacher. Where the concern is about the Head teacher, it should be reported to the Chair of Governors. Please refer to Whistleblowing policy for further guidance.

All concerns will be investigated thoroughly and confidentially, and appropriate action taken.

12. All staff need to exploit the potential of the curriculum to develop a proactive approach to behaviour and child protection issues.

Staff need to take a proactive approach towards both child protection and behaviour policies, through the creation of a positive classroom environment where all children are respected.

13. All staff taking medication / other substances.

Staff must not be under the influence of alcohol or any other substance which may affect their ability to care for and work with children. If staff are taking medication which may affect their ability to care for or work with children, that member of staff should seek medical advice.

The school is required to ensure that staff only work directly with children if medical advice confirms that any medication taken is unlikely to impair that member of staff's ability to look after children properly. Staff medication on the premises must be securely stored, and out of the reach of children, at all times.

The school is a smoke-free environment and smoking is not permitted in any of the school buildings or anywhere on the school site

14. All staff should take care of their physical and mental wellbeing

All staff are encouraged to look after their physical and mental wellbeing. This includes maintaining a healthy work-life balance. We take issues of stress very seriously, and look to provide appropriate support and help in these cases. Staff needing support are encouraged to discuss issues and concerns with the Headteacher in confidence. Support can be provided both internally (eg through the provision of a mentor) or externally through the Occupational Health Service. Trades Unions also provide help, support and advice for their members.

By adhering to this code of conduct staff can be assured they are playing their part in safeguarding pupils and protecting themselves. It is our expectation that all staff should sign to indicate agreement with this code of conduct.

I agree with Saint Nicholas School's Code of Conduct

Signed Name (please print)

Date