

SUNNYSIDE ACADEMY

STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT SAFEGUARDING POLICY

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN: CODE OF CONDUCT FOR STAFF EMPLOYED IN SCHOOLS

This policy is designed to give clear guidance for staff on standards of behaviour all school staff are expected to observe. This Code of Conduct applies to all adults employed by or working in the school, with the exception of peripatetic staff, school meals staff and contactors, who are covered with their own employer's Code of Conduct policies.

SAFEGUARDING STATEMENT

Sunnyside Academy is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

For teachers, and in addition to the general guidance about conduct for staff, volunteers etc, the Code of Conduct and Practice for Registered Teachers (General Teaching Council: November 2004) will apply. In particular, and in this context, Section 1 of that code and the following elements within it.

UNACCEPTABLE PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

All staff who work in schools set examples of behaviour and conduct which can be copied by pupils. All staff must therefore demonstrate high standards of conduct in order to encourage pupils to do the same. All staff must avoid putting themselves at risk of allegations of abusive or unprofessional behaviour.

"Conduct which falls short of the standard expected of a registered teacher and behaviour which involves a breach of the standard of propriety of the profession."

Staff have a duty to protect pupils from:

- Physical, sexual and emotional abuse
- Neglect

The duty to safeguard pupils includes the duty to report concerns about a pupil to the school's Designated person for Child Protection. Staff are advised to seek advice and support from Mr Andrew Dunn, Mrs Patricia Myers, Mrs Jill Patterson and Miss Nicola Anderson.

All staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn. They also have a responsibility to identify children who may be in need of extra help or who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm, and have a responsibility to take appropriate action, working with other services as needed.

The procedure for reporting concerns about children is laid down in the school's Child Protection policy, and staff should be familiar with this document. Concerns about the conduct of other staff members should be dealt with in line with the school's Whistleblowing policy.

CONDUCT RELATING TO PUPILS

Registered teachers may be found guilty of unacceptable professional conduct

Where they:

1. Seriously demean or undermine pupils, their parents, carers or colleagues or act towards them in a manner which is discriminatory in relation to gender, religion, belief, colour, race, ethnicity, class, sexual orientation or disability.

Where they fail to:

2. Take reasonable care of pupils under their supervision with the aim of ensuring their safety and welfare.
3. Comply with relevant statutory provisions which support the well being and development of pupils.

PUPIL DEVELOPMENT

Staff must comply with school policies and procedures that support the well-being and development of pupils. They must co-operate and collaborate with colleagues and with external agencies where necessary to support the development of pupils. Staff must also follow reasonable instructions that support the development of pupils.

CHILD ABUSE

Child abuse may be physical, sexual or psychological. Whilst child abusers may be relatives or friends of the family, some meet children in other contexts and a small minority of these may gain access to children in schools as teachers or support staff or through their voluntary involvement in school activities. Pupils should not feel inhibited from reporting abuse against them by staff or volunteers, or any incident where a pupil has grounds to believe that a member of staff has crossed the boundary of acceptable behaviour. The Head Teacher and staff will continue to do all they can to ensure that the environment within school encourages pupils and staff to make truthful reports of any inappropriate behaviour.

The action to be taken by staff when they suspect a pupil is being abused by a person outside or inside the school, and the steps that should be taken in an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff by a pupil, are set out in the school's Child Protection policy and all staff should be familiar with that.

OTHER PROCEDURES AND GUIDANCE

Staff should also be familiar with the school's policies about physical contact with pupils, the use of reasonable force to control or restrain pupils, and the procedures that should be followed if a pupil needs first aid or medical attention.

GUIDELINES FOR CONDUCT OUTSIDE OF WORK

Staff must not engage in conduct outside work which could seriously damage the reputation and standing of the school or the employee. In particular, criminal offences that involve violence or possession or use of illegal drugs, or sexual misconduct, are likely to be regarded as unacceptable.

Staff must exercise caution when using information technology and be aware of risks to themselves and others. Guidelines for this are in the school's Acceptable Use policy, which all staff should sign upon induction.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Where staff have access to confidential information about pupils or their parents and carers, they must not reveal such information except to those colleagues who have a professional role in the child's education.

Situations which may occur in school, such as bullying or unacceptable conduct by staff, must remain confidential. They should not be discussed outside school, and should be reported in the appropriate manner.

Staff do have a responsibility to share with their Designated Person any information which gives rise to concern about the safety and welfare of a pupil. Staff should never promise a pupil that they will not act on information disclosed.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

All staff need to recognise that failure to meet these standards of behaviour and conduct may result in disciplinary action, including dismissal.

1. GUIDELINES FOR STAFF

1.1 Private meetings with pupils

- (a) Staff and volunteers should be aware that private meetings with individual pupils might give rise to concern. There will be occasions when a confidential interview or a one to one meeting is necessary. However, where possible, such interviews should be conducted in a room with visual access, or with the door open, or in a room or area which is likely to be frequented by other people, and another pupil or adult should be present or nearby. Where such conditions cannot apply, staff should ensure that another adult knows that the interview is taking place.
- (b) Meetings with pupils away from the school premises should only be arranged with the specific approval of the Head Teacher.

1.2 Physical contact with pupils

- (a) A pupil, parent or observer may misconstrue physical contact. Touching pupils, including well-intentioned informal and formal gestures such as putting a hand on the shoulder or arm, can, if repeated regularly, lead to serious questions being raised. As a general principle staff must not make gratuitous physical contact with their pupils. It is particularly unwise to attribute touching to their teaching style or as a way of relating to pupils.
- (b) Any form of physical punishment of pupils is unlawful, as is any form of physical response to misbehaviour unless it is by way restraint. In cases of restraint, staff should use Team Teach techniques, and should involve another staff member wherever possible. All episodes of restraint should be logged on CPOMS. It is particularly important that staff understand this both to protect their own position and the overall reputation of the school.

1.3 Where physical contact may be acceptable

- (a) There may be occasions where a distressed pupil needs comfort and reassurance, which may include physical comforting such as a caring parent, would give. Staff should use their discretion in such cases to ensure that what is, and what is seen to be by others present, normal and natural does not become unnecessary and unjustified contact, particularly with the same pupil over a period of time. Where a member of staff has a particular concern about the need to provide this type of care and reassurance he/she should seek the advice of the Head Teacher.
- (b) Some staff are likely to come into physical contact with pupils from time to time in the course of their duties. Examples include: showing a pupil how to use a piece of apparatus or equipment; demonstrating a move or exercise during games or PE. Staff should be aware of the limits within which such contact should properly take place and of the possibility of such contact being misinterpreted.
- (c) There may be occasions where it is necessary for staff to restrain a pupil physically to prevent him/her from inflicting injury to others or self-injury, damaging property, or causing disruption. In such cases only

the minimum force necessary may be used (Team Teach techniques) and any action taken must be to restrain the pupil. Where an employee has taken action to physically restrain a pupil he/she should make a written report of the incident on CPOMS.

1.4 Caring for pupils with particular needs

- (a) Staff who have to administer first aid should ensure wherever possible that other children or another adult are present if they are in any doubt as to whether necessary physical contact could be misconstrued.
- (b) Wherever possible staff who have to help children with toileting difficulties should be accompanied by another adult, and pupils should, wherever possible, be encouraged to change themselves. It is accepted that there will be some situations where pupils will present particular problems for staff and the emphasis will be on what is reasonable in all the circumstances.

1.5 Relationships and attitudes

- (a) All staff should clearly understand the need to maintain appropriate boundaries in their dealings with pupils. Intimate or sexual relationships between staff and pupils will be regarded as a grave breach of trust, and any sexual activity between a member of staff and a pupil under 18 years of age will be a criminal offence.
- (b) All staff should ensure that their relationships with pupils are appropriate to the age and gender of the pupils, and care should be taken that their language or conduct does not give rise to comment or speculation. Attitudes, demeanours and language all require care and thought, particularly when members of staff of either sex are dealing with adolescent boys and girls
- (c) From time to time staff may encounter pupils who display attention-seeking behaviour, or profess to be attracted to them. Staff should aim to deal with those situations sensitively and appropriately, but must ensure that their behaviour cannot be misinterpreted. In these circumstances, the member of staff should also ensure that the Head Teacher or a senior colleague is aware of the situation.
- (d) Staff should act respectfully towards pupils at all times. They should speak in a calm and objective way, model good manners and take seriously what pupils tell them. They should try to settle conflicts in a fair and objective manner, dealing with current behaviour only, and not consider or refer to past behaviour, unless directly relevant.

1.6 Where conversation of a sensitive nature may be appropriate

- (a) Many staff have a pastoral responsibility for pupils and in order to fulfil that role effectively there will be occasions where conversations will cover particularly sensitive matters. Staff must, in these circumstances, use their discretion to ensure that, for example, any probing for details cannot be construed as unjustified intrusion.
- (b) Other staff in school may, from time to time, be approached by pupils for advice. Pupils may also appear distressed and staff may feel the need to ask if all is well. In such cases staff must judge whether it is appropriate for them to offer counselling and advice or whether to refer the pupil to another member of staff with acknowledged pastoral responsibility for the particular pupil

1.7 Inappropriate comments and discussions with pupils

- (a) As with physical contact, comments by staff to pupils, either individually or in groups, can be misconstrued. As a general principle therefore staff must not make unnecessary comments to and/or about pupils which could be construed to have a sexual connotation. It is also unacceptable for staff to introduce or to encourage debate amongst pupils in class, or elsewhere, which could be construed as having a sexual

connotation that is unnecessary given the context of the lesson, or the circumstance. At the same time it is recognised that a topic raised by a pupil is best addressed rather than ignored.

- (b) Systematic use of insensitive, disparaging or sarcastic comments are also unacceptable.

1.8. **Extra curricular activities.**

- (a) Staff should be particularly careful when supervising pupils in extra curricular activities, or a residential setting eg outdoor education camp or extended visit away from home. Typically a less formal approach than usual may be appropriate in these settings, but that can be open to misinterpretation. In any event, the standard of behaviour expected of staff will be no different from the behaviour expected within school.
- (b) Staff should take care in receiving or giving gifts to pupils, which could be misunderstood. Gifts to individual pupils from staff will be the exception and should be assessed against the school's policy or by a senior member of staff. Inappropriate gifts from pupils should be reported as described in paragraph 1.7.

1.9 **Relationships and attitudes towards other members of staff**

- (a) All staff should behave in a professional manner towards other staff, irrespective of the relative position or status within the school. They should speak politely, communicate honestly and openly with the person concerned, not dealing with sensitive matters in public. Staff should be publically supportive of each other, dealing with criticisms or concerns privately. Staff should never act in a way that undermines a colleague.

STAFF DRESS

All staff should dress in a manner which reflects the key role that they play in the lives of the pupils. Dress should be smart and practical. Clothes which could cause offence or embarrassment to others must be avoided.

When leading PE or similar activities, sportswear is 'practical.'

Excessive amounts of jewellery and tattoos are inappropriate.

SMOKING

Staff who wish to smoke are expected to do so a reasonable distance away from the boundary line, they should also be unable to see the school grounds. Staff who require support in quitting smoking are advised to discuss with the Head Teacher.

OTHER AREAS

Staff are expected to adhere to expected times of arrival in school, so that they are prepared for the role that they carry out. They should follow the policies for Attendance.

REPORTING INCIDENTS

Following an incident where a member of staff feels that his/her actions have been, or may be, misconstrued he/she should discuss the matter with the Head Teacher. Where it is agreed with the Head Teacher the member of staff or volunteer should provide a written report of the incident. A detailed written report should always be made if a member of staff has been obliged to restrain a pupil physically, or where a complaint has been made by a pupil, parent or other adult.

DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP

Sunnyside Academy acknowledges its responsibility to ensure the safety of its pupils at all times. The school's Acceptable Use Policy and Digital Citizenship Policy sets out the ways in which this will be done, and must be

adhered to at all times by staff. Parents are informed about this policy, and about the school's methods of ensuring their child's safety in this area. They must give permission (by default) for any image of their child to be used in school or on the website.

SAFER RECRUITMENT

Sunnyside Academy has adopted the Safe Recruitment practices and guidelines as advised by the Local Authority, which reflect the DfE guidelines. These include conducting pre-employment DBS checks and Disqualification Declaration. Relevant staff have successfully completed the online Safe Recruitment training .

OTHER SAFEGUARDING POLICIES

This policy is in line with, and linked to, the following other policies:

- Child Protection
- Confidentiality
- Whistleblowing
- Acceptable Use (ICT)
- Social Networking
- Bullying
- Safer Recruitment
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, April 2014)

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