St Edmundsbury and Ipswich
Diocesan Multi Academy Trust

St Mary's Church of England Primary School

Code of Conduct

Adopted: May 2024 Review date: Summer 2025

Introduction

This code of conduct has been adopted by the Governing Body of St Mary's C of E Primary School to enable it to discharge its duty to establish procedures for the regulation of the conduct of school staff members.

This code of conduct applies to all employees in the school. All schools are entitled to demand a high standard of conduct from employees. School staff members are in a unique position of influence and must adhere to behaviour that models the highest possible standards for all the pupils and parents in the school community.

Staff members act as role models to the children and are viewed as representatives of the school for parents and in the wider community. As such, all staff members are expected to conduct themselves responsibly and professionally.

As an employee, you must not put yourself in a position where duty and private interests conflict and you must not make use of your employment to further your private interests.

This school-based policy should be read and understood in conjunction with the separate St Edmundsbury & Ipswich Diocesan Multi Academy Trust (MAT) Code of Conduct.

Aims

This Code of Conduct aims to establish the standard of conduct expected of all employees at St Mary's C of E Primary School. Its principles reflect the school's core values and ethos as a Church of England school.

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 school and its pupils.

School Vision

The school's Code of Conduct reflects our Christian vision:

"Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another." John 13:34

Unconditional love underpins all we do at St Mary's Church of England Primary School. We value and embrace the individuality of every child as they discover, learn and flourish in a place of security and love. We are an inclusive school, welcoming all children with respect, understanding and dignity. We have a duty of care to the children and will demonstrate the compassion and understanding that allows all children to flourish. In the context of the Code of Conduct, the primary message of the school's vision is that we must treat all members of the school community with dignity and respect.

Context

In the case of teachers, this Code of Conduct applies in conjunction with the Teachers' Standards. The Teachers' Standards cover: '…the behaviour and attitudes which set the required standard for conduct throughout a teacher's career.' In addition, the Teachers' Standards document explains that these standards for personal and professional conduct are used to assess cases of serious misconduct.

This Code of Conduct should be read in conjunction with other significant documents, policies and procedures, including:

- Teachers' Standards
- Safeguarding;
- Whistleblowing;
- Capability;
- Induction;
- Staff Handbook;
- Intimate Care;
- Behaviour;
- Staff Absence;
- Online Safety;
- Acceptable use of ICT;
- Equalities and Accessibility.

The Ten General Principles of Public Life

This Code of Conduct should be read and be understood in the context of the generally accepted principles of public life.

Selflessness – members should serve only the public interest and should never improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person.
Honesty and integrity – members should not place themselves in situations where their honesty and integrity may be questioned, should not behave improperly, and should on all occasions avoid the appearance of such behaviour.
Objectivity – members should make decisions on merit, including when making appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards or benefits.
Accountability – members should be accountable to the public for their actions and the manner in which they carry out their responsibilities, and should co-operate fully and honestly with any scrutiny appropriate to their particular office.
Openness – members should be as open as possible about their actions and those of their authority, and should be prepared to give reasons for those actions.
Personal judgement – members may take account of the views of others, including their political groups, but should reach their own conclusions on the issues before them and act in accordance with those conclusions.

Respect for others – members should promote equality by not discriminating unlawfully against any person, and by treating people with respect, regardless of their race, age, religion, gender, sexual orientation or disability. They should respect the impartiality and integrity of the school's other employees. We extend this to being professional in our discussions regarding pupils, in both formal and informal meetings.
Duty to uphold the law – members should uphold the law and, on all occasions, act in accordance with the trust that the public is entitled to place in them.
Stewardship – members should do whatever they are able to do to ensure that their authorities use their resources prudently, and in accordance with the law.
Leadership – members should promote and support these principles by leadership, and by example, and should act in a way that secures or preserves public confidence.

Safeguarding

The safety of pupils is paramount. All staff members have a duty to safeguard pupils from:

- Physical abuse;
- Emotional abuse;
- Sexual abuse;
- Neglect.

The duty to safeguard pupils includes the duty to report concerns about a pupil to the school's **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and PREVENT Lead**.

All staff members are expected to be familiar with the school's Safeguarding and Whistleblowing Policies, both of which can be found in the 'Policies' folder on the Teachers' Shared Drive on the network and in the Staff Handbook folders in the office and staff room.

Staff members must not seriously demean or undermine pupils, their parents or carers, or colleagues. Staff must take reasonable care of pupils/students under their supervision with the aim of ensuring their safety and welfare.

Staff members must conduct themselves in such a way that pupils are kept safe and must not behave in ways that undermine the safety of pupils.

All staff are aware of the requirement to inform the school as their employer, of any circumstance relevant to their employment in a position of trust, such as police action in relation to their conduct upon and during the course of their employment.

Personal Interest

You must not in your official capacity:

- Allow your personal interests to conflict with the school's requirements;
- Use your position improperly to confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person.

You must:

- Not disclose information given to you in confidence, or information acquired which is of a confidential nature, without the consent of a person authorised to give it;
- Not prevent another person from gaining access to information to which that person is entitled by law;
- Ensure that your relationships with pupils, parents, Governors, staff members and any other people with whom you may come into contact in the course of your duties are professional at all times.

Positive and Professional Relationships

Staff members have a crucial role to play in shaping the lives of young people. They have a unique opportunity to interact with pupils in ways that are affirming and inspiring. Staff members should foster positive relationships with pupils and parents while being mindful of the need to maintain professional distance and guard against personal involvement. In particular, all staff members should model good behaviour and display the school's values and ethos through their own conduct. For example, it is important to:

- Remain calm in challenging situations;
- Speak to pupils and parents in a respectful manner;
- Judge pupils and their behaviour on the current situation and not on previous misbehaviour or preconceptions;
- Give pupils the time to express themselves clearly;
- Listen to pupils and show that we are taking them seriously;
- Deal with situations in a way that does not humiliate pupils or parents;
- Be aware of the messages conveyed by body language, tone of voice and volume (adults should not raise their voices unless absolutely necessary e.g. if a pupil's safety is at risk or to achieve a desired impact in a given situation, but adults should not shout in anger);
- Consider how we would wish to be spoken to;
- Protect ourselves and pupils by ensuring that we avoid being alone with individual pupils and, if this is unavoidable, we ensure that we are in a safe place where others can see us;
- Approach tasks and changes positively;
- Deal with situations and pupils in a way that is clearly fair, taking the time to explain outcomes and consequences as necessary;
- Show tolerance of all groups and individuals;
- Be sensitive to the particular needs and backgrounds of individual pupils and families;
- And model forgiveness after an incident.
- Be mindful of how we discuss pupils amongst ourselves; maintain a positive, respectful standpoint.

Above all, the conduct of staff members should demonstrate that they care for the wellbeing of pupils and their families, reflecting the school's Christian values.

Staff members must also be professional in the way they interact with one another. The National Education Union (NEU) has published a Code of Professional Ethics, which includes the following relevant points:

- All staff members should observe confidentiality in respect of any discussions with other individual teachers about their professional problems and difficulties.

- If a staff member experiences any concern or dissatisfaction in relation to a colleague's conduct or standard of work, the staff member is encouraged to discuss the issue informally and in confidence with the colleague concerned. Where the issue is not resolved informally the staff member is encouraged to take no further action without informing the colleague. If it is uncomfortable or felt not possible to talk to the colleague, then the staff member may discuss the issue with the Headteacher or another senior leader. **Should the staff member have reason to believe that a colleague is acting in a way which might be harmful to the school or to individual pupils then there is a clear duty to make a report to the Headteacher.**

- Staff members should not denigrate their colleagues in the presence of third parties; nor should a staff member adversely criticise a colleague in the presence of others, save in the context of appropriate procedures.

- Effective consultation between staff members takes place in an atmosphere of mutual respect for the professional expertise and a recognition and understanding of the various responsibilities, of those involved. Staff members should be able to express freely their considered professional opinions while recognising the responsibilities borne by colleagues.'

While the NEU relates these points specifically to the conduct of teachers, the Governing Body of St Mary's C of E Primary School recognises that this is a model of good practice to be adhered to by all staff members at the school.

Gifts and hospitality

The school seeks to maintain the highest standards of conduct and probity in its business. The acceptance of gifts and/or hospitality by employees must be treated with extreme caution. No offer of a gift or inducement, whether made at specific occasions (e.g. at Christmas) or casually, should be accepted when the gift is made by, or indirectly by, a person, firm or organisation which, to the knowledge of the employee, has or seeks to do business of any kind with the school or to have an interest in its decisions. The receipt of minor articles, often by way of trade advertisements, which will be used on the school's business (e.g. diaries, calendars, office requisites, etc., which are customarily distributed at Christmas and, occasionally, at other times) is acceptable.

The receipt of minor articles, such as 'thank you' gifts at the end of the year, from pupils or parents is acceptable so long as it is clear that this does not advantage or favour the pupil concerned. Any such gifts should be politely and gratefully received but this should not alter staff members' relationships with particular parents or pupils.

If employees are in any doubt, they should seek guidance from the Headteacher or Line Manager before accepting any gifts or hospitality offered.

Employees should also refrain from making any gifts to external organisations or to the employees of organisations which provide services to the school or which are potential providers of such services.

Employees should be aware that the St Edmundsbury and Ipswich Diocesan Multi Academy Trust has a separate Gifts and Hospitality Policy (available on the MAT website and in the 'Policies' folder on the Teacher's Shared Drive on the network). This policy clearly states that employees should not accept the offer of certain gifts and hospitality without informing the MAT Business Manager, who will record these on a central register for gifts and hospitality. Such gifts include cash, gifts with a value over £30, membership of a sports club and foreign travel.

Confidentiality

In school, staff members will see and hear private and confidential information about pupils, parents and colleagues. It is essential that staff members respect the privacy of these individuals and do not share information with anyone outside the school except a pupil's parents or other professionals who have a genuine, lawful need to know.

Confidential information about a pupil should never be used casually in conversation or shared with any person other than on a 'need to know' basis. In circumstances where the child'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 child, 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, such as a Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Alternate DSL), Police Officer or Social Worker.

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 a senior member of staff. Any media or legal enquiries should be passed to the Headteacher. This means that staff members:

- Are expected to treat information they receive about pupils, parents and colleagues in a discreet and confidential manner;
- Should seek advice from a senior member of staff if in any doubt about whether to share information they hold;
- Need to be cautious when passing information to others about a pupils, parent or colleague.

Expectations regarding data protection are listed in Appendix 3.

Dress and Appearance

A person's dress and appearance are matters of personal choice and self-expression. However, staff members should consider the manner of dress and appearance appropriate to their professional role, which may be different to that adopted in their personal life.

Staff members must maintain professionalism when meeting parents and other agencies. Also, staff members must be mindful that they are role models for pupils. Therefore, it is expected that staff members are dressed decently, safely and appropriately for the tasks they undertake. This means that adults should wear clothing that:

- Promotes a positive and professional image;
- Is safe and appropriate for the task undertaken, such as sports clothes during PE lessons;
- Is not likely to be viewed as offensive because of, for example, contentious or discriminatory slogans;
- Is not likely to be viewed as too revealing or provocative, especially in summer.

Those who dress or appear in a manner which could be considered as inappropriate could render themselves vulnerable to criticism or allegation. Senior leaders will determine whether dress has fallen below an acceptable standard and reserve the right to address this directly.

In addition, staff members work in close proximity to pupils and one another and are expected to maintain a high standard of personal hygiene.

The school values and welcomes diversity and, therefore, the dress code takes into account the requirements of religious, cultural and ethnic dress with sensitivity.

Employees are issued with identity badges and should wear them at all times while carrying out their duties, including when visiting people in their homes.

Smoking

The school is a non-smoking organisation. You are not permitted to smoke in the school building or grounds, at any time. Smoking whilst on the school's premises may be subject to disciplinary action.

Following Instructions

Employees are expected to follow all reasonable and lawful instructions by a person with the authority to issue such instructions, unless:

- There is a danger to a person's health and safety;
- A conflict of interest may exist;
- It does not comply with school policies and practice.

The Headteacher and Line Managers must be able to justify their instructions and decisions in line with their delegations, authority, and school policies and procedures, and be open and respond promptly to constructive questions.

Use of ICT

Mobile phones

As with all personal possessions, the school is not responsible for the security of personal mobile phones. Staff members must be sensitive about their roles in school and mobile phones should only be used at appropriate times.

- Phones should be silent during lesson times.
- Employees should not make or receive calls in front of pupils or during lesson times or during times when they are expected to be working (i.e. not break times).
- Phones should not be used to record and keep images or footage of pupils.

It is recognised that imposing rigid regulations or 'bans' can be counterproductive and can lead to a culture of secrecy, suspicion and uncertainty. Therefore, this code operates on a basis of professional trust with regard to the use of personal mobile phones. There may be times when exceptional personal circumstances require more flexibility. This should be negotiated with a line manager or the Headteacher.

Computers and Internet Usage

Internet users must not display, access, use, extract, store, distribute, print, reveal or otherwise process any kind of image, document or other material which is sexually explicit or offensive in any other way, on any school system. This includes but not limited to, sending obscene emails, gambling, and viewing pornography or other inappropriate content. This activity would be a violation of the school's Safeguarding, Acceptable Use of ICT and Online Safety policies and would be considered to be examples of serious misconduct.

When using social networking sites, staff members must be conscious of the overlap of 'personal' and 'professional' profiles online. If Staff members 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 up public profiles to private. Staff members must not post any comments, photographs, images or conversations on social networking websites which may bring themselves or the school into disrepute. Staff members must not become 'friends' with pupils on social networking sites and must exercise extreme caution in their online relationships with parents. Security settings should be maintained at the highest level in order to prevent members of the public seeing any of your personal information. Adults in a position of trust should refrain from online communications with pupils, except where this is for professional purposes, such as setting homework electronically.

During working periods, computers in school should only be used for work purposes unless special permission has been given by a senior leader. Personal websites, particularly social networking sites, should not be accessed via computers at school.

See the ICT, Personal Device and Internet Acceptable Use Policy for more information.

Physical Contact

St Mary's is not a 'no touch' school. There are occasions when it is appropriate and proper for staff to have physical contact with pupils, but it is crucial that they only do so in ways appropriate to their professional role. The general culture of 'limited touch' is adapted, where appropriate, to the individual requirements of each child. Pupils with special needs may require more physical contact to assist their everyday learning. The arrangements should be understood and agreed by all concerned, justified in terms of the child's needs, consistently applied and open to scrutiny.

It is acceptable to provide comfort and reassurance for a distressed pupil through age-appropriate physical contact. Staff must remain self-aware at all times in order to ensure that their contact is not threatening, intrusive or subject to misinterpretation. Pupils and staff are protected by ensuring that physical contact does not occur when staff members are alone with individual pupils. Where a member of staff has a particular concern about the need to provide this type of care and reassurance, they should seek further advice from a senior leader.

Staff members will make physical contact with pupils when providing first aid. Only staff members who have received first aid training should undertake this role.

In accordance with the school's Behaviour Policy, staff members will intervene physically and restrain pupils in certain situations, such as when they pose an immediate threat to the safety of others or themselves. Staff members will take this course of action as a last resort and only if they have received appropriate 'Behaviour Safe' training. Staff members attempt other appropriate forms of 'de-escalation' before using physical restraints. When a pupil has been physically restrained, this is recorded in a central record book, which is kept in the school office.

Adults must:

- Be aware that even well-intentioned physical contact may be misconstrued by a pupil, an observer or by anyone to whom this action is described;
- Never touch a child in a way which may be considered indecent;
- Always be prepared to explain actions and accept that all physical contact be open to scrutiny;
- Never indulge in physical play with pupils.

Intimate Care

There are times when staff members provide intimate care for pupils. On these occasions, parents must be informed that intimate care has been provided. Staff members should refer to the school's Intimate Care Policy.

All Pupils have a right to safety, privacy and dignity when contact of an intimate nature is required (for example, assisting with toileting or removing wet/soiled clothing). A care plan should be drawn up and agreed with parents for all children who require intimate care on a regular basis. Pupils should be encouraged to act as independently as possible and to undertake as much of their own personal care as is practicable. When assistance is required, staff should ensure that another appropriate adult is in the vicinity and is aware of the task to be undertaken. Additional vulnerabilities that may arise from a physical disability or learning difficulty should be considered with regard to individual teaching and care plans for each child.

Staff members must:

- Ensure other staff members are aware of intimate care being provided;
- Adhere to the school's Intimate Care Policy;
- Seek and consider the views and emotional responses of the pupil;

- Record and communicate with parents;
- Negotiate with parents and agree the provision of regular intimate care for pupils.

Absence and Punctuality

When employees arrive at school, it is essential they sign it at the front desk for health and safety reasons.

The school office must be informed of any planned absences, such as for training or subject leadership, at the earliest possible opportunity so that cover can be arranged. Any unexpected absences must be reported to the Headteacher (or another Senior Leader) by telephone to ensure that the message has been received and, if necessary, cover can be arranged. Text messages are not usually sufficient. If staff members are unable to make contact with the Headteacher, another senior leader must be contacted. For further information, refer to the St Edmundsbury and Ipswich Diocesan Multi Academy Trust Sickness Absence Policy. It is helpful if staff members who are absent due to illness can contact the school office before the end of the school day to give an update on their condition and advise whether they are likely to be in school the following day.

If employees are unwell or on medication, they must seek the guidance of a health professional to ensure they are fit for work.

Staff members are expected to be punctual, arriving in good time to begin their contracted hours punctually. If staff members are delayed, they must contact the school office or a senior leader.

Educational Visits and Transport

The school adheres to Local Authority guidance and policies in relation to educational visits. Staff members are required to undertake thorough risk assessments, using the Local Authority's online 'Evolve' system, which must be approved by senior leaders prior to the trip. Activities outside school or out-of-school-hours require parental consent. Less formal clothing may be appropriate depending upon the nature of the trip. However, staff members remain in a position of trust and must behave accordingly, modelling professional conduct.

Occasionally, staff members will transport pupils in private vehicles. For example, pupils sometimes require transport to an after-school sports event. Wherever possible, this should be avoided through providing alternative arrangements. Except in the most exceptional circumstances, an additional adult should be present in the vehicle. If unavoidable, Staff members should ensure that they are alone with a pupil for the minimum possible time. On such occasions, the staff member is responsible for the welfare of pupils until they are safely passed over to a parent or carer.

Conduct Outside of Work

Staff members must not engage in conduct outside work which could seriously damage the reputation and standing of the school or the employee's own reputation or the reputation of other members of the school community. In particular, criminal offences that involve violence or possession or use of illegal drugs or sexual misconduct will be regarded as unacceptable. Staff members are expected to disclose all criminal charges and convictions, including cautions. Failure to disclose would constitute grounds for disciplinary action.

Staff members must exercise caution when using information technology and be aware of the risks to themselves and others.

Staff members must ensure that the use of alcohol outside work does not adversely affect work performance and does not affect the safety and welfare of themselves or others. Staff members should be considerate of the impact of their behaviour on the image and reputation of the school.

Whistleblowing

Whistleblowing is the mechanism by which staff can voice their concerns, made in good faith, without fear of repercussion. For further information, refer to the St Edmundsbury and Ipswich Diocesan Multi Academy Trust Whistleblowing Policy. Staff should acknowledge their individual responsibilities to bring matters of concern to the attention of senior leaders and/or relevant external agencies. This is particularly important where the welfare of children may be at risk. All adults working in education settings should know the name of the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead for Child Protection, and follow the Safeguarding Policy and procedures as necessary. All staff members have a duty to report any child protection concerns.

All staff are encouraged to report suspected wrong doing as soon as possible, their concerns will be taken seriously and investigated, and their confidentiality will be respected.

Personal relationships at work

Employees must not allow personal relationships with a colleague to influence their conduct at work. Employees are required to declare any personal relationships at work which may fall under this policy. The policy sets out St Mary's expectations concerning personal and professional boundaries at work and the management of personal relationships at work.

St Mary's does not take a wholly prohibitive approach to personal relationships at work as it is recognised that these are inevitable in any workplace. However, this policy seeks to ensure that such relationships are declared are transparent and do not give rise to more or less favourable treatment.

This policy provides clear guidance to employees and managers as their responsibilities to ensure that issues arising from or involving personal relationships at work are dealt with promptly, sensitively, and effectively. By adhering to the guidelines in this policy, employees with personal relationships at work are more able to protect themselves from potential criticism.

Definitions of Personal Relationships

In order to promote a safe and positive work environment, careful consideration must be given to personal relationships at work. A personal relationship may be defined as a relationship that goes beyond professional boundaries and may lead to real or perceived conflicts of interest or misuse of authority at work. Examples of personal relationships may include, but are not limited to:

- A family relationship, e.g. brother, sister, daughter, son, mother, father and also being related by marriage or civil partnership e.g. brother-in-law, sister-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, mother-in-law, father-in-law, step children or parents etc, married partners, co-habiting partners, and civil union partnerships;
- A business/commercial/financial relationship;
- A very close friendship or social relationship that exists outside the workplace;
- A romantic/intimate relationship (including a brief or one-off occurrence).

A personal relationship can be with an existing or prospective employee, a volunteer, a contractor or suppliers, a Governor, or employee of a related organisation with whom an employee interacts regularly as a result of their employment.

The above definitions are examples of personal relationships; however, personal relationships are not restricted to these examples.

St Mary's approach to personal relationships at work

In any workplace it is likely that some employees will be related to one another or develop a personal relationship, and if they are in close working relationship in the same school, the potential for conflict between personal/family loyalty and work responsibilities may arise.

In the UK, there are no specific laws governing personal relationships at work. However, legislation relevant to personal relationships in the workplace includes:

- The Equalities Act 2010;
- Protection of Harassment Act 1997;
- The Human Rights Act 1998 (Article 8), which provides for the right to a private and family life.

Workplace relationships have the potential to be detrimental to the operation and reputation of the school. For example, it could cause issues relating to:

- A conflict of interest (i.e. when an individual might be seen to be influencing school matters for actual, potential or perceived personal benefit);
- Subjective or unfair recruitment decisions;
- Preferential or inconsistent treatment of employees;
- Breaches of confidentiality between the employees in the relationship;
- The perceptions of colleagues, parents or other members of the school community being shared as 'gossip';
- Inappropriate or unprofessional behaviours (e.g. physical contact at work);
- Positional power based on one person's position in the school's staffing structure;
- Bullying and harassment (e.g. unwanted physical contact or making threatening or insulting comments);
- The risk of inappropriate behaviours or grievances being raised if a personal relationship breaks down.

Despite these potential challenges, it is recognised that relationships in the workplace will not necessarily have any negative impact on the school's operation or reputation. Also, employees have a right to a private life and this needs to be balanced against the potential impact of personal relationships at work. The right to a private life is not to be restricted by banning personal relationships at work.

However, it is recognised that there will be particular circumstances where the employees concerned will need to withdraw from certain decisions or from undertaking certain roles, in order to protect themselves and St Mary's from any possible criticism of unfair bias.

While it is not St Mary's intention to infringe upon the private lives of its employees, it does expect that all employees (and others in scope of this policy) should conduct themselves at all times in ways that are consistent with St Mary's trust values and with fairness and impartially.

Where personal relationships occur between employees, it is the responsibility of both individuals to avoid any actual or potential conflicts of interest or favouritism.

Identifying and declaring a personal relationship at work

The following practical measures can help to manage potential risks. These steps are intended to be fair and reasonable and must not discriminate on the grounds of any protected characteristic identified in The Equalities Act 2010. The following measures are intended to protect and support all employees.

1. Recruitment – where there is a personal relationship between a candidate and a staff member or governor involved in the recruitment process, this person must remove themselves from the process (their role could be undertaken by another senior leader, governor or representative from the MAT).
2. Disciplinary/grievance issues – Employees should declare a potential conflict of interest as soon as they are approached to participate in such proceedings as either a witness, Investigating Officer, or Commissioning Officer.
3. Performance management - where there is a personal relationship between an employee and a line manager involved in the performance management process, the role of 'manager' should be undertaken by another senior leader or MAT representative.
4. It is required that personal relationships that create a real, potential or perceived conflict of interests are declared on 'pecuniary interest' forms, which are reviewed and renewed annually. These forms are confidential and kept securely.
5. It is required that any new personal relationships in the workplace are declared to the Headteacher, or to the Chair of Governors if the potential conflict of interests involves the Headteacher. This must be done in writing via letter or email within one calendar month. If this initial report is made verbally, then it should be followed up in writing. This written declaration will be received in confidence and kept in the employee's personnel file (copied for each staff member involved). Declarations will be treated respectfully, sensitively and confidentially. Either party can make the initial declaration but the onus to declare rests with the more senior staff member. Failure to disclose a relevant personal relationship within the stipulated timeframe will be considered a disciplinary matter and could amount to a breach of trust. Declaring a personal relationship in the workplace allows reasonable steps to be taken to safeguard the individuals involved and manage any of the potential challenges or conflicts in school. The Headteacher may discuss the declared relationship with the school's Human Resources (HR) Consultant in order to seek advice and respond appropriately.
6. When notified of a new relationship in the workplace, the Headteacher (or Chair of Governors – see above) will request a meeting with the employee(s) to consider and discuss how the relationship may impact the workplace and any real, perceived or potential conflicts of interest. Where the relationship involves a line manager and another employee, it will be considered whether an alternative line manager should be arranged and/or whether one of the staff members should be transferred to another role in the school. Should a staff member be transferred, the alternative role must be suitable and the same level of seniority and any transfer should not discriminate on the basis of any protected characteristic. The purpose of having such a discussion is to avoid and mitigate for possible problems or conflicts. Any action taken will be in consultation with

the employee(s). It may not be necessary for any action to be taken. A record of this meeting will be placed in the confidential personnel files for the staff members involved.

7. If colleagues of the staff members in a personal relationship discuss the relationship, which may be referred to as 'gossip', colleagues will be reminded of the need for sensitive, respectful, professional and confidential behaviour, and will be referred to the Code of Conduct, in order to ensure that the school remains a positive and welcoming working environment.
8. Where issues arise, for example due to the breakdown of a relationship, the situation will be managed fairly and consistently, by focusing on the impact on the workplace rather than on the staff members involved. All involved employees should ensure that no acts that could be interpreted as arguments or disagreements occur at work. And their personal relationship breakdown does not bring the school's reputation into disrepute. Appropriate wellbeing support will be offered.

Any employee who feels that the personal relationship of other team members or colleagues is adversely affecting their employment, is encouraged to share their concerns with the Headteacher.

Any personal relationships in the workplace must be conducted professionally and discreetly and those involved should always endeavour to maintain a positive working environment.

Where a personal relationship exists but either, there is no conflict of interest, or the conflict of interest has been resolved, the individuals must ensure that they demonstrate professional behaviour at all times and do not allow the personal relationship to influence their behaviour whilst at work. Similarly, if a personal relationship comes to an end, both parties must ensure that they continue to work professionally together and conduct themselves in an appropriate manner. Complaints made in this regard will be investigated in line with the appropriate Grievance procedure.

If staff members need to seek advice about personal relationships at any time (e.g. before declaring the relationship to the Headteacher), they can discuss the matter with the school's HR Consultant. For example, employees may wish to discuss whether the relationship in question creates a real, potential or perceived conflict of interest. Contact details for the school's HR Consultant can be obtained from the school office.

Alleged breaches of St Mary's Code of Conduct Policy will be investigated under St Edmundsbury & Ipswich Diocesan Multi Academy Trust (MAT) Disciplinary Policy.

Appendix 1
General behaviour Guidelines

The following behaviours reflect daily, natural practice at St Mary's. This list is not exhaustive but is intended to be a guide and useful reminder.

Helpful Behaviours

Acknowledgement
Empathy
Showing understanding towards colleagues and other members of the school community
Courtesy
Tolerance
Patience
Being Inspirational
Being calm
Engage positively with reasonable change and be willing to 'have a go'
Being confident to take a risk and make mistakes
Allowing others to make mistakes when they have taken creative risks
Good manners – showing courtesy and respect
Dealing with issues openly
Being decisive and be able to give clear reasons for decisions
Involve people in the decision making process wherever possible and appropriate
Communicate pupil issues to relevant colleagues
Highlight positives in both formal and informal discussions regarding pupils
Be punctual
Foster positive relationships with colleagues, reinforcing an atmosphere of team work and collaboration
Be aware of the impact of your behaviour and approach on others – be positive and consider the use of tone and body language (e.g. the use of eye contact and smiling!)
Listen to the views of others and be willing to contribute positively in meetings
Show commitment and dedication
Honesty
Include all colleagues and help to ensure nobody feels isolated
Be available and willing to help
Humour!

Appendix 2
Disciplinary Rules

The following are examples of behaviour that the school finds unacceptable. The list is not exhaustive and it is acknowledged that it will be necessary to exercise judgement in all cases and to be fair and reasonable in all circumstances.

- Threats or physical violence towards pupils, parents, colleagues or visitors.
- Sexual offences or sexual insults.
- Discrimination based on protected characteristics, including race, sex or religion (see Equalities Policy).
- Theft of school monies or property and of monies or property of colleagues or visitors to the school. Removal from School premises of property which is not normally taken away without the express authority of the Headteacher or of the owner of the property may be regarded as gross misconduct.
- Deliberate falsification of documents, such as expense claims, for the purpose of personal gain.
- Acceptance of bribes or other corrupt financial practices.
- Wilful damage of school property or of property belonging to other staff members or visitors to the school.
- Wilful disregard of safety rules or policies affecting the safety of pupils, other staff members or visitors to the School.
- Any wilful act which could result in actionable negligence for compensation against the school.
- Refusal to comply with reasonable instructions given by staff with a supervisory responsibility.
- Gross neglect of duties and responsibilities.
- Unauthorised absence from work.
- Being untruthful and/or engaging in deception in matters of importance within the school community.
- Deliberate breaches of confidentiality, particularly on sensitive matters.
- Being incapable by reason of alcohol or drugs (not prescribed for a health problem) from fulfilling duties and responsibilities of employment.
- Conduct which substantially brings the name of the school into disrepute or which seriously undermines confidence in the employee.

The following are examples of behaviour which could lead to formal disciplinary proceedings.

- Unsatisfactory timekeeping or absence without permission.
- Neglect of safety rules and procedures. Some offences of wilful neglect may be regarded as gross misconduct.
- Breaches of confidentiality. Deliberate breaches on sensitive matters maybe regarded as gross misconduct.
- Failure to comply with reasonable work-related requirements or lack of care in fulfilling the duties of the post.
- Behaviour towards other employees, pupils, and visitors which gives justifiable offence.
- Acting in a manner which could reasonably be regarded as rude, impolite, contemptuous or lacking appropriate professional demeanour. In certain circumstances such behaviour may be regarded as gross misconduct.
- Conduct which adversely affects either the reputation of the school or affects confidence in the employee. Certain conduct may be regarded as gross misconduct.

Appendix 3

Data Protection

At St Mary's C of E Primary School, policies and procedures are designed with privacy and security at their core.

Staff members are expected gather, store, process and, if necessary, share personal data with great care. Personal data refers to any electronic or hard copy information relating to a person (data subject) that can be used directly or indirectly to identify the person.

All staff members must be aware of the following rules and guidance within school that relate to how personal data should be gathered, stored, processed or shared. Sensitive use of personal data is considered to be a key aspect of good professional conduct.

- Staff members **must** only use memory sticks that are encrypted and supplied by the school.
- Staff members are **advised** to always keep memory sticks in the same place to avoid them getting lost.
- Staff members **must** only use password-protected laptops supplied by the school for school work off-site.
- Staff members **must** not leave school laptops in cars overnight.
- School email **must** only be used for work purposes. Emails containing sensitive information **must not** include pupils' full names. Sensitive documents sent via email to external agencies **must** be password protected (passwords should be sent in separate emails).
- Personal data taken on school trips for safety reasons **must** be shredded on return to school.
- Staff members are **advised** to use the shredding service paid for by the school to dispose of confidential documents. Documents for shredding should be put into the shredding bags in the lockable walk-in cupboard in the school office.
- Confidential documents **must** not be left on the central printer in the entrance hall after printing. In order to avoid this, staff members should not print off documents sent to the printer by another user.
- The main office **must** always be locked when unattended. The Headteacher's office **must** be locked overnight.
- Staff members are **advised** to limit the amount of personal data taken off-site for meetings or working at home, taking only the documents that are relevant and necessary to contribute professionally to the meeting or undertake the work.
- There **must** be a professional, justifiable reason for taking pupils' blue files or safeguarding files off-site. If blue files or safeguarding files are taken off site, they **must** be signed out and back in on return. The sheet for signing out these files is kept in the main office.