

Including Sandleford, our Early Years Foundation Stage provision

Staff Code of Conduct - Guidance on Interaction with Pupils

This guidance is offered to assist staff, both paid and voluntary, in ensuring that their interaction with pupils is appropriate and professional. All staff are expected to exercise caution in all their dealings with pupils to avoid any behaviour which could be misunderstood or misconstrued. This guidance has regard to Keeping Children Safe in Education; Working Together to Safeguard Children and takes account of the DCSF (as it then was) Guidance - *Guidance for safer working practice for adults who work with children and young people in education settings*.

Pupils will be treated with respect and dignity and no punishment, detention, sanctions or rewards are allowed outside of those detailed in the school's Behaviour Policy. Whilst it would be unrealistic and undesirable to preclude all physical contact between adults and pupils, staff are expected to avoid placing themselves in a position where their actions might be open to criticism or misinterpretation.

One-to-one meetings

For their own safety and protection, staff should exercise caution in situations where they are alone with pupils, ensuring, wherever practicable, that another member of staff is within earshot. If such a meeting or teaching session has been planned, staff should take particular care in the following ways:

- when working alone with a pupil is an integral part of your role for example in specialist settings such as peripatetic music lessons, sport, creative or performing arts, conduct and agree full risk assessments with a senior colleague
- use a room that has sufficient windows onto a corridor so the occupants can be seen, or keep the door open, or inform a colleague that the lesson/meeting is taking place
- arrange the meeting during normal school hours when there are plenty of other people about. If a meeting out of school hours is required, a member of the Senior or Junior School Management Team should be informed
- do not continue the meeting for any longer than is necessary to achieve its purposes
- avoid sitting or standing in close proximity to the pupil, except as necessary to check work
- avoid using "engaged" or equivalent signs on doors or windows
- avoid idle discussion
- avoid all unnecessary physical contact and apologise straight away if there is accidental physical contact
- avoid any conduct that could be taken as a sexual advance
- report any incident that causes you concern to the Designated Person under the School's child protection procedures, and make a written record (signed and dated)
- report any situation where a pupil becomes distressed or angry to a senior colleague.

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Physical contact

Any physical contact should be the minimum required for care, instruction or restraint. Where incidents occur which might otherwise be misconstrued, or in exceptional circumstances where it becomes necessary physically to restrain a pupil for her own protection or others' safety, this will be appropriately recorded and reported to the Executive. Any physical restraint used will comply with the DCSF guidance *The use of force to control or restrain pupils: Guidance for Schools in England* and any subsequent guidance.

Transporting pupils

Staff should not take one pupil only in a car, save in exceptional circumstances and with the prior knowledge and approval of the Executive. Where staff are required to transport pupils, staff should take particular care in the following ways:

- ensure that you are fit to drive and free from any substances that may impair your judgement or ability to drive
- be aware that until the pupil is passed over to a parent/carer, you have responsibility for that pupil's wellbeing, health and safety
- record the details of the journey
- record and be able to justify impromptu or emergency lifts
- ensure that there are proper arrangements in place to ensure vehicle, passenger and driver safety, including appropriate insurance, seat belts, adherence to maximum capacity guidelines etc
- wherever practicable, avoid using private vehicles and try and have one adult additional to the driver to act as an escort.

Home visits

Home visits to pupils or private tuition of pupils should take place only with the knowledge and approval of the Executive and should, wherever practicable, take place in circumstances where another adult is within earshot.

Visits/telephone calls by pupils to the homes of staff members should occur only in exceptional circumstances and with the prior knowledge and approval of the parents and the Executive.

Any unplanned contact of this nature must be reported to the Executive.

Contact outside school

Staff should not give their personal mobile telephone numbers to pupils nor should they communicate with them by personal text or personal email. Interacting with current pupils via social networking websites is prohibited. The Principal engages with parents and Alumnae using social networking sites such as LinkedIn and Twitter and the Head of Sixth Form engages with Alumnae using social networking sites such as Facebook. Staff who engage with alumnae, parents and former colleagues using social networks should be mindful of the need for professional standards at all times and use appropriate privacy settings. Staff must not disclose their home email addresses to pupils or parents, but should always use their school email addresses. If they need to speak to a pupil by telephone, they should use one of the school's telephones.

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The Group Leader on all trips and visits 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.

Any suspected infatuations or 'crushes' must be reported to the Executive. Suggestions that a pupil has developed a crush should be recorded. Staff should avoid being alone with pupils who have developed a crush on them and if the pupil sends personal communications to the member of Staff, this should be reported to a senior colleague and recorded.

This Staff Code of Conduct - Guidance on Interaction with Pupils, forms part of our Safeguarding Guidance and should be read in conjunction with the Child Protection (Safeguarding) Policy & Safeguarding Guidance; Pastoral Policy; Behaviour Policy; Anti-Bullying Policy; ICT Acceptable Use Policy; First Aid Policy; Whistleblowing Policy and Risk Assessment Policy.

Authorised by	resolution of the Board of Governors
Date	Autumn 2010
Reviewed	Autumn 2011
	Autumn 2012
	Autumn 2013
	Autumn 2014
	Autumn 2015
	Autumn 2016

Circulation	Published on the School's Website
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