



**CORPUS CHRISTI**  
We are His body, living and learning as one.

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# CODE OF CONDUCT



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Author	SHRO
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## **1. Introduction**

- i. The Corpus Christi Catholic Academy Trust (referred to hereafter as the Trust) has developed a number of key policies to ensure that the principles of Catholic Social Teaching in relation to respect, objectivity and belief in the dignity of the individual become embedded into every aspect of school life and these policies are reviewed regularly in this regard.
- ii. The distinctiveness of a Catholic school is lived out through the care and respect shown for each other. All staff are principally responsible for a Catholic school's ability to put into effect its ethos, aims and projects.
- iii. The Trust supports the creation of a safer culture to ensure the schools are an environment where everyone is safe and happy by reinforcing the safeguarding and well-being of children and young people in its care.
- iv. The Trust is mindful of its obligations and duties under the Equality Act 2010 and will be mindful of the protected characteristics in the Equality Act (i.e. age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy, maternity and marriage or civil partnership) in the application of this code of conduct.
- v. The Trust may take positive action to help redress any imbalances that may have arisen as a result of past discrimination or disadvantage. The aim of this positive action is to ensure that people from previously excluded groups are included.
- vi. This policy complies with the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA 2018).
- vii. This policy meets the requirements of the UK General Data Protection Regulations (UK GDPR) – the EU GDPR was incorporated into UK legislation, with some amendments by The Data Protection, Privacy and Electronic Communications (Amendments etc) (EU Exit) Regulations 2020
- viii. This policy meets the requirements of the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 when referring to the use of biometric data. This policy reflects the ICO's code of practice for the use of surveillance cameras and personal information.

## **2. Scope of the policy**

- a. This policy applies to all employees who work at schools within the Trust.
- b. This policy applies to self-employed staff, trainees, contractors, external consultants, volunteers, agency staff and governors, whether by direct contract with the Trust or otherwise. This policy also applies to parents, students, members of the public and users of the school or Trust website.
- c. This policy should be read alongside relevant Trust Policies and Procedures.
- d. This policy complies with the Trust's funding agreement and articles of association.
- e. Unless indicated otherwise, all references to "Governing Body" apply to school's Local Governing Body or Interim Management Board.

### **3. Principles**

- i. This code is designed to help and encourage employees to achieve and maintain acceptable standards of conduct.
- ii. The Trust is mindful of its obligations and duties under the Equality Act 2010 and will be mindful of the protected characteristics in the Equality Act (i.e. age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy, maternity and marriage or civil partnership) in the application of this code of conduct.

### **4. Roles and responsibilities**

- i. The Trust has delegated the overall responsibility for the effective operation of this code to the school's Governing Body. The responsibility for the day to day management and operation of this code has been delegated to the Headteacher.
- ii. Staff employed within the Trust are in a position of influence and expected to be role models for their pupils. Staff must demonstrate behaviour that sets a good example to all pupils at schools within the Trust.
- iii. Staff should maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in their role. This includes when dealing with pupils, handling money, claiming expenses and mileage, using the school's property and facilities.
- iv. All staff must familiarise themselves and comply with their school and the Trust's policies and procedures.

### **5. General behaviour**

- i. All staff are expected to set an example to pupils and consistently demonstrate professional behaviour by:
  - Maintaining regular attendance;
  - Being punctual upon arrival at school, lessons, duties and meetings;
  - Not using inappropriate or offensive language on or around the school premises;
  - Treating colleagues and pupils with dignity and respect;
  - Showing tolerance and respect for the rights of others;
  - Not undermining the fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs;
  - Not expressing personal beliefs in a way that will overly influence pupils and not exploit pupils' vulnerability;
  - Understand the statutory frameworks they must act within;
  - Adhere to the principles set out in Part 1 iii.
- ii. At the discretion of the Headteacher, alcohol may be consumed at social events and special occasions on the school premises and outside of

working hours when no pupil is present. Staff are limited to one glass per person and are expected to conduct themselves appropriately as drunken behaviour could bring the school into disrepute if witnessed by members of the community.

## **6. Professional behaviour both in and out of school**

- i. Staff are expected to behave professionally at all times, including both in and out of school. Staff have an individual responsibility to maintain their own reputation and that of the school and the Trust, and must not act in a way that would bring the school, Trust or their profession into disrepute. This covers relevant criminal offences, such as violence or sexual misconduct, as well as negative comments about the school on social media.
- ii. Staff are also expected to:
  - Maintain professional boundaries with pupils;
  - Follow e-safety guidelines;
  - Take responsibility for accessing help and support should it be needed;
  - Meet the requirements as specified by relevant examination bodies;
  - Avoid actions which undermine the school, staff, pupils or parents (this includes outside the workplace);
  - Follow the correct procedures for dealing with all matters relating to finance.
- iii. The Trust has a Trade Union Recognition Agreement and recommends that all staff become a member of a Trade Union or Professional Association.

## **7. Confidentiality**

- i. In the course of their role, staff are often privy to sensitive and confidential information about the school, colleagues, pupils, parents and carers. Information must never be disclosed to anyone without the relevant authority.
- ii. Any information that staff may be privy to must not be used to humiliate, embarrass or blackmail others.

## **8. Safeguarding**

- a. Staff have a duty to safeguard pupils from harm and to report any concerns they have. This includes physical, emotional, sexual abuse and neglect.
- b. Staff are required to read the Trust's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedure and the Prevent initiative and ensure they are aware of the processes to follow if they have concerns about a pupil.
- c. All staff must attend the annual safeguarding and child protection update sheet. This is issued to staff every September. Staff are also required to

read Part 1 of the DfE document 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'. All staff are required to undergo safeguarding training every three years.

- d. There are occasions when staff may have cause to have physical contact with pupils for a variety of reasons. For further guidance on this please refer to the school's policy on Positive Touch and the use of Restrictive Physical Intervention for all Staff working with Children & Young People.

## **9. Whistleblowing**

- a. If an employee has a legitimate concern about a specified matter known as a "qualifying disclosure", this should be raised in accordance with the Trust's Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure. A qualifying disclosure is one made in the public interest by an employee who has a reasonable belief that any of the following has been, or is likely to be committed:
  - A criminal offence;
  - A miscarriage of justice;
  - An act creating risk to health and safety;
  - Risk or actual damage to the environment;
  - A breach of any other legal obligation e.g. not having the right insurance; or
  - Concealment of any of the above.
- ii. It is the responsibility of the person raising a concern to report the matter to the relevant person in accordance with the Whistleblowing Policy.
- iii. Everyone should be aware of the importance of preventing and eliminating wrongdoing at work. Employees should be watchful for illegal or unethical conduct and report anything of that nature that they become aware of.

## **10. Low Level concerns**

- a. Low level concerns are those who do not meet the harms threshold and, as such, would not be reported to the LADO in the first instance.
- b. Low level concerns may arise in several ways and from a number of sources, for example; suspicion, complaint or disclosure made by a child, parent or other adult within or outside the school or Trust, or as a result of vetting checks undertaken.
- c. The Trust wishes to create and embed a culture of openness, trust and transparency in which its values and expected behaviour is clear, consistently lived, monitored and reinforced by staff. All adults working in or on behalf of the schools or Trust must deal with low level concerns promptly and appropriately to minimise the risk of abuse, to ensure adults working in and on behalf of the school are clear about professional boundaries and act within these boundaries.
- d. The term 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant, it means that the behaviour does not meet the 'harm' threshold, and can

be something small such as a 'nagging doubt' or sense of unease. Examples of a low-level concern are:

- Behaviour that is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work;
- Behaviour that does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:

- Being over friendly with children;
- Having favourites;
- Taking photographs of children on their mobile phone;
- Engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door; or
- Using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language.

Such behaviour can exist on a wide spectrum, from the inadvertent or thoughtless, or behaviour that may look to be inappropriate.

- e. These low-level concerns must be shared responsibly, with the headteacher. If the concern is about the headteacher, the concern should be raised with the Chair of Governors. A record of all low-level concerns will also be recorded which will include details of the concern, the context in which the situation arose and action taken and in compliance with the General Data Protection Regulations.
- f. All low-level concerns will also be recorded on the individual's personal file along with any agreed actions. This is to ensure that if a pattern of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour is identified, this could move the situation from a concern to behaviour meeting the harm threshold in which case a referral to the Local Authority's Designated Officer (LADO) will be made.
- g. If a member of staff is concerned at any point that an interaction between themselves and a pupil could be misinterpreted or might appear compromising to others and/or on reflection believe that they have behaved in a way that they consider falls below the expected professional standards, they should self-refer.
- h. Any low-level concerns relating to agency personnel or contractors should be notified to their employers so that any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

## **11. Day to day dealings with pupils**

- i. Staff must 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.



- ii. 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 individual pupils are not acceptable.
- iii. In day-to-day dealings with pupils, all staff must be careful to avoid putting themselves at risk. The following are examples:
  - Staff should work in an open environment where possible. If staff are in a one to one meeting or interview with a pupil, they should keep the door open where possible or ensure that there is clear visual access and ensure that a colleague or manager is made aware this is taking place;
  - If a pupil is to be searched, a member of staff of the same sex of the pupil should do this in the presence of a senior member of staff.
  - Staff should maintain a professional distance with pupils and should not allow pupils to become over familiar.
  - Staff are not allowed to communicate with pupils on social network sites other than those approved by the school. No 'friending', 'linking', 'joining' or 'following' must take place.
  - Staff should avoid confrontation with pupils and always try to diffuse the situation. They should not shout in a rude manner in order to humiliate a pupil and should be firm and calm. They should be careful to criticise the behaviour rather than the pupil.
  - Private tutoring should not be carried out on the school premises. It is also recommended that staff who privately tutor pupils should inform the Headteacher of the names of any pupils who are on roll at the school in case there are any pertinent issues of which they need to be aware.
  - Staff should be mindful and take additional care when assisting a child with their dress or attending to their personal care to ensure that there is no scope for misinterpretation. Contact must be appropriate and relevant to the situation and, where possible, there should be more than one member of staff present.
  - Staff should never give out their personal contact details to pupils or parents. School mobiles should be used to contact parents during trips and emergency contact numbers should be school mobile numbers only.
  - School cameras must be used on all school trips, not personal cameras or photography taken on personal phones;
  - If, in exceptional circumstances, staff are required to drive a pupil in their car, they must:
    - a) Ensure that their insurance covers them for business use;
    - b) Obtain parental permission in written form if possible;
    - c) Take more than one person unless there is an emergency;
    - d) Keep conversation professional;

- e) Seat pupils in the back of the car where possible.

## **12. Relationships**

- i. Staff have a responsibility to all individuals they come in contact with to be helpful, courteous, respectful, efficient and impartial.
- ii. Personal romantic relationships may become a concern for the school if it interferes with an individual's work and therefore all staff must behave in an appropriate and professional manner while at work.

## **13. Communications**

- a. Staff should ensure they are up to date with information and should check emails, SIMS information, pigeon holes and briefing notices daily to ensure they are aware of situations and events that will affect them.
- b. Teachers must ensure that relevant notices in registers are distributed or read out to pupils.
- c. Staff should not, in the normal course of events, deal directly with the press or the media. If canvassed by the press in the course of their work, staff must refer them to the Headteacher and make no comment.

## **14. Engaging with the Catholic Ethos of the school**

- i. All staff must fully engage in all activities that are an essential part of school life. In accordance with directed time, teaching staff are required to attend all relevant meetings including Parental Consultation evenings and Open Evenings. Teaching staff are also expected to attend and be involved in the wider professional life of the school and support staff are also encouraged to participate fully in school life.

## **15. Appearance and presentation**

- i. Staff must present themselves, their appearance, body language, actions and use language which sets an example to the pupils. The Trust has high expectations of staff and for this reason request that when in front of the pupils should not:
  - Chew gum;
  - Use mobile phones for personal use unless essential;
  - Use inappropriate language in either oral or written form;
  - Eat or drink in the corridors.
- iii. All staff must ensure they wear their name badge at all times.
- iv. All staff must ensure that their personal hygiene and grooming are properly attended to prior to presenting themselves to school.

## **16. Dress code**

- i. A person's dress and appearance are matters of personal choice. However, staff must understand that they are role models to the pupils and their choice of dress should uphold the same expectations as is held

for the pupils. Staff should be aware that disregard for this dress code and personal hygiene guidance may lead to disciplinary action being taken.

- ii. All staff are expected to dress in a professional, clean and appropriate manner for the duties and responsibilities of the role they are undertaking, including considerations for health and safety, which may be different to that adopted in their personal life.
- iii. All staff should endeavor to maintain good personal hygiene standards and must also take individual responsibility for their own personal cleanliness, through good hygiene practices e.g. regular showering, good oral hygiene, regular hand washing and wearing clean clothes.
- iv. If staff undertake a specialist role, they are able to wear clothing appropriate to that role. i.e. PE staff wearing school sports kit and lab technicians wearing a lab coat.
- v. All footwear should be worn to ensure health and safety whilst at work and staff should ensure that their choice of footwear is safe, secure and appropriate to their role. i.e. no flip flops or extremely high heels.
- vi. It is important to portray a smart and professional image and outfits must not be overly revealing or display any offensive or political slogans. Informal clothing should not be worn, unless there is prior agreement with the Headteacher, e.g. a school trip. Informal clothing includes, but is not limited to: jeans, shorts, slogan t-shirts, jogger pants, hoodies, high heels, strappy tops, short skirts, flip flops.
- vii. For safeguarding reasons, staff should wear their school lanyards at all times. Some school staff may need to wear high-vis when travelling around school corridors, duty points and outside areas on school grounds, but this may differ from school to school.
- viii. Clothing worn for religious beliefs, cultural practices and gender identity are permitted, as long as the clothing remains professional and appropriate.
- ix. Any form of dress should not interfere with the teaching and learning process and pupils should be able to see an individual's face.
- x. Those who dress or appear in a manner which could be viewed as offensive or inappropriate may render themselves vulnerable to criticism or allegation.
- xi. Reasonable adjustments will be made for disabled staff.

## **17. Tobacco and vaping control**

- a. The Health and Safety at Work Act (1974) requires that the Trust takes reasonable measures to protect the health and safety of all employees and members of the public visiting Trust premises.
- b. The Smoke-Free (Premises and Enforcement) Regulations 2006 requires all enclosed or “substantially enclosed” public places, workplaces and vehicles used for work to be smoke-free.
- c. The Trust is committed to and fully accepts its responsibilities to provide safe, smoke-free and vape-free workplaces.

- d. For clarity, smoking refers to the *practice in which tobacco is burned and the resulting smoke is typically breathed in to be tasted and absorbed into the bloodstream* and includes cigarettes, roll-up cigarettes, cigars, or pipes.
- e. For clarity, vaping is the action or practice of inhaling and exhaling vapour containing nicotine and flavouring produced by a device designed for this purpose and refers to any e-cigarette product.
- f. Smoking and vaping will be prohibited in all the following areas:
- All office accommodation used by the Trust.
  - Access doorways, surrounding areas, rest rooms, corridors and toilets.
  - All Trust owned vehicles (e.g. school minibuses).
  - All Trust owned public buildings, including function rooms, theatres, cafes, sports and recreational facilities. The sale of tobacco produce will also be prohibited in all of these outlets.
  - Youth clubs and after school clubs.
  - Outdoors on Trust grounds (e.g. car parks, courtyards).
- g. Smoking and/or vaping outside of Trust grounds, whilst undertaking contractual obligations and/or within contractual working hours, is also prohibited i.e. a school trip
- h. Smoking and vaping is prohibited in the above areas based on the following rationale:
- Smoking is illegal for anyone under 16 years old and vaping is illegal for anyone under 18 years old.
  - Smoking remains the single most preventable cause of premature death and ill health in our society.
  - Passive smoking - breathing other people's tobacco smoke - is also potentially fatal. It has been shown to cause lung cancer, as well as many other illnesses in non-smokers.
  - Smoking and vaping are a health and safety issue for all adults who use the school; staff and parents.
  - Vaping can cause side effects such as throat and mouth irritation, lung scarring, headache, cough, shortness of breath and feeling sick.
  - Everyone has the right to breathe clean air, and non-smokers and non-vapours are in the majority.
  - Schools have a major role to play in working towards non-smoking and/or non-vaping being seen as the norm in society.
  - Children need to receive consistent messages and require non-smoking and non-vaping role models within the school.
- i. Although vaping is not covered under smoke-free legislation (as vaping does not burn tobacco or create smoke) vaping is not permitted as outlined above for the following reasons:

- People with asthma and other respiratory conditions can be sensitive to a range of environmental irritants, which could include e-cigarette vapour, and;
  - Vaping can, in certain circumstances, be a nuisance or distraction for people nearby.
- j. Smokers and vapers are required to leave Trust premises and grounds (e.g. car parks, courtyards) in order to smoke and/or vape.
  - k. Trust employees who wish to smoke and/or vape may only do so in their own time. No employee is allowed to smoke and/or vape whilst being paid at work; this includes those working outdoors.
  - l. When on a smoking or vaping break, employees should not be easily identifiable as a Trust employee (e.g. lanyards need to be removed/covered when smoking or vaping).
  - m. No facilities will be provided for smokers or vapers either inside or outside Trust premises.

## **18. Smoking cessation support**

- a. The Trust will actively promote NHS support and locally-commissioned smoking cessation services to all its employees. Additional smoking cessation support will be promoted as appropriate. This may include smoking cessation apps and information and advice via an Employee Assistance Programme.
- b. Employees can access up to 2 hours paid leave to attend an initial stop smoking consultation via a GP, a GP Stop Smoking Nurse, or local smoking cessation service.

## **19. Alcohol and Drugs control**

- i. Employees may not consume alcohol or any unlawful drugs in the workplace during work time or during a period prior to work where they may still be under the influence of alcohol and drugs effects, which may carry over to the working hours. This includes business functions where the employee is representing the Trust.
- ii. Employees may not consume alcohol or any unlawful drugs outside of Trust grounds, whilst undertaking contractual obligations and/or within contractual working hours i.e. a school trip
- iii. At the discretion of the Headteacher, alcohol may be consumed at social events and special occasions on the school premises and outside of working hours when no pupil is present. Staff are limited to one glass per person and are expected to conduct themselves appropriately as drunken behaviour could bring the school into disrepute if witnessed by members of the community.
- iv. No employee shall be in possession of alcohol or illegal drugs in the workplace.

- v. No employee should try to report to work when unfit due to alcohol or drugs.
- vi. No employee shall supply others with illegal drugs or alcohol in the workplace.
- vii. Employees who are taking prescription drugs should ensure that they are aware of any side effects and advise their manager or a member of the management team immediately of any side effects of prescription drugs, which may affect work performance or the health and safety of themselves or others
- viii. The Trust's stance on alcohol and illegal drugs in the workplace will be strictly enforced and disciplinary action, in accordance with the Trust's disciplinary policy and procedure, will be undertaken where breaches occur. In the case of agency workers or contractors, services may be terminated immediately upon a breach.
- ix. When there is reasonable belief that an individual is under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs on reporting for work or during the course of work, they must be sent home immediately. In addition, possession of or dealing in illegal drugs on Trust premises will, without exception, be reported to the Police.

## **20. Help and support for alcohol and drug addiction**

- i. The Trust is committed to supporting all employee's health and wellbeing, including any employees with a drug or alcohol addiction. Employees with an illness related to alcohol and/or drugs are encouraged to disclose this at the earliest opportunity to ensure support and help with treatment.
- ii. Support for employees includes:
  - Referral/s to Occupational Health
  - Referral/s to counselling via the Trust's Occupational Health Provider, where necessary
  - Encouragement to seek support from their GP
  - Access to the Employee Assistance Programme
  - Support in attending rehabilitation programmes / facilities
  - The signing of an 'alcohol agreement'
  - Time off to obtain treatment or to attend support groups (the decision on whether this will be paid or unpaid is at the discretion of the Headteacher)
- iii. If an employee fails to co-operate in referral or treatment, no special assistance will be given and any failure in work performance and behaviour will be dealt with through disciplinary procedures.

## **21. External help and support for alcohol and drug addiction**

### **Alcohol Dependence**

#### **Drinkline**

Helpline: 0800 917 8282

Drinkline runs a free, confidential helpline for people who are concerned about their own drinking, or someone else's.

#### **NHS Choices Website**

<http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/Alcohol-misuse/Pages/Introduction.aspx>

National Health Service advice page.

#### **Drinkaware**

<https://www.drinkaware.co.uk/>

Drinkaware works to reduce alcohol misuse and harm in the UK.

#### **Addaction**

<http://www.addaction.org.uk/default.asp>

Addaction is the UK's leading drug and alcohol charity, helping over 40,000 people a year to recover from their addiction problems.

#### **Al-Anon**

<http://www.al-anonuk.org.uk>

Provide support to anyone whose life is, or has been, affected by someone else's drinking, regardless of whether that person is still drinking or not.

#### **Alcoholics Anonymous Great Britain**

<http://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk>

AA is an organisation of men and women who share their experience with each other hoping to solve their problems and help others to recover from alcoholism.

### **Drug Dependence**

#### **NHS Choices Website**

<http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/drugs/Pages/Drugtreatment.aspx>

National Health Service advice page.

#### **Addaction**

<http://www.addaction.org.uk/default.asp>

Addaction is the UK's leading drug and alcohol charity, helping over 40,000 people a year to recover from their addiction problems.

#### **Talk to Frank**

<http://www.talktofrank.com/>

National drugs awareness site for young people and parents/carers.

#### **Narcotics Anonymous**

<http://ukna.org/>

Helpline for the UK: 0300 999 1212

N.A. is a non-profit fellowship of recovering addicts who meet regularly to help each other stay clean. Membership is open to anyone with a drug problem seeking help, regardless of what drug or combination of drugs have been used, and irrespective of age, sex, religion, race, creed or class. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using drugs.