



Staff Behaviour Policy Code of Conduct

Mobile Phone Use

Staff must have their phones on 'silent' or switched off during class time. Staff may not make or receive calls during teaching time. If there are extreme circumstances the member of staff will have made the principal aware of this and can have their phone in case of having to receive an emergency call. Phones must be kept out of sight (eg. drawer, handbag, pocket) when staff are with students. Calls/texts must be made/received in private during non-contact time. Phones will never be used to take photographs of students or to store their personal data.

Staff should not give their personal mobile phone numbers or email addresses to students, nor should they communicate with them by text message or personal email. If they need to speak to a student by telephone, they should use one of the school's telephones and email using the school system.

The group leader on trips and visits involving an overnight stay should take a school mobile phone with them and may ask students for their mobile numbers before allowing them out in small, unsupervised groups. The school mobile should be used for any contact with students that may be necessary. The group leader will delete any record of students mobile phone numbers at the end of the trip and should ensure that student delete any staff numbers that they may have acquired during the trip.

Social Networking

Photographic material and/or video footage that includes students must NOT be taken using your personal equipment. Remember posts/tweets/blogs are an extension of the classroom - what is inappropriate in the classroom should be deemed inappropriate online.

Staff should only communicate with students through the school social media accounts and not through personal accounts. Staff are advised to ensure privacy settings of their personal social media accounts are restricted so only 'friends' can access. Any wall posts and descriptions should portray you in a professional

manner. Do not post personally identifiable student information and do not tag other staff without their permission. Under no circumstances should negative comments be made about students, parents/carers or other staff and any personal details of these people be posted.

Social Contact

Adults should not establish or seek to establish social contact with students for the purpose of securing a friendship or to pursue or strengthen a relationship. If a student or parent/carer seeks to establish social contact, or if this occurs coincidentally, the member of staff should exercise their professional judgement in making a response. There will be occasions when there are social contacts between students and staff, where for example the parent/carer and teacher are part of the same social circle. These contacts however, will be easily recognised and openly acknowledged.

Nevertheless, there must be awareness on the part of those working with students that some social contacts, especially where these are not common knowledge can be misconstrued as being part of a grooming process. This can also apply to social contacts made through outside interests or through the staff member's own family.

It is recognised that staff can support a parent/carer who may be in particular difficulty. Care needs to be exercised in those situations where the parent/carer comes to depend upon the staff member for support outside their professional role. This situation should be discussed with senior management and where necessary referrals made to the appropriate support agency.

This means that adults should:

1. have no secret social contact with students or their parents/carers
2. consider the appropriateness of the social contact according to their role and nature of their work
3. always approve any planned social contact with students or parents/carers with senior colleagues
4. advise senior management of any social contact they have with a student or a parent/carer with whom they work, which may give rise to concern.
5. report and record any situation, which may place a student at risk or which may compromise the school or your own professional standing
6. be aware that the sending of personal communications such as birthday or faith cards should always be recorded and/or discussed with senior management
7. understand that some communications may be called into question and need to be justified.

Physical Contact

There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate and proper for staff to have physical contact with students, but it is crucial that they only do so in ways appropriate to their professional role.

A 'no touch' approach is impractical for most staff and will in some circumstances be inappropriate. When physical contact is made with students this should be in response to their needs at the time, of limited duration and appropriate to their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background. Appropriate physical contact in schools will occur most often with younger students.

It is not possible to be specific about the appropriateness of each physical contact, since an action that is appropriate with one student in one set of circumstances may be inappropriate in another, or with a different student. Staff should therefore, use their professional judgement at all times.

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 in the school's incident book and if appropriate, a copy placed on the student's file.

Physical contact, which occurs regularly with an individual student, is likely to raise questions unless the justification for this is part of a formally agreed plan (for example in relation to students with SEN or physical disabilities). Any such contact should be the subject of an agreed and open school policy and subject to review. Where feasible, staff should seek the student's permission before initiating contact. Staff should listen, observe and take note of the student's reaction or feeling and – so far as it is possible – use a level of contact and/or form of communication which is acceptable to the student for the minimum time necessary.

The general culture of 'limited touch' should be adapted, where appropriate, to the individual requirements of each student. Students with special needs may require more physical contact to assist their everyday learning. The arrangements should be understood and agreed by all concerned, justified in terms of student's needs, consistently applied and open to scrutiny.

It is recognised that some students may seek inappropriate physical contact. Adults should be particularly aware of this especially when it is known that a student has suffered previous abuse or neglect. In the student's view, physical contact might be associated with such experiences and lead to some actions being misinterpreted. In all circumstances where a student initiates inappropriate physical contact, it is the responsibility of the adult to sensitively deter the student and help them understand the importance of personal boundaries. Such circumstances must always be reported and discussed with a senior manager and the parent/carer.

Pupils in Distress

There may be occasions when a distressed student needs comfort and reassurance and this may involve physical contact. Young students, in particular, may need immediate physical contact, for example after a fall, separation from parent/carer etc.

Adults should use their professional judgement to comfort or reassure a student in an age-appropriate way whilst maintaining clear professional boundaries.

Where an adult has a particular concern about the need to provide this type of care and reassurance, or is concerned that an action may be misinterpreted, this should be reported and discussed with a senior manager and parents/carers.

This means the adult should:

1. consider the way in which they offer comfort and reassurance to a distressed student and do it in an age appropriate way
2. be circumspect in offering reassurance in one to one situations, but always record such actions in these circumstances
3. follow professional guidance of code of practice
4. never touch a student in a way which may be considered indecent
5. record and report situations which may give rise to concern from either party
6. not assume that all students seek physical comfort if they are distressed.

Behaviour Management

All students have a right to be treated with respect and dignity even in those circumstances where they display difficult or challenging behaviour.

Adults should not use any form of degrading treatment to punish a student. The use of sarcasm, demeaning or insensitive comments towards a student is not acceptable in any situation. Any sanctions or rewards used should be part of a behaviour management policy, which is widely publicised and regularly reviewed.

The use of corporal punishment is not acceptable and is unlawful in schools. Whilst there may be a legal defence for parents who physically chastise their students, this does not extend, in any circumstances, to those adults who work with or on behalf of students.

Where students display difficult or challenging behaviour, adults must follow the behaviour policy outlined in the school and use strategies appropriate to the circumstance or situation. The use of physical intervention can only be justified in exceptional circumstances and must be used as a last resort when other behaviour management strategies have failed.

Where a student has specific needs in respect of particularly challenging behaviour, a positive handling plan may be drawn up and agreed by all parties. Only in these circumstances should an adult deviate from the behaviour management policy of the school.

This means that adults should:

1. not use force as a form of punishment
2. try to defuse situations before they escalate
3. inform parents of any behaviour management techniques used
4. adhere to the schools behaviour management policy

5. be mindful of factors which may impact upon a student's behaviour e.g. bullying, abuse and where necessary take appropriate action.

One-One Situations

Every organisation working with or on behalf of students should consider one to one situations when drawing up their policies. This includes schools and other education settings.

It is not realistic to state that one to one situations should never take place. It is however, appropriate to state that where there is a need, agreed with a senior manager and/or parents/carers, for an adult to be alone with a student, certain procedures and explicit safeguards must be in place. Adults should be offered training and guidance in the use of any areas of the workplace which may place themselves or students in vulnerable situations.

One to one situations have the potential to make a student more vulnerable to harm by those who seek to exploit their position of trust. Adults working in one to one settings with students may also be more vulnerable to unjust or unfounded allegations being made against them. Both possibilities should be recognised so that when one to one situations are unavoidable, reasonable and sensible precautions are taken. Every attempt should be made to ensure the safety and security of students and the adults who work with them.

There are occasions where managers will need to undertake a risk assessment in relation to the specific nature and implications of one to one work. These assessments should take into account the individual needs of the student and the individual worker and any arrangements should be reviewed on a regular basis.

Pre-arranged meetings with students away from the school premises should not be permitted unless approval is obtained from their parent/carer and the Headteacher or Chair of Trustees with delegated authority.

This means that adults should:

1. ensure that when lone working is an integral part of their role, full and appropriate risk assessments have been conducted and agreed
2. avoid meetings with a student in remote, secluded areas
3. always inform other colleagues and/or parents/carers about the contact beforehand, assessing the need to have them present or close by
4. avoid use of 'engaged' or equivalent signs wherever possible. Such signs may create an opportunity for secrecy
5. always report any situation where the student becomes distressed or angry to a senior colleague
6. carefully consider the needs and circumstances of the student when in one to one situations

Supervision while changing

Students are entitled to respect and privacy at all times and especially when in a state of undress, changing clothes, bathing or undertaking any form of personal care. There are occasions where there will be a need for an appropriate level of supervision in order to safeguard students and/or satisfy health and safety considerations. This supervision should be appropriate to the needs and age of the students concerned and sensitive to the potential for embarrassment. Adults need to be vigilant about their own behaviour, ensure they follow agreed guidelines and be mindful of the needs of the students with whom they work.

This means that adults should:

1. avoid any physical contact when students are in a state of undress
2. avoid any visually intrusive behaviour
3. where there are changing rooms announce their intention of entering.

This means that adults should not:

1. change in the same place as students
2. shower or bathe with students
3. assist with any personal care task which a student can undertake themselves.

Dress and Appearance

A person's dress and appearance are matters of personal choice and self-expression. However adults should dress in ways which are appropriate to their role and this may need to be different to how they dress when not at work. Adults who work with students should ensure they are dressed appropriately for the tasks and the work they undertake. Those who dress in a manner which should be considered as inappropriate could render themselves vulnerable to criticism or allegations.

This means that adults should wear clothing which:

1. is appropriate to their role
2. is not likely to be viewed as offensive, revealing or sexually provocative
3. does not distract, cause embarrassment or give rise to misunderstanding
4. is absent of any political or otherwise contentious slogans
5. is not considered to be discriminatory and is culturally sensitive.

Gifts, Rewards and Favouritism

All adults should be aware of their schools guidance on rewards including arrangements for the declaration of gifts received and given.

The giving of gifts or rewards to students should be part of an agreed policy for supporting positive behaviour or recognising particular achievements. In some situations, the giving of gifts as rewards may be accepted practice for a group of students, whilst in other situations the giving of a gift to an individual student will be part of an agreed plan, recorded and discussed with Headteacher, Chair of Trustees and the parent/carer.

It is acknowledged that there may be specific occasion when adult working with a student may consider it appropriate to give a student a small personal gift if insignificant value. This is only acceptable practice where, in line with the agreed policy, the adult has first discussed the giving of the gift and the reason for it, with the Headteacher, Chair of Trustees and the parent/carer and the action is recorded. Any gift should be given openly and not be based of favouritism. Adults need to be aware, however, that the giving of gifts can be misinterpreted by others as a gesture either to bribe or 'groom' a student.

Staff should exercise care when selecting students 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 students are excluded from an activity. Methods of selection and exclusion should always be subject to clear, agreed criteria.

Care should also be taken to ensure that adults do not accept any gift that might be constructed as a bribe by others, or lead the giver to expect preferential treatment. There are occasions when students or parents/carers wish to pass small tokens of appreciation to adults e.g. on special occasions or as a thank you and this acceptable. However, it is unacceptable to receive gifts on a regular basis or of any significant value.

This means that adults should:

1. be aware of the school's policy on the giving and receiving of gifts
2. ensure that gifts received or given in situations which may be misconstrued are declared
3. generally only give gifts to a student as part of an agreed reward system
4. where giving gifts other than as above, ensure that these are of insignificant value
5. ensure that all selection processes which concern students are fair and that wherever practicable these are undertaken and agreed by more than one member of staff.

Photography, video and creative arts

Working with students may involve taking or recording of images. Any such work should take place with due regard to the law and the need to safeguard the privacy, dignity, safety and well-being of students. Informed written consent from parents/carers and agreement, where possible, from the students, should always be sought before an image is taken for any purpose.

Careful consideration should be given as to how activities involving the taking of images are organised and undertaken. Care should be taken to ensure that all parties understand the implications of the image being taken especially if it is to be used for any publicity purposes or published in the media, or on the internet. There also needs to be an agreement as to whether the images will be destroyed or retained for further use, where these will be stored and who will have access to them.

Adults need to remain sensitive to any students who appear uncomfortable, for whatever reason, and should recognise the potential for such activities to raise concerns or lead to misunderstandings.

It is not appropriate for adults to take photographs of students for their personal use. It is recommended that when using a photograph the following guidance should be followed:

- if the photograph is used, avoid naming the student
- if the student is named, avoid using their photograph
- schools should establish whether the image will be retained for further use
- images should be securely stored and used only by those authorised to do so.

This means adults should:

1. be clear about the purpose of the activity and about what will happen to the images when the activity is concluded
2. be able to justify images of students in their possession
3. avoid making images in one to one situations or which show a single student with no surrounding context
4. ensure the students understands why the images are being taken and has agreed to the activity and that they are appropriately dressed
5. only use equipment provided or authorised by the school
6. report any concerns about any inappropriate or intrusive photographs found
7. always ensure they have parental/carer permission to take and/or display photographs.

This means adults should not:

1. display or distribute images of students unless they have consent to do so from parents/carers
2. use image which may cause distress
3. use mobile telephones or any other similar device to take images of students
4. take images 'in secret' or taking images in situations that may be construed as being secretive.

1. Authorised by: _____ Headteacher

Date: 22 September 2015

2. Authorised by: _____ Chair of Trustees

Date: 22 September 2015

Review Date: **September 2017**

