



## STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT for contact with pupils

Giggleswick School is committed to safeguarding & promoting the welfare of all our pupils and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. **All staff must abide by the school's Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy, Equal Opportunities Policy, eSafety User Agreement and this Code of Conduct at all times.** If a member of staff does not follow these policies and this code, then disciplinary procedures may be invoked.

This Code of Conduct establishes the professional boundaries within which all staff should work. Its aim is to safeguard children and to support staff by providing a clear framework in which to work.

It is intended to encourage and sustain an atmosphere of mutual trust and to promote the positive, caring and professional relationships between staff and pupils that are essential in a boarding school environment.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. In order to fulfil this responsibility effectively staff and volunteers should make sure that their approach is always child-centred: at all times considering what is in the best interests of the child. **The welfare of the child is paramount.**

References made to 'child' and 'children' refer to children and young people under the age of 18 years; however, the principles of **this code of conduct apply to professional behaviours towards all pupils**, including those over the age of 18 years. 'Child' should therefore be read to mean **any pupil** at Giggleswick School.

Staff 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. Staff should work, and be seen to work, in an open and transparent way. A **culture of self-referral** is essential.

Adults are expected to make judgements about their behaviour in order to secure the best interests and welfare of the pupils in their charge and, in so doing, will be seen to be acting reasonably. Staff should always consider whether their actions are warranted, proportionate, safe and applied equitably.

As a co-educational school Giggleswick has a policy of attaching members of staff of both genders to each boarding House. This ensures all pupils have access to staff who offer a variety of perspectives and provide pupils with a family-style environment in which to develop.

All staff and volunteers (including non-teaching staff) undergo an Enhanced Disclosure check with the Disclosure & Barring Service prior to commencing employment. . A satisfactory enhanced disclosure must be received for all staff before employment commences. Staff are asked to read and confirm in writing their understanding of this Code of Conduct as part of the induction process.

The school has a **Whistleblowing Policy** to enable members of staff to raise concerns internally and in a confidential fashion about fraud, malpractice, health and safety, criminal offences, miscarriages of justice, and failure to comply with legal obligations, inappropriate behaviour or unethical conduct.

Staff should be aware that a breach of this code of conduct, the law and other professional guidelines could result in formal disciplinary action being taken against them by the school, criminal action and/or other proceedings including barring by the Disclosure and Barring Service from working in regulated activity, or for acts of serious misconduct prohibition from teaching by the Teacher Regulation Agency (TRA).



## 1. SELF-REFERRAL & SHARING CONCERNS

Whilst every attempt has been made to cover a wide range of situations, it is recognised that any guidance cannot cover all eventualities.

- 1.1 There may be times when professional judgments are made or actions taken in the best interests of a child in situations not covered by this document or related policies. In such circumstances staff should **act reasonably**, record what has taken place and the justification for it.
- 1.2 Staff must always advise the DSL/s and/or the Headmaster/s as soon as possible if they encounter a situation:
  - with which they are unfamiliar
  - which they feel is not covered by this Code of Conduct
  - where they or a pupil has felt uncomfortable or embarrassed
- 1.3 If a member of staff is concerned that a colleague may have breached the Staff Code of Conduct this should be reported to the Headmaster or Head of the Junior School in accordance with the Safeguarding Policy.

## 2. STAFF, PARENT & PUPIL RELATIONSHIPS

- 2.1 Staff must always think carefully about their own conduct and the way in which they build relationships. Any sexual behaviour by a member of staff with or towards a pupil is unacceptable. Sexual activity involves physical contact and non-contact activities, such as causing pupils to engage in or watch sexual activity.
- 2.2 All adults working with students in education settings are in a position of trust in relation to the young people in their care.

Staff should be aware that:

- some actions may be misconstrued by pupils as unprofessional conduct. Therefore staff should all be alert to situations where they and other staff (including visiting staff and volunteers) are potentially vulnerable to false allegations of abuse
  - inappropriate behaviour with or towards children or pupils of any age is unacceptable and likely to constitute gross misconduct. In particular, it is an offence for a person aged 18 or over to have a sexual relationship with a child under 18 where that person is in a position of trust in respect of that child, even if the relationship is consensual. A situation where a person is in a position of trust could arise where the child is in full-time education and the person looks after children under 18 in the same establishment as the child, even if s/he does not teach the child
  - the school is under a duty to consider making a referral to the TRA where a teacher has been dismissed (or would have been dismissed had they not resigned) for: unacceptable professional conduct; conduct that may bring the profession into dispute; or a conviction, at any time, for a relevant offence
- 2.3 Staff undertake appropriate training so that they are fully aware of those behaviours that may constitute 'grooming' and they are made aware of their responsibility to always report to the DSL/s and/or Headmaster/s any concerns about the behaviour of a colleague which could indicate that a pupil is being groomed.
  - 2.4 Staff may have genuine friendships and social contact with parents of pupils independent of the professional relationship. They should advise Senior House Staff or the DSL/s of any regular social contact they have with a pupil which could give cause for concern. They should also inform the DSL/s or Headmaster/s of any relationship with a parent where this extends beyond the usual parent/professional relationship. Any requests or arrangements where parents wish to use the services of a member of staff outside the workplace e.g. babysitting or tutoring should also be notified.



2.5 Pupils and children of members of staff must not be given access to keys and key codes or be allowed to enter sensitive or potentially dangerous places unaccompanied (e.g. Offices or Senior Common Room). They are not allowed in the Swimming Pool or Laboratories, unless accompanied by a member of staff. The Reprographics Room is out of bounds to pupils.

### **3. PHYSICAL CONTACT & RESTRAINT**

In general, there should be no physical contact between staff and students.

- 3.1 Physical contact should only take place when it is necessary in relation to a particular activity or circumstance. It should only take place in a safe and open environment i.e. one easily observed by others and last for the minimum time necessary. An explanation should be given to the pupil about why the contact is necessary and what form the contact will take before it is made.
- 3.2 Corporal punishment and smacking or any physical response to student misbehaviour is unlawful, unless it is intended to restrain the student from:
- causing harm or injury to him/herself or others
  - committing a criminal offence
  - causing damage to property (including their own)

In such situations 'reasonable force' may be used. The minimum force should be used for the shortest time needed. Staff should always seek to defuse situations and avoid the use of physical intervention wherever possible. Reasonable force may also be used to remove disruptive children from a classroom or event or to prevent a pupil from leaving where allowing the pupil to leave would risk their safety.

Any instance of restraint must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and the Headmaster/s immediately. A written record will be made and kept and parents informed. A restraint log is held by the JS Headmaster and the SS DSL

- 3.3 Exceptions to the 'no physical contact' rule might include:
- Comforting or providing personal care for the youngest pupils in the Junior School
  - Administering essential First Aid
  - The technical coaching of games, drama, music etc
  - In cases of distress where a student might benefit from an arm round the shoulder as he/she is taken to the Medical Centre, or a hand held when he/she is in pain
- 3.4 The Intimate Care Policy for the Junior School and the the Mill House Pre-school Personal Care Policy contains specific additional guidance regarding personal care for the younger pupils.
- 3.5 Any physical contact should be in response to the child's needs at the time, of limited duration and appropriate to their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background.
- 3.6 Physical contact should never be secretive, or for the gratification of the adult, or represent a misuse of authority. If an action is observed which is possibly abusive the incident and circumstances should be reported immediately to the DSL/s and/or Headmaster/s.
- 3.7 Staff should be aware that minor forms of physical contact or any physical contact can be misinterpreted by a child and therefore makes staff vulnerable; it may also be the last thing that a child wants. So staff must be certain to avoid physical contact which might in any way be deemed inappropriate, this includes horseplay or fun fights, sitting children on a knee. Staff should therefore be cautious of any demonstration of affection.



- 3.8 Staff must report any situation where inappropriate physical contact with a student has arisen to the Head of GJS or Deputy Head as quickly as possible. A contemporaneous written record should be made, giving factual details explaining why the contact was necessary and what form that contact took. For senior school pupils a copy of this should also be given to the relevant member of Senior House Staff.
- 3.9 For students with SEN, disabilities or with medical conditions we consider the risks carefully to recognise the additional vulnerability of these groups. We have Individual Welfare Plans (IWPs) and Learning Plans (LAMPs) which include positive and proactive behaviour support. These are drawn up by the SHS, the SENCO, and the DSL/s, where appropriate, alongside the parents/guardians. It is important for staff to be aware of these plans for any child that they teach or support in a pastoral environment.

#### **4. MEETINGS WITH PUPILS (including one-to-one teaching)**

In order to ensure that pupils are fully supported pastorally and academically, one-to-one meetings between teachers and pupils or one-to-one lessons will at times be necessary.

- 4.1 Staff working in one-to-one situations with pupils can be more vulnerable to allegations or complaints, so meetings with pupils should always be arranged in line with the following guidelines:
- Meetings or lessons should always be held in an appropriate **location** (e.g. classroom or office with visual access) that can be overlooked and where possible with the door open
  - Other members of staff should be in close proximity
  - Always take a risk assessment approach and consider measures carefully, such as whether it might be better if another adult were present
  - Avoid the use of 'do not disturb signs' which can convey a sense of secrecy
- 4.2 Meetings should be **held during normal school hours**. Meetings with students off school premises or during term time or holidays should only take place with the prior knowledge and consent of the Head of GJS or Deputy Head and the pupil's parents.
- 4.3 The purpose and circumstances for any home visit must be agreed in advance with the DSL/s or Headmaster/s. A risk assessment should be undertaken in line with current Safer Working Practice guidance.
- 4.4 Staff should discuss and report any concerns about behaviour, mood or distress of a pupil in a one-to-one meeting/lesson to the DSL/s or Head of GJS immediately.
- 4.5 Staff (residential or non-residential) should not invite any pupils (including Personal Tutees) in their private living accommodation unless the reason to do so has been firmly established and agreed and it is with-the prior knowledge and consent of the relevant Senior House Staff or the Head of GJS.
- 4.6 Alcohol should never be served to pupils below the sixth form. No pupil should be given alcohol without the prior knowledge and consent of Senior House Staff and ideally it should only be offered when accompanied with food.

#### **5. PUPIL PRIVACY**

Pupil privacy should be respected. Staff should be sensitive to the pupils' needs for privacy and personal space. This is particularly so in changing and boarding areas.

- 5.1 In Houses, all members of staff should knock before entering a study bedroom.
- 5.2 To safeguard children and ensure that bullying or teasing does not occur it may be appropriate to supervise changing and showering of pupils in Year 7 & 8, at GJS, and at the Pre-school. This supervision should be appropriate to the needs and age of the



pupils concerned and staff should be sensitive to the potential for embarrassment. Staff should avoid any visually intrusive behaviour.

- 5.3 Staff should not change in the same place as students nor shower with them, and should only use lavatories designated for staff use.
- 5.4 In the senior boarding Houses all staff should avoid entering, except in the case of an emergency, the washing, changing and toilet facilities when they are in use.
- 5.5 In the senior boarding Houses staff of the opposite sex should not, in general, go into the sleeping areas after 2100. Where this is necessary, such as for the final check of the night, they should be in the company of a senior pupil or another member of staff.
- 5.6 Members of staff not attached to a particular boarding House, including maintenance staff, should seek the permission of staff of the relevant House before going beyond common room areas in that House.
- 5.7 At the start of each year and at regular intervals Senior House Staff should remind pupils of the guidelines above that relate to boarding accommodation. Pupils must know that they should change in private and that they should not wander into public areas such as corridors in a state of undress. They must be aware that adults will, at times, be in the boarding areas of Houses and that they also have a responsibility to conduct themselves appropriately to avoid embarrassment on either side.

## 6. COMMUNICATION

All communication with pupils should be considered.

- 6.1 Staff should not make commitments to pupils regarding **confidentiality**. Where the welfare of an individual or the wider school community is concerned this may not be possible.
- 6.2 Staff should consider the **language** that they use to and about pupils carefully. They should use discretion in conversations that cover sensitive matters and avoid making remarks of a personal nature.
- 6.3 Over-familiarity should be avoided. It is not appropriate for pupils to address members of staff using first names or nick-names during term time. Terms of endearment should be avoided as they can be easily misconstrued. Pupil nicknames must not be used in formal teaching situations.
- 6.4 All staff are expected to be familiar with the school's Equal Opportunities Policy and to support its aims. Staff are expected to respect the rights of others and to respect those with different beliefs; expressing a view in an unprofessional way that involved singling out pupils on grounds of sexuality, or presenting extreme views without balance on a topic such as politics or marriage for same sex couples, would be considered inappropriate.
- 6.5 Staff should not undermine fundamental British values of the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect for and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and for those without faith. They should not attempt to influence or impose their personal values, attitudes or beliefs on pupils.
- 6.6 Conversations should be polite and courteous. Staff should not shout at pupils other than as a warning in an emergency. They should not use inappropriate language, swear at or in front of children, nor should they use sarcasm, demeaning or humiliating comments.
- 6.7 Staff should never discuss students (or their families) in the hearing of other students. Unsolicited personal remarks about another pupil, even if intended to be positive or jocular, are not appropriate.
- 6.8 Staff should not discuss sexual matters with or in the presence of pupils other than within agreed curriculum content (e.g. Biology, PSHCEe, and literature/RE) or as part of their recognised job role.



- 6.9 Staff should not give their personal contact details to children e.g. personal email address, home or mobile telephone numbers or details of web-based identities. If children locate these by other means and attempt to make contact, the adult should report this to their line manager and/or DSL/s. The child should be firmly and politely informed that contact cannot be made in this way.
- 6.10 Staff must not discuss their own relationships or personal life with a pupil, nor should they instigate a discussion about a pupil's own personal relationships unless there is a specific welfare concern. Staff should avoid being led into the disclosure of personal information about other members of staff.
- 6.11 Staff should congratulate pupils on successes and recognise their efforts; however, staff should not comment on disciplinary matters involving a pupil with which they are not directly concerned.

## **7. MOBILE TELEPHONES & DEVICES FOR LEARNING**

- 7.1 The Junior School including Mill House Pre-school is a mobile free zone for staff and visitors, so only school provided devices can be used in areas where there are children (they are permitted in office spaces and common rooms).
- 7.2 Unless there has been an explicit agreement with the DSL/s or Headmaster/s staff should not give their personal mobile numbers or personal email addresses to pupils, nor should they communicate with them by text or personal email. Where permission has been obtained to communicate in this way, it will be logged by the DSL/s.
- 7.3 Whilst there may be occasions (e.g. on a school trip) when it might be necessary for a member of staff to have a list of pupils' mobile telephone numbers, numbers of current pupils should not be stored on personal mobile telephones.
- 7.4 In general, members of staff should not contact pupils via the pupil's mobile telephone. The only exception to this may be in an emergency, for example a Group Leader on a school trip or Senior House Staff wishing to contact a pupil in their House.
- 7.5 Any messages or contact from pupils to a member of staff that could be interpreted as of a personal nature should be reported to the DSL/s.
- 7.6 Mobile telephones must be switched off in the Chapel and Dining Hall. They should be set to silent when teaching or coaching or in the Library. They may be used for professional purposes on campus, but in order to set an appropriate example, staff should avoid using their phones whilst in public areas during the school day. Personal calls may be taken in breaks and must be taken in private.
- 7.7 It is unlawful to use a handheld mobile telephone whilst driving.

## **8. SOCIAL MEDIA**

- Staff should adhere to the school's policies on eSafety and Information Systems Use at all times. Staff should take steps to keep their personal and professional lives separate.
- 8.1 Staff must not use Social Networking or gaming sites (e.g. instant messaging, Twitter, WhatsApp, Facebook etc) to connect or communicate directly with current pupils.
  - 8.2 Communication with students over 18 who are no longer on the school roll is at staff discretion; however, particular care should also be taken when accepting friendship requests from recent leavers. Staff should be aware that ex-students may be in contact with current students.
  - 8.3 Staff must consider their privacy settings on social media very carefully. They should be aware that actions that bring the school into disrepute could lead to disciplinary procedures being taken.



- 8.4 Where relationships or friendships exist between staff and those who are also parents at the school social networking is acceptable between them; however, caution must be exercised so that professional standards are always maintained.

## **9. PHOTOGRAPHY & MOVING IMAGES**

Staff must be able to justify why they are taking images and why they have images in their possession. Detailed guidance is available in the Taking, Storing and Using Images of Children Policy. Separate guidance is in place which must be followed in regard to taking and storing images of children in the EYFS (including Pre-school) and Junior School.

- 9.1 Photographs or moving images of pupils and children taken at school events should not be used for publicity or be posted onto publicly accessible websites by members of staff without the prior permission of the Senior Leadership Team.
- 9.2 Images should not be taken for personal use. Images should not be made in one-to-one situations.
- 9.3 Staff should be aware that some pupils and colleagues may not wish to have their photograph taken and be sensitive to this. Staff should refer to the list of pupils for whom parental consent has been withheld before publishing any images.
- 9.4 Staff should not take images of children in a state of undress or semi-undress or which could be considered as indecent or sexual.
- 9.5 Photographs or moving images of senior school pupils should be taken wherever possible using school equipment. In the Junior School and Pre-school images should only be taken using school equipment.
- 9.6 Careful thought should be given about how images taken of pupils are managed. They should be emailed to the marketing department or uploaded to a relevant folder in an appropriate shared drive on the school's network. As soon as they have been emailed or stored they should be deleted from personal equipment. If you require further guidance, please contact the Systems department.
- 9.7 Adults should not take images of a child'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

## **10. DRESS**

Staff should set high personal standards of dress and appearance, which promotes a positive and professional image.

- 10.1 Dress should always be professional and appropriate to the activity which they are undertaking. In general it must be smart and in good repair. Clothing must be modest, not revealing or sexually provocative, it should be culturally sensitive and free from contentious slogans. It should not distract, cause embarrassment or give rise to misunderstanding.
- 10.2 Teaching staff and office staff should wear smart business-like clothing. Senior school teachers and office staff are expected to wear a jacket, following a similar dress standard to that of the Sixth Form dress code. In the junior school jackets would be worn on formal occasions, such as Parents' Meetings. There is additional guidance for teaching staff in the Junior School and Pre-school.
- 10.3 Where practical work is involved teachers may wear suitable practical clothing. Sportswear should be smart and where possible only school branded clothing should be worn.
- 10.4 Teaching support staff wear clothing appropriate to their role (e.g. lab coat).
- 10.5 Non-teaching support staff should wear the uniform with which they have been provided.



- 10.6 Protective clothing should be worn during any relevant activity.
- 10.7 Staff should wear their identification badge at all times.

## **11. MEDICATION, SMOKING & ALCOHOL**

Staff should not consume or be under the influence of alcohol or any substance, including prescribed medication, which may affect their ability to care for children.

- 11.1 If staff are taking any medication they must seek medical advice to ensure that it does not affect their ability to care for children.
- 11.2 Staff medication when on school premises must be stored securely and out of the reach of children at all times.
- 11.3 Members of staff on duty must not be under the influence of alcohol or any other substance that may affect their ability to care for or respond to the needs of children.
- 11.4 Staff may not drive a school vehicle if they have consumed alcohol.
- 11.5 The school is a non-smoking campus and it is against the law to smoke in the premises. Staff should not smoke in front of pupils at school or on school trips. This includes e-cigarettes.
- 11.6 For guidance about administering medication or First Aid to pupils see the relevant policies.
- 11.7 There is specific guidance for Early Years (Nursery) staff who are taking medication in the Mill House Pre-school- Health, Illness and Medication Policy' with relates to the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework.

## **12. SCHOOL TRIPS**

This staff code of conduct applies on school trips. Staff have a duty to ensure their behaviour remains professional at all times.

- 12.1 Staff : pupil ratios and gender mix must be carefully considered as part of the early planning and risk assessment for a trip and should be agreed with the EVC, with advice from the DSL/s if required. Normally there will be a minimum of two adults.
- 12.2 All arrangements for a residential trip should have full, informed consent of parents.
- 12.3 Careful consideration should be given to sleeping arrangements. Staff accommodation should be suitably separate from that of pupils but enable them to provide adequate supervision. Staff should not share bedrooms with pupils.
- 12.4 Staff should take particular care when supervising pupils in the less formal atmosphere of an educational visit. Staff remain in a position of trust and must ensure that their behaviour cannot be interpreted as seeking to establish an inappropriate relationship or friendship.

## **13. TRANSPORTING PUPILS**

- 13.1 Staff must ensure they are fit to drive and free from any drug, alcohol or medicine that is likely to impair judgement or the ability to drive.
- 13.2 Where possible and practicable it is advisable that transport is undertaken in a school vehicle with at least one adult present in addition to the driver.
- 13.3 Staff must ensure the vehicle is roadworthy, appropriately insured and should carry out the necessary pre-journey checks.
- 13.4 Car journeys, particularly where a member of staff is taking only one or two students, must be approved and logged by the Head of GJS or the Deputy Head prior to the event. A risk assessment must be completed using the agreed guidelines.



- 13.5 Staff should not offer lifts to pupils to and from the games pitches or Chapel unless the need for this has been agreed with the Head of GJS or the Deputy Head.
- 13.6 Staff should never offer to transport pupils outside of their normal working duties, other than in an emergency, or where not doing so would mean that the pupil may be at risk. Any emergency lifts that are given must be justified and should be reported immediately to and recorded in the log by the Head of GJS or the relevant member of SHS.
- 13.7 It is a legal requirement that all passengers wear seatbelts and the driver should ensure they do so. The driver must also be aware of and follow current legislation regarding use of car seats for younger children.

## **14. VISITORS**

Any member of staff inviting a visitor to school must follow the Visitor Policy.

- 14.1 Visitors should wear visitor lanyards and should not be left without appropriate supervision.
- 14.2 Resident staff must follow the notification requirements of the Licence to Occupy agreement.

## **15. PRIVATE TUITION**

No private or **regular one-to-one teaching arrangements** should be made between staff, pupils and their families without the prior knowledge and consent of the Head of GJS or Assistant Head (Academic) and the knowledge of the relevant member of Senior House Staff.

## **16. INFATUATIONS & CRUSHES**

Any member of staff who receives a report, overhears something, or otherwise notices any sign, however small or seemingly insignificant, that a young person has become, or may be becoming infatuated with either themselves or a colleague, should immediately report this to the Headmaster/s or DSL/s. In this way appropriate early intervention can be taken which can prevent escalation and avoid hurt, embarrassment or distress for those concerned.

## **17. FAVOURITISM**

Pupils are acutely sensitive to what they perceive as favouritism. Staff should always guard against showing partiality or treating a particular pupil less favourably.

- 17.1 Staff should exercise care when selecting children for or excluding them from specific activities, jobs or privileges. Methods of selection should always be subject to clear, fair, agreed criteria.
- 17.2 Staff should be aware that consistently conferring inappropriate special attention and favour upon a child might be construed as being part of a 'grooming' process and as such would give rise to concern about their behaviour. Grooming is when someone builds a relationship, trust and emotional connection with a child or young person so they can manipulate, exploit and abuse them.

## **18. GENERAL**

- 18.1 Staff should be punctual.
- 18.2 Classes should not be left unattended, except in an emergency.



Reviewed by: MM Turnbull  
JR Mundell  
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The representatives on the staff Joint Consultative Committee

Review period: Annual  
Updated: August 2019  
Approved by Governors : November 2019 (at the Governors' Boarding & Pastoral  
Committee) – pending  
Next review date: August 2020

Linked Policies

Equal Opportunities Policy; Safeguarding Policy & Procedures; Visitor Policy; Whistleblowing Policy; Taking, Storing and Using Images of Children Policy; and eSafety User Agreement

Guidance

*Use of Reasonable Force*: advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies (DfE July 2013)

*Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings* (Safer Recruitment Consortium October 2015)

*Keeping Children Safe in Education*: statutory guidance for schools and colleges (DfE September 2019)

*Sexual Offences Act 2003*