Boundary Oak Staff Code of Conduct

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Introduction

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

This means that these guidelines:

*apply to **all** adults working in Education and Early Years settings whatever their position, role or responsibilities*

Overview

The School seeks to provide a safe and supportive environment, which secures the well-being and very best outcomes for pupils in their care.

This document should clarify what is expected in terms of professional behaviour; it gives clear advice about what constitutes illegal behaviour and what might be considered as misconduct. It also describes safe practice and which behaviours should be avoided.

> **If a member of staff does not follow this code of conduct this may lead to disciplinary procedures.**

There may be times when professional judgements are made in situations not covered by this document, or which directly contravene the guidance given by their employer. It is expected that in these circumstances staff will always advise their senior colleagues of their justification for any such action already taken or proposed.

All adults working in schools are responsible for creating an environment which is tolerant, respectful, fair and inclusive.

Staff set an example to pupils. They will:

- Maintain high standards in their attendance and punctuality
- Never use inappropriate or offensive language in school
- Treat pupils and others with dignity and respect
- Show tolerance and respect for the rights of others
- Not undermine fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
- Express personal beliefs in a way that will not overly influence pupils, and will not exploit pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law
- Understand the statutory frameworks they must act within
- Adhere to the UK Teachers' Standards, https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teachers-standards

Core Principles

- The welfare of pupils is paramount.
- Staff should understand their responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils
- Staff should exercise professional curiosity and know what to look for in order to help identify early abuse and neglect so that they are able to identify cases of children who may be in need of help or protection.
- Staff should adhere to the school's values in creating a culture of openness, trust and transparency where whistleblowing is encouraged and low level concerns regarding inappropriate, problematic and concerning behaviour are reported promptly.
- 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 acknowledge that deliberately invented/malicious allegations are extremely rare and that all concerns should be reported and recorded
- Staff should discuss and/or take advice promptly from their line manager if they have acted in a way which may give rise to concern
- Staff should apply the same professional standards regardless of culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and sexual orientation
- Staff should not engage in behaviour, either in or out of school, which will bring the school into disrepute. Examples of inappropriate behaviour include but are not limited to possession or consumption of illegal drugs, excessive alcohol consumption leading to inappropriate behaviour in public, overt sexual behavior, physical aggression and swearing in public.
- 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
- Staff should be aware that breaches of the law and other professional guidelines could result in disciplinary action being taken against them, criminal action and/or other proceedings including barring by the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) from working in regulated activity, or for acts of serious misconduct prohibition from teaching by the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA)

- Staff and managers should continually monitor and review practice to ensure this guidance is followed
- Staff should be aware of and understand the school's safeguarding policy, low level concerns policy, arrangements for managing allegations against staff and arrangements for reporting low level concerns, staff behaviour policy, whistle blowing procedure and the procedures of the relevant Multi-agency Partnership (MAP) as well as the procedures in the Staff Handbook
- Staff should work and be seen to work in an open and transparent way.
- Staff should discuss and/or take advice promptly from their line manager or another senior member of staff over any incident, which may give rise to concern.
- Records should be made of any such incident and of decisions made/further actions agreed.

Staff should apply the same professional standards in keeping with the School's Equal Opportunities Policy and **teachers** must adhere to the terms and conditions outlined in the school-teachers' pay and conditions document (STPCD) https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-teachers-pay-and-conditions and The Teachers Standards as set out by the Department for Education. These cover both teaching standards and personal and professional conduct. Teacher's performance will be regularly reviewed against these professional standards: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teachers-standards

All staff should know the name of their Designated Safeguarding Lead child protection arrangements and understand their responsibilities to safeguard and protect pupils. Staff should have read and understood KCSIE part one and annexe A and Working together to safeguard children.

Staff should be aware that breaches of the law and other professional guidelines could result in criminal or disciplinary action being taken against them.

Establishing Good Practice:

Minimising Vulnerability to Allegations

Always:

- work in an open environment. Avoid private or out of sight locations and encourage open communication.
- speak clearly, without whispering, so that pupils do not need to come close to hear
- avoid spending time alone with individual pupils away from others
- treat all pupils, regardless of race, disability, religion or belief, gender, sexual orientation, equally and with respect and dignity.
- ensure the pupil's welfare comes first and record it.
- be aware of the impact of proxemics; maintain safe and appropriate distances; Know where and how to place your body.
- avoid touching pupils, but where **educationally necessary** staff should follow these guidelines:
  - try to demonstrate without touching first
  - ask permission; say what you intend to do first and explain why

- if a pupil seems uncomfortable: stop
- only touch hands, arms or shoulder nearest you (don't reach across the body)
- be aware of overall proximity; maintain physical space; don't stand behind
- inappropriate areas for touch include: chest, diaphragm, waist, thighs
- move away as soon as the contact is no longer required
- maintain professional boundaries, perhaps using a specific mobile number or email address for work purposes, rather than sharing personal details
- present as an exemplary role model by not smoking or drinking alcohol, swearing, allowing suggestive conversations or jokes or wearing less than professional clothing when in the company of a pupil
- seek to be enthusiastic and constructive when giving feedback rather than making negative or critical remarks
- record any injury that occurs and seek attention from a qualified First Aider or parent.
- record any incident of concern involving pupil's welfare.

Never:

- allow allegations made by a child to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon (this applies to any form of abuse or bullying);
- lock doors, cover windows or use 'Do Not Disturb' signs;
- impose humiliating or power-based punishments on a pupil or reduce a child to tears;
- engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay;
- allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching
- share a bedroom with a child;
- allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged;
- make sexually suggestive comments or 'jokes' to a child, even in fun;
- engage in any form of relationship, sexual or otherwise, with a young person you work with even if they are over the age of consent, but under 18 (older with vulnerable adults);
- do things of a personal or intimate nature for children or disabled young people that they can do for themselves;
- invite or allow children to stay with you at your home unsupervised;
- 'friend' a child on their social media or yours; social media can blur boundaries;
- take photographs or videos of children unless written/signed consent has been obtained from a parent/carer; this includes the use of phones.
- seek physical contact. Try to gently discourage contact, rather than reject pupils. Model appropriate contact, eg. shaking hands or patting the shoulder. Never allow physical contact when you are alone.
- take a child in your car, but where this is unavoidable:
  - ensure that a manager has agreed in advance
  - prepare a risk assessment
  - ensure the vehicle is roadworthy and insurance covers business use
  - obtain parental permission, preferably in writing
  - take more than one person
  - sit child in the back
  - travel directly to the destination
  - keep conversation professional

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following related policies and procedures and complies with the Globeducate group policy:

- Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy;
- Use of Email, Internet and Communication Systems Policy;
- Social Media Policy;
- Health and Safety Policy;
- Anti-Bribery/ Anti- Money Laundering Policy; and
- Whistleblowing Policy.
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Physical Restraint Policy
- Low Level Concerns Policy

Responsibilities

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

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

The safeguarding culture of a school is, in part, exercised through the development of respectful, caring and professional relationships between adults and pupils and behaviour by the adult that demonstrates integrity, maturity and good judgement.

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

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

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

This means that staff should:

- *understand the responsibilities which are part of their employment or role, and be aware that sanctions will be applied if these provisions are breached*
- *always act, and be seen to act, in the child's best interests*

- *understand how to raise a concern and contact designated staff or partner agencies if they have a concern about a child, particularly if the normal arrangements have been amended*
- *avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions*
- *take responsibility for their own actions and behaviour*

This means that School should:

- *promote a culture of openness and support*
- *ensure that systems are in place for concerns to be raised*
- *ensure that adults are not placed in situations which render them particularly vulnerable*
- *ensure that all adults are aware of expectations, policies and procedures*

This means that the Directors should:

- *ensure that appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures are distributed, adopted, implemented and monitored*
- *update or amend their CP policy and other safeguarding policies in the light of DfE guidance on safeguarding children*
- *there is no trained DSL on site, a senior member of staff is identified to lead on safeguarding issues*

Making professional judgements

This guidance cannot provide a complete checklist of what is, or is not, appropriate behaviour for staff. It does highlight however, behaviour which is illegal, inappropriate or inadvisable. There will be rare occasions and circumstances in which staff have to make decisions or take action in the best interest of a pupil which could contravene this guidance or where no guidance exists. Individuals 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. These judgements should always be recorded and shared with a manager.

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

This means that where no specific guidance exists staff should:

- *discuss the circumstances that informed their action, or their proposed action, with their line manager or, where appropriate, the school's designated safeguarding lead. This will help to ensure that the safest practices are employed and reduce the risk of actions being misinterpreted*
- *always discuss any misunderstanding, accidents or threats with the Head teacher or designated safeguarding lead*
- *always record discussions and actions taken with their justification*
- *record any areas of disagreement and, if necessary, refer to another agency / the LA / Ofsted / ISI / TRA / other Regulatory Body*

Power and positions of trust and authority

As a result of their knowledge, position and/or the authority invested in their role, all those working with children in a school or education setting are in a position of trust in relation to all pupils on the roll.

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

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

Staff should always maintain appropriate professional boundaries, avoid behaviour which could be misinterpreted by others and report and record any such incident to a senior manager. This is as relevant in the online world as it is in the classroom; staff engaging with pupils and / or parents online have a responsibility to model safe practice at all times.

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

This means that staff should not:

- *use their position to gain access to information for their own advantage and/or a pupil's or family's detriment*
- *use their power to intimidate, threaten, coerce or undermine pupils*
- *use their status and standing to form or promote relationships with pupils which are of a sexual nature, or which may become so*

Confidentiality

The storing and processing of personal information is governed by the General Data Protection Regulations 2017 (GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018. Employers should provide clear advice to staff about their responsibilities under this legislation so that, when considering sharing confidential information, those principles should apply.

Staff may have access to special category personal data about pupils and their families which must be kept confidential at all times and only shared when legally permissible to do so and in the interest of the child. Records should only be shared with those who have a legitimate professional need to see them.

Staff should never use confidential or personal information about a pupil or her/his family for their own, or others advantage (including that of partners, friends, relatives or other organisations). Information must never be used to intimidate, humiliate, or embarrass the child. Confidential information should never be used casually in conversation or shared with any person other than on a need-to-know basis. In circumstances where the pupil's identity does not need to be disclosed the information should be used anonymously.

There are some circumstances in which a member of staff may be expected to share information about a pupil, for example when abuse is alleged or suspected. In such cases, individuals have a responsibility to pass information on without delay, but only to those with

designated safeguarding responsibilities or to statutory services.

If a child – or their parent / carer – makes a disclosure regarding abuse or neglect, the member of staff should follow the School's procedures. The adult should not promise confidentiality to a child or parent, but should give reassurance that the information will be treated sensitively.

If a member of staff is in any doubt about whether to share information or keep it confidential, he or she should seek guidance from the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Any media or legal enquiries should be passed to senior management.

This means that school leaders should:

- *Ensure that all staff who need to share 'special category personal data' are aware that the DPA 2018 contains 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' as a processing condition that allows practitioners to share information without consent, if it is not possible to gain consent, it cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent or if to gain consent would place a child at risk*

This means that staff:

- *need to know the name of their Designated Safeguarding Lead and be familiar with child protection procedures and guidance:*
- *are expected to treat information they receive about pupils and families in a discreet and confidential manner*
- *should seek advice from a senior member of staff (designated safeguarding lead) if they are in any doubt about sharing information they hold or which has been requested of them*
- *need to be clear about when information can/ must be shared and in what circumstances*
- *need to know the procedures for responding to allegations against staff and to whom any concerns or allegations should be reported*
- *need to ensure that where personal information is recorded electronically that systems and devices are kept secure*

Standards of behaviour

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

There may be times where an individual's actions in their personal life come under scrutiny from the community, the media or public authorities, including with regard to their own children, or children or adults in the community. Staff should be aware that their behaviour, either in or out of the workplace, could compromise their position within the work setting in relation to the protection of children, loss of trust and confidence, or bringing the employer into disrepute. Such behaviour may also result in prohibition from teaching by the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) a bar from engaging in regulated activity, or action by another relevant regulatory body.

The Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2018 set out grounds for disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 where the person meets certain criteria set out in the Regulations. For example, an individual will be disqualified where they have committed a relevant offence against a child; been subject to a specified order relating to the care of a child; committed certain serious sexual or physical offences against an adult; been included on the DBS children's barred list; been made subject to a disqualification order by the court; previously been refused registration as a childcare provider or provider or manager of a children's home or had such registration cancelled. A disqualified person is prohibited from providing relevant early or later years childcare as defined in the Childcare Act 2006 or being directly concerned in the management of such childcare. Schools and private childcare settings are also prohibited from employing a disqualified person in respect of relevant early or later years childcare.

The Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 (Regulations 2018) state that schools should make clear their expectation that staff should disclose any relationship or association (in the real world or online) that may impact on the school's ability to safeguard pupils. This applies to all staff in all schools, not just those in early or later years childcare.

This means that staff should not:

- *behave in a manner which would lead any reasonable person to question their suitability to work with children or to act as an appropriate role model*
- *make, or encourage others to make sexual remarks to, or about, a pupil*
- *use inappropriate language to or in the presence of pupils*
- *discuss their personal or sexual relationships with or in the presence of pupils*
- *make (or encourage others to make) unprofessional personal comments which scapegoat, demean, discriminate or humiliate, or might be interpreted as such*

This means that staff should:

- *inform the head or specified person of any cautions, convictions, or relevant orders accrued during their employment, and / or if they are charged with a criminal offence*
- *be aware that behaviour by themselves, those with whom they have a relationship or association, or others in their personal lives, may impact on their work with children*

This means that school leaders should:

- *have a clear expectation that staff will discuss with managers any relationship / association (in or out of school or online) that may have implications for the safeguarding of children in school*
- *create a culture where staff feel able to raise these issues*
- *safeguard their employees' welfare and contribute to their duty of care towards their staff*
- *identify whether arrangements are needed to support these staff*
- *consider whether there are measures that need to be put in place to safeguard children (e.g. by putting arrangements in place to stop or restrict a person coming into school where a potential risk to children has been identified)*

Schools must not:

- *ask intrusive questions of staff regarding those they live with or have relationships / associations with.*

Dress and appearance

A person's dress and appearance are matters of personal choice and self-expression and some individuals will wish to exercise their own cultural customs. However, staff should select a manner of dress and appearance appropriate to their professional role and which may be necessarily different to that adopted in their personal life. We regularly receive visits from parents, potential parents and others, and naturally wish to convey an impression of professionalism and organisation. Therefore whilst not wishing to impose unreasonable obligations, Staff are, nonetheless, required to look smart in appearance at all times.

Staff should ensure they are dressed decently, safely and appropriately for the tasks they undertake; this also applies to online or virtual teaching or when working with small groups on site (in the case of schools who remain open to vulnerable children or those of critical workers). Those who dress or appear in a manner which could be viewed as offensive or inappropriate will render themselves vulnerable to criticism or allegation.

Piercings and Body Art

All jewellery should be of a discreet nature, including body piercings. Body art, such as tattoos, both ink or henna should not be visible.

This means that staff should wear clothing which:

- *promotes a positive and professional image*
- *is appropriate to their role*
- *is not likely to be viewed as offensive, revealing, or sexually provocative*
- *does not distract, cause embarrassment or give rise to misunderstanding*
- *is absent of any political or otherwise contentious slogans*
- *is not considered to be discriminatory*
- *is compliant with professional standards*
- *in online engagement, is similar to the clothing they would wear on a normal school day*

Gifts, rewards, favouritism and exclusion

Settings should have policies in place regarding the giving of gifts or rewards to pupils and the receiving of gifts from them or their parents/carers and staff should be made aware of and understand what is expected of them.

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

There are occasions when pupils or parents wish to pass small tokens of appreciation to staff e.g.at Christmas or as a thank-you and this is usually acceptable. However, it is unacceptable to receive gifts on a regular basis or of any significant value.

Similarly, staff should not give such personal gifts to pupils or their families. This could be interpreted as a gesture either to bribe or groom. It might also be perceived that a 'favour' of some kind is expected in return.

Any reward given to a pupil should be in accordance with agreed practice, consistent with the school or School's behaviour policy, recorded and not based on favouritism.

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

This means that staff should:

- *be aware of and understand their organisation's relevant policies, e.g. rewarding positive behaviour*
- *ensure that gifts received or given in situations which may be misconstrued are declared and recorded*
- *only give gifts to a pupil as part of an agreed reward system*
- *where giving gifts other than as above, ensure that these are of insignificant value and given to all pupils equally*
- *ensure that all selection processes of pupils are fair and these are undertaken and agreed by more than one member of staff*
- *ensure that they do not behave in a manner which is either favourable or unfavourable to individual pupils*

Infatuations and 'crushes'

All staff need to recognise that it is not uncommon for pupils to be strongly attracted to a member of staff and/or develop a 'crush' or infatuation. They should make every effort to ensure that their own behaviour cannot be brought into question, does not appear to encourage this and be aware that such infatuations may carry a risk of their words or actions being misinterpreted.

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 headteacher or most senior manager. In this way appropriate early intervention can be taken which can prevent escalation and avoid hurt, embarrassment or distress for those concerned.

The headteacher (or senior manager) should give careful thought to those circumstances where the staff member, pupil and their parents/carers should be spoken to and should ensure a plan to manage the situation is put in place. This plan should respond sensitively to the child and staff member and maintain the dignity of all. This plan should involve all parties, be robust and regularly monitored and reviewed.

This means that staff should:

- *report any indications (verbal, written or physical) that suggest a pupil may be infatuated with a member of staff*
- *always maintain professional boundaries*

This means that senior managers should:

- *put action plans in place where concerns are brought to their attention*

Social contact outside of the workplace

It is acknowledged that staff may have genuine friendships and social contact with parents of pupils, independent of the professional relationship. Staff should, however, also be aware that professionals who sexually harm children often seek to establish relationships and contact outside of the workplace with both the child and their parents, in order to 'groom' the adult and the child and/or create opportunities for sexual abuse.

It is also important to recognise that social contact may provide opportunities for other types of grooming such as for the purpose of sexual exploitation or radicalisation.

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

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. This also applies to social contacts made through outside interests or the staff member's own family.

Some staff may, as part of their professional role, be required to support a parent or carer. If that person comes to depend upon the staff member or seeks support outside of their professional role this should be discussed with senior management and where necessary referrals made to the appropriate support agency.

This means that staff should:

- *always approve any planned social contact with pupils or parents with senior colleagues, for example when it is part of a reward scheme*
- *advise senior management of any regular social contact they have with a pupil which could give rise to concern*
- *refrain from sending personal communication to pupils or parents unless agreed with senior managers*
- *inform senior management of any relationship with a parent where this extends beyond the usual parent/professional relationship*
- *inform senior management of any requests or arrangements where parents wish to use their services outside of the workplace e.g. babysitting, tutoring*

Communication with children (including the use of technology)

In order to make best use of the many educational and social benefits of new and emerging technologies, pupils need opportunities to use and explore the digital world. Online risks are posed more by behaviours and values than the technology itself.

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

Communication with children both in the 'real' world and through web based and telecommunication interactions must take place within explicit professional boundaries. This includes the use of computers, tablets, phones, texts, e-mails, instant messages, social media such as Facebook and X (formally known as Twitter), chat-rooms, forums, blogs,

websites, gaming sites, digital cameras, videos, web-cams and other hand-held devices. (Given the ever-changing world of technology it should be noted that this list gives examples only and is not exhaustive.)

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

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

Staff should adhere to the School's policies, including those with regard to communication with parents and carers and the information they share when using the internet.

This means that adults should:

- *not seek to communicate/make contact or respond to contact with pupils outside of the purposes of their work*
- *not give out their personal details*
- *use only the equipment and internet services provided by the school or setting, unless school policies state otherwise*
- *only use internet-enabled personal devices in line with school acceptable use policies*
- *follow their school / School's acceptable use policy and online safety guidance*
- *ensure that their use of technologies could not bring their employer into disrepute*
- *not discuss or share data relating to children/ parents / carers in staff social media groups*
- *Lock down their profile to ensure that data and images are not freely available. Seek advice if they are unsure how to do this.*
- *Do not permit current and recent pupils or parents to have access to their profile*
- *Ensure all their passwords are kept strong and secure*
- *Be aware that images of others should be protected and be treated as carefully as they would their own*

This means that education settings should:

- *wherever possible, provide school devices such as cameras and mobile phones rather than expecting staff to use their own (e.g. on school trips)*

Physical contact

There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate and proper for staff to have physical contact with children, however, it is crucial that they only do so in ways appropriate to their professional role and in relation to the pupil's individual needs and any agreed care plan. Please refer to our Positive Touch Policy for further details.

Not all children feel comfortable about certain types of physical contact; this should be recognised and, wherever possible, adults should seek the pupil's permission before initiating contact and be sensitive to any signs that they may be uncomfortable *or* embarrassed. Staff should acknowledge that some pupils are more comfortable with

touch than others and/or may be more comfortable with touch from some adults than others. Staff should listen, observe and take note of the child's reaction or feelings and, so far as is possible, use a level of contact and/or form of communication which is acceptable to the pupil.

It is not possible to be specific about the appropriateness of each physical contact, since an action that is appropriate with one pupil, in one set of circumstances, may be inappropriate in another, or with a different child.

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. Adults should therefore, use their professional judgement at all times.

Physical contact should never be secretive, or for the gratification of the adult, or represent a misuse of authority. If a member of staff believes that an action by them or a colleague could be misinterpreted, or if an action is observed which is possibly abusive, the incident and circumstances should be immediately reported to the manager and recorded. Where appropriate, the manager should consult with the Local Authority Designated Officer (the LADO).

Extra caution may be required where it is known that a child has suffered previous abuse or neglect. Staff need to be aware that the child may associate physical contact with such experiences. They also should recognise that these pupils may seek out inappropriate physical contact. In such circumstances staff should deter the child sensitively and help them to understand the importance of personal boundaries.

A general culture of 'safe touch' should be adopted, where appropriate, to the individual requirements of each child. Pupils with special educational needs or disabilities may require more physical contact to assist their everyday learning. The arrangements should be understood and agreed by all concerned, justified in terms of the pupil's needs, consistently applied and open to scrutiny.

This means that staff should:

- *be aware that even well-intentioned physical contact may be misconstrued by the pupil, an observer or any person to whom this action is described*
- *never touch a pupil in a way which may be considered indecent*
- *always be prepared to explain actions and accept that all physical contact be open to scrutiny*
- *never indulge in horseplay or fun fights*
- *always allow/encourage pupils, where able, to undertake self-care tasks independently*
- *ensure the way they offer comfort to a distressed pupil is age appropriate*
- *always tell a colleague when and how they offered comfort to a distressed pupil*
- *establish the preferences of pupils*
- *consider alternatives, where it is anticipated that a pupil might misinterpret or be uncomfortable with physical contact*
- *always explain to the pupil the reason why contact is necessary and what form that contact will take*
- *report and record situations which may give rise to concern*
- *be aware of cultural or religious views about touching and be sensitive to issues of gender*

This means that education settings should:

- *ensure they have a system in place for recording incidents and the means by which information about incidents and outcomes can be easily accessed by senior management*
- *provide staff, on a 'need to know' basis, with relevant information about vulnerable children in their care*

Other activities that require physical contact

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

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

Guidance and protocols around safe and appropriate physical contact may be provided, for example, by sports governing bodies and should be understood and applied consistently. Any incidents of physical contact that cause concern or fall outside of these protocols and guidance should be reported to the senior manager and parent or carer.

It is good practice that all parties clearly understand at the outset, what physical contact is necessary and appropriate in undertaking specific activities. Keeping parents/carers and pupils informed of the extent and nature of any physical contact may also prevent allegations of misconduct or abuse arising.

This means that staff should:

- *treat pupils with dignity and respect and avoid contact with intimate parts of the body*
- *always explain to a pupil the reason why contact is necessary and what form that contact will take*
- *seek consent of parents where a pupil is unable to give this; e.g. because of age or disability*
- *consider alternatives, where it is anticipated that a pupil might misinterpret any such contact*
- *be familiar with and follow recommended guidance and protocols*
- *conduct activities where they can be seen by others*
- *be aware of gender, cultural and religious issues that may need to be considered prior to initiating physical contact*

Intimate / personal care

Schools and settings should have clear nappy or pad changing and intimate / personal care policies which ensure that the health, safety, independence and welfare of children is promoted and their dignity and privacy are respected. Arrangements for intimate and personal care should be open and transparent and accompanied by recording systems- see The School's Intimate Care Policy

Pupils should be encouraged to act as independently as possible and to undertake as much of their own personal care as is possible and practicable. When assistance is required, this should normally be undertaken by one member of staff, however, they should try to ensure that another appropriate adult is in the vicinity who is aware of the task to be undertaken and that, wherever possible, they are visible and/or audible. Intimate or personal care procedures should not involve more than one member of staff unless the pupil's care plan specifies the reason for this.

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

Any vulnerability, including those that may arise from a physical or learning difficulty should be considered when formulating the individual pupil's care plan. The views of parents, carers and the pupil, regardless of their age and understanding, should be actively sought in formulating the plan and in the necessary regular reviews of these arrangements. Any changes to the care plan should be made in writing and without delay, even if the change in arrangements is temporary; e.g. staff shortages, changes to staff rotas during the pandemic, etc.

Intimate and personal care should not be carried out by an adult that the child does not know. Anyone undertaking intimate / personal care in an education setting is in regulated activity and must have been checked against the relevant DBS barred list, even if the activity only happens once; this includes volunteers. Volunteers and visiting staff from other schools should not undertake care procedures without appropriate training.

Pupils are entitled to respect and privacy at all times and especially when in a state of undress, including, for example, when changing, toileting and showering. However, there needs to be an appropriate level of supervision in order to safeguard pupils, satisfy health and safety considerations and ensure that bullying or teasing does not occur. This supervision should be appropriate to the needs and age of the children concerned and sensitive to the potential for embarrassment.

This means that education settings should:

- *have written care plans in place for any pupil who could be expected to require intimate care*
- *update care plans in writing where appropriate; e.g. because there are changes to staff rotas, etc.*
- *ensure that pupils are actively consulted about their own care plan*
- *ensure that intimate / personal care is provided by staff known to the child*
- *ensure that only individuals that have been checked against the relevant DBS barred list are permitted to engage in intimate or personal care*
- *ensure that temporary or visiting staff have been trained in intimate and personal care procedures*

This means that staff should:

- *adhere to their organisation's intimate and personal care and nappy changing policies*
- *make other staff aware of the task being undertaken*
- *always explain to the pupil what is happening before a care procedure begins*
- *consult with colleagues where any variation from agreed procedure/care plan is necessary*
- *record the justification for any variations to the agreed procedure/care plan and share this information with the pupil and their parents/carers*
- *avoid any visually intrusive behaviour*
- *where there are changing rooms announce their intention of entering*
- *always consider the supervision needs of the pupils and only remain in the room where their needs require this*

This means that adults should not:

- *change or toilet in the presence or sight of pupils*
- *shower with pupils*
- *allow any adult to assist with intimate or personal care without confirmation from senior leaders that the individual is not barred from working in regulated activity*
- *assist with intimate or personal care tasks which the pupil is able to undertake independently*

Behaviour management

Corporal punishment and smacking are unlawful in all schools and education settings.

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

Where pupils display difficult or challenging behaviour, adults should follow the School's behaviour and discipline policy using strategies appropriate to the circumstance and situation.

Where a pupil has specific needs in respect of particularly challenging behaviour, a positive handling plan, including assessment of risk, should be drawn up and agreed by all parties, including, for example, a medical officer where appropriate.

Senior managers should ensure that the establishment's behaviour policy includes clear guidance about the use of isolation and seclusion. The legislation on these strategies is complex and staff should take extreme care to avoid any practice that could be viewed as unlawful, a breach of the pupil's human rights and/or false imprisonment.

This means that staff should:

- *not use force as a form of punishment*
- *try to defuse situations before they escalate e.g. by distraction*
- *keep parents informed of any sanctions or behaviour management techniques used*
- *be mindful of and sensitive to factors both inside and outside of the school or setting which may impact on a pupil's behaviour*

- *follow the establishment's behaviour management policy*
- *behave as a role model*
- *avoid shouting at children other than as a warning in an emergency/safety situation*
- *refer to national and local policy and guidance regarding Restrictive Physical Intervention (RPI)*
- *be aware of the legislation and potential risks associated with the use of isolation and seclusion*
- *comply with legislation and guidance in relation to human rights and restriction of liberty*

The use of control and physical intervention

Early years providers must take all reasonable steps to ensure that corporal punishment is not given by any person who cares for or is in regular contact with a child, or by any person living or working in the premises where care is provided. A person will not be taken to have used corporal punishment if the action was taken for reasons that include averting an immediate danger of personal injury to, or an immediate danger of death of, any person including the child.

The law and guidance for schools states that adults may reasonably intervene to prevent a child from:

- committing a criminal offence
- injuring themselves or others
- causing damage to property
- engaging in behaviour prejudicial to good order and to maintain good order and discipline.

Great care must be exercised in order that adults do not physically intervene in a manner which could be considered unlawful.

Under no circumstances should physical force be used as a form of punishment. The use of unwarranted or disproportionate physical force is likely to constitute a criminal offence. Where the school or setting judges that a child's behaviour presents a serious risk to themselves or others, they must always put in place a robust risk assessment which is reviewed regularly and, where relevant, a physical intervention plan.

In all cases where physical intervention has taken place, it would be good practice to record the incident and subsequent actions and report these to a manager and the child's parents. (In a children's home it is a legal requirement to record such incidents.)

Similarly, where it can be anticipated that physical intervention is likely to be required, a plan should be put in place which the pupil and parents/carers are aware of and have agreed to. Parental consent does not permit settings to use unlawful physical intervention or deprive a pupil of their liberty.

This means that education settings should:

- *ensure that they have a lawful physical intervention policy consistent with local and national guidance (this is located as an appendix in our Safeguarding Policy*
- *regularly acquaint staff with policy and guidance*
- *ensure that staff are provided with appropriate training and support*

- *have an agreed policy for when and how physical interventions should be recorded and reported*

This means that staff should:

- *adhere to the school or School's physical intervention policy*
- *always seek to defuse situations and avoid the use of physical intervention wherever possible*
- *where physical intervention is necessary, only use minimum force and for the shortest time needed*

This means that staff should not:

- *use physical intervention as a form of punishment*

Sexual conduct

Any sexual behaviour by a member of staff with or towards a pupil is unacceptable. It is an offence for a member of staff in a position of trust to engage in sexual activity with a pupil under 18 years of age and sexual activity with a child could be a matter for criminal and/or disciplinary procedures.

Pupils are protected by the same laws as adults in relation to non-consensual sexual behaviour. They are additionally protected by specific legal provisions depending on their age and understanding. This includes the prohibition of sexual activity with children by adults in a position of trust.

Sexual activity involves physical contact including penetrative and non-penetrative acts, however it also includes non-contact activities, such as causing pupils to engage in or watch sexual activity or the production of pornographic material.

There are occasions when adults embark on a course of behaviour known as 'grooming' where the purpose is to gain the trust of a child and manipulate the relationship so sexual abuse can take place. All staff should undertake appropriate training so they are fully aware of those behaviours that may constitute 'grooming' and of their responsibility to always report to a senior manager any concerns about the behaviour of a colleague which could indicate that a pupil is being groomed.

This means that staff should:

- *not have any form of sexual contact with a pupil from the school or setting*
- *avoid any form of touch or comment which is, or may be considered to be, indecent*
- *avoid any form of communication with a pupil which could be interpreted as sexually suggestive, provocative or give rise to speculation e.g. verbal comments, letters, notes, by email or on social media, phone calls, texts, physical contact*
- *not make sexual remarks to or about a pupil*
- *not discuss sexual matters with or in the presence of pupils other than within agreed curriculum content or as part of their recognised job role*

One to one situations

Staff working in one-to-one situations with pupils at the setting, including visiting staff from external organisations can be more vulnerable to allegations or complaints.

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

Arranging to meet with pupils from the school or setting away from the work premises should not be permitted unless the necessity for this is clear and approval is obtained from a senior member of staff, the pupil and their parents/carers.

In order to ensure pupils are fully supported pastorally and academically, one-to-one meetings with pupils will be at times both necessary and desirable. The following guidelines should always be applied:

- Meetings should only be held with a specific purpose that is understood by the pupil involved.
- Meetings should be held during normal school hours and in an environment where there are other members of staff in close proximity in the same building.

- Where possible, the door to the meeting room should be left open and meetings should be held in a room where the pupil and member of staff can easily be seen from the corridor.
- At least one other colleague, and preferably a line manager, should be informed that the meeting is due to take place.
- When conducting the meeting, avoid all unnecessary physical contact and avoid sitting or standing in unnecessarily close proximity to the pupil.
- Report any concerns about the behaviour of a pupil in a one-to-one meeting to the Head.

This means the School should:

- ensure that risk assessments and emergency procedures are reviewed in the event of lone working / very small numbers on site
- keep pupil numbers under constant review
- liaise with the LA on suitable alternative provision if the school needs to close due to very low pupil numbers

This means that staff should:

- work one to one with a child only where absolutely necessary and with the knowledge and consent of senior leaders and parents/carers
- be aware of relevant risk assessments, policies and procedures
- ensure that wherever possible there is visual access and/or an open door in one to one situations
- avoid use of ‘engaged’ or equivalent signs wherever possible. Such signs may create an opportunity for secrecy or the interpretation of secrecy
- always report to the pastoral team and/or record any situation where a pupil becomes distressed or angry; use CPOMS to record these pastoral issues
- consider the needs and circumstances of the pupil involved

- work one to one with a child only where absolutely necessary and with the knowledge and consent of senior leaders and parents/carers
- be aware of relevant risk assessments, policies and procedures

Home visits

All work with pupils and parents should usually be undertaken in the school or setting or other recognised workplace. There are however occasions, in response to an urgent, planned or specific situation or job role, where it is necessary to make one-off or regular home visits.

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

A risk assessment should be undertaken prior to any planned home visit taking place. The assessment should include an evaluation of any known factors regarding the pupil, parents/carers and any others living in the household. Consideration should be given to any circumstances which might render the staff member becoming more vulnerable to an allegation being made e.g. hostility, child protection concerns, complaints or grievances. Specific thought should be given to visits outside of 'office hours' or in remote or secluded locations. Following the assessment, appropriate risk management measures should be put in place, before the visit is undertaken. In the unlikely event that little or no information is available, visits should not be made alone.

In a Covid-type situation, some settings may ask staff to undertake welfare visits, particularly in the EYFS or to primary age children. Settings should take into account the advice of their local authority early years service when deciding whether these home visits are proportionate and desirable. Staff will normally undertake home visits with a colleague. Staff undertaking welfare visits should always try to give parents / carers advance warning unless there is good reason not to; e.g. because the visit has been prompted by safeguarding concerns and / or is at the request of children's social care. In these cases, one of the staff undertaking the visit should be a Designated safeguarding lead or deputy safeguarding person. The purpose of the visit should be clarified and staff should be aware of the circumstances in which emergency services or partner agencies should be contacted.

This means that staff should:

- *agree the purpose for any home visit with their manager*
- *adhere to agreed risk management strategies*
- *avoid unannounced visits wherever possible*
- *ensure there is visual access and/or an open door in one-to-one situations*
- *always make detailed records including times of arrival and departure*
- *ensure any behaviour or situation which gives rise to concern is discussed with their manager*
- *have a clear understanding of the actions that should be taken if it is believed that a child or parent is at immediate risk of harm, including when to contact emergency services and / or partner agencies*
- *except in an emergency, never enter a home without the parent or carer's consent or when the parent is absent*

This means that education settings should:

- *ensure that they have home visit and lone-working policies which all adults are made aware of. These should include arrangements for risk assessment and management*
- *ensure that all visits are justified and recorded*
- *ensure that staff are not exposed to unacceptable risk*
- *make clear to staff that, other than in an emergency, they should not enter a home if the parent/carer is absent*
- *ensure that staff have access to a mobile telephone and an emergency contact*
- *ensure that staff understand the purpose and limitations of welfare visits*

Transporting pupils

In certain situations, staff or volunteers may be required or offer to transport pupils as part of their work. As for any other activity undertaken at work, the employer has a duty to carry out a risk assessment covering the health and safety of their staff and to manage any known risks.

Consideration must be given to the potential distraction of the driver and the supervision of the passengers. A judgement should be made about the likely behaviour and individual needs of the child/ren. If any of them may require close supervision, then another adult should travel in the vehicle so that the driver is not distracted or compromised.

Staff should not offer lifts to pupils unless the need for this has been agreed by a manager and by the pupil's parent/s. A designated member of staff should be appointed to plan and provide oversight of all transport arrangements and respond to any concerns that may arise.

Wherever possible and practicable it is advisable that transport is undertaken other than in private vehicles and with at least one adult additional to the driver acting as an escort.

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

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 carrying capacity is not exceeded.

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 the child may be at risk. In these circumstances the matter should be recorded and reported to both their manager and the child's parent(s) and permission must be sought from the parents.

This means that staff should:

- *plan and agree arrangements with all parties in advance*
- *respond sensitively and flexibly where any concerns arise*
- *take into account any specific or additional needs of the pupil*
- *have an appropriate licence/permit for the vehicle*
- *ensure they are fit to drive and free from any drugs, alcohol or medicine which is likely to impair judgement and/ or ability to drive*
- *ensure that if they need to be alone with a pupil this is for the minimum time*

- *be aware that the safety and welfare of the pupil is their responsibility until this is safely passed over to a parent/carer*
- *report the nature of the journey, the route and expected time of arrival in accordance with agreed procedures*
- *ensure that their behaviour and all arrangements ensure vehicle, passenger and driver safety. This includes having proper and appropriate insurance for the type of vehicle being driven*
- *ensure that any impromptu or emergency arrangements of lifts are recorded and can be justified*
- *refer to Local and National guidance for Educational visits*
- *Obtain consent from both parents and the Head to transport a pupil in their own private vehicle*

This means education settings should seek evidence that:

- *The vehicle is safe. This means that it holds a valid MOT certificate, where relevant, that the driver certifies it has been serviced in line with the manufacturer's schedule, and that the driver carries out any pre-use checks specified by the manufacturer*
- *The driver is suitable. This means that they hold a valid licence for the type of vehicle and meet any employer requirements*
- *There is a valid insurance policy covering the driver and the vehicle for the intended use. This may require that the driver has 'business use' cover. With the Head's permission the school insurance will cover private cars for school use.*
- *Retain evidence of the above with the risk assessment*

Educational visits

Staff responsible for organising educational visits should be familiar with the Department for Education's advice on Health and Safety available at https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-and-safety-on-educational-visits

The duties in the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the supporting regulations apply to activities taking place on or off the school premises (including school visits) in Great Britain. All school employers must have a Health and Safety policy. This should include policy and procedures for off-site visits, including residential visits and any school-led adventure activities.

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (1999) impose a duty on employers to produce suitable and sufficient risk assessments. This would include assessment of any risks to employees, children or others during an educational visit, and the measures that should be taken to minimise these risks. For regular activities, such as taking pupils to a local swimming pool, the risks should be considered under the school's general arrangements and a check to make sure that the precautions remain suitable is all that is required. For annual or infrequent activities, a review of an existing assessment may be all that is needed. For new higher-risk activities or trips, a specific assessment of the significant risks should be carried out.

Staff should take particular care when supervising pupils in the less formal atmosphere of an educational visit where a more relaxed discipline or informal dress and language code may be acceptable. However, staff remain in a position of trust and need to ensure that their behaviour cannot be interpreted as seeking to establish an inappropriate relationship

or friendship.

Where out of school or setting activities include overnight stays, careful consideration needs to be given to sleeping arrangements. Pupils, adults and parents should be informed of these prior to the start of the trip. In all circumstances, those organising trips and outings should pay careful attention to ensuring there is a safe staff/child ratio and suitable gender mix of staff.

This means that staff should:

- *adhere to their organisation's educational visits guidance*
- *always have another adult present on visits, unless otherwise agreed with senior staff*
- *undertake risk assessments*
- *have the appropriate consents in place (e.g. medical)*
- *ensure that their behaviour remains professional at all times*
- *never share beds with a child/pupil*
- *never share bedrooms unless it involves a dormitory situation and the arrangements have been previously discussed with Head teacher, parents and pupils*
- *refer to local and national guidance for educational visits, including exchange visits (both to the UK and abroad)*

First Aid and medication

All settings should have an adequate number of qualified first-aiders. Parents should be informed when first aid has been administered. Please see the First Aid and Medical policies for more information.

Any member of school staff may be asked to become a qualified first-aider or to provide support to pupils with medical conditions, including the administering of medicines, but they cannot be required to do so unless this forms part of their contract of employment.

Staff should receive sufficient and suitable training and achieve the necessary level of competency before they take on responsibility to support children with medical conditions.

Advice on managing medicines is included in the statutory guidance on supporting pupils at school with medical conditions. In circumstances where a pupil needs medication regularly, this would usually be recorded in their individual healthcare plan. This provides details of the level and type of support a child needs to manage effectively their medical condition in school and should include information about the medicine to be administered, the correct dosage and any storage requirements.

After discussion with parents, children who are competent should be encouraged to take responsibility for managing their own medicines and procedures. This could include for example, the application of any ointment or sun cream, or use of inhalers or Epipens.

If a member of staff is concerned or uncertain about the amount or type of medication being given to a pupil this should be discussed with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Adults taking medication which may affect their ability to care for children should seek medical advice regarding their suitability to do so and providers should ensure that they

only work directly with children if that advice confirms that the medication is unlikely to impair their ability to look after children. Employers are also responsible for managing the performance of their employees and for ensuring they are suitable to work with children.

Risk assessment is likely to recommend that staff medication on the premises must be securely stored and out of reach of children at all times.

Staff whose 'first aid at work' training is about to or has expired since 16th March 2020 should be aware that the HSE has agreed an extension of 3 months for renewal.

Depending on the ages of the children accessing the provision, there may need to be at least one person trained in paediatric first aid at all times when children are on site.

This means that education settings should:

- *ensure there are trained and named individuals to undertake first aid responsibilities, including paediatric first aid if relevant*
- *ensure training is regularly monitored and updated*
- *refer to local and national First Aid guidance and guidance on meeting the needs of children with medical conditions that adults should:*
- *adhere to the school or School's health and safety and supporting pupils with medical conditions policies*
- *make other staff aware of the task being undertaken*
- *have regard to pupils' individual healthcare plans*
- *always ensure that an appropriate health/risk assessment is undertaken prior to undertaking certain activities*
- *explain to the pupil what is happening.*
- *always act and be seen to act in the pupil's best interest*
- *make a record of all medications administered*
- *not work with pupils whilst taking medication unless medical advice confirms that they are able to do so*
- *if there is no member of staff available who has completed 'first aid at work' training, identify a senior person to be responsible each day*
- *review and update first aid, medicines in school and crisis / emergency policies and relevant risk assessments*

Use of technology for online/virtual teaching

When selecting a platform for online / virtual teaching, school staff should satisfy themselves that the provider has an appropriate level of security. Wherever possible, staff should use school devices and contact pupils only via the pupil school email address / log in. This ensures that the school's filtering and monitoring software is enabled.

In deciding whether to provide virtual or online learning for pupils, senior leaders should take into account issues such as accessibility within the family home, the mental health and wellbeing of children, including screen time, the potential for inappropriate behaviour by staff or pupils, staff access to the technology required, etc. Virtual lessons should be timetabled and senior staff, DSL and / or heads of department should be able to drop in to any virtual lesson at any time – the online version of entering a classroom.

Staff engaging in online learning should display the same standards of dress and conduct that they would in the real world; they should also role model this to pupils and parents. The following points should be considered: -

- think about the background; photos, artwork, identifying features, mirrors – ideally the backing should be blurred
- staff and pupils should be in living / communal areas – no bedrooms unless there's no alternative and the background is blurred and/or there's a desk/working area in the bedroom
- staff and pupils should be fully dressed
- filters at a child's home may be set at a threshold which is different to the school
- resources / videos must be age appropriate – the child may not have support immediately to hand at home if they feel distressed or anxious about content

It is the responsibility of the staff member to act as a moderator; raise any issues of suitability (of dress, setting, behaviour) with the child and / or parent immediately and end the online interaction if necessary. Recording lessons does not prevent abuse. If staff wish to record the lesson they are teaching, consideration should be given to data protection issues; e.g., whether parental / pupil consent is needed and retention / storage.

If a staff member believes that a child or parent is recording the interaction, the lesson should be brought to an end or that child should be logged out immediately. Staff, parent and pupil AUPs should clearly state the standards of conduct required.

If staff need to contact a pupil or parent by phone and do not have access to a work phone, they should discuss this with a senior member of staff and, if there is no alternative, always use 'caller withheld' to ensure the pupil / parent is not able to identify the staff member's personal contact details.

This means that senior leaders should:

- *review and amend their online safety and acceptable use policies to reflect the current situation*
- *ensure that all relevant staff have been briefed and understand the policies and the standards of conduct expected of them.*
- *have clearly defined operating times for virtual learning*
- *consider the impact that virtual teaching may have on children and their parents/carers/siblings*
- *determine whether there are alternatives to virtual teaching in 'real-time' – e.g., using audio only, pre-recorded lessons, existing online resources*
- *be aware of the virtual learning timetable and ensure they have the capacity to join a range of lessons*
- *take into account any advice published by the local authority, MAP or their online safety / monitoring software provider*

This means that staff should:

- *adhere to their establishment's policy*
- *be fully dressed*
- *ensure that a senior member of staff is aware that the online lesson / meeting is taking place and for what purpose*

- *avoid one to one situations – request that a parent is present in the room for the duration, or ask a colleague or member of SLT to join the session*
- *only record a lesson or online meeting with a pupil where this has been agreed with the head teacher or other senior staff, and the pupil and their parent/carer have given explicit written consent to do so*
- *be able to justify images of pupils in their possession*

This means that adults should not:

- *contact pupils outside the operating times defined by senior leaders*
- *take or record images of pupils for their personal use*
- *record virtual lessons or meetings using personal equipment (unless agreed and risk assessed by senior staff)*
- *engage online while children are in a state of undress or semi-undress*

Staff need to be careful around their use of AI – see https://www.globeducate.com/footers/globeducate-policies policies 11A, 11B and 11C.

Photography, videos and other images / media

Many educational activities involve recording images. Where photos are required of pupils' activities (such as trips, celebrations, innovative classroom practice, exemplar work and sports) staff should only take them on approved school devices or by using the ChatPro app on their own devices (personal devices should not be used in EYFS settings). Some pupils may feel sensitive or uncomfortable about having an image taken, and staff must recognise the potential in such circumstance for misinterpretation. If you are taking images of pupils for whom there is consent, ensure that you inform them that you are taking images and the purpose of these. Take account of the wishes of the child and if they do not want to have their photograph taken, respect this.
Prior to any publication or storage of such photos, the photo consent list should be checked. ChatPro photos are not stored on devices, and ChatPro maintains a log of all photos and who has viewed them; only authorised staff are allowed to download them off ChatPro servers.
Any photos downloaded should only be stored on school devices or secure school servers with permission from SMT.
The following guidance must be followed to ensure that staff and pupils are adequately safeguarded:

- Photographs/images must be securely stored and used only by those authorised to do so.
- Be clear about the purpose of the activity and about what will happen to the photographs/images when the lesson/activity is concluded.
- Ensure that a senior member of staff is aware that the photography/image equipment is being used and for what purpose.
- Ensure that all photographs/images are available to be screened for acceptability.
- Be able to justify the photographs/images made.
- Do not take photographs in one-to-one situations.
- Be completely familiar with the register of parental consent. Failure to be aware of the register of consent and/or taking, displaying or distributing photographs of pupils where there is not consent will be considered a breach of safeguarding duties.

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

Pupils who have been previously abused in a manner that involved images may feel particularly threatened by the use of photography, filming etc. Staff should remain sensitive to any pupil who appears uncomfortable and should recognise the potential for misinterpretation.

Making and using images of pupils will require the age-appropriate consent of the individual concerned and their parents/carers. 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 setting have access.

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

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

This means that staff should:

- *adhere to the School's* IT Acceptable Use Policy for staff and pupils.docx
- *only publish images of pupils where they and their parent/carer have given explicit written consent to do so*
- *only take images where the pupil is happy for them to do so*
- *only retain images when there is a clear and agreed purpose for doing so*
- *store images in an appropriate secure place in the school or setting*
- *ensure that a senior member of staff is aware that the photography/image equipment is being used and for what purpose*
- *be able to justify images of pupils in their possession*
- *avoid making images in one-to-one situations*

This means that adults should not:

- *take images of pupils for their personal use*
- *display or distribute images of pupils unless they are sure that they have parental consent to do so (and, where appropriate, consent from the child)*
- *take images of children using personal equipment unless authorised to do so on ChatPro*
- *take images of children in a state of undress or semi-undress*
- *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*
- *make audio recordings of a child's disclosure*
- *take images of children which could be considered as indecent or sexual*

Exposure to inappropriate images

Staff should take extreme care to ensure that children and young people are not exposed, through any medium, to inappropriate or indecent images.

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

If indecent images of children are discovered at the establishment or on the school or School's equipment an immediate referral should be made to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and the police contacted if relevant. The images/equipment should be secured and there should be no attempt to view or delete the images as this could jeopardise necessary criminal action. If the images are of children known to the school, a referral should also be made to children's social care in line with local arrangements.

Under no circumstances should any adult use school or setting equipment to access pornography. Personal equipment containing pornography or links to it should never be brought into or used in the workplace. This will raise serious concerns about the suitability of the adult to continue working with children and young people.

Staff should keep their passwords confidential and update them regularly. Staff should not allow unauthorised access to equipment. Staff should use 2 or multi-factor authentication where they have been advised to do so by the School's IT manager. In the event of any indecent images of children or unsuitable material being discovered on a device the equipment should not be tampered with in any way. It should be secured and isolated from the network, and the DO contacted without delay. Adults should not attempt to investigate the matter or evaluate the material themselves as this may lead to a contamination of evidence and a possibility that they will be at risk of prosecution themselves.

This means that staff should:

- *abide by the establishment's acceptable use and e-safety policies*
- *ensure that children cannot be exposed to indecent or inappropriate images*
- *ensure that any films or material shown to children are age appropriate*

Personal living accommodation including on-site provision

Generally, staff should not invite any pupils into their living accommodation unless the reason to do so has been firmly established and agreed with their manager and the pupil's parents/carers.

It is not appropriate for staff to be expected or requested to use their private living space for any activity, play or learning. This includes seeing pupils for e.g. discussion of reports, academic reviews, tutorials, pastoral care or counselling. Managers should ensure that appropriate accommodation for such activities is found elsewhere in the setting.

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

This guidance should also apply to all other persons living in or visiting the private accommodation.

This means that staff should:

- *be vigilant in maintaining their privacy, including when living in on-site accommodation*
- *be mindful of the need to avoid placing themselves in vulnerable situations*
- *refuse any request for their accommodation to be used as an additional resource for the school or setting*
- *be mindful of the need to maintain appropriate personal and professional boundaries*
- *not ask pupils to undertake jobs or errands for their personal benefit*

Overnight supervision and examinations

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

The supervision of a candidate on journeys to and from the centre and overnight may be undertaken by the candidate's parent/carer or centre staff.

This means that:

- *schools should ensure that all arrangements reflect a duty of care towards pupils and staff*
- *Where staff do supervise candidates overnight:*
  a full health and safety risk assessment should have been undertaken
- *all members of the household should have had appropriate vetting including, where eligible, DBS and barred list checks*
- *all arrangements should be made in partnership and agreement with the pupil and parents/carers*
- *arrangements involving one to one supervision should be avoided wherever possible.*
- *as much choice, flexibility and contact with 'the outside world', should be incorporated into any arrangement so far as is consistent with appropriate supervision*
- *whenever possible, independent oversight of arrangements should be made*
- *any situation which gives rise to complaint, disagreement or misunderstanding should be reported*
- *staff should have regard to any local and national guidance*

Curriculum

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

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

Care should be taken to comply with the School's PSHE Policy which should promote fundamental British values and be rigorously reviewed to ensure it is lawful and consistently applied. Staff should also comply at all times with the RSHE Policy. It should be noted that parents have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of any sex education provided but not from the National Curriculum for Science.

This means that staff should:

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

This means that adults should not:

- *enter into or encourage inappropriate discussions which may offend or harm others*
- *undermine fundamental British values*
- *express any prejudicial views*
- *attempt to influence or impose their personal values, attitudes or beliefs on pupils*

Whistleblowing

Whistleblowing is the mechanism by which staff can voice their concerns, made in good faith, without fear of repercussion. Education settings should have a clear and accessible whistleblowing policy that meets the terms of the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998. Staff who use whistle blowing procedures should have their employment rights protected. Please see the Whistleblowing policy for more information.

Staff should recognise their individual responsibilities to bring matters of concern to the attention of senior management and/or relevant external agencies and that to not do so may result in charges of serious neglect on their part where the welfare of children may be at risk.

Staff should be reminded of the routes for raising concerns during school closure or part closure, including how to escalate their concern if the normal routes for whistleblowing are

impeded by the absence / illness of senior managers.

“Don't think what if I am wrong — think what if I am right”.

Staff are encouraged to report even on “a sense of unease or a nagging doubt” about other staff via code of conduct and safeguarding policies. Please see links to further external advice on a low-level concerns and please refer to our Low Level Concerns Policy.
Examples could include: being over friendly with children, having favourites; taking photographs of children on their mobile phone; engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door; or using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language.
Any such concerns should be shared responsibly, properly recorded and dealt with appropriately according to our school policies. This should also protect those working in our school from potential false allegations or misunderstandings.
All staff should feel confident to report any behaviour that does not meet the harm threshold but may still be inconsistent with the Staff Code of Conduct.

This means that schools and settings should:

- *have a whistleblowing policy (Please see* Boundary Oak Whistleblowing Policy) i*n place which is known to all*
- *include in the whistleblowing policy how to escalate concerns if they believe that safeguarding arrangements in the setting are not effective, or a child/ren are not being protected*
- *have clear procedures for dealing with allegations against persons working in or on behalf of the school or setting*

This means that staff should:

- *escalate their concerns if they believe a child or children are not being protected*
- *report any behaviour by colleagues that raises concern*
- *report allegations against staff and volunteers to their manager, or registered provider, or where they have concerns about the manager’s response report these directly to the LADO*

Sexual harassment is a specific form of harassment and is defined as unwanted conduct of a sexual nature that affects an employee's dignity at work. It includes any actions, words, or behaviours of a sexual nature that violate someone's dignity or create an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating, or offensive work environment.

All complaints will be handled confidentially and with sensitivity. For further details, please see the full Boundary Oak Sexual Harrassment Policy.docx

Sharing concerns and recording incidents

All staff should be aware of the School’s safeguarding procedures, including the procedures for dealing with allegations against staff and volunteers.

In the event of an allegation being made, by any person, or incident being witnessed, the relevant information should be immediately recorded and reported to the headteacher. If the concern or allegation pertains to the headteacher, then the Director in charge of

safeguarding, Sarah King, sarah.king@globeducate.com and the LADO should be informed; and if it's the Director then please report directly to the LADO.

Members of staff should feel able to discuss with their line manager any difficulties or problems that may affect their relationship with or behaviour towards pupils, so that appropriate support can be provided and/or action can be taken.

In order to safeguard and protect pupils and colleagues, where staff have any concerns about someone who works with children they should immediately report this to the Head teacher, Director or senior manager in line with the School's procedures.

This means that staff should:

- *be familiar with the School's arrangements for reporting and recording concerns and allegations*
- *know how to contact the LADO, ISI and Globeducate Director of Safeguarding directly if required*
- *take responsibility for recording any incident, and passing on that information where they have concerns about any matter pertaining to the welfare of an individual in the school or setting*
- *ensuring their staff are clear about what appropriate behaviour is, and are confident in distinguishing expected and appropriate behaviour from concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour, in themselves and others*
- *empowering staff to share any low-level safeguarding concerns with the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy);*
- *addressing unprofessional behaviour and supporting the individual to correct it at an early stage;*
- *providing a responsive, sensitive and proportionate handling of such concerns when they are raised; and*
- *helping identify any weakness in the school or colleges safeguarding system.*

This means that education settings should have an effective, confidential system for recording and managing concerns raised by any individual regarding adults' conduct and any allegations against staff and volunteers.

Internet Use / Social Networking / Online Gaming

School has a clear policy about access to and the use of the Internet. Please refer to the online safety policies, Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) and ICT code of conduct for further guidance.

Under no circumstances should adults in the school access inappropriate images. Accessing child pornography or indecent images of children on the internet, and making, storing or disseminating such material, is illegal and, if proven, will invariably lead to the individual being barred from work with children and young people.

Using school equipment to access inappropriate or indecent material, including adult pornography, would normally lead to disciplinary action, particularly if as a result pupils might be exposed to inappropriate or indecent material.

School staff may use social networking sites for personal use. However, the school requires that profile and photos of the member of staff are ‘locked down’ as private so that pupils or parents do not have access to your personal data or images.

Staff must deny current or recent pupils access to your profile so you do not put yourself in a vulnerable position.

Staff should be aware that they leave themselves open to a charge of professional misconduct if images of a member of staff in a compromising situation are made available on a public profile by anyone.

If a pupil does gain access to the profile of a member of staff by fraudulent means (impersonation or hacking) senior leadership should be informed immediately.

Where relationships exist between staff and those who are also parents at the school, or personal friends who are parents at the school, social networking is acceptable but caution must be exercised so that professional standards are maintained and staff do not compromise themselves or the school.

As soon as a member of staff becomes aware that they are in an online game with a pupil of School, the member of staff should cease to play against that pupil and should not enter any games containing that player as part of the group.

Under no circumstances should staff seek out pupils and/or share their own gamer tags/ID with pupils, or use school equipment to play online games.

Staff must ensure that their personal social media presence upholds the reputation of the school and does not include content that could be deemed inappropriate, unprofessional, or discriminatory

Outside Commitments

Staff should ensure that their activities outside work do not conflict with their duty to the school.

All teaching and support staff should inform the head teacher before engaging in any other business or accepting additional employment.

Any additional employment should not conflict with the school’s interests or have the potential to bring the school into disrepute.

Employees may not set up a business, or accept a job with a business, which is in direct competition with the school. Employees should check with the head teacher where further clarification is required.

If an employee works for another organisation they may not act as a messenger between that organisation and the school. Formal channels of communication must be maintained.

Any secondary employment must not be carried out during an employee's contracted school working hours, nor whilst on standby for official call out purposes unless such employment can be undertaken from their home.

It is an employee's responsibility to monitor the number of hours they work and to ensure that they are rested and refreshed and able to carry out their role.

Relationships at Work

Employees are encouraged to socialise and develop professional relationships in the workplace provided that these relationships do not interfere with the work performance of either individual or with the effective functioning of the workplace. Employees who engage in personal relationships (including romantic and sexual relationships) should be aware of their professional responsibilities and will be responsible for assuring that the relationship does not raise concerns about favouritism, bias, ethics and conflict of interest. In cases of doubt, advice and counsel should be sought from the Head.

Romantic or sexual relationships between employees where one individual has influence or control over the other's conditions of employment are inappropriate. These relationships, even if consensual, may ultimately result in conflict or difficulties in the workplace. If such a relationship currently exists or develops, it must be disclosed:

- The supervisor or employee who has influence or control over the other's conditions of employment has an obligation to disclose his/her relationship to the Head.
- The other employee involved in the relationship is encouraged to disclose the relationship to their Head of Faculty, Line manager, Bursar or Head.

Other requirements of staff

Attendance and Timekeeping

Should you need to be absent or expect to be late for any reason, you should ask your Head and Deputy Head in advance when possible. If this is not possible, please contact your Head and Deputy Head at the earliest opportunity.

Eating and Drinking

The school operates a no nut food policy. Any snacks bought in by children must not contain nuts.

Smoking

To promote a healthy and pleasant working environment and because of the fire risk, smoking (in any form, including the use of e-cigarettes) is not allowed anywhere on site or within any of the School's vehicles. You must not smoke on school premises or outside school gates. Any member of Staff wishing to smoke must leave the school grounds.

You must not smoke whilst working with or supervising pupils offsite.

Alcohol and Illegal Drugs

Consumption of alcohol or illegal drugs is not permitted on site, save where at a school function or otherwise agreed when modest amounts of alcohol may be consumed. Staff that reside on site may consume modest quantities of alcohol in private accommodation when they are not on duty. Consumption of illegal drugs is never permitted.

Your conduct and performance must not be adversely impacted by alcohol or drugs when undertaking your duties.

Security

In the interests of security, employees must carry their identity badges whilst in School and produce it on request. You must not remove any School documents from the site or take any photographs without due permission. The School reserves the right to search the outer clothing, bags, lockers and vehicles etc. of employees whilst on site. Staff may have a colleague in attendance on such occasions.

Health and Safety

All Staff have a duty to ensure that a safe working environment exists. Fire and evacuation procedures must be adhered to at all times and Staff are required to familiarise themselves with the procedures and their responsibilities set out in the Health and Safety Policy.

Mobility and Flexibility

Due to the demands and nature of the School, employees should be prepared to transfer upon request within departments either temporarily or permanently and/or to undertake work of a different nature, providing it is reasonable and safe to do so and the individual is adequately trained. This may include working from home, if appropriate, and at the sole discretion of the School.

Communication with parents

Form tutors are expected to be the first point of contact between parents and the School, although enquiries will also come through the School Office. Staff can contact parents by telephone, email or letter. Zoom / Microsoft Teams/Google Meets can also be used with prior arrangement. Staff should not contact pupils, parents or conduct any school business using personal email addresses.

Where a member of Staff receives an email from a parent, a reply should normally be made within one working day. If a full reply cannot be made within that time, the member of Staff should send a brief acknowledgment e-mail and let the parent know when a fuller reply can be expected.

Staff sending emails to parents/carers are advised to send a copy (cc or bcc) to the Deputy Head, the Head or the class tutor.

Staff must inform the Head or Deputy Head if they receive an offensive email.

Equal treatment

We are committed to equal treatment for all Staff and pupils regardless of their race or colour, nationality or national or ethnic origins, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, marital or civil partnership status, gender reassignment, age, and disability (together known as "Protected Characteristics").

We aim to create a friendly, caring and perceptive environment in which every individual is valued. We endeavour to contribute positively towards the growing autonomy, self-esteem and safety of each pupil. Staff will be required to undertake regular consultation activities with pupils e.g. through safety questionnaires, participation in anti-bullying week and speaking to children about their experiences at lunchtime and playtimes.

Bullying, harassment, victimisation and/or discrimination will not be tolerated. We treat all our pupils and their parents fairly and with consideration which we expect them to reciprocate towards each other, the Staff and the School. Staff should ensure that they are familiar with the School's staff Equal Opportunities Policy and the Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy and the School's pupil policies on Equal Opportunities and Anti-Bullying.

Confidentiality

In the course of their role, members of staff are often privy to sensitive and confidential information about the school, staff, pupils and their parents.
This information will never be:

- Disclosed to anyone without the relevant authority
- Used to humiliate, embarrass or blackmail others
- Used for a purpose other than what it was collected and intended for

This does not overrule staff's duty to report child protection concerns to the appropriate channel where staff believe a child is at risk of harm.

Concerns or Complaints

The School aims to create an atmosphere in which a diverse range of people can work together openly in the spirit of mutual respect and trust towards a common purpose. Nevertheless, we recognise that it is possible for misunderstandings and disagreements to arise or for mistakes to occur.

Staff Complaints

Complaints should be dealt with immediately and openly and Staff should try to resolve issues informally in the first instance. If this approach is impractical or unsuccessful, Staff may wish to raise their concerns more formally in accordance with the School's Grievance Procedure or Whistleblowing Procedure, depending upon the nature of the concern.

Parental Complaints

Staff must ensure that parental complaints are dealt with in accordance with the School's Complaints Policy.

Safeguarding

For procedures for dealing with allegations or concerns about a child or disclosures/allegations of abuse, Staff should refer to the safeguarding policy and low level concerns policy.

Staff must adhere to the following Government guidance:

KCSIE

Working Together

Teachers' Standards