

St Thomas C.E. Junior and Infant School - Code of Conduct

This document has been written with reference to "Guidance for Safe Working Practice for the Protection of Children and Staff in Education Settings" produced by The National Network of Investigation and Referral Support Co-ordinators.

The name of the senior designated person for child protection is Mrs. Joanne Woods, Headteacher.

This code of conduct applies to all adults in our school whatever their position, role or responsibility in either a paid or unpaid capacity.

1. Duty of Care

All adults should:

- -understand the responsibilities, which are part of their employment or role, and be aware that sanctions will be applied if these provisions are breached.
- -always act, and be seen to act, in the child's best interests.
- -avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions.
- -take responsibility for their own actions and behaviour.

2. Exercise Professional Judgement

This guidance cannot provide a complete checklist of what is, or is not, appropriate behaviour.

This means that where no specific guidance exists all adults should:

- discuss the circumstances that informed their action, or their proposed action, with a senior colleague. This will help to ensure that the safest practices are employed and reduce the risk of actions being misinterpreted.
- always discuss any misunderstanding, accidents or threats with a senior manager.
- always record discussions and actions taken with their justifications.

3. Power and Positions of Trust

Adults should not:

- use their position to gain access to information for their own advantage and/or a child's or family's detriment.

- use their power to intimidate, threaten, coerce or undermine pupils.
- use their status and standing to form or promote relationships with children, which are of a sexual nature.

All adults should:

- Avoid behaviour, which might be misinterpreted by others, and report and record any incident with this potential.

4. Confidentiality

All Adults:

- are expected to treat information they receive about children and young people in a discreet and confidential manner.
- in any doubt about sharing information they hold or which has been requested of them should seek advice from a senior member of staff.
- need to be cautious when passing information to others about a child/young person.

5. Propriety and Behaviour

All adults should not:

- behave in a manner which would lead any reasonable person to question their suitability to work with children or act as a role model.
- make sexual remarks to a pupil (including email, chat room, text messages, phone or letter).
- discuss their own sexual relationships with, or in the presence of pupils.
- discuss a pupil's sexual relationships in inappropriate settings or contexts
- make or encourage others to unprofessional personal comments scapegoat, demean or humiliate, or might be interpreted as such.

6. Dress and Appearance

All adults should wear clothing which:

- promotes a positive and professional image.
- is appropriate to their role.

- is not likely to be viewed as offensive, or revealing.
- does not distract, cause embarrassment or give rise to misunderstanding.
- is absent of any political or otherwise contentious slogans.
- is not considered to be discriminatory.

7. Gifts

All adults should:

- generally, only give gifts to an individual young person as part of an agreed reward system
- where giving gifts other than as above, ensure that these are of insignificant value and given to all children equally and a senior colleague is informed; ensure that gifts received or given in situations which may be misconstrued are declared.

8. Infatuations

All adults should:

- report any indications (verbal, written or physical) that suggest a pupil may be infatuated with a member of staff.

9. Social Contact

All adults 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.
- always approve any planned social contact with senior colleagues, for example when it is part of a reward scheme or pastoral care programme.
- advise senior management of any regular social contact they have with a pupil which may give rise to concern.
- report and record any situation, which they feel, might compromise the school or their own professional standing.

10. Physical Contact

All adults should:

- be aware that even well intentioned physical contact may be misconstrued by the child, an observer or by anyone to whom this action is described.
- never touch a child in a way which may be considered indecent.
- always be prepared to explain actions and accept that all physical contact be open to scrutiny.
- never indulge in horseplay, tickling or fun fights.

The school:

- has a system in place for recording serious incidents and the means by which information about incidents and outcomes can be easily accessed by senior management.
- provides staff, on a "need to know" basis, with relevant information about vulnerable pupils in their care.

11. Physical Education and other activities which require physical contact.

All adults should:

- Explain the reason why contact is necessary and what form the contact will take in order to support a child 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.
- Ensure that contact under these circumstances is for the minimum time necessary to complete the activity and take place in an open environment. Remain sensitive to any discomfort expressed verbally or non-verbally by the child.
- consider alternatives, where it is anticipated that a pupil might misinterpret any such contact, perhaps involving another member of staff, or a less vulnerable pupil in the demonstration.

12. Toilets, Showers and Changing.

All adults should:

- avoid entering toilet cubicles when accompanying children to the toilet.
- avoid any physical contact when children are in a state of undress.
- avoid any visually intrusive behaviour and where there are changing rooms.
- announce their intention of entering.
- avoid remaining in the room unless pupil needs require it

- NOT change in the same place as children.
- NOT shower with children.

13. Pupils in Distress

All adults should:

- consider the way in which they offer comfort to a distressed pupil.
- always tell a colleague when and how they offered comfort to a distressed child
- record situations which may give rise to concern.

14. Behaviour Management

All adults should:

- not use force as a form of punishment.
- try to defuse situations before they escalate and not use sarcasm, demeaning or insensitive comments towards the pupils.
- keep parents informed of any sanctions.
- adhere to the school's behaviour management policy.

15. Care, Control and Physical Intervention

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.

This means that staff should:

- not use physical force as a form of punishment.
- adhere to the school's positive handling policy.
- always seek to defuse situations.
- always use minimum force for the shortest period necessary.

16. Sexual Contact with Young People

All adults should:

- not pursue sexual relationships with children and young people either in or out of school
- avoid any form of communication with a child or young person which could be interpreted as sexually suggestive or provocative ie verbal comments, letters, notes, electronic mail, phone calls, texts, physical contact.

17. One to One Situations

All adults should:

- avoid meetings with pupils in remote, secluded areas of school.
- ensure there is visual access and/or an open door in one to one situations.
- inform other staff of the meeting beforehand, assessing the need to have them present or close by.
- avoid use of 'engaged' or equivalent signs wherever possible. Such signs may create an opportunity for secrecy or the interpretation of secrecy.
- always report any situation where a child becomes distressed or angry to a senior colleague consider the needs and circumstances of the child/children involved.

18. Transporting Children

All adults should:

- make other staff aware of the task being undertaken.
- explain to the child what is happening.
- consult with colleagues where any variation from agreed procedure/care plan is necessary.
- record the justification for any variations to the agreed procedure/care plan and share this information with parents.

19. Educational Visits and After School Clubs etc.

All adults should:

- always have another adult present in out of school activities, unless otherwise agreed with senior staff in school.

- undertake risk assessments.
- have parental consent to the activity.
- ensure that their behaviour remains professional at all times.

20. First Aid and Administration of Medication

All adults should:

- adhere to the school's first aid policy.
- make other staff aware of the task being undertaken.
- explain to the child what is happening.
- Only administer prescribed medication according to the school's medication policy.

21. Intimate Care

All children have a right to safety, privacy and dignity when contact of an intimate nature is required (for example assisting with toileting or removing wet/soiled clothing).

All adults should:

- make other staff aware of the task being undertaken.
- explain to the child what is happening.
- consult with colleagues where any variation from agreed procedure/care plan is necessary.
- record the justification for any variations to the agreed procedure/care plan and share this information with parents.

22. Curriculum

All adults should:

- have clear written lesson plans.
- 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.
- not enter into or encourage inappropriate or offensive discussion about sexual activity.

23. Photography, Videos and other Creative Arts

All adults should:

- be clear about the purpose of the activity and about what will happen to the photographs/recording 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 images of children in their possession
- avoid making images in one to one situations.
- not take, display or distribute images of children unless they have consent to do so.

24. Internet Use

All adults should:

- follow the school policy on the use of IT equipment and social media policy.

25. Whistleblowing

All adults should:

- follow the school's whistleblowing policy and report any behaviour by colleagues that raises concern.

26. Sharing Concerns and Recording Incidents

All adults should:

- be familiar with their school system for recording concerns.
- take responsibility for recording any incident, and passing on that information where they have concerns about any matter pertaining to the welfare of an individual in the school or workplace.

The school has an effective, transparent and accessible system for recording and managing concerns raised by any individual in school or the workplace.

27. Libel/defamation

If an employee publishes either an untrue/defamatory statement or comment about another employee in school, or indeed about the school itself, which is deemed to be damaging to the reputation of either the individual or the school, then the individual or the school may choose to take legal action.

28. Obscene material

Employees should never publish anything that is classed as obscene - this would be deemed to be a criminal offence. Obscene material is that which is designed to deprave or corrupt the audience. For the purpose of this policy 'obscene material' is that which will cause extreme offence to the school as a whole, its pupils or employees.

29. Offensive material

Employees should never publish anything that is classed as offensive. 'Offensive', for the purpose of this policy, is material which is defamatory, racist or discriminatory on the grounds of religion, disability, gender or sexual orientation or alternatively which is designed, or is likely to, harass, victimise or bully, cause pain or distress to other employees, pupils or the school as a whole.

30. Online bullying and harassment

Social media can have potential dangers and drawbacks as both adults and children have found themselves the target of online abuse, harassment and bullying which is often referred to as 'cyber bullying' which includes:

- Name calling
- Malicious comments
- Exclusion
- Intimidation
- Spreading of rumours
- Bombarding with unwanted messages

Cyber bullying can have a significant impact on health and wellbeing and will not be tolerated. Should any employee feel they have been a victim of cyber bullying this should be reported to the Headteacher in the first instance.

31. Policies

All members of the school community must comply with school policies and procedures without exception.

