

Woodcocks' Well CE PS



Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education Settings Policy

Section 1: Overview

1.1. Background

All adults who come into contact with pupils in their work have a duty of care¹ to safeguard and promote their welfare.

The Children Act 2004, through the Stay Safe outcome of the Every Child Matters, places a duty on schools/services to safeguard and promote the well-being of pupils. This includes the need to ensure that all adults who work with or on behalf of pupils are competent, confident and safe to do so.

The vast majority of adults who work with children act professionally and aim to provide a safe and supportive environment which secures the well-being and very best outcomes for pupils in their care. However, it is recognised that in this area of work tensions and misunderstandings can occur. It is here that the behaviour of adults can give rise to allegations of abuse being made against them. Allegations may be malicious or misplaced. They may arise from differing perceptions of the same event, but when they occur, they are inevitably distressing and difficult for all concerned. Equally, it must be recognised that some allegations will be genuine and there are adults who will deliberately seek out, create or exploit opportunities to abuse children. It is therefore essential that all possible steps are taken to safeguard pupils and ensure that the adults working with them are safe to do so.

It is recognised that not all adults who work with pupils work as paid or contracted employees. The principles and guidance outlined in this document still apply and should be followed by any adult whose work brings them into contact with pupils.

The guidance contained in this document has due regard to current legislation and statutory guidance. It has been updated from a previous 2006 version.

1.2. What to do if you are worried a child is being abused²

Everyone working with pupils should be familiar with local procedures and protocols for safeguarding the welfare of pupils. Adults have a duty to report any child protection or welfare concerns to a designated member of staff in their school/service and/or report any concerns to the local social care office.

¹

Section 3: Guidance for Safe Working Practice

1. Context

This means that these guidelines:

- *apply to **all** adults working in education settings whatever their position, role, or responsibilities*
- *may provide guidance where an individual's suitability to work with pupils has been called into question.*

2. 'Unsuitability'

This means that adults should:

- *have a clear understanding about the nature and content of this document*
- *discuss any uncertainties or confusion with their Head teacher or line manager*
- *understand what behaviours may call into question their suitability to continue to work with children and young people.*

3. Duty of Care

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 child's best interests*
- *avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions*
- *take responsibility for their own actions and behaviour*
- *foster a culture of openness and support*
- *ensure that systems are in place for concerns to be raised*
- *ensure that there is in place effective recording systems which confirm discussions, decisions and the outcomes of any actions taken.*
- *ensure that staff are not placed in situations which render them particularly vulnerable*
- *ensure that all staff are aware of expectations, policies and procedures*

This means that Governing Bodies should:

- *ensure that appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures are adopted, implemented and monitored in school*
- *ensure that, where services or activities are provided by another body, the body concerned has appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures*

4. Confidentiality

This means that adults:

- *be clear about when information can be shared and in what circumstances it is appropriate to do so*
 - *are expected to treat information they receive about pupils in a discreet and confidential manner*
 - *should seek advice from a senior member of staff if they are in any doubt about sharing information they hold or which has been requested of them*
- need to know to whom any concerns or allegations should be reported*

5. Making a Professional Judgement

This means that where no specific guidance exists adults should:

- *discuss the circumstances that informed their action, or their proposed action, with the Head teacher, senior member of the team and the parent/carer.*
- *report any actions which could be misinterpreted to their senior manager*

- *always discuss any misunderstanding, accidents or threats with a senior manager*
- *record any areas of disagreement about course of action taken and if necessary referred to a higher authority*
- *ensure they have copies of records which confirm decisions, discussions and reasons why actions were taken.*

6. Power and Positions of Trust

This means that adults should not:

- *use their position to gain access to information for their own or others' advantage*
- *use their position to intimidate, bully, humiliate, threaten, coerce or undermine pupils*
- *use their status and standing to form or promote relationships which are of a sexual nature, or which may become so*

7. Propriety and Behaviour

This means that adults should not:

- *behave in a manner which would lead any reasonable person to question their suitability to work with children or act as a role model.*
- *make, or encourage others to make, unprofessional personal comments which scapegoat, demean or humiliate, or which might be interpreted as such*

This means that adults should:

- *be aware that behaviour in their personal lives may impact upon their work with pupils*
 - *follow any codes of conduct deemed appropriate by their school/service*
- understand that the behaviour and actions of their partner (or other family members) may raise questions about their suitability to work with pupils*

8. Dress and Appearance

This means that adults should wear clothing which:

- *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 and is culturally sensitive*

9. The Use of Personal Living Space³

This means that adults should:

- *be vigilant in maintaining their privacy and mindful of the need to avoid placing themselves in vulnerable situations*
 - *challenge any request for their accommodation to be used as an additional resource for the school or school/service*
 - *be mindful of the need to maintain professional boundaries*
- refrain from asking pupils/students to undertake personal jobs or errands*

10. Gifts, Rewards and Favouritism

This means that adults should:

- *be aware of their school/service's policy on the giving and receiving of gifts*
- *ensure that gifts received or given in situations which may be misconstrued are declared*

³ See also Section 13 Social Contact

- *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*
- *ensure that all selection processes which concern pupils are fair and that wherever practicable these are undertaken and agreed by more than one member of staff*

11. Infatuations

This means that adults should

- *report and record any incidents or indications (verbal, written or physical) that suggest a child or young person may have developed an infatuation with a member of staff*
- *always acknowledge and maintain professional boundaries*

12. Communication with Pupils (including the Use of Technology)

This means that schools/services should:

- *have in place an Acceptable Use policy (AUP)*
- *continually self-review e-safety policies in the light of new and emerging technologies*
- *have a communication policy which specifies acceptable and permissible modes of communication*

This means that adults should:

- *ensure that personal social networking sites are set at private and pupils are never listed as approved contacts*
- *never use or access social networking sites of pupils.*
- *not give their personal contact details to pupils, including their mobile telephone number*
- *only use equipment e.g. mobile phones, provided by school/service to communicate with children, making sure that parents have given permission for this form of communication to be used*
- *only make contact with children for professional reasons and in accordance with any school/service policy*
- *recognise that text messaging should only be used as part of an agreed protocol and when other forms of communication are not possible*

not use internet or web-based communication channels to send personal messages to a child/young person

13. Social Contact

This means that adults should:

- *have no secret social contact with pupils or their parents*
- *consider the appropriateness of the social contact according to their role and nature of their work*
- *always approve any planned social contact with children or parents with senior colleagues,*
- *advise senior management of any social contact they have with a child or a parent with whom they work, which may give rise to concern*
- *report and record any situation, which may place a child at risk or which may compromise the school/service or their own professional standing*
- *be aware that the sending of personal communications such as birthday or faith cards should always be recorded and/or discussed with line manager.*
- *understand that some communications may be called into question and need to be justified.*

14. Sexual Contact

This means that adults should not:

- *have sexual relationships with pupils*
- *have 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*
- *make sexual remarks to, or about, a child/young person*
- *discuss their own sexual relationships with or in the presence of pupils*

This means that adults should:

- *ensure that their relationships with pupils clearly take place within the boundaries of a respectful professional relationship*
- *take care that their language or conduct does not give rise to comment or speculation. Attitudes, demeanour and language all require care and thought, particularly when members of staff are dealing with adolescent boys and girls.*

15. Physical Contact

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 report and explain actions and accept that all physical contact be open to scrutiny*
- *not indulge in horseplay*
- *always encourage children, where possible, to undertake self-care tasks independently*
- *work within Health and Safety regulations*
- *be aware of cultural or religious views about touching and always be sensitive to issues of gender*
- *understand that physical contact in some circumstances can be easily misinterpreted*

This means that schools/services should:

- *ensure they have a system in place for recording incidents and the means by which information about incidents and outcomes can be easily accessed by senior management*
- *make adults aware of relevant professional or school/service guidance in respect of physical contact with children and meeting medical needs of pupils where appropriate*
- *be explicit about what physical contact is appropriate for adults working in their setting*
- *provide staff, on a "need to know" basis, with relevant information about vulnerable pupils in their care*

make staff aware of most recent government guidance in respect of physical contact with pupils⁴ and meeting medical needs of children and young people in school.

16. Other Activities that require Physical Contact

. This means that adults should:

- *treat children with dignity and respect and avoid contact with intimate parts of the body*
 - *always explain to a child the reason why contact is necessary and what form that contact will take*
 - *seek consent of parents where a child or young person is unable to do so because of a disability.*
 - *consider alternatives, where it is anticipated that a pupil might misinterpret any such contact,*
 - *be familiar with and follow recommended guidance and protocols*
 - *conduct activities where they can be seen by others*
 - *be aware of gender, cultural or religious issues that may need to be considered prior to initiating*
-

physical contact

This means that schools/services should:

- *have up to date guidance and protocols on appropriate physical contact in place that promote safe practice and include clear expectations of behaviour and conduct.*
- *ensure that staff are made aware of this guidance and that safe practice is continually promoted through supervision and training.*

17. Behaviour Management

. This means that adults should:

- *not use force as a form of punishment*
- *try to defuse situations before they escalate*
- *inform parents of any behaviour management techniques used*
- *adhere to the school/service's behaviour management policy*
- *be mindful of factors which may impact upon a child or young person's behaviour e.g. bullying, abuse and where necessary take appropriate action*

This means that schools/services should:

- *have in place appropriate behaviour management policies*
- *where appropriate, develop positive handling plans in respect of an individual child or young person.*

18. Use of Control and Physical Intervention

This means that adults should:

- *always seek to defuse situations*
- *always use minimum force for the shortest period necessary*
- *record and report as soon as possible after the event any incident where physical intervention has been used.*

This means that schools/services should:

- *ensure that an effective recording system is in place which allows for incidents to be tracked and monitored*
- *ensure adults are familiar with the above*
- *ensure that staff are appropriately trained*

19. Children and Young People in Distress

.This means the adult should:

- *consider the way in which they offer comfort and reassurance to a distressed child and do it in an age-appropriate way*
- *be circumspect in offering reassurance in one to one situations, but always record such actions in these circumstances*
- *follow professional guidance or code of practice*
- *never touch a child in a way which may be considered indecent*
- *record and report situations which may give rise to concern from either party*
not assume that all children seek physical comfort if they are distressed

20. Intimate Care

This means that adults should:

- *adhere to the school/service's intimate care guidelines or code of practice*
- *make other staff aware of the task being undertaken*
- *explain to the child what is happening*
- *consult with senior managers and parents/carers 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*
- *ensure that any changes to the agreed care plan are discussed, agreed and recorded.*

21. Personal Care

This means that adults should:

- *avoid any physical contact when children are in a state of undress*
- *avoid any visually intrusive behaviour*
- *where there are changing rooms announce their intention of entering*

This means that adults should not:

- *change in the same place as children*
- *shower or bathe with children*

assist with any personal care task which a child or young person can undertake by themselves

22. First Aid and Administration of Medication

This means that schools/services should:

- *ensure staff understand the extent and limitations of their role in applying basic care and hygiene tasks for minor abrasions and understand where an injury requires more experienced intervention*
- *ensure there are trained and named individuals to undertake first aid responsibilities*
- *ensure training is regularly monitored and updated*
- *always ensure that arrangements are in place to obtain parental consent for the administration of first aid or medication*

This means that adults should:

- *adhere to the school/service's policy for administering first aid or medication*
- *comply with the necessary reporting requirements*
- *make other adults aware of the task being undertaken*
- *explain to the child what is happening.*
- *always act and be seen to act in the child's best interests*
- *report and record any administration of first aid or medication*
- *have regard to any health plan which is in place*
- *always ensure that an appropriate health/risk assessment is undertaken prior to undertaking certain activities*

23. One to One Situations

This means that adults should:

- *ensure that when lone working is an integral part of their role, full and appropriate risk assessments have been conducted and agreed.*
- *avoid meetings with a child or young person in remote, secluded areas,*
- *always inform other colleagues and/or parents/carers about the contact(s) 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*
- *carefully consider the needs and circumstances of the child/children when in one to one situations*

24. Home Visits

These means that adults should:

agree the purpose for any home visit with senior management, unless this is an acknowledged and integral part of their role e.g. home tutors

- *adhere to agreed risk management strategies*
- *always make detailed records including times of arrival and departure and work undertaken*
- *ensure any behaviour or situation which gives rise to concern is discussed with their manager and, where appropriate action is taken*
- *never make a home visit outside agreed working arrangements*

This means that employers should:

- *ensure that they have home visit and lone-working policies of which all adults are made aware. These should include arrangements for risk assessment and management*
- *ensure that all visits are justified and recorded*
- *ensure that adults are not exposed to unacceptable risk*

ensure that adults have access to a mobile telephone and an emergency contact person

25. Transporting Pupils

This means that adults should:

- *ensure they are fit to drive and free from any drugs, alcohol or medicine which is likely to impair judgement and/ or ability to drive*
- *be aware that the safety and welfare of the child is their responsibility until they are safely passed over to a parent/carer*
- *ensure that their behaviour is appropriate at all times*
- *ensure that there are proper arrangements in place to ensure vehicle, passenger and driver safety. This includes having proper and appropriate insurance for the type of vehicle being driven*

26. Educational Visits and After-School Activities

This means that adults should:

- *always have another adult present in out of workplace activities, unless otherwise agreed with a senior manager*
- *undertake risk assessments in line with their school/service's policy where applicable*
- *have parental consent to the activity*
- *ensure that their behaviour remains professional at all times*
- *never share beds with a child/pupils.*

not share bedrooms unless it involves a dormitory situation and the arrangements have been previously discussed with senior manager, parents and pupils

27. Photography and Videos

This means that adults should:

- *be clear about the purpose of the activity and about what will happen to the images when the activity is concluded*
- *be able to justify images of children in their possession*
- *avoid making images in one to one situations or which show a single child with no surrounding*

context

- *ensure the child/young person understands why the images are being taken and has agreed to the activity and that they are appropriately dressed.*
- *only use equipment provided or authorised by the school*
- *report any concerns about any inappropriate or intrusive photographs found*
- *always ensure they have parental permission to take and/or display photographs*

This means that adults should not:

- *display or distribute images of children unless they have consent to do so from parents/carers*
 - *use images which may cause distress*
 - *use mobile telephones or any other similar devices to take images of children*
- take images 'in secret', or taking images in situations that may be construed as being secretive.*

28. Access to Inappropriate Images and Internet Usage

This means that schools/services should

- *have clear e-safety policies in place about access to and use of the internet*
- *make guidance available to both adults and pupils about appropriate usage.*

This means that adults should:

- *ensure that children are not exposed to unsuitable material on the internet*
- *ensure that any films or material shown to pupils are age appropriate*

29. Overnight Supervision and Examinations

This means that:

- *a full health and safety risk assessment should have been undertaken*
- *all members of the household should have the appropriate checks made.*
- *all arrangements should be made in partnership and agreement with the student and parents/carers*
- *arrangements involving one to one supervision should be avoided wherever possible.*
- *staff should have regard to any guidance that exists*
- *as much choice, flexibility and contact with 'the outside world', should be incorporated into any arrangement so far as is consistent with appropriate supervision*
- *whenever possible, independent oversight of arrangements should be made*
- *any situation which gives rise to complaint, disagreement or misunderstanding should be reported*
- *LEAs and schools should ensure that all arrangements reflect a duty of care towards pupils and staff*

30. Curriculum

This means that adults should:

- *have clear written lesson plans*
- *take care when encouraging pupils to use self expression, not to overstep personal and professional boundaries*
- *be able to justify all curriculum materials and relate these to clearly identifiable lessons plans.*

This means that adults should not:

enter into or encourage inappropriate discussions about sexual activity or any behaviours which may offend or harm others

31. Whistle blowing

This means that schools/services should:

- *ensure they have appropriate whistle-blowing policies in place*
- *ensure that they have clear procedures for dealing with allegations against staff which are in line with their Local Safeguarding Children Board's procedures.*

This means that adults should:

report any behaviour by colleagues that raises concern regardless of source

32. Sharing Concerns and Recording Incidents

This means that adults:

- *should be familiar with their school/service's system for recording concerns*
- *should take responsibility for recording any incident, and passing on that information where they have concerns about any matter pertaining to the welfare of an individual in the workplace*

This means that schools/services:

- *should have an effective, transparent and accessible system for recording and managing concerns raised by any individual in the workplace*

Date of Policy January 2016

Date of Policy Review January 2017

Signed.....Head Teacher

Signed.....Safeguarding Governor