All Saints Catholic High School

Safer Working Practices for Adults
Staff Code of Conduct

"We will provide a Christian Education for all pupils based on the teachings of Jesus and the Spirit of the Gospels. The whole life of the school will be determined by the Gospel Values of Love and Justice. We will always value and care for all members of the All Saints Community according to their needs, and will affirm and nurture the development of all"

School Mission Statement

Date Reviewed: October 2026

Next Review Date: October 2027

All Saints Catholic High School is committed to safeguarding children and promoting children's welfare and expects all staff, governors, volunteers and visitors to share this commitment and maintain a vigilant and safe environment. It is our willingness to work in a safe manner and challenge inappropriate behaviour that underpins this commitment. Everyone, regardless of position, role or responsibilities, is expected to adhere to this 'Code of Conduct' and the Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education Settings (updated in February 2022 by The Safer Recruitment Consortium), which is available online at:

Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings February 2022

Everyone must also read and understand **Part One** and **Annex A** of ***Keeping Children Safe in Education*** **(DfE September 2026).**

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026: Part One

This code of conduct aims to support adults so they don't work in a manner, which might lead to an allegation against them by raising awareness of illegal, unsafe, unprofessional and unwise behaviour and by supporting staff and volunteers to understand what safe, professional conduct is. Equally it aims to reduce the opportunity for any adult intent on grooming or harming a child or young person. The policy aims to reduce the risks of incidents or misunderstandings occurring by developing and setting out clear guidelines and boundaries. It encourages you to work in an open and transparent way that should avoid someone questioning your motives, intentions or suitability to work with young people.

Our school promotes an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about adults working in or on behalf of the school are dealt with promptly and appropriately. Creating this culture in which all concerns are shared responsibly, in a timely way with the right person, and are recorded and dealt with appropriately, is critical to effective safeguarding practice. This culture enables the school to identify concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour at the earliest possible stage, minimises the risk of abuse and ensures that all adults working in or on behalf of the school are clear about professional boundaries and act within these, in accordance with our ethos and values. This culture also empowers individuals to share concerns with key staff about their own behaviour at the earliest possible opportunity.

It is a key principle of this code of conduct that **everyone** understands their responsibility to share **without delay** any concerns they may have about a child's welfare or an adult's behaviour towards a young person. This includes any behaviours, which may not meet the harm test and may be deemed to be a "low level concern" as set out in our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures. In addition, **everyone** has a responsibility to escalate their concerns to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) on 0151 443 3928 or LADOinbox@knowsley.gov.uk or via Knowsley Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on 0151 443 2600, if they feel that safeguarding concerns they have raised about a child or adult working at the school are not being addressed by the school. Further information and guidance regarding how school will respond to concerns about an adult's conduct towards children where the harm test is met, is set out in our Allegations Management Policy.

Code of Conduct:

Our School will create a culture of openness, transparency, trust and support where all members of the school community feel empowered to share relevant information about themselves or someone else.

- 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.

- If you have any concerns that a child is being harmed, abused or neglected you **must share your concerns immediately**, both verbally and via CPOMS with Lynne Jackson, Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), or Nicki Harper, Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL), or Brian Bradley, Assistant Headteacher, or Ed Cassidy, Headteacher, who are also members of the Safeguarding Team. Always listen carefully to the child and record what they tell you in their own words. **Never promise to keep a secret.**

- If you receive an allegation against an adult working in the school or observe behaviour that concerns you, you **must** discuss your concerns **without delay** with the Headteacher. In the absence of the Headteacher, concerns must be shared with one of the Deputy Headteachers. Concerns regarding the Headteacher should be directed to John Thornhill, Chair of Governors, via email jthornhill@allsaintschs.org.uk or the LADO. The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is available for staff who do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally or via Local Authority procedures - Tel: 0800 028 0285 (8:00am - 8:00pm, Monday to Friday and 9.00am - 6.00pm at the weekend) or email help@nspcc.org.uk. Staff 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.

- Anyone (in emergencies or if they need to) can make a referral about their concerns for a child to Knowsley MASH on 0151 443 2600.

You should:

- Always act and be seen to act in the child's best interests. The welfare of the child is paramount.
- Respect others' confidentiality unless sharing information is appropriate to ensure their welfare.
- Follow the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures and share information appropriately in line with. Seek advice from the DSL if you are in any doubt about sharing information you hold or which has been requested of you.
- Be alert to the indicators of harm and abuse towards a child, including child on child abuse.
- Dress appropriately according to your role, ensuring that clothing is compliant with professional standards and is not likely to distract, cause embarrassment or give rise to misunderstanding; be viewed as discriminatory, offensive or revealing and is free from any political or other contentious slogans or images. This applies to online or virtual teaching/meetings, as well as face to face. Also, ensure that visible tattoos do not cause offence to others; if they are likely to, then they must be covered up whilst in work.
- Act as an appropriate role model, treating all members of the school community with dignity, respect and tolerance.
- Always maintain appropriate professional boundaries and avoid behaviour, which could be misconstrued by others. This includes within school, in your personal life and in any online activity. All staff have a responsibility to model safe practices at all times.
- Ensure that you appropriately challenge any form of derogatory and sexualised language or behaviour to ensure that everyone is respectful at all times. Reassure victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. Victims should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem or made to feel ashamed for reporting abuse.
- Be mindful and sensitive to factors both inside and outside of school, which may impact on a child's behaviour, and try to defuse any situations before they escalate using positive behaviour management strategies.
- Ensure gifts given or received in situations which may be misconstrued are discussed with your Line Manager and recorded. Monetary gifts from parents/carers or pupils should always be refused and personal gifts, payment, or other incentives from a business contact should be returned. Any gift that cannot be returned should be declared to the governing board, who will decide how it will be used.
- Report any indications (verbal, written or physical) that suggest a child may be infatuated with you or another member of staff to your Line Manager.
- Always explain to a child the reason why any physical contact is necessary and what form it will take. Consider alternatives, where it is anticipated that a child might misinterpret any such

contact. Ensure the way you offer comfort or reassurance to a distressed child is age appropriate. Where physical contact is required, it is good practice for it to be within the sight of others.

- Carry out home visits with a colleague, wherever possible, and always try to give parents/carers advance warning unless there is good reason not to, e.g. because the visit has been prompted by safeguarding concerns. You should have access to a mobile phone and never enter a house if a parent/carer is not present other than in an emergency. You should also have a clear understanding of the actions that should be taken if it is believed that a child or parent/carer is at immediate risk of harm.
- Follow health and safety rules, routines and procedures and ensure that you take every action to keep yourself and everyone in the school environment safe and well.
- Ensure that you adhere to the school's guidance if you are arranging an educational visit. Risk assessments should be undertaken and the appropriate consents in place prior to the visit. Another adult should always be present during the visits, unless otherwise agreed by the Headteacher. Be aware that professional behaviour and conduct is expected to be extended to extracurricular trips and visits.
- Adhere to all of the school's policies, particularly those related to safeguarding – including child protection, behaviour, attendance, anti-bullying, allegations management and whistleblowing.
- Complete a Declaration of Pecuniary Interest Form. If you are in any doubt about a declaration, you are advised to speak to Ian Williams, Finance Manager, or your trade union representative. Any member of staff found to be withholding information about a conflict of interest could become subject to disciplinary action.
- Ensure that you understand your responsibilities under the General Data Protection Regulations and Data Protection Act 2018 and be clear that where personal information is recorded electronically, systems and devices are kept secure.
- Ensure that you maintain a professional level of conduct in your use of technology and do not bring the school into disrepute. Read and sign the school's Acceptable Use Agreement for Staff and abide by the policy and Online Safety Guidance. Ensure that you are familiar with the section entitled '*Use of Technology for Online/Virtual Teaching and Meetings*' before delivering any lessons online. Be aware of how the use of technology can impact safeguarding and wellbeing issues, e.g. online abuse, and be vigilant to ensure that pupils under your care behave respectfully and use technology, including AI, appropriately.
- Ensure that pupils can't be exposed to indecent or inappropriate images. Always make sure that any films or materials shown to children are age appropriate.
- Apply the same professional standards regardless of culture, disability, gender, identity, language, racial origin, religious belief and sexual orientation.
- Report any behaviour or situations that you feel may give rise to a complaint or misunderstanding in respect of your own actions, both in and out of school. Also, share situations with the Headteacher, if you feel your actions might have sat outside of this code of conduct, or may appear to others to have done so.
- Understand that it may be appropriate to discuss with the Headteacher matters outside of work, including online, which may have implications for the safeguarding of children in the workplace.
- This includes information about yourself. You must ensure that you are aware of the circumstances where this would be applicable.
- Remember that the behaviour of those with whom you have a relationship or association, or others in your personal life (in or out of school or online), may impact on your work with children.
- Inform the Headteacher of any name changes that you have not previously declared.
- Inform the Headteacher of any cautions, bans, convictions or relevant orders accrued throughout your employment and/or if you are subject to a Police enquiry or investigation, charged with a criminal offence or have a pending prosecution.
- Be aware that breaches of the law and other professional guidelines could result in disciplinary action being taken against you, criminal action and/or other proceedings including barring by the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) from working in regulated activity, or for acts of serious misconduct, prohibition from teaching by the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA).

- Share any ***low-level concerns**** with the Headteacher If you believe that an adult working in or on behalf of the school may have acted in a way that is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct (including inappropriate conduct outside of work) and does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO. It doesn't matter how small the concern is, even if it is no more than a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt'; your intervention may allow for the individual's behaviour/practice to be addressed at an early stage, so that they are clear about professional boundaries and act within these boundaries; minimising the risk of abuse and protecting themselves from potential false allegations or misunderstandings.
- Report the behaviour of another adult in the school to the Headteacher when it breaches this code of conduct or the school's safeguarding policies, in order to prevent a child from being harmed/abused; deliberately invented/malicious allegations are extremely rare.

**** Low-level concerns** - Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to, being over friendly with children, having favourites or engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door.*

Never:

- Act in a way both at work and/or in your personal life (including online) that brings yourself, school or the (teaching) profession into disrepute.
- Engage in outside work, which could seriously damage the reputation and standing of the school, your own reputation or the reputation of other members of the school community.
- Use your position to gain access to information for your own advantage and/or a pupil's or family's detriment.
- Make, encourage or ignore others making personal comments, which scapegoat, demean, discriminate or humiliate any member of the school community including ignoring any form of child on child abuse. Downplaying certain behaviours, such as sexual harassment, can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours that normalises abuse, leading to children accepting it as normal and not coming forward to report it.
- Use your position to intimidate, bully, threaten, coerce or intentionally undermine others. This includes shouting in anger and aggressively to punish them rather than raising your voice to be heard or avoid danger. Physical force should never be used as a punishment.
- Undermine fundamental British values including democracy, rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance for those with different faiths, beliefs or from different cultures. You should not express any prejudicial views or attempt to influence or impose your personal values, attitudes or beliefs on pupils.
- Use inappropriate language to or in the presence of pupils or engage in inappropriate conversations with them or in their presence about your personal or sexual relationships.
- Develop 'personal' or sexual relationships with children and young people, including making or encouraging others to make sexual remarks to, or about a pupil, or having inappropriate sexual banter, in person or using technology. In addition, the Sexual Offences Act 2003 makes it clear that **all** members of staff are in a position of trust and would therefore be committing a criminal offence to have a sexual relationship with a young person in full time education/below the age of 18, even if the young person is over the age of consent.
- Discriminate favourably or unfavourably towards a child.
- Give personal contact details to pupils on roll or former pupils under the age of 18, communicate with or respond to contact from them outside of the purposes of your work using social networks, email, text, WhatsApp, etc. or meet a young person out of school unless part of a planned school activity **with** the prior knowledge and agreement of your Line Manager. If you need to contact a pupil or parent/carer by phone in a professional capacity and you do not have access to a work phone, you should always use 'caller withheld' to ensure that the pupil or parent/carer is not able to identify your personal contact details.
- Have conversations online or via social networking sites that make reference to children, parents/carers or other colleagues at the school or be derogatory about the school. Never make any statements or post images online or on social networking sites that might cause someone

to question your suitability to act as a role model to young people or bring your own or the school's reputation into disrepute. You should never communicate with parents/carers through social network sites and you are strongly advised to declare any existing friendships/relationships to your Line Manager. You should always inform the Headteacher of any requests or arrangements where parents/carers wish to use your services outside of the workplace, e.g. tutoring.

- Take photographs of children for your own personal use or store images of them on your personal equipment. Ensure photographs are only stored on the designated secure place on the school's network and deleted from portable equipment. Avoid taking photographs in one-to-one situations. Never take images of a child in a state of undress or semi-undress or of a child's injury (e.g. following a disclosure of abuse), even if requested to do so by Children's Social Care. You should never make an audio/video recording of a child's disclosure either. Photographs and video footage of pupils, school personnel, or visitors should not be used in the generation of new or composite images via artificial intelligence (AI).
- Display or distribute any images of children or post photographs of them on the school's website or social media accounts without their parents'/carers' consent. (Some children may be put at risk by their whereabouts being made public).
- Use your personal mobile phone in areas used by children unless in emergencies or under an agreed protocol set out by the Headteacher.
- Undertake one-to-one activities out of the sight of others unless it is a planned activity with the knowledge of your Line Manager and in keeping with your particular responsibilities. Wherever possible, ensure that there is visual access and/or an open door in one-to-one situations and avoid the use of 'engaged' or equivalent signs, which may create an opportunity for secrecy or the interpretation of secrecy. Always report any situation where a pupil becomes distressed, anxious or angry.
- Consume or be under the influence of alcohol, drugs or any substances that may hinder judgement and cause changes in behaviour when professionally active and responsible for either pupils, parents/carers, other colleagues and/or school property. This includes the misuse of prescribed medication.
- Smoke or vape on-site and whenever in the sight of pupils, parents/carers or visitors. Neither should you do so whilst working with pupils off-site, such as when on educational visits and trips.
- Transport children unsafely, for example, using a vehicle that is not road worthy, by driving whilst using your mobile phone, failing to ensure that seat belts are worn or driving without appropriate insurance. Any trips should be planned and with the prior knowledge of the Educational Visits Coordinator and the Headteacher. Unforeseen events should be reported to the Headteacher and it is good practice to have another adult to act as an escort during the journey.
- Have physical contact with young people that might be misconstrued or considered indecent or harmful. Never engage in horseplay or fun fights with pupils. Ensure you are always able to give an account of the reasons for physical contact or physical intervention. Any physical contact with a child that is needed to control or restrain a child should be the minimum required and the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher must be informed immediately.

All school employees must have a clear understanding of their responsibilities under this Code of Conduct. It aims to help avoid poor working practices that may lead to a person's behaviour being investigated and the consideration of disciplinary procedures.