

Approved:

September 2024

Review Date:

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St. Mark's Catholic Primary School



Proudly and joyfully, we love, live and learn as God's children

Code of Conduct Policy

ST JOHN BOSCO CATHOLIC ACADEMY



1. Introduction

- 1.1 This policy sets out clear guidance on the standards of behaviour expected from all staff working for or in the St John Bosco MAC. The principles underlying the guidance aim to encourage staff to achieve the highest possible standards of conduct and minimise the risk of inappropriate conduct occurring.
- 1.2 MAC staff are in a unique position of trust and influence as role models for students. Therefore, staff must adhere to behaviour that sets a good example to all students within their school.
- 1.3 Staff also have an individual responsibility to maintain their reputation and the reputation of the MAC and individual school, both inside and outside working hours and work setting.
- 1.4 This policy applies to all staff and volunteers in the MAC regardless of their position, role or responsibility. References to 'staff' throughout the policy relate to all of the following groups:
 - 1.4.1 All members of staff including teaching and support staff
 - 1.4.2 Volunteers, including governors
 - 1.4.3 Casual workers
 - 1.4.4 Temporary and supply staff, either from agencies or engaged directly
 - 1.4.5 Student placements, including those undertaking initial teacher training and apprentices.
- 1.5 St John Bosco MAC requires that all staff have read and agree to comply with this policy.
- 1.6 Breach or failure to observe this policy will result in action being taken under the MAC disciplinary procedures including, but not limited to, dismissal.
- 1.7 This code of conduct is not an exhaustive list of acceptable and unacceptable standards of behaviour. In situations where guidance does not exist in this policy, staff are expected to exercise their professional judgement and act in the best interests of the students the MAC and their individual school.
- 1.8 As a Catholic school, all adults in our schools are expected to actively follow and live out the school mission statement and work in line with the MAC vision and values.

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 MAC. Staff are to have regard to the Catholic character of the school and MAC and not do anything in any way detrimental or prejudicial to the interests of the same at any time, at work or at home.

2.0 Professional Behaviour and Conduct

- 2.1 Staff are expected to demonstrate the highest possible standards of personal and professional conduct and behaviour and consistently act with honesty and integrity. St John Bosco MAC expects staff to treat each other, students, parents and the wider community with dignity and respect at all times.
- 2.2 Staff must act in accordance with their duty of care to students and ensure that the safety and welfare of students are accorded the highest priority.
- 2.3 Staff should show fairness in their treatment of children and avoid behaviours such as embarrassing or humiliating students, making jokes at the expense of students, discriminating against or favouring students and sarcasm.
- 2.4 Staff must have regard for the ethos and values of their school and the MAC and must not do or say anything which may bring the MAC, their school or governing body into disrepute. Care should be taken by staff to avoid any conflict of interest between activities undertaken outside their school and responsibilities within school. Staff should act in accordance with the MAC and individual school policies and procedures at all times.

3.0 Dress and Appearance

- 3.1 St John Bosco MAC recognises that dress and appearance are matters of personal choice and self-expression. However, all staff must dress in a manner that is appropriate to a professional role and that promotes a professional image.
- 3.2 Staff should dress in a manner that is not offensive, revealing or sexually provocative and in a manner that is absent from political or contentious slogans.
- 3.3 Staff should dress safely and appropriately for the tasks they undertake.

Please refer to the SJBCA Dress Code Policy for further information

4.0 Smoking, vaping, alcohol and other substances

- 4.1 All St John Bosco MAC schools are non-smoking sites. Staff must not smoke or vape on school premises or outside school gates. Any member of staff wishing to smoke or vape must leave the school grounds.
- 4.2 Staff must not smoke whilst working with or supervising student's offsite.
- 4.3 Staff must not consume or be under the influence of alcohol, illicit drugs or other illegal substances on or near school premises when students are present or when supervising students.

5.0 Relationships with students

- 5.1 Staff must maintain professional boundaries with students appropriate to their position and must always consider whether their actions are warranted, proportionate, safe and applied equitably. Staff should act in an open and transparent way that would not lead any reasonable person to question their actions or intent. Staff should think carefully about their conduct so that misinterpretations are minimised.
- 5.2 Staff must not establish or seek to establish social contact with students for the purpose of securing a friendship or to pursue or strengthen a relationship. If a young person or their parents seek to establish social contact you should exercise your professional judgement in making a response and be aware that such social contact could be misconstrued.
- 5.3 Staff must not develop personal relationships with students or their parents/guardians that are known to them solely through their professional life.
- 5.6 Staff must not make sexual remarks to a student, discuss their own personal relationships with, or in the presence of, students or discuss a student's relationships in an inappropriate setting or context.
- 5.7 Contact with students should be through the individual school authorised mechanisms i.e. school email addresses, ILPs, home/school books. Personal phone numbers, email addresses or communication routes via all social media platforms should not be used and staff should not share their home address with students or their parents. The exception to this would be if a member of staff has a child at the school and is contacting the parent in relation to their own child. If contacted via an inappropriate route the member of staff must inform the Principal immediately.
- 5.8 St John Bosco MAC staff must not accept friend invitations or become friends with any student or parents/guardians of St John Bosco MAC schools on any social media platform unless they know them personally and not through their professional life. Staff should also refrain from following the Twitter or other similar social media accounts of students or their parents.

6.0 Infatuations

- 6.1 It is not unusual for students or, sometimes, their parents to develop infatuations towards members of staff. All such situations must be responded to sensitively to maintain the dignity of those concerned.
- 6.2 Staff should also be aware that such circumstances carry a high risk of words or actions being misinterpreted and for allegations to be made against staff. Any indications of an infatuation towards yourself or another member of staff must be reported to the Principal.

7.0 Gifts/Hospitality

- 7.1 Staff need to take care that they do not accept any gift/offer of hospitality that might be construed as a bribe by others, or lead the giver to expect preferential treatment. However, there may be occasions where students or parents wish to give a small token of appreciation to staff, for example at religious festivities or at the end of the year.
- 7.2 It is unacceptable to receive gifts on a regular basis or to suggest to students that gifts are appropriate or desired. Money must not be accepted as a gift. If you are unsure whether to accept a gift you should consult the Principal
- 7.3 Staff must not accept significant gifts or hospitality from students, parents, carers, actual or potential contractors or outside suppliers. All such gifts/offers of hospitality should be reported to the Principal and recorded.
- 7.4 Personal gifts must not be given by staff to students and any reward to students should be in accordance with the individual MAC behaviour policy, recorded and not based on favouritism.

Please refer to the SJBCA Gifts and Donations Policy

8.0 Physical Contact with Students

- 8.1 There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate and proper for staff to have physical contact with students, but it is crucial that they only do so in ways appropriate to their professional role. A 'no touch' approach is impractical for most staff and may in some circumstances be inappropriate. When physical contact is made with students it should be in response to their needs at that time, of limited duration and appropriate to their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background.
- 8.2 Where feasible, staff should seek the child's permission before initiating contact. Staff should listen, observe and take note of the child's reaction or feelings and, so far as is possible, use a level of contact which is acceptable to the child for the minimum time necessary.
- 8.3 It is not possible 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 therefore, use their professional judgement at all times.
- 8.4 Staff 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. Staff should 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. Staff must not engage in rough play, tickling or fun fights with students.
- 8.5 Extra caution should be exercised where a child is known to have suffered previous abuse or neglect. Such experiences may sometimes make a child exceptionally needy and demanding of physical contact and staff should respond sensitively by deterring the child through helping them to understand the importance of personal boundaries.
- 8.6 Staff supervising PE and games or providing musical tuition should demonstrate the use of a particular piece of equipment/instrument on another member of staff if possible. However, they may be required to initiate physical contact with students to support a child to perform a task safely, to demonstrate the use of a particular piece of equipment/instrument or to assist them with an exercise. Contact under these circumstances should be done with the student's agreement, for the minimum time necessary and in an open environment. Staff

should remain sensitive to any discomfort expressed verbally or non-verbally by the student/student.

- 8.7 Physical contact must never be secretive, for the gratification of the adult or represent a misuse of authority.
- 8.8 If a member of staff believes that an action could be misinterpreted, the incident and circumstances should be reported to the Principal, recorded and, if appropriate, a copy placed on the child's file.
- 8.9 Staff should refer to their individual school's Challenging Behaviour Policy.

9.0 Child in distress

- 9.1 There may be occasions when a student is in distress and in need of comfort as a reassurance. This may include age appropriate physical contact. Staff should remain self-aware at all times in order that their contact is not threatening, intrusive or subject to misinterpretation.
- 9.2 If you have a particular concern about the need to provide this type of care and reassurance you should seek further advice from the Principal.

10.0 Changing

- 10.0 Students are entitled to respect whilst they are changing before or after PE/games. However, there needs to be an appropriate level of supervision in order to safeguard young people and meet health and safety requirements. The supervision should be appropriate to the needs and age of the students and sensitive to the potential for embarrassment.
- 10.1 Staff should be vigilant about their own behaviour when helping children change in and out of clothes for PE and other activities.

11.0 One to one situations

- 11.1 Staff working individually with students should be aware of the potential vulnerability of students and staff in such situations. Staff should manage these situations with regard to the safety of the student and to themselves.
- 11.2 Individual work with students should not be undertaken in isolated areas or rooms where there is no external viewing panel. Where it is necessary to close doors for reasons of confidentiality a colleague should be made aware of this and asked to remain vigilant.

12.0 Transporting students

- 12.1 In certain circumstances it may be appropriate for staff to transport student's offsite, for example sports fixtures, outings or other out of school activities. The Principal must oversee the plan and provide oversight of all transport arrangements and to respond to any difficulties that may arise.
- 12.2 The Principal should ensure that the transport arrangements and the vehicle meet all legal requirements. Staff should ensure that the driver has the appropriate license for the vehicle, that the vehicle is roadworthy, has a valid MOT certificate and is appropriately insured and that the maximum capacity is not exceeded.
- 12.3 Staff should ensure that the driver is not distracted while the vehicle is in motion for any reason other than an emergency and should also ensure all passengers are wearing correctly fastened seatbelts.
- 12.4 Prior to transporting student's offsite consent must be obtained from student parent/guardian and staff should be aware that the safety and welfare of the students is their responsibility until this is safely passed back to their parent/carer.

13.0 E-Safety

- 13.1 Staff should follow the individual school's E-Safety policy for staff and the MAC Acceptable Use Policy at all times and have regard for individual school's E-Safety policy for students.

- 13.2 Staff must not engage in inappropriate use of social network sites which may bring themselves, the school or the school community into disrepute. Staff should adopt the highest security settings on any personal profiles they have. This includes unauthorised filming on site.
- 13.3 Staff should remain mindful of their digital footprint and exercise caution in all their use of social media or any other web-based presence they have. This includes written content, videos or photographs and views expressed either directly or by 'liking' certain pages or posts or following certain individuals or groups. Staff should exercise care when using dating websites where staff could encounter students.
- 13.4 Staff must not make contact with students, must not accept or initiate friend requests nor follow students' or their guardians' accounts on any social media platform. Staff must not communicate with students or their guardians via social media, websites, instant messenger accounts or text message. The only acceptable method of contact is via the use of school email accounts or telephone equipment.
- 13.5 Staff should not make contact with students' family members, accept or initiate friend requests or follow students' family member's account on any social media platform.
- 13.6 However, St John Bosco MAC acknowledges that staff who are also parents may wish to contact other parents, who are friends, over social media. Staff must exercise caution and professional judgement in these circumstances and should not have any contact with students' family members via social media if that contact is likely to constitute a conflict of interest or call into question their objectivity.
- 13.7 Mobile phones and personally-owned devices may not be used during lessons or formal school time. They should be switched off (or silent) at all times. The Bluetooth functionality of a mobile phone should be switched off during school time and may not be used to send images or files to other mobile phones. Mobile phones and personal devices are not permitted to be used in certain areas within the school site such as classrooms and toilets.
- 13.8 Mobile phones and personally-owned mobile devices brought in to a school are the responsibility of the device owner. St John Bosco MAC accepts no responsibility for the loss, theft or damage of personally-owned mobile phones or mobile devices.

14.0 Photography, video and images of children

- 14.1 Many school activities involve recording images as part of the curriculum, extra school activities, publicity or to celebrate an achievement. In accordance with The Data Protection Act 1998 the image of a student is personal data. Therefore, it is a requirement under the Act for consent to be obtained from the parent/guardian of a student for any images made. It is also important to take into account the wishes of the student, remembering that some students do not wish to have their photograph taken or be filmed.
- 14.2 Using images for publicity purposes will require the age-appropriate consent of the individual concerned and their parent/guardian. Images should not be displayed on websites, in publications or in a public place without their consent. Staff should also be clear about the purpose of the activity and what will happen to the photographs/images/video footage when the lesson or activity is concluded.
- 14.3 Photographs/stills or video footage of students should only be taken using school equipment for purposes authorised by the school and should be stored securely and only on school equipment.
- 14.4 Staff should ensure that the Principal or Vice Principal is aware of the proposed use of photographic/video equipment and that this is recorded in lesson plans. All photographs/stills and video footage should be available for scrutiny and staff should be able to justify all images/video footage made.
- 14.5 Staff should remain aware of the potential for images of students to be misused to create indecent images of children and/or for grooming purposes. Therefore, careful consideration should be given to how activities which are being filmed or photographed are organised and

undertaken. Particular care should be given when filming or photographing young or vulnerable students who may be unable to question how or why the activities are taking place. Staff should also be mindful that students who have been abused through the use of video or photography may feel threatened by its use in a teaching environment.

15.0 Confidentiality

- 15.1 Members of staff may have access to confidential information about students, their parents/carers or their siblings. Staff must not reveal such information except to those colleagues who have a professional role in relation to the student on a need to know basis.
- 15.2 Staff should never use confidential or personal information about a student or her/his family for their own, or others' advantage (including that of partners, friends, relatives or other organisations). Information must never be used to intimidate, humiliate, or embarrass the student.
- 15.3 All staff are likely at some point to witness actions which need to be confidential. For example, where a student is bullied by another student, this needs to be reported and dealt with in accordance with the appropriate school procedure. It must not be discussed outside the school, including with the student's parent or carer, nor with colleagues in the school except by a senior member of staff with the appropriate authority to deal with the matter.
- 15.4 Staff have a statutory obligation to share with school's Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead any information which gives rise to concern about the welfare or safety of a student/student or that might suggest a student/student is in need or at risk of significant harm. Staff should pass on information without delay in accordance with the school safeguarding policy and procedures and this should be recorded. Staff must never promise a student that they will not act on or pass on any information that they are told by the student.
- 15.5 Staff should refer to the Department of Education's document Information sharing: advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services for further guidance on information sharing. If you are in any doubt about whether to share you should seek guidance from the DSL or Deputy DSL.
- 15.6 Any media or legal enquiries should be passed to the Principal and only approved staff and Governors should communicate to the media about the school.

16.0 Whistleblowing/Speaking Out

- 16.1 Whistleblowing/Speaking Out is the mechanism by which staff can voice their concerns, without fear of repercussion.
- 16.2 All school staff have a duty to report any behaviour by a colleague which raises concern. Staff should refer to St John Bosco MAC's Whistle Blowing Policy for further guidance. This is particularly important where the welfare of students may be at risk.

17.0 Compliance

- 17.1 All new staff must complete the form in appendix 1 or for existing staff have read and agreed the policy on EVERY when the policy is updated. This is to confirm they have read, understood and agree to comply with this policy. This form should be signed and dated and a copy retained on the member of staff's file or a copy of the read document retained in EVERY.

Appendix 1

SJBCA MAC CODE OF CONDUCT

Confirmation of compliance

I hereby confirm that I have read, understood and agree to comply with St John Bosco MAC's Staff Code of Conduct Policy.

I understand that this policy is not exhaustive and should be read in conjunction with all other school policies and national guidance.

Name

Position/Post Held.....

Signed Date

Once completed, signed and dated, please return to the Principal within the school or for Central Services staff to Mrs H Parkes, Chief Operating Officer.