



HARRYTOWN CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

Harrytown is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

(Throughout the remainder of this document the term 'staff' refers to staff, visiting/supply staff and volunteers).

1. INTRODUCTION

The public is entitled to have trust and confidence in the integrity of the Harrytown School Community, its staff, governors and volunteers. The conduct of all adults working in our school must therefore be of the highest standard. This Code of Conduct has been prepared to help employees and volunteers with issues relating to appropriate conduct by providing a framework of guidelines.

2. GENERAL OBLIGATIONS AND SAFEGUARDING

Adults working, volunteering or visiting Harrytown Catholic High School must all always perform their duties, act with utmost degree of good faith with regard to the business of the School, and do all in their power to promote the School's interests and not do anything which may adversely affect the School's reputation.

The school does not operate a blanket 'No Touch Policy' since such a policy may place a member of staff in breach of their duty of care towards pupils, or prevent them taking the action needed where a pupil may be likely to cause harm to themselves or others.

It is not illegal for a teacher to touch a pupil. There are occasions when physical contact with a pupil is proper and necessary, for example to demonstrate how to use a musical instrument or to give first aid.

Teachers also have a specific legal power to use reasonable force to prevent pupils from hurting themselves or others, from damaging property or from causing disorder. If the force used is reasonable, the teacher will have a robust defence against any accusations however there should not, routinely be any form of physical contact between teachers and pupils and staff must not participate in any form of sporting activity with pupils. There will be occasions, in a busy and crowded environment when unintentional physical contact occurs between staff and pupils but we must all always seek to minimise these unintended instances.

It is important that staff behaviours in school (including topics of conversation) are always appropriate for the professional context in which we work. We must always be mindful of being overheard and how our words, actions and behaviours might be interpreted by those around us. Physical contact, comments relating to clothing, (regardless of whether they are meant in jest) and comments of a personal nature are not appropriate. Intimate details, relating to aspects of colleagues personal lives, are not suitable topics for discussion. They would only become pertinent when they formed part of private and confidential HR or Welfare conversation, held in a professional context, in respect of how you or your ability to do your job in school might be affected.

3. PUBLIC DUTY AND PRIVATE INTEREST



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Off-duty hours are an employee / volunteer's own personal concern. It is important, however, that people do not put themselves in a position where their duty to the School and their private interests conflict. Staff should disclose to the school any circumstance where potential conflict may arise or indeed already exists.

Employees and volunteers are expected to abide by the policies of the School. They must take care to ensure that their own personal or political opinions do not interfere with the provisions of balanced professional advice or their duty to carry out those policies.

4. CONFIDENTIALITY AND INFORMATION DISCLOSURE

Adults working at Harrytown must conform to the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation which replaced the Data Protection Act 1998 and must take all reasonable steps to ensure that the loss, destruction, inaccuracy or disclosure of information does not occur as a result of their actions. This includes information relating to school business and pupil data.

Members of staff / volunteers must not disclose personal or financial information about any other member of staff to any unauthorised person, external organisation or agency without the express consent of the individual concerned or that of the Headteacher.

Members of staff / volunteers must not use information obtained in the course of their duties to the detriment of the School or for personal gain or benefit; nor should they impart this information to others who might use it in such a way.

Confidential information belonging to the School must not be disclosed to any person not authorised to receive it.

5. STAFF DRESS CODE

To dress professionally shows pride, effort, respect for oneself and one's profession. Adults in school are role models for the young people in our 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 adults in the school dress. It is therefore important to dress appropriately when acting in a professional capacity.

Adults should be neat, clean, smart and tidy, wearing clothes, including shoes, which are commensurate with their post in the school. The staff dress code is smart rather than casual. This is not a policy meant to detail every eventuality, it is up to individual staff to decide whether their appearance is appropriate guided by the principles above. However, denim, flip flops and revealing clothes, clothes that are see through and items such as short skirts/shorts or low cut tops, should be avoided. Tattoos should also be covered and facial piercings should be discrete or covered. Extreme haircuts, including unnatural colours, are not permitted. For health and safety reasons jewellery should be kept to a minimum and be appropriate to the role. All employees should wear ID badges at all times.

Harrytown Catholic High School is committed to promote diversity and will therefore respect individual preference in terms of customs, culture, religion and tradition.



6. OTHER EMPLOYMENT

Employees are not allowed to set up a business or accept employment with a business engaged in work which is in direct competition with the School. Employees are not allowed to Tutor or provide services to pupils or families who attend Harrytown Catholic High School.

If employees / volunteers do have another job it must not conflict with the School's interest or bring the School into disrepute. If an employee takes on another job they must ensure that their collective working hours do not exceed the Working Time Directive maximum. Support staff (above Scale 6) should not engage in any other business or take up an additional appointment without the consent of the Governing Body.

If employees / volunteers have another job with another organisation they must not act as a messenger, go between or arbitrator between that organisation and the School. Formal channels of communication must be maintained.

Employees' / volunteers' working commitments to another employer must not interfere with their work for the School; they must be able to work for the School at the contracted/arranged times rested and refreshed.

7. GENERAL

In accordance with the School's Equality Plan employees must ensure that they do not discriminate in recruitment and employment practices or in the delivery of services. They must also ensure that in their dealings with the local community, all members of the public are treated with respect and fairness.

Serious misconduct and/or criminal offences committed during or outside of working hours which bring employees or The School into disrepute will be the subject of disciplinary investigation which could lead to dismissal.

The use of school property, facilities, equipment and resources are not permitted for any other purpose other than that which is an approved school activity having been agreed by the leadership team and the governing body.

Any criminal convictions which were not current or disclosed when your working relationship began with the school must be communicated in writing to the Chair of Governors. Failure to make a declaration of this type will lead to a disciplinary investigation.

This school operates a complete no smoking policy on the school premises and on the pavement outside of the school.

The School recognises the importance of preserving the integrity of professional relationships between members of staff as well as with students, consultants, contractors and/or suppliers. Whilst most social and personal relationships need not present a difficulty, and can be entirely beneficial in that they promote good working relationships, it is recognised that there will be particular circumstances where the staff member(s) concerned



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will need to withdraw from certain decisions or from undertaking certain roles, in order to protect themselves and the School from any possible criticism of unfair bias.

The school does not concern itself with the private lives of its staff unless they affect its operation or its reputation.

Members of staff who are relatives or who have a close personal relationship should not normally have a supervisory, assessing or authorising relationship with each other. Employees must inform (Line manager/Headteacher/Governors) if they have a close personal relationship with another employee, pupil, parent etc which could be considered by colleagues or others as impacting on the way they conduct themselves within the school.

8. FINANCIAL INDUCEMENTS, GIFTS, HOSPITALITY AND SPONSORSHIP

Employees / volunteers must not seek or receive preferential rates by virtue of their dealings on behalf of the School. Offers of hospitality, including visits to exhibitions, business meals, social functions, etc should only be accepted if there is a genuine need to represent the School in an official capacity.

Where an external organisation wishes to sponsor or is sought to sponsor a School activity, the above rule applies. Particular care must be taken when dealing with contractors or potential contractors.

Any gifts received in a school context from any school related (or potential), contact, contractor, sponsor, supplier, must be declared to both the headteacher and the business manager and a plan will be formulated to deal with such items appropriately.

9. DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Any breach of this Code of Conduct will be the subject of disciplinary investigation which could result in dismissal.

10. FURTHER INFORMATION

This Code of Conduct cannot cover every eventuality. Its purpose is to alert employees / volunteers to some of the matters about which queries are received. It does not replace the general requirements of the law, common sense and good conduct.

If employees / volunteers are uncertain about what to do in a particular situation or require further information or guidance on the appropriate course of action to take in any situation they must contact a senior member of staff for advice before they take any action.

Date of Policy: August 2018

Review Date: June 2019



Supplementary Guidance for Staff – Student Relationships

This guidance is not exhaustive and is designed to set out principles rather than to give detailed and specific advice. Clearly, the circumstances in which staff work vary; this guidance is meant to give general principles only. Although this advice applies primarily to teachers and to other adults with educational roles, all adults working within schools relate to students/pupils during the course of their duties; again, the general principles apply equally to all who are involved in the school.

- 1 The relationship between staff and students/pupils is a professional one. It is fully expected – and, indeed, hoped – that staff in the school have a friendly and caring relationship with students/pupils; nevertheless, the basis of that relationship is professional not personal. It is suggested that a good test to apply is to reflect on whether the child’s parents would be happy with the relationship if they were standing with you.
- 2 A personal relationship between staff and a student/pupil is inappropriate unless it is with the full knowledge and consent of the students/pupil’s parents or guardians. Circumstances in which such a personal relationship may arise would be when your own children are friends with those in the school or when you have a personal relationship with parents of children in the school. It is not normally appropriate for a member of staff to meet with a student/pupil out of school hours or off school premises except with the prior knowledge and consent of parents and the school.
- 3 In general, unnecessary physical contact with students/pupils should be avoided. In some circumstances, physical contact between a member of staff and a student/pupil is necessary and beneficial; a sports coach may need to demonstrate to a student/pupil how to hold a racket or a secondary teacher may give a student/pupil a gentle pat on the back as encouragement. In rare circumstances it may be appropriate for members of staff to use reasonable restraint in circumstances where a student is behaving in a manner which endangers him or herself or other people. In these situations, staff are advised to be very sensitive to the student’s/pupils likely reaction and to watch out for signs that the student/pupil is apprehensive or uncomfortable. We all have our own personal space that needs to be protected. Wherever possible when working with



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- students/pupils, other people (adults, colleagues or students/pupils) should be present or the door should be open.
- 4 Over-familiar words and actions, displays of affection, discussion of one's personal life or the personal life of the student/pupil are normally inappropriate. Sexual innuendo is wrong in all circumstances. Staff are advised to avoid actions, words or expressions that could be interpreted as suggesting that they have an emotional relationship with any student/pupil. In the professional staff-student/pupil relationship it is not appropriate to single a student/pupil out for favours or to suggest to a student/pupil that he or she is a special friend.
 - 5 Occasionally it is necessary for professional academic reasons for staff to communicate with students/pupils out of school. Except where absolutely necessary, personal email addresses, home or mobile phone numbers should not be given, asked for or used. A mobile phone number might be given to students/pupils for use during an educational visit; the school's mobile phone should be used for this purpose. Pastoral matters should not be dealt with by personal email or using personal phone contacts. Only in the most exceptional circumstances, for instance, where there is well-founded concern for the unexplained whereabouts of a student, should pastoral matters be dealt with by personal email or using personal phone contact. In any event, records of all contacts should be kept on the student file so that if it is necessary to use email or personal contact, the reason why will be specified in the written record. It is very difficult to envisage circumstances under which individual texting is appropriate except through official school channels.
 - 6 It is not appropriate for students/pupils to visit a member of staff in their own home. Where such a visit does take place it should be with the full knowledge and consent of either the School or parents or guardians. If possible, more than one adult should be present on such an occasion.
 - 7 With older students/pupils, a gathering might be held as part of a celebration. Generally, it is advisable if that is held in school. It is essential that professional criteria (e.g. all the students/pupils in a particular teaching or tutorial group) rather than personal criteria (e.g. selected students/pupils only) are used for inviting students/pupils, that the event is held openly, and that senior colleagues are aware of it. Staff on such an occasion have a particular duty to ensure that the supply and consumption of alcohol is appropriate, is responsible and falls within the law. Consumption of alcohol by staff at such events is discouraged.
 - 8 Members of staff who in the course of their professional duties need to work on a one-to-one basis with a student/pupil (e.g. a piano lesson, a maths tutorial, etc.), in particular one of the opposite sex, are advised to take care to ensure that the circumstances of the meeting or lesson are professional. Staff are advised to use a room which has vision panels in the door or keep the door open and ensure that colleagues know that the meeting or lesson is taking place. It is helpful if the meeting or lesson can be arranged during normal school hours or immediately before or after school when there are plenty of other people about.



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- 9 Staff must avoid threatening words, raised voices and any aggressive contact such as holding, pushing, pulling or hitting, which could amount to or which could be interpreted as a criminal assault.
- 10 Members of staff do have the right to use reasonable physical force to restrain students/pupils in order to prevent them from committing a criminal offence, injuring others or themselves, damaging property or behaving in such a way as to compromise good order and discipline. The DfES Circular 10/98 sets out more detailed advice simply and clearly.
- 11 Social networking sites and activities, pose risks for all staff in terms in terms of professional integrity and the welfare of pupils. Staff must not use any form of social media to contact or communicate with pupils. Many pupils will post information which is inappropriate in language or visuals. To view such pages may alter your judgement of pupils, to be known to be viewing them may alter a pupil's view of you, and to comment to pupils about what you have seen is likely to have an impact on your professional reputation as well as possibly causing distress to pupils concerned. Should you become aware of material about yourself, the school, or a pupil which is inappropriate, the Senior Leadership Team should be informed and they will instruct a member of staff to check the allegations and inform the appropriate authorities. You should not check it out yourself.
- 12 If you are at all concerned about anything which has occurred or which has made you uncomfortable, you are strongly encouraged to discuss the matter with a senior colleague at the earliest opportunity, even if it turns out that nothing untoward has happened. As a matter of good practice it is advisable to make a written record, dated and signed, of any such incident.
- 13 Under no circumstances should the vision panels in doors be covered over.