



## **STAFF BEHAVIOUR AND CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY**

### **STATEMENT OF INTENT**

The aim of the Staff Behaviour and Code of Conduct policy is to provide clear guidance about behaviour and actions to not place pupils or staff at risk of harm or of allegation of harm to a pupil.

It also aims to help school staff working with children to understand their roles and responsibilities to work safely and responsibly, including the use of technology and the online world:

- for the protection and benefit of the children and young people in their care, and
- for their own protection, minimising misplaced or malicious allegations and to better understand their own standards and practice
- for the benefit of the school, supporting the school ethos, aims and objectives, and protecting the reputation of the school and profession

It should be read alongside the school's E-Safety Policy.

### **POSITION OF TRUST**

As a result of their knowledge, position and/or the authority invested in their role, all adults working with children and young people in education settings are in positions of trust in relation to the young people in their care. A relationship between a member of staff and a pupil cannot be a relationship between equals. There is potential for exploitation and harm of vulnerable young people and all members of staff have a responsibility to ensure that an unequal balance of power is not used for personal advantage or gratification.

Staff should bear in mind that it is an offence for a person aged 18 or over, such as a teacher, to have a sexual relationship with a child under 18 where that person is in a position of trust in respect of that child, even if, in the case of those over 16, the relationship is consensual.

Wherever possible, staff should avoid behaviour which might be misinterpreted by others, including their use of social media, and report and record any incident with this potential.

In general, pupils should be encouraged to discuss with their parents, or guardians, issues that are troubling them. It may be appropriate to suggest that a pupil sees the school counsellor or member of the medical staff.

Staff need to ensure that their behaviour does not inadvertently lay them open to allegations of abuse. They need to treat all pupils with respect and try, as far as possible, not to be alone with a child or young person. Where this is not possible, for example, in an instrumental music lesson, or sports coaching lesson, it is good practice to ensure that others are within earshot, and if there are no windows in the door, the door should be left open. Where possible, a gap or barrier should be always maintained between teacher and child. Any physical contact should be the minimum required for care, instruction or restraint.

## **Communication with Pupils**

Staff should not give their personal mobile phone numbers or email addresses to pupils, nor should they communicate with them by text message, personal email or personal social media sites. If they need to speak to a pupil by telephone, they should use one of the school's telephones and email using the school system. The group leader on all trips and visits involving an overnight stay should take a school mobile phone with them and may ask the pupils for their mobile numbers before allowing them out in small, unsupervised groups. The school mobile should be used for any contact with pupils that may be necessary. The group leader will delete any record of pupils' mobile phone numbers at the end of the trip or visit and should ensure that pupils delete any staff numbers that they may have acquired during the trip.

## **Physical contact with pupils**

There are occasions when it is entirely 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. Staff should, therefore, always use their professional judgement. Staff should not have unnecessary physical contact with pupils and should be alert to the fact that minor forms of friendly physical contact can be misconstrued by pupils or onlookers.

A member of staff can never take the place of a parent in providing physical comfort and should be cautious of any demonstration of affection.

Physical contact should never be secretive, or for the gratification of the adult, or represent a misuse of authority. If a member of staff believes that an action could be misinterpreted, the incident and circumstances should be recorded as soon as possible, the DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead) informed and, if appropriate, a copy placed on the pupil's file. It is an offence for a person aged 18 or over, such as a teacher, to have a sexual relationship with a child under 18 where that person is in a position of trust in respect of that child, even if, in the case of those over 16, the relationship is consensual.

## **Positive Handling**

Any physical restraint is only permissible when a child is in imminent danger of inflicting an injury on themselves or on another, and then only as a last resort when all efforts to defuse the situation have failed. Another member of staff should, if possible, be present to act as a witness. All incidents of the use of physical restraint should be recorded in writing and reported immediately to the DSL/Head who will decide what to do next. Where this relates to the school's EYFS setting, parents will be informed of any physical restraint used on their child the same day or as soon as reasonably practicable. Please see our school policy on restraint for further details.

## **Physical education and other activities requiring physical contact**

Where exercises or procedures need to be demonstrated, extreme caution should be used if the demonstration involves contact with pupils and, wherever possible, contact should be avoided. It is acknowledged that some staff, for example, those who teach PE and games, or who offer music tuition, will, on occasions, have to initiate physical contact with pupils in order to support a pupil so they can perform a task safely, to demonstrate the use of a particular piece of equipment/instrument or assist them with an exercise. This should be done with the pupil's agreement.

Contact under these circumstances should be for the minimum time necessary to complete the activity and take place in an open environment. Staff should remain sensitive to any discomfort expressed verbally or non-verbally by the child.

## **Transporting pupils**

It is inadvisable for a teacher to give a lift in a car to a pupil alone. Wherever possible and practicable it is advisable that transport is undertaken other than in private vehicles, with at least one adult additional to the driver acting as an escort. If there are exceptional circumstances that make unaccompanied transportation of pupils unavoidable, the journey should be made known to a senior member of staff.

## **Confidentiality**

Staff members should never give absolute guarantees of confidentiality to pupils or adults wishing to tell them about something serious. They should guarantee only that they will pass on information to the minimum number of people who must be told in order to ensure that the proper action is taken to sort out the problem and that they will not tell anyone who does not have a clear need to know. They will also take whatever steps they can to protect the informing pupil or adult from any retaliation or unnecessary stress that might be feared after a disclosure has been made.

## **EQUAL TREATMENT**

We are committed to equal treatment for all pupils regardless of gender, sexual orientation, race, disability, religion or belief. We keep a record of racist incidents.

We aim to create a friendly, caring and perceptive environment in which every individual is valued. We endeavour to contribute positively towards the growing autonomy, self-esteem and safety of each pupil. Our staff undertake regular consultation activities with our pupils, for example, through questionnaires, participation in harmful behaviour activities and speaking to children about their experiences at lunchtime and playtimes.

## **Harmful and Abusive Behaviours (Bullying)**

Harmful and abusive behaviour, harassment, victimisation and discrimination will not be tolerated. We treat all our pupils and their parents fairly and with consideration and we expect them to reciprocate towards each other, the staff and the school. Any kind of abusive behaviour is unacceptable, and the school keeps a record of any incidents. Please see our school policy on harmful and abusive behaviours (anti-bullying) for further details.

## **DAILY CONDUCT REQUIREMENTS FOR STAFF**

### **Attendance and Timekeeping**

Should a staff member need to be absent or expect to be late for any reason, they should ask their Head of Department in advance when possible. If this is not possible, they are asked to contact the Head of Department at the earliest opportunity.

### **Smoking and Vaping**

To promote a healthy and pleasant working environment and because of the fire risk, smoking and vaping are not allowed anywhere on site.

### **Alcohol and Illegal Drugs**

Consumption of illegal drugs is not permitted on site. Consumption of alcohol is not permitted on site save at a school function or where otherwise agreed when modest amounts of alcohol may be consumed. Employees conduct and performance must not be adversely impacted by alcohol or drugs when undertaking their duties. Please see the school's Alcohol and Illegal Drugs Policy for more details.

## **Security**

Staff must not remove any school documents from the site nor take any photographs without due permission. The school reserves the right to search the outer clothing, bags, lockers and vehicles etc. of staff members whilst on site. The staff member may have a colleague in attendance on such (rare) occasions.

## **Personal Appearance**

The school regularly receives visits from parents, potential parents and others, and naturally wishes to convey an impression of efficiency and organisation. Therefore, whilst not wishing to impose unreasonable obligations of staff they are, nonetheless, required to look smart in appearance.

## **Mobility and Flexibility**

Due to the demands and nature of the school, staff should be prepared to transfer upon request within departments either temporarily or permanently, to undertake work of a different nature, providing it is reasonable and safe to do so and the staff member is adequately trained.

## **ACCEPTABLE USE OF TECHNOLOGIES**

### **Use of Mobile Phones and Cameras**

Photography and videos of pupils will be taken by staff for internal and external promotional use (Notice of Objection to school use of photography and video of a pupil must be provided in writing to the Director of Admissions and Communications). We may use external photographers / video for professional shots and videos under the direction of the Director of Admissions and Communications. Photographs will only be taken by designated staff member/s. Where photographs are taken by staff to give evidence of children's progress, photos can only be taken on school cameras. They must then be downloaded onto school computers, where they will be monitored. Photos cannot be used or passed on outside the school. NO photos must be taken on a member of staff's personal electronic devices.

### **Social Media**

Staff are advised to closely and regularly monitor their presence on social media and to keep their privacy settings at their highest. It should also be noted that a requirement of KCSIE is that schools should carry out online searches of any short-listed candidates prior to interview so attention to this will certainly be important for all staff re future career progression.

## **SAFER RECRUITMENT**

The school is committed to safer recruitment processes. Members of the teaching and non-teaching staff at the school including part-time staff, temporary and supply staff, and visiting staff, such as musicians and sports coaches are subject to the necessary statutory child protection checks before starting work, for example, right to work checks, additional overseas checks (if necessary), verifying identity, taking up references, checking work history, online searches for short-listed candidates (informing them of this in advance of a search and confirming medical fitness for the role).

For most appointments, an enhanced DBS check with 'barred list' information will be appropriate. A DBS certificate will be obtained from the candidate before or as soon as practicable after appointment. Alternatively, if the applicant has subscribed to it and gives permission, the school may undertake an online update check through the DBS Update Service.

Full details of the school's safer recruitment procedures for checking the suitability of staff, Governors and volunteers to work with children and young people is set out in the school's Safer Recruitment Policy.

### **From our E-Safety Policy: (see full policy for further details)**

#### **All staff**

#### **Key responsibilities** both in lessons and during wraparound care sessions after school:

- Understand that online safety is a core part of safeguarding; as such it is part of everyone's job – never think that someone else will pick it up.
- Know who the Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) and E Safety Officers are.
- Read Part I and Annex B of Keeping Children Safe in Education, Further Information. It is statutory for all staff to read Part I and Annex B as they work directly with children. Good practice is to also read Part 5, Child on Child Abuse and Annex C, the role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Read and follow this policy in conjunction with the school's main safeguarding policy
- Record online-safety incidents in the same way as any safeguarding incident and report in accordance with school procedures.
- Understand that safeguarding is often referred to as a jigsaw puzzle – you may have discovered the missing piece so do not keep anything to yourself
- Follow the staff IT acceptable use policy and code of conduct/handbook
- Notify the DSL/E Safety Officer if policy does not reflect practice in your school and follow escalation procedures if concerns are not promptly acted upon
- Identify opportunities to thread online safety through all school activities, both outside the classroom and within the curriculum, supporting curriculum/stage/subject leads, and making the most of unexpected learning opportunities as they arise (which have a unique value for pupils)
- Ensure learners understand and follow the [Device Code of Conduct](#) in the Senior school and pupil code of conduct for the use of technology in the Junior school and have a good understanding of research skills and the need to avoid plagiarism and uphold copyright regulations.
- Whenever overseeing the use of technology (devices, the internet, new technology such as augmented reality, etc including mobile phones) in school or setting as homework tasks, encourage sensible use, monitor what pupils/students are doing and consider potential dangers and the age appropriateness of websites (ask your DSL what appropriate filtering and monitoring policies are in place)
- To carefully supervise and guide pupils when engaged in learning activities involving online technology (including, extra-curricular and extended school activities if relevant), supporting them with search skills, critical thinking (e.g. fake news), age-appropriate materials and signposting, and legal issues such as copyright and data law
- Prepare and check all online source and resources before using within the classroom
- Where lessons take place using live-streaming or video-conferencing, staff must have full regard to national safeguarding guidance and local safeguarding policies and should take note of the guidance contained in the [SWGfL Safe Remote Learning Resource](#).

- Encourage pupils/students to follow their acceptable use policy, remind them about it and enforce school sanctions
- Have an awareness of current online safety matters/trends and of the current school Online Safety Policy and practices.
- Notify the DSL/E SAFETY OFFICER of new trends and issues before they become a problem
- Take a zero-tolerance approach to bullying and low-level sexual harassment (your DSL will disseminate relevant information from the new DfE document on this)
- Be aware that you are often most likely to see or overhear online-safety issues (particularly relating to bullying and sexual harassment and violence) in the playground, corridors, toilets and other communal areas outside the classroom.
- Report online safety incidents in the same way that you would any other safeguarding incidents.
- Report any IT misuse immediately to [esafety@colfes.com](mailto:esafety@colfes.com) in the Senior school or to the DSL in the Junior school.
- Receive regular updates from the DSL/E SAFETY OFFICER and have a healthy curiosity for online safety issues
- Ensure that all digital communications with learners and parents/carers are on a professional level and only carried out using official school systems.
- Model safe, responsible and professional behaviours in their own use of technology. This includes outside the school hours and site, and on social media, in all aspects upholding the reputation of the school and of the professional reputation of all staff. More guidance on this point can be found in this [Online Reputation](#) guidance for schools.

**From our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy: (see full policy for further details)**

### **What staff should do if they have concerns about another staff member - 'low level concerns'**

If staff have concerns about another staff member, then this should be referred to the DSL. Where there are concerns about the Head, this should be referred to the Chair of Governors. In the event of allegations of abuse being made against the Head, staff are referred to the procedures below regarding managing allegations of abuse against staff (including volunteers) and refer the matter directly to the designated officer(s) for Greenwich. Please refer to the Low-Level Concerns Policy for greater guidance.

### **What staff should do if they have concerns about safeguarding practices in the school**

The School aims to ensure there is a culture of safety and raising concerns and an attitude of 'it could happen here'. Where staff have concerns about poor or unsafe practices and potential failures in the school's safeguarding systems, these should be raised in accordance with the school's whistleblowing procedures which can be found in the Whistleblowing Policy. There will be no disciplinary action taken against a member of staff for making such a report provided that it is done in good faith.

If staff and volunteers feel unable to raise an issue with the school or feel that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, they may use other whistleblowing channels, such as the NSPCC whistleblowing advice line. Contact details for the NSPCC helpline can be found on the Key Contacts page at the start of this policy.

## **RELATED POLICIES**

These policies are available upon request from the Headmaster's EA.:

Safer Recruitment Policy  
Alcohol and Illegal Drugs Policy  
ICT Acceptable Use Policy  
E-Safety Policy  
Positive Handling Policy  
First Aid Policy  
Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy  
Harmful and Abusive Behaviours (Anti-bullying) Policy  
Anti-Racism Policy  
Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy  
Low Level Concerns Policy

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