

HR Consultancy for Schools

Safe Working Practice for Staff in Education Settings



An introduction leaflet for all staff and volunteers working with children to help establish safe working practice in schools, academies and all settings where children receive formal education

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- Internet use should be according to school policy and there should not be any access to inappropriate material or unauthorised images of children,
- Any taking or recording of images of pupils should take place with regard to the law, school policy and the need to safeguard the privacy, dignity and safety of pupils.
- Communication with pupils should never be sexually suggestive; staff are in a position of trust and should never engage in any sexual relationship with pupils in or out of school.
- Staff responsible for organising educational visits should be familiar with the Department for Education's advice on Health and Safety available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-and-safety-advice-for-schools>.
- **Personal living accommodation including on site provision**
Generally, staff should not invite any pupils into their living accommodation unless the reason to do so has been firmly established and agreed with their manager and the pupil's parents/carers.

CONCERNS ABOUT THE CONDUCT OF A MEMBER OF STAFF:

- You must report to the Headteacher/Senior Manager any concern that indicates that a member of staff or a volunteer may be a risk to or may have acted inappropriately towards children.
- If the concern is about the Headteacher/Senior Manager you must report it to the Chair of Governors or, in their absence, direct to the WCC Local Area Designated Officer - LADO.
- If you feel unable to report the matter within school you must seek safeguarding advice from the WCC LADO.
- Record what you have noticed or what has been said and sign and date it.
- You should follow the procedures but you have a responsibility to whistle-blow if all else fails.
- **Keep the matter confidential**
Advice can also be sought from the LADO and/or the Family Front Door (Access Centre). There are procedures for dealing with concerns, allegations and disclosures which take account of the seriousness and sensitivity of these situations.

Education Adviser Safeguarding - 01905 844436
Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) - 01905 843311
Family Front Door (Access Centre) - 01905 822666

This leaflet summarises key points from the Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education Settings – Safer Recruitment Consortium October 2015

STAFF - includes all adults working with children, in whatever capacity or setting, paid or unpaid.

CHILDREN - includes children and young people under the age of 18.

SCHOOL - includes any setting in which children/young people receive formal education.

HEADTEACHER - is the senior manager in the setting.

UNDERPINNING PRINCIPLES

1. Staff should understand their responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils.
2. 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.
3. Staff should work, and be seen to work, in an open and transparent way.
4. Staff should acknowledge that deliberately invented/malicious allegations are extremely rare and that all concerns should be reported and recorded.
5. Staff should discuss and/or take advice promptly from their line manager if they have acted in a way which may give rise to concern.
6. Staff should apply the same professional standards regardless of culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and sexual orientation.
7. Staff should not consume or be under the influence of alcohol or any substance, including prescribed medication, which may affect their ability to care for children.
8. Staff should be aware that breaches of the law and other professional guidelines could result in disciplinary action being taken against them, criminal action and/or other proceedings including barring by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) from working in regulated activity, or for acts of serious misconduct prohibition from teaching by the Teaching Regulation Agency.
9. Staff and managers should continually monitor and review practice to ensure this guidance is followed.
10. Staff should be aware of and understand their establishment's child protection policy, arrangements for managing allegations against staff, staff behaviour policy, whistle-blowing procedure and their Local Safeguarding Children Board LSCB procedures.

SAFE WORKING PRACTICES

- Staff must report concerns about other staff behaviour in the interests of both staff and children involved.
- Staff must keep to confidentiality protocols and discuss any information sharing issues with senior staff if in any doubt.
- Staff should be careful not to misuse their power and influence over children.
- Staff should ensure their behaviour remains professional at all times, including their dress and use of language.
- Staff should not receive gifts, other than small tokens of appreciation.
- Staff should not give gifts, other than as part of an agreed reward system or given to all children equally.
- Staff should guard against any pupil forming an infatuation with them and report any such concerns to senior staff.
- Physical intervention should never be inappropriately used, should follow relevant procedures and be clearly recorded and reported.
- Physical contact should be minimal, time limited, age appropriate and in response to the needs of the child at the time.
- Intimate care and first aid should only be administered according to relevant procedures and care plans.
- Staff working in one to one situations should ensure there is visual access and remote or secluded areas should be avoided.
- Staff should not engage in personal email or telephone contact with pupils, including instant messaging, text messaging, and social networking sites, etc.
- Any out of school contact should be planned in advance and agreed with senior staff and parents.
- Home visits should be planned and agreed with senior managers and risk management plans should be in place and adhered to.
- Only authorised areas of the curriculum should include any sexual or other sensitive material; staff should take advice from senior staff if there is any chance of misinterpretation.

Where examination arrangements require overnight supervision of candidates, schools should ensure that all arrangements reflect a duty of care towards pupils and staff: Risk assessments should have been undertaken and all members of the household should have had appropriate vetting including, where eligible, DBS and Barred List checked.