



SAFER WORKING PRACTICE STATEMENT

All staff must read and abide by:

Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education Settings.2015

<https://www.safeguardingschools.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Guidance-for-Safer-Working-Practices-2015-final1.pdf>

The school has a duty to safeguard and promote the well-being of pupils. This includes the need to ensure that all adults who work with or on behalf of pupils are competent, confident and safe to do so.

What to do if you are worried a child is being abused

Anyone who has concerns or is in doubt should refer to the document '**What to Do If You're Worried a Child is Being Abused**' and follow that guidance.

Underpinning Principles

The welfare of the child is paramount.

- It is the responsibility of all adults to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils. This responsibility extends to a duty of care for those adults employed, commissioned or contracted to work with pupils.
- Adults who work with children are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions.
- Adults should work and be seen to work, in an open and transparent way.
- The same professional standards should always be applied regardless of culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity.
- Adults should continually monitor and review their practice and ensure they follow the guidance contained in this document.

Staff Code of Conduct

All staff are obliged to adhere to the school's Staff Code of Conduct. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action in accordance with employment regulations and school policies.

Duty of Care

All adults have a duty to:

- Understand the responsibilities, which are part of their employment or role, and be aware that sanctions will be applied if these provisions are breached
- Always act, and be seen to act, in the child's best interests
- Avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions
- Take responsibility for their own actions and behaviour, responsibilities and trust inherent in that role.

The school will

- Foster a culture of openness and support
- Ensure that systems are in place for concerns to be raised
- Ensure that there is in place effective recording systems which confirm discussions, decisions and the outcomes of any actions taken.
- Ensure that staff are not placed in situations which render them particularly vulnerable
- Ensure that all staff are aware of expectations, policies and procedures

This means that Governing Bodies should:

- Ensure that appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures are adopted, implemented and monitored in school
- Ensure that, where services or activities are provided by another body, the body concerned has appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures in place.

Confidentiality

All staff should be

- Clear about when information can be shared and in what circumstances it is appropriate to do so
- Are expected to treat information they receive about pupils in a discreet and confidential manner
- Should seek advice from a senior member of staff if they are in any doubt about sharing information they hold or which has been requested of them
- Need to know to whom any concerns or allegations should be reported but only to those with designated child protection responsibilities.

Making a Professional Judgement

Adults should:

- Discuss the circumstances that informed their action, or their proposed action, with the Headteacher, senior member of the team and the parent/carer.
- Report any actions which could be misinterpreted to their senior manager
- Always discuss any misunderstanding, accidents or threats with a senior manager
- Record any areas of disagreement about course of action taken and if necessary referred to a higher authority
- Ensure they have copies of records which confirm decisions, discussions and reasons why actions were taken.

Power and Positions of Trust

Adults should not:

- Use their position to gain access to information for their own or others' advantage
- Use their position to intimidate, bully, humiliate, threaten, coerce or undermine pupils
- Use their status and standing to form or promote relationships which are of a sexual nature, or which may become so is not a relationship between equals. There is potential for exploitation and harm of vulnerable young people. Adults therefore have a responsibility to ensure that an unequal balance of power is not used for personal advantage or gratification.
- Adults should always maintain appropriate professional boundaries and avoid behaviour which might be misinterpreted by others. They should report and record any incident with this potential.
- Where a person aged 18 or over is in a specified 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.

Propriety and Behaviour

This means that adults should not:

- Behave in a manner which would lead any reasonable person to question their suitability to work with children or act as a role model.
- Make, or encourage others to make, unprofessional personal comments which scapegoat, demean or humiliate, or which might be interpreted as such

This means that adults should:

- Be aware that behaviour in their personal lives may impact upon their work with pupils
- Follow any codes of conduct deemed appropriate by the school
- Understand that the behaviour and actions of their partner (or other family members) may raise questions about their suitability to work with pupils

Dress and Appearance

This means that adults should wear clothing which:

- Is appropriate to their role
- Is not likely to be viewed as offensive, revealing, or sexually provocative
- Does not distract, cause embarrassment or give rise to misunderstanding
- Is absent of any political or otherwise contentious slogans
- Is not considered to be discriminatory and is culturally sensitive

The Use of Personal Living Space

Adults should:

- Be vigilant in maintaining their privacy and mindful of the need to avoid placing themselves in vulnerable situations
- Challenge any request for their accommodation to be used as an additional resource for the school
- Be mindful of the need to maintain professional boundaries
- Refrain from asking pupils/students to undertake personal jobs or errands
- Staff should not invite pupils to their home/accommodation unless under exceptional circumstances and any such contact must be reported to the management team.

Gifts, Rewards and Favouritism

Adults should:

- Be aware of their school policy on the giving and receiving of gifts
- Ensure that gifts received or given in situations which may be misconstrued are declared
- Generally, only give gifts to an individual young person as part of an agreed reward system
- Where giving gifts other than as above, ensure that these are of insignificant value
- Ensure that all selection processes which concern pupils are fair and that wherever practicable these are undertaken and agreed by more than one member of staff not be based on 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 young person.
- Staff should exercise care when selecting pupils for school teams, productions, trips and/or specific work tasks in order to avoid perceptions of favouritism or injustice. Similar care should be exercised when pupils are excluded from an activity. 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 construed as a bribe by others, or lead the giver to expect preferential treatment.

There are occasions when children, young people or parents wish to pass small tokens of appreciation to adults e.g. on special occasions or as a thank-you and this is acceptable.

However, it is unacceptable to receive gifts on a regular basis or of any significant value.

Infatuations

Adults should:

- Report and record any incidents or indications (verbal, written or physical) that suggest a child or young person may have developed an infatuation with a member of staff
- Always acknowledge and maintain professional boundaries

Communication with Pupils (*including the Use of Technology*)

Schools will:

- Have in place an Acceptable Use policy (AUP)
- Continually self-review Online safety policies in the light of new and emerging technologies
- Have a communication policy which specifies acceptable and permissible modes of way in which new and emerging technologies may and may not be used and identify the sanctions for misuse.

Adults should:

- Ensure that personal social networking sites are set at private and pupils are never listed as approved contacts
- Never use or access social networking sites of pupils.
- not give their personal contact details to pupils, including their mobile telephone number
- Only use equipment e.g. mobile phones, provided by school/service to communicate with children, making sure that parents have given permission for this form of communication to be used
- Only make contact with children for professional reasons and in accordance with any school/service policy
- Recognise that text messaging should only be used as part of an agreed protocol and when other forms of communication are not possible
- Not use internet or web-based communication channels to send personal messages to a child/young person

Social Contact

Adults should:

- Have no secret social contact with pupils or their parents
- Consider the appropriateness of the social contact according to their role and nature of their work
- Always approve any planned social contact with children or parents with senior colleagues,
- Advise senior management of any social contact they have with a child or a parent with whom they work, which may give rise to concern
- Report and record any situation, which may place a child at risk or which may compromise the school/service or their own professional standing
- Be aware that the sending of personal communications such as birthday's, faith cards should always be recorded and/or discussed with line manager.
- Understand that some communications may be called into question and need to be justified.

It is recognised that staff can support a parent who may be in particular difficulty. Care needs to be exercised in those situations where the parent 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.

Sexual Contact

All adults should clearly understand the need to maintain appropriate boundaries in their contacts with pupils. Intimate or sexual relationships between children/young people and the adults who work with them will be regarded as a grave breach of trust.

Adults should not:

- Have sexual relationships with pupils

- Have any form of communication with a child or young person which could be interpreted as sexually suggestive or provocative i.e. verbal comments, letters, notes, electronic mail, phone calls, texts, physical contact
- Make sexual remarks to, or about, a child/young person
- Discuss their own sexual relationships with or in the presence of pupils

Adults should:

- Ensure that their relationships with pupils clearly take place within the boundaries of a respectful professional relationship
- Take care that their language or conduct does not give rise to comment or speculation. Attitudes, demeanour and language all require care and thought, particularly when members of staff are dealing with adolescent boys and girls.

Physical Contact

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

Adults should:

- Be aware that even well intentioned physical contact may be misconstrued by the child, an observer or by anyone to whom this action is described
- Never touch a child in a way which may be considered indecent
- Always be prepared to report and explain actions and accept that all physical contact be open to scrutiny
- Not indulge in horseplay
- Always encourage children, where possible, to undertake self-care tasks independently
- Work within Health and Safety regulations
- Be aware of cultural or religious views about touching and always be sensitive to issues of gender
- Understand that physical contact in some circumstances can be easily misinterpreted

The school will

- Ensure they have a system in place for recording incidents and the means by which information about incidents and outcomes can be easily accessed by senior management
- Make adults aware of relevant professional or school/service guidance in respect of physical contact with children and meeting medical needs of pupils where appropriate
- Be explicit about what physical contact is appropriate for adults working in their setting
Provide staff, on a "need to know" basis, with relevant information about vulnerable pupils in their care
- Make staff aware of most recent government guidance in respect of physical contact with pupils and meeting medical needs of children and young people in school

Other Activities that require Physical Contact

Positive physical contact, usually in the form of touch, is recognised as having a vital role in an individual's development therefore strategies to use touch must be balanced with guidelines that safeguard learners and staff.

Safeguarding learner's needs is central to our work. If we recognise physical contact as important educationally, emotionally, socially and physically we must also recognise the need to keep learners and staff safe from inappropriate or unwanted touch and provide an open, honest environment where everyone can discuss issues around physical contact.

Adults should:

- Treat children with dignity and respect and avoid contact with intimate parts of the body
- Always explain to a child the reason why contact is necessary and what form that contact will take
- Seek consent of parents where a child or young person is unable to do so because of a disability.
- Consider alternatives, where it is anticipated that a pupil might misinterpret any such contact,

- Be familiar with and follow recommended guidance and protocols
- Conduct activities where they can be seen by others
- Be aware of gender, cultural or religious issues that may need to be considered prior to initiating physical contact

The school will:

- Have up to date guidance and protocols on appropriate physical contact in place that promote safe practice and include clear expectations of behaviour and conduct.
- Ensure that staff are made aware of this guidance and that safe practice is continually promoted through supervision and training.

This list demonstrates the ways in which positive physical contact may take place, but will not be exhaustive.

- To develop learner's communication in an educational context
- Demonstrate acknowledgment of a person, greetings and goodbyes.
- To encourage interaction and extend the fundamentals of communication
- Reciprocate touch to show you have 'heard' someone.
- To give reassurance and emotional support
- To prompt an action or support continuing an action
- To initiate an activity e.g. using hand over hand.
- Massage for therapeutic and educational purposes.
- Encouraging the acceptance of touch, particularly for people who are tactile defensive.
- To explore tactile resources which stimulate interest and interaction.
- To show you are having fun together-a pre-requisite of good learning.
- To communicate a mutual enjoyment of another person's company, an appreciation of their personality and the gifts of their personality that they bring to college.
- *As part of an intensive interaction session.
- To meet learner's care needs:
- To provide medication.
- To assist in eating and drinking.
- To assist in personal care needs, including: going to the toilet, washing hands or face, brushing hair.
- To support mobility.
- To support a learner out of their wheelchair for positive positioning and back to their wheelchair.
- To support a learner whilst out of their wheelchair, following a physiotherapy plan.
- To prevent dangerous situations to the learner or to others.

*The use of Intensive Interaction as an approach to build relationships and develop communication may involve the use of physical contact that can appear as unusual and therefore it is important that staff, parents, carers, and multi-disciplinary team are supported to understand the purpose of intensive interaction strategies. These will be recorded on Plans and shared with parents and carers in Reviews

Behaviour Management

Adults should:

- Not use force as a form of punishment
- Try to defuse situations before they escalate
- Inform parents of any behaviour management techniques used adhere to the school's behaviour management policy
- Be mindful of factors which may impact upon a child or young person's behaviour e.g. bullying, abuse and where necessary take appropriate action or on behalf of pupils.
- Where children display difficult or challenging behaviour, adults must follow the behaviour policy outlined by their school or service and use strategies appropriate to the circumstance and 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 child has specific needs in respect of particularly challenging behaviour, a positive handling plan may be drawn up and agreed by all parties.

The school will:

- Have in place appropriate behaviour management policies
- Where appropriate, develop positive handling plans in respect of an individual child or young person.

Use of Control and Physical Intervention

Adults should:

- Adhere to the school's physical intervention policy and PROACT- SCIPR-UK[®] philosophy
- Always seek to defuse situations
- Always use minimum force for the shortest period necessary
- Record and report as soon as possible after the event any incident where physical intervention has been used.

The school will:

- Have a policy on the use of physical intervention in place that complies with government guidance and legislation and describes the context in which it is appropriate to use physical intervention
- Ensure that an effective recording system is in place which allows for incidents to be tracked and monitored
- Ensure adults are familiar with the above
- Ensure that staff are appropriately trained in PROACT- SCIPR-UK[®]

Children and Young People in Distress

Adult should:

- Consider the way in which they offer comfort and reassurance to a distressed child and do it in an age appropriate way
- Be circumspect in offering reassurance in one to one situations, but always record such actions in these circumstances
- Follow professional guidance or code of practice
- Never touch a child in a way which may be considered indecent
- Record and report situations which may give rise to concern from either party
- Not assume that all children seek physical comfort if they are distressed

Intimate Care

Adults should:

- Adhere to the school/service's intimate care guidelines or code of practice
- Make other staff aware of the task being undertaken
- Explain to the child what is happening
- Consult with senior managers and parents/carers where any variation from agreed procedure/care plan is necessary
- Record the justification for any variations to the agreed procedure/care plan and share this information with parents
- Ensure that any changes to the agreed care plan are discussed, agreed and recorded.

Personal Care

Adults *should*:

- Avoid any physical contact when children are in a state of undress
- Avoid any visually intrusive behaviour
- Where there are changing rooms announce their intention of entering

This means that adults should not:

- Change in the same place as children
- Shower or bathe with children

- Assist with any personal care task which a child or young person can undertake by themselves

First Aid and Administration of Medication

The school will:

- Ensure staff understand the extent and limitations of their role in applying basic care and hygiene tasks for minor abrasions and understand where an injury requires more experienced intervention
- Ensure there are trained and named individuals to undertake first aid responsibilities
- Ensure training is regularly monitored and updated
- Always ensure that arrangements are in place to obtain parental consent for the administration of first aid or medication

This means that adults should:

- Adhere to the school/service's policy for administering first aid or medication
- Comply with the necessary reporting requirements
- Make other adults aware of the task being undertaken
- Explain to the child what is happening.
- Always act and be seen to act in the child's best interests
- Report and record any administration of first aid or medication
- Have regard to any health plan which is in place
- Always ensure that an appropriate health/risk assessment is undertaken prior to undertaking certain activities

One to One Situations

Adults should:

- Ensure that when lone working is an integral part of their role, full and appropriate risk assessments have been conducted and agreed.
- Avoid meetings with a child or young person in remote, secluded areas,
- Always inform other colleagues and/or parents/carers about the contact(s) beforehand, assessing the need to have them present or close by
- Avoid use of 'engaged' or equivalent signs wherever possible. Such signs may create an opportunity for secrecy or the interpretation of secrecy
- Always report any situation where a child becomes distressed or angry to a senior colleague
- Carefully consider the needs and circumstances of the child/children when in one to one situations

Home Visits

Adults should:

- Agree the purpose for any home visit with senior management, unless this is an acknowledged and integral part of their role e.g. home tutors
- Adhere to agreed risk management strategies
- Always make detailed records including times of arrival and departure and work undertaken
- Ensure any behaviour or situation which gives rise to concern is discussed with their manager and, where appropriate action is taken
- Never make a home visit outside agreed working arrangements

This means that employers should:

- Ensure that they have home visit and lone-working policies of which all adults are made aware. These should include arrangements for risk assessment and management
- Ensure that all visits are justified and recorded
- Ensure that adults are not exposed to unacceptable risk
- Ensure that adults have access to a mobile telephone and an emergency contact person

Transporting Pupils

School will:

- Have appropriate policies for transporting pupils

Adults should:

- Ensure they are fit to drive and free from any drugs, alcohol or medicine which is likely to impair judgement and/ or ability to drive
- Be aware that the safety and welfare parents/carers of the child is their responsibility until they are safely passed over to a parent/carer
- Record details of the journey in accordance with agreed procedures
- Ensure that their behaviour is appropriate at all times
- Ensure that there are proper arrangements in place to ensure vehicle, passenger and driver safety.
- This includes having proper and appropriate insurance for the type of vehicle being driven
- Ensure that any impromptu or emergency arrangements of lifts are recorded and can be justified if questioned

Educational Visits and After-School Activities

Adults should:

- Always have another adult present in out of workplace activities, unless otherwise agreed with a senior manager
- Undertake risk assessments in line with their school/service's policy where applicable
- Have parental consent to the activity
- Ensure that their behaviour remains professional at all times(see section 7)
- Never share beds with a child/pupils.
- Not share bedrooms unless it involves a dormitory situation and the arrangements have been previously discussed with senior manager, parents and pupils

Photography and Videos

Adults should:

- Be clear about the purpose of the activity and about what will happen to the images when the activity is.

It is recommended that when using a photograph the

- Following guidance should be followed:
- If the photograph is used, avoid naming the pupil
- If the pupil 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.
- Be able to justify images of children in their possession
- Avoid making images in one to one situations or which show a single child with no surrounding context
- Ensure the child/young person understands why the images are being taken and has agreed to the activity and that they are appropriately dressed.
- Only use equipment provided or authorised by the school
- Report any concerns about any inappropriate or intrusive photographs found
- Always ensure they have parental permission to take and/or display photographs

This means that adults should not:

- Display or distribute images of children unless they have consent to do so from parents/carers
- Use images which may cause distress
- Use mobile telephones or any other similar devices to take images of children
- Take images 'in secret', or taking images in situations that may be construed as being secretive.

Access to Inappropriate Images and Internet Usage

The school will:

- Have clear e-safety policies in place
- About access to and use of the internet
- Make guidance available to both adults and pupils about appropriate usage.

This means that adults should:

- Follow their school/service's guidance on the use of IT equipment
- Ensure that children are not exposed to unsuitable material on the internet
- Ensure that any films or material shown to pupils are age appropriate

Overnight Supervision and Examinations

This means that:

- A full health and safety risk assessment should have been undertaken
- All members of the household should have the appropriate checks made.
- All arrangements should be made in partnership and agreement with the student and parents/carers
- Arrangements involving one to one supervision should be avoided wherever possible.
- Staff should have regard to any guidance that exists
- As much choice, flexibility and contact with 'the outside world', should be incorporated into any arrangement so far as is consistent with appropriate supervision
- Whenever possible, independent oversight of arrangements should be made
- Any situation which gives rise to complaint, disagreement or misunderstanding should be reported
- Schools should ensure that all arrangements reflect a duty of care towards pupils and staff

Curriculum

Adults should:

- Have clear written lesson plans
- Take care when encouraging pupils to use self-expression, not to overstep personal and professional boundaries
- Be able to justify all curriculum materials and relate these to clearly identifiable lessons plans.

This means that adults should not:

- Enter into or encourage inappropriate discussions about sexual activity or any behaviours which may offend or harm others

Whistle blowing

The school will

- Ensure they have appropriate whistle-blowing policies in place
- Ensure that they have clear procedures for dealing with allegations against staff which are in line with their Local Safeguarding Children Board's procedures.

This means that adults should:

- Report any behaviour by colleagues that raises concern regardless of source

Safeguarding - Sharing Concerns and Recording Incidents

Adults:

- Should be familiar with their school/service's system for recording concerns
- Should take responsibility for recording any incident, and passing on that information where they have concerns about any matter pertaining to the welfare of an individual in the workplace
- Report any concerns relating to the PREVENT duty, extremism and radicalisation to the safeguarding designated leads immediately.

- Ensure that they participate fully with face to face and online training and reading of relevant policies and documents. They are individually responsible for abiding by school policies and procedures.

This means that schools/services:

- Should have an effective, transparent and accessible system for recording and managing concerns raised by any individual in the workplace