



Safer Working Practice Guidance

The Exceed Academies Trust has adopted this procedure (based on guidance developed by the Safer Recruitment Consortium)

Approved by the Trust Board on: 13 December 2017

To be reviewed on: As necessary

Signed on behalf of the Trust Board: *T V Grams*

NB. This guidance will be retained for a period of 7 years from replacement.

1. Introduction

The Safer Working Practice guidance was initially developed by IRSC (Independent Referral and Support Coordinators) in conjunction with the Department for Education and CAPE (Child Protection in Education). The Safer Recruitment Consortium reviewed the guidance in 2015 and many of the principles remain relevant to safeguarding within schools. Exceed Academies Trust has developed this guidance to make it specific and relevant to the organisation, and expects all staff to adhere to it, alongside child protection and safeguarding policies and procedures. This guidance forms part of the organisation's code of conduct, and applies to all adults (paid or unpaid) that may come into contact with children.

Exceed Academies Trust is committed to providing support and guidance to all staff in order that they may work, and be seen to work, in a professional manner. All staff who come into contact with children have a duty of care to safeguard and promote their welfare. The Trust recognises its duty to ensure that staff are confident, competent and safe to carry out their roles.

The majority of staff who work with children act professionally and aim to provide a safe and supportive environment, which secures the wellbeing and best outcomes for those in their care. It is recognised that in this area of work, tensions and misunderstandings can occur. The behaviour of staff working with children can give rise to allegations of abuse being made against them. Allegations may be malicious or misplaced and may arise from differing perceptions of the same event but when they occur, they are inevitably distressing and difficult for all concerned. Equally, it must be recognised that some allegations will be genuine and there are staff who will deliberately seek out, create, or exploit opportunities to abuse children. All possible steps must be taken to safeguard children and ensure that staff working with them are safe to do so. The term 'allegation' means where it is alleged that a person has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed, or may have harmed, a child;
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against, or related to, a child; or,
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children

This guidance cannot cover all situations and there may be times when professional judgements are made in instances not covered within this document.

All staff working with children, including volunteers, should be familiar with the local Safeguarding Children procedures and recognise that all staff have a duty to report any child protection or welfare concerns to the designated staff with the school. Concerns regarding staff should be referred directly to the Headteacher and concerns regarding the Headteacher should be referred to the Chair of the Governing Body.

2. Underpinning principles

1. The welfare of the child is paramount.
2. Everyone is responsible for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.
3. 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.
4. Staff should work, and be seen to work, in an open and transparent way.
5. Staff should acknowledge that deliberately invented/malicious allegations are extremely rare and that all concerns should be reported and recorded.

6. 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.
7. Staff should apply the same professional standards regardless of culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief or sexual orientation.
8. 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.
9. Staff should be aware that breaches of the law and other professional guidance 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 regulating body.
10. Staff and managers should continually monitor and review practice to ensure this follow the guidance contained in this document.
11. Staff should be aware of and understand the school's child protection policy, arrangements for managing allegations against staff, staff codes of conduct, whistleblowing procedures and the local Safeguarding Children procedures.

3. Context

All adults who work with children have a crucial role to play in shaping their lives. They have a unique opportunity to interact with children in ways that are both affirming and inspiring. This guidance has been produced to help staff working for Exceed Academies Trust to establish safe and responsible environments which safeguard children and reduce the risk of staff being unjustly accused of improper or unprofessional conduct.

These guidelines apply to all staff, regardless of role and responsibilities, paid or voluntary.

4. 'Unsuitability'

The guidance contained in this document is an attempt to identify what behaviours are expected of people who work with children. Staff whose practice deviates from this guidance and/or their professional standards or code of conduct may bring into question their suitability to work with children.

This means that staff should:

- have a clear understanding about the nature and content of this guidance
- discuss any uncertainties or confusion with a line manager
- understand what behaviours may call into question their suitability to continue to work with children

5. Duty of Care

All staff who work with children are accountable for the way in which they exercise authority, manage risk and safeguard children.

Whether working in a paid or voluntary capacity, staff have a duty to keep children safe and to protect them from sexual, physical, emotional and financial harm. Children have a right to be treated with dignity and respect. It follows that trusted people are expected to take reasonable steps to ensure the health, safety, welfare and wellbeing of children. Failure to do so may be regarded as neglect and a breach of the statutory duty of care that staff are required to discharge in accordance with the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974.

The duty of care is, in part, exercised through the development of respectful and caring relationships between staff and children. It is also exercised through the behaviour of the member of staff, which at all times should demonstrate integrity, maturity and good judgement.

Everyone expects high standards of behaviour from staff who work with children. When individuals accept such work, they need to understand and acknowledge the responsibilities and trust inherent in that role.

Exceed Academies Trust has a duty of care towards staff, both paid and unpaid, under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. This means the Trust is required to provide a safe working environment for staff and provide guidance about professional working practices. The Trust has a duty of care for the wellbeing of staff and to ensure that staff are treated fairly and reasonably in all circumstances. Staff who are subject to an allegation will therefore be supported and the principles of natural justice will be applied.

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 also imposes a duty on employees to take care of themselves and anyone else who may be affected by their actions or failing. The Trust's duty of care and staff's duty of care towards children should not conflict. This 'duty' can be demonstrated through the use and implementation of these guidelines.

This means that staff should:

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

6. Making a Professional Judgement

This guidance cannot provide a complete checklist of what is, or is not, appropriate behaviour for staff in all circumstances. There may be occasions and circumstances in which people have to make decisions or take actions in the best interests of the child 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 child in their care. Such judgements, in these circumstances, should always be recorded and shared with a senior manager. In undertaking these actions, individuals must be seen to be acting reasonably.

Staff should always consider whether their actions are warranted, proportionate and safe, and applied equitably. Using tools such as risk assessments can be helpful in this.

This means that where no specific guidance exists, staff should:

- Discuss the circumstances that informed their action, or their proposed action, with a senior manager and, where appropriate, a safeguarding lead and/or the parent/carer
- Report any actions which could be misinterpreted to a senior manager or safeguarding lead
- Always discuss any misunderstandings, accidents or threats with a senior manager or safeguarding lead.

- Always record discussions and reasons why actions were taken
- Record any areas of disagreement about course of action taken and refer to external agencies, if necessary.

7. Power and Positions of Trust

As a result of their knowledge, position and/or the authority invested in their role, all staff working with children are in positions of trust. Broadly speaking, a relationship of trust can be described as one in which one party is in a position of power or influence over the other by virtue of their work or the nature of their activity. It is vital for all those in positions of trust to understand the power this can give them over those they care for and the responsibility they must exercise as a consequence of this relationship. All staff within the Trust are in a position of trust, regardless of role.

A relationship between a member of staff and a child cannot be a relationship of equals. There is potential for exploitation and harm. Staff have a responsibility to ensure that an unequal balance of power is not used for personal advantage or gratification.

Staff should always maintain professional boundaries and avoid behaviour which might be misinterpreted by others. Staff should report and record any incidents with this potential.

Where a person aged 18 or over is in a specified position of trust (i.e. they are member of staff) 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 or others' advantage
- Use their position to intimidate, bully, humiliate, threaten, coerce or undermine children
- Use their status and standing to form or promote relationships which are of a sexual nature or which may become so.

8. Confidentiality

Staff may have access to confidential information about children in order to undertake their responsibilities. In some circumstances staff may have access to, or be given, highly sensitive or private information. These details 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 concerned, nor should it be used casually in conversation or shared with any person other than on a need-to-know basis.

If a member of staff is in any doubt about whether to share information or keep it confidential, they should seek guidance from a senior manager or a safeguarding lead. Any actions should be in line with data protection protocols as the storing and processing of personal information about children is governed by Data Protection legislation.

Whilst staff need to be aware of the need to listen to and support children, they must also understand the importance of not promising to keep secrets. Neither should they request this of a child under any circumstances.

Concerns and allegations about staff should be treated as confidential and passed to the Headteacher without delay. Any media or legal enquiries should be passed to senior management.

This means that staff:

- Should be clear about when information can be shared and in what circumstances it is appropriate to do so
- Are expected to treat information they receive about children in a discreet and confidential manner
- Should seek advice from a senior manager if they are in any doubt about sharing information they hold or what has been requested of them
- Need to know that allegations against staff must be reported to the Headteacher
- Should not discuss personal or confidential information where they may be overheard, or outside the work setting
- Should ensure that personal information is recorded using appropriate systems.

9. Propriety and Behaviour

All staff working with children have a responsibility to maintain public confidence in their ability to safeguard the welfare and best interests of children. It is therefore expected that they will adopt high standards of personal conduct in order to maintain the confidence and respect of the public in general, and all those with whom they work.

There may be times, for example, when a member of staff's behaviour or actions in their personal life comes under scrutiny from local communities, the media or public authorities. This could be because their behaviour is considered to compromise their position in their workplace or indicate an unsuitability to work with children. Misuse of drugs, alcohol or acts of violence are examples of such behaviour.

Staff in contact with children should therefore understand and be aware that professional practice also involves using judgement and integrity about behaviours in places other than the work setting.

The behaviour of a person's partner or other family members may raise similar concerns that require careful consideration by the Trust as to whether there may be a potential risk to children. This is not solely related to the Disqualification by Association statutory guidance and may apply to staff that are not covered by this guidance.

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 act as a role model

This means that staff should:

- Be aware that behaviour in their personal lives may impact upon their work with children
- Follow the school's code of conduct
- Understand that the behaviours and actions of their family members, or those with whom they share a household or are associated with, may raise questions about their suitability to work with children

10. Dress and Appearance

A member of staff's dress and appearance are matters of personal choice and self-expression, however, staff should dress in ways which are appropriate to their role and this may be different to how they dress when not at work.

Staff who work with, or around, children should take care to ensure they are dressed appropriately for the tasks and the work they undertake. Those who dress in a manner which could be considered as inappropriate could render themselves vulnerable to criticism or allegations.

Staff should also be mindful of wearing work-related clothing, including identification badges, outside of work and their behaviour whilst in such clothing or whilst they may be identifiable as a member of staff. Staff should not act in a manner which may bring the Trust into disrepute whilst wearing work-related clothing or identification.

This means that staff should wear clothing which:

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

11. Gifts, Rewards and Favouritism

The giving of gifts or rewards to children should be part of an agreed policy for supporting positive behaviour or recognising particular achievements. In some situations, the giving of gifts as rewards may be accepted practice for a group of children, whilst in other situations the giving of a gift to an individual child will be part of an agreed plan, recorded and discussed with a senior manager and parents/carers.

It is acknowledged that there are specific occasions when persons may wish to give a child a personal gift. This is only acceptable practice where the member of staff has discussed the giving of the gift and the reason for it with a senior manager and/or the parents/carers. Any gifts should be given openly and not based on favouritism. Staff need to be aware that the giving of gifts could be misinterpreted by others as a gesture either to bribe or groom a child.

Staff should exercise care when selecting children for specific activities or privileges to avoid perceptions of favouritism or unfairness. Methods and criteria for selection should always be transparent, subject to scrutiny, and in line with the school's behaviour policy.

Care should also be taken to ensure that staff do not accept any gift that might be construed as a bribe by others, or lead the giver to expect preferential treatment.

There are occasions when children or their parents/carers wish to pass on small tokens of appreciation to staff e.g. on special occasions or as a thank-you. This is acceptable provided the receiving of such a gift is reported to a line manager. It is unacceptable to receive gifts on a regular basis or of any significant value.

This means that staff should:

- Be aware of the Trust and school's policies regarding anti-bribery and behaviour management
- Ensure that gifts received or given in situations which may be misconstrued are declared
- Generally, only give gifts to an individual child as part of an agreed reward system
- Where giving gifts other than as above, ensure that these are of insignificant value
- Ensure that all selection processes which concern children are fair and that, wherever practicable, these are undertaken and agreed by more than one member of staff.

12. Infatuations

Occasionally, a child may develop an infatuation with a person who works with them. The person should deal with these situations sensitively and appropriately to maintain the dignity and safety of all concerned. Staff should remain aware that such infatuations carry a high risk of words or actions being misinterpreted and should therefore make every effort to ensure that their own behaviour is above reproach.

A member of staff who becomes aware that a child is developing an infatuation should discuss this at the earliest opportunity with a senior manager and/or parents/carers so that appropriate action can be taken to avoid any hurt, distress or embarrassment.

This means that staff should:

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

13. Social Contact

It is accepted that staff may live within the communities that they work or may know children and families connected to the Trust in their personal lives, however staff should not seek to have social contact with children or their families, unless the reason for this contact has been firmly established and agreed by a senior manager. If a child or parent/carer seeks to establish social contact, or if this occurs coincidentally, staff should exercise professional judgement when responding and should always discuss the situation with their line manager. Staff should be aware that social contact in certain situations could be misconstrued as grooming (for the purposes of sexual exploitation or radicalisation) or inappropriate.

It is recognised that some staff may support a parent/carer who may be in particular difficulty. Care needs to be exercised in those situations where the parent/carer comes to depend upon a member of staff for support outside of their professional role. This situation should be discussed with a senior manager and, where necessary, referrals made to the appropriate agency for support.

This means that staff should:

- Have no secret social contact with children or their parents/carers

- Consider the appropriateness of social contact with children
- Always approve any planned social contact with children or parents/carers with a senior colleague
- Inform a senior manager of any social contact they have with a child or a parent/carer with whom they work, which may give rise to concern
- Be aware that the sending of personal communications such as birthday or faith cards should always be discussed with a senior manager beforehand and recorded
- Understand that some communication may be called into question and may need to be justified

14. Communication with Children, including the use of Technology and Social Networks

Communication with children should take place within clear and explicit professional boundaries and in line with the school's acceptable use of ICT policy. This includes the wider use of technology such as mobile phones, text messaging, emails, web-cams, websites and blogs. Staff should not share any personal information with a child and should not use their own personal technology to communicate with a child on a personal level under any circumstances.

There may be times when a member of staff needs to contact a child outside of the work setting (e.g. trips). Staff should use school-owned mobile phones for any work related purposes when they need to contact children. That way, numbers can be deleted following the event and children will not have access to an employee's personal number.

Staff should not seek to make contact with children outside of the work setting and should ensure that all communications are transparent and open to scrutiny.

Staff should store their own personal technology securely away from children. It is highly recommended that mobiles are switched off during work hours and should only be accessed during breaks and lunchtime but not in the presence of children. This also applies when in meetings with children and their parents/carers.

Staff should also be cautious in their communication with children so as to avoid any possible misinterpretation of their motives or any behaviour which could be construed as grooming or inappropriate. Staff should not give their personal contact details to children under any circumstances, unless the need to do so is explicitly agreed with a senior manager and parents/carers in advance. This includes personal email address, home or mobile telephone numbers and extends to communication through internet based websites. Personal communication between a member of staff and a child may lead to disciplinary and/or criminal investigations.

Staff should be mindful of the following advice:

- Privacy on the internet seldom means communications are entirely private
- Staff should protect themselves from probing interest from children
- Caution should be taken when posting online as children may challenge staff e.g. online dating, twitter etc.
- No photographs of children taken in the workplace or on any occasion connected with the workplace should be displayed online
- Staff that witness any improper use of social media/online which may be a safeguarding concern should inform a senior manager immediately

- Any form of social media that is found to reveal confidential information about children or the Trust, attacks or abuses colleagues or children, or constitutes a conflict of interest will be investigated and may be subject to disciplinary action.

This means that staff should:

- Not give their personal contact details to children
- Inform the Headteacher immediately if contacted by a child on a personal mobile
- Only use equipment provided by the school to communicate with children, making sure that parents have given permission for this form of communication to be used
- Only make contact with children for professional, work-related reasons
- Not use internet based communication channels to send personal messages to a child
- Be mindful that they are in a notifiable position and keep themselves as safe as possible
- Not use the internet, particularly social media, to complain or criticise about colleagues, the Trust, children or parents
- Not befriend children outside of work
- Make it clear on social media that their views are their own and not representative of the Trust i.e. a disclaimer
- Adhere to the acceptable use of ICT policies and procedures

15. Physical Contact

There may be occasions when it is entirely appropriate and proper for staff to have physical contact with children. It is crucial that they only do so in ways appropriate to their professional role.

A 'no touch' approach is impractical for most staff and will, in some circumstances, be inappropriate. When physical contact is made with children, this should be 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 incident of physical contact. An action that is appropriate with one child in a particular set of circumstances may be inappropriate in another, or with a different child. Staff should use professional judgement at all times.

Physical contact should never be secretive, for the gratification of the adult, or represent a misuse of authority. If a member of staff believes that an action could be misinterpreted, the incident and circumstances should be reported to a senior manager and a record should be made.

Physical contact which occurs regularly with a child is likely to raise questions, unless it forms part of an agreed plan e.g. in relation to pupils with special needs or physical disabilities. Where possible, staff should seek the child's permission before initiating contact. Staff should listen, observe and take note of the child's reaction or feelings and use a level of contact which is acceptable to the child for the minimum time necessary.

A culture of 'limited touch' should be adopted, where appropriate, to the individual needs of the child. Children with special needs may require more physical contact

to assist their everyday learning. Arrangements for this should be understood and agreed by all concerned, justified in terms of the child's needs, consistently applied and open to scrutiny.

It is recognised that some children may seek inappropriate physical contact. Staff should be particularly aware of this, especially 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 may lead to some actions being misinterpreted. In all circumstances where a child initiates inappropriate physical contact, it is the responsibility of the staff to sensitively deter the child and help them understand the importance of personal boundaries. Such circumstances must always be reported and discussed with a senior manager and the parent/carer.

This means that staff should:

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

16. Children in Distress

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 e.g. following a fall or separation from parent. Staff should use their professional judgement to comfort or reassure a child in an age-appropriate way, whilst maintaining clear professional boundaries. This is particularly important when working on a one-to-one basis.

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

This means staff should:

- Consider the way in which they offer comfort and do it in an age-appropriate way
- Be cautious when offering reassurance in one-to-one situations and always record actions in these circumstances
- Never touch a child in a way which may be considered indecent
- Record and report situations which may give rise to concern
- Not assume that all children seek or need physical comfort and should make a professional assessment of each situation

17. Other Activities that require Physical Contact

Some staff, due to the nature of their role, may have to initiate some physical contact with children. This could be within sports, drama or outdoor activities and could include demonstration of techniques in the use of a particular piece of equipment, adjusting posture or to support a child so they can perform an activity safely.

Physical contact should only take place when it is necessary in relation to a particular activity and should take place in a safe and open environment i.e. an environment easily observed by others and should last for the minimum time necessary. The

extent of the contact should be made clear to parents/carers and once agreed, should be undertaken with the permission of the child. As with all physical contact, adults should remain sensitive to any discomfort expressed by the child, verbally or non-verbally.

Protocols around safe and appropriate physical contact are provided by national organisations, for example sports governing bodies, and should be understood and applied consistently. Any incidents of physical contact that cause concern should be reported to a senior manager and parents/carers.

Physical contact may also include provision of health care, such as the administration of medication or first aid, therefore this guidance should be applied wherever physical contact is deemed to be necessary by the member of staff.

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

18. Intimate Care

Staff may be working in roles that necessitate intimate physical contact with children on a regular or ad-hoc basis, for example assisting young children with toileting or providing intimate care for children with disabilities. The nature, circumstances and context of such contact should comply with the school's intimate care policy and procedures and should be part of a formally agreed plan.

The emotional responses of any child to intimate care should be carefully and sensitively observed. Any concerns should be reported to senior managers and parents/carers.

All children have a right to safety, privacy and dignity when contact of an intimate nature is required. Depending on their abilities, children should be encouraged to act as independently as possible.

This means that staff should:

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

19. Personal Care

Children are entitled to 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 when there will be a need for an appropriate level of supervision in order to safeguard the children and/or satisfy health and safety requirements. This supervision should be appropriate to the needs and age of the children and sensitive to the potential for embarrassment.

Staff must be vigilant about their own behaviour and ensure they follow agreed guidance and be mindful of the needs of the children.

This means that staff should:

- Avoid any physical contact when children are in a state of undress
- Avoid any visually intrusive behaviour
- Where there are changing rooms, announce their intention to enter
- Not change in the same place as children
- Not shower or bathe with children
- Not assist with any personal care task which a child can undertake by themselves

20. Behaviour Management

Children have a right to be treated with dignity and respect, even in circumstances where they display difficult or challenging behaviour.

Staff should not use any form of degrading treatment to punish a child. The use of sarcasm, demeaning or insensitive comments towards a child is not acceptable in any situation. Any sanctions or rewards should be part of the school's behaviour management policy.

The use of corporal punishment for children is not acceptable and whilst there may be a legal defence for parents who physically chastise their children, this does not extend, in any circumstances, to staff.

Where children display difficult or challenging behaviour, staff must follow the school's behaviour management policy and use strategies appropriate to the circumstance and situation. The use of physical intervention can only be justified in exceptional circumstances and must be used as a last resort.

Where a child has specific needs in respect of particularly challenging behaviour, a positive handling or care plan may be drawn up and agreed by all parties.

This means that staff should:

- Not use force as a form of punishment
- Try to defuse situations before they escalate
- Adhere to the school's behaviour management policy
- Inform a senior manager and parents/carers of any behaviour management techniques used that are not part of the agreed policy
- Not make, or encourage others to make, unprofessional personal comments which scapegoat, demean or humiliate, or which might be interpreted as such
- Be mindful of factors which may impact on children's behaviour e.g. bullying or abuse, and take appropriate action.

21. Use of Control and Physical Intervention

There are circumstances when staff working with children displaying extreme behaviours can legitimately intervene, using either non-restrictive or restrictive physical interventions. Staff that are expected to use restrictive physical intervention must only do so following appropriate training e.g. Team Teach.

The use of physical intervention should, wherever possible, be avoided. It should only be used to manage a child's behaviour if it is absolutely necessary to prevent injury to the child, other children or the public, to prevent serious damage to property, or in what would reasonably be regarded as exceptional circumstances. When physical intervention is used, it should be undertaken in such a way that maintains the safety and dignity of all concerned.

The scale and nature of any physical intervention must be proportionate to both the behaviour of the child to be controlled, and the nature of the harm they may cause. The minimum necessary force should be used.

Where restrictive physical interventions may need to be engaged regularly i.e. where staff are working with children that have specific needs or medical conditions, individual care plans may include the use of physical intervention and should be discussed and agreed with senior managers and parents/carers.

Under no circumstances should physical force or intervention be used as a form of punishment. The use of unwarranted physical force may constitute a criminal offence.

In all cases where physical intervention is employed, the incident and subsequent actions should be documented and reported to a senior manager. This should include written and signed accounts of all those involved, including the child. Parents/carers should be informed as soon as possible following the incident.

This means that staff should:

- Adhere to the statutory physical intervention guidance
- Always seek to defuse situations
- Always use minimum force for the shortest period necessary
- Record and report as soon as possible after any incident where restrictive physical intervention has been used

22. Sexual Conduct

Staff should clearly understand the need to maintain appropriate boundaries in their contact with children. Intimate or sexual relationships between staff and children will be regarded as a grave breach of trust. Allowing or encouraging a relationship to develop in a way which might lead to a sexual relationship is also unacceptable.

Any sexual activity between a member of staff and a child could be regarded as a criminal offence and will always be a matter for disciplinary action.

Children are protected by specific legal provisions, regardless of whether the child consents or not. Sexual activity does not just involve physical contact, including penetrative and non-penetrative acts, and may also include activities such as causing children to engage in or watch sexual activity or production of pornographic material.

Keeping Children Safe in Education defines sexual abuse as “forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities...whether or not the child is aware of what is happening”. There are occasions when a person may embark on a course of behaviour known as ‘grooming’, where the sole purpose is to gain the trust of a child, and manipulate that relationship so that sexual abuse can take place. Staff should be aware that consistently giving inappropriate special attention and favour to a child might be construed as part of a ‘grooming’ process and as such will give rise to concerns.

This means that staff should not:

- Have sexual relationships with children
- Have any form of communication with children which could be interpreted as sexually suggestive or provocative e.g. verbal comments, letters, notes, email, phone calls, text messages or physical contact
- Make sexual remarks to, or about, children
- Discuss their own sexual relationships with, or in the presence of, children

This means that staff should:

- Ensure their relationships with children clearly take place within the boundaries of a respectful professional relationship
- Take care that their language or conduct does not give rise to speculation
- Be aware that attitudes, demeanor and language all require care and thought, particularly when staff are dealing with adolescent children

23. One to One Situations

It is accepted that staff may need to work on a one to one basis with children. It should be accepted that where there is a need, agreed with senior managers and parents/carers, for staff to be alone with a child, procedures and safeguards must be in place. Staff should be offered support and guidance when working in any areas which may place them or children in vulnerable situations.

One to one situations have the potential to make children more vulnerable to harm by those who seek to exploit their position of trust. Staff working in one to one settings with pupils may also be more vulnerable to unjust or unfounded allegations being made against them. Both possibilities should be recognised so that when one to one situations are unavoidable, reasonable and sensible precautions are taken. Every attempt should be made to ensure the safety and security of pupils and the staff who work with them.

There are occasions when senior managers will need to undertake a risk assessment in relation to the specific nature and implications of one to one work. These assessments should take into account the individual needs of the child and the duty of care towards the member of staff, and should be reviewed on a regular basis.

Meetings with children away from the school premises should not be permitted unless approval is obtained from the parent/carer and the Headteacher.

This means that staff should:

- Ensure that when lone working is an integral part of their role, appropriate risk assessments are conducted and agreed
- Avoid meeting a child in remote or secluded areas
- Always inform a senior manager and/or parents/carers about any concerns
- Consider the need to have a colleague present or close by
- Avoid use of 'engaged' or equivalent signs wherever possible. Staff should not seek to create the opportunity for secrecy or the interpretation of secrecy
- Always report a situation where a child becomes distressed or angry to a senior manager
- Carefully consider the needs and circumstances of children when in one to one situations.

24. Home Visits

For some staff, home visits are an integral part of their role. In these circumstances it is essential that appropriate policies and related risk assessments are in place to safeguard children and that staff who work with them.

Risk assessments should include evaluation of any known factors regarding the child, parents/carers and others living in the household. Factors such as hostility, child protection concerns or complaints can make a person more vulnerable to an allegation. Specific consideration should be given to visits outside of 'work hours' or in remote or secluded locations.

Appropriate risk management measures should be in place before visits are agreed. Where little or no information is available, visits should not be made alone. There may be occasions when it is not possible to conduct and agree a risk assessment e.g. in an emergency. In these circumstances, a record must be made of the circumstances and outcome of the home visit. Such records must be open to scrutiny.

Under no circumstances should a member of staff visit a child in their home outside of agreed work arrangements or invite a child to their own or any other home. If this should need to happen, in exceptional circumstances e.g. an emergency, staff must have a prior discussion with a senior manager and the parents/carers and have a clear justification for such an arrangement. Any such arrangement must be agreed and recorded.

This means that staff should:

- Agree the purpose of any home visit with senior management
- Adhere to agreed risk management strategies
- Always make detailed records including times of arrival, departure and work undertaken

- Ensure any behaviours or situations which may give rise to concern are discussed with senior managers and appropriate action is taken where necessary

25. Transporting Children

There may be occasions when staff are expected, or asked, to transport children as part of their duties. 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. Staff should also be aware of current legislation and adhere to the use of car seats for younger children.

Where staff transport children in a vehicle which requires a specialist license/insurance, staff should ensure that they have an appropriate license and insurance to drive such a vehicle. Anyone driving a minibus must have undertaken driver assessment training.

It is inappropriate for staff to offer lifts to children outside of their normal working duties, unless this has been discussed with a senior manager and agreed with parents/carers. There may be occasions when children require transport in an emergency situation or when leaving a child without transport may place the child at risk. Such circumstances must always be recorded and reported to a senior manager and parents/carers.

This means that staff should:

- Ensure they are fit to drive and free from any drugs, alcohol or medicine which may impair judgement and/or ability to drive
- Be aware that the safety and welfare of the child is their responsibility until they are safely passed over to parents/carers
- Record details of the journey in accordance with agreed procedures
- Ensure that their behaviour is professional and appropriate at all times
- Ensure that there are proper arrangements in place to ensure vehicle and occupant safety, including appropriate insurance
- Ensure that any impromptu or emergency arrangements are recorded and can be fully justified.

26. Education Visits, Trips and Outings

Staff should take particular care when supervising children on trips and outings, where the setting is less formal than the usual workplace. Staff remain in a position of trust and need to ensure that their behaviour remains professional at all times and stays within clearly defined professional boundaries and in accordance with Health and Safety legislation.

Where activities include overnight stays, careful consideration needs to be given to sleeping arrangements. Children and parents should be informed of the arrangements 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, particularly on overnight stays.

Staff should maintain appropriate contact with colleagues and senior managers, keeping them aware of their whereabouts, especially when involved in activities outside of the workplace.

This means that staff should:

- Always have another adult present during out of work activities, unless otherwise agreed with a senior manager
- Undertake risk assessments in line with health and safety requirements
- Have parental consent to the activity where appropriate
- Ensure that behaviour remains professional at all times
- Never share beds with a child
- Not share bedrooms unless it involves a dormitory situation and where such arrangements have been previously discussed and agreed with senior managers and parents/carers

27. First Aid and the Administration of Medication

Staff working with children should be aware of basic first aid techniques. It is not a contractual requirement, and whilst a person may volunteer to undertake such a task, they should be suitably trained and qualified before administering first aid and/or any agreed medication. Depending upon the age of a child, a knowledge of paediatric first aid may be required.

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

In accordance with the school's medication policy, children that are able to should be encouraged to administer their own medication. Staff should ensure personal medication is stored securely, out of reach of children, and does not impair them from being in work or looking after children.

This means that staff should:

- Adhere to the school's medication policy
- Make other adults aware of the task being undertaken
- Explain what is happening to the child
- Always act, and be seen to act, in the child's best interests
- Report and record any administration of first aid or medication
- Have regard for any health plan which is in place

28. Photography and Videos

Working with children may involve the taking or recording of images. Any such work should be done with due regard to the law and the need to safeguard the privacy, dignity, safety and wellbeing of children. Written consent from parents/carers and agreement, where possible, from the child should always be sought before any image or recording is taken.

Careful consideration should be given as to how activities involving the taking of images are organised. All parties should understand the implications of the image or recording being taken, especially if it is to be used for any publicity purposes or published in the media/online.

There also needs to be an agreement as to whether the images or recordings will be destroyed or retained for further use, where they will be stored and who will have access to them. Staff need to remain sensitive to any children who appear uncomfortable, for whatever reason, and should recognise the potential for such activities to raise concerns or lead to misunderstandings.

It is not appropriate for staff to take photographs or recordings of children for their personal use.

This means that staff should:

- Be clear about the purpose of the activity and about what will happen to the images when the activity is concluded
- Be able to justify images of children in their possession
- Avoid taking images in one to one situations or which show a single child with no surrounding context
- Ensure the children understands why the images are being taken, have agreed to the activity and are appropriately dressed
- Only use equipment provided or authorised by the school
- Report any concerns about any inappropriate or intrusive photographs found
- Always ensure parental permission is obtained prior to taking and/or displaying photographs in accordance with Data Protection regulations

This means that staff should not:

- Display or distribute images of children without consent from parents/carers
- Use any images which may cause distress
- Use any personal electronic device to take images or recordings of children
- Take images or recordings in secret or in situations that may be construed as being secretive

29. Access to Inappropriate Images and Internet Use

There are no circumstances that can justify a person possessing indecent images of children. Staff who access and possess links to such websites will be reviewed as a significant and potential threat to children. Accessing, making, possessing and storing indecent images of children is illegal. This will lead to criminal investigation and the individual being barred from working with children, if proven.

Staff should not use equipment belonging to the Trust to access adult pornography, nor should personal equipment containing these images, or links to them, be brought into the workplace. This includes any material which could be deemed to be adult content, including personal images or recordings. This will raise serious concerns about the staff member's suitability to work with children.

Staff should ensure, in accordance with the school's acceptable use of ICT policy, that children are not exposed to any inappropriate images or websites. The school will take all reasonable measures to ensure that internet equipment used by children has the appropriate controls with regards to access.

Where indecent images of children or other unsuitable material are found, the police and Local Authority Designed Officer (LADO) should be immediately informed. Staff should not attempt to investigate the matter or evaluate the material themselves, as this may lead to evidence being contaminated, which in itself could lead to criminal prosecution.

This means that staff should:

- Adhere to the school's acceptable use of ICT policy
- Ensure that children are not exposed to unsuitable material on the internet
- Ensure that any films or material shown to children are age appropriate

30. Personal Living Space

No child should be invited into the home of a member of staff, unless the reason for this has been firmly established and agreed with parents/carers and a senior manager in advance.

This means that staff should:

- Be vigilant in maintaining their privacy and mindful of the need to avoid placing themselves in vulnerable situations
- Be mindful of the need to maintain professional boundaries

31. Overnight Supervision and Examinations

There can be rare occasions during exam periods when timetables clash and arrangements need to be made to preserve the integrity of the examination process. Examination boards may allow candidates to take an examination the following morning, therefore a child may need to be supervised during this process. Supervision of a child during this process, including overnight supervision, may be done by the parent/carer or a member of staff. Staff may be asked to volunteer for such supervision.

This means that staff should:

- Be vigilant in maintain their privacy at all times and avoid placing themselves in vulnerable situations

A risk assessment must always be conducted to ensure the safeguarding of both the child and the member of staff. All members of the household must be appropriately vetted, including DBS and Barred List checks where appropriate. All arrangements should be made in partnership with the child and parent/carer and should be confirmed in writing.

32. 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. The curriculum can sometimes lead to unplanned discussion about sensitive matters. Responding to children's questions requires careful judgement and staff should take guidance in these circumstances from the safeguarding lead or Headteacher.

Care should be taken to comply with the school's spiritual, moral, social and cultural policy which should promote fundamental British values. Staff should also comply at all times with the policy for sex and relationships education.

This means that staff should:

- Have clear written lesson plans that identify sensitive subject matter and how it will be addressed
- Be able to justify all curriculum materials
- Be mindful of overstepping personal and professional boundaries

This means that staff 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 children

33. Handling a Child's Finances

Staff who work with children should not seek to be involved with, interfere with, or have any control in handling the finances unless such activity is part of their contract of employment or the reasons for doing so have been discussed, agreed and recorded between senior managers and parents/carers.

The misuse or misappropriation of an individual's money, property, inheritance, possessions or insurance is a criminal offence and may lead to a criminal prosecution.

34. Whistleblowing and sharing/recording concerns

Staff should feel able to raise concerns without fear of reprisal. Concerns regarding other adults should be raised with the Headteacher in accordance with the local safeguarding children procedures. Staff that believe they have witnessed wrong doing or illegal activity should use the the Trust' whistleblowing policy. Staff should feel able to discuss with their line manager any issues that may affect their relationship with or behaviour towards children, so that appropriate support can be provided.

This means that staff should:

- Report any behaviour by staff that raises concern
- Report any concerns regarding their own behaviour
- Report any allegations against staff (any adults or volunteers within the school) directly to the Headteacher (or Chair of Governors if the allegation is against the Headteacher)
- Take responsibility for recording any incident of concern and immediately passing the information on

If staff are unclear about any aspect of professional practices and how to adhere to the requirement for professional behaviour at all times, further guidance should be sought from a senior manager, the Headteacher, designated safeguarding lead or HR.