

# St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

## Keeping Children Safe in Education

### Code of Conduct for Safer Practice September 2020

#### **Introduction**

All education settings are required to have a clear and effective Code of Conduct for adults working in the setting. Indeed, as stated in DfE "Keeping Children safe in education" – Sept 2020 18– paragraph 62-63:

*"Governing Bodies and proprietors should ensure there are appropriate policies and procedures in place in order for appropriate action to be taken in a timely manner to safeguard and promote children's welfare. This should include an effective child protection policy. The child protection policy should describe procedures which are in accordance with government guidance and refer to locally agreed multi-agency safeguarding arrangements put in place by the three safeguarding partners. It should be updated annually (as a minimum), and be available publicly via the school website.*

*A staff behaviour policy (sometimes called the code of conduct) which should, amongst other things, include: acceptable use of technologies, staff/pupil relationships and communications including the use of social media.*

*Governing bodies and proprietors should put in place appropriate safeguarding responses to children who go missing from education, particularly on repeat occasions, to help identify the risk of abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse or exploitation, and to help prevent the risk of them going missing in future."*

This document provides a guide for all adults working at St Joseph's School (including staff, supply staff, governors, volunteers and visitors) about acceptable and desirable conduct to protect both pupils and adults. It refers to and complements other policies and guidance in our school, including:

- Safeguarding -Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Policy on physical intervention
- Online safety policy
- Data protection policy
- Mobile phone policy
- Whistle blowing policy

This policy reflects the requirements set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education 2020, and the Safer Recruitment Consortium document 'Revised guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults Who Work with Children and Young People in Education (May 2019) including the April 2020 Addendum.

In particular all adults working at St Joseph's should keep the following statements from Keeping Children Safe in Education in mind:

- **Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility and should consider, at all times, what is in the best interests of the child.**
- **All school staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn**
- **All school staff should be prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help**
- **Staff working with children are advised to maintain an attitude of "it could happen here" where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff should always act in the best interests of the child.**

All adults working at St Joseph's School must know who the Designated Safeguarding Lead is and be familiar with the school's safeguarding-child protection policy and understand their individual responsibilities to safeguard and protect children.

In addition, the Teaching Standards 2012 state that teachers should safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties.

### **Basic principles**

- The welfare of the child is paramount
- Staff should understand their responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils
- Staff working in school are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should avoid any conduct which would lead a reasonable person to question their motivation or intentions
- Staff working in the school must work and be seen to work in an open and transparent way
- Staff should acknowledge that deliberately invented / malicious allegations are extremely rare and that all concerns should be reported and recorded
- Staff should discuss and/or take advice promptly from their line manager or another senior member of staff if they have acted in a way which could give rise to concern
- The school should keep a record of any such incident and of decisions made/further actions agreed, in accordance with the school's record keeping policy
- Staff should apply the same professional standards regardless of culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and sexual orientation
- Staff should not consume or be under the influence of alcohol or any substance, including prescribed medication, which may affect their ability to care for children
- Staff should be aware that breaches of the law and other professional guidelines could result in disciplinary action being taken against them, criminal action and /or other proceedings including barring by the Disclosure & Barring Service ( DBS) from working in regulated activity, or for acts of serious misconduct prohibition from teaching by the Teaching Regulation Agency( TRA)

**As a general principle, when thinking about taking any course of action with a pupil, adults should ask themselves the following questions:**

- Is this needed to meet the pupil's needs?**
- Is there a professional reason for me to do it?**
- Can I do it in a way that is safe for both the pupil and for me?**

**Only if the answer to all three questions is YES should the adult take the course of action.**

## **All staff, volunteers and visitors to the schools must:**

Be familiar with and work in accordance with the school's policies, including in particular

- Safeguarding-Child Protection
- Behaviour
- Physical Intervention
- Intimate Care
- On line Safety
- Data Protection Policy
- Health and Safety
- Use of Photography and Video
- Use of mobile phones
- Whistleblowing

All staff must provide a good example and a positive role model to pupils

All staff must behave in a mature, respectful, safe, fair and considered manner.

## **All staff ...**

- Should not be sarcastic, and not make remarks or 'jokes' to pupils of a personal, sexual, racist, discriminatory, intimidating or otherwise offensive nature
- Should not embarrass or humiliate children
- Should not discriminate favourably or unfavourably towards any child.
- Should treat all pupils equally – never build 'special' relationships or confer favour on particular pupils
- Staff should always maintain appropriate professional boundaries, avoid behaviour which could be misinterpreted by others and report any such incident to the DSL / HT. This is as relevant in the online world as it is in the classroom; staff engaging with pupils and/or parents online have a responsibility to model safe practice at all times.
- Staff should wear clothing which promotes a positive and professional image and is appropriate to their role. In online engagement, staff should wear clothing they would wear on a normal school day.
- Staff should not give or receive (other than token) gifts unless arranged through School and according to school policy
- Staff should not offer lifts to pupils unless the need for this has been agreed by the Headteacher and there should always be at least one additional adult to the driver, acting as an escort.
- Staff should ensure that their relationship with pupils remains on a professional footing.
- Staff should only use a "safe touch" with pupils for professional reasons, and when this is necessary and appropriate for the pupil's wellbeing or safety
- Staff should not behave in a way that could lead a reasonable observer to question their conduct, intentions or suitability to care for other people's children
- Staff should not make arrangements to contact, communicate or meet with pupils outside of their work (this includes use of email, text, social media groups and other messaging systems)
- Staff should not take images of a child's injury, bruising or similar, for example, following a disclosure of abuse, even if requested by children's social care, or make audio recordings of a child's disclosure

- Staff should not develop ‘personal’ or sexual relationships with pupils. In particular, note the provisions of the Sexual Offences Act 2003, which creates a criminal offence of abuse of a position of trust  
(when a person aged 18 or over is in a ‘position of trust’ with a person under 18 and engages in sexual activity with or in the presence of that child, or causes or incites that child to engage in or watch sexual activity).

### **Reference documents**

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE) 2020
- School policies including Safeguarding and Child Protection , Attendance , Behaviour Policy
- Harrow Local Safeguarding Children Board - local safeguarding children procedures
- Safer Recruitment Consortium document ‘Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults Who Work with Children and Young People in Education (May 2019) and Addendum April 2020
- The Teachers’ Standards 201