



Twyford
CofE
Academies Trust

Document Title	Staff Code of Conduct
Committee Responsible for Policy	Resources Committee
Review Frequency	Every 3 years
Last Reviewed	March 2024 (Updated May 2025)
Next Review Due	March 2027
Policy Author	Director of Finance & Operations

Assessment of the Impact of a Policy on Equality & Diversity

Policy: Staff Code of Conduct	
Impact assessed by: R Lane	Date: 7/3/2024
1. What is the potential for this policy impacting a person or group with a protected characteristic differently (favourably or unfavourably) from everyone else? A higher proportion of staff from protected groups could be found to be in breach of the code of conduct than the general staff population.	
2. How would this be evidenced? By monitoring the number of breaches.	
3. Is there evidence that the operation of the current policy might impact a person or group with a protected characteristic differently from everyone else? No.	
4. If the answer to 3 is 'Yes', please provide details and evidence.	
5. How might the new policy change this?	
6. Are there any other changes to the policy which might impact a group with a protected characteristic differently from everyone else? No.	
7. If the answer to 6 is 'Yes', please provide details and evidence.	
8. Policies are required to reduce or eliminate inequality and disadvantage and promote diversity. Does this assessment indicate that the Policy passes or fails this test? PASS	

Staff Code of Conduct

1 Purpose

This code outlines the rules that apply to Trust employees, volunteers, directors and governors and provides guidance to help ensure compliance. The code sets out the minimum standards that are expected and provides a framework that will help to prevent misunderstandings or criticism. References to employees/staff include agency staff, contractors, volunteers, members, directors and governors. For members, governors and directors the document is supplemented by the Information for Prospective Governors document and the Directors' Conflict of Interest Policy.

2 Roles and Responsibilities

- The Board of Directors: The Board of Directors has a general role in ensuring that appropriate standards of conduct are established and maintained. Members of the Board may also be involved in dealing with specific declarations made by employees under the code.
- Head teacher (Chief Executive Officer and Associate Head teachers): The Head teachers are responsible for ensuring that staff are made aware of the Code of Conduct as part of their induction programme and for ensuring that the code is adhered to. They will also consider declarations made by the employees under the Code and will ensure appropriate action is taken to deal with any alleged breaches.
- Employees: All staff employed at the Trust are required to keep to the standards of this Code and carry out their duties honestly and fairly. Failure to do so is a serious matter and could result in disciplinary action including dismissal. Staff should therefore read the document carefully and if they have any queries contact their immediate line manager or head teacher.

3 Policy Statement

The Trust endorses the Seven Principles of Public Life proposed by the Committee on Standards in Public Life chaired by Lord Nolan. These are:

3.1 Selflessness

People who work for the public should take decisions by thinking only of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain any benefits for themselves, their family or their friends.

3.2 Integrity

People who work for the public should not put themselves under any financial or other obligation to any outside person or organisation that might influence them in carrying out their official duties.

3.3 Objectivity

In carrying out public duties, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards or benefits, choices should only be made on merit.

3.4 Accountability

Those working for the public must answer for their decisions and actions to the public and be open to whatever questioning is appropriate to their job.

3.5 Openness

People who work for the public should be as open as possible about and give reasons for decisions and actions they take. They should restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly requires this.

3.6 Honesty

Those working for the public have a duty to declare any private interests to do with their public duties. They must resolve any possible conflicts of interest in a way which protects the public interest.

3.7 Leadership

People who work for the public should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

The governing body also expect employees to operate in accordance with the codes of conduct provided by their relevant professional body.

Furthermore, the Trust requires staff to fully comply with Trust Policies, legal requirements, relevant standards and regulations applying to the Trust's activities, in particular those concerning the safety/safeguarding of children and health and safety more generally. Staff are also required to complete mandatory training provided online by the prescribed deadlines.

4 Standards

All employees are expected to give the highest possible standard of service to the Trust and to carry out their duties politely, honestly, fairly and to the best of their ability. Employees are expected to respect and uphold the reputation and ethos of the Trust, its schools and employees. Employees must also observe the highest standards concerning non-consumption of alcohol or drugs while on duty or outside working hours to the extent that their work could be affected. Violent or intimidating behaviour and actions leading to the damage or loss of Trust property are also unacceptable.

All employees must report concerns about breaches in this code to their line manager in the first instance, or to a senior manager if their complaint is about their own manager. For details on the process for reporting concerns, please refer to the **Whistleblowing Policy**.

It is not enough for people working for the school to avoid doing wrong. All employees should avoid anything which could give the impression or appearance of doing wrong.

5 Hours of Work and Attendance

Employees are required to work the hours stated in their contract of employment, or as required in the schoolteachers pay and conditions document in respect to directed time.

The Twyford Trust has a long-established precedent of a longer school day designed to achieve maximum flexibility for the delivery of the compulsory and extended curriculum and to impact positively on outcomes for all students. This arrangement also facilitates quality CPD and support for staff.

A detailed break-down of the 1265 hrs directed time is updated annually.

The contract of employment requires that all staff:

- Be at work and ready to commence work at their contracted start time (unless they have prior agreement to arrive late)

- Agree with their manager any planned absence (for example a medical appointment)
- Agree with their manager any annual, special, or flexi leave they want BEFORE they take any time off (except bereavement leave and emergency leave)

If staff are absent due to sickness they are required to follow the Trust's sickness absence reporting procedure.

6 Appearance and Dress

Employees must ensure that they are dressed decently, safely and appropriately for the tasks they undertake. This may need to be different to how they dress when not at work. Those who dress or appear in a manner that could be considered as inappropriate could render themselves vulnerable to criticism or allegations of misconduct.

7 Safeguarding Welfare of Children and Young People

All staff are required to work within the Trust's **Child Protection Policy, Online Safety Policy** and **Health & Safety Policy**. These aim to safeguard children and young people and reduce the risk of staff and other adults in schools being falsely accused of improper or unprofessional conduct.

Staff receiving information about allegations of inappropriate behaviour or child abuse should report such information to the designated person, as set out in the Trust's Child Protection Policy and in accordance with the Trust's Procedure for Dealing with **Allegations against Staff**.

Employees are required to notify their manager in writing if:

- They are charged with a crime which (if convicted) would make them unfit for the job they do
- They are convicted of a criminal offence which would make them unfit for the job they do

All staff are also required to read and familiarise themselves with key safeguarding policies and mandatory guidance (the latest "Keeping Children Safe in Education" document) and to complete a paper or online form when required to and to confirm this and indicate their agreement to abide by the provisions of these documents. The paper version of this agreement is found in [Annex A](#). A full account of safeguarding requirements applicable to all staff is found in [Annex B](#).

8 Disclosure of Information

The law requires that certain types of information must be kept confidential while other types of information should be made public or shared with other agencies. All employees must comply with the Trust's **Data Protection and Confidentiality Policy**, complete mandatory training – and check with a member of the Executive team if in doubt as to whether the particular information should be released.

Employees must not use any information they get in the course of their employment for personal gain or benefit. They must not pass information on to others who might use it for their own gain.

Employees must only give confidential information or documents to those who have a legitimate right to them.

Employees other than the Chief Executive Officer must not make statements directly to the press or other media without first obtaining the approval of the Chief Executive Officer, except in the case of trade union representatives who are communicating with the media in that role. The Chief Executive Officer should consult with the Chair of the Board before making statements to the press or other media on major policy issues.

9 Political Neutrality

Employees serve the Board of Directors as a whole and must treat all directors and governors equally and make sure that their individual rights are respected.

Employees must not allow their own political opinions to interfere with their work nor to affect the Trust or its subsidiary bodies.

Employees may not display political posters, including election material, in areas of school premises which the public has access to. Trade union representatives may display trade union/association views on current issues on the appropriate authorised notice boards within the school.

Where political views are brought to the attention of pupils within the school or during extracurricular activities they should be in the form of a balanced presentation of opposing views.

10 Relationships

With Directors and Governors: Mutual respect between employees and directors/governors is essential to good school governance. An employee who believes that a director/governor has acted improperly towards them may report the matter to their head teacher who will take appropriate action.

With the local community and service users: Employees are expected to be polite, efficient, fair and impartial when they provide services to all groups and individuals within the community they serve.

With contractors and suppliers: All relationships of a business or personal nature outside work between staff in any way involved in procurement and external contractors or suppliers must be declared at the earliest opportunity to the Senior Clerk to the Directors and recorded in the register of interests. Orders and contracts must be awarded on merit and no special favour should be shown to anyone.

With parents or members of staff where the relationship causes you to act in your employment in a way that you would not have acted if the relationship did not exist: You must inform your manager of the action that you have taken or not taken that is different from the action that you would otherwise have taken.

For more information on relationships and conflicts of interest please refer to the Trust's **Financial Regulations** and the **Directors' Conflicts of Interest Policy**.

11 Recruitment and Other Employment Matters

Employees involved in appointing people to posts should ensure that they follow the Trust's **Recruitment, Induction and Probation Procedure**.

In order to avoid any possible accusation of bias, employees must not be involved in recruitment to or management of a post where they are related to or have a close relationship outside work with the person applying or employee. Staff must disclose to the head teacher any such relationship with any person who they know is an applicant for a post at the school or an employee in a post they manage. This should not prevent employees encouraging friends or relatives to apply for vacant posts.

Employees should not be involved in, or try to influence, decisions relating to discipline, promotion or pay for any employee who is a relative or with whom they have a close relationship outside work.

Examples of close relationships outside work are: flatmate, business associate, family friend, church friend.

12 Admissions

Employees involved in admitting students to a Trust school must follow the Trust's **Admissions Policy**.

Employees should not be involved in, or try to influence, decisions relating to the admission of a student who is a relative or with whom they have a close relationship outside work. Employees must disclose any such potential conflicts of interest to the head teacher.

13 Commitments Outside Work

Employees' off-duty hours are their private concern as long as they do not:

- Put their private interests before their duty to the school
- Put themselves in a position where their duty and private interests conflict or could appear to conflict; or
- Do anything which could adversely affect their suitability to carry out their duties or the reputation of the school

Teaching staff or support staff in a full-time role graded above Grade 5 may not carry out any other business or take up any additional employment without the permission of the Chief Executive Officer. The Chief Executive Officer will not unreasonably prevent you carrying out other employment. However this employment must not, in the view of the Chief Executive Officer, conflict with the Trust's interests and specific conditions may be laid down. The following conditions apply to all commitments outside work:

- Employees must not carry out private work (whether paid or unpaid) relating to the school or local authority without permission from the head teacher;
- Employees must not carry out any work related to a private interest (including taking or making telephone calls) during normal working hours;
- An employee must not use the school's facilities or equipment or confidential information for a private interest; and
- All approvals will be reviewed and may be withdrawn if thought necessary.

Some staff, particularly teachers, may wish to use their professional expertise to do other work, for example examination marking or private tuition. It is recognised that this can be of value to the school. The Chief Executive Officer will not normally prevent employees from undertaking additional employment if they are satisfied that it does not conflict with the interests of or weaken public confidence in the school.

The provisions of this section are not intended to apply to trade union officers engaged in legitimate trade union duties and activities.

14 Personal Interests

Employees must declare to the Head of Governance and to the Directors, using the Register of Interests, any financial or non-financial interests that could conflict with the Trust's interests.

Employees must not be involved in decisions about matters in which they have a personal interest.

Employees must declare membership of any organisation that is not open to the public, does not have formal membership and has secrecy about rules, membership or conduct in the Register of Interests.

15 Equality

All members of the local community and employees have a right to be treated fairly and equally. Employees must follow the Trust's **Equalities Policy**.

16 Tendering Procedures

Employees involved in the tendering process or dealing with contractors should make sure that they know the separate roles of client and contractor. Employees must deal fairly and impartially with all customers, suppliers and other contractors and sub-contractors.

Employees who have access to confidential information on tenders or costs relating to contractors must not give that information to any unauthorised person or organisation.

More details about tendering procedures are found in the Trust's **Financial Regulations**.

17 Use of Financial Resources

Employees involved in financial activities and transactions must follow the Trust's **Financial Regulations**.

They must use public funds in a responsible and legal way, try to make sure that the school provides value for money to the local community and avoid legal challenges to the Trust.

18 Gifts, Hospitality and Other Benefits, Bribery and Corruption

It is a serious criminal offence under the Prevention of Corruption Acts for employees to corruptly receive or give any gift, loan, fee, reward or advantage or to show favour or disfavour to any person. If an allegation is made it is for the employee to prove that any rewards have not been corruptly gained or given.

The offer of gifts, hospitality or benefits in kind to employees (or their partners or family members) arising from their official duties could cause conflict between their private and public interests.

Employees should refuse any personal gift or hospitality offered to them, their partner or family member by any person or organisation who has dealings with the Trust or its schools exceeding the value of £25. Employees must declare any offer in the **Gifts and Hospitality Register** kept by the Director of Finance & Operations and say what action they have taken. The Director of Finance & Operations should report declarations to the Chief Executive Officer and/or Directors as appropriate.

Details of the Trusts rules mainly concerning the giving of gifts and hospitality are found in the Trust's **Gifts and Hospitality Policy**. More information about rules on giving and receiving Gifts and Other Benefits, Bribery and Corruption are found in the Trust's **Financial Regulations**.

19 Sponsorship

The above rules relating to gifts and hospitality also apply where an outside organisation wishes to sponsor or is approached to sponsor a school activity. This may be by invitation, tender, negotiation or voluntarily. Employees should be particular careful when dealing with current or potential contractors.

Any employee who, or whose partner or family member, would directly benefit from sponsorship of an activity by the school, must declare this in the Register of Interests.

Employees must give impartial advice and avoid any conflict of interest where the Trust gives support in the community through sponsorship, grant aid or financial or other means.

Further details on this subject can be found in the Trust's **Sponsorship Policy**.

20 Retention of Declarations

Declarations of interest and declarations of gifts and hospitality should be retained for 3 years after the end of employment or the end of a contract to which the declaration relates – whichever is later.

21 Relationship with Other Policies and Procedures

Trust employees are required to comply with all Trust Policies and Procedures. However, those listed below have particular relevance to this Code of Conduct:

- **Admissions Policy.** This policy and the oversubscription criteria set out the rules governing how applications for admissions are determined.
- **Child Protection Policy.** This policy provides more detail on how the Trust requires employees to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children.
- **Data Protection and Confidentiality Policy.** This policy details how staff are required to handle personal and sensitive information.
- **Directors' Conflict of Interest Policy.** This policy sets out how the Trust manages conflicts of interest arising at Director/Member level.
- **Disciplinary Procedure.** This procedure should be used to deal with an allegation against a member of staff that they have acted in breach of this Code of Conduct. The procedure details examples of misconduct, including gross misconduct which can lead to summary dismissal.
- **Online Safety Policy.** This sets out the requirements concerning safe use of the Trust's IT systems.
- **Equalities Policy.** This policy details how staff are required to ensure different groups are treated equally and fairly.
- **Financial Regulations.** This document contains the rules concerning a range of financial issues including tendering, bribery and corruption.
- **Gifts and Hospitality Policy.** This contains rules mainly concerning the giving of gifts and hospitality.
- **Health & Safety Policy.** This details requirements ensuring the safety of staff and pupils.
- **Information for Prospective Governors.** This gives details of the expectations of Governors and Directors.
- **Procedures for Dealing with Allegations against Staff.** This should be followed if it is alleged that a member of staff, volunteer or agency worker has abused a child.
- **Sponsorship Policy.** Offers of sponsorship should be dealt with in accordance with this policy.

- **Staff Induction Policy** and **NQT Induction Policy**. These documents detail expectations for the induction of new staff.
- **Staff Recruitment, Probation and Leaver Procedure**. This document sets out the procedures to be followed to ensure staff are treated fairly at key stages of their employment with the Trust.
- **Whistleblowing Policy**. This should be followed by an employee wishing to report illegality or malpractice.

These policies are all available on [COPIA](#).

Annex A: Agreement to Abide by Safeguarding Policies and Guidance

The Trust requires all staff, members, governors, directors and volunteers to read and agree to abide by:

1. "Guidance for Safer Working Practice for those working with children and young people in education settings", Safer Recruitment Consortium, February 2022.
https://www.saferrecruitmentconsortium.org/_files/ugd/f576a8_0d079cbe69ea458e9e99fe462e447084.pdf
2. Part 1 and Annex A of "Keeping Children Safe in Education", Department for Education, September 2023
3. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/64f0a84da78c5f000dc6f3b4/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2023_-_part_one.pdf The Trust's Child Protection Policy

<https://twyfordacademies.sharepoint.com/:f/r/sites/policies/Policies/3%20Pastoral?csf=1&web=1&e=paAuRO>

I _____ (name) have read and agree to abide by the above documents.

Signed Date

The Trust Directors, Headteachers and Governors of your school thank you for your support of the arrangements made for the safety and care of young people and adults in our school community.



Alice Hudson
Chief Executive Officer
Twyford Church of England Academies Trust

Annex B: Safeguarding Children Requirements Applicable to All Staff

The following text is taken from page 12 of [Ealing Council's Code of Conduct for School Employees January 2024](#).

Statutory requirements

Schools (including independent and non-maintained schools) and further education institutions have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils under s175 of the Education Act 2002. They should create and maintain a safe learning environment for children and young people and identify where there are child welfare concerns and take action to address them in partnership with other organisations where appropriate. The same duty is put on independent schools, academies and technology colleges by regulations made under s157.

The following guidance on appropriate behaviour is primarily taken from Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in educational settings (Safer Recruitment Consortium May 2019), Keeping children safe in Education, (Department for Education September 2023) and Use of reasonable force (Department for Education July 2013).

All staff have a duty to report any suspicion of abuse. In the first instance you should inform the school's Child Protection Officer or in their absence the head teacher. If the concern is regarding the behaviour of another member of staff you should inform the head teacher. If the concern is regarding the head teacher the matter should be referred to the Chair of Governors or directly to the Council's Designated Officer. The September 2021 version of Keeping children safe in education emphasises the following staff responsibilities:

- School and college staff are particularly important as they are in a position to identify concerns early, provide help for children, and prevent concerns from escalating.
- It is essential that everyone working in a school or college understands their safeguarding responsibilities
- All staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn.
- All staff should be prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years.
- Any staff member who has a concern about a child's welfare should follow the referral processes set out in KCSIE (page 16 of the 2023 document). Staff should expect to support social workers and other agencies following any referral.

It is recognised that not all people who work with children work as paid or contracted employees. However the principles and guidance outlined in this document still apply and should be followed by any person whose work brings them into contact with children.

Employers also have a duty of care towards their employees, both paid and unpaid, under the Health and safety at Work Act 1974. This requires them to provide a safe working environment for adults and provide guidance about safe working practices.

The Human Rights Act 1998 sets out important principles regarding protection of individuals from abuse by state organisations or people working for those institutions. Adults who are subjected to an allegation should therefore be supported and the principle of natural justice applies.

Confidentiality

Staff may have access to sensitive or private information about children that must be kept confidential at all times and only shared when it is in the interests of the child to do so. Such information must not be used to intimidate, humiliate, or embarrass the child or young person concerned.

Information sharing is vital in identifying and tackling all forms of abuse and neglect, and in promoting children's welfare, including their educational outcomes. Schools and colleges have clear powers to share, hold and use information for these purposes. The data protection act 2018 and UK GDPR do not prevent the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. Fears about sharing information must not be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare and protect the welfare of children.

Staff must understand the importance of not promising to keep children's secrets. Neither should they request this of a child or young person under any circumstances.

Staff / pupil relationships

All staff need to know that inappropriate behaviour with or towards children is unacceptable. In particular under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 it is an offence for a person over 18 (e.g. teacher or school support staff) to have a sexual relationship with a child under 18 where that person is in a position of trust in respect of that child, even if the relationship is consensual. This applies where the person works in the same establishment as the child, even if s/he does not teach the child.

A relationship between a member of staff, a volunteer or a governor and any student cannot be a relationship of equals. There is potential for exploitation and harm of students and all adults have a responsibility to ensure that the unequal balance of power is not used for personal advantage or gratification.

Pupils will on occasion have an infatuation or crush on a member of staff. These situations must be taken seriously and the adult should be careful to ensure that no encouragement of any kind is given to the pupil. It should also be recognised that careless and insensitive reactions may provoke false accusations. An adult who becomes aware that a child or young person is developing an infatuation should discuss this at the earliest opportunity with the head teacher or senior manager so appropriate action can be taken to avoid any hurt, distress or embarrassment.

Personal property of a sexually explicit nature such as books, magazines, videos or digital media or material stored on personal laptops must not be brought onto or stored on the school premises.

Physical contact with pupils / restraint

It is not realistic to suggest that teachers should never touch pupils and they and other staff in schools have the right to use reasonable force to control or restrain pupils in certain circumstances (Section 93, Education and Inspections Act 2006). However, it is crucial that in all circumstances, adults should only touch children in ways that are appropriate to their professional or agreed role and responsibilities. Corporal punishment is no longer acceptable in any circumstances.

Schools are advised to have a policy about the use of reasonable force and to record incidents in which force is used to control or restrain pupils and tell parents or carers about such incidents.

Not all children and young people feel comfortable about physical contact, and adults should not make the assumption that it is acceptable practice to use touch as a means of communication. Reasonable force can be used to prevent pupils from hurting themselves or others, from damaging property or from causing disorder. In a school, force is used for two main purposes – to control pupils or to restrain them. In other situations permission should be sought from a child or young

person before physical contact is made. Where the child is very young, there should be a discussion with the parent or carer about what physical contact is acceptable and/or necessary.

When physical contact is made with a child this should be in response to their needs at the time, of limited duration and appropriate to their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background. It is not possible to be specific about the appropriateness of each physical contact, since an action that is appropriate with one child in one set of circumstances may be inappropriate in another, or with a different child. Adults, nevertheless, should use their professional judgement at all times, 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 child for the minimum time necessary.

Physical contact that occurs regularly with an individual child or young person is likely to raise questions unless there is explicit agreement on the need for, and nature of, that contact. This would then be part of a formally agreed plan or within the parameters of established, agreed and legal professional protocols on physical contact e.g. sport activities or medical procedures. Any such arrangements should be understood and agreed by all concerned, justified in terms of the child's needs, consistently applied and open to scrutiny.

Physical contact should never be secretive, or for the gratification of the adult, or represent a misuse of authority. If an adult believes that their action could be misinterpreted, or if an action is observed by another as being inappropriate or possibly abusive, the incident and circumstances should be reported to the head teacher or senior manager outlined in the procedures for handling allegations and an appropriate record made. Parents/carers should also be informed in such circumstances.

Where a child seeks or initiates inappropriate physical contact with an adult, the situation should be handled sensitively and care taken to ensure that contact is not exploited in any way. Careful consideration must be given to the needs of the child and advice and support given to the adult concerned.

It is recognised that some children who have experienced abuse may seek inappropriate physical contact. Adults should be particularly aware of this when it is known that a child has suffered previous abuse or neglect. In the child's view, physical contact might be associated with such experiences and lead to some actions being misinterpreted. In all circumstances where a child or young person initiates inappropriate physical contact, it is the responsibility of the adult to sensitively deter the child and help them understand the importance of personal boundaries. Such circumstances must always be reported and discussed with the head teacher or the appropriate senior manager and the parent/carer.

Further information about when physical intervention might be appropriate and the meaning of reasonable force can be found in Use of reasonable force – Advice for Head teachers, staff and governing bodies, Department for Education July 2013.

Children and young people in distress

There are some settings, where adults are involved in managing significant or regular occurrences of distress and emotional upset in children, for example when dealing with very young pupils or pupils with special educational needs. In these circumstances professional guidance should be followed and staff should be aware of what is and what is not acceptable behaviour when comforting a child or diffusing a situation. This is particularly important when working on a one-to-one basis.

For all other staff working with children there will be occasions when a distressed child needs comfort and reassurance and this may involve physical contact. Young children, in particular, may need immediate physical comfort, for example after a fall, separation from parent etc. Staff should use their professional judgement to comfort or reassure a child in an age-appropriate way whilst maintaining clear professional boundaries.

Where a member of staff has a particular concern about the need to provide this type of care and reassurance, or is concerned that an action may be misinterpreted, this should be reported and discussed with the head teacher or a senior manager and parents/carers.

Intimate and personal care

Some job responsibilities necessitate intimate physical contact with children on a regular basis, for example assisting young children with toileting, providing intimate care for children with disabilities or in the provision of medical care. The nature, circumstances and context of such contact should comply with professional codes of practice or guidance and/or be part of a formally agreed plan, which is regularly reviewed. The additional vulnerabilities that may arise from a physical or learning disability should be taken into account and be recorded as part of an agreed care plan. The emotional responses of any child to intimate care should be carefully and sensitively observed, and where necessary, any concerns passed to Head teachers, senior managers and/or parents/carers.

Young people are entitled to respect and privacy at all times and especially when in a state of undress, changing clothes, bathing or undertaking any form of personal care. There are occasions where there will be a need for an appropriate level of supervision in order to safeguard young people and/or satisfy health and safety considerations. This supervision should be appropriate to the needs and age of the young people concerned and sensitive to the potential for embarrassment.

First aid and administration of medication

When administering first aid, wherever possible, staff should ensure that another adult is aware of the action being taken. Parents should always be informed when first aid has been administered.

In circumstances where children need medication regularly a health care plan should have been established to ensure the safety and protection of children and the adults who are working with them. Depending upon the age and understanding of the child, they should where appropriate, be encouraged to self-administer medication or treatment.

Behaviour management

Corporal punishment is unlawful in all schools. Staff and volunteers must not use any form of degrading treatment to punish a student. The 1996 Education Act covers the circumstances in which staff can physically intervene with a student. Staff may legitimately intervene to prevent a student 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. Staff should have regard to the health and safety of themselves and others. Under no circumstances should physical force be used as a form of punishment. The use of unwarranted physical force is likely to constitute a criminal offence. However head teachers should support staff when they make use of reasonable force in justifiable situations.

Where children display difficult or challenging behaviour, adults must follow the behaviour policy outlined by their place of work and use strategies appropriate to the circumstances and situation. The use of physical intervention can only be justified in exceptional circumstances and must be used as a last resort when other behaviour management strategies have failed. Belittling or sarcastic behaviour towards a child is unacceptable.

Where a child has specific needs in respect of particularly challenging behaviour, a positive handling plan may be drawn up and agreed by all parties. Only in these circumstances should an adult deviate from the behaviour management policy of the organisation.

Appearance / Dress

Staff and volunteers must ensure they are dressed decently, safely and appropriately for the tasks they undertake and in line with any school policy. This may need to be different to how they dress when not at work. Those who dress or appear in a manner that could be considered as inappropriate could render themselves vulnerable to criticism or allegations of misconduct. The school should make clear any rules that apply with regards to appearance or dress for staff and volunteers.

Social contacts

Staff should be aware that safe practice also involves using judgement and integrity about behaviours in places other than the work setting. An individual's behaviour, either in or out of the workplace, should not compromise their position within the work setting or bring the school into disrepute.

Adults in schools should not establish or seek to establish social contact with students for the purpose of developing a friendship or to pursue or strengthen a relationship. Even if a student seeks to establish social contact or if this occurs coincidentally, the adult should exercise her/her professional judgement in making a response and be aware that such social contact could be misconstrued. If a student perseveres with any effort to establish social contact the employee should report the issue to their line manager.

One to one meetings and work with pupils

Staff should be aware that one-to-one meetings with individual pupils might leave them vulnerable to allegations. There will be occasions when a confidential interview or a one to one meeting is necessary but where possible such interviews should be conducted in a room with visual access or with the door open or in a room or area which is likely to be frequented by other people and another pupil or adult should be present or nearby. Where such conditions cannot apply staff should ensure that another adult is present and/or senior management knows that the meeting is taking place.

Meetings with pupils away from the school premises should only be arranged with the specific approval of the head teacher and parents or carers.

Transporting children and young people

In certain situations e.g. out of school activities, staff may agree to transport students. Wherever possible a designated member of staff should make transport arrangements in advance and transport should be provided other than in private vehicles, with at least one adult additional to the driver acting as an escort. Staff, who are expected to use their own vehicles for transporting children should ensure that the vehicle is roadworthy, appropriately insured and that the maximum capacity is not exceeded.

It is a legal requirement that all passengers should wear seat belts and it is the responsibility of the staff member to ensure that this requirement is met. Adults should also be aware of current legislation and adhere to the use of car seats for younger children. Where adults transport children in a vehicle that requires a specialist license/insurance e.g. PCV or LGV2F3- staff should ensure that they have an appropriate licence and insurance to drive such a vehicle.

It is inappropriate for adults to offer lifts to a child or young person outside their normal working duties, unless this has been brought to the attention of the line manager and has been agreed with the parents/carers.

There may be occasions where the child or young person requires transport in an emergency situation or where not to give a lift may place a child at risk. Such circumstances must always be recorded and reported to a senior manager and parents/carers.

Educational visits and school clubs

Staff should take particular care when supervising students in the less formal atmosphere of an educational visit, particularly in a residential setting, or after-school activity. Staff remain in a position of trust. Although a more informal approach may be appropriate the same standards of conduct apply.

Where activities include overnight stays, careful consideration needs to be given to sleeping arrangements. Children, young people, adults and parents should be informed of these prior to the start of the trip. In all circumstances, those organising trips and outings must pay careful attention to ensuring safe staff/child ratios and to the gender mix of staff especially on overnight stays.

Health and Safety arrangements require members of staff to keep colleagues/employers aware of their whereabouts, especially when involved in activities outside the usual workplace

Curriculum

Many areas of the curriculum can include or raise subject matter which is sexually explicit, or of an otherwise 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 plan should highlight particular areas of risk and sensitivity.

Communication

As with physical contact, comments by staff to pupils can be misconstrued. As a general principle staff must not make unnecessary comments to and / or about pupils that could be construed to have a sexual connotation. It is also unacceptable for staff to introduce or to encourage debate amongst pupils in class, or elsewhere, which could be construed as having sexual connotations that is unnecessary given the context of the lesson. If a pupil mentions unnecessarily an inappropriate topic it should be addressed but with the class then moving on promptly.

No child or young person should be in or invited into the home of an adult who works with them unless the reason for this has been firmly established and agreed in advance with parents or carers and agreed to by the head teacher.

The curriculum can sometimes include or lead to unplanned discussion about subject matter of a sexually explicit or otherwise sensitive nature. Responding to students' questions can require careful judgement and staff must take guidance in these circumstances from a senior member of staff.

Remember

- If you are unsure in any safeguarding situation consult the head teacher or the appropriate senior member of staff
- If in an emergency you have to take a course of action that differs from the above guidance ensure the incident is fully recorded with the head teacher or the appropriate senior member of staff
- If at any time you are concerned that an action or comment by yourself may be misinterpreted or that a child behaves or makes a comment in a way that causes you concern in this respect ensure the incident is fully recorded and shared with the head teacher or the appropriate senior member of staff

Any employees found to have behaved inappropriately towards children or who are found to not have appropriately reported having observed children being treated inappropriately will be liable to

disciplinary action that could include dismissal. It could also lead to them being barred from working with children in the future.

Concerns that do not meet the harm threshold

KCSE part 4, section 2 requires schools to record and address low level concerns to enable schools to identify concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour early, minimise the risk of abuse and ensure employees are clear about professional boundaries. A low level concern does not mean that it is insignificant but that it does not meet the harm threshold or is otherwise not serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO. Examples given in KCSIE of such behaviour could include but are not limited to:

- 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
- Humiliating children

As a first offence these may only need to be dealt with informally, but more formal action may be required depending on the circumstances such as if the misconduct is serious or repeated.