

STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT

CONTENTS

MONITORING AND REVIEW	3
PURPOSE AND APPLICATION	3
Purpose:	3
WIDER REFERENCES	4
Your duty:	4
Application:	4
GUIDANCE ON STAFF/STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS	5
Behaviour giving particular cause for concern:	5
Procedure to be followed in these cases	6
General guidance:	6
Record keeping	6
GENERAL CONDUCT	6
General conduct and behaviour:	6
School property:	6
Use of premises	6
Good order and discipline:	6
Curriculum:	6
One-to-one meetings:	7
Pre-arranged meetings:	7
Home visits	7
Language	7
Dealing with "crushes":	8
Sexual Conduct:	8
ALLEGATIONS THAT DO NOT MEET THE HARM THRESHOLD (Low level concerns).....	8
Procedure	9
THE USE OF FORCE OR PHYSICAL RESTRAINT	10
Physical restraint:	10
Application of code of physical restraint:	10
Before intervening:	10
Inform senior staff:	10
Action taken in self-defence or in an emergency:	10
Using reasonable force:	10

PHYSICAL CONTACT IN OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES	11
When physical contact may be appropriate	11
Guidance on using physical contact:	11
Report concerns:	11
Offering comfort to distressed Student s:.....	11
Administering First Aid:.....	11
Regular physical contact:	12
Student s' entitlement to privacy:.....	12
Intimate Care.....	12
Checks on Student s in changing areas or toilet facilities should only be carried out by female staff in regulated activity. They should announce their intention of entering and only remain in the room when the needs of the student require this.	12
See also EYFS policy – Personal Care.	12
Where a child has been abused:.....	12
CODE OF CONDUCT FOR CONTACT OUTSIDE SCHOOL.....	12
Contact outside school:.....	12
Social contact:	13
Friendships with parents and Student s:.....	13
Arranging social contact as part of scheme or care programme:.....	13
Scope of application of code on contact outside school:	13
After school activities:.....	13
COMMUNICATION WITH STUDENT S AND PARENTS	13
Communicating with children and parents:.....	13
Application:	13
CODE OF CONDUCT FOR PHOTOGRAPHS AND VIDEOS.....	14
Permission required:.....	14
Be sensitive to any Student who appears to be uncomfortable and only take images where the Student is happy for you to do so.....	14
Guidance where permission obtained.....	14
Appropriate material	14
CONFIDENTIALITY AND DATA PROTECTION	15
Treatment of Student information	15
Consent required:.....	15
Disclosing confidential information:	15
Duty to disclose confidential information:.....	15

GIFTS AND REWARDS.....	15
If a gift is received:	15
Giving gifts and rewards:	15
Allocation of gifts and rewards:	15
REPORTING AND CRIMINAL OFFENCES	15
Whistleblowing	15
Duty of disclosure:	16
EXAMPLES OF CRIMINAL OFFENCES:	16
CONSEQUENCES OF BREACHING THIS POLICY.....	16
The school's position:	16

MONITORING AND REVIEW

Staff Responsible	Deputy Head
Reviewed by	SLT
Approved by	SLT
Frequency of Review	Annually
Date of Last Review	April 2026
Date of Next Review	April 2027

The School refers to all staff and students in St Mary's School, which includes the Early Years/Foundations Stage (EYFS), the Preparatory Department (Years 1-6), Senior House (Years 7-11) and the Sixth Form (Years 12-13).

The term 'parent' refers to those who have parental responsibility for a child.

PURPOSE AND APPLICATION

Purpose: Relationships with fellow staff, employees, governors, contractors, visitors, students and their parents or guardians should be reasonable and mutually respectful at all times. This code has been formulated in order to maintain this balance.

The purpose of the code is to:

- confirm and reinforce the professional responsibilities of staff (both teaching and non-teaching).
- clarify the legal position in relation to sensitive aspects of staff/student relationships.
- set out the expectations of standards to be maintained within the school.
- ensure full compliance with the guidance laid out in the document Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2025).

All staff are required to read the Staff Code of Conduct annually, and this is highlighted in New Staff Induction. This should enable an open and transparent culture, enable the early identification of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour, minimise the risk of abuse, ensure that adults

working in schools are clear about and act within professional boundaries in accordance with the values and ethos of the school, and protect those working in or on behalf of the school from potential false allegations or misunderstandings.

The Staff Code of Conduct ensures that 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. Knowledge of this and the procedures if a low-level concern is raised:

- empowers staff to share any low-level safeguarding concerns.
- addresses unprofessional behaviour and supports the individual to correct it at an early stage.
- provides a responsive, sensitive and proportionate handling of such concerns when they are raised.
- helps to identify any weakness in the school or college's safeguarding system.
- Creates an environment where staff are encouraged and feel confident to self-refer, where, for example, they have found themselves in a situation which could be misinterpreted, might appear compromising to others, and/or on reflection they believe they have behaved in such a way that they consider falls below the expected professional standards.

This document should be read in conjunction with the School's Safeguarding Policy, Policy on the Use of Physical Restraint, Online Safety Policy, Mobile Devices Policy and the Acceptable Use Policy.

WIDER REFERENCES

- Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools Guidance for schools in England April 2026
- [Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings February 2022](#)

References made to 'child' and 'children' refer to children and young people under the age of 18 years. However, the principles of the document apply to professional behaviours towards all Students, including those over the age of 18 years. 'Child' should therefore be read to mean any Student at the education establishment.

Your duty: It is the contractual duty of every member of staff to observe the rules and obligations in this code. You should also follow the guidance unless there is a good reason not to follow it in a particular case. If you have concerns or difficulties (either within school or outside of work) that may affect your relationship with or behaviour towards a Student, or which may have implications for the safeguarding of children, you should discuss with your line manager/Head so that appropriate support can be provided, and/or action taken, so that you feel comfortable and empowered to fulfil your role without fear of misinterpretation or allegation.

Application: Allegations of unprofessional conduct or improper contact or words can arise at any time. Professionalism and vigilance are required so as to ensure the safety of children in our care, and to reduce the risk of an allegation of impropriety against a member of staff. This guidance applies to all adults working in this school, and not just teachers. Forming inappropriate relationships with children or young people who are Students or students at another school may also be regarded as gross misconduct. Such behaviour tends to bring the school into disrepute and gives rise to concern that the staff involved cannot be trusted to maintain professional boundaries with students at the school.

Underpinning principles

- The welfare of the child is paramount.

- Staff should understand their responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of students.
- Trusted adults are expected to take reasonable steps to ensure their safety and well-being.
- 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.
- Staff should work, and be seen to work, in an open and transparent way including self-reporting if their conduct or behaviour falls short of these guiding principles.
- Staff should acknowledge that deliberately invented/malicious allegations are extremely rare and that all concerns should be reported and recorded.
- Staff should feel comfortable and be encouraged to self-refer when they may have acted in a way that could give rise to concern and know that the school will support them in accordance with the low-level concerns procedure to ensure that both the staff member and any students are supported appropriately, and the matter resolved. In doing so, all staff are working to provide a community where all can feel safe.
- Staff should apply the same professional standards regardless of culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and sexual orientation.
- 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.
- 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 & Barring Service (DBS) from working in regulated activity, or for acts of serious misconduct prohibition from teaching by the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA).
- Staff and managers should continually monitor and review practice to ensure this guidance is followed.
- Staff should be aware of and understand the School's Safeguarding Policy, arrangements for managing allegations against staff including low-level concerns, whistleblowing procedures and the procedures of the relevant Multi-agency Partnership (MAP).

These principles apply to the online world as well as the classroom

GUIDANCE ON STAFF/STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS

Behaviour giving particular cause for concern: You should take particular care when dealing with a student who:

- appears to be emotionally distressed, or generally vulnerable and/or who is seeking expressions of affection.
- appears to hold a grudge against you.
- acts in a sexually provocative way, or who is inclined to make exaggerated claims about themselves and others, or to fantasise, or one whose manner with adults is over-familiar.
- may have reason to make up an allegation to cover the fact that she has not worked hard enough for public examinations.

Procedure to be followed in these cases: Some of these behaviours may be indications that a child has been, or is currently being, abused and should therefore be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead under the School's Child Protection Procedures.

General guidance: You should be aware of the general guidance that will apply in all cases. In particular you:

- need to exercise professional judgment but always act within the spirit of these guidelines. If you are involved in a situation where no specific guidance exists, you should discuss the circumstances with a senior colleague. A written record should be kept that includes justification for any action taken.
- must seek guidance from a senior colleague if you are in any doubt about appropriate conduct.

Record keeping: Comprehensive records are essential. Any incident involving children that could give cause for concern, whether contemplated in these guidelines or not should be recorded with justifications for any action taken. In addition, any incident should be promptly reported to a senior colleague.

Staff should be aware of the need to challenge inappropriate behaviour between peers or between staff and students. Downplaying certain behaviours as 'just banter' can lead to an unsafe environment and a culture that normalises inappropriate behaviour. (Further detail can be found in the school's Safeguarding Policy).

GENERAL CONDUCT

General conduct and behaviour: You should observe the school's policy on Smoking, Alcohol and Drugs contained in the Employment Manual.

School property: You must take proper care when using school property and you must not use school property for any unauthorised use or for private gain.

Use of premises: You must not carry out on school premises any work or activity other than pursuant to your terms and conditions of employment without the prior permission of the Head.

Good order and discipline: Teaching staff and other staff in charge or control of Students must maintain good order and discipline at all times when Students are present on school premises and whenever students are engaged in authorised school activities, whether on school premises or elsewhere.

Curriculum: Many areas of the curriculum can raise subject matter which is sexually explicit or of a political or sensitive nature. Care must be taken to ensure that resource materials and clearly relate to the learning outcomes. You should:

- Ensure that all lessons are planned in advance and content is appropriate to the child's age and cognitive development.
- Take care when encouraging Students to use self-expression not to overstep the personal and professional boundaries.
- Be able to justify all curriculum materials and relate these clearly to identifiable lessons plans/schemes of work.
- Not enter into or encourage inappropriate discussions which may offend or harm others.
- Proactively support fundamental British Values and protected characteristics.

- Not express any prejudicial views, or attempt to influence or impose their personal values, attitudes or beliefs on students.

One-to-one meetings: If you are teaching one Student, or conducting a one-to-one meeting or teaching session with a student (including virtual meetings), you should take particular care in the following ways:

- use a room that has sufficient windows onto a corridor so the occupants can be seen, or keep the door open, or inform a colleague that the lesson/meeting is taking place.
- avoid the use of engaged or other equivalent signs.
- arrange the meeting during normal school hours when there are plenty of other people about.
- do not continue the meeting for any longer than is necessary to achieve its purposes.
- avoid sitting or standing in close proximity to the Student, except as necessary to check work
- avoid idle discussion.
- avoid all unnecessary physical contact and apologise straight away if there is accidental physical contact.
- avoid any conduct that could be taken as a sexual advance.
- always report any situation where a Student becomes distressed or angry.
- report any incident that causes you concern to the Designated Safeguarding Lead under the School's Child Protection Procedures, and record in writing on CPOMS.
- always let a member of SLT know when and where you are meeting with a Student on site after school.
- Ensure prior to any online learning, there are clear expectations of behaviour and conduct of all parties that have been agreed in advance. Staff should adhere to the Remote Learning Policy.

Pre-arranged meetings: pre-arranged meetings with students outside school should not be permitted unless approval is obtained from their parents and a senior colleague. If you are holding such a meeting, you should inform colleagues before the meeting.

Home visits: In some circumstances home visits are necessary. You should:

- discuss the purpose of any visit with senior colleagues.
- ensure that home visits are only conducted with a minimum of two members of staff.
- the risks should be assessed in advance, and the Head notified, taking into account the known factors regarding the Student, parents/carers and any others living in the household. Considerations should be given to any circumstances which might render the staff member becoming vulnerable to an allegation being made e.g. hostility, child protection concerns, complaints or grievances. If no information is available, the visit should not be made alone.
- not visit unannounced if this can be avoided.
- never enter the home without the parent or carer's consent or when the parent is absent, except in an emergency.
- leave the door open where you will be alone with students, and ensure that children are seen in open and observable spaces e.g., living room.
- keep records detailing times of arrival and departure, and work undertaken.
- discuss with your manager anything that gives cause for concern and refer to other agencies if felt appropriate.
- have a mobile phone and an emergency contact.

Language: You should use appropriate language at all times. You should:

- avoid any form of aggressive contact such as holding, pushing, pulling or hitting, which could amount to a criminal assault, or threatening words.

- avoid any words or actions that are over-familiar.
- not swear, blaspheme or use any sort of offensive language in front of students.
- avoid the use of sarcasm or derogatory words, or humiliating treatment when punishing or disciplining students and avoid making unprofessional personal comments about anyone.

Dealing with "crushes": Crushes, fixations or infatuations are part of normal adolescent development. However, they need sensitive handling to avoid allegations of exploitation. If you suspect that a Student has a "crush" on you or on another colleague, you should bring it to the attention of senior colleagues at the earliest opportunity. In this way appropriate early intervention can be taken which can prevent escalation and avoid hurt, embarrassment or distress for those concerned.

Sexual Conduct: Any sexual behaviour by a member of staff with or towards a student is unacceptable. It is an offence for any member of staff to engage in sexual activity with any student where that person is in a position of trust in respect of that child and could be a matter for criminal and/or disciplinary procedures. You should:

- avoid words or expressions that have any unnecessary sexual content or innuendo; avoid displays of affection either personally or in writing (e.g. messages in birthday cards, text messages, emails etc).
- avoid any form of touch or comment which is or may be considered to be indecent.
- Not make sexual remarks to or about a student.
- Not discuss sexual matters with or in the presence of students other than within agreed curriculum content or part of their recognised job role.
- Not have any form of sexual contact with a student from the school.

Dress and Appearance

Staff should wear clothing which:

- promotes a positive and professional image.
- is appropriate to their role.
- is not likely to be viewed as offensive, revealing or 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.
- is compliant with professional standards.
- in online engagement, is similar to the clothing they would wear on a normal school day.

Allegations that do not Meet the Harms Threshold (LOW-LEVEL CONCERNS)

If the allegation is considered 'low level' and does not meet the thresholds set out in KCSIE 2025, Part 4 section 1 para 362, the Head will take appropriate action and/or follow disciplinary procedures to address the behaviour.

A low-level concern is 'any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' – that an adult working in or on behalf of the school or college may have acted in a way that:

- is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate contact outside of work, and
- does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider

a referral to the LADO.

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

- being over 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.
- Humiliating children.

Low level concerns should be reported directly to the Head, via email or in person, regardless of whether the person concerned is permanent staff, temporary, volunteer or a contractor. Staff should feel confident to self-refer. If the member of staff is from a supply agency or contractor the concern should be recorded and their employer should be notified.

Procedure

1. If there is any doubt about whether the information which has been shared meets the harms threshold, the Head will consult the LADO.
2. The Head will speak directly to the person who raised the concern, and then to any individuals involved and any witness.
3. The Head may involve the DSL as appropriate.
4. A decision will be made categorising the type of behaviour.
5. Meeting with the member of staff concerned to share the nature of the decision and any subsequent actions or training requirements.

The member of staff will be given support and/or training as appropriate. Employers of agency staff or contractors will be informed.

The headteacher should record all low-level concerns in writing. This should include:

- details of the concern.
- the context in which it arose.
- evidence collected by the DSL where the concern has been raised via a third party.
- the decision categorising the type of behaviour.
- action taken; the rationale for decisions and action taken.
- the name of the individual sharing the concerns (respecting any wish to remain anonymous as far as possible).

These records must be kept confidential and comply with GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018. They should be reviewed regularly so that any potential patterns concerning problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified. Also, to identify if the problematic behaviour moves from being a low-level concern to meeting the harms threshold, in which case the LADO will be informed. These records will be kept until at least the individual leaves employment.

Patterns of behaviour will also be monitored to see if there is a cultural issue within school that needs addressing. Extra training will be delivered as required, and improvements will be made to the staff code of conduct and safeguarding procedures as necessary and shared with all staff.

Low level concerns will not be included in references unless they relate to issues which would normally be included in a reference, for example, misconduct or poor performance. It follows that a low-level concern which relates exclusively to safeguarding (and not to misconduct or poor performance) will not be referred to in a reference. However, where a low-level concern (or group of concerns) has met the threshold for referral to the LADO and found to be substantiated, it will be referred to in a reference.

THE USE OF FORCE OR PHYSICAL RESTRAINT

(See also school policy on the use of physical restraint)

Physical restraint: All forms of corporal punishment are unlawful. However, by law, teaching staff, and other staff who are authorised by the Head to have control or charge of Students, may use such force or physical contact as is reasonable in the circumstances to prevent a student from doing, or continuing to do any of the following:

- committing a criminal offence.
- injuring themselves or others.
- causing damage to property, including their own.
- engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to good order and discipline at the school or among any of its students, whether that behaviour occurs in a classroom or elsewhere.

Application of code of physical restraint: This applies when a teacher, or other authorised person, is on school premises and when he or she is in control or charge of the student elsewhere, for example on a field trip or other authorised out of school activity. It only applies where no other form of control is available and where it is necessary to intervene.

Before intervening: Before intervening physically you should, wherever practicable, tell the student to stop and what will happen if he or she does not. You should continue attempting to communicate with the student throughout the incident and should make it clear that physical contact or restraint will stop as soon as it ceases to be necessary. You should always avoid touching or holding a student in a way that might be considered indecent. Nor should you act in a way that might reasonably be expected to cause injury.

Inform senior staff: You should inform the Head or another member of SLT immediately following an incident, except the most minor or trivial, where force has been used. This is to help prevent any misunderstanding or misrepresentation of the incident, and it will be helpful in the event of a complaint. You should provide a written report as soon as possible afterwards.

EYFS: In the event of physical restraint being applied to a Student in EYFS, their parents will be informed on the same day or as soon as reasonably practicable.

Action taken in self-defence or in an emergency: The law allows anyone to defend themselves against an attack provided they do not use more force than is necessary. Similarly, where a Student is at risk of immediate injury or on the point of inflicting injury on someone else, any member of staff (whether authorised or not) would be entitled to intervene.

Using reasonable force: There is no legal definition of "reasonable force". It will always depend on the circumstances. Note that:

- physical force could not be justified to prevent a Student from committing a trivial misdemeanour.
- any force should always be the minimum needed to achieve the desired result.
- whether it is reasonable to use force and the degree of force that could be reasonably employed might also depend on the age, understanding and sex of the student.

Staff should:

- Not use force as a form of punishment.
- Try to diffuse situations before they escalate.
- Keep parents informed of any sanction or behaviour management techniques.
- Be mindful of and sensitive to any factors both inside and outside of school which may impact on a student's behaviour.
- Follow the school's behaviour policy.
- Behave as a role model.
- Avoid shouting at children other than as a warning in an emergency situation.

PHYSICAL CONTACT IN OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES

When physical contact may be appropriate: Physical contact with a Student may be necessary and beneficial in order to demonstrate a required action, or a correct technique in, for example, singing and other music lessons or during PE, sports and games.

Guidance on using physical contact: You should observe the following guidelines (where applicable):

- explain the intended action to the student.
- do not proceed with the action if the student appears to be apprehensive or reluctant, or if you have other concerns about the student's likely reaction.
- Be aware of cultural and religious views about touching and be sensitive to issues of gender.
- ensure that the door is open and if you are in any doubt, ask a colleague or another student to be present during the demonstration.

Report concerns: If you are at all concerned about any instance of physical contact, inform a senior colleague or the Head without delay, and make a written record.

Offering comfort to distressed Students: Touching may also be appropriate where a Student is in distress and needs comforting. You should use your own professional judgement when you feel a student needs this kind of support and should be aware of any special circumstances relating to the student. For example, a child who has been abused may find physical contact particularly difficult. You should always notify a senior colleague when comfort has been offered and should seek guidance if unsure whether it would be appropriate in a particular case.

Administering First Aid: When administering First Aid you should explain to the child what is happening and ensure that another adult is present or is aware of the action being taken. The medical team work to

their own code of practice. The treatment must meet the school's Health and Safety policy and Intimate care guidelines as detailed in the administration of medicine's policy and parents should be informed.

Regular physical contact: Generally, regular physical contact can only be justified where it is part of an agreed plan such as school policy, or as a result of a Special Educational Need or medical need

Students' entitlement to privacy: Children are entitled to privacy when changing or showering. However there still must be an appropriate level of supervision to ensure safety. You should:

- avoid physical contact or intrusive behaviour when children are undressed.
- announce yourself when entering changing rooms and avoid remaining unless required.
- not shower or change in the same place as children.

Intimate Care:

Students are encouraged to be as independent as possible and undertake as much of their own personal care as is possible and practicable. When assistance is required, this would normally be undertaken by one member of staff (unless the student's intimate care plan specifies the reason for other staff) but try to ensure there is another appropriate adult in the vicinity who is aware of the task to be undertaken and that, wherever possible, they are visible and audible. The intimate care should only be carried out by a person known to the child and is in regulated activity, and therefore all relevant DBS barred list checks have been completed. A record should be kept of all intimate and personal care tasks undertaken, including times and by whom. The member of staff should consult with a colleague if any variation from agreed care plans or procedures is necessary.

Checks on Students in changing areas or toilet facilities should only be carried out by female staff in regulated activity. They should announce their intention of entering and only remain in the room when the needs of the student require this.

See also EYFS policy – Personal Care.

Where a child has been abused: Where a child has previously been abused, staff should be informed on a 'need to know' basis and should be extra cautious when considering the necessity of physical contact.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR CONTACT OUTSIDE SCHOOL

Contact outside school: You should avoid unnecessary contact with students outside school. You:

- should not give students your home address, home phone number, personal mobile phone number or e-mail address or any other social media details (and ensure the caller ID is blocked if needing to use a personal mobile phone outside of school).
- Staff will not accept requests or engage in following students or allowing students to follow them on any social media platforms.
- should not send personal communications to children unless agreed by the Head.
- should not make arrangements to meet students, individually or in groups, outside school other than on school trips authorised by the Head.
- should avoid contacting Students at home unless this is strictly necessary, and you should keep a record of any such occasion.
- should not give a student lift in your own vehicle other than in exceptional circumstances and approved by the Head and Bursar in advance. A risk assessment is completed and approved, and the parents have given permission.

- should avoid inviting students (groups or individuals) to your home unless there is a good reason, and it has been approved by the Head. This prohibition also applies if you have on site accommodation.
- should ensure that Students do not see anything in your home that may cause embarrassment or that might become the subject of inappropriate gossip or rumour.
- only use internet-enabled personal devices in line with the schools AUP policy.
- only use channels of communications approved by the school.
- ensure that their use of technology could not bring the school into disrepute.
- not discuss or share data relating to children/parents/carers in staff social media groups.
- staff should adhere to the remote learning policy.
- personal email should not be used for school business with either students, parents or other staff.

For the above and other reasons, it is inappropriate for staff to give private tuition or other services such as babysitting to students in the school other than in the most exceptional circumstances and after discussion with the Head.

Social contact: You should be aware that where you meet children or parents socially, such contact could be misinterpreted as grooming. Any social contact that could give rise to concern should be reported to a senior colleague.

Friendships with parents and Students: Members of staff who are friends with parents of Students or who, for example, are voluntary workers in youth organisations attended by Students, will of course have contact with those Students outside school. However, members of staff should still respect the above advice wherever possible and should keep the Head informed of such relationships.

Arranging social contact as part of scheme or care programme: Where you are arranging planned social contact with parents or students, such as part of a reward scheme or pastoral care programme, you should still seek the approval of a senior colleague.

Scope of application of code on contact outside school: The same guidelines should be applied to after school clubs, school trips, and especially trips that involve an overnight stay away from the school. The principles of this guidance also apply to contact with children or young people who are Students at another school.

After school activities: When taking part in after school activities, you should:

- be accompanied by another adult unless otherwise agreed with a senior colleague.
- undertake a risk assessment.
- obtain parental consent.

COMMUNICATION WITH STUDENTS AND PARENTS

Communicating with children and parents: All communication with children or parents should conform to School policy and be limited to professional matters. Except in an emergency, communication should only be made using School property. If it is essential that a personal mobile phone is used the caller ID should be blocked. Communication should only be made from a school email address and using channels of communication approved by the school.

Staff members who are parents: All communications should be administered within the same professional framework using school policy for professional matters. If a staff member who is a parent would like information or consultation with their child's teacher, they should organise this through the correct

channels, requesting a formal meeting. Staff members who wish to meet or consult with the parent of a child in their class who is a member of the staff should adhere to the same expectations.

Application: These rules apply to any form of communication including new technologies such as mobile phones, web-cameras, and blogs.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR PHOTOGRAPHS AND VIDEOS

(Please see also the school's policy on the taking and storing of images and Mobile Device policy)

Permission required: You should seek permission from the Head before taking photographs or video camera footage of any Students in class, at any school events or on a trip. You should also seek permission before displaying these photographs. You must not take images of children using personal mobile phones. However, if a member of staff uses their own phone when out on a trip the photos or videos must be transferred to the school shared storage as soon as possible and by the following day at the latest. The original image must be double deleted from the member of staff's phone.

Be sensitive to any student who appears to be uncomfortable and only take images where the student is happy for you to do so.

The use of personal mobile phones in the EYFS is strictly prohibited. Where photographs are required, they must be taken on a school device e.g. EYFS iPad and stored in strict accordance with the school's policy on taking and storing of images. All mobile phones must be stored out of sight of the children.

Guidance where permission is obtained: Where permission has been obtained, the following should be considered:

- the purpose of the activity should be clear as should what will happen to the photos. You must be able to justify images in your possession.
- all images should be made available in order to determine acceptability.
- images should not be made during one-to-one situations.
- if an image is to be displayed in a place to which the public have access it should not display the student's name. Similarly, where a student is named (in a school prospectus, for example) the name should not be accompanied by a photograph.
- all images of children should be stored securely on the school's system and only accessed by those authorised to do so.
- Images should never be taken of a child in a state of undress or semi-undress.
- Images of injuries or bruising should never be taken even if requested by social care.
- Audio recordings should not be taken of a child's disclosure.

Appropriate material: You must ensure children are not exposed to inappropriate or indecent images. All material/videos/clips/films to be shown to children must be checked in advance that they are age appropriate and appropriate for the intended educational purpose.

Inappropriate material, such as pornography, should not be brought to work and you must not use school property to access such material. You should not allow unauthorised access to school equipment and should keep your computer passwords safe. If you discover material that is potentially illegal, you must isolate the equipment and contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead under the School's Child Protection Procedures immediately.

Use of mobile phones by students: If you wish the students to use their mobile phones for taking images/videos this must be discussed in advance with a member of SLT and for a clear curriculum purpose. The member of staff is responsible for notifying the office in advance, ensuring the phones are collected in

and returned to the office at the end of the lesson. The member of staff should confirm with SLT that this has been done. See mobile device policy.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND DATA PROTECTION

Treatment of Student information: You should respect the privacy of Students, parents and colleagues and should not pass information about, for example, addresses or telephone numbers to others, without checking first with the person concerned.

Consent required: Lists of students'/parents' names and addresses must not be used for any purpose without the consent of the Head. Information about Students, parents or colleagues should never be disclosed to telephone enquirers. You should ask the enquirer to put the request in writing so that it can be dealt with appropriately.

Disclosing confidential information: Confidential information should only be disclosed on a need-to-know basis. Where it is not necessary to disclose a child's identity the information should be disclosed anonymously. If you are unsure whether you should disclose information, you should seek advice from a senior colleague.

Duty to disclose confidential information: You may have to disclose information, for example where abuse is alleged or suspected. In such cases, there is a duty to pass on the information immediately, but only to the Designated Safeguarding Lead under the School's Child Protection Procedures. The storing of personal information must not breach the School's Data Protection Policy. Note: never give an undertaking of confidentiality to a student where child protection issues are involved (see separate Safeguarding Policy).

GIFTS AND REWARDS

If a gift is received: If you receive a gift, you should:

- declare the gift where there is a possibility it could be misconstrued, or in any event where the gift is of a value of more than £100. The Head may in her absolute discretion require you to decline the gift.
- decline outright gifts that could be seen as a bribe or that have created an expectation of preferential treatment. Although it is accepted for parents or children to make small gifts to show appreciation, you must not receive gifts on a regular basis or receive anything of significant value.

Giving gifts and rewards: Where you are thinking of giving a gift or reward:

- it should only be provided as part of an agreed reward system.
- in all cases except the above, the gift or reward should be of little value and should be distributed equally.
- selection processes should be fair and where possible should be agreed by more than one member of staff.

Allocation of gifts and rewards: Decisions regarding entitlement to benefits or privileges such as admission to school trips, activities or classroom tasks must avoid perceptions of bias or favouritism. The selection process must be based on transparent criteria.

REPORTING AND CRIMINAL OFFENCES

Whistleblowing: You should report any activities or behaviour of colleagues that give you cause for concern as detailed in the School's Whistleblowing policy.

Duty of disclosure: You are required immediately to notify the school if you are charged or convicted or any criminal offence, if you receive a police caution, reprimand or warning, or if there is a formal child protection investigation of you under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 as amended.

In addition to the above all staff who work directly with or are involved in the management of Early Years or are involved in any way with later years care (under 8's) before or after school are required to self-declare if they are disqualified by the Childcare act 2006 as amended by the 2018 regulations.

EXAMPLES OF CRIMINAL OFFENCES:

In addition to being gross misconduct, it is a criminal offence under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 for a person aged 18 or over who is in a position of trust in relation to another person under 18 to engage in sexual activity with that person. Sexual activity is defined broadly and does not have to include physical contact. The offence is punishable by up to six months' imprisonment and/or an unlimited fine. For the purposes of the Act, a teacher is in a position of trust in relation to Students at the school at which he or she is teaching. It should be noted, however, as explained above, that forming inappropriate relationships with children or young people who are Students or students at another school may also be regarded as gross misconduct. Such behaviour tends to bring the school into disrepute and gives rise to concern that the staff involved cannot be trusted to maintain professional boundaries with Students and students at the school.

The Sexual Offences Act 2003 also introduced the offence of "meeting a child following sexual grooming". This applies where an adult arranges to meet a child aged under 16 in any part of the world, if he/she has met or communicated with that child on at least two earlier occasions and intends to commit a sexual offence against that child. The law is clearly intended to apply where adults contact children through the internet. However, the prior meetings or communications need not have an explicitly sexual content.

Most sexual activity involving a person under the age of 16 (male or female) is an indecent assault which is both a criminal offence and a matter for which damages can be awarded. This is so, even when the younger person is alleged to have provoked or encouraged the activity.

The Education (Prohibition from Teaching or Working with Children) Regulations 2003 (SI 2003/1184) require that where an employee is dismissed for misconduct or as being unsuitable to work with children (or resigns to avoid such dismissal), he or she must be reported to the Secretary of State and may be barred or restricted from teaching or working with children.

Every complaint by a student must be taken seriously and investigated. It may be necessary to involve social services who may themselves involve the police if there are grounds for thinking that a criminal offence has been committed.

CONSEQUENCES OF BREACHING THIS POLICY

The school's position: It is in your interests to follow this policy so as to maintain standards of behaviour and your own professional reputation. A breach of this policy may be treated as misconduct and will render you liable to disciplinary action including in serious cases, dismissal.

In addition, St Mary's School staff accept in full the Teachers' Standards laid out in the government document <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teachers-standards>.