

**Safeguarding Code of Conduct for Staff  
Working with and safeguarding children at Biddenham**

[The Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who Work with Children and Young People document](#) (this can also be found in the staffroom) provides guidance clarifying which behaviours constitute safe practice and which should be avoided. This provides clear advice on appropriate and safe behaviours for all adults working with children.

All actions concerning children and young people must uphold the best interests of the young person as a primary consideration. Staff must always be mindful of the fact that they hold a position of trust, and that their behaviour towards the children and young people in their charge must be above reproach. This document is not intended to detract from the enriching experiences children and young people gain from positive interaction with staff within the school it is intended to assist staff in respect of the complex issue of Safeguarding, by drawing attention to the areas of risk for staff and by offering guidance on conduct. Staff should read and understand:

- [Working Together to Safeguard Children \(2018\)](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(2023\)](#)

These documents have been sent to all staff.

### **Private Meetings with Students**

- Staff should be aware of the difficulties which may arise from private interviews with individual students. It is recognised that there will be occasions when confidential interviews must take place. As far as possible, staff should conduct such interviews in a room with visual access, or with the door open.
- Where such conditions cannot apply, staff are advised to ensure that another adult knows that the interview is taking place. It may be necessary to use a sign indicating that the room is in use, but it is not advisable to use signs prohibiting entry to the room.
- Where possible another student or (preferably) another adult should be present or nearby during the interview.

### **Physical Contact with Students**

- As a general principle staff should refrain from unnecessary physical contact with their students. However there are circumstances in which it is both allowable and perhaps necessary; as when a child is highly distressed and in need of comfort and reassurance (as any parent would)
- Staff should never touch a child who has clearly indicated that he/she is, or would be, uncomfortable with such contact, unless it is necessary to protect the child, others or property from harm .
- Physical punishment is illegal as is any other form of physical response to misbehaviour, unless it is by way of necessary constraint.
- Staff who have to administer first aid to a student should ensure whenever possible that this is done in the presence of other children or another adult.

- Following any incident where a member of staff feels that his/her actions have been, or may be, misconstrued, a written report of the incident should be submitted immediately to the Principal.
- Staff should be particularly careful when supervising students in approved out of school activities, where more informal relationships tend to be usual and where staff may be in proximity to students in circumstances very different from the normal school environment.

### **Use of Reasonable Force**

- Schools generally use force to control students and to restrain them. Control means either passive physical contact, such as standing between students or blocking a student's path, or active physical contact such as leading a student by the arm out of a classroom.
- Restraint means to hold back physically or to bring a student under control. It is typically used in more extreme circumstances, for example when two students are fighting and refuse to separate without physical intervention.
- School staff should always try to avoid acting in a way that might cause injury, but in extreme cases it may not always be possible to avoid injuring the student.

### **Who can use reasonable force?**

- All members of school staff have a legal power to use reasonable force.
- Reasonable force will only be used to protect students from harming themselves or others.
- This power applies to any member of staff at the school. It can also apply to people whom the Principal has temporarily put in charge of students such as unpaid volunteers or parents accompanying students on a school organised visit.

### **When can reasonable Force be used?**

- Reasonable force can be used to prevent students from hurting themselves or others, from damaging property, or from causing disorder.
- The decision on whether or not to physically intervene is down to the professional judgement of the staff member concerned and should always depend on the individual circumstances.
- All incidents should be reported to the Principal immediately after any incident occurs.

### **Choice and use of Teaching Materials**

- Teachers should avoid teaching materials where the choice of which might be misinterpreted.
- When using teaching materials of a sensitive nature a teacher should be aware of the sensitivities of the students in their care and make decisions accordingly.

### **Relationships and Attitudes**

Staff should ensure that their relationship with students is appropriate to the age, maturity and gender of the students, taking care that their conduct does not give rise to comment or speculation. Attitudes, demeanour and language all require care and thought, particularly when staff are dealing with adolescent boys and girls.

## **Talking to Students where there are concerns about possible abuse**

Where staff see signs which cause them concern they should share their concern with a designated Safeguarding officer. If a child discloses to a member of staff the following should be noted

- Do not ask the child leading questions, as this can later be interpreted as putting ideas into the child's mind.
- Do not ask questions which encourage the child to change his/her versions of events in any way. For example an appropriate question is, 'Tell me what happened' rather than 'Did they do X to you?'
- The chief task at this stage is to listen to the student and not interrupt or try to interpret if he/she is freely recalling significant events, as soon as possible afterwards to make a note of the discussion and pass it on to the designated teacher. The note should record the time, date, place and people who were present, as well as what was said. Signs of physical injury observed should be noted in detail, but under no circumstances should a child's clothing be removed.
- Avoid giving student undertakings of confidentiality although they should be reassured that information will only be disclosed to those professionals who need to know.
- Be aware that any notes made may need to be used in subsequent court proceedings. Lack of records will not absolve the school from a requirement to give evidence in court; it is therefore essential that proper contemporaneous records are kept.
- If unsure please seek advice from the school's designated Safeguarding Officers.

## **Teaching and Non-Teaching Staff using Social Networking Sites/Blogs**

It is not recommended that staff use these sites, however if staff have a profile they must ensure that they:

- Keep their profile private.
- Lock all pictures and make sure that they can only be seen by 'friends'.
- Be careful of profile content.
- NEVER accept students as friends.
- Do not accept parents as friends.

## **The designated teachers for Safeguarding are:**

- Clare Warburton - Lead (DSL)
- Ed Evans (Deputy DSL)
- Abi Speight
- Sarah Standage
- Amy Lewis
- Danni De Spirito
- Issy Lilley-Moncrieff
- Gareth Massey