



Professional Code of Conduct Policy

St. Teresa's Nursery School aspires to provide a child focused pre-school experience that is warm and welcoming, open and inclusive, and one that will positively introduce each child to education. To ensure all in the school community 'be the best that they can be' in an oasis of calm and love.

To achieve this end, St. Teresa's Nursery School promotes and encourages:

1. Staff to be unashamedly approachable and accessible.
2. A friendly and welcoming environment for parents, guardians and their children.
3. The comprehensive involvement of parents and guardians in the life of the school and the education of their children.
4. Full inclusivity for children, irrespective of need, ability, denomination or race.
5. A nurturing educational atmosphere based on fun and positivity.
6. Flexibility of learning that engages all children and allows them to reach their full potential.
7. The development of confident, happy children who are keen to progress to primary school

In St. Teresa's Nursery School, the pastoral care structures are based on the school's aims. The staff of St. Teresa's Nursery School, in partnership with parents, aim to provide a caring and stimulating environment where each child will have the opportunity to develop fully in every aspect of his/her development.

It is the aim of the school that every child should be given opportunities to:

- Develop at his/her own rate through challenging, progressive play.
- Learn to share with others and play co-operatively.
- Appreciate and care for others and practise social skills.
- Deepen and lengthen concentration through his/her natural spontaneous curiosity and interest.
- Choose and explore a wide range of materials which allow him/her to express himself/herself appropriately and creatively.
- Become aware of his/her body's capabilities and limits in a safe environment
- Communicate thoughts, ideas and feelings clearly to both adults and other children.
- Share the wonder and excitement created by books, stories, songs, rhymes, music and the natural environment.
- Grow in self-confidence, experience success and thus develop a good self-image.
- Enjoy the satisfaction of work well done and share with his/her parents.
- Recognise the importance of learning outdoors and to play purposefully in the many outdoor spaces available at Nursery.

To ensure that the aims and ethos of the school are supported by all staff members, the Staff Code of Conduct should be adhered to at all times.

Staff Code of Conduct

All actions concerning children must uphold the best interests of the child as a primary consideration. Staff must always be mindful of the fact that they hold a position of trust, and that their behaviour towards the children in their charge must be above reproach. This Code of Conduct is not intended to detract from the enriching experiences children gain from positive interaction with staff. It is intended to assist staff in respect of the complex issue of child abuse, by drawing attention to the areas of risk for staff and by offering guidance on prudent conduct.

1. Private meetings with pupils:

Staff should be aware of the dangers which may arise from private interviews with individual pupils.

There may be times when staff will be working on a one-one basis with a child. On all occasions this work should take place either in a room with visual access or with the door open.

2. Physical contact with pupils:

- a) As a general principle, staff are advised not to make unnecessary physical contact with their pupils. (e.g. Constant nursing of particular children)
- b) It is unrealistic and unnecessary, however to suggest that staff should touch children only in emergencies. In particular, a distressed child may need reassurance involving physical comforting, as a caring parent would provide. Staff should not feel inhibited from providing this. Neither should staff attempt to stifle the natural affection of Nursery age children but should direct it into an appropriate display.
- c) Staff should never touch a child who has clearly indicated that he/she is, or would be, uncomfortable with such contact, unless it is necessary to protect the child, others or property from harm.
(DENI Circular 1999/9: Article 4 Education (N.I) Order1998)
- d) Physical punishment is illegal, as is any form of physical response to misbehaviour, unless it is by way of necessary restraint.
- e) Staff who have to administer first aid to a pupil should ensure wherever possible that this is done in the presence of other children or another adult.
- f) Any physical contact which would be likely to be misinterpreted by the pupil, parent or other casual observer should be avoided.
- g) The special procedures regarding changing a child who is wet/dirty/sick as detailed next should be adhered to by all staff.

NB students should not be involved in changing children.

With special reference to changing children who are wet/dirty/sick, the following procedures must be observed at all times:

- a) Only children whose parents have given permission for them to be changed may be changed. The Parent / Carer of those for whom parental consent has not been received should be telephoned instead. A list of any children who MAY NOT be changed will be clearly sited for all staff to check.
- b) Due to problems of supervision of the rest of the class, both members of staff will not be present when a child is being changed. However, the member of staff changing the child MUST alert the other member of staff prior to starting to change the child.

- c) To provide visual access, the bathroom door should remain open at all times.
- d) While every attempt should be made to give the child privacy and preserve their dignity, other children will not be barred from the bathroom during changing.
- e) Staff must wear disposable gloves and aprons when changing a child.
- f) The child should be encouraged to remove the clothes to be changed by themselves where possible.
- g) Where necessary, the child can be given a baby wipe to freshen themselves.
- h) The child should be encouraged to dress themselves with help being given when necessary
- i) A note of the change must be entered on the chart and signed by the staff member. Wet / soiled clothes are to be placed in a bag on the child's peg and the carer informed at the end of the session.
- j) A child who is asking for help in the toilet should be encouraged and directed how to clean themselves where possible. Where intervention is necessary, the other member of staff should be alerted, and the record sheet signed by the staff member on completion.
- k) Should a child be heavily soiled and in need of a full wash, home should be contacted and the child should be collected and taken home from school to be made more comfortable.

Behaviour Management

Pupils will be dealt with fairly and positively by staff, respecting their rights as individuals. (see Behaviour Management Policy.) Staff are expected to act in an open and transparent way that would not lead any reasonable person to suspect their actions or intent. Staff are in a position of trust and have a duty to protect young people from discrimination and harm and to appropriate professional boundaries. Unprofessional relationships will not be condoned. It is equally important for staff to avoid behaviour that might be misinterpreted by others in order to protect both young people and themselves. Staff are required to read and understand school policies on Child Protection and Safeguarding.

Bullying

It is expected that colleagues will be dealt with in a professional manner and treated with respect. The perceived misuse of power or position, persistently or deliberately, to intimidate, humiliate or undermine will not be condoned. In order to combat harassment in the school the Board of Governors will deal with circumstances where the complainant and the person against whom the allegation is made are both members of staff. Matters involving pupils should be dealt with under the school's pastoral care policies.

Child Protection and Safeguarding

Please read the school's policy for detailed information on Safeguarding and Child Protection. The Child Protection Designated Teacher is the Principal and the Deputy Designated Teacher is the Assistant Teacher.

Communication

When talking to Parents/carers, staff should not discuss in detail issues relating to any pupil other than the child of those parents. Staff should not disclose information relating to the school community inappropriately at any time. All communication with the media must be directed through the Principal or their nominee.

Complaints

Complaints by Parents/Carers against teachers, by pupils against teacher, and by teachers against teachers will be dealt with in a sensitive, objective and professional manner. Complaints should be dealt with at an informal level by the Principal who will then inform the member of staff concerned and will decide on any action to be taken. If required, Governors will be informed.

Criminal Action

School employees must inform the Principal (or the Principal inform the Chairman of the Board of Governors) immediately if they are subject to a criminal conviction, caution, pending prosecution, or police investigation.

Disciplinary procedures

Informal and formal disciplinary procedures against staff will be followed according to the Department of Education guidelines and the school's Disciplinary Policy.

Dress Code

The school operates a comfortable and practical dress code. Facial piercings should be removed during school hours and tattoos should be covered. Skirt lengths should be of an appropriate length. Blue denim jeans should not be worn but black denim is acceptable.

Mobile Phones

Please note that in line with Child Protection guidelines, all staff phones should be locked away during lesson time. There are lockers available for all staff and these are located in the staffroom. Mobile phones should not be used during working hours and should be turned to silent (or off). Mobile phones should only be used during the staff break time, when not in contact with pupils.

- Photographs or videos of pupils must never be taken on a staff member's phone.
- Personal phone numbers should not be shared with Parents/carers.

Health and Safety

Healthy and Safety is the shared concern of all staff and is the responsibility of all users. Risk assessments must be carried out to cover all school events, outings and excursions. Unknown visitors should be politely challenged by staff. All visitors must wear a visitor pass and all staff must wear a staff identity badge

Any Health and Safety concerns should be passed on to the Principal. All employees must adhere to the school's Health and Safety policy, procedure and guidance and must ensure that they take every action to keep themselves and everyone in the school environment safe and well. This includes taking immediate safety action in a potentially harmful situation (either at school or off-site) by complying with statutory guidelines.

Intimate Care

All staff who provide intimate care to children have completed child protection training and will undertake their duties in a professional manner at all times. No child should be attended to in a way that causes distress or pain. All intimate care support will be recorded by the staff member who attends to the child and Parents/carers will be made aware of any clothing changes. The school maintains a supply of clothes whereby a child can be changed and made comfortable.

Medication

Should a child require the administration of medication during the school day, parental consent will be required to formally authorise this.

Professional Behaviour

All staff are expected to treat other colleagues, pupils and external contacts, such as Parents/carers, with dignity and respect and are required to comply with the school's equality policies. Unacceptable behaviour such as discrimination, bullying, harassment or intimidation will not be tolerated. This includes unprofessional behaviour, physical and verbal abuse and use of inappropriate comments language or tone. Staff must behave at all times in compliance with the law and must not misuse or misrepresent their position, qualifications or experience or bring the reputation of the school into disrepute. Such behaviour will not be condoned and may lead to disciplinary action.

Punctuality and Hours of Work

Members of staff should be punctual on all occasions; being ready to start work on time, this means arriving at least five minutes before the given start time. Each morning a staff briefing will take place at 8.20 am daily.

Social Networking

Staff must not access social networking websites for personal use (i.e. non- job-related use) during work time. School staff must act in the best interests of the school and not disclose personal data or information about any individual including staff, young people or children. This includes images. Access may be withdrawn and disciplinary action taken if there is a breach of confidentiality or defamatory remarks are made about the school, staff, young people or children. The school respects an employee's private life. However, it must also ensure that confidentiality and its reputation are protected. Staff using social networking websites in their private life

- must refrain from identifying themselves as working for the school, in a way which has, or may have, the effect of bringing the school into disrepute
- must not identify other school staff, children or young people without their consent;
- must not make any defamatory remarks about the school, its employees, children or young people, or conduct themselves in a way that is detrimental to the school;
- disclose personal data or information about the school, employees, children or young people, that could breach the Data Protection Act 1998, for example, posting photographs or images of children or young people;
- where staff are contacted by a Parent/ Carer they should bring it to the Principal's attention.

Smoking

The school is a health-promoting organisation and therefore operates a no smoking policy.

Policy Review

This policy will be kept under review by school staff and reviewed as part of the school schedule for policy review.

