

Staff Code of Conduct

Primary person responsible for updates to this policy: Donal Brennan

Job title: Headteacher

Last review date: July 2021

Next review date: July 2022

Relevant ISI coding (if applicable)

Circulation: This policy has been adopted by the governors and is available to parents on request. It is addressed to all members of staff and volunteers and applies wherever they are working with children.

'Parents' refers to parents, guardians and carers.

STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT

INTRODUCTION

Under the statutory guidance document 'Keeping Children Safe in Education, September 2021, St. Anthony's School for Girls is required to set out a staff conduct policy for school employees.

This document clarifies what is expected in terms of professional behaviour but must also be read in conjunction with the Staff Handbook, the School's Policies and the Alpha Plus Group Policies, all of which are available on the Policy Portal.

The safety and well-being of every pupil at St Anthony's School for Girls are of paramount importance. Every child has the right to grow up and to live in a safe environment. All staff have a duty to protect pupils from abuse and bullying and to promote their well-being.

Every member of staff should read this Staff Code of Conduct in conjunction with the St Anthony's School for Girls Safeguarding Policy.

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

Setting an example: All staff should maintain high standards of behaviour and conduct and are expected to uphold the Catholic ethos of the school. Particular attention should be paid to punctuality at the start of the day and for lessons and meetings, smart professional appearance, the use of appropriate language and courteous professional behaviour towards pupils, parents and colleagues.

Confidentiality: Staff are expected to treat information they receive about pupils, parents, staff and the school in a discreet and confidential manner. If in any doubt about sharing information they hold, or which has been requested of them, staff should seek advice from a senior member of staff. Further guidance can be found in the Alpha Plus Data Protection Policy.

Attendance and Timekeeping: Should a member of staff need to be absent or expect to be late for any reason, he/she should ask the Headteacher in advance when possible. If this is not possible, he/she is asked to telephone the School Register at the earliest opportunity, preferably before 7.00 a.m. Further details are available in the Staff Handbook.

Smoking: To promote a healthy and pleasant working environment and because of the fire risk, smoking (in any form, including the use of e-cigarettes) is not allowed anywhere on site.

Eating and drinking: Staff are asked to confine eating to the dining room or the staff room. Please ensure that any used plates and cups are put in the dishwasher in the staff room after use. Hot drinks should not be taken to classrooms or public areas where pupils may be present. Drinks carried on the

stairs or in the playground should be in a sealed cup. The school is a nut free zone, so staff should not bring anything that contains nuts for fear of cross contamination.

Alcohol and Illegal Drugs: Consumption of alcohol or illegal drugs is not permitted on site save where, in the case of alcohol, at a school function or otherwise agreed when modest amounts of alcohol may be consumed. Employees' conduct and performance must not be adversely impacted by alcohol or drugs when undertaking their duties.

Personal Appearance: The school regularly receives visits from parents, potential parents and others, and naturally wishes to convey an impression of efficiency and organisation. Therefore, whilst not wishing to impose unreasonable obligations on staff they are, nonetheless, required to look smart in appearance. Please see the Staff Handbook for further guidance.

Mobility and Flexibility: Due to the demands and nature of the school, staff should be prepared to transfer upon request within departments either temporarily or permanently, to undertake work of a different nature, providing it is reasonable and safe to do so and the staff member is adequately trained.

Honesty and integrity: All staff must maintain a high degree of honesty and integrity in all aspects of their work. This includes the handling of money and the use of school property and facilities, as well as their dealings with pupils, parents and colleagues, which should be fair, equitable and free from discrimination. All staff must comply with the Bribery Act 2010 including the declaration of gifts received from parents, suppliers etc. Anything over the value of **£100** must be declared to the Headteacher for inclusion in the register. The basic information required is as follows:

- Your name;
- The name of the family or individual who has given you the gift;
- A brief description of the item;
- Approximate estimated value of the item or items **if over £100**.

The full Alpha Plus Group Anti-Corruption and Bribery Policy is available on the portal. Reference should also be made to the St. Anthony's School and Alpha Plus Group Equal Opportunities policies.

ICT Code of Conduct: All staff must be aware of and comply with the Alpha Plus Group policy on the use of information and communication technology. The full policy document is available via the portal. All staff must ensure they are familiar with the sections covering systems integrity and support, data security, laptop users, passwords, viruses and e-mails and internet access.

SAFEGUARDING

Designated Safeguarding Leads:

Raffaella Merolla (Jack Lewis for the year 2021-2022) is the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). Donal Brennan and Olivia Green are the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads. They have been fully trained

for the demands of this role and inter-agency working. They regularly attend courses with child support agencies to ensure that they remain conversant with best practice. They under-go refresher training every two years and maintain close links with the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) for Barnet. The Headteacher reports at least once a year to the Governors on child protection issues.

The school's records on child protection are kept locked in locked filing cabinets and access is restricted to the DSLs and Headteacher.

Duty of Care: All staff have a duty of care to our pupils, therefore we are accountable for the way in which we exercise authority, manage risk, use resources and protect pupils. All staff, whether paid or voluntary, have a duty to keep young people safe and to protect them from physical and emotional harm.

Promoting Awareness: Our curriculum and pastoral systems are designed to foster the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all our pupils. All our teaching staff play a vital role in this process, helping to ensure that all of our pupils relate well to one another and feel safe and comfortable within the school. We expect all the teaching and support staff to lead by example, and to play a full part in promoting awareness amongst all our pupils of issues relating to health, safety and well-being. All the staff, including all non-teaching staff, have an important role in insisting that our pupils always adhere to the standards of behaviour set out in our Behaviour Policy and in enforcing our Anti-bullying Policy.

Time is allocated in PSHEE and as part of the EYFS curriculum and in class time to discussions of what constitutes appropriate behaviour and on why bullying and lack of respect for others is never right. Assemblies, Drama and Religious Education lessons may be used specifically to promote tolerance and mutual respect and understanding. We use opportunities, such as the National Anti-Bullying week and the Safer Internet Day to teach about the unacceptability of bullying and abusive behaviour and to promote the safe use of the internet and mobile phones, inside and outside school.

One-to-one Situations: Staff working in one-to-one situations with children and young people are more vulnerable to allegations. Teachers and other staff should recognise this possibility and plan and conduct such meetings accordingly. This could include pastoral meetings, sports coaching, etc.

In addition, staff should:

- Avoid meeting with pupils in remote, secluded areas of the school
- Ensure there is visual access or an open door in one-to-one situations, including sports coaching
- Inform other staff of the meeting beforehand, assessing the need to have another member of staff present
- Avoid the use of 'Do not Disturb' signs in meetings with pupils
- Always report any situation where a child becomes distressed or angry

Communication with Pupils including the use of social media: Staff should not give their personal mobile phone numbers or email addresses to pupils, nor should they communicate with them by text message or personal email. If they need to speak to a pupil by telephone, they should use one of the school's telephones and email using the school system. The group leader on all trips and visits involving an overnight stay should take a school mobile phone with him/her and may ask the pupils

for their mobile numbers before allowing them out in small, unsupervised groups. The school mobile should be used for any contact with pupils that may be necessary. The party leader will delete any record of pupils' mobile phone numbers at the end of the trip or visit and should ensure that pupils delete any staff numbers that they may have acquired during the trip. Staff should be aware that it is not appropriate to use social media to communicate with pupils. Please see the School's Social Media Policy for further guidance.

Staff are reminded that it is a criminal offence for a person aged 18 or over 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.

Physical contact with pupils: There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate and proper for staff to have physical contact with pupils, but it is crucial that they only do so in ways appropriate to their professional role. Staff should, therefore, use their professional judgement at all times. Staff should not have unnecessary physical contact with pupils and should be alert to the fact that minor forms of friendly physical contact can be misconstrued by pupils or onlookers.

A member of staff can never take the place of a parent in providing physical comfort and should be cautious of any demonstration of affection.

Physical contact should never be secretive, or of the gratification of the adult, or represent a misuse of authority. If a member of staff believes that an action could be misinterpreted, the incident and circumstances should be recorded as soon as possible, the DSL informed and, if appropriate, a copy placed on the pupil's file.

Physical Restraint: Any physical restraint is only permissible when a child is in imminent danger of inflicting an injury on himself or on another, and then only as a last resort when all efforts to diffuse the situation have failed. Another member of staff should, if possible, be present to act as a witness. All incidents of the use of physical restraint should be recorded in writing and reported immediately to the DSL/Headteacher who will decide what to do next. Where this relates to the school's EYFS setting, parents will be informed of any physical restraint used on their child the same day or as soon as reasonably practicable.

Physical education and other activities requiring physical contact: Where exercises or procedures need to be demonstrated, extreme caution should be used if the demonstration involves contact with pupils and, wherever possible, contact should be avoided. It is acknowledged that some staff, for example, those who teach PE and games, or who offer music tuition, will, on occasions, have to initiate physical contact with pupils in order to support a pupil 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.

Contact under these circumstances should be for the minimum time necessary to complete the activity and take place in an open environment. Staff should remain sensitive to any discomfort expressed verbally or non-verbally by the child.

Transporting pupils: The school's policy is that, wherever possible and practicable, private vehicles are not used for transporting pupils. If there are exceptional circumstances that make unaccompanied transportation of pupils unavoidable, (for example in a medical emergency) the journey should be made known to the Headteacher and another adult should accompany the driver.

Confidentiality: Staff members should never give absolute guarantees of confidentiality to pupils or adults wishing to tell them about something serious. They should guarantee only that they will pass on information to the minimum number of people who must be told in order to ensure that the proper action is taken to sort out the problem and that they will not tell anyone who does not have a clear need to know. They will also take whatever steps they can to protect the informing pupil or adult from any retaliation or unnecessary stress that might be feared after a disclosure has been made.

Action if a pupil is missing: Please refer also to the school's missing child policy and procedures which also include the requirements for a day pupil or EYFS missing child in its content.

During the working day:

- first check with the pupil's friends
- check with the school office who will check the signing out/in book and if necessary; inform the senior member of staff on duty who will then follow up this information

A record is kept by the school of any instances in which a pupil is missing from school without satisfactory permission and documentation, including the action taken and the pupil's explanation.

Equal Treatment: We are committed to equal treatment for all pupils regardless of age, gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief. We keep a record of discriminatory incidents.

We aim to create a friendly, caring and self-reflective environment in which every individual is valued. We endeavour to contribute positively towards the growing autonomy, self-esteem and safety of each pupil. Our staff undertake regular consultation activities with our pupils e.g. through safety questionnaires, participation in anti-bullying week and speaking to children about their experiences at lunchtime and play-times.

Bullying: Bullying, harassment and victimisation and discrimination will not be tolerated. We treat all our pupils, staff, and their parents fairly and with consideration and we expect them to reciprocate towards each other, the staff and the school. Any kind of bullying, including cyber-bullying, is unacceptable and the school keeps a record of any incidents. Please see our school policy on anti-bullying for further details.

Complaints: Copies of the school's complaints procedure can be sent to any parent on request. Any complaint arising from the implementation of this policy will be considered under the school's complaints procedure.

Whistleblowing: The School wishes to foster a culture of openness and safety and the schools Whistleblowing Procedure reflects this. Should any member of staff have any concerns about the

behaviour of another member of staff towards a pupil, he or she should report it at once to the Headteacher/DSL (or to the Director of Schools and Colleges where the concern relates to the Head or a governor). Any concern will be thoroughly investigated under the school's whistle-blowing procedures. Such reporting will be without prejudice to the member of staff's position in the school. Where there are allegations of criminal activity, the LADO (or DO) will always be informed, and advice taken, before the school undertakes any investigation of its own. Wherever possible, and subject to the rights of the pupil, the member of staff will be informed of the outcome of the investigation. No one who reports a genuine concern in good faith needs to fear retribution. Under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 the member of staff may be entitled to raise a concern directly with an external body where the circumstances justify it. The NSPCC have a Whistleblowing helpline – 0800 028 0285.

Low level concerns: A low-level concern is defined as a behaviour(s) that is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work and is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO. The School promotes an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about all members of staff working in or behalf of the School, in a paid or unpaid capacity, including supply staff, volunteers and contractors are dealt with promptly and appropriately. Any low-level concerns should be reported to the Headteacher and the Headteacher will decide whether the allegation is a low-level concern.

Use of Mobile Phones and Cameras: Photographs will only be taken of children with their parents' permission (provided in writing via a consent form). Where photographs are taken by staff, photos can only be taken on school cameras. They must then be downloaded onto school computers, where they will be monitored. No personal camera, mobile phone or other electronic device should be used at any time to take photographs of pupils. Photos cannot be used or passed on outside the school. Further guidance is given in the school's Taking, Storing and Using Images of Children Policy.

Safer Recruitment: St. Anthony's School for Girls follows the Government's guidelines for the safer employment of staff who work with children. We obtain enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificates on all new members of staff, temporary staff, visiting and peripatetic staff, contractors' employees, such as catering staff, who work unsupervised in the school. Governors and parent helpers who have regular unsupervised access to children are also required to have up to date DBS certificates. New staff and Governors receive child protection training as part of their induction process. This training is repeated at not more than three yearly intervals. Staff are also regularly updated on safeguarding and child protection, via email and staff meetings.

All applicants for employment at St. Anthony's School for Girls are requested to complete a self-disclosure form as part of the school's recruitment procedures. As part of the induction programme, all new staff are told that they have a duty to inform one of the DSLs if they receive any convictions, cautions, court order, reprimands or warnings which may affect their suitability to work with children during their employment at the school.

OTHER ITEMS

Health and Safety: Staff must ensure they are familiar with and follow all school Health and Safety Policies.

Mobile Telephones: Staff may have personal mobile phones in school, but must only use them in the staff room or in a discreet location. They must never be switched on to take a call when staff are teaching or performing a duty.

Change of Personal Details: Members of staff must notify the school of any changes in personal details including change of name, address, bank details, telephone numbers etc. This will enable the school to maintain accurate personal details in compliance with data protection legislation and to contact staff in case of emergency.

Conduct outside work: Staff must not engage in conduct outside work which could seriously damage the reputation and standing of the school or the employee's own reputation or the reputation of other members of the school community. In particular, criminal offences that involve violence or possession or use of illegal drugs or sexual misconduct are likely to be regarded as unacceptable.

Reputation: Staff must be careful to ensure that nothing they say or do brings the school's name into disrepute. Staff should not gossip or speak inappropriately about the school, pupils, parents, staff or other Alpha Plus Group employees including discussing incidents.

Work outside school: Staff may undertake work outside school either paid or voluntary provided that it does not conflict with the interests of the school or affect an individual's work performance. Please note that it is a contractual obligation to gain the Headteacher's permission before accepting any such post or undertaking any additional work.