



St. Mary's College & Preparatory School

Staff Code of Conduct

Guidance for Safe Working Practices
For the Protection of
Children and Staff

Policy Review Date: August 2022

This policy has been written in consultation with staff and governors of The College and Prep and with due regard to the school's mission statement:

Our Mission is to provide an independent Catholic education for boys and girls of all faiths aged 0-18; to provide individual challenge towards holistic and balanced development, service and achievement for life and beyond; and to try to show our Faith by the way we live, showing care and consideration for each other, those around us and the environment.

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Definitions

Throughout this document references are made to “children”, “young people” and “pupils”. These terms are interchangeable. All refer to children under the age of 18 years.

References to “staff” or “adults” include teachers, other staff/governors, and volunteers, working in St Mary’s College, in either paid or unpaid capacity.

The term “allegation” means any information that suggests an adult has caused or may cause hurt or harm to a child or young person.

Overview

The vast majority of adults who work with children in education settings act professionally. They seek to provide a safe and supportive environment, which secures the well-being and very best outcomes for children and young people in their care. It is recognised that achieving these aims is not always straightforward. Much relies on pupil and staff interactions where tensions and misunderstandings can occur. It is here that staff behaviours can give rise to allegations being made against them. Allegations may be genuine, malicious or misplaced. They may arise from differing perceptions of the same event, but when they occur, they are inevitably distressing and difficult for all concerned.

Staff working in education settings have expressed concern about their vulnerability and have requested clearer advice about what constitutes illegal behaviour and what might be considered as misconduct. They have asked for practical guidance about which behaviours constitute safe practice and which behaviours should be avoided.

This document has been produced in response to these concerns. It seeks to ensure that the duty of care towards pupils and staff is promoted by raising awareness of illegal, unsafe and unwise behaviour. It is hoped that it will also assist to monitor their own standards and practice.

The guidance will also support employers in giving a clear message that unlawful or unsafe behaviour will not be tolerated and that where appropriate, legal or disciplinary action may follow.

Whilst every attempt has been made to cover a wide range of situations, it is recognised that any such guidance cannot cover all eventualities. There may be times when professional judgements are made in situations not covered by this document, or which directly contravene the guidance given by the employer. It is expected that in these circumstances staff will always advise their senior colleagues of the justification for any such action already taken or proposed.

III. Underpinning Principles

- The welfare of the child is paramount (Children Act 1989)
- Staff are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions.
- Staff should work, and be seen to work, in an open and transparent way.
- Staff should discuss and/or take advice promptly from their line manager, or another senior member of staff, over any incident that may give rise to concern.
- Records should be made of any such incident and of decisions made/further actions agreed, in accordance with school policy for keeping and maintaining records.
- Staff should apply the same professional standards regardless of culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and or sexual identity.
- All staff should know the name of the St. Mary's College lead designated person for child protection, Mr. S. Hardeley, and deputy designated persons for child protection, Mrs. S. Bartolo and Mrs. J. Thomas, be familiar with local child protection arrangements and understand their responsibilities to safeguard and protect children and young people. At the Prep school the DSL is Mr J Webster and the Deputy is Mrs V Johnson.
- Staff should be aware that breaches of the law and other professional guidelines could result in criminal, professional and / or disciplinary action being taken against them.
- Staff are required to read the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, Whole School Behaviour Policy, Staff Code of Conduct and Whistleblowing Procedure and staff must be familiar with these documents. Copies of these are available on the T-drive in folder 'College Approved Policies'. This policy should be read alongside Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021.

Developing Safe Working Practices for the Protection of Children and Staff at St Mary's College.

1. Introduction

Staff have a crucial role to play in shaping the lives of young people. They have a unique opportunity to interact with children and young people in ways that are both affirming and inspiring. This guidance has been produced to help staff establish the safest possible learning and working environments. The aims are to safeguard young people and reduce the risk of staff being falsely accused of improper or unprofessional conduct.

When we speak to others we will:

- use a positive statement rather than a negative one so that children can learn what we expect of them in any situation.
- use a calm tone of voice at all times, to explain something to or instruct the children, so that they can follow our words without feeling threatened or uncomfortable.
- No shouting will take place
- Avoid using sarcastic words or phrases as these demean children and prevent them from developing high self-esteem.
- speak respectfully to other adults at all times, even if we disagree with them.
- As professionals we will avoid workplace gossip and negativity as it breeds resentment and becomes a roadblock to effective communication and collaboration.
- We all have a duty to take active steps to divert conversations away from this if we come across it.
- Work as part of a team, contributing as well as learning from others and helping to build up a strong workforce so that we can provide the best possible learning opportunities for the children.
- Work within the school's policies and practices, so that what we do is consistent with what has been agreed between all members of the staff and the governors.
- Behave in a positive way despite any personal problems that we may have, especially in front of the children.
- Dress appropriately, so that we set a good example for the children and to show that we are here to work.

2. Safeguarding pupils -

In accordance with 'Keeping children safe in education 2021' (KCSIE), staff members have a responsibility to safeguard pupils, and protect and promote their welfare.

Staff members have a responsibility to ensure that they provide a learning environment in which pupils feel safe, secure and respected.

To effectively safeguard pupils, staff members are required to follow the procedures outlined in this Staff Code of Conduct, the Behavioural Policy and the Child Protection

and Safeguarding Policy, ensuring that they do not act in a way that may put pupils at risk of harm, or lead others to question their actions.

In accordance with the school's Behavioural Policy and Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, staff members will be prepared to identify pupils who may be subject to, or at risk of, various types of abuse and neglect, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect
- Peer-on-peer abuse
- Serious violence
- FGM
- Child sexual exploitation (CSE)
- Child criminal exploitation (CCE)
- Bullying; this includes cyberbullying, and prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying

Copies of policies and a copy of Part one (or Annex A for staff members not working directly with children) of KCSIE will be provided to staff at induction. Staff will have a clear understanding of the school's policies and procedures with regards to safeguarding issues, e.g. abuse, and the important role they play in preventing harm against pupils.

In accordance with the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, staff will also be aware of the factors that could increase a pupil's risk of being subject to safeguarding issues, including but not limited to:

- Pupils who need a social worker (Child in Need and Child Protection Plans).
- Pupils requiring mental health support.
- LAC and previously LAC.
- Pupils with SEND.
- Pupils who identify as LGBTQ+.
- Pupils perceived to be LGBTQ+.
- Pupils struggling with mental health needs.
- Pupils who have a family member in prison, or who are affected by parental offending.
- Pupils that are frequently absent or permanently excluded from school.

If a staff member identifies a pupil who is subject to, or at risk of, abuse and neglect, they will follow the necessary reporting and referral procedures outlined in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. Staff will be aware of the procedures to follow if a pupil tells them they are experiencing abuse, exploitation or neglect.

In all cases, if a staff member feels unsure as to whether an incident or pupil would be classed as a safeguarding concern, they will speak directly to the DSL. Staff will not

assume a colleague will take action and share information that might be critical in keeping children safe.

Staff will understand that even if there are no reports of peer-on-peer abuse in the school, this does not mean it is not happening. Staff will report any concerns regarding any form of abuse to the DSL without undue delay. Staff will understand the importance of challenging inappropriate behaviours between peers that are abusive in nature.

Any staff member that has concerns about another staff member's (including volunteers and supply staff) actions or intent, or believes these actions may lead to a pupil being put at risk of harm, will report this in line with the Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy or Whistleblowing Policy immediately so appropriate action can be taken.

Upskirting is not tolerated by the school and any incidents of upskirting must be reported to the DSL who will decide on the next steps to take, which may include involving the police.

If a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with the school, they will use other whistleblowing channels, including contacting the NSPCC's helpline on 0800 028 0285 (between the hours of 8:00am and 8:00pm Monday to Friday) or email address help@nspcc.org.uk. Staff members can also access guidance at www.gov.uk/whistleblowing. Fear about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils.

If the concern is regarding the headteacher, staff will report this to the chair of the governing board.

Staff will partake in the appropriate safeguarding and child protection training, which will include online safety; additionally, staff will receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates at least annually.

Staff will recognise that, when teaching pupils about safeguarding and online safety, a one-size-fits-all approach may not be appropriate for every pupil, and a more personalised or contextualised approach may be needed for pupils who are vulnerable, victims of abuse and/or have SEND.

Staff will be aware of their local early help process and understand their role in it. Staff will also be aware of the process for making referrals to children's social care service (CSCS) and for statutory assessments under the Children Act 1989, along with the role they may be expected to play in such assessments.

Staff will reassure victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe by the school. Staff will never give the impression that pupils are creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment, nor should a pupil ever be made to feel ashamed for reporting an incident.

Staff will be aware that confidentiality must never be promised to a pupil – staff will understand the procedure for if a pupil discloses a potential safeguarding issue, in accordance with the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Staff will be aware of the school's legal duty to refer anyone who has harmed, or poses a risk of harm to, a child or vulnerable adult to the DBS – this includes where:

The harm test is satisfied in respect of that individual.

The individual has received a caution or conviction for a relevant offence, or if there is reason to believe that the individual has committed a listed relevant offence.

The individual has been removed from working in regulated activity or would have been removed if they had not left their post.

5. Propriety and Behaviour

All staff have a responsibility to maintain public confidence in their ability to safeguard the welfare and best interests of children and young people. They should adopt high standards of personal conduct in order to maintain the confidence and respect of their peers, pupils and the public in general.

An individual's behaviour, either in or out of the workplace, should not compromise her/his position within the work setting.

The DfE guidance "Teachers Standards" became effective on the 1 September 2012 . (Updated 2013) This guidance recognises that:

A teacher is expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct. The following statements define the behaviour and attitudes which set the required standard for conduct throughout a teacher's career.

Teachers uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, by:

- treating pupils with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to a teacher's professional position
- having regard for the need to safeguard pupils' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions
- showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others
- not undermining fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
- ensuring that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways which exploit pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law.

Teachers must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they teach, and maintain high standards in their own attendance and punctuality.

Teachers must have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities. Personal property of a sexually explicit nature such as books, magazines or videos must not be brought onto or stored on the school premises.

6. Dress and Appearance

A person's dress and appearance are matters of personal choice and self-expression. However staff should consider the manner of dress and appearance appropriate to their professional role which may be different to that adopted in their personal life. Staff should ensure they are dressed decently, safely and appropriately for the tasks they undertake. Those who dress or appear in a manner which could be considered inappropriate could render themselves vulnerable to criticism or allegation.

St. Mary's College has a dress code for staff – appendix 1 to this document.

7. Gifts, Rewards and Favouritism.

Staff need to take care that they do not accept any gift that might be construed as a bribe by others, or lead the giver to expect preferential treatment.

There are occasions when children or parents wish to pass small tokens of appreciation to staff e.g. at Christmas or as a thank you and this is acceptable. However, it is unacceptable to receive gifts on a regular basis or of any significant value. Staff must notify their line manager in writing if they have accepted any gift of significant value from an individual pupil, their parents or family.

Similarly, it is inadvisable to give such personal gifts to pupils. This could be misinterpreted as a gesture to bribe, groom, or single out the young person. It might be perceived that a 'favour' of some kind is expected in return.

Any reward given to a young person should be agreed practice within the establishment, consistent with the school's behaviour policy, recorded and not based on favouritism.

8. Infatuations

Staff and volunteers need to be aware that it is not uncommon for pupils to be strongly attracted to a member of staff and/or develop infatuations. All situations should be responded to sensitively to maintain the dignity of all concerned. Staff should also be aware that such circumstances always carry a high risk of words or actions being misinterpreted and for allegations to be made against staff.

A member of staff, volunteer or governor, who becomes aware that a pupil may be infatuated with him/herself or a colleague, should discuss this at the earliest opportunity with a senior colleague so that appropriate action can be taken. In this way, steps can be taken to avoid hurt and distress for all concerned. These discussions should be recorded contemporaneously and the Designated Safeguarding Lead should be informed.

9. Social Contact

Staff and volunteers should not give their personal details such as home/mobile phone number; home or e-mail address to pupils unless the need to do so in agreement with senior management.

Personal mobiles should never be used to contact a parent – if on a school trip the school mobile must be used.

Internal e-mail systems should only be used in accordance with school policy. More guidance is given in the Staff ICT Policy.

This means:

Staff must not befriend pupils on social media or any other media site. Ideally staff should not have parents as friends on social media. In exceptional circumstances this may be the case, but not reference to school pupils, staff or activities should ever be mentioned on social media. Failure to comply may result in disciplinary action.

10. Physical Contact (also see “First Aid” page 18)

There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate and proper for staff to have physical contact with pupils. When physical contact is made with pupils this should be in response to their needs at the time, of limited duration and appropriate given their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background.

Physical contact should never be secretive or casual, or for the gratification of the adult, or represent a misuse of authority. If a member of staff or volunteer believes that an action could be misinterpreted, the incident and circumstances should be reported.

Where feasible, staff should seek the pupil’s permission before initiating contact. Staff should listen, observe and take note of the pupil’s reaction or feelings and – so far as is possible – use a level of contact which is acceptable to the pupil for the minimum time necessary.

11. Physical Education and other activities which require physical contact

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 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.

Contact under these circumstances should be for the minimum time necessary to complete the activity and take place in an open environment (see section 19, one-to-one situations, below). Staff should remain sensitive to any discomfort expressed verbally or non-verbally by the child.

12. Showers and Changing

Young people are entitled to respect and privacy when changing clothes or taking a shower. However, there needs to be an appropriate level of supervision in order to safeguard young people, satisfy Health & Safety considerations and ensure that bullying or teasing does not occur. This supervision should be appropriate to the needs and age of the young people concerned and sensitive to potential for embarrassment.

Staff therefore need to be vigilant about their own behaviour, ensure they follow agreed guidelines and be mindful of the needs of the pupils.

This means that adults should:

- Avoid 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
- be close to the changing rooms in order to deal with any issues

This means that adults should not:

- Change in the same place as children
- Shower with children

13. Pupils in Distress

There may be occasions when a distressed pupil needs comfort and 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.

Where a member of staff has a particular concern about the need to provide this type of care and reassurance s/he should seek further advice from a senior manager.

Record all such situations which arise.

14. Behaviour Management and Physical Intervention

All pupils have a right to be treated with respect and dignity. Staff and volunteers must not use any form of degrading treatment to punish a pupil. The use of sarcasm, demeaning or insensitive comments towards pupils is not acceptable in any situation. Shouting aggressively or hectoring is not acceptable in any situation. Deliberately intimidating pupils is not acceptable in any situation.

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 must have had the appropriate training before administering first aid or medication except in an emergency. Please refer to the school's First Aid policy and Administration of Medicines policy.

Please refer to the school's policies on Positive Handling, First Aid and Administration of Medicines.

15. Sexual Contact with Young People

Any sexual behaviour, whether homosexual or heterosexual, volunteer or governor by a member of staff with or towards a child or young person is illegal. Children and young people are protected by the same laws as adults in relation to non-consensual sexual behaviour. They are additionally protected by specific legal provisions regardless of whether the child or young person consents or not. This includes the prohibition on adults in a position of trust (see Section 5).

The sexual activity referred to does not just involve physical contact including penetrative and non-penetrative acts. It may include non-contact activities, such as causing children to engage in or watch sexual activity or the production of pornographic material. The DfE guidance "Working Together to Safeguard Children" July 2018 , (together with Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2021) defines sexual abuse as "forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening".

There are occasions when adults embark on a course of behaviour known as 'grooming' where the sole purpose is to gain the trust of a child, and manipulate that relationship so sexual abuse can take place. Staff and volunteers should be aware that conferring special attention and favour upon a pupil might be construed as being part of a 'grooming' process, which is a criminal offence.

16. One to One Situations

Staff working in one-to-one situations with pupils are more vulnerable to allegations. Staff should recognise this possibility and plan and conduct such meetings accordingly. Every attempt should be made to ensure the safety and security needs of both staff and pupils are met.

One to one interviews or teaching should be in a venue visible to passers-by.

Managers should undertake a risk assessment in relation to the specific nature and implications of one to one work for each worker and pupil. Where such a meeting is demonstrably unavoidable it is advisable to avoid remote or secluded areas of the school and to ensure that the door of the room is left

open and/or visual/auditory contact with others is maintained. Any arrangements should be reviewed on a regular basis.

17. Transporting Pupils

In certain situations e.g. out of school activities, staff, volunteers or governors may agree to transport pupils. Wherever possible transport arrangements should be made in advance. Wherever possible and practicable transport should be provided other than in private vehicles, with at least one adult additional to the driver acting as an escort. With parental agreement and where no other option exists, staff may transport children in their own car with no other adult present. Certain restraints will be put into place for such events.

1. Permission must be granted by the Principal or Vice-Principal.
2. Permission must be granted by each parent.
3. Staff are never permitted to transport one child alone.
4. Looked after children must never be transported alone.

Adults should ensure that their behaviour is safe and that the transport arrangements and the vehicle meet all legal requirements. They must ensure that the vehicle is roadworthy and appropriately insured and that the maximum capacity is not exceeded. Booster car seats must be used if needed.

18. Educational Visits and School Clubs

Staff and volunteers should take particular care when supervising pupils in the less formal atmosphere of an educational visit, particularly in a residential setting. Staff and volunteers remain in a position of trust and the same standards of conduct apply.

Mobile phones should only be used when out of earshot of children.

Leaders of Trips must complete the necessary risk assessments no later than a week before the trip is to take place. Failure to do so may result in the trip being cancelled. Trip leaders must also ensure that adult to child ratios are sufficient.

19. Curriculum

Many areas of the curriculum can include or raise subject matter which is sexually explicit, or of an otherwise sensitive nature. Care should be taken to 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.

The curriculum can sometimes include or lead to unplanned discussion about subject matter of a sexually explicit or otherwise sensitive nature. Responding to pupils' questions can require careful judgement and staff may wish to take guidance in these circumstances from a senior member of staff.

Care should also be taken to abide by the governing body's required policy on sex and relationships education and the wishes of parents. Parents have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of any sex education provided (but not from the biological aspects of human growth and reproduction necessary under the science curriculum)

This means that adults should:

- Have clear written lesson plans

This means that adults should not:

- Enter into or encourage inappropriate or offensive discussion about sexual activity

20. Photography, Videos and other Creative Arts

Many school activities involve recording images. These may be undertaken as part of the curriculum, extra school activities, for publicity, or to celebrate achievement. The Data Protection Act 2018 affects the use of photography. An image of a child is personal data and it is, therefore, a requirement under the Act that consent is obtained from the parent of a child for any images made such as those used for school web sites, productions or other purposes. When using a photograph the following guidance must be followed:

- If the photograph is used, avoid naming the pupil
- Never take a photograph / video using own phone
- Only download the photographs onto a school computer

21. Internet Use

Please refer to the school's "ICT Acceptable Use" policy which forms part of this Code of Conduct. Under no circumstances should adults in school access inappropriate images. Deliberately accessing pornography on school equipment will be treated as gross misconduct and may be a criminal offence. Accessing indecent images of children on the internet, and making, storing or disseminating such material, is illegal and is likely lead to criminal prosecution and may result in barring from work with children and young people.

22. Whistleblowing

Whistleblowing is the mechanism by which staff can voice their concerns, made in good faith, without fear of repercussion. The College has a clear whistle blowing policy that meets the terms of the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 and staff should follow that policy.

Staff should acknowledge their individual responsibilities to bring matters of concern to the attention of senior management and/or relevant external agencies. This is particularly important where the welfare of children may be at risk.

This means that adults should:

- Report any behaviour by colleagues that raises concern.

23. Sharing Concerns and Recording Incidents

All staff, volunteers and governors must be aware of the school's child protection procedures. Staff, volunteers and governors must be vigilant and share concerns and report incidents. All staff have a responsibility to report concerns. Never leave reporting a concern because you can't talk to a senior manager. Failure to report serious concerns could result in a referral to the Designated Officer for the Local Authority managing allegations procedure against yourself. Whistleblowing is the mechanism by which staff can voice their concerns, made in good faith, with fear of repercussion.

24. 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. Any such conduct could lead to dismissal.

Staff must only use their school email account or Microsoft teams when communicating electronically with pupils, parents and colleagues.

Staff may undertake work outside school, either paid or voluntary provided that it does not conflict with the interests of the school and is not to a level which may contravene the working time regulations or affect an individual's work performance.

All members of staff must declare any business interests outside of school that may be connected either to the of goods / services to the school or be rewarded through association with the school.

All members of staff must ensure they disclose information about themselves relating to relationships that could place children at risk of harm.

School will create an environment and culture where staff are able to do this. The school will no longer ask questions about people in households on application forms, in the safer recruitment policy, on any staff self-disclosure questionnaires, etc The 2018 Regulations bring up-to-date the offences by which an individual can be disqualified under the childcare disqualification arrangements. The relevant offences are set out in the regulations but are listed in Table A guidance for ease of access.

All staff must disclose this information to the Principal and/or Safeguarding Governor as soon as possible. Disqualification from Childcare: statutory guidance for schools 2018.

25. Use of Mobile phones

These should not be used in school during their directed hours / paid hours of employment. They should not sit on teacher desks or be heard to go off

during the school day. Mobile phones should only be used in the staff room at lunchtime. No mobiles should be used on the yard, or in the classroom at break time.

26. Honesty and Integrity

Staff must maintain the highest standards of honesty and integrity in their work. This includes the handling and claiming of money and the use of school property and facilities.

27. Changes in Personal Circumstances

It is the responsibility of each member of staff to notify the Senior Management or the School Business Manager of any changes in personal circumstances.

28. Data Protection and Confidentiality

Regarding personal and sensitive data, staff members are required, under the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018, to:

Consider the legal basis for collecting the data, ensuring that this is documented.

Ensure that the data is stored on a GDPR-compliant server, and that the data is not held for any longer than necessary.

Securely dispose of the data when the relevant retention period ends.

Staff members will not disclose sensitive information about the school, its employees or the LA to other parties.

The only exception whereby it is acceptable for a staff member to disclose information that would otherwise be considered confidential is when the confidential information gives rise to concerns about the safety or welfare of a pupil.

Staff members have the right to request access to data that is held about them. Such requests will be made to the headteacher in writing in accordance with the school's Data Protection Policy.

Include Appendix 1: St. Mary's College Dress Code for Staff

Date of Policy – August 2021

Date of Review- August 2022

Appendix 1 St Mary's College Dress Code for Staff:

Introduction

As an independent school, St Mary's College is a professional and prestigious establishment and our staff dress code should reflect this. It is important that all staff present a professional image to students, parents and other stakeholders. Our dress code reflects the high expectations of the College in terms of teaching and learning, behaviour and student uniform. It is recognised that staff within the College perform a variety of different roles and our dress code takes this into account.

Rationale:

- All staff must dress in a manner which reflects their professionalism
- All staff are models for the learners in the school, therefore they have a responsibility to model appropriate dress and appearance
- The image that we project as professionals is associated with how we present ourselves; the image of the school in the community is related to how all staff and volunteers at the school dress. It is therefore important to dress appropriately when acting in a professional capacity and with due regard to any conclusions parents/visitors may draw from your appearance

This policy provides:

- Guidance to all colleagues
- A benchmark against which the standards of all can be measured
- A framework to inform decisions on standards taken by individual(s)

General Principles

- Staff must abide by the dress code and dress appropriately for their particular role
- Clothing should be clean and in a good state of repair
- The Principal has the final say on whether clothing and appearance is appropriate
- If a staff member's clothing or appearance is not deemed appropriate, the Principal or other member of SLT will speak discreetly to the staff member concerned to discuss any concerns

Information for all staff

- Clothing must be professional attire, not casual wear
- Male staff must wear a shirt, tie, trousers and smart shoes (except PE staff and designated support staff).
- Female staff must wear smart dresses or separates (except PE staff and designated support staff). Trousers may be full or $\frac{3}{4}$ length, but no shorter. Trousers must be formal and tailored. Skirts and dresses should not be too short (on or below the knee). Shirts, blouses, knitwear and other smart tops may be worn, plus smart shoes or boots
- Appropriate religious and cultural dress (including clerical collars, head scarves, skullcaps and turbans) may be worn unless it creates a health

and safety risk to you or any other person or otherwise breaches this policy.

- Hair should be neat and tidy. No extreme hairstyles are allowed
- Male staff facial hair should be well shaved or trimmed and neat.
- Tattoos are to be covered from view
- Jewellery should be discreet with visible piercing restricted to ears (for women only) and single nose studs.
- On formal occasions (such as Mass, parents' evenings, Prize Day) all staff attending must dress in a professional manner befitting the event
- Priority is at all times given to health and safety requirements. Where necessary, advice will be taken from the Health and Safety Officer.

The following may be helpful in clarifying what is and what is not appropriate:

- No denim
- No revealing or excessively tight clothing
- No t-shirts (except PE staff) exceptions are for female staff who wear t-shirts in conjunction with other clothing
- No shorts (except PE staff)
- No combat or cargo trousers (except CCF uniforms)
- No leggings
- No inappropriate footwear e.g. flip flops and trainers (except PE staff) which may contravene Health & Safety guidelines.
- Women's tops may be sleeveless but should not be 'strappy' (i.e. have narrow shoulder straps) or be strapless
- No large logos
- No clothes that are excessively worn or faded
- No clothes with rips or tears