Staff Code of Conduct for Wivelsfield Primary School

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This policy is due for review on September 2021

Key contacts

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Introduction

The governing body is required to set out a Staff Behaviour Policy/Code of Conduct for all school employees.

In addition to this policy, all staff employed under Teachers' Terms and Conditions of Employment have a statutory obligation to adhere to the 'Teachers' Standards 2012' and in relation to this policy, Part 2 of the Teachers' Standards - Personal and Professional Conduct.

Employees should be aware that a failure to comply with the following Staff Behaviour Policy/Code of Conduct could result in disciplinary action including dismissal.

1. Definitions

For ease of reading, references will be made to 'school'. This term encompasses all types of educational establishments including academies, independent and free schools, further education institutions, sixth form colleges and early year's settings.

References made to 'child' and 'children' refer to children and young people under the age of 18 years. However, the principles of the document apply to professional behaviours towards all children including those over the age of 18 years. 'Child' should therefore be read to mean **any child** at the school.

References to adults and staff should be broadly read as any adult working within the school, whether directly employed, providing a contracted service, a one-off service such as a supply teacher, or a volunteer. It is good practice to share this document with volunteers in the school.

The term 'allegation' means where it is alleged that a person who works with children has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child;
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child;
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children; or,
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

References are made in this document to legislation and statutory guidance which differ dependent on the school and alter over time. However, the behavioural principles contained within the document remain consistent, hence, wherever possible, such references have been removed in order that the document does not appear to quickly become out of date or to apply only to certain staff or schools.

2. Overview and purpose of this policy

The document seeks to ensure that the responsibilities of school leaders towards children and staff are discharged by raising awareness of illegal, unsafe, unprofessional and unwise

behaviour. It should assist staff to monitor their own standards and practice and reduce the risk of allegations being made against them. It is also recognised that not all people who work with children work as paid or contracted employees. 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.

The policy will also support employers in giving a clear message that unacceptable behaviour will not be tolerated and that, where appropriate, legal or disciplinary action is likely to follow. The headteacher of Wivelsfield Primary School may refer to this document in any disciplinary proceedings.

Whilst every attempt has been made to cover a wide range of situations, it is recognised that no policy can cover all eventualities. There may be times when professional judgements are made in situations not covered by this document, or which directly contravene the guidance given by the employer. It is expected that in these circumstances staff will always advise their senior colleagues of the justification for any such action already taken or proposed.

All staff have a responsibility to be aware of systems within their school which support safeguarding and these should be explained to them as part of staff induction and in regular staff training sessions. This includes the school's safeguarding and child protection policy and this policy.

It is recognised that most adults who work with children act professionally and aim to provide a safe and supportive environment which secures the well-being and very best outcomes for children in their care. Achieving these aims is not always straightforward, as much relies on child and staff interactions where tensions and misunderstandings can occur. This policy aims to reduce the risk of these.

It must be recognised that some allegations will be genuine as there are people who seek out, create or exploit opportunities to harm children. However, allegations may also be false or misplaced and may arise from differing perceptions of the same event. When they occur, they are inevitably distressing and difficult for all concerned. It is therefore essential that all possible steps are taken to safeguard children and ensure that the adults working with them do so safely.

3. Underpinning principles

- The welfare of the child is paramount
- Staff should understand their responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- Staff are responsible for their own actions and behaviour both within and outside the school and should avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions
- Staff should work, and be seen to work, in an open and transparent way

- Staff should acknowledge that deliberately invented/malicious allegations are extremely rare and that all concerns should be reported and recorded

- Staff should discuss and/or take advice promptly from their line manager if they have acted in a way which may give rise to concern

- Staff are encouraged to discuss with the DSL situations where their relationships and associations both within and outside the workplace (including online) may have implications for the safeguarding of children in the school.

- Staff should adhere to the same professional standards regardless of culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and sexual orientation

- Whilst on duty, staff should not consume or be under the influence of alcohol or any substance, including prescribed medication, which may affect their ability to care for children

- Staff should be aware that breaches of the law and other professional guidelines could result in disciplinary action being taken against them; criminal action and/or other proceedings including barring by the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) from working in regulated activity, or for acts of serious misconduct prohibition from teaching by the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA).

- Staff and managers should continually monitor and review practice to ensure this policy is followed

- Staff should be aware of and understand their school's safeguarding and child protection policy, arrangements for managing allegations against staff, whistle blowing procedure and the East Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership procedures; this should include any COVID-19 addendums.

4. How to use this policy

Each section provides general guidance about a particular aspect of work and specific guidance about which behaviours should be avoided and which are recommended.

Some schools will have additional responsibilities arising from their regulations (e.g. Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Quality Standards) or their responsibility towards young people over the age of 18. Not all sections of the guidance will, therefore, be relevant to all schools and each school will need to adapt this model policy to suit their establishment.

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1. Introduction

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

This means that these guidelines:

- *apply to **all** adults working in education and early years settings whatever their position, role or responsibilities*

2. Status of document

This document is endorsed and recommended by the Safer Recruitment Consortium and the East Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership.

3. Responsibilities

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

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

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

This means that employers should:

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

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

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

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

This means that managers/proprietors/governing bodies should:

- *ensure that appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures are distributed, adopted, implemented and monitored*

4. Making professional judgements

This policy cannot provide a complete checklist of what is, or is not, appropriate behaviour for staff. It does highlight however, behaviour which is illegal, inappropriate or inadvisable. There will be rare occasions and circumstances in which staff have to make decisions or take action in the best interest of a child which could contravene this policy 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 children in their charge and, in so doing, will be seen to be acting reasonably. These judgements should always be recorded and shared with a manager.

This means that where no specific guidance exists staff should:

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

5. Power and positions of trust and authority

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

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

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

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

Where a person aged 18 or over is in a position of trust with a child under 18, it is an offence[1] 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.

Staff should also be aware that it is a criminal offence for anyone aged 18 or over to intentionally communicate with a child under 16, where the person acts for a sexual purpose and the communication is sexual or intended to elicit a sexual response. The offence applies to online

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and offline communication, including social media, emails, texts, letters, etc.[2] It is therefore important staff consider how communications and behaviours which may not meet the criteria of a criminal offence, may raise concerns to a level where there is a consideration of position of trust and boundaries being breached which lead to internal investigation, disciplinary or dismissal processes.

This means that staff should not:

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

6. Confidentiality

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

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

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

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

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

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

This means that staff:

- *need to know the name of their designated safeguarding lead and be familiar with the Pan-Sussex Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures - https://sussexchildprotection.procedures.org.uk/*
- *are expected to treat information they receive about children and families in a discreet and confidential manner*

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- *should seek advice from a senior member of staff (designated safeguarding lead) if they are in any doubt about sharing information they hold, or which has been requested of them*
- *need to be clear about when information can/must be shared and in what circumstances*
- *need to know the procedures for responding to allegations against staff and to whom any concerns or allegations should be reported*
- *need to ensure that where personal information is recorded using modern technologies that systems and devices are kept secure*

7. Standards of behaviour

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

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

This means that staff should not:

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

This means that staff should:

- *be aware that behaviour by themselves, those with whom they share a household, or others in their personal lives, may impact on their work with children*

8. Dress and appearance

A person's dress and appearance are matters of personal choice and self-expression and some individuals will wish to exercise their own cultural customs. However, staff should select a manner of dress and appearance appropriate to their professional role and which may be necessarily different to that adopted in their personal life. Staff should ensure they are dressed decently, safely and appropriately for the tasks they undertake. Those who dress or appear in a manner which could be viewed as offensive or inappropriate could render themselves vulnerable to criticism or allegation.

This applies equally to online or virtual teaching or when working with small groups on site. Staff and other adults in our school are expected to wear the same standard of clothing an accessories when in an online engagement as they would wear on a normal school day.

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This means that staff should wear clothing which:

- *promotes a positive and professional image*
- *is appropriate to their role*
- *is not likely to be viewed as offensive, revealing, or sexually provocative*
- *does not distract, cause embarrassment or give rise to misunderstanding*
- *is absent of any political or otherwise contentious slogans*
- *is compliant with professional standards*

See Appendix 1

9. Gifts, rewards, favouritism and exclusion

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

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

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

Similarly, it is inadvisable to give such personal gifts to children or their families. This could be interpreted as a gesture either to bribe or groom. It might also be perceived that a 'favour' of some kind is expected in return.

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

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

This means that staff should:

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

10. Infatuations and 'crushes'

All staff need to recognise that it is not uncommon for children to be strongly attracted to a member of staff and/or develop a 'crush' or infatuation. They should make every effort to ensure

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that their own behaviour cannot be brought into question, does not appear to encourage this and be aware that such infatuations may carry a risk of their words or actions being misinterpreted.

Any member of staff who receives a report, overhears something, or otherwise notices any sign, however small or seemingly insignificant, that a young person has become or may be becoming infatuated with either themselves or a colleague, should immediately report this to the Headteacher or most senior manager[3]. In this way appropriate early intervention can be taken which can prevent escalation and avoid hurt, embarrassment or distress for those concerned.

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

This means that staff should:

- *report any indications (verbal, written or physical) that suggest a child may be infatuated with a member of staff*
- *always maintain professional boundaries*
- *This means that senior managers should:*
- *put action plans in place where concerns are brought to their attention*

11. Social contact outside of the workplace

It is acknowledged that staff may have genuine pre-existing friendships and social contact with parents of children, independent of the professional relationship.

Staff should, however, also be aware that professionals who sexually harm children often seek to establish relationships and contact outside of the workplace with both the child and their parents, in order to 'groom' the adult and the child and/or create opportunities for sexual abuse.

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

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

If a child or parent seeks to establish social contact, or if this occurs coincidentally, the member of staff should consult with their line manager at the first opportunity. This also applies to social contacts made through outside interests or the staff member's own family.

Some staff may, as part of their professional role, be required to support a parent/carer. Should the parent/carer seek to extend this support outside of the previously agreed professional role, this should be immediately discussed with senior management and where necessary referrals

made to the appropriate support agency. Staff should be working as part of an agreed plan and not in isolation.

This means that staff should:

- *always approve any planned social contact with children or parents with senior colleagues, for example when it is part of a reward scheme*
- *advise senior management of any regular social contact they have with a child which could give rise to concern including new social contacts*
- *staff only communicate with children or parents via school-based media*
- *inform senior management of any relationship with a parent where this extends beyond the usual parent/professional relationship*
- *ensure that they have discussed the boundaries of any pre-existing friendships and social contacts with parents with their line manager*
- *inform senior management of any requests or arrangements where parents wish to use their services outside of the workplace e.g. babysitting, tutoring*
- *direct any concerns raised directly to them about another member of staff through the appropriate channels*

12. Communication with parents and children using technology

Staff should adhere to other school policies, including those regarding communication with parents and carers.

Phone Calls Home

Within the normal running of the school there are many reasons why various staff may need to contact home, for reasons such as discussing academic progress or behaviour.

Contact by phone will only be directed towards the landline for the home or the mobile phone of parents/carers. No contact will be attempted directly to devices which are known to be personal to a child.

Contact will only be made using a school landline or school mobile. If this is not possible as re a personal device is used, the number recognition will be blocked for the recipient.

In the event of further lockdowns/partial/full closures of schools and the increased need for staff to be making routine or regular contact with families, notably those of vulnerable children, to discuss welfare, these calls will only be completed under the direction of the DSL or SLT

When planning these calls the school will identify the members of staff who are best placed to make contact, taking into consideration their skills, experience and relationship with the family/child.

Within this phone contact with parents/carers, children will need to be spoken with.

We recognise that there may be times when children are genuinely unable to or disinclined to come to the phone: if this happens then we will reschedule a call with the parents/carers so that the child/ren can be spoken with. This will be recorded and discussed with the DSL or designated member of SLT.

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The DSL will decide, based upon individual risk factors for specific children, as to whether the conversation with the child will be requested to be on loudspeaker/speakerphone at the family's end of the call. The member of staff making the call will be advised of this as necessary.

The call will be logged by the member of staff

Where any aspect of contact, or lack of contact, with a family/child causes any concern then this will be raised immediately with the DSL or designated member of SLT.

Online communication

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

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

Communication with children both in the 'real' world and through web based and telecommunication interactions should take place within explicit professional boundaries. This includes the use of computers, tablets, phones, texts, e-mails, instant messages, social media such as Facebook and Twitter, chat rooms, forums, blogs, websites, gaming sites, digital cameras, videos, web cams and other hand-held devices. (Given the ever-changing world of technology it should be noted that this list gives examples only and is not exhaustive.)
Staff should not request or respond to any personal information from children other than which may be necessary in their professional role. They should ensure that their communications are open and transparent and avoid any communication which could be interpreted as 'grooming behaviour'

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

Staff should, in any communication with children, also follow the guidance in Section 7 'Standards of Behaviour'.

There has been a sharp increase in the use of technology for remote learning since March 2020. We will ensure that all staff involved in the use of technology to facilitate virtual teaching, such as live stream lessons or recorded content are briefed on best practice.

Staff should seek further guidance on live steam lessons and recorded content within the relevant section of the online safety policy

When selecting a platform for live steam lessons or recorded content, we will ensure that the 'provider' has an appropriate level of security. Staff will only use school devices and contact

children only via their school email address/log-in. This ensures that the school's filtering and monitoring software is enabled.

Staff engaging in live stream lessons or recorded content must display the same standards of dress and conduct that they would in the real world; they should role model this to pupils and parents.

When engaging in live stream lessons or creating recorded content the following will be adhered to:

- Live stream lessons will not be conducted by staff on their own. There will always be a second member of staff present (either physically in the room with them, or online within the virtual room) before any children are present.
- A location with a neutral background will be used, particularly if the member of staff is working from home (think personal photos, artwork, identifying features, mirrors etc); ideally the background will be blurred using features of the online platform.
- Staff will be dressed professionally.
- Pupils should be dressed appropriately e.g. clothes they might wear for a non-uniform day, not pyjamas.
- Pupils should live stream from a communal/living area within their household, not bedrooms.
- It is the responsibility of the staff member to act as a moderator, raising any issues of suitability (dress, setting, behaviour etc.) with the child and/or parent immediately and ending the online interaction if necessary.
- All other school policies/practices will be followed, notably the safeguarding and child protection policy, so should there be any welfare concerns about the child these will be brought to the attention of the DSL without delay.
- Resources/videos will be age-appropriate; the child may not have support immediately to hand at home if they feel distressed or anxious about content.

Staff and other adults will not:

- Contact pupils outside the operating times defined by the DSL, take or record images of pupils for their own personal use;
- Record virtual lessons or meetings (unless agreed and risk assessed by senior school staff);
- Engage in any 1:1 communication with children via a video call (unless agreed and risk assessed by senior school staff);
- Engage online while children are in a state of undress or semi-undress.

This means that adults should:

- *not seek to communicate/make contact or respond to contact with children outside of the purposes of their work*
- *not give out their personal details*
- *use only equipment and Internet services provided by the school*
- *follow the school's Acceptable Use policy*
- *ensure that their use of technologies could not bring their employer into disrepute*
- *ensure their privacy settings on social media are high*
- *refrain from expressing personal opinions about the school where they work and/or events that may have occurred there on social media sites*
- *refrain from posting on social media any form of inappropriate content for example photographs and/or information that could cause offence or bring their profession into disrepute*

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13. Physical contact

The experience of physical contact is a subjective issue and will be experienced by each child differently according to their experiences. This is an area that can lead to misinterpretation and allegations of inappropriate behaviour. It is therefore essential that staff consider why they need to touch the child and whether it is necessary.

There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate and proper for staff to have physical contact with children, however, it is crucial that they only do so in ways appropriate to their professional role and in relation to the child's individual needs, age, stage of development and any agreed care plan.

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.

Any physical contact should be appropriate to the circumstances at the time, of limited duration and appropriate to the child's age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background. Adults should, therefore, use their professional judgement always. Staff should listen, observe and take note of the child's reaction or feelings and, so far as is possible, use a level of contact and/or form of communication which is acceptable to the child.

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

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

A general culture of 'safe touch' should be adopted, where appropriate, to the individual requirements of each child. Children with identified additional and/or disabilities who require more physical contact to assist their everyday learning should have a clear and agreed plan that is shared with the parents and where appropriate the child. The arrangements should be understood and agreed by all concerned, justified in terms of the child's needs, consistently applied and open to scrutiny.

This means that staff should:

- *be aware that even well -intentioned physical contact may be misconstrued by the child, or an observer*
- *never touch a child in a way which may be considered indecent*
- *always be prepared to explain actions and accept that all physical contact can be open to scrutiny*

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- *never indulge in horseplay or fun fights*
- *always allow/encourage children, where able, to undertake self-care tasks independently*
- *ensure the way they offer comfort to a distressed child is age appropriate and is acceptable to the child*
- *always tell their line manager when and how they offered comfort to a distressed child*
- *report and record situations which may give rise to concern*
- *be aware of cultural or religious views about touching and be sensitive to issues of gender*
- *be aware of children who have a plan relating to their physical contact needs*

Wivelsfield School will

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

14. Other activities that require physical contact

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

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

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

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

This means that staff should:

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

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Wivelsfield School

- *uses up to date guidance and protocols on appropriate physical contact, that promote safe practice and include clear expectations of behaviour and conduct.*
- *ensures that staff are made aware of this and that it is continually promoted*

15. Intimate/personal care

There should be a clear nappy or pad changing and intimate/personal care policy to ensure that the health, safety, independence and welfare of children is promoted, and their dignity and privacy are respected. Arrangements for intimate and personal care are open and transparent and accompanied by recording systems.

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

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

Any vulnerability, including those that may arise from a physical or learning difficulty should be considered when formulating the child's individual healthcare plan. The views of parents, carers and the child, regardless of their age and understanding, should be actively sought in formulating the plan and in the necessary regular reviews of these arrangements.

Children are entitled to respect and privacy always, especially when in a state of undress including, for example, when changing, toileting and showering.

However, there needs to be an appropriate level of supervision in order to safeguard children, satisfy health and safety considerations and ensure that bullying or teasing does not occur. This supervision should be appropriate to the needs and age of the children concerned and sensitive to the potential for embarrassment.

Appropriate levels of personal protective equipment (PPE) and arrangements for safe disposal of that equipment must be provided for those involved in delivering intimate/personal care. At Wivelsfield School masks, face shields, gloves and aprons are available.

Wivelsfield Primary School

- *ensures that there are written individual healthcare plans in place for any child who could be expected to require intimate care*
- *ensure that, wherever possible, children are actively consulted about their own healthcare*

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This means that staff should:

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

This means that adults should not:

- *change or toilet in the presence or sight of children*
- *shower with children*
- *assist with intimate or personal care tasks which the child can undertake independently*

16. Home visits

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

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

A risk assessment should be undertaken prior to any planned home visit taking place. The assessment should include an evaluation of any known factors regarding the child, parents/carers and any others living in the household.

Consideration should be given to any circumstances which might render the staff member becoming more vulnerable e.g. hostility, child protection concerns, complaints or grievances.

Specific thought should be given to visits outside of 'office hours' or in remote or secluded locations.

Following the assessment, appropriate risk control measures should be in place before the visit is undertaken.

Visits should not be made alone.

All visits will be justified and recorded. Staff will not be exposed to unacceptable risk and will understand the purpose and limitations of welfare visits. Staff will have a clear understanding of the actions that should be taken if it is believed that a child or parent is at immediate risk of harm, including when to contact emergency services and/or partner agencies. Except in an emergency, staff will never enter a home without the parent's consent or when the parent is absent.

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In the event of further lockdowns/partial/full closures of schools and the increased need for staff to be making routine or regular contact with families, notably those of vulnerable children, to discuss welfare, home visits will only be completed under the direction of the DSL or SLT.

If a vulnerable child is not routinely attending school and phone contact with the family/child has been unsuccessful, or in itself has raised further concerns then we will give consideration to completing a home visit.

In considering a home visit we will always make contact with any social worker or other professional who is known to be working with the family to ensure a coordinated approach.

If the initial risk assessment deems a home visit by staff to be too risky then this outcome will be shared with the social worker or other professionals involved with the family and consideration will be given to what other services might be able to complete a home visit: this may result in requesting a welfare check by the Police.

Where it is determined that the school are best placed to complete a home visit, as with phone calls home, we will identify the members of staff best suited to complete the task.

Social distancing guidance will be followed so staff will not enter the property; instead parents and children should be spoken with on the door step, with staff maintaining a distance of at least two metres.

A schedule of visits and staff involved, detailing when and where they are going and what time they are expected back at school, will be held by the DSL/ designated member of SLT so that, should there be an issue, they can be located.

Staff completing the visit will follow the agreed schedule, they will advise the school of any variations or issues during the course of these planned visits, they will have a mobile phone and they will be advised of an agreed 'emergency phrase' so that if they find themselves in a challenging situation which may require police intervention, they can alert the school to this without alerting the family.

The purpose of the home visit is to have sight of and speak with the child/ren.

The outcome of the visit will be recorded and, should there be any cause for concern, then normal safeguarding procedures will be followed.

This means that staff should:

- *never take a child to their own home, the only exception is where it is part of previously agreed arrangement*
- *agree the purpose for any home visit with their manager*
- *adhere to agreed risk control strategies*
- *avoid unannounced visits wherever possible*
- *ensure there is visual access and/or an open door in one to one situations*
- *always make detailed records including times of arrival and departure*
- *ensure any behaviour or situation which gives rise to concern is discussed with their manager*

At Wivelsfield Primary School we:

- *ensure that all visits are justified and recorded*

- *ensure that staff are not exposed to unacceptable risk*
- *make clear to staff that, other than in an emergency, they should not enter a home if the parent/carer is absent*
- *ensure that staff have access to a mobile telephone and an emergency contact*

17. Behaviour management

Corporal punishment and smacking is unlawful in all schools, settings and colleges.

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

Where children display difficult or challenging behaviour, adults should follow the behaviour policy using strategies appropriate to the circumstance and situation.

Where a child has specific needs in respect of particularly challenging behaviour, a plan, including assessment of risk, should be drawn up and agreed by all parties, including, for example, a medical officer where appropriate. Staff involved with positive handling should be appropriately trained in the methods of intervention and de-escalation should always be used in the first instance.

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

This means that staff should:

- *not use force as a form of punishment*
- *try to defuse situations before they escalate e.g. by distraction*
- *keep parents informed of any sanctions or behaviour management techniques used*
- *be mindful of and sensitive to factors both inside and outside of the school which may impact on a child's behaviour*
- *follow the behaviour management policy*
- *behave as a role model*
- *avoid shouting at children other than as a warning in an emergency/safety situation*
- *refer to national and local policy and guidance regarding positive handling*
- *be aware of the legislation and potential risks associated with the use of isolation and seclusion*
- *comply with legislation and guidance in relation to human rights and restriction of liberty*

18. The use of restrictive physical intervention and reasonable force

All children and young people should feel safe, secure and be in an environment free from abuse, bullying and violence. Boundaries and behavioural expectations in schools, settings and colleges should be clear and provide opportunities for children to maximise their potential. Most pupils do not behave in an aggressive or unpredictable way; they attend their school, setting or college in an environment which is conducive to learning.

All members of school staff have a duty of care to prevent serious harm. Where there is a high or immediate risk of death or serious injury, any member of staff is justified in taking any necessary action (consistent with the principal of using minimum force). Such situations could

include preventing a pupil from running off a pavement and into a busy road or preventing a pupil from striking another pupil or adult with a dangerous object.

The safety of pupils and staff is the prime underpinning aim of the use of reasonable force or restrictive physical intervention.

It is essential that the physical management of pupils:

- should, wherever possible, be avoided
- is seen as a rare occurrence and as a last resort
- seeks to ensure the safety of the pupil, other pupils and staff
- must be used in ways that maintain the safety and dignity of all concerned

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

In all cases where a restrictive physical intervention or reasonable force has taken place, the incident will be recorded and any subsequent actions, and reported to a senior manager and the child's parents/carers.

Similarly, where it can be anticipated that a restrictive physical intervention or reasonable force is likely to be required, a plan will be put in place which the child and parents/carers are aware of and have agreed to. Parental consent does not permit schools to use unlawful physical intervention or deprive a child of their liberty. Staff involved with positive handling should be appropriately trained in the methods of intervention and de-escalation should always be used in the first instance.

Further information and advice and strategies around managing children with challenging behaviour can be found on czone here

Wivelsfield Primary School

- *ensures that there is a lawful use of reasonable force policy consistent with local and national guidance which may be included in the behaviour policy*
- *regularly acquaint staff with policy and guidance*
- *ensures that staff are provided with appropriate training and support, have an agreed policy for when and how reasonable force should be recorded and reported*

This means that staff should:

- *adhere to the school's use of reasonable force policy which may be included in the behaviour policy*
- *always seek to defuse situations and avoid the use of reasonable force wherever possible*
- *where the use of reasonable force is necessary, only use minimum force and for the shortest time needed*

This means that staff should not

- *use physical intervention as a form of punishment*

19. Sexual conduct

Any sexual behaviour by a member of staff with or towards a child is unacceptable. It is an offence for a member of staff in a position of trust to engage in sexual activity with a child under 18 years of age[5] and sexual activity with a child could be a matter for criminal and/or disciplinary procedures.

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

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

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

This means that staff should:

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

20. One-to-one situations

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

To safeguard both children and adults, a risk assessment in relation to the specific nature and implications of one to one work should always be undertaken. Each assessment should account for the individual needs of each child and should be reviewed regularly.

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

This means that staff should:

- *ensure that wherever possible there is visual access and/or an open door in one-to-one situations*
- *avoid use of 'engaged' or equivalent signs wherever possible. Such signs may create an opportunity for secrecy or the interpretation of secrecy*

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- *always report any situation where a child becomes distressed or angry*
- *consider the needs and circumstances of the child involved*

21. Transporting children

In certain situations, staff or volunteers may be required or offer to transport children as part of their work. As for any other activity undertaken at work, the employer has a duty to carry out a risk assessment covering the health and safety of their staff and to manage any known risks.[6]

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

Staff should not offer lifts to children unless the need for this has been agreed by a manager. A designated member of staff, the educational visits co-ordinator (EVC), should be appointed to plan and provide oversight of all transport arrangements and respond to any concerns that may arise.

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

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

Staff should ensure that their behaviour is safe and that the transport arrangements and the vehicle meet all legal requirements. They should ensure that the vehicle is roadworthy and appropriately insured and that the maximum carrying capacity is not exceeded.

Staff should never offer to transport children outside of their normal working duties, other than in an emergency or where not doing so would mean the child may be at risk. In these circumstances the matter should be recorded and reported to both their manager and the child's parent(s). The school's health and safety policy and/or educational visits policy should set out the arrangements under which staff may use private vehicles to transport children

This means that staff should:

- *plan and agree arrangements with all parties in advance*
- *respond sensitively and flexibly where any concerns arise*
- *take account of any specific or additional needs of the child*
- *have an appropriate licence/permit for the vehicle*
- *ensure they are fit to drive and free from any drugs, alcohol or medicine which is likely to impair judgement and/ or ability to drive*
- *ensure that the need to be alone with a child is for the minimum time*
- *be aware that the safety and welfare of the child is their responsibility until this is safely passed over to a parent/carer*
- *report the nature of the journey, the route and expected time of arrival in accordance with agreed procedures*
- *ensure that their behaviour and all arrangements ensure vehicle, passenger and driver safety. This includes having proper and appropriate insurance for the type of vehicle being driven*

- *ensure that any impromptu or emergency arrangements of lifts are recorded and can be justified*
- *refer to Local and National guidance for Educational visits*

This means that the school should seek evidence that:

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

Evidence of the above should be retained with the risk assessment.

22. Educational visits

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

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (1999) impose a duty on employers to produce suitable and sufficient risk assessments. This would include assessment of any risks to employees, children or others during an educational visit, and the measures that should be taken to minimise these risks.

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

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

Guidance is also available from the Outdoor Education Advisers' Panel http://oeapng.info/

This means that staff should:

- *adhere to the school's educational visits guidance*
- *always have another adult present on visits, unless otherwise agreed with senior staff*
- *undertake risk assessments*
- *have parental consent to the activity*
- *ensure that their behaviour remains professional at all times*
- *never share beds with a child/ren*
- *never share bedrooms unless it involves a dormitory situation and the arrangements have been previously discussed with Headteacher, parents and children*
- *refer to local and national guidance for Educational visits, including exchange visits (both to the UK and abroad) available on Exeant - https://eastsussex.exeant.co.uk/*

23. First Aid

All schools should have an adequate number of qualified first aiders. The school should report all serious or significant incidents to the parents e.g. by sending a letter home with the child or telephoning the parents.

Any member of school staff may be asked to become a qualified first aider, but they cannot be required to do so unless this forms part of their contract of employment.[7]

All early years' providers including child minders must follow the EYFS guidance on displaying (making available to parents) staff paediatric first aid certificates and Ofsted guidance for the notification and recording of accidents.

Wivelsfield Primary School

- *ensures there are trained and named individuals to undertake first aid responsibilities, including paediatric first aid if relevant*
- *ensures training is regularly monitored and updated*
- *refers to local and national first aid guidance*
- *adheres to the school's health and safety policy*
- *explains to the child what is happening.*
- *always acts and be seen to act in the child's best interest*

24. Medical Conditions

Any member of school staff may be asked to provide support to children with a medical condition, including the administering of medicines, but they cannot be required to do so unless this forms part of their contract of employment[7]

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

Advice on managing medicines is included in the statutory guidance on supporting pupils at school with medical conditions - https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-pupils-at-school-with-medical-conditions--3. The school policy on supporting children with medical conditions will be followed.

No child under 16 should be given prescription or non-prescription medicines without their parent's written consent - except in exceptional circumstances where the medicine has been prescribed to the child without the knowledge of the parents. In such cases, every effort should be made to encourage the child or young person to involve their parents while respecting their right to confidentiality.

In circumstances where a child needs medication regularly, this would be included in their individual healthcare plan. This provides details of the level and type of support a child needs to manage effectively their medical condition in school and should include information about the medicine to be administered, the correct dosage and any storage requirements. A record of all medicines administered to individual children will be kept. Any side effects of the medication to be administered at school will be noted and parents informed.

After discussion with parents, children who are competent to do so should be encouraged

to take responsibility for managing their own medicines and procedures. This could include for example, the application of any ointment, or use of inhalers or epipens.

If a member of staff is concerned or uncertain about the amount or type of medication being given to a child, this should be discussed with the designated safeguarding lead.

If a member of staff is concerned that a child's medical needs are not being met, because of mismanaged medicines or treatments, by the parent or the child, or repeated missed medical appointments, this should be raised with the designated safeguarding lead.

Adults taking medication which may affect their ability to care for children should seek medical advice regarding their suitability to do so and providers should ensure that they only work directly with children if that advice confirms that the medication is unlikely to impair their ability to look after children. Employers are also responsible for managing the performance of their employees and for ensuring they are suitable to work with children.

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

Wivelsfield Primary School

- *ensures there are sufficient trained and named individuals to administer medicines*
- *ensures training is regularly monitored and updated*
- *refers to local and national guidance on meeting the needs of children with medical conditions*
- *adheres to the school's health and safety and supporting children with medical conditions policies*
- *makes other staff aware of the task being undertaken*
- *has regard to child's individual healthcare plans*
- *always ensures that an appropriate health/risk assessment is undertaken prior to undertaking certain activities*
- *explains to the child what is happening.*
- *supports staff in acting and being seen to act in the child's best interest*
- *ensures that individual records of all medications administered are kept*
- *ensures adults do not work with children whilst taking medication unless medical advice confirms that they are able to do so*

25. Photography, videos and other images

Many educational activities involve recording images. These may be undertaken for displays, publicity, to celebrate achievement and to provide records of evidence of the activity. Under no circumstances are staff expected or allowed to use their personal equipment to take images of children at or on behalf of the school.

The school has arrangements regarding the taking and use of images, which is linked to our safeguarding and child protection policy. This covers the wide range of devices which can be used for taking/recording images e.g. cameras, mobile-phones, smart phones, tablets, web cams etc. and arrangements for the use of these by staff, parents and visitors.

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

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

Making and using images of children will require the age appropriate consent of the child concerned and their parents/carers, and the child's views and wishes should be respected. Images should not be displayed on websites, in publications or in a public place without such consent. The definition of a public place includes areas where visitors to the school have access.

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

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

This means that staff should:

- *adhere to the online policy*
- *only publish images of children where they and their parent/carer have given explicit written consent to do so*
- *only take images where the child is happy for them to do so*
- *only retain images when there is a clear and agreed purpose for doing so*
- *store images in an appropriate secure place in the school*
- *ensure that a senior member of staff is aware that the photography/image equipment is being used and for what purpose*
- *be able to justify images of children in their possession*
- *avoid making images in one-to-one situations*

This means that adults should not:

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

26. Exposure to inappropriate images

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

There are no circumstances that will justify adults: making, downloading, possessing or distributing indecent images or pseudo-images of children (indecent images of children).

Accessing these images, whether using the school's or personal equipment, on or off the premises, or making, storing or disseminating such material is illegal.

If indecent images of children, including sexting and child sexual exploitation, are discovered at the school or on the school's equipment an immediate referral should be made to the police and Single Point of Advice (SPOA). The images/equipment should be secured and there should be no attempt to view or delete the images as this could jeopardise necessary criminal action. If there is any implication of professional misconduct the managing allegations procedures in the safeguarding and child protection policy should be followed, which will include early consultation with the LADO.

Adults should not attempt to investigate the matter or evaluate the material themselves as this may lead to a contamination of evidence and the possibility that they will be at risk of prosecution themselves.

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

Staff should keep their passwords confidential and not allow unauthorised access to equipment. In the event of any indecent images of children or unsuitable material being discovered on a device the equipment should not be tampered with in any way.

For further information please refer to UK Council for Child Internet Safety Sexting in Schools and Colleges: Responding to Incidents and Safeguarding Young People

This means that staff should:

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

This means that staff should:

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

27. Curriculum

Many areas of the curriculum can include or raise subject matter which is sexually explicit or of a political or sensitive nature. Care should be taken to ensure that resource materials cannot be misinterpreted and clearly relate to the learning outcomes identified by the lesson plan. This can be supported by developing ground rules with children to ensure sensitive topics can be discussed in a safe learning environment. This plan should highlight areas of risk and

sensitivity, and care should especially be taken in those areas of the curriculum where usual boundaries or rules are less rigorously applied e.g. drama

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

Care should be taken to comply with our policy on spiritual, moral, social, cultural (SMSC) which should promote fundamental British values and be rigorously reviewed to ensure it is lawful and consistently applied. Staff should also comply always with the policy for relationships and sex education (RSE). It should be noted that parents have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of any sex education provided but not from the National Curriculum for Science.

This means that staff should:

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

This means that adults should not:

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

28. Whistleblowing

Whistleblowing is the mechanism by which staff can voice their concerns, made in good faith, without fear of repercussion. Our school has a clear and accessible whistleblowing section in the safeguarding and child protection policy. Staff who use whistle blowing procedures should have their employment rights protected.

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

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- *ensures that there is a whistleblowing section in the safeguarding and child protection policy in place which is known to all*
- *has, as part of the safeguarding and child protection policy, clear procedures for dealing with allegations against persons working in or on behalf of the school*

This means that staff should:

- *report any behaviour by colleagues that raises concern*
- *report allegations against staff and volunteers to their headteacher, manager, or registered provider, or chair of governors or where they have concerns about the manager's response report these directly to the LADO*

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29. Sharing concerns and recording incidents

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

In the event of an allegation being made, by any person, or incident being witnessed, the relevant information should be immediately recorded and reported to the headteacher, senior manager or designated safeguarding lead as appropriate.

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

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

This means that staff should:

- *be familiar with their school's arrangements for reporting and recording concerns and allegations*
- *know how to contact the LADO/Ofsted/regulatory body directly if required*
- *take responsibility for recording any incident, and passing on that information where they have concerns about any matter pertaining to the welfare of an individual in the school*

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- *ensures that there is an effective, confidential system for recording and managing concerns raised by any individual regarding adults' conduct and any allegations against staff and volunteers*

Footnotes

1. Sexual Offences Act 2003
2. Sections 67 of Serious Crime Act 2015/Section 15 Sexual Offences Act
3. If the headteacher has the concern that a young person is becoming infatuated with them, they should report this to the chair of governors.
4. Para 3.52 Statutory framework for the EYFS
5. Sexual Offences Act 2003: abuse of a position of trust
6. See also https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-and-safety-advice-for-schools
7. Teachers cannot be required to do these tasks but other members of staff, whose contracts are agreed locally, can be required to do so if their contracts provide for it.

Aide Memoire: As professionals we will

- Treat everyone with respect.
- Avoid workplace gossip and negativity as it breeds resentment and becomes a roadblock to effective communication and collaboration. We all have a duty to take active steps to divert conversations away from this if we come across it.
- Maintain confidentiality about anything that we see or hear in the school, so that parents and children can trust us, and as a way of showing respect to our fellow professionals.
- Work as part of a team, contributing as well as learning from others and helping to build up a strong workforce so that we can provide the best possible learning opportunities for the children.
- Work within the school's policies and practices, so that what we do is consistent with what has been agreed between all members of the staff and the governors.
- Dress appropriately, so that we set a good example for the children and to show that we are professionals. Teachers should wear track suit bottoms and trainers or similar when teaching PE. Jeans should not be worn except for INSET, Forest School, non-uniform days and other 'extraordinary days'. Skirts should be no shorter than just above the knee, unless worn with leggings; shoes should be appropriate for all day to day school activities. Smart shorts may be worn in very hot weather.
- Behave in a positive way despite any personal problems that we may have, especially in front of the children.

When we speak to others we will:

- Use a positive statement rather than a negative one so that children can learn what we expect of them in any situation.
- Use a calm tone of voice at all times, to explain something to or instruct the children, so that they can follow our words without feeling threatened or uncomfortable.
- Avoid using sarcastic words or phrases as these demean children and prevent them from developing high self-esteem.
- Speak respectfully to other adults at all times, even if we disagree with them.

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