

St. Mary's Primary School, Fivemiletown

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Staff Code of Conduct Policy



Policy adopted by Board of Governors: March 2019

Policy review date: March 2021

Signed: _____ (Principal)

_____ (Chair of Board of Governors)

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Staff Code of Conduct

Staff in St. Mary's Primary School have the safety and well-being of the children in their care as paramount. Staff must always be aware that they hold a position of trust and that their behaviour towards the children in their care must always be beyond reproach.

This code of conduct is intended to assist staff to be aware of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. It is to protect both staff and children. This code of conduct is not intended to detract from the enriching experiences children gain from positive interaction with staff.

1) Private meetings with pupils:

- We recognise that there will be occasions when confidential interviews must take place. As far as possible, staff should conduct such interviews in a room with visual access, or with the door open.
- Where and when such conditions cannot apply, staff are advised to ensure that another adult knows that the interview is taking place. It may be necessary to use a sign indicating that the room is in use, but it is not advisable to use signs prohibiting entry into the room.
- Where possible, another pupil or (preferably) another adult should be present or nearby during the interview and the school will take active measures to facilitate this.

2) Physical contact with pupils:

- As a general principle, staff are advised not to make unnecessary physical contact with children.
- It is unrealistic and unnecessary, however, to suggest that staff should touch pupils only in emergencies. In particular, a distressed child, especially a younger child, may need reassurance involving physical comforting, as a caring parent would provide. Staff should not feel inhibited from doing so.
- Staff should never touch a child who has clearly indicated that he/she is, or would be, uncomfortable, unless it is necessary to protect the child, others or property from harm.
- Administration of first-aid should be done, whenever possible, in the presence of other children or another adult. However, no member of staff should hesitate to provide first-aid in an emergency simply because another person is not present.
- Any physical contact which would be likely to be misinterpreted by the pupil, parent or other casual observer should be avoided.
- Following any incident where a member of staff feels that his/her actions have been or may be misconstrued, a written report of the incident should be submitted immediately to Mrs Keown.

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- Staff should be particularly careful supervising children in approved out-of-school activities, where more informal relationships tend to be usual and where staff may be in proximity to pupils in circumstances very different from the normal school/work environment.

3) Choice and use of teaching materials:

- Teachers should avoid teaching materials which may be misinterpreted or the motives for choice could be misconstrued.
- When using teaching materials of a sensitive nature, teachers should be aware of the danger that their application, either by the pupils or by the teacher, might be criticised.
- If in doubt about the appropriateness of a particular teaching material, the teacher should consult with the principal.

4) Relationships and attitudes:

- Within the context of the Pastoral Care policy of the school, staff should ensure that their relationships with pupils are appropriate to the age, maturity and gender of the pupils, taking care that it does not give rise to comment or speculation. Attitudes, demeanour and language all require thought.

5) Photographs, telephones and social media:

- Staff should not have photographs of children stored on personal devices such as phones or memory pens.
- Staff should not have their mobile phones in view during class time, unless there is an emergency situation. Phones should just be used at break and lunch time.
- Staff should keep the school and school-related issues separate from their own social media, allowing for professionalism in their work.
- Staff should be aware of the open nature of social media and strive to ensure that their own accounts do not reflect negatively on them as professionals.

Conclusion:

It would be impossible and inappropriate to lay down hard and fast rules to cover all circumstances in which staff interrelate with children, or where opportunities for their conduct to be misconstrued might occur.

Signed: _____

_____ (date)

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