Plymouth CAST
Staff Code of Conduct

Last Update: October 2018 (version 1.0)

Document Control

Changes History

Version	Date	Amended by	Recipients	Purpose
1.0	October 2018	Raymond Friel CEO	All Plymouth CAST staff	Required by KCSIE

Approvals

This policy requires the following approvals:

Board	SEL	CEO	Date Approved	Version	Date for Review
			October 2018	1.0	September 2019

National/Local Policy

☐ This policy must be localised by Academies

☐√ This policy must not be changed, it is a CAST/National Policy (only change logo, contact details and yellow highlighted sections)

Position with the Unions

Does the policy require consultation with the National Unions under our recognition agreement? ☐ √Yes ☐ No If yes, the policy status is: ☐ √Consulted and Approved ☐ Consulted and Not Approved ☐ Awaiting Consultation

Distribution

This document has been distributed to:

Position	Date	Version
All CAST Central employees, CAST Headteachers, CAST Directors, JCC	Monday 29 October 2018	1.0

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1. Vision and Values

Plymouth CAST is a multi-academy trust of Catholic schools which is part of the mission of the Catholic Church dedicated to human flourishing and the building of a kingdom of peace, truth and justice. The Trust is to be conducted in all aspects in accordance with canon law and the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church and at all times to serve as a witness to the Catholic faith in Our Lord Jesus Christ.

Our vision and values are derived from our identity as a Catholic Trust. Central to our vision is the dignity of the human person, especially the most vulnerable. Our academies are dedicated to providing an education and formation where all our pupils and young people flourish in a safe, nurturing, enriching environment. All staff in our academies are expected to be familiar with the vision, mission, values and principles of the Trust and not in any way to undermine them. They should support and promote the vision and conduct themselves at all times in school and on school business according to the vision and principles of the Trust.

2. Aims, scope and principles

This policy aims to set and maintain standards of conduct that we expect all staff to follow, based on our vision and values and the Teachers' Standards.

School staff have an influential position in the Trust and will act as role models for pupils by consistently demonstrating high standards of behaviour.

CAST Central staff likewise will be expected to demonstrate the same high standards, whether visiting schools, at CAST Central, or on CAST business.

We expect all CAST employees and volunteers to also act with personal and professional integrity, respecting the safety and wellbeing of others.

Failure to follow the code of conduct may result in disciplinary action being taken, as set out in our staff disciplinary procedures (see: CAST website).

Please note that this code of conduct is not exhaustive. If situations arise that are not covered by this code, staff will use their professional judgement and act in the best interests of the Trust, the school and its pupils.

3. Legislation and guidance

In line with the statutory safeguarding guidance *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (September 2018), we should have a staff code of conduct, which should cover acceptable use of technologies, staff/pupil relationships and communications, including the use of social media.

This policy also complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

4. General obligations

Staff set an example to pupils. They will:

- Support and promote the vision, values and principles of the Trust
- Maintain high standards in their attendance and punctuality
- Never use inappropriate or offensive language in school
- Treat pupils and adults with dignity and respect, demonstrating sensitivity and civility at all times
- Show tolerance and respect for the rights of others
- Not undermine fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs

- Express personal beliefs in a way that will not overly influence pupils, undermine the teachings of the Catholic Church, and will not exploit pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law
- Understand the statutory frameworks they must act within
- Adhere to the Teachers' Standards

5. Safeguarding

At Plymouth CAST, our aspiration is to ensure that in all our academies and settings, safeguarding is at least effective and moving towards best practice. This is fundamental to our vision of the dignity of the human person, especially the vulnerable.

Staff have a duty to safeguard pupils from harm, and to report any concerns they have. This includes physical, emotional and sexual abuse, or neglect.

Staff will familiarise themselves with the *Plymouth CAST Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy* (latest version: September 2018) and the Prevent initiative, and ensure they are aware of the processes to follow if they have concerns about a child.

Our safeguarding policy and procedures are available on the CAST website and from each academy. New staff will also be given copies on arrival as part of their induction.

All staff are required to read, understand and abide by the principles and practices outlined in the following key safeguarding documents which will be emailed to them at the beginning of term. All staff must sign a Safeguarding Declaration by the second week of the academic year to confirm they have done so.

- *CAST Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy* (presented to Board on 21 Sept 2018)
- *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (Sept 2018)
- *Staff Code of Conduct* [this document] (presented to Board on 26 Oct 2018)
- *Health and Safety Policy* (presented to Board on 21 Sept)

6. Staff/pupil relationships

Staff will observe proper boundaries with pupils that are appropriate to their professional position. They will act in a fair and transparent way that would not lead anyone to reasonably assume they are not doing so.

If staff members and pupils must spend time on a one-to-one basis, staff will ensure that:

- This takes place in a public place that others can access
- Others can see in to the room
- A colleague or line manager knows this is taking place

Staff should avoid **contact with pupils outside of school hours** if possible. Pupils should not be invited to the homes of staff, unless in exceptional circumstances (e.g. an exam clash requiring an overnight stay, or a member of staff with children in the school has their friends for a sleepover) which have been assessed and approved by the Headteacher or CAST Senior Executive Leadership. Personal contact details should not be exchanged between staff and pupils. This includes social media profiles.

Physical contact between staff and pupils should, as a general rule, be avoided at all times. There will be occasions, however, when appropriate physical contact is required to protect a pupil from harming themselves or others. There will also be times when it is appropriate to comfort a child, especially younger children, with some physical contact. We will be guided by the DFE's publication, *Use of Reasonable Force* (2013) and the advice in the CAST *Safeguarding and Child Protection* policy.

While we are aware many pupils and their parents may wish to give gifts to staff, for example, at the end of the school year, gifts from staff to pupils are not acceptable, unless the gift is a joint gift to a class, for example from a Parents' Association, with the approval of the Headteacher after consultation with CAST executive.

If a staff member is concerned at any point that an interaction between themselves and a pupil may be misinterpreted, this should be reported to their line manager or the headteacher.

7. Communication and social media

School staff's social media profiles should not be available to pupils. If they have a personal profile on social media sites, they should consider not using their full name, as pupils may be able to find them. Staff should consider using a first and middle name instead and set public profiles to private.

Staff should not attempt to contact pupils or their parents via social media, or any other means outside school, in order to develop any sort of relationship. They will not make any efforts to find pupils' or parents' social media profiles.

Staff will ensure that they do not post any images online that identify children who are pupils at the school without their consent. Staff should be aware of the school's e-safety policy

Communication from parents and carers to the school should be acknowledged within twenty-four hours in term time, within the timeframe of reasonable working hours, with a reply to the issue within five working days in term time, using designated school email accounts.

Use of email in school. Staff should assume that any email is being read by the subject of the email and refer to them at all times with courtesy as demanded by our foundational vision. Individuals have the right under data protection and freedom of information legislation to have access to any correspondence which refers to them. No-one should be referred to in a derogatory or demeaning way in any school communication. Staff should avoid any references to parents and carers and pupils in their own social media communications.

School and CAST email accounts should not be used for feedback or group raising of issues of concern. The email system is not a 'chat room' and the other platforms for feedback should be used such as staff meetings, staff surveys, heads and governors' briefings.

8. Acceptable use of technology

Staff will not use technology in school to view material that is illegal, inappropriate or likely to be deemed offensive. This includes, but is not limited to, sending obscene emails, gambling and viewing pornography or other inappropriate content.

Staff will not use personal mobile phones and laptops in school hours or in front of pupils, unless it is in the school staff room out of sight of the pupils, or in another designated room e.g. workroom. Staff will not use school equipment for personal use, unless in the case of an emergency call. They will also not use personal mobile phones or cameras to take pictures of pupils. We have the right to monitor emails and internet use on the school IT system.

9. Confidentiality

In the course of their duties, members of staff are often privy to sensitive and confidential information about the school, staff, pupils and their parents. They must at all times be compliant with GDPR legislation.

This information will never be:

- Disclosed to anyone without the relevant authority
- Used to humiliate, embarrass or blackmail others
- Used for a purpose other than what it was collected and intended for

This does not overrule staff's duty to report child protection concerns to the appropriate channel where staff believe a child is at risk of harm.

Care should be taken with information displayed on computer screens or interactive whiteboards. Sensitive details, or information likely to cause a pupil embarrassment should never be displayed in the sight of pupils. Teachers' computer screens should face away from the class where at all possible. Care also needs to be taken with material which is printed, especially if the printer is in another room. Confidential material should not be found uncollected from printers.

Staff must operate a 'clear desk' policy which is that when staff are away from their desks there is no sensitive or confidential visible material. In conversations around the school, staff should always refer to pupils and their parents and carers respectfully and never share with other pupils or parents and carers sensitive information about pupils.

10. Alcohol and Substance Misuse Policy

It is a requirement and expectation that employees will not:

- report for or remain at work under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, any prohibited substance, or legal highs;
- be adversely affected by prescribed drugs without alerting their line manager;
- employees will not consume alcohol or any prohibited substance whilst on work duty, on work premises or representing Plymouth CAST or any of its schools in a professional capacity, including on school trips and accompanying pupils on residential trips;
- use, possess, conceal, transport, promote, sell or buy any prohibited substance e.g. illegal drugs, whilst on work duty, on work premises or representing Plymouth CAST or any of its schools in a professional capacity, including on school trips and accompanying pupils on residential trips.

  More information can be found in the CAST Alcohol and Substance Misuse Policy.

Please also note that Plymouth CAST operate a no smoking policy in all its premises.

11. Honesty and integrity

Staff should maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their role. This includes when dealing with pupils, handling money, claiming expenses and using school property and facilities.

Staff will not accept bribes. Gifts that are worth more than £20 must be declared and recorded on the gifts and hospitality register.

Staff will ensure that all information given to the school about their qualifications and professional experience is correct and updated accordingly, including any changes to their DBS status.

12. Dress code

Staff will dress in a smart, professional, appropriate manner.

Clothes will not display any offensive or political slogans.

The judgement on what constitutes professional and appropriate rests with the headteacher or person in charge of the school.

13. Conduct outside of work

Staff will not act in a way that would bring the school, or the teaching profession into disrepute. This covers relevant criminal offences, such as violence or sexual misconduct, as well as negative comments about the school or the Catholic Church on social media.

Staff on school trips are expected to behave as if they were in school. This Code applies to school business outside of school.

14. Staff Voice and Well-Being

Plymouth CAST is committed to the well-being of all its staff. We will monitor the levels of stress among staff through the use of staff surveys. The Whistleblowing Policy sets out how staff can raise concerns if they suspect any wrongdoing or if they feel their concerns have not been addressed.

15. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed every year, but can be revised as needed. It will be ratified by the Board of Directors.

16. Links with other policies

This policy links with our policies on:

- *CAST Disciplinary Policy and Procedure*, which will be used if staff breach this code of conduct. It also sets out examples of what we will deem as misconduct and gross misconduct
- *CAST Grievance Policy and Procedure*
- *CAST Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy*
- *CAST Social Media Policy*
- *CAST Alcohol and Substance Misuse Policy*
- *CAST Finance Policy and Regulatory Framework*
- *CAST Data Protection Policy*
- *CAST Whistleblowing Policy*