



## POLICY:

# STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT

### Policy Statement

This policy sets out clear guidance on the standards of behaviour expected from all staff (as defined below) at the school and applies to **all** staff and volunteers working at the school regardless of their position, role or responsibility.

References to “staff” throughout this policy relate to all of the following groups:

- all members of staff including teaching and support staff;
- governors;
- volunteers;
- casual workers;
- contractors;
- temporary and supply staff, either from agencies or engaged directly; and
- work experience and student placements, including those undertaking initial teacher training and apprentices.

The principles underlying the guidance aim to encourage staff to achieve the highest possible standards of conduct (including online) in order to keep children safe and minimise the risk of any inappropriate conduct occurring. The professional working relationships of members of staff should be positive, supportive and characterised by mutual respect, as should all staff interactions with pupils and parents.

All members of staff have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people. Staff are in a unique position of trust and influence as role models for pupils and must adhere to behaviour that sets a good example to all pupils within the school. Staff also have an individual responsibility to maintain their reputation and the reputation of the school, both inside and outside working hours and whether they are inside or outside the work setting. This policy therefore applies equally when staff are conducting lessons online or when it is necessary for them to work from home.

On joining, and at the start of every academic year thereafter, all staff will be asked to read and acknowledge their acceptance to comply to this policy and confirm that there are no reasons why they should not be working with children (e.g. that they have not had criminal convictions since their last DBS check). Breach or failure to observe this policy may bring into question staff’s suitability to work with children and young people and may result in action been taken under the school’s disciplinary procedures including, but not limited to, dismissal.

This staff code of conduct is not an exhaustive list of acceptable and unacceptable standards of behaviour. In situations where guidance does not exist in this policy, staff are expected to exercise their professional judgement and act in the best interests of the pupils and the school.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following related policies and procedures:

- safeguarding policy (including child on child abuse and low level concerns)
- equal opportunities and anti-harassment and bullying policy
- equal opportunities for pupils
- technology acceptable usage policy and procedure for staff
- social media policy
- health and safety policy
- whistleblowing policy
- behaviour policies (Senior and Prep/Pre-Prep)
- Keeping children safe in education 2023
- Preventing extremism and radicalisation policy

Staff should ensure that they have read and are familiar with these policies and procedures.

Staff are required to read and understand Part One and Annex A of the statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (KCSiE - September 2023), and confirm that they have done so.

## Professional behaviour and conduct

All staff are expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct. All staff must uphold public trust in their professional position and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside the school, by:

- treating children with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to their professional position;
- having regard for the need to safeguard children's well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions;
- showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others not undermining fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs;
- ensuring that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways which exploit children's vulnerability or might lead them to break the law;
- All staff must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they work and teach, and maintain high standards in their own attendance and punctuality;
- All staff must have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities;
- All staff should avoid any conflict of interest between activities undertaken outside school and responsibilities within school.

Allegations against staff (including supply staff, volunteers, contractors and any adult working with children) will be dealt with in accordance with the safeguarding policy. Staff need to be aware that in accordance with KCSiE 2023, schools must also manage low level concerns.

## Safeguarding

For procedures for dealing with allegations or concerns about a child or disclosures/allegations of abuse, staff should refer to the school's safeguarding policy.

## Low-level concerns

As part of our whole school approach to safeguarding, we promote an open and transparent culture in all concerns about adults working in or on behalf of the School are dealt with promptly and appropriately. This includes any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' - that an adult working in or on behalf of the school may have acted in a way that:

- is inconsistent with this Staff Behaviour Policy, including inappropriate conduct outside of work; and
- does not meet the harm threshold set out in Part 4 of the statutory guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE), or is otherwise not serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

Such allegations or concerns are referred to as "low-level concerns" within KCSiE. The term "low-level" does not mean that it is insignificant. Such behaviour can exist on a wide spectrum, from the inadvertent or thoughtless, or behaviour that may look to be inappropriate, but might not be in specific circumstances, through to that which is ultimately intended to enable abuse.

Staff should be encouraged and feel confident to self-refer, where, for example, they have found themselves in a situation which could be misinterpreted, might appear compromising to others, and/or on reflection they believe they have behaved in such a way that they consider falls below the expected professional standards.

Low-level concerns should be recorded in writing. The record will include details of the concern, the context within which the concern arose, and details of the action taken. The name of the reporting individual should also be included, unless they have asked to remain anonymous, which will be respected as far as reasonably possible. The records will be kept confidential, will be held securely and in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK GDPR at all times.

Staff are expected to act in accordance with the school's policies and procedures at all times. Please see safeguarding policy for more information.

In order to create and embed a culture of openness, trust and transparency in which the school's values and expected behaviour set out in this staff behaviour policy are lived, monitored and reinforced constantly by all staff, it is vital that any such low-level concerns are shared in accordance with the school's low-level concerns section in the safeguarding policy (section 11).

Any questions regarding low-level concerns and/or the procedure for reporting them should be raised with the DSL and/or Head.

## **Attendance and timekeeping**

Should you need to be absent or expect to be late for any reason, you should ask your Head of Department in advance when possible. If this is not possible, please contact your Head of Department at the earliest opportunity.

## **Eating and drinking**

Eating and drinking should be confined to staff rooms and is not permitted in lessons. Food and drinks are not allowed at all in specific areas including the sports hall and gym (unless designated as a dining area at certain times), the music school teaching rooms, the main staircase (green stairs), library, inner and outer halls of the mansion.

## **Smoking**

To promote a healthy and pleasant working environment and because of the fire risk, smoking (in any form, including the use of vapes and e-cigarettes) is not allowed anywhere on site or within any of the school's vehicles. You must not smoke on school premises or outside school gates or fences. Any member of staff wishing to smoke must leave the school grounds and immediate boundaries. You must not smoke whilst working with or supervising pupils off-site.

## **Alcohol and illegal drugs**

Consumption of alcohol is not permitted on site, save where at a school function or as otherwise agreed when modest amounts of alcohol may be consumed. Consumption of illegal drugs is never permitted.

Your conduct and performance must not be adversely impacted at any time by alcohol or drugs when undertaking your duties, including whilst on school trips. Staff that reside on site may consume modest quantities of alcohol in private accommodation when they are not on duty. All members of staff are expected to convey that they do not in any way encourage or condone the abuse or misuse of alcohol or drugs.

## **Security**

In the interests of safeguarding and security, all staff and visitors must carry their ID badge and ensure it is clearly visible at all times whilst on the school site. In the interests of safeguarding and protecting children, staff should feel able to challenge any adult they see on site who is not wearing an ID badge and escort them to reception if necessary. You must not remove any school documents from the site or take any photographs without due permission. The school reserves the right to search the outer clothing, bags, lockers and vehicles etc. of employees whilst on site. Staff may have a colleague in attendance on such occasions.

## **Health and safety**

All staff have a duty to ensure that a safe working environment exists under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974. Fire and evacuation procedures must be adhered to at all times and staff are required to familiarise themselves with the procedures and their responsibilities set out in the health and safety policy.

## **Personal appearance**

Staff are role models for the pupils and the school regularly receives visits from parents, potential parents and others, and naturally wish to convey an impression of professionalism and organisation. Therefore, whilst not wishing to impose unreasonable obligations, staff are, nonetheless, required to look smart and business-like in appearance at all times, as appropriate to their role. The dress code guide for staff mirrors the sixth form dress code – this is available in the senior school parent handbook or on the staff portal under Policies & Procedures DFE Standard 3. Tattoos and piercings must be covered while at work. Political or contentious slogans on clothing are not permitted. Any member of staff who has

concerns about appropriate dress is expected to raise these initially with his/her line manager and vice versa. Final decisions about the appropriateness of dress in any individual case are ultimately at the discretion of the headmaster.

When working either from home or remotely (including the delivery of online lessons, or virtual meetings using a virtual meeting platform such as Google Meet, Zoom (or similar), staff must ensure they are dressed appropriately in clothing that is smart and of a similar style to what they would wear on a normal school day. Staff should also consider the background behind them and consider using a blurred or alternative image.

Uniforms are provided for some positions and personal protective clothing issued as required. It is your duty to inform your Line Manager if any item of personal protective clothing is inadequate.

## **Mobility and flexibility**

Due to the demands and nature of the school, employees should be prepared to transfer upon request within departments either temporarily or permanently and/or to undertake work of a different nature, providing it is reasonable and safe to do so and the individual is adequately trained. This may include working from home, if appropriate, and in the sole discretion of the school.

## **Gifts, rewards and favours**

Staff should take care to ensure that they do not appear to accept a gift that may be construed as a bribe or lead the giver to expect preferential treatment. Staff are required to familiarise themselves with the content of the school's conflicts of interest policy which requires disclosure of gifts in excess of the de minimis limit of £250 p.a.

Staff should exercise care when selecting pupils for school teams, productions, trips and/or specific work tasks in order to avoid perceptions of favouritism or injustice. Similar care should be exercised when pupils are excluded from an activity without prior consultation with the head or the deputy head.

Staff should not give presents/rewards to an individual outside of the school reward system.

## **Communication**

Good communication between all members of the school community is vital. All communication between staff, pupils and parents should take place within clear, explicit and professional boundaries.

### **Communication with parents**

Heads of house, heads of Y12/sixth form and/or form tutors are expected to be the first point of contact between parents and the school, although enquiries will also come through the school office. Staff can contact parents by telephone, email or letter. Google Meet/Microsoft Teams can also be used with prior agreement. Staff should not contact pupils, parents or conduct any school business using personal email addresses or personal telephone numbers.

Where a member of staff receives an email from a parent, a reply should normally be made within one working day. If a full reply cannot be made within that time, the member of staff should send a brief acknowledgment email and let the parent know when a fuller reply can be expected.

Staff sending emails to parents/carers are advised to send a copy (cc or bcc) to the head, the deputy head, the pastoral/line manager or the class teacher/tutor.

Staff must inform the head, senior deputy head and their line manager if they receive an offensive email.

Staff are required to record relevant communications with parents on the school's secure notes system (CPOMS). Members of staff who are friends with parents, guardians or carers of pupils, may have contact with those pupils outside school. However, if in communication with pupils in this context, members of staff should still respect the advice in this policy. Staff should ensure they maintain a professional image and avoid discussing school business or gossip.

## Communication with pupils

Staff should not seek to establish social contact with pupils for the purpose of securing a personal friendship. Staff should carefully consider the manner in which they communicate with pupils at all times so as to avoid any possible misinterpretation of their motives or behaviours. All communications should be transparent and open to scrutiny so that cannot be misconstrued as grooming.

Staff must not give share any personal details (personal mobile phone/home numbers, personal email, social media handles) with pupils, nor should they communicate with them by social media, text message or personal email. 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. Any communication on video call platforms, such as Google Meet, Microsoft Teams or Zoom, must be for professional reasons only and should accord with the rules of this policy at all times.

The group leader on all trips and visits involving an overnight stay should take a school mobile phone with him/her 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.

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 a member of the pastoral team.

Staff may send cards or messages to express congratulations. It is important that these messages are routine, appropriate, consistent and maintain professional standards.

## Duty of care

All staff have a duty to keep young people safe and to protect them from sexual, physical and emotional harm. Children have a right to be safe and treated with respect and dignity. Staff are expected to take reasonable steps to ensure the safety and wellbeing of pupils. Failure to do so may be regarded as professional neglect.

The duty of care is, in part, exercised through the development of respectful, caring and professional relationships between staff and pupils and behaviour by staff that demonstrates integrity, maturity and good judgement.

## Relationships with pupils

Staff should understand that they are in a position of trust in relation to pupils, giving them influence and power by virtue of the knowledge they have and/or the authority invested in their role. A relationship between a member of staff and a pupil cannot be a relationship between equals. There is a potential for exploitation and harm of vulnerable young people and staff have a responsibility to ensure that an unequal balance of power is not used for personal advantage or gratification. Staff should ensure that their relationship with pupils clearly takes place within the boundaries of a respectful, professional relationship and avoid behaviour which may be misinterpreted by others.

Staff are encouraged to self-refer under the school's low-level concerns policy (see safeguarding policy – section 11) in the event that they have found themselves in a situation which may be misinterpreted, might appear compromising to others, and/or on reflection they believe they have behaved in a way that may be considered to fall below the expected professional standard. All concerns will be handled sensitively and will be dealt with appropriately and proportionately.

Staff are reminded that it is a criminal offence for a person aged 18 or over to have a sexual relationship with a child under 18 where that person is in a position of power, even if the child is over 16 and the relationship is consensual.

## Infatuations

On occasion, pupils may develop an infatuation for a member of staff. If a member of staff suspects or becomes aware of an infatuation, the advice of the head or deputy head must be sought immediately. Other members of staff must alert a colleague to the possibility of an infatuation in order that appropriate steps can be taken. Staff should deal with these situations sensitively and appropriately to maintain the dignity and safety of all concerned.

## One to one situations

Staff working individually with pupils should be aware of the potential vulnerability of pupils and staff in such situations. Staff should manage these situations and take reasonable and sensible precautions to ensure the safety and security of the pupil and staff alike.

Individual work with pupils should not be undertaken in isolated areas, behind a closed door or rooms where there is no external viewing panel. Where it is necessary to close doors for reasons of confidentiality a colleague should be made aware of this and asked to remain vigilant. Wherever possible, one to one work should only be undertaken with the knowledge and consent of a senior member of staff to minimise risk to those involved.

Where it is necessary to conduct a one-to-one session online, staff must ensure that a senior member of staff is aware of the sessions and, wherever possible, arrange for a parent to be in the same room, or alternatively ask a colleague or a member of SMT to join the session.

Where possible, a gap or barrier should be maintained between teacher and child at all times. Any physical contact should be the minimum required for care, instruction or restraint and reported to the DSL.

## Physical contact with pupils

There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate for staff to have physical contact with pupils, but it is crucial that they only do so in ways appropriate to their professional role. When physical contact is made with pupils such contact should be in response to their needs at the time, of limited duration, and appropriate given their age, stage of development, gender and background. Physical contact may be appropriate in the following circumstances:

- when a pupil needs to get comfort or reassurance e.g., following an accident or personal crisis;
- when a pupil needs encouragement to attempt a new challenge e.g., to climb on to a piece of apparatus; or
- when there is a need to take urgent action to avoid an incident or injury.

It is not possible to be exact about the appropriateness of each occurrence of physical contact, since an action that is appropriate with one child in one set of circumstances may be inappropriate in another, or with a different child. In assessing whether physical contact with a pupil is appropriate staff should use their professional judgement at all times and ensure that the touch is an exception and never for the staff member's own need. Physical contact must be appropriate for the age, understanding and sex of the child and must never threaten or be sexually inappropriate.

Staff should:

- be aware that even well-meaning contact may be misconstrued by the pupil, an observer or anyone to whom the action is described;
- never touch the pupil in a way which may be considered indecent;
- always be prepared to explain their actions and accept that all physical contact be open to scrutiny;
- never indulge in horseplay, tickling or fun fights.

Staff must seek the pupil's permission before initiating contact. Staff must observe and take note of the pupil's reaction or feelings and use a level of contact which is acceptable to the pupil for the minimum time necessary.

Staff must also be sensitive to an individual's cultural background and any special educational needs. Extra caution should be exercised where a child is known to have suffered previous abuse or neglect.

Physical contact must never be secretive, for the gratification of the adult or abuse a position of trust. If a member of staff believes an action could be misinterpreted, the incident and circumstances should be recorded as soon as possible and reported to the DSL.

The use of physical intervention should, whenever possible be avoided. However, staff may use reasonable force to prevent pupils from hurting themselves or others, from damaging property or causing disorder. When used, it should be undertaken in such a way that maintains the safety and dignity of all concerned. The scale and nature of the intervention must be proportionate to the behaviour and nature of the harm that may be caused. Staff should report any cases of physical intervention to the DSL as soon as possible.

Staff supervising PE and games or providing musical tuition should demonstrate the use of a particular piece of equipment/instrument on another member of staff if possible. However, they may be required to initiate physical contact

to support a child to perform a task safely or to assist them. Contact under these circumstances must be done with the pupil's agreement, for the minimum time necessary and in an open environment.

Staff are referred to the school's behaviour and safeguarding policies for guidance on the use of reasonable force in relation to pupils.

## Prevent Duty

All Staff should understand that the school has a legal duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 to have 'due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism'. This is known as the Prevent duty. Schools are required to assess the risk of children being drawn into terrorism, including support for extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology. Consequently, Staff should be aware of:

- what extremism and radicalisation means and why people - including pupils and fellow staff members - may be vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism as a consequence of it;
- what measures are available to prevent people from becoming drawn into terrorism and how to challenge the extremist ideology that can be associated with it; and
- how to obtain support for people who may be being exploited by radicalising influences.

more guidance for schools from the DfE on this can be found at:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/439598/prevent-duty-departmental-advice-v6.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/439598/prevent-duty-departmental-advice-v6.pdf)].

## Transporting pupils

In certain circumstances it may be appropriate for staff to transport pupils offsite on approved school business. The head or deputy/assistant head must oversee the plan and provide oversight of all transport arrangements. Staff should not transport pupils without prior authorisation other than in the case of an emergency.

Staff should ensure that the driver is not distracted while the vehicle is in motion for any reason other than an emergency and should also ensure all passengers are wearing correctly fastened seat belts.

Staff should not behave in an illegal or unsafe manner e.g., exceeding the speed limit, being under the influence of drugs or alcohol or using a mobile phone. Please refer to the *Drivers' Code of Practice* for fuller guidance.

Prior to transporting pupils offsite, consent must be obtained from a pupil's parent/guardian and staff should be aware that the safety and welfare of the pupils is their responsibility until they are safely passed back to their parent/carer.

Staff should never be alone in a vehicle with a pupil, except in cases of an emergency.

In exceptional circumstances it may be necessary, in emergencies, for staff to convey pupils in their private vehicles. Wherever possible and practicable it is advisable that transport is undertaken other than in private vehicles, with at least one adult in addition to the driver acting as an escort. Children should sit on the back seat. Parental consent should be sought before a child is transported by a member of staff and a member of KLT consulted. The use of a private vehicle should be referred to the DSL.

Where a private vehicle is used, staff should ensure it is roadworthy, appropriately insured, with an up-to-date MOT and that the maximum capacity is not exceeded.

It is a legal requirement that all passengers should wear seatbelts and it is the responsibility of the staff member to ensure that this requirement is met. Where adults transport children in a vehicle which requires a specialist licence/insurance e.g., PCV or LGV, staff should ensure they have an appropriate licence to drive such a vehicle. Staff wishing to drive the school minibus must take the school's minibus test.

## Contact with pupils out of school

Staff should not:

- arrange meetings with pupils off the school premises (whether in person or online) without the prior approval of the head;

- arrange private tuition of any of the school's pupils in school or outside of school whether in term-time or outside of term-time without the prior written approval of the head (see private tuition policy); and
- give pupils their home address or any of their personal contact details.

## Acceptable use of technologies

Staff should ensure that they establish safe and responsible online behaviours and are familiar with and comply with the school's technology acceptable usage policy and procedure for staff policy and also the technology acceptable usage policy and procedure for pupils and parents policy at all times. In particular, staff must:

- be especially careful that any publicly available profile of themselves befits their role in the school and should avoid using social media in a way which could compromise suitability to work in a position of trust with children;
- not engage in inappropriate use of social network sites which may bring themselves, the school or the school community into disrepute;
- adopt the highest security settings on any personal profiles they have;
- remain mindful of their digital footprint and exercise caution in all their use of social media or any other web-based presence they have - this includes written content, videos or photographs and views expressed either directly or by 'liking' certain pages or posts or following certain individuals or groups;
- regularly review security settings and the level of public access to personal social media accounts and consider a possible pseudonym profile.
- exercise care when using dating websites where staff could encounter students; and
- not make contact with pupils, their guardians or family members, accept or initiate friend requests or follow pupils' or their guardians' accounts on any social media platform.

## Equal treatment

We are committed to equal treatment for all staff and pupils regardless of their race or colour, nationality or national or ethnic origins, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, marital or civil partnership status, gender reassignment, age, and disability (together known as "Protected Characteristics").

We aim to create a friendly, caring and professional environment in which every individual is valued. We endeavour to contribute positively towards the growing autonomy, self-esteem and safety of each pupil. Staff will be required to undertake regular consultation activities with pupils e.g., through safety questionnaires, participation in anti-bullying week and speaking to children about their experiences at lunchtime and playtimes.

Bullying, harassment, victimisation and/or discrimination will not be tolerated. This school has a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment, including online. We treat all our pupils and their parents fairly and with consideration which we expect them to reciprocate towards each other, the staff and the school. Staff should ensure that they are familiar with the school's policies - equal opportunities and anti-harassment and bullying policy for staff and equal opportunities for pupils.

## Photographs

Many school activities involve recording images as part of the curriculum, extra school activities, publicity or to celebrate an achievement. In accordance with data protection legislation, the image of a pupil is personal data. All images of children should be stored securely and only accessed by those authorised to do so.

Photographs must only be taken of children with the permission of a parent or an individual with parental responsibility. Such consent must have been provided in writing via the school's acceptance form on entry to the school. It is also important to consider the wishes of the pupil, remembering that some pupils do not wish to have their photograph taken or be filmed.

Where photographs are taken by staff to evidence a child's progress, such photos should only be taken on school cameras. They must then be downloaded onto a school computer. Photographs cannot be used or passed on outside the school. Neither staff nor children should use their own mobile phones to take photographs.



## **Business ethics**

Staff must always seek to uphold and enhance the standing of the school and should never use their authority or office for personal, financial or other gain.

Proper care should be taken of school property.

School premises and equipment must not be used to carry out any work or activity other than pursuant to terms and conditions of employment.

Although a close and co-operative relationship with a supplier is often mutually beneficial, impartiality must be maintained, and fair competition should not be compromised.

You must not make excessive personal use of the school telephone, email or internet facilities without prior permission except in an emergency.

## **Confidentiality and data protection**

Staff may have access to personal details about pupils and their families in order to undertake their everyday responsibilities. In some circumstances, staff may be given highly sensitive or private information and staff should have particular regard for the need for security and confidentiality in these cases. Information must never be used to intimidate, humiliate or embarrass the pupil. 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. Particular care must be taken when discussing pupils around the school.

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.

## **Showers and changing**

Young people are entitled to respect and privacy when changing or showering. However, there needs to be an appropriate level of supervision in order to safeguard young people, satisfy health and safety considerations and ensure that bullying or teasing does not occur. This supervision should be appropriate to the needs and age of the young people concerned and sensitive to the potential for embarrassment.

Staff therefore need to be vigilant about their own behaviour and be mindful of the needs of the pupils.

## **Educational visits and after school activities**

Staff should take particular care when supervising pupils in the less formal atmosphere such as an after school activity. Adults remain in a position of trust and need to ensure that their behaviour remains professional at all times and stays within clearly defined professional boundaries.

Where out of school activities include overnight stays, careful consideration needs to be given to sleeping arrangements. Pupils, staff and parents should be informed of these prior to the start of the trip. In all circumstances, those organising trips and outings must pay careful attention to ensure safe staff/child ratios and to the gender mix of staff especially on overnight stays.

When organising a trip, staff will need to consider safeguarding as a matter of priority. Any people accompanying an overnight trip aged 16 and over as a volunteer helper must have all safeguarding checks in place. In particular overnight trips where external trainers are being used, staff should check with the organisation delivering the programme that their staff satisfy safeguarding criteria. This may not be possible when running overseas trips but all adults accompanying must be vigilant and ensure that adequate supervision is in place. Any safeguarding concerns should be raised with the DSL. Staff should respect the advice in this policy when supervising overnight visits.

## Parents as employees

Some staff also have children who attend the school. It is recognised that in these cases the staff fulfil a dual role of parent and employee. There are many advantages to having children attending school where you work but it can also bring some challenges, for example as a member of staff you will be privy to a wealth of information and data which parents cannot access quite so readily. You will also have relationships with the colleagues you work with, who are also your son/daughter's teacher. This can quite easily lead to a conflict of interest and where possible, it is helpful to observe the following guidelines.

Staff-parents should raise any concerns in the usual way and should not expect colleagues to answer concerns about their child, for example, while they are having lunch, or a break in the staff room. Conversely, teaching staff should not raise concerns with a colleague who is also a parent informally, they should make contact through email, or a call, asking for an appointment to talk or to meet. This helps to keep the boundaries between the role of parent and the role of staff clear for all.

Parents as employees should ensure that they uphold boundaries between the two roles and that their behaviour does not constitute a conflict of interest. For example, they must maintain the same level of confidentiality despite social expectations. Parent-staff should discuss any inter-role conflict with their line manager.

Through being parent-staff, they may have contact with pupils at the school within their own home (meals, sleepovers, parties) or in everyday situations such as giving a lift to pupils in their car as a result of their children's friendships. These are considered entirely normal acts of parenting, and it is logistically unrealistic to expect staff members to alert the safeguarding team every time they are going to have contact with a pupil (i.e., a friend of their son or daughter) outside of the school context. Common sense should apply – whilst we would not expect staff members to inform us of such situations, it would be wise to follow normal safeguarding principles, such as:

- Not being in a 1-to-1 situation alone with that child, if possible;
- Maintaining good and open communication with the child's parent/s;
- Adapting behaviour/dress if necessary, just as would be considered normal when having a guest in the home;
- Informing the DSL/safeguarding team as a matter of urgency of any situation which may have been/may be uncomfortable/ compromising or inappropriate.

## Overnight Stays/Sleepovers

Although we do not require staff to alert us when a pupil (friend of their child) is staying overnight with them, it may be wise to do so to demonstrate that safeguarding the pupils remains a priority for the staff member in those situations.

Staff members have been trained in safeguarding and should follow normal procedures if they have a concern about the welfare or safety of a child. This is probably the most important principle of all; there have been instances in other schools when staff members chose to deal with a situation 'as a parent' or tried to resolve a concern themselves 'among the parents', rather than alerting the DSL and/or the local children's services to a concern. The training staff members have received should be used regardless of whether they become aware of a concern in school or at home/outside of school.

In the event of a staff member being made aware in their capacity as a parent of abuse or suspicion of abuse, the DSL/local authority/ police MUST be informed in the normal way and within the normal timeframes.

## Behaviour Management

All pupils have a right to be treated with respect and dignity, even in circumstances where they display difficult and challenging behaviour. Corporal punishment is unlawful in all schools. Staff should not use any form of degrading treatment to punish a child. Whilst the use of humour can help diffuse a situation, the use of demeaning or insensitive comments towards pupils is not acceptable in any situation.

Please refer to the Behaviour Policies for further guidance.

## Curriculum

Some areas of the curriculum can include or raise subject matter which is sexually explicit or of an otherwise sensitive nature (e.g. depression, self-harm, eating disorders, domestic violence, bullying etc.). Care should be taken to ensure that resource materials cannot be misinterpreted and clearly relate to the learning outcomes identified when planning lessons. The plan should highlight particular areas of risk and sensitivity.

The curriculum will sometimes include or lead to unplanned discussions about subject matter of a sensitive nature. Responding to pupils' questions will require careful judgement and staff should take guidance from senior staff before delivering lessons with this potential.

Be aware that such discussions might affect particular pupils more than others (for example, if a pupil has suffered a related traumatic incident). Where a discussion has caused discomfort, report the discussion to the DSL as soon as possible.

## **Concerns or complaints**

The school aims to create an atmosphere in which a diverse range of people can work together openly in a spirit of mutual respect and trust towards a common purpose. Nevertheless, we recognise that it is possible for misunderstandings and disagreements to arise or for mistakes to occur.

## **Staff complaints**

Complaints should be dealt with immediately and openly and staff should always try to resolve issues informally in the first instance. If this approach is impractical or unsuccessful, staff should then speak to the HR department. Staff may thereafter wish to raise their concerns more formally in accordance with the school's grievance procedure or whistleblowing procedure, depending on the nature of the concern.

## **Whistleblowing**

Whistleblowing is the mechanism by which staff can voice their concerns without fear of repercussion. The school has a whistleblowing policy which enables members of staff to raise legitimate concerns regarding suspected malpractice within the school.

Staff should be aware of their individual responsibilities to bring matters of concern to the attention of the Key Leadership Team and/or relevant external agencies, especially where the welfare of children may be at risk. Please see the Whistleblowing Policy for further information.

## **Parental complaints**

Staff must ensure that parental complaints are dealt with in accordance with the school's complaints policy.

## ONGOING DUTY OF DISCLOSURE FORM (to be submitted as a Google form)

All staff are required to complete this form relating to safeguarding circumstances at the start of the new academic year and at any time that their circumstances change. Should you have any queries about any of the information required or if you wish to discuss any aspects of this further please do contact HR on a confidential basis.

The questions require you to declare if there have been any changes since your last declaration – please complete the form even where you have previously informed the school. For most, the last time you made a declaration will be when you were employed by the School.

This duty of disclosure form will be issued annually at the start of each academic year.

If you answer “Yes” to any of the questions below, the head of HR and DSL will be made aware; please feel free to talk directly to them.

### Criminal records:

Since the date of you last self-declaration,

Have you been prosecuted for, received a caution for, or been convicted of, any criminal offence whether in the United Kingdom or in another country? You must disclose all spent and unspent convictions. However, you are not required to disclose a spent caution or conviction for an offence committed in the United Kingdom which is protected under the DBS filtering rules		
Is there any relevant court action pending against you?		

### Sanctions, restrictions and prohibitions:

Since the date of you last self-declaration,

Are you barred from working with children?		
Are you prohibited from teaching?		
Are you the subject of a sanction, restriction or prohibition issued by the Teaching Regulation Agency, any predecessor or equivalent body in England or a regulator of the teaching profession in any other country?		
Have you been the subject of a referral to the Teaching Regulation Agency, any predecessor or equivalent body in England or a regulator of the teaching profession in any other county?		
Have you attended a hearing before a professional conduct panel where consideration was given to imposing on you a sanction, prohibition or restriction which would restrict or prevent you from carrying out teaching work, whether in England or any other country?		
Are you or the subject of a direction under section 128 of the Education and Skills Act 2008 which prohibits, disqualifies or restricts you from being involved in the management of an independent school (section 128 direction)?		
Have you been the subject of a referral to the Department for Education, or any predecessor body, so that consideration could be given to imposing a section 128 direction on you?		

Have you been the subject of a direction under section 142 of the Education Act 2002 which prohibits you from teaching, working regularly with children or from being involved in the management of an independent school?		
Are you known to the police and / or children's social care? If in any doubt, please speak to the DSL/Director of Safeguarding.		
Are you or have you ever been disqualified from providing childcare?		
<b>If you have answered "Yes" to any of the questions above the relevant DSL or Director of Safeguarding will be made aware</b>		

**Please complete the declaration below-**

I confirm that the information I have given on this form is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and that I have provided relevant information.

I understand that a failure to disclose information or the provision of false information, may result in disciplinary proceedings and may amount to a criminal offence.

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Data protection: You are required to provide the information requested in this form so that the School can meet its legal obligations in accordance with its Staff Privacy Notice.**