



WOODCOTE HOUSE SCHOOL

SEPTEMBER 2022

STAFF BEHAVIOUR POLICY

Staff need to ensure that their behaviour does not inadvertently lay them open to allegations of abuse. They need to treat all pupils with respect and try, as far as possible, not to be alone with a child or young person. Where this is not possible, for example, in an instrumental music lesson, or sports coaching lesson, it is good practice to ensure that others are within earshot. Where possible, a gap or barrier should be maintained between teacher and child at all times. Any physical contact should be the minimum required for care, instruction or restraint. Staff should avoid taking one pupil on his/her own in a car.

Access to dormitories is restricted and only authorised teaching and pastoral staff should go into dormitories in the normal conduct of their duties. No guests or visitors (either adult or child) are allowed to stay in Boarding Houses during term time.

Communication with Pupils including the use of social media

Staff should not give their personal mobile phone numbers or email addresses to pupils, nor should they communicate with them by text message or personal email. If they need to speak to a pupil by telephone, they should use one of the school's telephones and email using the school system. Staff should be aware that it is not appropriate to use social media to communicate with pupils. Staff are reminded that it is a criminal offence for a person aged 18 or over to have a sexual relationship with a child under 18 where that person is in a position of trust in respect of that child, even if the relationship is consensual.

Physical contact with pupils

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. Staff should, therefore, use their professional judgement at all times. Staff should not have unnecessary physical contact with pupils and should be alert to the fact that minor forms of friendly physical contact can be misconstrued by pupils or onlookers.

A member of staff can never take the place of a parent in providing physical comfort and should be cautious of any demonstration of affection.

Physical contact should never be secretive, or of 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, the DSL informed and, if appropriate, a copy placed on the pupil's file.

Physical Restraint

Any physical restraint is only permissible when a child is in imminent danger of inflicting an injury on himself/herself or on another, and then only as a last resort when all efforts to diffuse the situation have failed. Another member of staff should, if possible, be present to act as a witness. All incidents of the use of physical restraint should be recorded in writing and reported immediately to the DSL/Head who will decide what to do next.

Physical education and other activities requiring physical contact

Where exercises or procedures need to be demonstrated, extreme caution should be used if the demonstration involves contact with pupils and, wherever possible, contact should be avoided. It is acknowledged that some staff, for example, those who teach PE and games, or who offer music tuition, will, on occasions, have to initiate physical contact with pupils in order to support a pupil so they can perform a task safely, to demonstrate the use of a particular piece of equipment/instrument or assist them with an exercise. This should be done with the pupil's agreement.

Contact under these circumstances should be for the minimum time necessary to complete the activity and take place in an open environment. Staff should remain sensitive to any discomfort expressed verbally or non-verbally by the child.

Electronic communication with pupils

Please see the E-Safety Policy and the Social Media Policy for staff's obligations in relation to electronic communications with pupils. Staff will undertake regular training on the internet and safety online.

Transporting pupils

It is inadvisable for a teacher to give a lift in a car to a pupil alone. 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. If there are exceptional circumstances that make unaccompanied transportation of pupils unavoidable, the journey should be made known to a senior member of staff.

Confidentiality

Staff members should never give absolute guarantees of confidentiality to pupils or adults wishing to tell them about something serious. They should guarantee only that they will pass on information to the minimum number of people who must be told in order to ensure that the proper action is taken to sort out the problem and that they will not tell anyone who does not have a clear need to

know. They will also take whatever steps they can to protect the informing pupil or adult from any retaliation or unnecessary stress that might be feared after a disclosure has been made.

ACTION IF A PUPIL IS MISSING

N.B Please refer also to the school's guidance on missing child policy and procedures when a child is not collected on time

During the working day:

- first check with the pupil's friends
- check the medical centre
- check with reception who will check the signing out/in book and if necessary inform the senior member of staff on duty who will then follow up this information.

If a pupil is missing at bedtime or in the early hours:

- first check with the pupil's friends
- do a thorough search of the boarding area and inform the medical centre
- consult the senior member of boarding staff on duty in School (see duty rota)
- check exeat/holiday forms or any other information before contacting the senior member of staff on duty who will then deal with the matter if there is not a suitable explanation.

A record is kept by the school of any instances in which a pupil is missing from school without satisfactory permission and documentation, including the action taken and the pupil's explanation.

EQUAL TREATMENT

We are committed to equal treatment for all pupils regardless of sex, sexuality, race, caste, disability, religion or belief. We keep a record of discriminatory incidents.

We aim to create a friendly, caring and perceptive environment in which every individual is valued. We endeavour to contribute positively towards the growing autonomy, self-esteem and safety of each pupil. Our staff undertake regular consultation activities with our pupils e.g. through participation in anti-bullying week and speaking to children about their experiences at lunchtime and tutor groups.

BULLYING

Bullying, harassment and victimisation and discrimination will not be tolerated. We treat all our pupils, staff, and their parents fairly and with consideration and we expect them to reciprocate towards each other, the staff and the school. Any kind of bullying including cyber bullying is unacceptable and the school keeps a record of any incidents. Please see our school policy on anti-bullying for further details.

COMPLAINTS

Copies of the school's complaints procedure can be sent to any parent on request. Any complaint arising from the implementation of this policy will be considered under the school's complaints procedure.

WHISTLEBLOWING

The School wishes to foster a culture of openness and safety and the school's Whistleblowing Procedure reflects this. Should any member of staff have any concerns about the behaviour of another member of staff towards a pupil, he or she should report it at once to the Head (or to the Proprietor where the concern relates to the Head. Any concern will be thoroughly investigated under the school's whistle-blowing procedures. Such reporting will be without prejudice to the member of staff's position in the school. Where there are allegations of criminal activity, the LADO will always be informed, and advice taken, before the school undertakes any investigation of its own. Wherever possible, and subject to the rights of the pupil, the member of staff will be informed of the outcome of the investigation. No one who reports a genuine concern in good faith needs to fear retribution. Under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 the member of staff may be entitled to raise a concern directly with an external body where the circumstances justify it.

DAILY CONDUCT REQUIREMENTS FOR STAFF

Attendance and Timekeeping

Should a staff member need to be absent or expect to be late for any reason, he/she should ask the Head in advance when possible. If this is not possible, he/she is asked to contact the Head at the earliest opportunity.

Alcohol and Illegal Drugs

Consumption of alcohol or illegal drugs is not permitted on site save where, in the case of alcohol, at a school function or otherwise agreed when modest amounts of alcohol may be consumed. Employees' conduct and performance must not be adversely impacted by alcohol or drugs when undertaking their duties. Staff that reside on site may consume modest quantities of alcohol in private accommodation when they are not on duty.

Security

Staff must not remove any school documents from the site nor take any photographs without due permission. The school reserves the right to search the outer clothing, bags, lockers and vehicles etc. of staff members whilst on site. The staff member may have a colleague in attendance on such (rare) occasions.

Personal Appearance

The school regularly receives visits from parents, potential parents and others, and naturally wishes to convey an impression of efficiency and organisation. Therefore, whilst not wishing to impose unreasonable obligations on staff they are, nonetheless, required to look smart in appearance.

Mobility and Flexibility

Due to the demands and nature of the school, staff should be prepared to transfer upon request within departments either temporarily or permanently, to undertake work of a different nature, providing it is reasonable and safe to do so and the staff member is adequately trained.

Use of Mobile Phones and Cameras

In order to facilitate ease and speed of communication among staff, a school Whatsapp group exists (for important information only.) All Staff delete the contents of this group at close of play each day. For this reason, staff are allowed their mobile phones on site. These phones should be on silent during lessons and no staff member should conduct personal business on their phones whilst in the company of the children.

All members of staff are deemed integral to the marketing of the school, particularly as most take part in a number of areas of school life (academic/pastoral/sport/drama/music.) Staff are permitted to use camera phones to take photos deemed appropriate for marketing purposes only. Events where photos can be taken include: Sports matches, Concerts, plays, hobbies and significant school events. Staff are required to delete the photos once they have been used in a marketing capacity. The DSL checks staff phones regularly to ensure compliance.

September 2022