

Policy: Staff Code of Conduct Policy and Guidelines
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Ratified FGB: March 2026
Review: March 2028

Holy Trinity Church of England (VA) Primary School



Believe • Achieve • Inspire •

Staff Code of Conduct Policy and Guidelines

SCHOOL VISION

Our vision is for our pupils to flourish in an inclusive, inspirational place of learning where we are happy, respectful, kind and safe.

At Holy Trinity Church of England Primary School our Christian vision shapes all we do.

*"I know that there is nothing better for people than to be happy and to do good while they live."
Ecclesiastes 3:12.*

- we facilitate opportunities so every child can flourish in a place where they feel **safe, happy and confident**.
- staff **well-being** and professional development is valued and supported in order to fulfil their roles, **inspire** others and experience personal **fulfilment**.
- the school provides facilities that enables our pupils to reach their potential in an **optimum learning environment**.
- the **school plays a central role within our community** and enjoys strong **links with the church, local companies and other schools**.
- we create a culture of vigilance to **safeguard** all children.

'I know that there is nothing better for people than to be happy and to do good while they live.'
Ecclesiastes 3:12

Safe Working Practices for the Protection of Children and Staff

1. Introduction

The Governors of Holy Trinity CE Primary School have a legal duty under section 175 of the Education Act 2002 to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils by creating and maintaining a safe learning environment.

In this regard, all Holy Trinity CE Primary School staff have a duty to keep children and young people safe and protect them from harm. Staff should ensure that they do not put themselves in situations in which allegations of abuse or inappropriate behaviour could be made. The Public are also entitled to expect the highest standards of conduct from school staff, Governors and volunteers and to have trust and confidence in their integrity.

All adults working in Holy Trinity CE Primary School must therefore act with the utmost good faith with regard to the business of the school and not do anything, which may adversely affect its reputation.

The following Code has been drawn up with a view to reducing the risk of staff being accused of improper or unprofessional conduct in all aspects of their work. It aims to help staff work safely and professionally and clarify what behaviour constitutes safe practice and what is unacceptable and/or illegal.

The Code refers closely to the national safeguarding guidance [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) and [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#).

2. Scope

The Code applies to all adults working in schools whatever their position, roles or responsibilities and is therefore aimed at all school-based staff and volunteers.

The Code is predominantly geared towards safe working practices for the protection of children and in this connection should be read in conjunction with Holy Trinity CE Primary School Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. However, the Code also encompasses other general aspects of conduct expected within Holy Trinity CE Primary School.

The Code cannot cover every eventuality. Its purpose is to show the standard expected of employees, but it does not replace the general requirements of the law. In respect of teachers specifically, the Code supplements the Practice for Registered Teachers.

The Code is recommended to all school Governing Board members for adoption.

The Local Authority will not accept liability for any actions, claims, costs or expenses arising out of a school's decision not to follow these recommended guidelines, where it is found that the school's Governing Board has been negligent or has acted in an unfair or discriminatory manner.

3. General obligations

Staff should understand the responsibilities that are an intrinsic part of their employment or role. They should make a professional judgement about their actions and behaviour and seek to avoid conduct, which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation.

If there is an incident where staff feel there may be a concern, they should discuss the circumstances that informed their action, or their proposed action with a senior colleague, to help ensure that the safest practices are employed and the risk of actions being misinterpreted reduced.

Records should be made of any incidents and decisions made or further actions agreed, with their justifications, in accordance with school policy.

All staff should know the Designated Safeguarding Lead (and deputies) in school, be familiar with local safeguarding arrangements and understand their responsibilities to safeguard and protect children and young people.

Staff should understand their responsibility to voice any general concerns that they might have about practice within the school, in accordance with the Holy Trinity CE Primary School Whistleblowing Policy.

Staff should also be aware of and comply with Holy Trinity CE Primary School financial and administrative regulations and any other procedure manuals such as the Staff Handbook.

Unlawful, unsafe, unprofessional or inappropriate behaviour may result in disciplinary action being taken.

4. Good practice guidelines

The following Code and guidelines set out specific areas of conduct and behaviour that constitute expected and safe practice. Appendix 1 refers to what is considered as misconduct and what can be seen as gross misconduct.

If staff are in any doubt about any aspect of this guidance or need to seek further clarification about a particular situation in the absence of specific guidance, they are advised to speak to a senior leader within Holy Trinity CE Primary School.

5. Propriety and Behaviour

All adults working with children and young people are in a position of trust in relation to the individuals in their care. Staff are expected to adopt high standards of personal integrity and conduct and behave in such a way that does not compromise their position both within or outside Holy Trinity CE Primary School.

For teachers, the General Teaching Council for England's Statement of Professional Values and Practice also sets out the minimum professional standards for the regulation of the teaching profession and recognises that 'professionalism involves using judgement over appropriate standards of personal behaviour'.

Staff should not:

- behave in a manner, which would lead any reasonable person to question their suitability to work with children or act as a role model.
- use their power to intimidate, threaten, coerce or undermine pupils, parents or staff.
- make (or encourage others to make) unprofessional personal comments which scapegoat, demean or humiliate other individuals.

6. Confidentiality and Information disclosure

Staff should not use any information obtained in the course of their duties to the detriment of Holy Trinity CE Primary School or for personal gain or benefit or pass this information on to others who might use it in such a way.

Staff must also take all reasonable steps to ensure that the loss, destruction, inaccuracy or disclosure of information does not occur as a result of their actions, including information relating to school business and pupil data.

There are some circumstances in which staff may be expected to share information about a child, for example, when child protection issues arise. In such cases staff have a duty to pass information on without delay in line with school safeguarding and child protection procedures. If staff are in any doubt about whether to share information or keep it confidential they should seek guidance from the DSL or Deputy DSL.

- staff should not use their position to gain access to information for their own advantage or to intimidate, humiliate or embarrass a child, parent or other staff member;
- staff are expected to treat any information they receive about children and young people in a discreet and confidential manner;

- staff need to be cautious when passing on information to others about a child/young person; and if in any doubt about sharing information, seek the advice of a senior member of staff, or a DSL.

7. Equality issues

All staff are required to adhere to the Holy Trinity CE Primary School Equal Opportunities Policy, in addition to the requirements of the law.

- staff should not discriminate in recruitment and employment practices, nor in the delivery of services;
- staff should also ensure that in their dealings with parents and other members of the public, they ensure the provision of an efficient and impartial delivery to all individuals.

8. Employment matters

All staff involved in appointments and/or tendering process should ensure that these are made on the basis of merit.

- staff should not be involved in an appointment or decisions relating to discipline, promotion or pay adjustments for any individual who is a relative or with who they are in a close personal relationship;
- all relationships of a business or private nature with external contractors, or potential contractors should be made known to the Headteacher or if concerning the Headteacher, then the Chair of Governors.

9. Public duty and private interest

It is important that staff do not put themselves in a position where their duty to Holy Trinity CE Primary School and their private interests conflict.

- Staff should not allow their own personal or political opinions to interfere with their work and the provision of a balanced and professional service, ensuring that they work to the professional standard required.

10. Other employment/private work

Any external work that staff undertake must not bring Holy Trinity CE Primary School into disrepute or conflict with the school's interest. Any copyright of this work or payment created by a member of staff during their employment with Holy Trinity CE Primary School becomes the property of the school.

- staff should not set up a business or accept employment with a business that is engaged in work, which is in direct competition with Holy Trinity CE Primary School
- private work should not be undertaken in the school's time, or using the school's premises or equipment, without prior approval of the Headteacher.

11. Dress and Appearance

Staff should ensure that they are dressed decently, safely and appropriately for the tasks that they undertake and that through their appearance, they promote a positive and professional image. Denim Jeans are not permitted unless agreed by the Headteacher. When delivering or engaged in supporting P.E. or sport lessons, staff should wear appropriate footwear and clothing for safety and as an example to children.

12. Financial inducements, gifts, hospitality and sponsorship

Staff should ensure that they use public funds entrusted to them in a responsible and lawful manner and that they do not give or receive any gift, loan, fee, reward or advantage, which might be misinterpreted.

Although staff should not give or receive gifts from pupils or parents on a regular basis or of any significant value, it is acceptable however for staff to receive small tokens of appreciation, such as at Christmas time.

- staff should not seek or receive preferential rates for themselves by virtue of their dealings on behalf of the school;
- staff should generally only give gifts to an individual young person as part of an agreed reward system;
- where staff do give gifts, they should ensure that they are of insignificant value, do not breach any medical risk and given to all children equally.

13. Use of School Time and Facilities

The School's property and facilities (e.g. stationery, computers, and photocopiers) may only be used for school business unless permission for their private use has been granted.

14 Publications of Books/Articles

If staff want to publish books, articles, letters, dissertations etc that they have written in connection with their duties and in which they describe themselves as holding an appointment with the school they must consult the Headteacher.

Staff should speak to the Headteacher if they wish to publish books, articles, letters, dissertations etc, which have been written in connection with their duties and their role within Holy Trinity CE Primary School.

15. Infatuations

In cases where a young person develops an infatuation, there is a high risk of words or actions being misinterpreted and for allegations to be made against staff.

- Staff should report to a senior colleague any clear/apparent indications (whether they are verbal, written or physical), that suggest a pupil may be infatuated with them and respond sensitively to such situations in order to maintain the dignity of all parties.

16. Social contact

Staff should not establish or seek to establish social contact with pupils to secure or strengthen a friendship. This includes giving any personal details to a pupil or parent such as a home/mobile phone number, home or email address. Only in exceptional circumstances can this be with the prior approval of a senior member of staff. Staff should

- not give out personal details such as home/mobile numbers, home address or e-mail address to pupils or parents.
- should always approve any planned social contact with pupils with the teacher, for example, when it is part of a reward scheme or pastoral care programme;
- should advise the Headteacher of any regular social contact they have with a pupil, where it is apparent that it may give rise to a concern.

17. Physical contact

It is unrealistic to suggest that teachers should never touch pupils. There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate and proper for staff to have physical contact with pupils, such as when a distressed pupil needs comfort and reassurance or as an integral part of some lessons such as PE and music.

However, innocent actions and appropriate physical contact can often be misconstrued and it is therefore crucial that staff only initiate physical contact for the minimum time necessary and in ways appropriate to their own role and the needs of the child. Staff should use their professional judgement at all times. Where feasible, staff should seek the child's permission before initiating contact. Where a member of staff thinks that an incident could have been misinterpreted it should be reported to the Headteacher.

Any formally agreed plan for children with SEND should be understood and agreed by all concerned and staff should be provided with relevant information about vulnerable pupils in their care where it is relevant for this to be provided in order for staff to be able to undertake tasks appropriately. Staff will follow Holy Trinity Intimate Care Policy.

Extra caution may also be required where it is known that a child has suffered previous abuse or neglect. Many such children are often needy and seek out inappropriate contact, thereby leading staff to be vulnerable to allegations of abuse.

In this regard, staff should:

- be aware that even well intentioned physical contact may be misconstrued by the child, an observer or by anyone to whom this action is described;
- never touch a child in a way which may be considered indecent;
- always explain to a pupil the reason why contact is necessary and what form that contact will take;
- look at alternatives, where it is anticipated that a pupil might misinterpret contact and consider involving another member of staff, or a less vulnerable pupil in a demonstration;
- never indulge in horseplay, tickling or fun fights;
- always tell a colleague when and how they offered comfort to a distressed child and record any situations, where they think they may give rise to concern; (Incidences such as C.P ones should be reported on CPOMS; minor incidences such as a child falling over and a member of staff comforting them should not)
- be acquainted with DfE Guidance in respect of physical contact with pupils and meeting the medical needs of children and young people in school.

18. Showers and Changing

Children are entitled to respect and privacy when changing clothes or taking a shower.

However, there does need to be an appropriate level of supervision to safeguard young people and satisfy health and safety considerations. Any supervision must therefore be appropriate to the needs and age of the young people concerned.

- staff should avoid any physical contact when children are in a state of undress or any visually intrusive behaviour where there are changing rooms;
- staff should announce their intention of entering a changing room and avoid remaining in the room unless pupil needs require it;
- staff should not change in the same place as or shower with children.

19. Behaviour Management and Physical Intervention

Corporal punishment is unlawful in all schools and physical force should never be used as a form of punishment; to do so is likely to constitute a criminal offence. However in some circumstances, staff in schools have the right to use physical intervention/reasonable force for the shortest period necessary to control or restrain pupils who may be at harm to themselves or others. The Education and Inspections Act 2006 provides the legal power for school staff to use reasonable force to prevent pupils from committing a crime or causing injury, damage or disruption.

- staff should try to defuse situations before they escalate;
- staff should keep parents informed of any consequences according to our policy.
- staff should adhere to Holy Trinity CE Primary School policies on Behaviour and Positive Handling;
- where it is identified that staff are likely to have to restrain on a regular basis they should have received appropriate training.

(See Holy Trinity Primary School Positive Handling Policy)

20. Sexual contact with children and curriculum issues

It is a criminal offence for any adult in a position of trust to engage in any form of sexual activity with a young person under 18, even with their consent (Sexual Offences Act 2003). This also includes non-contact activities such as causing children to engage in or watch sexual activity.

There may be occasions when, as part of the curriculum, a teacher has to raise subject matter that is sexually explicit (such as reproduction in the science curriculum). In such situations, any lesson plan should highlight the areas of risk and sensitivity. Staff should respond to questions with careful judgement and avoid entering into inappropriate or offensive discussions about sexual activity.

In this regard, staff should not:

- use their status and standing to form or promote relationships with children, which are of a sexual nature;
- pursue sexual relationships with children and young people either in or out of school;
- enter into or encourage inappropriate or offensive discussion about sexual activity;
- make sexual remarks to a pupil (including email, text messages, phone or letter), or use any communication which could be interpreted as sexually suggestive or provocative;
- discuss their own sexual relationships with, or in the presence of pupils;
- discuss a pupil's sexual relationships in inappropriate settings or contexts;
- confer special attention and favour upon a child, which might be misconstrued as being part of a 'grooming' process.

21. One to one situations and overnight supervision

When staff work regularly on an individual basis with children, they are generally more vulnerable to allegations. To avoid such situations arising meetings should, wherever possible, be arranged so that staff are visible and/or audible and not in secluded areas of the school.

Staff should not arrange to meet a pupil away from the school premises without good reason, but if this is necessary, only with the expressed approval of parents and a senior member of staff.

Staff should:

- ensure there is visual access and/or an open door in one to one situations;
- inform other staff of the meeting beforehand, assessing the need to have them present or close by;
- avoid the use of 'engaged' or equivalent signs wherever possible, as they may create an opportunity for secrecy or the interpretation of secrecy;
- always report to a senior colleague any situation which gives rise to complaint, disagreement or misunderstanding or where a child becomes distressed or angry.

22. Transporting Children

In such cases where children need to be transported between different locations, a designated member of staff should be appointed to plan and provide oversight of all arrangements. Wherever practicable, an adult additional to the driver should act as an escort and all arrangements agreed with relevant parties in advance.

All staff:

- should avoid using private vehicles wherever possible;
- must ensure that they have the appropriate insurance (for business use) where they do have to use their private vehicle;
- should ensure that they are alone with a child for the minimum time possible;
- should be aware that the safety and welfare of the child is their responsibility until this is safely passed over to a parent/carer;

- should report the nature of the journey, the route and expected time of arrival in accordance with agreed procedures;
- should ensure that their behaviour and all arrangements ensure vehicle, passenger and driver safety; taking into account any specific needs that the child may have.

23. Educational visits and after school clubs

Staff should always take care to have another adult present during out of school activities, unless otherwise agreed with senior staff. Health and safety requirements should be strictly adhered to.

Staff should ensure that they display professional behaviour during activities that take place off the school site and ensure that their behaviour cannot be interpreted as seeking to establish an inappropriate relationship or friendship. Staff should therefore maintain a professional relationship with pupils at all times.

Where out of school activities include overnight stays, particular consideration should be given to sleeping arrangements, if applicable and pupils, staff and parents informed of the arrangements in advance.

In this regard, staff should therefore:

- undertake risk assessments unless already provided by the institution or LA.
- have parental consent to the activity;
- ensure that their behaviour remains professional at all times.

24. First aid and administration of medication

In cases where first aid or medication needs to be administered, all staff should adhere to Holy Trinity CE Primary School Health and Safety policy and Medical Conditions Policy.

A health care plan should be drawn up in circumstances where the child needs to take regular medication and any such agreement between the child, parents/carers and the school must be negotiated, agreed and recorded.

Where possible, children should be encouraged to administer the medication themselves, with the permission of parents.

Staff should:

- make other staff aware of the task being undertaken;
- explain to the child what is happening.

25. Intimate Care

All children have a right to safety, privacy and dignity when contact of an intimate nature is required. A care plan should be drawn up and agreed with parents for all children, including those with special needs, who require intimate care on a regular basis.

In this regard staff should:

- adhere to the school's intimate care guidelines found in the Intimate Care Policy;
- make other staff aware of the task being undertaken;
- explain to the child what is happening;
- consult with colleagues where any variation from the agreed procedure or care plan is necessary and record the justification, sharing the information with parents.

A detailed Intimate Care Policy has been produced by Holy Trinity CE Primary School which should be referred to.

26. Photography, videos and other creative arts

Many school activities involve recording images, but the use of such images needs careful consideration and handling. In particular, children who may have been abused in this way may feel threatened by the use of photography and filming.

The use of any images of children for publicity purposes will also require the appropriate consent of the individual concerned and their legal guardians.

Staff should therefore:

- be clear about the purpose of the activity and about what will happen to the photographs when the lesson or activity is concluded;
- ensure consent is gained from the pupil and their legal guardians where being used for publicity purposes;(i.e. for the local paper). Lists of levels of consent can be found in the school office.
- ensure that a senior member of staff is aware that the photography/image equipment is being used and for what purpose;
- ensure that all images are available for scrutiny in order to screen for acceptability;
- be able to justify images of children in their possession;
- refrain when possible from using mobile phones to take images;
- avoid taking images in one to one situations.

Please refer to GDPR Policy regarding consent and retention of images.

27. Internet use

Accessing child pornography or indecent images of children on the computer is illegal. Under no circumstances should adults in schools access inappropriate images on the internet. The same rule applies to the use of the school's equipment by members of staff at home, e.g. use of laptops. Staff should not contact parents or pupils on social media sites or use any pupil imagery on these sites. This is in breach of the data protection act and is a criminal offence. Staff should follow the school Online Safety Policy and Acceptable Use Policy on the use of IT equipment.

Staff should never share images that are deemed inappropriate.

All online searches undertaken by staff and pupils is reported daily to DSLs in order to monitor internet use and ensure all searches are appropriate.

28. Mobile Phones

Staff are not permitted to use their mobile phones whilst teaching or working with a group of pupils. They should be kept in bags (on silent) not in pockets etc and are permitted to be used in the staffroom/areas away from pupils. See Holy Trinity CE Primary School Mobile Phone Policy.

29. Sanctions

Staff found to be in breach of this policy or behaviours associated with this policy will be subject to investigation and procedures within the discipline policy and procedures will be followed.

Further reference documents

- [Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings](#) produced by The Safer Recruitment Consortium February 2022
- DfE [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#) .
- School **Whistleblowing Policy**

- This policy provides the framework by which staff can voice their concerns in good faith about practice within the school, without fear of repercussion and in accordance with the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998. Available on the school website [here](#).

- **School Managing Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy**

- Aims to ensure that any allegations are dealt with fairly, consistently and quickly and in a way that provides protection for the child, whilst supporting the person who is the subject of the allegation.

- **Education and Inspections Act 2006**

- Forbids corporal punishment, but allows all teachers to use reasonable force to prevent a pupil from committing a criminal offence, injuring themselves or others, damaging property, acting in a way that is counter to maintaining good order and discipline at the school.

- Also provides legal right to confiscate items such as mobile phones or devices.

- **Violent Crime Reduction Act 2006**

- Allows Headteachers (or other school staff who have been authorised by the Headteacher) to undertake searches of pupils where they suspect they are carrying a knife or other offensive weapon.

- **What to Do if you are Worried that a child is Being Abused**. Department of Health, March 2015

- School Policies

- Behaviour Policy
- Intimate Care Policy
- Internet Safety Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Safeguarding Policy and Child Protection Policy
- Positive Handling Policy

Other legal considerations

Education Act 2002 (section 175)

Schools should exercise their functions with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

Children Act 1989

Recognises that the identification and investigation of child abuse together with the protection and support of victims requires multi-agency collaboration

Children Act 2004

It is the duty on all agencies to make arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998

Gives legislative protection for 'whistle blowers' where there is a qualifying disclosure.

Sexual Offences Act 2003

It is a criminal offence for any adult in a position of trust to engage in any form of sexual activity with a young person under 18, even with their consent.

This policy was adopted by Holy Trinity CE Primary School and agreed by the Finance and Resource Committee and ratified by the Full Governing Board.

Approved by.....on behalf of the School Governing Board.

Signature:.....

Date:.....

What counts as misconduct

Misconduct is when an employee's inappropriate behaviour or action breaks workplace rules.

Some misconduct examples include:

- Bullying
- Harassment
- Refusing to do work ('insubordination')
- Being absent without permission (some people call it absent without leave or 'awol')

If misconduct happens outside the workplace an employee could face disciplinary action for misconduct outside work.

For example, where an employee's behaviour in front of external clients at the work Christmas party reflects badly on the company.

It depends on how serious the employer sees the misconduct and whether it could have a bad effect on the business.

It's important the employer carries out a thorough investigation and can show the effect on the business.

When there is gross misconduct

Some acts count as 'gross misconduct' because they are very serious or have very serious effects.

If an employer finds there has been gross misconduct, they should still carry out an investigation and the full disciplinary procedure. They might then decide on dismissal without notice or payment in lieu of notice.

Examples of gross misconduct in the workplace include:

- Fraud
- Physical violence (persons or property)
- Serious lack of care to duties or other people ('gross negligence')
- Serious insubordination

Declaration of Receipt

I confirm that I have read and understand the school **Staff Code of Conduct** and Guidelines for Safe Working Practice for the Protection of Children and Staff and understand that any unlawful, inappropriate or unsafe behaviour could lead to appropriate legal or disciplinary action being taken.

Name	Sign & date when read	Name	Sign & date when read
Su Tomes		Tori O'Neil	
Becky Meadows		Abi Whiter	
Carmel Barnes		Lizzie Hurst	
Hannah Cross		Yvonne Hunter	
Debbie Harrison		Alisa Lazar	
Georgie O'Brien		Sally Stephens	
Elaine Fogarty		Fiona Fargher	
Stacey Harding		Jo Griffith	
Tonia Pinkerton		Michelle Milner	
Janelle Rhodes		Wendy Poulter	
Shirin Ahmed		Sarah Lawson	
Janine Bohdjalian		Melissa Lawrence	
Rose Fearn			