



# Safeguarding Code of Conduct

## Northampton Campus

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## 1. Introduction

Adults have a crucial role to play in the lives of children. This code of conduct has been produced as part of our Safeguarding Policy to help staff establish the safest possible learning and working environments which safeguard children and reduce the risk of them being falsely accused of improper or unprofessional conduct.

### Campus contacts

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is: *Philip Irwin*

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSL) is: *Julie Heron*

Safeguarding Trustee is: *Simon Calder*

## 2. Status of document

Our ethos and values are:

### ETHOS

*At this School, we are committed to a culture where students are encouraged to develop their full potential and acquire the discipline of learning how to learn, while upholding Christian teachings and beliefs.*

*The truth and authority of the Holy Bible and strong family values underpin the commitment of the School to provide quality in every facet of education – curriculum, teachers, facilities, management and discipline - **in a safe and caring environment**.*

### VALUES

*In coming to this School each student, parent and staff member shall uphold the values of the School which include:*

- *Integrity – uprightness, honesty and decorous conduct, governed by the Holy Bible,*
- *Care & Compassion - kindness, consideration and generosity to all,*
- *Respect – for all people, property, opinions and authority,*
- *Responsibility – for our actions, progress and the environment and*
- *Commitment – to self-discipline and the pursuit of excellence.*

This guidance should be read and understood in conjunction with the Safeguarding policy and alongside school policies and guidance, including your employment contract.

## 3. Responsibilities

Staff are accountable for the way in which they: exercise authority; manage risk; use resources; and safeguard children.

All staff have a responsibility to keep pupils safe and to protect them from abuse (sexual, physical and emotional), neglect and safeguarding concerns. Pupils have a right to be safe and to be treated with respect and dignity. It follows that trusted adults are expected to take reasonable steps to ensure their safety and well-being. Failure to do so may be regarded as professional misconduct.

The safeguarding culture of a school 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.

The authorities, employers and parents/carers will have expectations about the nature of professional involvement in the lives of children. When individuals accept a role working in a school they should understand and acknowledge the responsibilities and trust involved in that role.

Employers have duties towards their employees and others under Health and Safety legislation which requires them to take steps to provide a safe working environment for staff.

Legislation also imposes a duty on employees to take care of themselves and anyone else who may be affected by their actions or failings. An employer's Health and Safety duties and the adults' responsibilities towards children should not conflict. Safe practice can be demonstrated through the use and implementation of these guidelines.

#### **4. Making professional judgements**

This guidance cannot provide a complete checklist of what is, or is not, appropriate behaviour for staff. It does highlight however, behaviour which is illegal, inappropriate or inadvisable.

In circumstances which you are concerned about for which there is no guidance, record your judgements and actions, and then share with the DSL.

Staff should always consider whether their actions are warranted, proportionate, safe and applied equitably.

#### **5. Power and positions of trust and authority**

As a result of your knowledge and role you are in a position of trust in relation to all pupils at the campus.

The relationship between a teacher with a child/ren is one in which the adult has a position of power or influence. It is vital for staff to understand this power; that the relationship cannot be one between equals and the responsibility they must exercise as a consequence.

The potential for exploitation and harm of vulnerable pupils means that staff have a responsibility to ensure that an unequal balance of power is not used for personal advantage or gratification.

Staff should always maintain appropriate professional boundaries, avoid behaviour which could be misinterpreted by others and report and record any such incident.

Where a person aged 18 or over is in a position of trust with a child under 18, it is an offence for that person to engage in sexual activity with or in the presence of that child, or to cause or incite that child to engage in or watch sexual activity.

#### **6. Confidentiality and Data Protection**

The storing and processing of personal and sensitive information is governed by the Data Protection Act 2018, which enacted the EU GDPR directive. Please refer to the campus' Data Protection Policy and Privacy Notices.

Staff should never use confidential or personal information about a pupil or her/his family for their own, or others' advantage. Information must never be used to intimidate, humiliate, or embarrass the child.

All safeguarding concerns and/or disclosures should be reported immediately to the DSL. Data Protection or confidentiality can never be used as an excuse to not disclose; safeguarding always comes first.

The Data Protection rights of staff are outlined in the staff privacy notice. The obligation on staff to confidentiality is outlined in your employment contract.

## **7. Standards of behaviour**

All staff have a responsibility to maintain public confidence in their ability to safeguard the welfare and best interests of children. They should adopt high standards of personal conduct in order to maintain confidence and respect of the general public and those with whom they work.

Staff should not:

- A. Make, or encourage others to make, sexual/racial/discriminatory/inflammatory remarks to or about a pupil.
- B. Use inappropriate language to or in the presence of children
- C. Discuss their personal relationships with or in the presence of pupils
- D. Make (or encourage others to make) unprofessional personal comments which scapegoat, demean or humiliate or which might be interpreted as such

There may be times where a member of staff's action in their personal life come under scrutiny from the community, the media or public authorities, including with regard to their own children, or children or adults in the community. Staff should be aware that their behaviour, either in or out of the school, could compromise their position within the School in relation to the protection of children, loss of trust and confidence, or bringing the employer (Sceptre Education Trust) into disrepute. Such behaviour may also result in: prohibition from teaching by the NCTL, a bar from engaging in regulated activity, or action by another relevant regulatory body.

## **8. Dress and appearance**

Refer to the 'Guiding Principles' and your employment contract.

## **9. Gifts, rewards, favouritism and exclusion**

Refer to 1) your employment contract, especially the conflict of interests section and 2) the campus' Behaviour Policy.

Staff need to take care that they do not accept any gift that might be construed as a bribe by others, or lead the giver to expect preferential treatment.

There are occasions when pupils or parents wish to pass small tokens of appreciation to staff (e.g. end of year) and this is acceptable. However, it is unacceptable to receive gifts on a regular basis or of any significant value.

It is advised that staff do NOT give personal gifts to pupils or their families. This could be interpreted as a gesture either to bribe or groom. Any gifts should be approved and given from the school (eg a volunteer for their support).

Any reward given to a pupil should be in accordance with an agreed reward scheme within the behaviour policy, recorded and not based on favouritism.

Staff should exercise care when selecting children for specific activities, jobs or privileges in order to avoid perceptions of favouritism or injustice. Similar care should be exercised when pupils are excluded from an activity. Methods of selection and exclusion should always be subject to clear, fair, agreed criteria and in accordance with the behaviour policy.

## **10. Infatuations and ‘crushes’**

Occasionally pupils may be attracted to a member of staff and/or develop a ‘crush’ or infatuation. Staff must ensure that they maintain professional boundaries and should make every effort to ensure that their own behaviour cannot be brought into question. In such instances there is a risk of the words or actions of staff being misinterpreted.

Staff who receive a report, or overhears or observes something of this nature should report it immediately to the Headteacher or DSL.

The Headteacher should give careful thought to such circumstances and prepare and implement an action plan working with all parties to resolve the situation.

## **11. Social contact outside of school**

Occasionally staff may have friendships and social contact with parents of pupils, independent of the professional relationship.

It is recognised that social contact may provide opportunities for grooming (eg sexual exploitation or radicalization) and/or abuse.

Staff should recognise that some types of social contact with pupils or their families could be perceived as harmful or exerting inappropriate influence on children, and may bring the campus into disrepute (e.g. attending a political protest, circulating propaganda).

If a pupil or parent seeks to establish social contact, the member of staff should exercise her/his professional judgement.

## **12. Communication with children (including the use of technology)**

Please refer to the ICT and E-Safety, and Social Media Policies, as well as the Campus’ Communications Channels protocol.

Staff should ensure that they establish safe and responsible online behaviours, working to Focus', local and national guidelines and acceptable use policies which detail how existing and emerging technologies may be used.

Staff should not request or respond to any personal information from children other than which may be necessary in their professional role. They should ensure that their communications are open and transparent and avoid any communication which could be interpreted as 'grooming behaviour'.

Staff should not give their personal contact details to children for example, e-mail address, home or mobile telephone numbers, details of web based identities. If children locate these by any other means and attempt to contact or correspond with the staff member, staff should not respond and must report the matter to the relevant Head of School. The child should be firmly and politely informed that this is not acceptable.

Staff should, in any communication with children, also follow the guidance in section 7 'Standards of Behaviour'.

### **13. Physical contact**

Physical contact is entirely inappropriate and can be misconstrued by the recipient and observers.

There are occasions when physical contact may be necessary, such as:

- A. Fulfilling the curriculum (refer to the next section)
- B. Pupils with individual needs (refer to the intimate care section)
- C. Pupils with individual needs not covered by a care plan. In such circumstances extreme caution should be exercised.

### **14. Other activities that require physical contact**

In certain curriculum areas, such as PE, drama or music, staff may need to initiate some physical contact with children, for example, to demonstrate technique in the use of a piece of equipment, adjust posture, or support a child so they can perform an activity safely or prevent injury.

Physical contact should take place only when it is absolutely necessary in relation to a particular activity. It should take place in a safe and open environment i.e. one easily observed by others and last for the minimum time necessary. The extent of the contact should be made clear and undertaken with the permission of the pupil. Contact should be relevant to their age / understanding and adults should remain sensitive to any discomfort expressed verbally or non-verbally by the pupil.

Any incidents of physical contact that cause concern should be reported to the DSL.

### **15. Intimate / personal care**

The intimate care plans should be followed to ensure that the health, safety, independence and welfare of children is promoted and their dignity and privacy are respected.

Pupils should be encouraged to act as independently as possible and to undertake as much of their own personal care as is possible and practicable. When assistance is required, this should normally be

undertaken by one member of staff, however, they should try to ensure that another appropriate adult is in the vicinity who is aware of the task to be undertaken and that, wherever possible, they are visible and/or audible.

A signed record should be kept of all intimate and personal care tasks undertaken and, where these have been carried out in another room, should include times left and returned.

Pupils are entitled to respect and privacy at all times and especially when in a state of undress, such as when changing, toileting and showering.

However there needs to be an appropriate level of supervision in order to safeguard pupils, satisfy health and safety considerations and ensure that bullying or teasing does not occur.

## **16. Behaviour management**

The school's behaviour management policy should be followed.

Staff should not use any form of degrading or humiliating treatment to punish a child. The use of sarcasm, demeaning or insensitive comments towards children is unacceptable.

Staff need to act with extreme caution with students in isolation/seclusion to avoid any practice which could be viewed as unlawful.

## **17. The use of control and physical intervention**

Refer to the Focus Behaviour Management Policy. This details the acceptable use of physical restraint in rare circumstances.

Physical punishment is illegal.

## **18. Sexual conduct**

Any sexual activity or behaviour by a member of staff with or towards a pupil is totally unacceptable and will result immediately in disciplinary proceedings. This includes physical contact and non-contact activities. Any breaches of criminal law, such as sexual activity with a pupil under 18, will be reported to the police.

## **19. One to one situations**

Staff working in one to one situations with pupils can be more vulnerable to allegations or complaints.

Staff need to ensure that wherever possible there is visual access and/or an open door in the one to one situations.

To safeguard both pupils and adults, a risk assessment in relation to the specific nature and implications of one to one work should always be undertaken. Each assessment should take into account the individual needs of each pupil.

Arranging to meet with pupils from the school away from the school is not permitted unless the necessity for this is clear and approval is obtained from the Headteacher/CA Team, the pupil and their parents/carers.

## **20. Home visits**

All work with pupils and parents should be undertaken in the school. There may be occasions, in response to an urgent, planned or specific situation, where it is necessary to make one-off or regular home visits however approval from the Headteacher/CA Team and parents must be obtained first.

It is essential that appropriate policies and related risk assessments are in place to safeguard both staff and pupils, who can be more vulnerable in these situations

## **21. Transporting pupils**

All regular transporting of students (from/to home/school and educational visits) is organized by the school in the campus' transport. Staff should not offer students lifts.

In rare situations staff may be required to transport pupils as part of their work. They must have valid insurance to cover this.

Wherever possible and practicable, school minibuses will be used rather than private vehicles.

It is a legal requirement that all passengers wear seatbelts and the driver should ensure that they do so. They should also be aware of and adhere to current legislation regarding the use of car seats for younger children.

## **22. Educational visits**

All educational visits should be organized using the Campus' EV procedures which are detailed in the Health & Safety manual, and summarised in associated flowcharts.

This will ensure that suitable risk assessments are undertaken prior to the educational visit, thus ensuring adequate safety for the wellbeing and health of the students as well as protecting them from abuse or neglect.

## **23. First Aid and medication**

The Health & Safety policy should be referred to.

First Aid should only be given by competent first aiders who are named.

Medication should be dispensed:

- A. According to the student's EH plan and recorded appropriately
- B. After checking the medical records and consent is granted by the parents
- C. According to the pupil's known medical needs (e.g. diabetes, epilepsy)

Any concerns should be raised with a First Aider and DSL.

## **24. Photography, videos and other images**

Many educational activities involve recording images. These may be undertaken for displays, publicity, to celebrate achievement and to provide records of evidence of the activity. Staff should use the school's equipment on behalf of the school to take images of pupils. However it is acceptable for a member of staff to use their own camera providing a school SD card is used.

Whilst images are normally used for very positive purposes staff need to be aware of the potential for these images to be taken and/or misused or manipulated for pornographic or 'grooming' purposes. Particular regard needs to be given when images are taken of young or vulnerable children who may be unable to question why or how the activities are taking place.

Parents/Guardians have consented to the school making and using images of pupils at the enrolment stage; however parents may withdraw consent in writing. Please liaise with the school office regarding parental consent for the use of images.

For the protection of children, it is recommended that when using images for publicity purposes that the following guidance should be followed:

- If the image is used, avoid naming the child, (or, as a minimum, use first names rather than surnames)
- If the child is named, avoid using their image
- Establish whether the image will be retained for further use, where and for how long
- Images should be securely stored and used only by those authorized to do so.

Please refer to the Focus ICT and E-Safety Policy which includes safe use of images guidance.

## **25. Exposure to inappropriate images**

Staff should take extreme care to ensure that children and young people are not exposed, through any medium, to inappropriate or indecent images. To this end only school ICT devices should be used in school.

There are no circumstances that will justify staff: making, downloading, possessing or distributing indecent images or pseudo-images of children (child abuse images). Accessing these images, whether using the school's or personal equipment, on or off the premises, or making, storing or disseminating such material is illegal. Accessing, downloading, storing and circulating pornography on the school's equipment and premises is strictly prohibited.

If indecent images are discovered at the school or on the school's equipment an immediate referral should be made to the DSL, and the police contacted if relevant. The images/equipment should be secured and there should be no attempt to view or delete the images as this could jeopardise necessary criminal action. If the images are of children known to the school the DSL should take relevant action.

## **26. Personal living accommodation including on site provision**

Staff should not invite any pupils into their living accommodation.

Under no circumstances should pupils be asked to assist staff with jobs or tasks, either for or without reward, at or in their private accommodation.

## **27. Overnight supervision and examinations**

There are rare occasions during exam periods when timetables clash and arrangements need to be made to preserve the integrity of the examination process. In these circumstances examination boards may allow candidates to take an examination the following morning.

In such circumstances the situation should be discussed with the Exams Officer, Headteacher, CA Team and Parents to reach an agreement, and a full risk assessment undertaken to safeguard the pupil from abuse and neglect.

## **28. Curriculum**

Some areas of the curriculum can include or raise subject matter which is sexually explicit or of a political or sensitive nature. Care should be taken to ensure that resource materials cannot be misinterpreted and clearly relate to the learning outcomes identified by the lesson plan. Focus curriculum guidance should be used in such scenarios. This can be supported by developing ground rules with pupils to ensure sensitive topics can be discussed in a safe learning environment. The lesson plan should highlight particular areas of risk and sensitivity and care should especially be taken in those areas of the curriculum where usual boundaries or rules are less rigorously applied e.g. drama

The curriculum can sometimes include or lead to unplanned discussion about subject matter of a sexually explicit, political or otherwise sensitive nature. Responding to children's questions requires careful judgement and staff should take guidance in these circumstances from the DSL.

Care should be taken to comply with the school's policy on spiritual, moral, social, cultural (SMSC) which should promote fundamental British values and be reviewed to ensure it is lawful and consistently applied.

## **29. Whistleblowing**

Please refer to, and follow when necessary, the Campus' Whistleblowing policy and the LSCB's allegations against staff flowchart.

## **30. Sharing concerns and recording incidents**

Please refer to the school's Safeguarding Policy for sharing and recording concerns, disclosures and allegations. Data Protection (GDPR) cannot be used as a reason for not sharing concerns.