KING'S HOUSE SCHOOL
RICHMOND

STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT

Member of staff responsible:	Head
Date of policy review:	September 2026
Date of next review:	September 2027
Approved by Governors:	September 2026

INTRODUCTION

The ethos and the character of King's House School are set by the adults who work at the school. This should be both positive and professional, and characterised by respect between members of staff, with parents and, also, with the children. This policy applies to all staff that work at King's House School and for the purposes of this Staff Code of Conduct, "staff" includes employees (including temporary employees), agency staff, peripatetic staff, coaches, club staff and governors. A separate version exists for volunteers. This policy should also be read alongside the Staff Handbook, which includes Standards for Teachers.

Staff have a crucial role to play in shaping the lives of the children. They have a unique opportunity to interact with children in ways that are both affirming and inspiring. This policy is designed to help staff appreciate what the expectations are when dealing with members of the School community. It also gives advice on how to establish a safe working environment for the children hence reducing the risk of staff being falsely accused of unprofessional conduct which may have a bearing on child protection.

It is the duty of every member of staff to observe this Staff Code of Conduct and the guidance should be followed unless there is a good reason not to follow it in a particular case. The School also has a duty of care to its staff, parents, guardians or carers and pupils and the implementation of the practices in this Staff Code of Conduct will help to discharge that duty.

SAFEGUARDING

King's House School treats Safeguarding as critical to all of its activities. All staff are trained during their induction and regularly thereafter, and are regularly reminded of the procedures for reporting concerns. All staff have read both the school's Safeguarding Children Policy and the relevant parts of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2026).

If a member of staff has a concern they should consult one of the following members of staff:

- Martin Shore, Deputy Head - the Designated Safeguarding Lead for Child Protection (DSL).
- Mark Turner, Head - the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL).
- Simon Gower, Head of the Junior Department - the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead for The Junior Department (DDSL - JD).
- Jane O'Brien, Head of Co-education Experience and Admissions, the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead for EYFS & Before and After School (DDSL - Nursery).
- Jo Reid, Nursery Practitioner and After School Care Manager the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead for Wraparound Care in the Nursery Department.

If staff feel that they are unsure about their training or the documentation they have read they should consult one of the above. Please remember that the safety of the child is paramount.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Principles for all staff

All staff should put the wellbeing, development and progress of all pupils first by:

- taking all reasonable steps to ensure the safety and wellbeing of pupils under their supervision;
- using professional expertise and judgement for the best interests of pupils in their care;
- demonstrating self-awareness and taking responsibility for their own actions and for providing help and support to pupils;
- 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;
- raising concerns about suspected child on child abuse, including suspected sexual harassment and/or sexual violence;
- being familiar with the School's Safeguarding procedures;
- knowing the identity of the current Designated Safeguarding Lead and their Deputies;
- being aware that they are in a position of trust (i.e. 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.

All staff should demonstrate respect for diversity and take steps to promote equality by:

- acting appropriately and in accordance with this Staff Code of Conduct, towards all pupils, parents, guardians or carers and colleagues;
- complying with the School's Anti-bullying, Equality and Disability Policy and this Staff Code of Conduct;
- addressing issues of discrimination and bullying whenever they arise; helping to create a fair and inclusive School environment.

All staff should work as part of a unified staff body by:

- developing productive and supportive relationships with colleagues;
- exercising any management responsibilities in a respectful, inclusive and fair manner;
- complying with all School policies and procedures;
- participating in the School's development and improvement activities;
- recognising the role of the School in the life of the local community;

- upholding the School's reputation and standing within the local community and building trust and confidence in it.

Additional principles for teachers

Teachers should take responsibility for maintaining the quality of their teaching practice by:

- meeting the professional standards for teaching applicable to their role and position within the School;
- reflecting on their current practice and seeking out opportunities to develop knowledge, understanding and skills;
- helping pupils to become confident and successful learners;
- establishing productive relationships with parents, guardians or carers by:
    - providing accessible and accurate information about their child's progress;
    - involving them in important decisions about their child's education;
    - complying with this Code.

Teachers should maintain public trust and confidence in the School by:

- demonstrating honesty and integrity;
- understanding and upholding their duty to safeguard the welfare of children and young people;
- maintaining high standards of behaviour whether inside or outside of normal School hours and whether on or off the School's site;
- maintaining an effective learning environment.

GUIDANCE ON STAFF / PUPIL RELATIONSHIPS

Allegations of unprofessional conduct or improper contact or words can arise at any time. Professionalism and vigilance are required so as to ensure the safety of children in our care, and to reduce the risk of an allegation of impropriety against a member of staff. This guidance applies to all adults working in this School, and not just teachers.

Forming inappropriate relationships with children or young people who are pupils or students at another school will be regarded as gross misconduct. It will also be treated as a low level concern or, if a child may have been harmed, it will be escalated in accordance with paragraph 12 of the Safeguarding Children Policy. Such behaviour tends to bring the School into disrepute and gives rise to concern that the staff involved cannot be trusted to maintain professional boundaries with pupils and students at the School.

You should be aware of the general guidance that will apply in all cases. In particular you must:

- exercise professional judgement but always act within the spirit of these guidelines. If you are involved in a situation where no specific guidance exists, you should discuss the circumstances with the Designated Safeguarding Lead or one of the Deputies. A written record should be kept that includes explanations for any action taken;
- be familiar with procedures for handling allegations against staff;
- be aware of the School's child protection procedures;
- seek guidance from the Designated Safeguarding Lead or one of the Deputies if you are in any doubt about appropriate conduct;
- report under the Low Level Concerns Policy (located under paragraph 13 of the Safeguarding Children Policy) any actions which could be misinterpreted, any misunderstandings, accidents or threats involving you and a pupil or a group of pupils to the Head. Any allegations against staff where a child may have been harmed should be referred directly to the Head under paragraph 12 of the Safeguarding Children Policy.
- You should take particular care when dealing with a pupil who:
    - appears to be emotionally distressed, or generally vulnerable and / or who is seeking expressions of affection;
    - appears to hold a grudge against you;
    - acts in a sexually provocative way, or who is inclined to make exaggerated claims about themselves and others, or to fantasise, or one whose manner with adults is over-familiar;
    - may have reason to make up an allegation to cover the fact that he or she has not worked hard enough for public examinations.

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 or one of the Deputies under the School's Safeguarding procedures.

It is vital that comprehensive records are kept. Any incident involving children that could give cause for concern, whether contemplated in these guidelines or not, should be recorded, with explanations for any action taken. In addition any incident should be reported promptly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or one of the Deputies, or directly to the Head if there is an allegation against a member of staff and a child may have been harmed.

Teaching staff and other staff in charge or control of pupils must maintain good order and discipline at all times when pupils are present on School premises and whenever pupils are engaged in authorised school activities, whether on School premises or elsewhere.

GUIDANCE ON STAFF / PARENT RELATIONSHIPS AND COMMUNICATION

Positive and professional relationships with parents, guardians or carers are essential at the School. This is paramount in maintaining trust, safeguarding the welfare of pupils, and protecting staff from allegations of inappropriate conduct or favouritism. Staff must be mindful that interactions with parents can influence perceptions of impartiality and professional judgement. Staff should raise any concern that they may have, or speak to their relevant SLT member or the Head if they have any questions.

You should be aware of the general guidance that will apply in all cases. In particular, you must:

- always maintain a professional tone and manner in all interactions with parents, guardians or carers;
- avoid creating relationships which could be perceived as overly familiar, exclusive, or secretive;
- ensure that communication focuses solely on matters relating to the child, school activities, or professional issues;
- use only approved school communication channels (e.g., school email, school platforms);
- ensure that written communications are professional, factual and capable of being formally shared or recorded;
- limit communication to reasonable working hours unless authorised due to specific operational needs;
- ensure that contentious or sensitive matters are handled face-to-face where possible, rather than prolonged written dialogue.
- exercise professional judgement to ensure that contact cannot be misinterpreted;
- ensure that conversations do not breach confidentiality, professional boundaries or safeguarding expectations.
- ensure gifts from parents should be managed in accordance with the Gifts, Rewards and Selection of Pupils section of this Code.
- ensure that impartiality and fairness can always be demonstrated.

Staff should not:

- engage in discussions with parents which stray into personal or intimate aspects of the staff member's or parents' private lives;
    - be mindful that personal information shared with parents may blur professional boundaries or can create safeguarding concerns.
- form private friendships or social relationships with parents that could compromise impartiality or give rise to perceptions of undue favour or advantage;

- engage in gossip, speculation, or disclosure of confidential information about pupils, colleagues or the School.
- use personal email addresses, personal telephone numbers or personal messaging apps (e.g., WhatsApp, SMS, social media messaging) to communicate with parents unless explicitly authorised by senior leadership and recorded;
- respond to messages from parents via private social media accounts — staff should instead redirect communication to official channels.
- arrange social meetings with parents for the purpose of developing a personal relationship;
- allow a personal relationship with a parent to influence decisions related to their child, or any other pupil;
- accept invitations to private events (e.g., parties, holidays, family gatherings) where this could be interpreted as creating a relationship of favouritism or indebtedness.
- offer gifts to parents or invite parents to their home or to social events

Staff should also be reminded of the Second Job Guidance in the Employee Handbook. It is a contractual obligation that staff do not work with pupils or families at the School; "[staff should not] receive any remuneration or reward for privately organised work with any pupil of the School" without the Head's written consent.

Any situation in which staff feel including, but not limited to the below list, must be reported to the Head / Deputy Head. A written record should be kept where appropriate:

- pressured into over-familiar communication,
- overwhelmed by parental expectations,
- uncomfortable due to tone, frequency or nature of contact, or
- Inappropriate interaction in a social setting

The School is aware that there will be members of staff that have pre-existing relationships with parents. The Head should be informed where an existing personal friendship or unavoidable relationship exists with a parent of a pupil, as soon as possible, in order to avoid any conflict of interest or creation of a situation that could bring the School into disrepute or put into question your suitability for your role at the School.

GENERAL CONDUCT

You should be aware that your conduct outside of work reflects upon the school and your suitability to work with children. The school will follow-up on any safeguarding concerns that are raised in relation to your conduct, regardless of whether those concerns relate to your conduct at work or outside of work.

You must take proper care when using School property and you must not use School property for any unauthorised use or for private gain.

You must not carry out on School premises any work or activity other than pursuant to your terms and conditions of employment without the prior permission of the Head.

You should be aware that the behaviour of your partner, other family members or friends may raise concerns. Such concerns will be given careful consideration as to whether they constitute a potential risk to children at the School.

ROLE MODELS

Pupils learn by example and the example set by staff in a school sets the tone for all that occurs. Professional standards of preparation, marking, punctuality, record keeping and loyalty are central to our lives at King's House School. Professional standards of conduct and dress are also expected at all times. By our own attitudes we should show that we care for manners, language, service and respect for the individual. We should also be aware of unconsciously moulding children's attitudes by absence from certain School events or by minimising the importance of activities we may personally not be interested in.

ATTENDANCE

As we all know, working in a school is not a 'nine to five' job. The greater the commitment of staff in both time and energy, the greater the rewards both in terms of enjoyment and results achieved. All full-time members of staff are expected to be at School at a suitable time to carry out any tasks that need completing before duties commence. Teachers are expected to arrive by 8.10am, and other staff according to their contracted hours. Once at School, full-time staff are expected to be available until the end of the School day whether or not they are teaching in the afternoon. Attendance at various meetings and evening events will also be required.

ADDRESSING CHILDREN

Staff should learn pupils' first names and use them as often as possible. Children should not be called by nicknames as although this may not be intended to have ill effects it may be construed as favouritism by other children. Children should never be referred to by a name that is undermining or hurtful.

ADDRESSING COLLEAGUES

Although children may not be around and staff will want to relax in the staff room, all staff must be aware that they are still at a place of work and must be sensitive to the feelings of others. Foul language, discriminatory references about sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, age, race, colour, disability, religion or belief, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity are unacceptable. At all times staff are expected to be courteous to their colleagues. Harassment and bullying of any kind are disciplinary offences and incidents will be dealt with under the school's disciplinary procedure.

ADDRESSING PARENTS

Communication with parents should always be characterised by a professional approach. Parents should be dealt with politely, their concerns listened to and responded to. In particular:

- Staff should avoid being late for meetings and be courteous throughout. When given sufficient time, staff should be thoroughly prepared for meetings. Meetings with parents of a formal nature should always be recorded and filed.
- If ever a member of staff feels uneasy about meeting a parent he or she should ask a member of SLT to attend the meeting. If a parent is rude or acts inappropriately the member of staff should politely terminate the meeting and inform a member of SLT.
- As with meetings, a written record of important telephone calls should be made and filed.
- Staff should endeavour to respond to emails within 24 hours, but this may be a holding email to acknowledge receipt of an email or to say that a concern raised is being looked into. It is good practice to say when you will get back to the parent with more detail. Generally, if it is likely to be a contentious issue a face to face meeting is preferable rather than emails going back and forth, the tone of which can be misunderstood. It is unprofessional to respond to emails during lessons.
- The Head, Head of JD, Head of Nursery or Bursar should be copied in on all contentious emails as appropriate.
- All letters should be written on headed paper and be approved by a member of SLT.

DUTY OF CARE

All staff have a duty of care. They are accountable for the way in which they exercise authority, manage risk, use resources and protect pupils from all forms of avoidable harm.

All staff have a duty to keep young people safe and to protect them from sexual, physical and emotional harm. Children have a right to be safe and to be treated with respect and dignity. Adults are expected to take reasonable steps to ensure the safety and well-being of pupils.

The duty of care 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.

TRUST

All adults working with children are in a position of trust. There is an inherent imbalance in this between a member of staff and a child which should never be abused for personal advantage or any other reason.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Members of staff should not divulge information of a confidential nature. Comments made by staff in the Staff Room or in meetings should be regarded as confidential. Safeguarding and Child Protection concerns supersede confidentiality. Such concerns must only be shared with the Designated Safeguarding Lead or one of the Deputies. The Deputy Head is the Designated Safeguarding Lead, the Head is the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Head of the Nursery and the Head of the Junior Departments are the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads in their respective departments.

PROPRIETY AND BEHAVIOUR

All staff have a responsibility to maintain public confidence in their ability to safeguard the welfare and best interests of the children. They should adopt high standards of personal conduct in order to maintain the confidence and respect of their peers, pupils and the public in general. An individual's behaviour, either in or out of the workplace, should not compromise her/his position within the work setting. This includes references on Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, Instagram and other internet sites or forms of social media.

Consumption of alcohol, while on duty, or the use of new psychoactive substances (formerly known as 'legal highs') or illegal drugs is not permitted on site nor must staff be under the influence because of the adverse effects they can have on efficiency and conduct. A member of staff's inability or physical incapability to carry out their duties due to the influence of drugs or alcohol will normally be considered gross misconduct and lead to summary dismissal.

LANGUAGE

Staff should use appropriate language at all times. Staff should:

- avoid words or expressions that have any unnecessary sexual content or innuendo;
- avoid direct personal contact with pupils outside the proper performance of their duties (e.g. in personal emails, text messages or on social media) and avoid displays of affection towards pupils either personally or in writing (e.g. messages in birthday cards);
- avoid inappropriate displays of affection towards fellow staff members either personally or in writing (e.g. messages in birthday cards, text messages, emails etc);
- avoid any form of aggressive or threatening words;
- avoid any words or actions that are over-familiar;
- not swear, blaspheme or use any sort of offensive language in front of pupils;
- avoid the use of sarcasm or derogatory words when punishing or disciplining pupils and avoid making unprofessional personal comments about anyone. Any sanctions should be in accordance with the School's behaviour management programme;
- 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 (e.g. drama or art). Staff should have clear lesson plans and should take pro-active care to avoid overstepping personal and professional boundaries.

DRESS AND APPEARANCE

As pupils are required to wear school uniforms, it is expected that all staff also present themselves in a professional manner, which may differ from their personal style of dress. A person's dress and appearance should befit that of a professional educational setting. Staff should ensure they are dressed decently, safely and appropriately for the tasks they undertake. This also applies when accompanying children on trips. Just as children may be required to wear casual clothing for certain outings, staff should wear attire that is suitable for the nature of the trip

Male staff should wear shirts with ties and female members of staff should dress to an equally smart standard. Clothing should not be low cut or revealing. Inappropriate items include flip-flops, jeans and short shorts. Dress should also be appropriate to the setting in which you are working. It may be appropriate for Nursery staff to wear more informal and practical clothing. PE staff are expected to wear King's House School sportswear.

Those who dress or appear in a manner which could be considered as inappropriate could render themselves vulnerable to criticism or allegation.

MEDICINES

If staff are using medication which may affect their performance or behaviour at work then they must inform their line-manager. All staff medicines should be stored away from access to children.

In the EYFS, staff must also seek medical advice if they are taking medication which may affect their ability to care for children.

GIFTS, REWARDS AND SELECTION OF PUPILS

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 children or parents wish to pass small tokens of appreciation to staff, e.g. at Christmas 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. Similarly, it is inadvisable to give such personal gifts to individual pupils.

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 criteria.

Where you are thinking of giving a gift or reward:

- it should only be provided as part of an agreed reward system;
- in all cases except the above, the gift or reward should be of little monetary value and should be discussed and agreed with the Head, senior leadership and the parent or carer;
- selection processes should be fair and where possible should be agreed by more than one member of staff;
- gifts should be given openly and not based on favouritism.

Decisions regarding entitlement to benefits or privileges such as admission to school trips, activities or classroom tasks must avoid perceptions of bias, grooming or favouritism. The selection process must be based on transparent criteria.

INFATUATIONS OR "CRUSHES"

A member of staff who becomes aware that a pupil may be infatuated with them or a colleague, should report concerns to the DSL immediately so that appropriate action can be taken. Suggestions that a pupil may have developed a crush should also be recorded. Staff should avoid being alone with pupils who have developed a crush on them. In this way, steps can be taken to avoid hurt and distress for all concerned.

SOCIAL CONTACT

Staff should not establish or seek to establish social contact with pupils for the purpose of securing a friendship or to pursue or strengthen a relationship. If a pupil or parent seeks to establish social contact, or if this occurs coincidentally, the member of staff should exercise her/his professional judgement in making a response and be cautious to avoid such social contact being misconstrued as grooming. Staff must not engage in social contact with pupils on any form of social media.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR CONTACT OUTSIDE SCHOOL

You should avoid unnecessary contact with pupils outside School. You should:

- not give pupils your home address, home telephone number, mobile telephone number or email address;
- not send personal communications (such as birthday cards or faith cards, text messages etc) to children unless agreed with the Deputy Head / Head;
- not make arrangements to meet pupils, individually or in groups, outside school other than on School trips authorised by the Head;
- avoid contacting pupils at home unless this is strictly necessary, and you should keep a record of any such occasion;
- not give a pupil a lift in your own vehicle other than on School business and with permission from the Head;
- avoid inviting pupils (groups or individuals) to your home unless there is a good reason and it has been approved by management.
- report and record any situation which may place a child at risk or which may compromise the School's or your professional standing;
- ensure that pupils do not see anything in your home that may cause embarrassment or that might become the subject of inappropriate gossip or rumour;
- never engage in secretive social contact with pupils or their parents, guardians or carers.

You should be aware that where you meet children or parents, guardians or carers socially, such contact could be misinterpreted as grooming. Any social contact that could give rise to concern should be reported to the DSL/ Head.

Members of staff who are friends with parents, guardians or carers 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, members of staff should still respect the above advice wherever possible and should keep the Head informed of such relationships.

The same guidelines should be applied to after School clubs, School trips, and especially trips that involve an overnight stay away from the School. There are separate, more detailed guidelines for school trips in the Educational Visits Policy. The principles of this guidance also apply to contact with children or young people who are pupils at another school.

COMMUNICATION WITH PUPILS (EMAIL, TEXT, TELEPHONE ETC.)

Adults should be circumspect in their communications with children so as to avoid any possible misinterpretation of their motives or any behaviour which could be construed as grooming.

Staff should not give their personal contact details to pupils including e-mail, home or mobile telephone numbers unless the need to do so is agreed with senior leadership, such as a point of contact on a School trip. If a pupil wishes to email a piece of work the teacher must insist that it comes from a school learning platform or school email address.

Adults must establish safe and responsible online behaviours. Adults should report to senior colleagues any new and emerging technologies which may have a bearing on School practices. Local and national guidelines on acceptable user policies should be followed. Staff should also:

- ensure that their own personal social media accounts are set as private and ensure that pupils are not approved contacts, including former pupils up to the age of 18;
- if personal social media accounts are not set as private, there should be no information that links the member of staff to the school i.e. listing their place of occupation on their 'Details' or 'About You' section
    - there is an exception to this being LinkedIn
- never view, use or access in any way social media accounts of pupils and not use internet, web-based or any other communication channels to send personal messages to pupils;
- not use their own equipment (e.g. mobile telephones) to communicate with pupils – they should use equipment provided by the School and ensure that parents, guardians or carers have given permission;
- only make contact with pupils for professional reasons;
- recognise that text messaging should only be used as part of an agreed protocol and only when other forms of communication are not possible.

Email or text communications between an adult and a pupil outside agreed protocols may lead to disciplinary and / or criminal investigations. This also includes communications through internet based websites.

SOCIAL MEDIA

The school recognises that staff will use social media outside of the workplace. However, it is important that staff understand the power of social media and the content that they post. Staff should:

- maintain a professional tone when posting about work-related topics;
- avoid offensive, discriminatory, or inflammatory language;
- use proper judgment before engaging in work-related discussions online;
- staff should not share confidential or proprietary information (including information about pupils, parents or other members of staff);
- avoid posting photos or videos taken inside the workplace without permission from the Head, Bursar or Marketing Officer;
- if staff are discussing the school online, clearly state that the views are personal to you and do not reflect the views of the school;
- staff should not post negative or defamatory content about coworkers, SLT, or the school;
- avoid "venting" publicly about workplace issues— if staff have concerns, these should be raised via HR or with their Line Manager instead following the school's grievance procedure, which can be found in the staff handbook.

USE OF MOBILE TELEPHONES

Mobile telephones should not be out in classrooms or teaching areas (except for multi-factor authentication purposes); please note that in EYFS areas, mobile phones are strictly prohibited and must be left stored away from the children in a locked area or office. Staff should never answer their telephones (or wearable devices such as smartwatches) or make calls when they are supervising the children in class or on the playground or when driving.

Exceptions to this would be when a member of staff is on duty either in the playground or at the front of school and there is a need to contact the emergency services or the School office on account of an incident and when PE and Games staff are out on the games fields and may need them for emergencies and unforeseen incidents. Staff on outings and residential trips should also have phones on them for emergencies.

PHYSICAL CONTACT AND RESTRICTIVE INTERVENTION

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. All staff should have regard to the School's Safe Handling Policy.

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

Physical contact, which occurs regularly with an individual child or young person, is likely to raise questions unless the justification for this is part of a formally agreed plan (for example in relation to pupils with physical disabilities).

Some staff, for example, those who work with younger pupils, who teach PE and games, or who offer music tuition will, on occasions, have to initiate physical contact with pupils in order to comfort the children, support them so they can perform a task safely, to demonstrate the use of a particular piece of equipment/instrument or assist them with an exercise. This should be done where possible with the pupil's agreement. Contact under these circumstances should be for the minimum time necessary to complete the activity and take place in an open environment. Staff should remain sensitive to any discomfort expressed verbally or non-verbally by the child. With younger pupils touching to provide for comfort should be for no longer than is reasonably needed.

THE USE OF RESTRICTIVE INTERVENTIONS, INCLUDING FORCE

The School's approach to the use of restrictive interventions, including reasonable force and seclusion, is set out in the school's Safe Handling Policy, available on the school website.

Reasonable force means using no more force than is needed, for the least time possible. Seclusion involves keeping a pupil confined to a place away from others.

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 or non-physical restrictive interventions should be avoided if possible. However, by law, teaching staff, and other staff who are authorised by the Head to have control or charge of pupils, may use reasonable force to prevent a pupil from doing, or continuing to do any of the following:

- committing a criminal offence;
- injuring themselves or others;
- causing damage to property, including their own;
- engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to good order and discipline at the School or among any of its pupils, whether that behaviour occurs in a classroom or elsewhere.

This applies when a teacher, or other authorised person, is on School premises and when he or she is in control or charge of the pupil elsewhere, for example on a field trip or other authorised

out of school activity. It only applies where no other form of control is available and where it is necessary to intervene.

You should proactively attempt to prevent situations escalating to the point where restrictive intervention is required, using de-escalation strategies, positive behaviour management, and consideration of individual pupil needs and behaviour plans. Before intervening, you should, wherever practicable, tell the pupil to stop and what will happen if he or she does not. Staff should be especially mindful when using interventions with children with SEN or disabilities, of the additional vulnerability of these groups.

You should continue attempting to communicate with the pupil throughout the incident and should make it clear that intervention will stop as soon as it ceases to be necessary. You should always avoid touching or holding a pupil in a way that might be considered indecent. You should also avoid any form of aggressive contact such as holding, pushing, pulling or hitting which could amount to a criminal assault, nor act in a way that might reasonably be expected to cause injury.

If physical restraint has been used, you must inform a member of the Senior Leadership Team. This is to help prevent any misunderstanding or misrepresentation of the incident, and it will be helpful in the event of a complaint. The School will record and report restrictive interventions, including significant uses of force, seclusion and restraint, as soon as reasonably practical. This should include written and signed accounts of those involved, including the pupil. The parents/carers will be informed as soon as reasonably practicable, and where possible the same day.

The law allows anyone to defend themselves against an attack provided they do not use more force than is necessary. Similarly, where a pupil is at risk of immediate injury or on the point of inflicting injury on someone else, any member of staff (whether authorised or not) would be entitled to intervene.

There is no precise legal definition of reasonable force. It will always depend on the circumstances. Note that:

- any use of force should be proportionate to the behaviour of the pupil involved and the seriousness of the harm prevented;
- physical force could not be justified to prevent a pupil from committing a trivial misdemeanour;
- any force should always be the minimum needed to achieve the desired result;
- whether it is reasonable to use force and the degree of force that could be reasonably employed might also depend on the age, understanding and sex of the pupil.

PHYSICAL CONTACT IN OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES

Physical contact with a pupil may be necessary and beneficial in order to demonstrate a required action, or a correct technique in, for example, singing and other music lessons or during PE, sports and games. Any physical contact should be in response to the pupil's needs, of limited duration and appropriate to the pupil's age, stage of development, gender, religion, ethnicity and background. Physical contact can be easily misinterpreted and should be limited. Staff should use professional judgement.

You should observe the following guidelines (where applicable):

- explain the intended action to the pupil;
- do not proceed with the action if the pupil appears to be apprehensive or reluctant, or if you have other concerns about the pupil's likely reaction;
- ensure that the door is open and if you are in any doubt, ask a colleague or another pupil to be present during the demonstration;
- consider alternatives if it appears likely that the pupil might misinterpret the contact.

If you are at all concerned about any instance of physical contact, inform a member of SLT without delay, and make a written record on the pupil's file if necessary, and send a copy to the appropriate member of SLT.

Touching may be appropriate where a pupil is in distress and needs comforting. This may include age appropriate physical contact. You should use your own professional judgement when you feel a pupil needs this kind of support and should be aware of any special circumstances relating to the pupil. For example, a child who has been abused may find physical contact particularly difficult. If you believe such action could be misinterpreted, the DSL or one of the Deputies should be informed of the incident and the circumstances should be recorded in writing as soon as possible and, if appropriate, a copy placed on the child's file.

When administering first aid you should explain to the child what is happening and ensure that another adult is present or is aware of the action being taken. The treatment must meet the School's health and safety at work rules and intimate care guidelines, and parents, guardians or carers should be informed. Staff should:

- adhere to the School's policy on administering first aid / medication;
- comply with the necessary reporting requirements;
- make other adults aware of the task that is being undertaken;
- explain what is happening;

- report and record the administration of first aid;
- have regard to any health plans;
- ensure that an appropriate health / risk assessment is undertaken prior to undertaking certain activities.

Sometimes intimate care is required, for example when assisting with toileting or removing wet clothes. You should:

- comply with the School's guidelines for changing and assisting with toileting;
- advise other staff of the task being undertaken and consult where there is any change from the agreed procedure. A record should be kept of the justification for any variations and this information should be shared with parents, guardians or carers;
- explain to the child what is happening;
- comply with applicable professional codes of practice, as appropriate;
- comply with regularly reviewed, formally agreed plans, as appropriate.

Where a child has previously been abused, staff should be informed on a 'need to know' basis, and should be extra cautious when considering the necessity of physical contact. Some children may seek inappropriate physical contact. Staff should sensitively deter the pupil and help them understand the importance of personal boundaries. Such incidents should be reported and discussed with the DSL or one of the deputy DSLs, guardians or carers.

Some children may need more physical contact to assist their everyday learning, which should be agreed and understood by all concerned, justified, openly applied and open to scrutiny.

SHOWERS AND CHANGING

Young people are entitled to respect and privacy when changing clothes or taking a shower. However, there needs to be an appropriate level of supervision in order to safeguard young people, satisfy health and safety considerations and ensure that bullying or teasing does not occur.

Supervision should be appropriate to the needs and age of the young people concerned and sensitive to the potential for embarrassment. Where supervision is required, two members of staff should normally be present to safeguard young people as well as themselves.

Where possible, boys should be supervised by male staff and girls by female staff. However, this may not always be possible due to staffing arrangements or other circumstances. Where mixed-gender supervision is necessary, staff must act professionally and sensitively, maintaining appropriate boundaries and respecting young people's dignity and privacy at all times.

Where possible, staff should supervise from an appropriate position that allows them to safeguard young people without unnecessarily intruding on their privacy. Where appropriate, this should be from the corridor outside the changing or showering area, where staff are able to hear and monitor activity without directly viewing the pupils. Staff should only enter where necessary to respond to a safeguarding, welfare of health and safety concern.

Young people must be informed, in an age-appropriate way, of the supervision arrangements and expected standards of behaviour. They should be given reassurance that their dignity will be respected.

In our Early Years, children are often changed in an unlocked bathroom cubicle, which is visible to other adults, and staff will always inform a colleague that they are changing a child.

You should:

- avoid physical contact or visually intrusive behaviour when children are undressed;
- announce yourself when entering changing rooms and avoid remaining unless required;
- not shower or change in the same place as children;
- not assist with any personal care task which a pupil can undertake themselves.
- not behave in any way that would cause embarrassment, distress or discomfort to a young person.

SAFE SLEEPING

When supervising children who are asleep, staff must prioritise the safety and wellbeing of the children. Sleeping children must always be appropriately supervised, with two members of staff present who remain awake, alert and able to respond promptly to any concerns.

Regular visual checks must be carried out, including monitoring breathing, position, colour and general wellbeing. Staff must ensure the sleep environment is safe and follows current safe-sleep guidance. Any concerns must be acted upon immediately, recorded appropriately and reported in accordance with safeguarding procedures.

Staff may use the nursery iPad for appropriate nursery-related work while children are sleeping, provided this does not affect supervision. Staff may agree between themselves who is completing a short task and who is maintaining closer observation; however, both staff must remain aware of the children and able to respond immediately.

Children must remain within sight and hearing at all times, and staff must remain alert and continue all required sleep checks. The iPad must be positioned so it does not obstruct the view of the children and must be put down immediately if a child requires attention.

Staff must not access personal social media, shopping or entertainment. Photographs or videos of children must not be taken while they are sleeping.

If there is any doubt about whether iPad use is affecting supervision, the iPad must be put away.

BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT

All pupils have a right to be treated with respect and dignity. Corporal punishment is unlawful in all schools. Equally, staff should not use any form of degrading treatment to punish a pupil. The use of humour can help to defuse a situation. The use of sarcasm or demeaning or insensitive comments towards pupils is not acceptable in any situation. Idiosyncratic punishments should be avoided.

ONE-TO-ONE SITUATIONS

Staff working in one-to-one situations with children and young people may be more vulnerable to allegations. Teachers and others should recognise this possibility and plan and conduct such meetings accordingly. Every attempt should be made to ensure the safety and security needs of both staff and pupils are met. Pre-arranged meetings with pupils away from the school premises should not be permitted unless approval is obtained from their parent and the Head or member of SLT with delegated authority.

ONE-TO-ONE MEETINGS

If you are teaching one pupil, or conducting a one-to-one meeting or teaching session with a pupil, you should take particular care in the following ways:

- when working alone with a pupil as an integral part of your role you should carry out a risk assessment which will be approved by the DSL or one of his deputies;
- 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;
- 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 flirtation or sexual advance;
- report any incident that causes you concern to the DSL or one of the deputy DSLs 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 the DSL/ Head;
- where the one-to-one session is online (for example, using a platform such as Zoom or Teams), ensure that a senior member of staff is aware of the session and, wherever possible, arrange for a parent to be in the same room, or alternatively, ask a colleague or a member of SLT to join the session.

PRE-ARRANGED MEETINGS

Pre-arranged meetings with pupils outside school should not be permitted unless approval is obtained from their parents, guardians or carers and the DSL / Head. If you are holding such a meeting, you should inform colleagues before the meeting.

HOME VISITS

All work with pupils and parents should, wherever possible, be undertaken in the School. If a home visit is arranged ensure there is visual access and/or an open door in one-to-one situations, and SLT is informed of the arrangements.

In some circumstances home visits are necessary. You should:

- discuss the purpose of any visit with senior colleagues and adhere to any agreed work plan / contract;
- follow the risk management strategy and ensure appropriate risk assessments are in place. Where there is insufficient information to complete a risk assessment, ensure that you are accompanied by a colleague;
- not visit unannounced if this can be avoided;
- leave the door open where you will be alone with pupils;
- keep records detailing times of arrival and departure, and work undertaken;
- ensure that any behaviour or situation that gives rise to a concern is reported and actioned;
- discuss with your manager anything that gives cause for concern and refer to other agencies if felt appropriate;
- have a mobile telephone and an emergency contact.

Pupils should not be in or invited into the personal living space of any member of staff, unless agreed with the parents, guardians or carers and the DSL / Head. Pupils should not be asked to assist with chores or tasks in the personal living space. Personal living spaces should not be used as an additional resource for the School.

TRANSPORTING CHILDREN

Wherever possible and practicable it is advisable that transport is undertaken other than in private vehicles, with at least one adult additional to the driver acting as an escort. Staff should ensure that their behaviour is safe and that the transport arrangements and the vehicle meet all legal requirements. They should ensure that the vehicle is roadworthy and appropriately insured and that the maximum capacity is not exceeded. Ensure that they are never alone with a child.

There may be some situations when staff are required to transport pupils. You should:

- ensure that you are fit to drive (which includes having had enough sleep) 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 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, you should avoid using private vehicles and should try and have one adult additional to the driver to act as an escort.

ACCEPTABLE USE OF TECHNOLOGIES

Staff should ensure that they are familiar with and comply with the School's Internet Safety Policy and the Staff IT Acceptable Use Policy at all times. In particular, staff must:

- not engage in inappropriate use of social network sites which may bring themselves, the School or the School community into disrepute;
- adopt the highest security settings on any personal profiles they have;
- remain mindful of their digital footprint and exercise caution in all their use of social media or any other web based presence they have. This includes written content, videos or photographs and views expressed either directly or by 'liking' certain pages or posts or following certain individuals or groups; and
- not contact pupils, their guardians or family members, accept or initiate friend requests or follow pupils' or their guardians' accounts on any social media platform.

EDUCATIONAL VISITS AND AFTER-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

During school activities that take place off the School site or out of School hours, a more relaxed discipline or informal dress code may be acceptable. However, staff remain in a position of trust and need to ensure that their behaviour cannot be interpreted as inappropriate.

Where out of School activities include overnight stays, careful consideration needs to be given to sleeping arrangements. Pupils, staff and parents should be informed of these prior to the start of the trip. Staff on the trip should ensure that checking arrangements do not place them in a position of vulnerability.

When taking part in educational visits, you should:

- follow the School's Educational Visits Policy;
- be accompanied by another adult unless otherwise agreed with the Head;
- undertake a risk assessment;
- obtain parental consent;
- never share bedrooms unless in a dormitory situation and arrangements have been discussed previously with the Head, parents, guardians or carers and pupils.

PHOTOGRAPHY, VIDEOS AND OTHER CREATIVE ARTS

All staff should follow the School's Taking and Storing Images of Children Policy. Using images of children for publicity purposes will require the age appropriate consent of the individual concerned and their legal guardians. Images should not be displayed on websites, in publications or in a public place without such consent. The definition of a public place includes areas where visitors to the School have access. The School gets the permission of parents to use their photos when they start at the School. Staff should be aware of pupils whose parents have not granted this position. The School offices have their names.

When using a photograph the following guidance should be followed:

- Staff are not permitted to use their personal phone or camera, or other electronic devices capable of capturing images or video (e.g. for a School field trip). Images will not be stored at home or on memory sticks or used for any other purpose than School approved business. There is a supply of School cameras and iPads which can be used for photographs and video;
- the purpose of the activity should be clear as should what will happen to the photographs or videos. You must be able to justify images in your possession;

- all images should be made available in order to determine acceptability;
- images should not be made during one-to-one situations;
- ensure that the pupil is appropriately dressed;
- ensure that the pupil understands why the images are being taken and has agreed to the activity;
- only use equipment provided or authorised by the School;
- if an image is to be displayed in a place to which the public have access it should not display the pupil's name. Similarly where a pupil is named (in a School prospectus, for example) the name should not be accompanied by a photograph or video;
- all images of children should be stored securely and only accessed by those authorised to do so;
- images must not be taken secretively.

You should not take images of a pupil's injury, bruising or similar (e.g. following a disclosure of abuse) even if requested by children's social care; or make audio recordings of a child's disclosure. You must ensure children are not exposed to inappropriate or indecent images. Inappropriate material, such as pornography, should not be brought to work and you must not use School property to access such material. 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 under the School's child protection procedures immediately. Pupils must not be exposed to unsuitable material on the internet or via any other media and staff should ensure that any film or material shown is age appropriate.

SEXUAL CONTACT

Staff must not:

- have any type of sexual relationship with a pupil or pupils;
- have sexually suggestive or provocative communications with a pupil;
- make sexual remarks to or about a pupil;
- discuss their own sexual relationships in the presence of pupils.

Sexual relationships or contact with pupils, or encouraging a relationship to develop in a way which might lead to a sexual relationship are a grave breach of trust. The School will always follow up on any such allegations, which include making referrals in accordance with the Safeguarding Children Policy. It will usually also lead to disciplinary action and may also lead to criminal prosecution.

WHISTLEBLOWING

Staff should acknowledge their individual responsibilities to bring matters of concern to the attention of senior leadership and/or relevant external agencies (commonly known as "whistleblowing"). This is particularly important where the welfare of children may be at risk. All staff should be aware of the School's Safeguarding procedures and Whistleblowing Policy and will receive regular training and updates.

CONSEQUENCES OF BREACHING THIS STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT

It is in your interests to follow this Staff Code of Conduct so as to maintain standards of behaviour and your own professional reputation. A breach of this Staff Code of Conduct may be treated as misconduct and will render you liable to disciplinary action under the School's Disciplinary Procedure including, in serious cases, dismissal.

Allegations against staff will be handled in accordance with the Safeguarding Children Policy. Breach of the Staff Code of Conduct may be sufficient to reach the "harm threshold" set out in paragraph 12.2 of the Safeguarding Child Policy. Any breach of the Staff Code of Conduct which is insufficient to reach the harm threshold will be dealt with as a low level concern, in accordance with paragraph 13 of the Safeguarding Children Policy.

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 and to Teaching Regulation Agency will be made as soon as possible if the criteria for a referral are met. Any such incidents will be followed by a review of the safeguarding procedures within the School, with a report being presented to the Governors without delay.

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 and to the Teaching Regulation Agency as soon as possible if the criteria for a referral are met.

CONCERNS

Safeguarding:

For procedures for dealing with allegations or concerns about a child or disclosures / allegations of abuse, staff should refer to the School's Safeguarding Children Policy.

Low level concerns:

As part of our whole school approach to safeguarding, we promote an open and transparent culture in which all concerns or allegations about adults working in or on behalf of the School are dealt with promptly and appropriately. This includes any concern or allegation – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' - that an adult working with children may have acted in a way that:

- is inconsistent with this Staff Code of Conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work; and
- does not meet the harm threshold set out in Part 4 of the statutory guidance, KCSIE, or is otherwise not serious enough to merit a referral to the LADO.

Such concerns or allegations are referred to as "low level concerns" within KCSIE. The term "low level" does not mean that it is insignificant. Such behaviour can exist on a wide spectrum, from the inadvertent or thoughtless, through to that which is ultimately intended to enable abuse.

In order to create and embed a culture of openness, trust and transparency in which the School's values and expected behaviour set out in this Staff Code of Conduct are lived, monitored and reinforced constantly by all staff, it is vital that any such low level concerns or allegations are shared in accordance with the School's Low Level Concerns Policy which can be found at paragraph 13 of the Safeguarding Children Policy.

Any questions regarding low level concerns or allegations and/or the procedure for reporting them should be raised with the DSL and/or the Head.