



EAST RIDING  
OF YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

# School Staff & Volunteer Code of Conduct

Updated July 2015

## Safe Schools, Safe Children, Safe Staff\*

Companion to

*'Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who Work with Children & Young People in Education Settings' 2009*, which contains more detailed guidance and advice

\*Refers to all paid staff, temporary or supply, volunteers, visitors and adults on placements

## **The aims of this guidance are to:**

- Help all staff establish safe and responsive learning environments which safeguard children
- Reduce the risk of adults being unjustly accused of unprofessional, inappropriate or abusive conduct
- Help staff to work safely to protect pupils and themselves
- Ensure that all staff are aware of what is regarded as appropriate or inappropriate conduct and practice
- Support the School managers in setting clear expectations for all staff

## **References**

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE) 2015
- Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who Work with Children & Young People in Education Settings' DCSF 2009',
- Working Together to Safeguard Children HM Govt 2015
- Teachers' Standards Part Two (DfE) 2013
- Dealing with Allegations against Teachers & Other Staff (DfE) 2015
- Use of Reasonable Force (DfE) 2013
- Screening, Searching & Confiscation DfE-2011
- Facebook – Checklist Safer Internet Centre 2014
- The Prevent Duty -advice for schools and childcare providers DfE 2015
- Female Genital Mutilation:Multi-Agency Practice Guidelines HM Govt 2015
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused HM Govt 2015
- Information sharing Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services to children HM Govt 2015

## **Related School Policies include :**

- *Child Protection & Safeguarding*
- *Behaviour & Physical Intervention*
- *Whistle Blowing & Managing Allegations*
- *Health & Safety*

## **Seek Advice & Support**

This guidance is not exhaustive and cannot provide specific advice for all situations. Therefore:

- If no specific advice, policies or guidelines exist for a specific situation, or if you are unsure consult a senior manager
- If you need to take a particular course of action in an unplanned circumstance, which may vary from policies or does not allow time for advice to be sought, record these actions with a senior manager
- If at any time you are concerned that an action or comment by yourself may be misinterpreted or that a child behaves or makes a comment in a way that causes you concern in this respect, log your concerns immediately with the appropriate senior member of staff.

### **Staff Responsibilities**

All staff have the following responsibilities in line with **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) 2015** to ensure the safeguarding of children;

- Work and behave safely and responsibly at all times to fulfil your duty of care and not abuse in any way your position of trust.
- Respond to any concerns about a child's wellbeing that you may have or are brought to your attention in line with the school Child Protection policy and East Riding Safeguarding Children Board (ERSCB) procedures.
- Respond in the same way to concerns that involve the behaviour of other adults in the school by following the school procedures for 'Whistle Blowing' as outlined in the school policy, ERSCB Guidance & LA policy.
- Review your own practice and follow school policies and procedures and seek advice when unsure.
- Understand that it is professionally and morally unacceptable for staff not to carry out these responsibilities and failure to do so could result in disciplinary action
- Be aware of current Teachers' Standards Part Two (DfE) 2013 (attached to end of this document)

### **School Responsibilities**

In order for staff to carry out these responsibilities the school will ensure that as outlined in KCSiE 15:

- all new and existing staff receive an adequate child protection related induction and continuing training
- all staff are made aware and regularly reminded of the school procedures for reporting child protection and other specific and wider safeguarding concerns
- staff concerns and opinions will be sought and taken into account in the regular review of related policies and procedures.

- all staff are aware of the School & LA 'Whistle Blowing' procedures by which adults can voice their concerns, made in good faith, without fear of repercussion
- managers strive to provide a safe working environment for staff and provide guidance about safe working practices.
- the Duty of Care to staff is fulfilled

### **Sharing Concerns and Recording Incidents**

#### **Do**

- be familiar with the schools system for recording child protection and other concerns about children and young people
- be aware that you have a responsibility to pass on concerns that a pupil may be suffering: Neglect, Sexual, Physical or Emotional harm and indicators of possible Child Sexual Exploitation, Female Genital Mutilation, Radicalisation and Forced Marriage
- ensure that you are aware of and have read Part 1 of *KCSiE 2015*
- take responsibility for recording any incident, and passing on information where you have concerns or concerns are disclosed to you by, or about a child, using the school procedures as soon as possible
- report appropriately and confidentially any behaviour by colleagues that raises concern in line with the school safeguarding Whistle Blowing procedures
- be aware that if you feel that a safeguarding or Child Protection matter has not been dealt with effectively you should raise the matter with the appropriate senior member of staff to seek review or reconsideration and that ..
- If you feel the after this that the concern persists you can should make a referral to the Early Help and Safeguarding Hub or in cases of concerns about the behaviour of a member of staff to the Local Authority Designated Officer.

### **Confidentiality**

#### **Do**

- treat information you receive about children and young people in a discreet and confidential manner and only share such information in line with the school policy and national Information Sharing guidance
- be aware that the discussion of internal school matters, including via the internet / social networking sites, can be regarded as breaches of confidentiality or data protection and could risk bringing the school into disrepute or action under Data Protection legislation

### **Power and Positions of Trust**

#### **Do not:**

- use your position to intimidate, bully, humiliate, threaten, coerce or undermine children or young people
- use your position to form or promote relationships which are of a sexual nature, or otherwise inappropriate or which may become so

### **Propriety and Behaviour**

#### **Do**

- be aware that certain circumstances in your private and personal life may impact upon your job and may result in consideration of your suitability to work with children and young people
- be aware that this will include information that you may place on social networking sites (or is placed about you by others) or otherwise publish
- follow professional codes of conduct at all times

#### **Do not**

- behave in a manner, which would lead any reasonable person to question your suitability to work with children or act as a role model.

### **Dress and Appearance**

#### **Do not**

- wear clothes, jewellery etc at school or in offsite school activities that are likely to be viewed as offensive, revealing, sexually provocative or distract or cause embarrassment
- wear clothes, jewellery, shoes etc that could present a Health & Safety risk

### **Gifts, Rewards and Favouritism**

#### **Do**

- be aware of the schools policy on the giving and receiving of gifts
- ensure that gifts received or given in situations which may be misconstrued are declared or appropriately declined
- only give gifts to an individual child or young person as part of an agreed reward system

### **Infatuations**

#### **Do**

- report and record any incidents or indications that suggest a child or young person may have developed an infatuation with you or another adult
- always maintain appropriate professional boundaries consistently with all pupils regardless of their age

### **Communication with Children and Young People (including the Use of Information Technology)**

**Do**

- report to a senior manager any internet or other communication by a pupil to you as soon as possible.
- ensure that you understand & follow the school 'Acceptable Internet Use policy'
- ensure that you understand and apply the maximum security setting for any internet based social networking sites or systems
- only use equipment e.g. mobile phones, email provided by school to communicate with pupils, making sure that parents have given consent for this form of communication to be used in line with school policy
- only make contact with pupils for professional reasons and in accordance with the above and school related policies
- confine any such communication to school related content or discussion

**Do not**

- Accept request from pupils (regardless of age) to establish Social Networking links outside of the school procedures
- give personal contact details to pupils, including mobile telephone numbers, email addresses or website / social networking sites
- use emails, social networking sites, mobile phones, other internet systems or written communication of any kind to send personal messages to a pupil.

**Social Contact****Do**

- make senior colleagues aware of any ongoing community activities or social contact with pupil's families
- log any concerns you may have about contact with pupils or their families in the community or in your private life
- consider the appropriateness of the social contact according to your role
- advise senior management of any unplanned social contact you have with a child
- be aware that you should ensure that your behaviour in social situations where you may be in the company of pupils or their families must not compromise your position or reputation as a member of staff

**Do not**

- have social contact with pupils unless this is part of a family or established parental social or community arrangement

**Sexual Contact****Do**

- ensure that your relationships with children and young people clearly take place within the boundaries of a respectful professional relationship
- be aware that sexual relationship with a pupil under 18 is a criminal offence, regardless of consent
- be aware that a sexual or otherwise inappropriate relationship with any pupil over 18 will be regarded as a disciplinary offence

**Do not**

- have sexual relationships with any pupil or otherwise abuse your position of trust
- have any form of communication with a pupil which could be interpreted as sexually suggestive or provocative i.e. verbal comments, letters, notes, electronic mail, phone calls, texts, physical contact
- make sexual remarks to, or about, a child/young person
- discuss your own sexual relationships with or in the presence of children or young people

**Physical Contact****Do**

- be aware there are some occasions when it is entirely appropriate for staff to have a level of physical contact with a child. However
- be aware that it is crucial in all circumstances that staff only intentionally touch children in ways which are appropriate to their professional or agreed role and responsibilities or a specific circumstance or activity
- be aware that even well intentioned physical contact may be misconstrued by the child, an observer or by anyone to whom this action is described and should be avoided if not appropriate as above
- always be prepared to report and explain actions and accept that all physical contact will be open to scrutiny
- be aware that you need to take particular care in crowded or restricted areas such as corridors, changing rooms and some teaching areas in particular activities to avoid physical contact with pupils

**Do Not**

- indulge in 'horseplay' or other physical contact intended as a joke or in an attempt to diffuse challenging situations
- touch a pupil in a way which may be considered indecent

**Activities that require Physical Contact****Do**

- explain to a child always the reason why contact is necessary and what form that contact will take
- follow recommended professional subject guidance and school protocols
- conduct such activities where they can be seen by others and as part of planned activities

**Behaviour Management and Physical Intervention****Do**

- adhere to the school's behaviour management and physical intervention policy and use physical intervention as a last or emergency resort in order to prevent harm to the pupil or others
- attempt to diffuse challenging situations wherever possible before resorting to physical intervention
- seek the support of colleagues before intervening where ever possible

- record and report as soon as possible after the event any incident where physical intervention has been used.
- be aware that there is no exact definition of 'Reasonable Force' and allegations of assault can be made against staff

### **Do Not**

- act outside the school behaviour policy & procedures
- act in temper
- use physical intervention as a punishment
- use more force than required for longer than required
- compromise safety & dignity of all involved
- touch in a way that could be seen or portrayed as inappropriate
- use sarcasm, demeaning or insensitive comments or degrading treatment

### **Children and Young People in Distress**

#### **Do**

- consider the way in which you offer comfort and reassurance to a distressed child in an age-appropriate and situation appropriate manner
- record and report situations which may give rise to concern from either party

### **Respect and Privacy**

#### **Do**

- avoid any physical contact when pupils are in a state of undress
- avoid any visually intrusive behaviour
- follow the school procedures in ensuring privacy and safety in changing areas
- change for PE or other activities in staff designated places

### **First Aid and Intimate Care**

#### **Do**

- adhere to the school's policy for administering first aid or medication
- make other adults aware of such a task being undertaken
- explain to the child what is happening
- report and record any administration of first aid or medication
- have regard to any individual health plan which is in place

#### **Do not**

- administer first aid or intimate care unless you are specifically identified and trained to do so
- 

### **One to One Situations**

#### **Do**

- avoid meeting in remote or secluded parts of the school
- inform other adults about meetings beforehand, assessing the need to have them present or close by
- ensure there is an open door or visual access

- consider the needs and circumstances of the child/children involved
- use your professional judgement in such meetings and report any situation where a child does or says anything that gives cause for concern

### **Do not**

- arrange meetings with children or young people off the school site unless in exceptional circumstances and with the approval of a senior manager and parents
- use 'engaged' or equivalent signs on internal doors when meeting with pupils
- create blind or potentially vulnerable places within your teaching areas, e.g. covering internal or external windows

## **Home Visits**

### **Do**

- agree the purpose for any home visit with senior management
- adhere to agreed risk management strategies
- always make detailed records including times of arrival and departure and work undertaken
- ensure any behaviour or situation of concern is reported

### **Do Not**

- enter a home if only the child or children are present unless as an emergency safety measure and in such a case alert school or the appropriate agency immediately

## **Transporting Children and Young People**

### **Do**

- ensure that you do not transport children in any situation other than as part of school arranged activity unless in an emergency situation in the interests of the pupil's welfare
- ensure that any impromptu or emergency arrangements of lifts are logged and can be justified
- be aware that the safety and welfare of the child is your responsibility until they are safely passed over to a parent/carer or colleague
- ensure parental consent is obtained and record details of the journey in accordance with agreed procedures
- ensure that all arrangements take into account , vehicle, passenger and driver safety including having proper and appropriate insurance for the type of vehicle being driven
- avoid situations where allegations against you or misunderstandings can arise

## **Trips, Educational visits & Extra Curricular Activities e.g. sports or music & Drama events etc**

### **Do**

- arrange for another adult to be present in out of school activities, unless otherwise agreed with a senior manager

- undertake risk assessments in line with the school and LA policy where applicable
- ensure that these risk assessments take account of vulnerable or challenging pupils taking part in the event
- ensure that parents are aware of the visit / activity
- have appropriate parental consent to the activity
- ensure that your behaviour remains professional at all times
- maintain professionalism and do not allow pupils to use your first name
- ensure that any adult volunteers are appropriately vetted, supervised and briefed

### **Photography and Video**

#### **Do**

- 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 your possession
- ensure the child/young person understands why the images are being taken
- report any concerns about any inappropriate or intrusive photographs found
- ensure that you are aware of any pupils whose parents/ carers have refused consent for photographs to be taken or published
- be aware of and follow the school policy for the storage and use of personal mobile and smart phones in school

#### **Do not**

- use equipment not provided or authorised by the school to take, store or send images of children
- take or display photographs without parental consent
- place images on social networking sites other than the school official site

### **Access to Inappropriate Images and Internet Usage**

#### **Do**

- ensure that school equipment is not used to view or download adult pornography or other inappropriate material
- ensure that pupils are not exposed to or have access to inappropriate material such as pornography, extremist material, gambling sites etc
- ensure that school IT and internet policies are followed at all times

#### **Do not**

- use personal IT or other photographic equipment in school without arrangement with senior staff

### **Remember**

- **If no specific advice, policies or guidelines for a specific situation exist, or if you are unsure consult a senior manager.**
- **If you need to take a particular course of action in an unplanned circumstance, which may vary from policies or which does not**

**allow time for advice to be sought, record these actions with a senior manager**

- **If at any time you are concerned that an action or comment by yourself may be misinterpreted, or that a child behaves or makes a comment in a way that causes you concern, log this immediately with the appropriate senior member of staff.**

## **Teachers' Standards June 2013**

### **Part Two: Personal and professional conduct**

- A teacher is expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct. The following statements define the behaviour and attitudes which set the required standard for conduct throughout a teacher's career
- Teachers uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, by:
  - treating pupils with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to a teacher's professional position
  - having regard for the need to safeguard pupils' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions
  - showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others
  - not undermining fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
  - ensuring that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways which exploit pupils' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law
- Teachers must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they teach, and maintain high standards in their own attendance and punctuality
- Teachers must have an understanding of, and always act within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities