



# Code of Conduct

## Kennington C.E. Academy



*Everyone who uses what he has will get more. He will have much more than he needs. But the one who does not use what he has will have everything taken away from him.' Parable of the Talents.*

*(Matthew 25:14-30)*



## **1. Introduction:**

Staff have a crucial role to play in shaping the lives of young people. They have a unique opportunity to interact with children and young people that are both affirming and inspiring. This guidance has been produced to help staff establish the safest possible learning and working environments. The aims are to safeguard young people and reduce the risk of adults being falsely accused of improper or unprofessional conduct

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

*Apply to all adults working in education settings whatever their position, roles or responsibilities.*

## **2. Duty of care**

Teachers and other education staff are accountable for the way in which they exercise authority; manage risk; use resources; and protect pupils 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 and pupils and behaviour by staff that demonstrates integrity, maturity and good judgment.

The Trust, individual Academies, parents and carers have legitimate expectations about the nature of professional involvement 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 under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 which requires them to provide a safe working environment for staff and guidance about safe working practices.

An employer's duty of care and the staff duty of care towards children should not conflict.

### **This means that adults should:**

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

**This means that employers should:** *Ensure that safeguarding procedures are in place and are reviewed regularly Ensure that systems are in place for concerns to be raised*  
*Ensure that adults are not placed in situations that render themselves particularly vulnerable Ensure that job descriptions clearly identify the competences necessary to fulfil the duty of care and that training and guidance are*

*provided to staff*

### **3. Exercise of Professional Judgment**

This guidance cannot provide a complete checklist of what is, or is not, appropriate behaviour for staff. It does highlight however, behaviour that is illegal, inappropriate or inadvisable. There will be occasions and circumstances in which staff have to make decisions or take action in the best interests of the child or young person which could contravene this guidance or where no guidance exists. Individuals are expected to make judgments 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.

***This means that where no specific guidance exists staff should:*** *Discuss the circumstances that informed their action, or their proposed action, with a senior colleague. 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 a senior manager*

*Always record discussions and actions taken with their justifications.*

### **4. Power and Positions of Trust**

As a result of their knowledge, position and/or the authority invested in their role, all adults working with children and young people in education settings are in positions of trust in relation to the young people in their care. A relationship 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 and staff and helpers have a responsibility to ensure that an unequal balance of power is not used for personal advantage or gratification.

Wherever possible, staff should avoid behaviour, which might be misinterpreted by others, and report and record any incident with this potential.

Where a person aged 18 or over is in a position of trust with a child under 18, it is an offence for that person to engage in sexual activity with or in the presence of that child, or to cause or incite that child to engage in or watch sexual activity.

***This means that adults 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 pupils*

*Use their status and standing to form or promote relationships with children, which are of a sexual nature.*

### **5. Confidentiality**

Members of staff may have access to confidential information about pupils in order to undertake their everyday 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 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 pupil.

Confidential information about a child or young person should never be used casually in conversation or shared with any person other than on a need-to-know basis. This should be undertaken formally by the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, SENCo or class teacher unless specifically directed to liaise about a child by one of these personnel. 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 duty to pass information on without delay, but only to those with designated safeguarding responsibilities (the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, or in a case where the headteacher is suspected of abuse, the Chair of Governors).

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 management, and advice sought from The Trust if appropriate.

***This means that staff:***

*Are expected to treat information they receive about children and young people in a discreet and confidential manner.*

*Should not respond to any questions about children, incidents or any matters concerning school life if approached by parents, friends or acquaintances and should refer them to the class teacher, team leader or Headteacher.*

*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 child/young person.*

*Should refer all requests for information from the media directly to the headteacher and not offer any information or comment whatsoever, even if asked direct, apparently simple questions.*

## **6. Propriety and Behaviour**

All staff have a responsibility to maintain public confidence in their ability to safeguard the welfare and best interests of children and young people. They should adopt high standards of personal conduct in order to maintain the confidence and respect of their peers, students and the public in general.

An individual's behaviour, either in or out of the workplace should not compromise his or her position within the work setting. It is important to exercise due care and attention when outside of the Academy environment.

All staff in our school are professionals. Everyone should have the right to be treated with courtesy by all members of the Academy's community.

***This means adults should:*** *Treat each other with courtesy, respect and dignity in any setting with their colleagues*

*Be aware that behaviour in their personal lives may impact on their work with children and young people.*

***Adults must not:***

*Behave in a manner that would lead any reasonable person to question their suitability to work with children or act as a role model.*

*Make inappropriate remarks to a student, parent/carer or colleague in any media (including email, text message, telephone etc)*

*Make, or encourage others to make unprofessional personal comments which scapegoat, demean or humiliate, are racist or bullying, or might be interpreted as such in any form of communication (email, conversations or social networking comments.)*

*Discuss their own sexual relationships with or in the presence of students*

*Discuss a student's sexual relationships in inappropriate settings or contexts*

A person's dress and appearance are matters of personal choice and self-expression. However, staff should consider the manner of dress and appearance appropriate to their professional role which may be 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 considered as inappropriate could render themselves vulnerable to criticism or allegation.

***This means that adults should wear clothing which:***

*Promotes a positive and professional image (i.e. jeans should not be worn on normal school days but may be appropriate on development days) is appropriate to their role Is not likely to be viewed as offensive, revealing, or sexually provocative Does not distract, cause embarrassment or give rise to misunderstanding Is absent of any political or otherwise contentious slogans Is not considered to be discriminatory.*

## **8. Gifts.**

Staff should be aware of their Authority's guidance and/or school's policy including arrangements for the declaration of gifts received and given.

It is against the law for public servants to take bribes. 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 acceptable.

Similarly, it is inadvisable to give such personal gifts to pupils. This could be misinterpreted as a gesture either to bribe, or single out the young person. It might be perceived that a 'favour' of some kind is expected in return.

Any reward given to a young person should be agreed practice within the school, consistent with the school's behaviour policy, recorded and not based on favouritism, or resulting from the close relationship formed when supporting children regularly on a small group or individual basis.

***This means that adults should:***

*Ensure that gifts received or given in situations which may be misconstrued are declared,*

*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 children equally.*

## 9 . Infatuations

Even in a primary school setting staff need to be aware that it is not uncommon for pupils to be strongly attracted to a member of staff and/or develop a heterosexual or homosexual infatuation. All situations should be responded to sensitively to maintain the dignity of all concerned.

Staff should also be aware that such circumstances always carry a high risk of words or actions being misinterpreted and for allegations to be made against staff.

A member of staff, who becomes aware that a pupil may be infatuated with themselves or a colleague, should discuss this at the earliest opportunity with a senior colleague so that appropriate action can be taken. In this way, steps can be taken to avoid hurt and distress for all concerned.

### ***This means adults should:***

*Report any indications (verbal, written or physical) that suggest a pupil may be infatuated with a member of staff.*

## 10. Personal Living Space:

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

It is not appropriate for any other organisation to expect or request that private living space be used for work with children and young people.

Under no circumstances should children or young people assist with chores or tasks in the home of an adult who works with them. Neither should they be asked to do so by friends or family of that adult.

***This means that adults should:*** *Be vigilant in maintaining their privacy and be mindful of the need to avoid placing themselves in a vulnerable situation*

*Challenge any request for their accommodation to be used as an additional resource for the organisation. Be mindful of the need to maintain professional boundaries .Refrain from asking children and young people to undertake personal jobs or errands.*

## 11. Social Contact

Staff should not establish or seek to establish social contact with pupils for the purpose of securing a friendship or to pursue or strengthen a relationship. Even if a young person seeks to establish social contact, or if this occurs coincidentally, the member of staff should exercise her/his professional judgment in making a response and be aware that such social contact could be misconstrued.

Contact with parents must be kept to a professional basis. Parents wishing to discuss their children's needs will do so through an appointment with the class teacher or, in the case of urgent matters, the class teacher will be freed to meet the parent / carer.

Where relationships exist between staff and those who are also parents at the Academy, or personal friends who are parents at the Academy, social networking is acceptable but caution must be exercised so that professional standards are maintained and you do not compromise yourself, the Academy or the Trust.

When engaged in online gaming, should you become aware that you are in an online game with a student of the Academy, you should cease to play against that student and should not enter any games with that player as part of the group.

***This means that adults should:*** *Have no secret social contact with children and young people or their parents Consider the appropriateness of social contact according to their role and the 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 program*

*Advise senior management of any regular social contact they have with a pupil which may give rise to concern. Report and record any situation, which they feel, might compromise the school or their own professional standing.*

**This means that adults should not:**

*Give their personal details such as home/mobile phone number; home or e-mail address to pupils unless the need to do so is agreed with senior management.*

*Use Internal e-mail systems except in accordance with school policy.*

## **12. Social networking:**

Academy and Trust staff are not forbidden to use social media sites as we recognise the benefits of these modes of communication. However, in line with your professional attitudes and awareness, we do insist that your profile and photos are “locked down” as private so that students and parents do not have access to your personal data or images, including those of your family, friends or other staff. We also request that you do not allow current or recent students to access your profile so you do not put yourself in a vulnerable position.

We appreciate that it is very difficult to control what other people put on these sites but please be aware that you are leaving yourself open to professional misconduct if images are made available on a public profile by anyone.

***This means adults should:*** *Make Headteacher / Deputy Headteacher aware of any networking accounts that you have arranged.*

*Use professional judgment when using these accounts. Mention of the Academy and any events at school are not appropriate. Naming of pupils on social networking sites by staff is not within the expected professional conduct of the school.*

***This means adults must:*** *Ensure privacy settings have been set at the highest level and any communications between staff are kept at professional levels. Please note, children should not be chosen as ‘friends’ and contact with parents / carers should be appropriate.*

*Inform senior leadership immediately if a student does gain access to your profile by fraudulent means (impersonation or hacking)*

***This means adults must not:*** *Seek out students and/or share their own gamer tags/ID with students, or use Academy resources to play online games under any circumstances.*

### 13. 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.

A 'no touch' approach is impractical for most staff and may in some circumstances be inappropriate. When physical contact is made with pupils this should be in response to their needs at the time, of limited duration and appropriate given their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background.

Appropriate physical contact in schools may occur most often with younger pupils. 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. Staff should therefore, use their professional judgment at all times. 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 recorded as soon as possible in the school's incident book and, if appropriate, a copy placed on the child's file. Physical contact, which occurs regularly with an individual child or young person, is likely to raise questions unless the justification for this is part of a formally agreed plan (for example in relation to pupils with SEN or physical disabilities). Any such contact should be the subject of an agreed and open school policy and subject to review.

Where feasible, staff should seek the child's permission before initiating contact. Staff should listen, observe and take note of the child's reaction or feelings and – so far as is possible - use a level of contact which is acceptable to the child for the minimum time necessary.

Extra caution may be required where it is known that a child has suffered previous abuse or neglect. In the child's view, physical contact might be associated with such experiences and lead to staff being vulnerable to allegations of abuse. It is recognised that many such children are extremely needy and seek out inappropriate physical contact. In such circumstances staff should deter the child sensitively by helping them to understand the importance of personal boundaries. The general culture of 'limited touch' should be adapted, where appropriate, to the individual requirements of each child. Children with special needs may require more physical contact to assist their everyday learning. The Arrangements should be understood and agreed by all concerned, justified in terms of the child's needs, consistently applied and open to scrutiny.

**Staff therefore need to be vigilant about their own behaviour, ensure they follow agreed guidelines and be mindful of the needs of the pupils.**

***This means that adults should:*** *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.*

*Never touch a child in a way which may be considered indecent.*

*Always be prepared to explain actions and accept that all physical contact be open to Scrutiny. Never indulge in horseplay, tickling or fun fights.*

***This means that Academy should:*** *Ensure they have a system in place for recording serious 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 pupils in their care*

*Make staff aware of the DfES guidance in respect of physical contact with pupils and meeting medical needs of children*



## 14. Pupils in Distress

There may be occasions when a distressed pupil 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 reassurance s/he should seek further advice from a senior manager.

## 15. Behaviour Management

All pupils have a right to be treated with respect and dignity. Corporal punishment in any form is unlawful in all schools. This includes direct physical contact or contact with any object whether held or thrown. Equally, staff should not use any form of degrading treatment to punish a pupil. The use of humour can help to defuse a situation. The use of sarcasm, demeaning or insensitive comments towards pupils is not acceptable in any situation.

## 16. Care Control and Physical Intervention

All aspects of this are dealt with in the school's policy for Physical Restraint. Only trained staff should restrain pupils, restraint may only be carried in accordance with the school policy and should be undertaken by three adults where possible.

Should a situation occur when a trained member of staff is not present, staff on duty must call appropriate staff to undertake the restraint unless a child is in actual physical danger or is endangering another pupil.

The circumstances in which staff can intervene with a pupil are covered by the 1996 Education Act. Staff may legitimately intervene to prevent a pupil from committing a criminal offence, injuring themselves or others, causing damage to property, engaging in behaviour prejudicial to good order and to maintain good order and discipline.

Staff should have regard to the health and safety of themselves and others. This is a complex area and staff must have regard to DfE guidance.

***This means that adults should:*** *Consider the way in which they offer comfort to a distressed pupil*

*Always tell a colleague when and how they offered comfort to a distressed child*

*Record situations which may give rise to concern.*

***This means that adults should:***

*Not use force as a form of punishment.*

*Try to defuse situations before they escalate.*

*Keep parents informed of any sanctions through the Senior Management Team.*

*Adhere to the school's behaviour management policy.*

***This means that adults should:***

*Adhere to the school's physical intervention policy*

*Always seek to defuse situations. Always use minimum force for the shortest period necessary.*

*Record, document and report the incident and subsequent actions in all cases where physical intervention is deemed necessary.*

***This means adults must not:*** *Use physical force as a form of punishment under any circumstances. The use of unwarranted physical force is likely to constitute a criminal offence.*

## **17. Sexual Contact with Young People:**

Any sexual behaviour by a member of staff with or towards a child or young person is both inappropriate and illegal. Children and young people are protected by the same laws as adults in relation to non-consensual sexual behaviour. They are additionally protected by specific legal provisions regardless of whether the child or young person consents or not. This includes the prohibition on adults in a position of trust.

The sexual activity referred to does not just involve physical contact including penetrative and non-penetrative acts. It may also include non-contact activities, such as causing children to engage in or watch sexual activity or the production of pornographic material. 'Working Together to Safeguard Children', defines sexual abuse as "forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening".

There are occasions when adults embark on a course of behaviour known as 'grooming' where the sole purpose is to gain the trust of a child, and manipulate that relationship so sexual abuse can take place. Staff should be aware that conferring special attention and favour upon a child might be construed as being part of a 'grooming' process, which is an offence.

## **18. One to One Situations**

Staff working in one to one situations with children and young people may be more vulnerable to allegations. Teachers and others should recognise this possibility and plan and conduct such meetings accordingly. Every attempt should be made to ensure the safety and security needs of both staff and pupils are met. Schools need to consider these issues in drawing up their school policies and offer clear training and guidance for the use of any areas of the school which place staff or children in vulnerable situations e.g. photographic darkrooms, counselling rooms.

Managers should undertake a risk assessment in relation to the specific nature and implications of one to one work for each worker. In addition, each assessment should take into account the individual needs of each pupil. Any arrangements should be reviewed on a regular basis.

Pre-arranged meetings with pupils away from the school premises should not be permitted unless approval is obtained from their parent and the head teacher or other senior colleague with delegated authority.

***This means that adults should:*** *Not pursue sexual relationships with children and young people either in or out of school.*

*Avoid any form of communication with a child or young person which could be interpreted as sexually suggestive or provocative i.e. verbal comments, letters, notes, electronic mail, phone calls, texts, physical contact. Ensure there is visual access and/or an open door in one-to-one situations.*

*Inform other staff of the meeting beforehand, assessing the need to have them present or close by. Avoid use of 'engaged' or equivalent signs wherever possible. Such signs may create an opportunity for secrecy or the interpretation of secrecy. Always report any situation where a child becomes distressed or angry to a senior colleague.*

***This means that adults should:*** Avoid meetings with pupils in remote, secluded areas of school

*Consider the needs and circumstances of the child/children involved.*

## **19. Transporting Children**

In certain situations e.g., out of Academy activities, staff or volunteers may agree to transport children. A designated member of staff should be appointed to 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. 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, taxed and appropriately insured and that the maximum capacity is not Exceeded.

***This means that adults should:*** Plan and agree arrangements with all parties in advance, responding sensitively and flexibly to disagreements

*Ensure that they are alone with a child for the minimum time possible. 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*

## **20. Educational Visits**

Staff should take particular care when supervising pupils in the less formal atmosphere of a residential setting or after school activity. During school activities that take place off the school site or out of school hours, 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. Pupils, staff and parents should be informed of these prior to the start of the trip.

Health and Safety arrangements require members of staff to keep colleagues/employers aware of their whereabouts, especially when involved in an out of school activity. Staff must be aware of and follow guidance.

***This means that adults should:*** Always have another adult present in out of school activities, unless otherwise agreed with senior staff in school.

*Undertake a risk assessment.*

*Have parental consent to the activity.*

*Ensure that their behaviour remains professional at all times.*

## **21. First Aid and the Administration of Medication**

The Academy has trained first-aiders/ appointed people. Staff should receive appropriate training before administering first aid or medication. First aid will be carried out as appropriate and must be non – invasive. In case of doubt of the severity of an injury a member of the SLT should be consulted and the parents will be called.

A form must be completed for all children who suffer more than a minor injury at school. If applicable one copy is sent home with the child and one retained for school records. If a child has severe injuries, parents must be informed and an ambulance called. Parents must always be informed of injuries to the head and genitalia. Permission is always sought for examination of genital areas, however if this is not available medical aid must be sought.

Parents are informed if a child is ill during school hours.

Pupils may need medication during school hours. In this case the Academy's Medicine policy must be adhered to. Staff cannot administer medicine without the written consent of parents/carers or guardians, specifying the medicine, time and dosage. The school medicine form should be used for this purpose.

In circumstances where children need medication regularly a health care plan should be drawn up to ensure the safety and protection of pupils and staff. With the permission of parents, the children should be encouraged to administer the medication themselves. Regular medication such as Ritalin is kept safe in the school office.

If a member of staff is concerned or uncertain about the amount or type of medication being given to a pupil, this should be discussed with the appropriate senior colleague at the earliest opportunity. When administering first aid, wherever possible, staff should ensure that another adult is present, or aware of the action being taken. Parents should always be informed when first aid has been administered.

***This means that adults should:*** *Adhere to the school's safety and administration of medicines policies*

*Adhere to the school's intimate care policy make other staff aware of the task being undertaken explain to the child what is happening.*

## **22. 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 care plan should be drawn up and 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.

Additional vulnerabilities that may arise from a physical disability or learning difficulty should be considered with regard to individual teaching and care plans for each child. As with all arrangements for intimate care needs, agreements between the child, their parents/carers and the organisation must be negotiated, agreed and recorded. In addition, the views and/or emotional responses of children with special educational needs, regardless of age and ability must be actively sought in regular reviews of these arrangements.

***This means that adults should:***  
*Adhere to the school's intimate care guidelines*

*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 record the justification for any variations to the agreed procedure/care plan and share this information with parents.*

## 23. Curriculum

Many areas of the curriculum can include or raise subject matter which is sexually explicit, or of an otherwise 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 plan should highlight particular areas of risk and sensitivity. The curriculum can sometimes include or lead to unplanned discussion about subject matter of a sexually explicit or otherwise sensitive nature. Responding to pupils' questions can require careful judgment and staff may wish to take guidance in these circumstances from a senior member of staff.

Care should also be taken to abide by the governing body's required policy on sex and relationships education and the wishes of parents. Parents have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of any sex education.

***This means that adults should:***

*Have clear written lesson plans.*

***This means that adults should not:*** *Enter into or encourage inappropriate or offensive discussion about sexual activity.* education provided (but not from the biological aspects of human growth and reproduction necessary under the science curriculum).

## 24. Photographic, Videos and Other Creative Arts

Many Academy activities may involve recording images. These may be undertaken as part of the curriculum, extra-Academy activities, for publicity, or to celebrate achievement.

Staff need to be aware of the potential for these aspects of teaching to be misused for pornographic or grooming purposes. Careful consideration should be given to how these activities are organised and undertaken. Particular regard needs to be given when they involve young or vulnerable students who may be unable to question why or how the activities are taking place.

Children who have previously been abused in this way may feel threatened by the use of photography, filming etc. in the teaching environment.

Staff should remain sensitive to any children who appear uncomfortable and should recognise the potential for misinterpretation.

Using images of children for publicity purposes will require the age-appropriate consent of the individual concerned and their legal guardians. 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 Academy have access.

It is recommended that when using a photograph the following guidance should be followed:

If the photograph is used, avoid naming the student unless parental permission has been given.

If the student is named, avoid using their photograph

Academies should establish whether the image will be retained for further use Images should be securely stored and used only by those authorised to do so.

***This means that adults 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 Avoid making images in one to one situations. Be clear about the consent that has been given by the parents of participating students for recording images.*

***This means adults should not:*** *Have images of students stored on personal cameras, devices or home computers Make images of students available on the internet other and through the Academy network/website with the permission from parents and SLT*

*Make an image of any child where the parent or guardian has refused consent.*

## **25. Internet Use**

The Academy has a clear policy about access to and the use of the Internet. Please refer to the Academy Computer Usage Policy for further guidance.

Under no circumstances should adults in the Academy 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 working with children and young people.

Using Academy equipment to access inappropriate or indecent material, including adult pornography, is likely to give cause for concern particularly if as a result students might be exposed to inappropriate or indecent material.

***This means adults should not:*** *Have images of students stored on personal cameras, devices or home computers Make images of students available on the internet other an through the Academy network/website with the permission from parents and SLT*

*Make an image of any child where the parent or guardian has refused consent*

## **26. Sharing Concerns and Recording Incidents**

All staff should be aware of the Academy's Child Protection Procedures, including procedures for dealing with allegations against staff, and the procedures for informing the school of any matter than may result in a "risk by association". 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 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 or carer 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 students so that appropriate support can be provided or action can be taken.

***This means that adults:*** *Should be familiar with the Academy's system for recording concerns Should take responsibility for recording any incident and passing that information on, where they have concerns about any matter pertaining to the welfare of an individual in the Academy or Trust.*

*Should familiarise themselves with the Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.*

## 27. Whistleblowing

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

Staff should acknowledge their individual responsibilities to bring matters of concern to the attention of senior leadership, the Trust Board, and/or relevant external agencies. This is particularly important where the welfare of children may be at risk.

### Definition of low-level concerns

The term 'low-level' concern is any concern – no matter how small – that an adult working in or on behalf of the school may have acted in a way that:

- Is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work, **and**
- Does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the designated officer at the local authority

Examples of such behaviour could include, but are not limited to:

- Being overly friendly with children
- Having favourites
- Taking photographs of children on their mobile phone
- Engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door
- Using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language.

### Sharing low-level concerns

We recognise the importance of creating a culture of openness, trust and transparency to encourage all staff to share low-level concerns so that they can be addressed appropriately.

We will create this culture by:

- Ensuring staff are clear about what appropriate behaviour is, and are confident in distinguishing expected and appropriate behaviour from concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour, in themselves and others
- Empowering staff to share any low-level concerns as per section 9.6 of this policy
- Empowering staff to self-refer
- Addressing unprofessional behaviour and supporting the individual to correct it at an early stage
- Providing a responsive, sensitive and proportionate handling of such concerns when they are raised
- Helping to identify any weakness in the school's safeguarding system

### Responding to low-level concerns

If the concern is raised via a third party, the headteacher will collect evidence where necessary by speaking:

- Directly to the person who raised the concern, unless it has been raised anonymously
- To the individual involved and any witnesses

The headteacher will use the information collected to categorise the type of behaviour and determine any further action, in line with the Trust's code of conduct and taking advice from Worknest.

Keeping Children Safe in Education also links to this report for more information [Developing and implementing a low-level concerns policy: A guide for organisations which work with children](#)

***This means that adults should:*** Report any behaviour, whether action or inaction by colleagues that raises concern.

## **28. Contact with the Media**

Dealing with the media requires specific skills and an in-depth knowledge of the workings of the Trust and the press. It is not always possible to know how the press will represent individuals and so to protect you from potential embarrassment or misrepresentation, and the Trust from potentially bad press coverage only authorised people can speak, write or give an interview or information to the media.

If you receive a request for information or comment from any form of media, whether local or national press or television, it must in the first instance be referred to the Headteacher, who may discuss this with the Trust. They may authorise and brief a nominated individual to give a response. Only authorised staff should have contact with the media in relation to the business of the Academy or Trust. Sometimes the Trust or the Academy may have to make difficult decisions that may conflict with the views of the community, or your own. Whatever your personal feelings about the decisions made by the Academy or Trust, you must not leak information to the media, either directly or by careless comment. Any such leaks will be considered to be a disciplinary offence.

***This means that adults should:*** Raise any concerns they have about the actions of the Academy or Trust using the

*appropriate procedures*

*Refer any media enquiry to the Headteacher or nominated deputy immediately*

*Take care with the comments made about the Academy or Trust in for a that they could be misused e.g Social media*