

Holy Rosary Nursery  
School



# Professional Code of Conduct for Staff, Students & Volunteers

Ratified by *Governors*: January 2019

Signed:

Reviewed: September 2022

Review: September 2025

## **Professional Code of Conduct**

In Holy Rosary Nursery School, we follow our school mission statement in our teaching and learning day:

*We aim to create a happy, safe and secure environment in which staff will encourage children to fulfill their intellectual, spiritual, physical and emotional potential.*

*We aim to establish a community where pupils, teachers and parents enjoy a sense of belonging and share a responsibility for positive learning. Central to the school ethos is a commitment to Christian values and the recognition of the value of each child.*

We aim to offer:

- A safe and secure learning environment
- Respect for all
- Equal treatment for all pupils and families
- Encouragement and support for all pupils to enable them to reach their full potential
- A welcome for all from differing religious and cultural backgrounds
- A welcome for children with Special Educational Needs
- Committed, well qualified and trained staff
- Respect and support for parents in their role as educators of their children
- An atmosphere of happiness, fun and positive behaviour and attitudes
- Links with the parish and community

### **Objectives, scope and principles**

This Code of Conduct is designed to give clear guidance on the standards of behaviour all school staff and volunteers are expected to observe. School staff and volunteers are role models and are in a unique position of influence and trust and must adhere to behaviour that sets a good example to all the pupils within the school. As a member of a school community, each person has an individual responsibility to

maintain their reputation and the reputation of the school, whether inside or outside working hours.

This Code of conduct applies to all staff and volunteers and does not form part of any employee's contract of employment.

**The Code includes sections on:**

- Setting an Example
- Safeguarding pupils
- Relationships and Attitudes
- Private Meetings with Pupils
- Physical Contact with Pupils
- Honesty and Integrity
- Conduct Outside of Work
- E-Safety and Internet Use
- Confidentiality
- Pupil Development
- Dress and appearance
- Intimate Care

**Setting an Example**

All staff and volunteers who work in schools set examples of behaviour and conduct which can be copied by pupils. All staff and volunteers must therefore for example avoid using inappropriate or offensive language at all times & demonstrate high standards of conduct in order to encourage pupils to do the same.

All staff and volunteers must avoid putting themselves at risk of allegations of abusive or unprofessional conduct.

This code helps all staff and volunteers to understand what behaviour is and is not acceptable.

All staff and volunteers are expected to familiarise themselves and comply with all school policies and procedures so as to set a good example to pupils and uphold the reputation of the school.

**Safeguarding Pupils**

All staff and volunteers have a statutory duty to safeguard pupils from physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, neglect and exploitation.

The duty to safeguard pupils includes the duty to report and record concerns about a pupil or colleague to a member of the school's Safeguarding team (Designated Teacher (DT) or Deputy Designated Teacher (DDT) for Child Protection).

The school's DT is the Principal, Mrs Sarah Morrison and the DDT is Assistant Teacher, Miss Eimear Dynes.

All staff and volunteers are provided with personal copies of the school's Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy and must be familiar with these documents and other relevant school policies.

All staff and volunteers should treat children with respect and dignity. They must not demean nor undermine pupils, their parents or carers.

All staff and volunteers should not demonstrate behaviour that may be perceived as sarcasm, making jokes at the expense of pupils or parents/carers; embarrassing or humiliating others; discriminating against or favouring pupils.

All staff and volunteers must take reasonable care of pupils under their supervision with the aim of ensuring their safety and welfare at all times. Staff and volunteers should also complete risk assessments where appropriate in accordance with school policies.

### **Relationships and Attitudes**

All staff and volunteers should treat pupils with respect and dignity and not in a manner which demeans or undermines them, their parents or carers, or colleagues.

Staff and volunteers should ensure that their relationships with pupils are appropriate to the age and maturity of their pupils. They should not demonstrate behaviours that may be perceived as sarcasm, making jokes at the expense of pupils, embarrassing or humiliating pupils, discriminating against or favouring pupils. Attitudes, demeanour and language all require thought to ensure that conduct does not give rise to comment or speculation.

Staff and volunteers may have less formal contact with pupils outside of school; perhaps through mutual membership of social groups, sporting organisations, or family connections.

Staff and volunteers should not assume that the school would be aware of any such relationship and should therefore consider whether the school should be made aware of the connection.

Staff and volunteers should always behave in a professional manner which, within the context of this code of conduct, includes such aspects as:

- acting in a fair, courteous and mature manner to pupils, colleagues and other stakeholders;
- cooperating and liaising with colleagues, as appropriate, to ensure pupils receive a coherent and comprehensive educational service;
- respect for school property;
- taking responsibility for the behaviour and conduct of pupils in the classroom and sharing such responsibility elsewhere on the premises;
- being familiar with communication channels and school procedures applicable to both pupils and staff and volunteers;
- respect for the rights and opinions of others.

Relationships with pupils and family must be professional at all times.

### **Private meetings with pupils:**

Staff and volunteers should be aware of the dangers which may arise from private time with individual pupils.

There may be times when staff and volunteers will be working on a one-to-one basis with a child. On all occasions this work should take place either in a room with visual access or with the door open and ensure that another adult knows that the staff member is there with the child or children.

### **Physical contact with pupils:**

As a general principle staff and volunteers are advised not to make unnecessary physical contact with pupils (e.g. constant nursing of particular children).

It is unrealistic and unnecessary, however to suggest that staff and volunteers should touch children only in emergencies. In particular, a distressed child may need reassurance involving physical comforting, as a caring parent would provide. Staff and volunteers should not feel inhibited from providing this. Neither should staff and volunteers attempt to stifle the natural affection of nursery age children but should direct it into an appropriate display.

Staff and volunteers should never touch a child who has clearly indicated that he/she is, or would be, uncomfortable with such contact, unless it is necessary to protect the child, others or property from harm.

Physical punishment is illegal, as is any form of physical response to misbehaviour, unless it is by way of necessary restraint.

Staff and volunteers should therefore be cognisant of the guidance issued by the Department on the use of reasonable force (Circular 1999/09 and guidance document 'Towards a Model Policy in Schools on Use of Reasonable Force) and be familiar with the school's policy on Safe Handling and Use of Reasonable Force.

Staff who may have to administer first aid to a child should ensure wherever possible that this is done in the presence of another adult.

In general, any physical contact which would be likely to be misinterpreted by the child, parent or other casual observer should be avoided.

### **Honesty and Integrity**

All staff and volunteers must maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their work. This includes the handling and claiming of money and the use of school property and facilities.

Gifts from suppliers or associates of the school must be declared to the Principal with the exception of "one off" token gifts from parents. Personal gifts from individual members of staff and volunteers to pupils are inappropriate and could be misinterpreted and may lead to disciplinary action.

### **Conduct Outside of Work**

All staff and volunteers must not engage in conduct outside work which could seriously damage the reputation and standing of the school or the staff member's own reputation or the reputation of other members of the school community.

In particular, criminal offences that involve violence, possession or use of illegal drugs or sexual misconduct are to be regarded as unacceptable.

Staff and volunteers may undertake work outside school, either paid or voluntary, provided that it does not conflict with the interests of the school. It should not contravene the working time regulations or affect an individual's work performance in the school. Staff and volunteers should seek advice from the Principal when considering work outside the school.

### **Drugs and alcohol**

Staff are under no circumstance to present for work under the influence of drugs or alcohol or to have any in their possession on the premises. Any breaches of this will result in disciplinary action.

## E-Safety and Internet Use

Staff and volunteers must exercise caution when using information technology and be aware of the risks to themselves and others. Regard should be given to the school's E-safety and Acceptable Use Policy at all times both inside and outside of work.

Staff and volunteers must not discuss the school, staff or children on social media in any way even after work experience/volunteering has finished.

Staff and volunteers must not engage in inappropriate use of social network sites which bring themselves, the school, the school community or employer into disrepute.

Staff and volunteers should ensure that they adopt suitable high security settings on any personal profiles they may have.

Staff and volunteers should exercise caution in their use of all social media or any other web-based presence that they may have, including written content, videos or photographs, and views expressed either directly or by "liking" certain pages or posts established by others.

This may also include the use of dating websites where staff and volunteers could encounter pupil family members either with their own profile or acting covertly.

Contact with pupils' parents must be via school authorised mechanisms only! At no time should personal telephone numbers, email addresses or communication routes via personal accounts on social media platforms be used to communicate with pupils parents.

If contacted by a parent by an inappropriate route, staff and volunteers should report the contact to the Principal immediately.

Photographs/stills or video footage of pupils should only be taken using school equipment for purposes authorised by the school. Any such use should always be transparent and only occur where parental consent has been given.

Staff and volunteers' mobile phones must not be used to film or photograph pupils and must be stored safely out of the classroom during school hours. Mobile phones should only be accessed during lunch times, unless previous consent has been requested from the Principal, as a case of an imminent emergency contact. Staff and volunteers may issue family with the school land line number and this number should be used

to contact members of staff and volunteers should an emergency arise.

### **Confidentiality**

Members of staff and volunteers may have access to confidential information about pupils in order to undertake their everyday responsibilities. In some circumstances staff may be given additional highly sensitive or private information. They should never use confidential or personal information about a pupil or their family for their own, or others' advantage. Information must never be used to intimidate, humiliate, or embarrass the pupil.

Confidential information about pupils should never be used casually in conversation or shared with any person other than on a need to know basis. In circumstances where the pupil's identity does not need to be disclosed the information should be used anonymously.

There are some circumstances in which a member of staff may be expected to share information about a pupil, for example when abuse is alleged or suspected. In such cases, individuals have a duty to pass information on without delay, but only to those with designated child protection responsibilities.

If a member of staff is in any doubt about whether to share information or keep it confidential he or she should seek guidance from the Principal. Any media or legal enquiries should be passed to the Principal.

Staff and volunteers need to be aware that although it is important to listen to and support pupils, they must not promise confidentiality or request pupils to do the same under any circumstances.

Additionally, concerns and allegations about adults should be treated as confidential and passed to the Principal without delay.

### **Pupil Development**

All staff and volunteers must comply with school policies and procedures that support the well-being and development of pupils.

All staff and volunteers must co-operate and collaborate with colleagues and with external agencies where necessary to support the development of pupils.

### **Dress and Appearance**

All staff and volunteers must dress in a manner that is appropriate to a professional role and promoting a professional image.

Staff and volunteers should dress in a manner that is not offensive, revealing or sexually provocative.

Staff and volunteers should dress in a manner that is absent from political or other contentious slogans.

### **Intimate Care Code of Conduct**

The special procedures regarding changing a child who is wet / soiled /sick as detailed next should be adhered to by all staff and volunteers at all times.

### **NB Casual substitute staff, students or volunteers should not be involved in changing children.**

- a) Only children whose parent/carer has given permission for them to be changed may be changed. The parent/carer of those for whom parental consent has not been received should be telephoned instead. A list of any children who MAY NOT be changed will be clearly displayed in each classroom's bathroom for all staff to check.
- b) Only members of staff will be present when a child is being changed.
- c) Due to problems of supervision of the rest of the class, both members of staff will not be present when a child is being changed. However, the member of staff changing the child MUST alert the other member of staff prior to starting to change the child.
- d) To provide visual access, the bathroom door should remain open at all times.
- e) While every attempt should be made to give the child privacy and preserve their dignity, other children will not be barred from the bathroom during changing.
- f) Staff must wear disposable gloves when changing a child.

- g) The child should be encouraged to remove the clothes to be changed, where possible, by themselves.
- h) Where necessary, the child can be given a baby wipe to freshen themselves.
- i) The child should be encouraged to dress themselves with help being given only when necessary.
- j) A note of the change must be entered on the Intimate Care record sheet (kept inside bathroom cupboard) signed by the staff member involved. Wet / soiled clothes are to be placed in a sealed plastic bag for return to parent and hung on the child's peg and the parent/ carer informed at the end of the session.
- k) A child who is asking for help in the toilet should be encouraged and directed how to clean themselves where possible. Where intervention is necessary, the other member of staff should be alerted, and the record sheet signed by both staff members on completion.

### **Compliance**

All staff and volunteers must complete the form in Appendix 1 to confirm they have read, understood and agreed to comply with the Code of Conduct. This form should then be signed and dated. All actions concerning pupils must uphold the best interests of the child as a primary consideration.

Staff and volunteers must always be mindful of the fact that they hold a position of trust, and that their behaviour towards the children in their charge must be above reproach. This code of conduct is not intended to detract from the enriching experiences children gain from positive interaction with staff and volunteers. It is intended to assist staff and volunteers in respect of the complex issue of child abuse, by drawing attention to the areas of risk for staff and volunteers and by offering guidance on prudent conduct.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's policies on:

- \*Safeguarding & Child Protection
- \*Health & Safety
- \*Pastoral Care

- \*E-Safety & Acceptable Use
- \*Intimate Care
- \*Mobile Phones
- \*Positive Behaviour Management
- \*Drugs
- \*Reasonable Force and Safe Handling
- \*Special Educational Needs
- \*Seesaw
- \*Use of Images
- \*Remote learning

## APPENDIX 1

### Confirmation of Compliance

I hereby confirm that I have read, understood and agree to comply with the school's Code of Conduct, Intimate Care Code of Conduct and policies on Confidentiality, Use of Images, Seesaw, E-safety and Acceptable Use and Mobile Phones.

I understand that in line with this Safeguarding & Child Protection policy, all mobile phones must be kept in the staff room and may only be used during staff lunch times, or with prior consent from the Principal, in the case of emergency contact.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Position \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Once completed, signed and dated, please return this form to the Principal.**