



## STAFF BEHAVIOUR POLICY

### Overview

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

This document should clarify what is expected in terms of professional behaviour.

It describes safe practice and which behaviours should be avoided.

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

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

### Core Principles:

- The welfare of students is paramount.
- Staff are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions.
- Staff should work, and be seen to work in an open and transparent way.
- Staff should discuss and/or take advice promptly from their line manager or another senior member of staff over any incident, which may give rise to concern.
- Records should be made of any such incident and of decisions made/further actions agreed.
- Staff should apply the same professional standards in keeping with the School's Equality Policy.
- All staff should know the name of their designated person for child protection, be familiar with child protection arrangements and understand their responsibilities to safeguard and protect children.

### Introduction

This guidance has been produced to help all staff establish the safest possible learning and working environments. The aims are to safeguard young people and reduce the risk of staff being falsely accused of improper or unprofessional conduct.

### ***This means that these guidelines:***

- *Apply to **all** adults working in education settings whatever their position, role.*

### Principles for the Whole Workforce (1)

Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play in safeguarding children. Therefore it is important that **ALL** staff:

- Ensure that they listen to and reflect on the voice of the child at **ALL** times and take seriously any concerns raised to them by a child
- Ensure that they report any concerns of harm to any child to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately.
- Ensure that they record any information shared directly with them by a child or observed/witnessed with the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately. This could include sharing information on behalf of the Designated Safeguarding Lead with other agencies.
- Ensure that they maintain an attitude of ‘it could happen here’ and report any concerns regarding the behaviour of an adult/staff member in school directly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead/Headteacher or Chair of Governors if the allegation is relation to the Headteacher/Principal.
- Ensure that they attend regular training/updates to support them in recognising the signs and symptoms of abuse, particularly in support of early Principles for the Whole Workforce and the child.

### **Principles for the Whole Workforce (2)**

- The welfare of the child is paramount
- It is the responsibility of all adults to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people. This responsibility extends to a duty of care for those adults employed, commissioned or contracted to work with children and young people.
- Adults who work with children are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions.
- Adults should work and be seen to work in an open and transparent way.
- The same professional standards should always be applied regardless of culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity.
- Adults should continually monitor and review their practice and ensure they follow the settings policies and practice.

### **Duty of Care**

Teachers and other staff are accountable for the way in which they exercise authority; manage risk; use resources; and protect children from discrimination and avoidable harm. All staff, whether paid or voluntary, have a duty to keep young people safe and to protect them from physical and emotional harm. This duty is in part exercised through the development of respectful, caring and professional relationships between staff/pupils and behaviour by staff that demonstrates integrity, maturity and good judgement. There are legitimate high expectations about the nature of the professional involvement of staff in the lives of pupils. When individuals accept a role that involves working with children and young people, they need to understand and acknowledge the responsibilities and trust inherent in that role. Employers have a duty of care towards their employees which requires them to provide a safe working environment for staff and guidance about safe working practices.

#### ***This means that staff should:***

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

- *Avoid any conduct which would lead to any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions*
- *Take responsibility for their own actions and behaviour.*
- *Ensure that safeguarding procedures are in place according to whole school guidance.*
- *Ensure that systems are used for concerns when raised*
- *Ensure that adults are not placed in situations which render them particularly vulnerable*

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

All adults working with children in education settings are in positions of trust in relation to the young people in their care. Relationships between a member of staff and a pupil cannot be a relationship between equals. There is potential for exploitation and harm of vulnerable young people therefore staff have a responsibility to ensure that an unequal balance of power is not used for personal advantage or gratification. Staff should always maintain appropriate professionalism and wherever possible, they should avoid behaviour which might be misinterpreted by others, and report and record any incident with this potential.

#### ***This means that staff should NOT-***

- *Use their position to gain access to information for their own advantage and/or a pupils' or family's detriment*
- *Use their power to intimidate, threaten, coerce or undermine pupils*

### **Confidentiality**

Members of staff may have access to confidential information about pupils in order to undertake their every day responsibilities. In some circumstances staff may be given additional highly sensitive or private information. They should never use confidential or personal information about a pupil or his family for their own, or others' advantage. Information must never be used to intimidate, humiliate, or embarrass the pupil. Confidential information about pupils should never be used casually in conversation or shared with any person other than on a need to know basis. In circumstances where the pupil's identity does not need to be disclosed the information should be used anonymously. There are some circumstances in which a member of staff may be expected to share information about a pupil, for example when abuse is alleged or suspected. In such cases, individuals have a duty to pass information on without delay, but only to those with designated child protection responsibilities. 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 a senior member of staff. Any media or legal enquiries should be passed to senior leadership.

Adults need to be aware that although it is important to listen to and support pupils they must not promise confidentiality or request students to do the same under any circumstances. Additionally concerns and allegations about adults should be treated as confidential and passed to a senior leader without delay.

#### ***This means that staff:***

- *Are expected to treat information they have receive about pupils in a discreet and confidential manner.*
- *If in any doubt about sharing information they hold or which has been requested of them should seek advice from a senior member of staff.*
- *Need to be cautious when passing information to others about a pupil*

- *Need to know to whom any concerns or allegations should be reported*

### **Propriety and Behaviour**

All staff have a responsibility to maintain public confidence in their ability to safeguard the welfare and best interests of pupils. They should adopt high standards of personal conduct in order to maintain the confidence and respect of their peers, pupils and the general public. An individual's behaviour, either in or out of the workplace, should not compromise her/his position within the work setting so it is important to exercise due care and attention when outside of the school environment. Membership of organisations whose goals are in conflict with the values and 'equality' policies of the school is not acceptable.

***This means that staff: should not:***

- *Behave in a manner which would lead any reasonable person to question their suitability to work with pupils or act as a role model.*
- *Make (or encourage others) to make unprofessional personal comments in any form of communication. This includes e mail conversations or social networking comments)*

***Staff should be aware that their behaviour in their personal lives may impact upon their work within school***

### **Dress and Appearance**

Staff should consider the manner of dress and appearance appropriate to their professional role. Smart and professional appearance is expected at all times for staff.

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 considered as inappropriate (which might include tattoos or piercings) could render themselves vulnerable to criticism or allegation. Appropriate personal presentation is expected of staff. Jewellery should not be ostentatious or the type that could cause injury to themselves or others.

***This means that staff should ensure their appearance and clothing-***

- *Promotes a positive and professional image.*
- *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.*

***See 'Staff Dress' Policy***

### **Gifts**

Staff should be aware of the school's policy regarding arrangements for the declaration of gifts received and given. Staff need to take care that they do not accept any gift that might be construed as a bribe by others, or lead the giver to expect preferential treatment. There are occasions when pupils or parents wish to pass small tokens of appreciation to staff, for example at Christmas or as a thank-you, and this is acceptable. However, it is unacceptable to receive gifts on a regular basis or of any significant value. Any member of staff concerned about whether they or their colleagues may be at risk of giving or receiving a bribe (financial or otherwise) should contact a Senior Leader. Members of staff may not give personal gifts to students. It is acceptable for staff to offer prizes of small value in certain tasks or competitions.

***This means that staff should-***

- *Ensure that gifts received or given in situations which may be misconstrued are declared.*
- *Ensure that gifts of significant value are declared*
- *Generally, only give gifts to an individual young person as part of an agreed reward system.*
- *Where giving gifts other than as above, ensure that these are of insignificant value and given to all pupils equally.*

**Personal Living Space**

No pupil should be in, or invited into, the home of an adult who works with them, unless the reason for this has been firmly established and agreed with parents and senior leaders or the home has been designated by the organisation or regulatory body as a work place e.g. childminders, foster carers.

***This means that staff should:***

- *Be vigilant in maintaining their privacy and mindful of the need to avoid placing themselves in vulnerable situations.*
- *Be mindful of the need to maintain professional at all times.*

**Communication with pupils**  
**(including the use of technology)**

Communication between pupils and adults, by whatever method, should take place within clear and explicit professional boundaries. This includes the wider use of technology such as mobile phones, text messaging, e-mails, digital cameras, videos, web-cams, websites, social networking sites, online gaming and blogs. Adults should not share any personal information other than that which might be appropriate as part of their professional role. Adults should ensure that all communications are transparent and open to scrutiny. Staff should refrain from giving their personal contact details including e-mail, home or mobile telephone numbers, unless the need to do so is agreed with senior leadership and parents. E-mail or text communications between an adult and a pupil outside agreed protocols may lead to disciplinary and/or criminal investigations. This also includes communications through internet based web sites, such as social networking. Be aware that actions that bring the school into disrepute could lead to disciplinary procedures being taken.

***This means that staff should:***

- *Only give their personal contact details to pupils, including their mobile telephone number, for professional reasons and with the knowledge of their line manager.*
- *Communicate with pupils in an appropriate and professional manner, making sure that parents have given permission for this form of communication to be used*
- *Only make contact with pupils for professional reasons*
- *Not use internet or web-based communication channels to send personal messages to a pupil*
- *Not have images of pupils stored on personal cameras, devices or home computers.*
- *Not make images of pupils available on the internet, other than through the school network/website, without permission from parents and senior teachers.*

- *Be cautious in contact with ex-pupils.*

### **Social Contact**

Staff should not establish or seek to establish social contact with pupils, or their families, for the purpose of securing a friendship or to pursue or strengthen a relationship.

#### ***This means that staff should:***

- *Have no undeclared social contact with pupils.*
- *Consider the appropriateness of the social contact according to their role and nature of their work*
- *Always approve any planned social contact with senior colleagues, for example when it is part of a reward scheme or pastoral care programme*
- *Advise senior leadership of any regular social contact they have with a pupil or parent which may give rise to concern*
- *Report and record any situation, which they feel, might compromise the school or their own.*

### **Social Networking Sites**

Staff may use social networking sites for personal use. However, the school requires that profile and photos of the member of staff are 'locked down' as private so that pupils or parents do not have access to personal data or images. Staff must deny current or recent pupils access to personal profiles. Staff should be aware that they leave themselves open to a charge of professional misconduct if images of a member of staff in a compromising situation are made available on a public profile. Where relationships exist between staff and those who are also parents at the school, or personal friends who are parents at the school, social networking is acceptable but caution must be exercised so that professional standards are maintained and staff do not compromise themselves or the school.

#### ***This means that staff should:***

- *Lock down their profile to ensure that data and images are not freely available. Staff should seek advice if they are unsure how to do this.*
- *Ensure all passwords are kept secure*
- *Be aware that images of others should be protected and be treated carefully.*

### **Physical Contact**

There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate and proper for staff to have physical contact with pupils, but it is crucial that they only do so in ways appropriate to their professional role. When physical contact is made with pupils this should be in response to their needs at the time, of limited duration and appropriate. Staff should use their professional judgement at all times about the appropriateness of any physical contact. 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 could be misinterpreted, the incident and circumstances should be made clear to senior staff.

#### ***This means that staff should:***

- *Be aware that even well intentioned physical contact may be misconstrued by the pupil or an observer.*
- *Never touch a pupil in a way which may be considered sexual.*

- *Always be prepared to discuss actions and accept that all physical contact must be open to scrutiny.*
- *Consider alternatives to physical contact in line with the school's behaviour policy.*
- *Always explain to the pupil the reason why contact is necessary and what form that contact will take unless their safety is at risk.*

*See 'Behaviour and Discipline' Policy*

*See 'Team Teach' Guidelines*

### **Changing**

Young people are entitled to respect and privacy when changing clothes. However, there needs to be an appropriate level of supervision in order to safeguard pupils, satisfy health and safety considerations and ensure that bullying or teasing does not occur. This supervision should be appropriate to the needs and age of the pupils concerned and sensitive to the needs and age of the pupils concerned and sensitive to the potential for embarrassment. Staff therefore need to be vigilant about their own behaviour, ensure they follow agreed guidelines and be mindful of the needs of the pupils.

#### ***Staff should:***

- *Always explain to a pupil the reason why contact is necessary and what form that contact will take unless the child's safety is at immediate risk.*
- *Avoid any unnecessary intrusive behaviour whilst children are changing.*
- *Be sensitive to the needs of a child who wants to change privately.*

### **Pupils in Distress**

There may be occasions when a distressed child needs comfort and reassurance. This may include age appropriate physical contact. Staff should remain self-aware at all times in order that their contact is not threatening, intrusive or subject to misinterpretation. Where a member of staff has a particular concern about the need to provide this type of care and they should seek advice from a senior leader.

#### ***This means that staff should:***

- *Consider the way in which they offer comfort to a distressed child appropriate to 'need.'*
- *Record situations which may give rise to concern.*

### **Behaviour Management**

All pupils have a right to be treated with respect and dignity. Staff should not use any form of degrading treatment. The use of sarcasm, demeaning or insensitive comments towards pupils is not acceptable in any situation.

#### ***This means that staff should:***

- *Adhere to the School's Behaviour Policy.*
- *Use de-escalation strategies wherever possible.*

*See 'Behaviour and Discipline' Policy*

### **Care, Control and Physical Intervention:**

Staff may legitimately intervene to prevent a child from injuring themselves or others, causing damage to property. However restraint interventions must be undertaken by a member of the 'Team Teach' group (list on the staff notice board). Staff should have regard to the health and safety of themselves and others.

Under no circumstances should physical force be used as a form of punishment. The use of unwarranted physical force is likely to constitute a criminal offence. In all cases where physical intervention is undertaken by Team Teach personnel actions should be documented and reported.

***This means that staff should:***

- Adhere to the *School's Behaviour Policy*.
- Use de-escalation strategies wherever possible.
- Seek advice from 'Team Teach' staff if physical intervention may be required.

**Transporting Children**

In certain situations, for example out of school activities, inclusion or if a child needs transporting home staff or volunteers may agree to transport children. A senior member of staff will plan and provide oversight of all transporting arrangements and respond to any difficulties that may arise. Wherever possible and practicable it is advisable that transport is undertaken other than in private vehicles, with at least one adult additional to the driver acting as an escort. **The driver must also have appropriate insurance.** 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 capacity is not exceeded.

***This means that staff should:***

- Be aware that the safety and welfare of the child is their responsibility until he/she 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 behaviour and all arrangements ensure vehicle, passenger and driver safety.
- Take into account any specific needs that the child may have.

**Administration of Medication**

The school has an administration of medication policy, which must be adhered to at all times.

*See 'Administration of Medication' Policy*

**Extra-curricular activities:**

Staff should take care when supervising children in less formal out of school activities. Staff need to ensure health and safety requirements are met including an up to date risk assessment. Senior staff should be available for support and advice.

***This means that staff should:***

- Always have another adult present unless agreed with a senior member of staff.
- Undertake risk assessments
- Have parental consent
- Staff ensure they remain professional at all times.

**Intimate Care**

All children have a right to safety, privacy and dignity when contact of an intimate nature is required (for example assisting with toileting or removing wet/soiled



clothing). A plan should be agreed with parents for all children who require intimate care on a regular basis. Children should be encouraged to act as independently as possible and to undertake as much of their own personal care as is practicable. When assistance is required, staff should ensure that another appropriate adult is in the vicinity and is aware of the task to be undertaken.

***This means that staff should:***

- *Make other staff aware of the task being undertaken*
- *Explain to the child what is happening*
- *Consult with colleagues where any variation from agreed procedure/care plan is necessary.*

*See 'Intimate Care' Policy*

**Photography, Videos**

Many school activities involve recording images. These may be undertaken as part of the curriculum, out of school activities, for publicity, or to celebrate achievement. Staff need to be aware of the potential for these aspects of teaching to be misused. Careful consideration should be given as to how these activities are organised and undertaken. Using images of children for the school's publicity purposes must have had the consent of parents through the 'Admission' Forms. Images should not be displayed on other websites, in publications or in a public place without additional consent.

***This means that staff should:***

- *Be clear about the purpose of the activity and about what will happen to the photographs when the lesson/activity is concluded*
- *Ensure that a senior member of staff is aware that the photography/image equipment is being used and for what purpose.*
- *Ensure that all images are available for scrutiny in order to screen for acceptability.*
- *Be able to justify images of children in their possession.*

***This means that staff should NOT:***

- *Have images of students stored on personal cameras, devices or home computers.*
- *Make images of students available on the internet, other than through the school network/website with permission from parents and senior leaders.*

**Internet Use**

Sunningdale has a clear policy about access to and the use of the Internet. Please refer to the acceptable use of Internet policy for further guidance. Under no circumstances should adults in the school access inappropriate images. Accessing child pornography or indecent images of children on the internet, and making, storing or disseminating such material, is illegal and, if proven, will invariably lead to the individual being barred from work with children and young people. Using school equipment to access inappropriate or indecent material, including adult pornography will result in disciplinary action, particularly if as a result pupils might be exposed to inappropriate indecent material.

*See 'Use of Internet' Policy*

**Whistleblowing (Confidential Reporting)**

Whistleblowing is the mechanism by which staff can voice their concerns, made in good faith, without fear of repercussion. Please refer to the school 'Whistle

Blowing'-Confidential Reporting Policy. Staff should acknowledge their individual responsibilities to bring matters of concern to the attention of senior leadership and/or relevant external agencies. This is particularly important where the welfare of pupils may be at risk.

***This means that staff should:***

- *Report any behaviour by colleagues that raises concern.*  
*See 'Whistle Blowing' Confidential Reporting Policy*

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

All staff should be aware of the school's child protection procedures, including procedures for dealing with allegations against staff. Staff who are the subject of allegations are advised to contact their professional association. In the event of an incident occurring, which may result in an action being misinterpreted and/or an allegation being made against a member of staff, the relevant information should be clearly and promptly recorded and reported to senior staff. Early discussion with a parent could avoid any misunderstanding. Members of staff should feel able to discuss with their line manager any difficulties or problems that may affect their relationship with pupils so that appropriate support can be provided or action.

***This means that staff should:***

- *Be familiar with Sunningdale School's safeguarding procedures*
- *Take responsibility for recording any incident and passing on that information where there are concerns about the welfare of any individual in the school*  
*See 'Child Protection' Policy*