

Code of Conduct for Staff

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Code of conduct for staff

Purpose and application

1. **Purpose:** Relationships with fellow Staff, employees, governors, contractors, visitors, volunteers, pupils and their parents, guardians or carers should be reasonable and mutually respectful at all times. This Code has been produced to place the welfare of children at the centre of the School and its culture and to ensure that all those who work in the School and may have contact with children are clear on the rules of conduct and the expectations of the School. Children place trust in those connected to the School creating obligations which we must all meet to ensure the successful outcomes achieved by the children in our care.
2. This Code has regard to the School's Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy and Procedures and the following (collectively referred to in this Code as the **Guidance**):
 - 2.1. *Keeping children safe in education* (September 2023) (**KCSIE**):
 - 2.1.1. KCSIE also refers to the non-statutory advice for practitioners: *What to do if you're worried a child is being abused* (March 2015).
 - 2.2. *Working together to safeguard children* (July 2018, updated December 2020) (**WT**):
 - 2.2.1. WT refers to the non-statutory advice: *Information sharing* (July 2018).
 - 2.3. *Revised Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales* (April 2021) (**Prevent**). Prevent is supplemented by :
 - 2.3.1. *The Prevent duty: Departmental advice for schools and childminders* (June 2015);
 - 2.3.2. *Channel Duty Guidance: Protecting vulnerable people from being drawn into terrorism* (2015); and
 - 2.3.3. *The use of social media for online radicalisation* (February 2021).
 - 2.4. Guidance on mental health, to include:
 - 2.4.1. *Preventing and Tackling Bullying* (July 2017);
 - 2.4.2. *Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools* (November 2018); and
 - 2.4.3. *Promoting children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing* (March 2015).
 - 2.5. *Political impartiality in schools* (February 2022).
3. The purpose of the Code of Conduct is to:
 - 3.1. confirm and reinforce the professional responsibilities of all Staff
 - 3.2. clarify the legal position in relation to sensitive aspects of staff/pupil relationships and communication including the use of social media
 - 3.3. set out the expectations of standards and behaviour to be maintained within the School

- 3.4. help adults establish safe practices and reduce the risk of false accusations or improper conduct.
4. **Application:** The Code of Conduct (**Code**) applies to all staff working in the School (**School**) whether paid or unpaid whatever their position, role or responsibilities and Staff includes employees, governors, contractors and volunteers. Any query about the interpretation or application of the Code of Conduct in a general or specific context should be made to a member of the Senior Leadership Team.
5. **Your duty:** It is the contractual duty of every member of staff to observe the rules and obligations in this Code. You should also follow the Guidance. The School also has a duty of care to its staff, parents and pupils and the implementation of the practices in this Code of Conduct will help to discharge that duty.
6. **Wrongdoing:** All Staff are under a duty to report their own wrongdoing, or any wrongdoing or proposed wrongdoing of any other member of Staff or any conduct which they may suspect to be inappropriate. This duty applies even if the concern is no more than one which causes a sense of unease or a nagging doubt. Staff are under a duty to report suspected, known or proposed wrongdoing in conjunction with the School's policies including this Code of Conduct, the School's Safeguarding (Child Protection) policy, and the Whistleblowing policy contained within the Employment Handbook. This includes suspected, known or proposed wrongdoing brought to the attention of a member of Staff by a pupil, parent or other adult
7. **Duty of disclosure:** You are required immediately to notify the School if you are, as applicable:
 - 7.1. subject to any change in your circumstances that affects your right to work in the United Kingdom;
 - 7.2. barred from working with children or vulnerable adults;
 - 7.3. the subject of a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service or any successor body;
 - 7.4. the subject of a referral to, or a sanction, restriction or prohibition issued by, the Teaching Regulation Agency (previously the National College of Teaching and Leadership) or any predecessor or successor body, or by a regulator of the teaching profession in any other country;
 - 7.5. the subject of a referral to, or proceedings before, the Department for Education or any other appropriate authority where consideration is given to imposing a direction under section 128 of the Education and Skills Act 2008;
 - 7.6. disqualified from providing childcare in connection with early or later years provision or from being directly involved in its management pursuant to the Childcare Act 2006 and the Childcare (Disqualification) and Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlement) (Amendment) Regulations 2018;
 - 7.7. questioned, arrested, charged or convicted of any criminal offence;
 - 7.8. subject to an investigation for any allegation of a disciplinary nature at any other employer or organisation at which you are a volunteer;
 - 7.9. in receipt of a police caution, reprimand or warning, or if there is a formal child protection investigation of you or any member of your household; or

- 7.10. aware of any circumstances (whether related to you or anyone with whom you have an association) that may reasonably be considered to pose a risk or an increased risk to children.
8. ***Application with other policies:*** The Code should be read in conjunction with the School's Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy and Procedures and Whistleblowing Policy.

Guiding Principles

9. Principles for all staff

- 9.1. All Staff should put the wellbeing, development and progress of all pupils first by:
- 9.1.1. taking all reasonable steps to ensure the safety and wellbeing of pupils under their supervision;
 - 9.1.2. using professional expertise and judgement for the best interests of pupils in their care;
 - 9.1.3. demonstrating self-awareness and taking responsibility for their own actions and for providing help and support to pupils;
 - 9.1.4. raising concerns about the practices of teachers or other professionals where these may have a negative impact on pupils' learning or progress, or may put pupils at risk;
 - 9.1.5. being familiar with the School's Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy, the Behaviour Policy and associated child protection procedures;
 - 9.1.6. reading and understanding Part 1, and where appropriate Annex B, of KCSIE (September 2023);
 - 9.1.7. knowing the role, identity and contact details of the current Designated Safeguarding Lead, and any Deputies;
 - 9.1.8. knowing the role, identity and contact details of the Chair of Governors and the Nominated Safeguarding Governor (see the Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy);
 - 9.1.9. being aware that they are in a position of trust (ie the adult is in a position of power or influence over the pupil due to his or her work), that the relationship is not a relationship between equals and that this position must never be used to intimidate, bully, humiliate, coerce or threaten pupils.
- 9.2. All Staff should demonstrate respect for diversity and take steps to promote equality by:
- 9.2.1. acting appropriately and in accordance with this Code, towards all pupils, parents, guardians or carers and staff;
 - 9.2.2. complying with the School's Anti-bullying, Equal Opportunities and Dignity at Work policies and this Code of Conduct;
 - 9.2.3. not discriminating against others on the basis of protected characteristics, which include: race, sex, religion or belief, disability, sexual orientation, gender

reassignment, pregnancy or maternity and, for adults, age and marriage or civil partnership status;

- 9.2.4. addressing issues of discrimination and bullying whenever they arise and challenging discriminatory or extremist opinions or behaviours;
 - 9.2.5. taking reasonable steps to ensure that where political issues are brought to the attention of pupils, they offer pupils a balanced presentation of opposing views and do not promote partisan political views (see DfE guidance *Political impartiality in schools* (February 2022) for further guidance);
 - 9.2.6. helping to create a fair and inclusive School environment.
- 9.3. All Staff should work as part of a unified staff body by:
- 9.3.1. developing productive and supportive relationships with colleagues;
 - 9.3.2. exercising any management responsibilities in a respectful, inclusive and fair manner;
 - 9.3.3. complying with all School policies and procedures;
 - 9.3.4. participating in the School's development and improvement activities;
 - 9.3.5. recognising the role of the School in the life of the local community;
 - 9.3.6. upholding the School's reputation and standing within the local community and beyond and building trust and confidence in it.
- 9.4. All Staff should understand that the School has a legal duty to have regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism, and consequently should be aware of:
- 9.4.1. 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;
 - 9.4.2. 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
 - 9.4.3. how to obtain support for people who may be being exploited by radicalising influences.
- 9.5. All Staff should maintain public trust and confidence in the School and in their profession by:
- 9.5.1. demonstrating honesty and integrity;
 - 9.5.2. understanding and upholding their duty to safeguard the welfare of children and young people;
 - 9.5.3. understanding and demonstrating fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs;

- 9.5.4. maintaining reasonable standards of behaviour whether inside or outside of normal School hours and whether on or off the School's site; and
- 9.5.5. maintaining an effective learning environment.
- 9.6. All Staff should raise any concerns relating to so-called 'honour'-based abuse (to include female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage) with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and involve children's social care as appropriate in accordance with the School's Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy and procedures. Teachers must also report directly to the police cases where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that an act of female genital mutilation appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18. The report should be made orally by calling 101, the single non-emergency number. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining pupils but any such cases must be reported.
- 9.7. All Staff should know what to do if a child tells them that they are being abused, exploited or neglected. Staff should know how to manage the requirement to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality. This means only involving those who need to be involved, such as the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy) and children's social care. Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of any form of abuse, as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child.
- 9.8. All Staff should be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the School and/or can occur between children outside of the School environment. All Staff, but especially the Designated Safeguarding Lead (and deputies) should consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, and serious youth violence.
- 9.9. All Staff should also be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Staff however, are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one. It is key that staff are aware of how experiences such as abuse, neglect or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences can impact on a child's mental health, behaviour and education. If Staff have a concern about the mental health of a child which is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, following the School's child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures.
- 9.10. All staff should be able to reassure victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

10. Additional Principles for Teaching Staff

- 10.1. Teachers should take responsibility for maintaining the quality of their teaching practice by:
- 10.1.1. meeting the professional standards for teaching applicable to their role, responsibilities and position within the School;

- 10.1.2. reflecting on their current practice and seeking out opportunities to develop knowledge, understanding and skills;
- 10.1.3. helping pupils to become confident and successful learners;
- 10.1.4. establishing productive relationships with parents, guardians or carers by:
 - (a) providing accessible and accurate information about their child's progress;
 - (b) involving them in important decisions about their child's education;
 - (c) complying with this Code.

11. General Conduct

- 11.1. **School property:** You must take proper care when using School property and you must not use School property for any unauthorised use or for private gain.
- 11.2. **Use of premises:** You must not carry out any work or activity on School premises other than pursuant to your terms and conditions of employment without the prior permission of the Head or the Bursar.
- 11.3. **Behaviour of others:** You should be aware that the behaviour of your partner or other family members or any member of your household may raise concerns which could affect the welfare of a member of the School community or a member of the public, or bring the School into disrepute and you should bring any such behaviour to the immediate attention of the School. Such concerns will be given careful consideration as to whether they constitute a potential risk to children at the School or its reputation.

Safeguarding Guidelines for staff

12. General

- 12.1. The welfare of the child is paramount.
- 12.2. You should demonstrate professional standards of behaviour at all times and always act within the spirit of this Code and any Guidance. If you are involved in a situation where no specific guidance exists or if you are in any doubt about appropriate conduct, you should discuss the situation with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and keep a written record of the outcome of that discussion.
- 12.3. You should be familiar with the contents of the Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy, in particular the procedures for dealing with allegations against members of staff, including supply staff and volunteers, and the procedures for reporting a concern about a child. This includes local reporting guidelines, and the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership's reporting threshold document (in respect of any concerns relating to children) and the possible indicators for children at risk of abuse, neglect, exploitation or radicalisation.
- 12.4. You must be aware of the risks of child-on-child abuse and bullying and the procedures for dealing with allegations against other children as set out in the Safeguarding (Child

Protection) Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy and the important role you have to play in preventing it and responding where you believe a child may be at risk from it. Examples of child-on-child abuse are bullying (including cyberbullying), physical abuse, sexual violence and sexual harassment, up-skirting, the consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi nudes images and videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery) and initiation and hazing (which could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may include an online element especially around chat groups, and the sharing of abusive images and pornography).

- 12.5. You should take particular care when dealing with a pupil who appears to be emotionally distressed, generally vulnerable, is seeking expressions of affection, acts in a sexually provocative or over-familiar way or appears to hold a grudge against you. Some of these behaviours may be indications that a child has been, or is currently being, abused and should therefore be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead in accordance with the School's safeguarding procedures.
- 12.6. The School recognises that many children have unlimited and unrestricted access to the internet via 4G and 5G. You must ensure pupils are not exposed to inappropriate or indecent images. Viewing, retrieving or downloading of pornographic, terrorist or extremist material, or any other material which the School believes is unsuitable is strictly prohibited and may constitute gross misconduct. This includes at any time when on School premises or otherwise in the course of your employment, including using the School's ICT network, or via 4G or 5G, whether or not on a School or personal device. You should not allow unauthorised access to School equipment and should keep your computer passwords safe. If you discover material that is potentially illegal or inappropriate, you must isolate the equipment and contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead in accordance with the School's Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy and Procedures immediately. Pupils must not be exposed to unsuitable material on the internet and Staff should ensure that any film or material shown is age appropriate.
- 12.7. Where safeguarding incidents involve youth produced sexual imagery, you must not intentionally view or forward sexual imagery reported to you and must follow the School's policy on sharing nude and semi-nude images and videos as set out in the Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy.
- 12.8. Comprehensive records are essential. All concerns, discussions and decisions made and the reasons for those decisions should be recorded in writing. Records should include a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern, details of how the concern was followed up and resolved, a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome. Information should be kept confidential and stored securely. Any incident involving children that could give cause for concern, must always be reported promptly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead in accordance with the School's Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy. If there is any doubt about recording requirements this should be discussed with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- 12.9. Breaches of the law and other statutory or professional guidance could result in criminal or disciplinary action being taken.

13. *Neutral Notifications*

- 13.1. The School encourages an open and transparent culture in which it may identify concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour early, minimise the risk of abuse and ensure that adults working in or on behalf of the School (including supply teachers,

volunteers and contractors) are clear about professional boundaries and act within these boundaries. Creating a culture in which any concerns about adults working on behalf of the School are shared promptly, responsibly and with the right person, and recorded and dealt with appropriately, is critical.

- 13.2. There may be occasions where something occurs which is out of the ordinary and which causes a member of staff to have doubts about the behaviour of another adult towards a pupil or another child, or concerns about how their own behaviour or someone else's might be misinterpreted, but that behaviour does not meet the threshold of harm (in which case it should be dealt with under the School's Safeguarding Policy). It is important that any such concerns, or incidents which might give rise to concerns about the conduct of staff, however minor, are reported to the DSL or, if preferred or if the concern is about the DSL, to the Head. In the vast majority of cases, there will be a perfectly innocent explanation for what has occurred, and staff should not feel that making a report, or being the subject of a report, will cause them to suffer any detriment or stigma where this is the case. Reporting of these types of concerns is a neutral act, and the DSL will, on receipt of a report, determine how best to approach the issue.
- 13.3. The process for reporting a concern of this nature is called 'Neutral Notification'; other institutions may use the term 'low-level concern'. The term 'low-level concern' does not mean that it is insignificant, it means that the behaviour towards a child does not meet the threshold of harm. A low-level concern is any concern, no matter how small, but still the cause of 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 the Code of Conduct for Staff, including inappropriate contact outside of work.
- 13.4. Neutral Notification should be used by staff where they are at all concerned about the behaviour of an adult, not just where it is clear that a rule or professional boundary has been broken. The purpose of neutral reporting is to protect both pupils, and the staff working with them, and allows a system for a simple record to be kept in case events are later referred to or any patterns emerge.
- 13.5. There may also be occasions when a member of staff has concerns about how their own behaviour in a particular situation may be misinterpreted. It is accepted that there are occasions when school staff, as professionals, have to make decisions to act in a particular way in order to protect the health, safety and welfare of their pupils. This may, in some cases, put the adult in a vulnerable position and cause them, with hindsight, to consider that they might have made different decisions. In this scenario, staff must make a Neutral Notification. Neutral Notifications may be made in person to the DSL (or Head if preferred or if the concern relates to the DSL) or by completing the Neutral Notification Form template, available via a link from the homepage of the Staff Handbook, and sending this to the DSL. If the notification is made in person in the first instance, staff may be required to complete a Neutral Notification Form later.
- 13.6. Some circumstances in which staff should make a Neutral Notification are as follows:
 - 13.6.1. feeling that their own actions or behaviour towards a pupil could be misinterpreted or, with hindsight, were not appropriate to the pupil's age or needs at that time;
 - 13.6.2. feeling that the actions or behaviour of another adult towards a pupil could be misinterpreted or are not appropriate to the pupil's age or needs at that time;

- 13.6.3. inadvertent email, messaging, use of social media sites or other communication between a colleague and pupils or former pupils outside agreed protocols;
- 13.6.4. witnessing a colleague being over familiar with pupils or knowing that a colleague has favourites amongst those they teach;
- 13.6.5. feeling that a pupil is showing signs of inappropriate attachment to a member of staff such as having a crush on them or bearing a grudge against them;
- 13.6.6. witnessing a colleague using sexually inappropriate language, references or jokes to a pupil;
- 13.6.7. becoming aware that a colleague has images of pupils on personal devices;
- 13.6.8. if a pupil uses a member of staff's home address, mobile or home phone number, or private email address;
- 13.6.9. any one-to-one contact with a pupil (including on school trips) other than in the context of a one-to-one lesson or discussion about academic, extra-curricular or pastoral issues or other situations which fall within expected boundaries of professional conduct;
- 13.6.10. any incident where a member of staff has been alone with a pupil or pupils in a vehicle where this has not been authorised in advance;
- 13.6.11. any incident of physical contact with a pupil when no one else is present, including when administering first aid or medical treatment (school medical staff are exempt from this requirement);
- 13.6.12. any inadvertent and/or potentially inappropriate social contact with pupils outside school particularly where the member of staff and /or pupil is under the influence of alcohol;
- 13.6.13. becoming aware that a staff member is involved in an intimate or sexual relationship with a former pupil of the School, regardless of the age of the (former) pupil;
- 13.6.14. any incident where, for whatever reason, you believe a member of staff has not complied with this Code of Conduct for Staff.

This is not intended to be an exhaustive list. Anything which causes staff to have a 'nagging doubt' about the way in which other adults behave or interact with pupils should be notified, in order to protect both pupils and the members of staff involved.

- 13.7. Where a member of staff, or a member of their family, has an established family friendship/relationship with a current parent and/or current or former pupil this should be formally declared at the start of each academic year via an annual Neutral Notification 'Declaration of Interests'. Once declared this removes the need for informal social contact associated with such friendships/relationships to be reported using the Neutral Notification system.

14. *Communications with Pupils and Former Pupils*

- 14.1. Communication with pupils and former pupils should always be appropriate within the context of the professional relationship between staff and pupils and care should be taken to avoid an over-familiar tone or the disclosure of personal information. Except in an emergency communication should only be made using the School's IT platforms including school email and G Suite applications.
- 14.2. Staff must comply with the Acceptable Use of ICT for Staff Policy regarding communications with pupils and former pupils.
- 14.3. Staff should not engage in personal email or telephone contact with pupils or former pupils, including text messaging, and should not become 'friends', follow or communicate privately with pupils or former pupils on any social media network. Personal social networking sites should be set as private and pupils or former pupils should not be approved contacts.
- 14.4. Staff must not give pupils or former pupils their personal contact details (home address, home telephone number, mobile telephone number or private email address) unless the need to do so has been agreed with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the pupil's parents (or former pupil's parents where appropriate) in advance.
- 14.5. Should any former pupil make personal contact with you, you must notify the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately and follow guidance issued to you, ensuring that the School email system is used for a professional response.
- 14.6. Email or text communications between an adult and any pupil or former pupil outside agreed protocols may lead to a report to external agencies in accordance with the School's child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures, disciplinary action and / or criminal investigations. This also includes communications through internet based websites. If you have any questions about appropriate communication with pupils or former pupils you should speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

15. *One-to-one Meetings or Lessons*

- 15.1. When working alone with a pupil is an integral part of your role, you must ensure that you follow the guidance set out in this section and discuss any questions you may have with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- 15.2. Staff working in one-to-one situations should ensure there is visual access where possible via windows in doors or open doors.
- 15.3. You should arrange any one-to-one meetings for during normal school operating hours, when there will be other adults on site, and avoid remote or secluded areas. One-to-one meetings in person should not take place away from the school site but if you need to conduct a one-to-one meeting remotely (eg via Google Meet) you must notify the Designated Safeguarding Lead in advance with relevant joining details.
- 15.4. You should not continue the meeting for longer than necessary and discussion should be pertinent to school business.
- 15.5. All unnecessary physical proximity or conduct, and any conduct that could be taken as a sexual advance, should be avoided. You should apologise straightaway if there is accidental physical contact.

- 15.6. Any incident that causes concern, or any situations where a pupil becomes distressed or angry, should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead in writing (neutral notification).

16. Physical Contact

- 16.1. **Intervention:** All forms of corporal punishment are unlawful and the use of unwarranted physical force is likely to constitute a criminal offence. The use of physical intervention should be avoided if possible but there are circumstances when it is appropriate for Staff to use force to safeguard children where no other form of control is available and where it is necessary to intervene. The use of force or physical contact may be reasonable and proportionate to prevent a pupil from: committing a crime; injuring themselves or others; causing damage to property; or engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to good order and discipline at the School or among its pupils (in the classroom or elsewhere). In these instances the contact should be reasonable and proportionate in the circumstances, taking into account the additional vulnerability of children with SEN, disabilities or certain medical conditions. Any member of staff involved in an incident in which the use of force has been necessary must make a detailed record of the incident and inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible that same day.
- 16.2. **General guidance in other circumstances:** You should avoid any unnecessary physical contact with pupils. Any physical contact should be minimal, age appropriate and needs-led. When using physical contact, you should (where applicable): explain the intended action to the pupil; not proceed if the pupil appears apprehensive or reluctant; ensure the physical contact continues for as short a time as possible; ensure the door is open or another colleague or pupil is present; and consider alternatives if the contact might be misinterpreted.
- 16.3. **Demonstration:** Physical contact may be necessary and beneficial in order to demonstrate an action or technique in, for example, PE, Drama, Music or Art. Where possible, this should be discussed with senior colleagues in advance. You should never initiate physical contact that could be misconstrued or come as a surprise to the child.
- 16.4. **First Aid:** When administering first aid, you should explain to the pupil what is happening and, where possible, ensure that another adult is present or aware. Staff should adhere to the School's *First Aid Policy* in administering first aid.
- 16.5. **Comfort:** Contact may be appropriate where a pupil is in distress and needs comforting. You should use your own professional judgment if you feel a pupil needs this kind of support and must always notify the Designated Safeguarding Lead when comfort has been offered in this way.
- 16.6. For any physical contact, staff should consider any special circumstances relevant to the pupil of which they are aware, such as special needs, past trauma or a cultural issue that may affect the pupil's reaction.
- 16.7. If you are at all concerned about any instance of physical contact, you should inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately.

17. Relationships with pupils and former pupils

- 17.1. All adults working with children and young people in schools are in positions of trust in relation to the young people in their care. You have a responsibility to maintain confidence in your ability to safeguard the welfare and best interests of pupils by treating pupils with

dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to a teacher's professional position.

- 17.2. Relationships with pupils of any age or, in most cases, with former pupils which are sexual, physical or romantic in nature are strictly prohibited and likely to result in summary dismissal for gross misconduct. Such conduct may also constitute a criminal offence. For example, it is an 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 trust in respect of that child, even if, in the case of those over 16, the relationship is consensual.
- 17.3. Any inappropriate conduct with a pupil or former pupil of this School, or with a pupil of another school, or conduct (whether committed at or outside work) which is likely to damage the School's reputation may be treated as a serious disciplinary offence up to and including an act of gross misconduct.

18. *Contact outside school*

- 18.1. Members of staff who are friends with parents of pupils or who, for example, are voluntary workers in youth organisations attended by pupils will of course have contact with those pupils outside school. However, in these circumstances you should still follow the guidance in this Code of Conduct wherever possible and should inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead of such relationships.
- 18.2. Any other planned out of school contact between staff and pupils must be agreed in advance with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the parents of the pupils concerned.
- 18.3. Any contact with a pupil outside school that could be misinterpreted as inappropriate must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead as a neutral notification.
- 18.4. This guidance set out in this Code of Conduct applies equally to educational visits (see the Educational Visits Policy) and extra-curricular activities.

19. *Transporting pupils*

- 19.1. Staff should avoid using private vehicles to transport pupils wherever practicable. You should consult the Finance Office in advance if you may need to drive a private vehicle to transport pupils (or if you need to drive your own vehicle on school business for any other reason).
- 19.2. If you do need to transport pupils you should: try to ensure that there is an additional adult in the vehicle or notify the Designated Safeguarding Lead in advance; ensure that you are fit to drive; be aware that you are responsible for the pupil's health and safety (eg insurance, seatbelts); and record the details of the journey.
- 19.3. You should always notify the Designated Safeguarding Lead of any impromptu or emergency transport of pupils.
- 19.4. See the School's *Transport Policy* for further information.

Language and Appearance

20. **Language:** You should use appropriate language at all times. You should:

- 20.1. avoid words or expressions that have any unnecessary sexual content or innuendo; avoid displays of affection either personally or in writing (eg messages in birthday cards, text messages, e-mails etc);
 - 20.2. avoid any form of aggressive or threatening words;
 - 20.3. avoid any words or actions that are over-familiar;
 - 20.4. not swear, blaspheme or use any sort of offensive language in front of pupils;
 - 20.5. avoid the use of sarcasm or derogatory words when disciplining pupils and avoid making unprofessional personal comments about anyone. Any sanctions should be in accordance with the School's Behaviour Policy; and
 - 20.6. be aware that some parts of the curriculum may raise sexually explicit subject matters. Care should be taken in subjects where rules / boundaries are relaxed (eg drama or art). Staff should have clear lesson plans and should take care to avoid overstepping personal and professional boundaries.
21. **Dress:** You should dress appropriately and in a professional manner.

Use of photographs and videos

22. **General:** Staff are encouraged to use school iPads and equipment to take photographs and film events that show the range of academic and extra-curricular activities that pupils are involved in and for educational purposes.
23. **Personal Devices:** If you need to use your own device for this purpose, you must download the image or video onto the school network and delete it from your device, and all related cloud back-ups, at the earliest opportunity. There should be no unauthorised use of images of children.
24. **Consent:** Parents will have been informed, via the School's privacy notice for parents and pupils of the use of photographs and videos of pupils by the School for educational and other less privacy intrusive purposes. Additional consent is not required for the use of such images. However, you should still try to ensure that the pupil understands why the images are being taken and has agreed to the activity. If you are considering using a more privacy intrusive image or using an image for a new purpose, it may be necessary to seek specific consent from the pupil, their parents or both. Please consult the Assistant Bursar (Compliance) in these circumstances. Pupils for whom there are restrictions regarding images will be notified to you and any instructions must be followed.
25. **Guidance:** The following should also be considered:
 - 25.1. the purpose of the activity should be clear and justifiable;
 - 25.2. images should not be made secretly or during one-to-one situations;
 - 25.3. pupils must always be adequately dressed; and
 - 25.4. if the images are made public they should not be accompanied by the pupil's name.
26. **Personal social media:** You must not publish anything which could identify pupils, parents or guardians on any personal social media account, personal webpage or similar platform. This includes photos, videos, or other materials such as pupil work.

Visitors

27. Any member of staff inviting a visitor to the School must ensure that the School's *Security Policy* and Visitor Procedures are followed.
28. Staff must ensure that visiting speakers are appropriately vetted and supervised in accordance with the School's Visitor Procedures. In addition, any messages communicated to pupils by visiting speakers must be consistent with the ethos of the school, and must not marginalise any communities, groups or individuals or seek to radicalise pupils through extreme or narrow views of faith, religion, culture or other ideologies.
29. The Security Office must be notified in advance and the visitor must be collected on arrival, wear a visitors badge and be appropriately supervised at all times during the visit.
30. If a visitor will be unaccompanied at any time, the Personnel Manager should be consulted as a DBS check may be required.

Confidentiality and data protection

31. ***Treatment of pupil information:*** You should respect the privacy of pupils, parents and colleagues and should not pass information about, for example, addresses or telephone numbers to others, without checking first with the person concerned.
 32. ***Consent required:*** Details of pupils'/parents' names and addresses must not be used for any purpose other than school business without the consent of the Head. Information about pupils, parents or colleagues should never be disclosed to telephone enquirers. You should ask the enquirer to put the request in writing so that it can be dealt with appropriately.
 33. ***Disclosing confidential information:*** Confidential information should only be disclosed on a need-to-know basis. Where it is not necessary to disclose a pupil's identity the information should be disclosed anonymously. If you are unsure whether you should disclose information, you should seek advice from a member of the Senior Leadership Team.
 34. ***Duty to disclose confidential information:*** You may have to disclose information, for example where abuse is alleged or suspected. In such cases, there is a duty to pass on the information immediately, but only to the Designated Safeguarding Lead under the School's *Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy*. Note: staff should never give an undertaking of confidentiality to a pupil where child protection issues are involved.
- 34.1. Staff should adhere to the School's Confidentiality Policy but be aware that there are limits to confidentiality where child welfare is concerned.
 - 34.2. If a pupil confides a serious issue to a member of staff, such as child abuse, neglect, running away from home, drug use or anything that puts them in danger, then the member of staff must not promise to keep their confidence if asked. The member of staff should advise the pupil that because of the nature of the information that has been shared, it is essential that the matter is discussed further with the School's Designated Safeguarding Lead. The member of staff should then pass on the information to the Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible and, in their absence, the Head.
 - 34.3. In every case, when a pupil confides in a member of staff, it is good practice for that member of staff to discuss and negotiate the next phase of action with the pupil involved so that the pupil feels a certain amount of control or forewarning as to the consequences.

- 34.4. When consulting with colleagues on sensitive matters regarding pupils, it is important that this is done discreetly, on a need-to-know basis with the appropriate person, avoiding public places and out of earshot of other pupils or staff.
35. **Data Protection:** The processing or storing of personal information must not breach the School's Data Protection Policy or Information Security Policy.

Gifts and rewards

36. Before accepting or giving any gifts or rewards, Staff must familiarise themselves with the Gifts and Hospitality Policy and the Anti-Bribery and Corruption Policy which is contained in the Employment Handbook.
37. **If a gift is received:** If you receive a gift from a pupil or parent or otherwise in connection with your role at the School you should:
- 37.1. declare the gift, by email to the Bursar, where there is a possibility the gift could be misconstrued, or in any event where the gift is of a value of more than £50 (for a joint gift this may be pro rata per pupil up to a maximum of £300). The Head or Bursar may in their absolute discretion require you to decline the gift.
- 37.2. decline outright gifts of cash or gifts that could be seen as a bribe or that have created an expectation of preferential treatment. Although it is accepted for parents or children to make small gifts to show appreciation, you must not receive gifts on a regular basis or receive anything of significant value. If you decline a gift outright you must notify the Bursar.
38. **Giving gifts and rewards:** When you are thinking of giving a gift or reward:
- 38.1. it should only be provided as part of an agreed reward system
- 38.2. in all cases except the above, the gift or reward should be of little value and should be distributed equally
- 38.3. selection processes should be fair and where possible should be agreed by more than one member of staff
39. **Allocation of gifts and rewards:** Decisions regarding entitlement to benefits or privileges such as admission to school trips, activities or classroom tasks must avoid perceptions of bias or favouritism. The selection process must be based on transparent criteria.

Whistleblowing Procedures

40. All staff are required to report to the Head, or the Chair of Governors in her absence, any concern or allegations about poor or unsafe school practices or potential failures in the School's safeguarding regime. There will be no retribution or disciplinary action taken against a member of staff for making such a report provided that it is done in good faith. Further details of whistleblowing procedures are contained in the School's Whistleblowing Policy contained in the Employment Handbook.

Consequences of breaching this Code of Conduct

41. **The School's position:** It is a contractual requirement as well as in the interests of all members of staff to follow this Code of Conduct so as to maintain standards of behaviour and their own professional reputation. A breach of this Code of Conduct may be treated as

misconduct and will render the member of staff liable to disciplinary action including, in serious cases, dismissal.

- 42. *Termination of Employment:*** If the School ceases to use the services of a member of Staff or volunteer because they are unsuitable to work with children, a settlement agreement (formerly known as a compromise agreement) will not be used and a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service will be made promptly if the criteria for a referral are met. Any such incidents will be followed by a review of safeguarding procedures within the School with a report being presented to Governors without delay. The School may also need to consider a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service if a member of Staff is suspended or deployed to another area of work that is not regulated activity.
- 43. *Resignation:*** If a member of Staff or volunteer tenders his or her resignation, or ceases to provide his or her services to the School at a time when child protection concerns exist in relation to that person, those concerns will still be investigated in full by the School and a referral will be made to the Disclosure and Barring Service promptly if the criteria for a referral are met.
- 44. *Teaching Regulation Agency:*** Separate consideration will also be given to making a referral to the Teaching Regulation Agency where a teacher has been dismissed (or would have been dismissed had he or she not resigned) because of unacceptable professional conduct, conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute, or a conviction at any time for a relevant offence. An interim referral to the Teaching Regulation Agency may also be considered and made if appropriate.