



## STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and the other policies mentioned within this document

**This policy is applicable to all adults who work for/at the School, including volunteers, visiting staff and governors**

### **Aims**

The aims of this Code of Conduct are to:

- ensure the safety, welfare and happiness of all members of the community, both children and adults;
- promote a caring environment;
- reinforce the School's core values and the behaviour that is consistent with them.

### **Role models**

The example set by the members of staff at GES sets the tone for the sort of community that we want to create and maintain. Professional standards of conduct, dress, punctuality, commitment and courtesy are expected at all times. Through our words and actions, and through the attitudes we adopt, we should aim to demonstrate care for each other and for every member of the community.

### **Core Values of the School**

The core values of the School are:

- Community
- Respect
- Opportunity
- Integrity
- Teamwork
- Courage

These core values are important to us. We ask all members of the community (pupils, parents, staff and governors) to adopt them and to try to behave in ways that reflect them. The school values are interpreted in a document that is appended to this Code, together with our mission, vision and aims.

### **Commitment**

Commitment, dedication and a conscientious approach are attributes that are highly valued at GES. The greater the commitment that members of staff show towards their work, the greater are the rewards in terms of fulfilment, enjoyment and achievement.

### **Attendance, punctuality and permitted leave**

High standards of attendance and punctuality are expected from all members of staff. Full-time teachers should be in school from 08:00 and early years/primary class teachers should be in their classrooms from 08:15. Teaching assistants should arrive in good time to help teachers to prepare for the day. Full-time members of staff are expected to be available until the end of the school day, whether or not they are teaching.

Attendance at a number of meetings, evening and occasional weekend events will be required and must be given priority. Members of staff will be given as much notice as possible of dates and times.

For permission to be away from school, all members of staff should write to the Head, giving as much notice as possible. In cases of personal or family crisis or tragedy, an appropriate amount of compassionate leave will be granted. Leave will also normally be granted in order to allow members of staff to attend very special occasions, such as close family weddings or funerals. Unless travel arrangements are long and complicated, this would normally be for one or two days. Leave may also be granted for other special occasions or events but this is at the discretion of the Head and will not normally be given more than once or twice per year.

### **Addressing children**

Staff should learn pupils' first names and use them as often as possible. Any list of names or report of an event should include a pupil's first name. Pupils should not be called by nicknames, as although the intentions may be good, the child may not want it, and parents or other children may construe it either as favouritism or the opposite. Pupils must never be referred to by a name that is undermining or hurtful, e.g. referring to their size or skin colour.

### **Addressing colleagues**

When addressing colleagues, foul language, discriminatory references about sex, sexual orientation, age, race, colour, physical ability and other protected characteristics are unacceptable. At all times members of staff are expected to be respectful and courteous to their colleagues.

### **Duty of care**

We all have a duty of care to the pupils. Members of staff are accountable for the way in which they exercise authority, manage risk, use resources and protect pupils from discrimination and avoidable harm. We all have a duty to keep young people safe and to protect them from sexual, physical and emotional harm. Children have a right to be safe and to be treated with respect and dignity. Adults are expected to take reasonable steps to ensure the safety and wellbeing of pupils. Refer also to the [Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy](#), [Equal Opportunities Policy](#), [Health & Safety Policy](#) and [First Aid Policy](#).

The duty of care is, in part, exercised through the development of respectful, caring and professional relationships between staff and pupils and through behaviour that demonstrates kindness, integrity, maturity and good judgement.

### **Trust**

Adults who work with children are in a position of trust. There is an inherent imbalance in the relationship between an adult and a child, which must never be abused for personal advantage.

### **Confidentiality**

Members of staff should not divulge information of a confidential nature. Comments made by staff in the staff room or in meetings should be regarded as confidential, as should minutes of meetings. However, child protection concerns always supersede confidentiality. Such concerns must be shared as soon as they arise with the Designated Safeguarding Lead or with one of the Deputy DSLs. Refer also to the [Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy](#).

### **Propriety and behaviour both in and out of school**

All members of staff have a responsibility to maintain public confidence in their ability to safeguard the welfare and best interests of the pupils. They should adopt high standards of personal conduct in order to maintain the confidence and respect of their peers, pupils and the public in general. An individual's behaviour, either in or out of the workplace, should not compromise her/his position, credibility or reputation within the work setting.

Consumption of alcohol is not permitted during the working day except in moderation at very occasional special occasions. During the working day and at all times when working with children, members of staff must ensure that their performance, efficiency and behaviour is never affected by alcohol or any other drug. A member of staff's inability or physical incapability to carry out his/her duties because of the adverse effect of drugs or alcohol could lead to summary dismissal.

Except in cases of emergency, members of staff should not use, or have audible, personal mobile devices during lessons, duties, assemblies or activities without special permission from a member of the SLT.

Members of staff must be aware of their obligation to inform the Head of any cautions or convictions that may arise subsequent to their commencing employment at the School.

### **Dress and appearance**

It is expected that members of staff dress decently, professionally and appropriately. When accompanying pupils on visits and trips, staff should wear what befits the nature of the trip. In certain circumstances, a member of staff who dresses or presents themselves inappropriately could be vulnerable to criticism or allegation.

### **Gifts, rewards and selection of pupils**

Staff need to take care that they do not accept any gift that might be construed as a bribe by others, or lead the giver to expect preferential treatment. There are occasions when children or parents wish to pass small tokens of appreciation to staff, for example at Christmas or as a thank-you, and this is acceptable. However, it is unacceptable to receive gifts on a regular basis or of any significant value.

Personal gifts should not be given to individual pupils as to do so could give rise to concerns about grooming or favouritism. Staff should exercise care when selecting pupils for school teams, other groups, productions, trips or specific tasks in order to avoid perceptions of favouritism or injustice. Similar care should be exercised whenever pupils are excluded from an activity. Methods of selection and exclusion should always be subject to clear criteria.

### **Infatuations**

A member of staff, who becomes aware that a pupil may be infatuated with him/herself, or with a colleague, should discuss this at the earliest opportunity with a member of the SLT so that appropriate action can be taken. In this way, steps can be taken to avoid hurt and distress for all

concerned.

### **Social contact**

Members of staff should not establish or seek to establish social contact with pupils for the purpose of securing a friendship or to pursue or strengthen a relationship. If a pupil or parent seeks to establish social contact, or if this occurs coincidentally, the member of staff should exercise her/his professional judgement in making a response and be aware that such social contact could be misconstrued as grooming.

**Communication with pupils (e-mail, text, telephone, social networking etc)** Refer also to the [Social Media Policy](#) and [eSafety Policy](#)

Adults should be circumspect in their communications with children so as to avoid any possible misinterpretation of their motives or any behaviour that could be construed as grooming. Members of staff should not give their personal contact details to pupils including e-mail, home or mobile telephone numbers unless the need to do so is agreed with a member of the SLT.

### **Sexual contact with young people**

Any sexual behaviour by a member of staff towards a child is both completely inappropriate and illegal. Members of staff must avoid doing anything, such as conferring special attention and favour upon a child, that might be construed as grooming. Members of staff should also avoid any form of communication with a child that could be interpreted as sexually suggestive or provocative, either in verbal comments, letters, notes, e-mail, phone calls, texts, social media, or through inappropriate physical contact.

### **Physical contact**

There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate and proper for members of staff to have physical contact with pupils, but it is crucial that they only do so in ways appropriate to their professional role. A 'no touch' approach is impractical for many staff and will in some circumstances be inappropriate. However, whenever physical contact is made with a pupil it must be in response to their needs at the time, of limited duration, and appropriate to their age and stage of development.

Physical contact that occurs regularly with an individual child or young person is likely to raise questions unless the justification for this is part of a formally agreed plan (for example in relation to pupils with physical disabilities or as an aid to teaching dance, drama, sport or music etc).

Some members of staff, for example, those who teach PE and games, or who offer individual music tuition will, on occasions, have to initiate physical contact with pupils in order to support a child 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 appropriately and with the pupil's agreement. Physical contact under these circumstances should be for the minimum time necessary to complete the activity and should not take place in a closed environment. Staff should remain sensitive to any discomfort expressed verbally or non-verbally by the child.

Refer also to the [Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy](#).

### **Changing**

Young people are entitled to respect and privacy when changing clothes. However, there needs to be an appropriate level of supervision in order to safeguard young people, satisfy health and

safety considerations and ensure that bullying or teasing does not occur. This supervision should be appropriate to the needs and age of the young people concerned and sensitive to the potential for embarrassment. It is advisable to end supervision before there is just one child left in a room.

### **Intimate Care**

GES takes seriously its responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children and young people in its care. Meeting a pupil's intimate care needs is one aspect of safeguarding.

Intimate care can be defined as any care which involves washing, touching or carrying out a procedure to intimate personal areas which most people usually carry out themselves but some pupils are unable to do because of their young age, physical difficulties or other special needs. Examples include care associated with continence and menstrual management as well as more ordinary tasks such as help with washing, toileting or dressing.

The following are the fundamental principles upon which this guidance is based:

- Every child has the right to be safe;
- Every child has the right to personal privacy;
- Every child has the right to be valued as an individual;
- Every child has the right to be treated with dignity and respect;
- Every child has the right to be involved and consulted in his/her own intimate care to the best of their ability;
- Every child has the right to express their views on their own intimate care and to have such views taken into account;
- Every child has the right to have levels of intimate care that are as consistent as possible.

The following good practice should be observed:

- Parents/carers will be informed on the same day if their child has needed help with meeting intimate care needs (e.g. has had an 'accident' and wet or soiled him/herself). This information should be treated as confidential and communicated in person by telephone/email or by sealed letter, not through the home/school diary etc.
- All pupils will be supported to achieve the highest level of autonomy that is possible given their age and abilities. Staff will encourage each individual pupil to do as much for his/herself as possible.
- Where the pupil is of an appropriate age and level of understanding, permission should be sought from the pupil before starting an intimate procedure. Staff who provide intimate care should speak to the pupil personally by name, explain what they are doing and communicate carefully in a way that reflects the pupil's age.
- Wherever possible, the pupil's wishes and feelings should be sought and taken into account.
- Members of staff should inform a colleague when they are going to assist a pupil with intimate care alone.
- Adults who assist pupils with intimate care should be employees of the School with the required vetting checks, not students or volunteers.
- Members of staff must not use a mobile phone, camera or similar device whilst providing intimate care.
- If a child has wet/soiled themselves the wet/soiled clothing should be put in a plastic bag and sealed.

GES will provide:

- Disposable gloves
- Disposable aprons
- Disposable masks
- Wet wipes
- Plastic bags
- Antiseptic spray

Members of staff are responsible for making sure they protect themselves from possible infection by using the above resources. All used products should be disposed of properly.

### **Behaviour management**

All pupils have a right to be treated with respect, dignity and fairness. Corporal punishment is unlawful in all schools. Equally, staff must not use any form of degrading treatment to punish a pupil. Members of staff are encouraged to use positive discipline, noticing, encouraging and praising good behaviour. The use of sarcasm, ridicule, or of demeaning or insensitive comments towards pupils is always unacceptable. Members of staff must follow the guidance set out in the [Behaviour and Discipline Policies \(Early Years/Primary and Secondary\)](#). Idiosyncratic punishments must be avoided. If in doubt, matters of behaviour management and discipline should be referred to the appropriate member of the senior leadership team.

### **Restraint**

Members of staff may legitimately use physical restraint to prevent a pupil from committing a criminal offence, causing harm to themselves or others, damaging property, or engaging in behaviour prejudicial to good order. Staff should always have regard to the health and safety of themselves and others.

In all cases where physical intervention is deemed necessary, the incident and any subsequent actions must be documented and reported to the Head without delay.

### **One-to-one situations**

Staff working in one-to-one situations with children may be more vulnerable to allegations. Teachers and others should recognise this possibility and so plan and conduct such meetings accordingly. Every attempt should be made to ensure that the safety and security needs of both staff and pupils are met.

Pre-arranged meetings with pupils away from the school premises are not permitted unless approval is obtained both from their parent(s) and from the Head or other member of the senior leadership team.

### **Transporting children**

Wherever possible, members of staff should avoid transporting pupils in private vehicles. In emergency or critical situations, where doing so is both unavoidable and in the child's best interests, written permission should be sought from a parent and from a member of the SLT. In addition to the driver, there should be at least one trusted adult acting as an escort.

The transport arrangements and the vehicle should meet all safety and legal requirements. As far as can be ascertained, members of staff should ensure that the driver will drive safely, the vehicle is roadworthy and appropriately insured, and that the maximum capacity is not exceeded.

### **Educational visits and activities**

During school activities that take place away from off site or out of school hours, the school rules and pupil/staff codes of conduct still apply.

Where out of school activities include overnight stays, careful consideration needs to be given to sleeping arrangements. Pupils, staff and parents should be informed of these prior to the start of the trip. Refer to the [Educational Visits Policy](#) and the [Staff Expectations on Residential Trips](#).

### **Taking, storing and using images of children**

Members of staff must be aware and abide by the School's policy on Taking, Storing and Using Images of Children. This policy makes it clear that we do use pupil images to celebrate the achievements of pupils, to promote the work of the School and for important administrative purposes such as identification and security. However, whenever the School deems the planned use of a pupil's image to be more intrusive or surprising, we will seek written consent from the parent and/or pupil before publishing. For example, if we deem it to be appropriate, we will do this before using the image of a pupil on a website or in other public media, especially if the pupil is featured prominently. We would normally seek consent before naming the pupil together with the image. Where children from other schools are included incidentally in images of pupils, we would normally check with the other school before using or publishing them.

When using images of pupils, the following guidance should be followed:

- if the image is used, avoid naming the pupil
- if the pupil is named, avoid using the image
- establish whether the image will be retained for further use
- images should be stored securely and used only by those authorised to do so
- members of staff must be able to explain their reasons for possessing any images of children

Members of staff should not use a personal device, including a mobile phone, to take or store images of pupils.

Refer also to the [Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy](#), [ICT Acceptable Use Policies](#), [eSafety Policy](#) and [Data Protection Policy](#).

### **Illegal or inappropriate images**

Members of staff must take extreme care to ensure that children and young people are not exposed, through any medium, to illegal, inappropriate or indecent images. Under no circumstances should any adult use school equipment to access such material, including adult pornography. Personal devices containing such images, or links to them, must never be brought into the School.

Members of staff should not show films or videos that are not appropriate to the age of the pupils. If in doubt, members of staff should consult the DSL.

### **Whistleblowing**

Staff should acknowledge their individual responsibilities to bring matters of concern to the attention of the senior leadership team. This is particularly important where the welfare of children may be at risk and includes concerns about the behaviour of another member of staff as well as concerns about poor or unsafe practices at the School. Any doubts about the behaviour of another member of staff should be reported to the Head. To report such concerns in good faith

will always be seen as a neutral act. The school will fully support staff and do all it can to protect them from any adverse repercussions that may arise from whistle blowing. Allegations that prove to be deliberately fabricated and malicious will be dealt with through staff disciplinary procedures. However, no action will be taken against any member of staff who raises a genuine concern that proves to be unfounded. See also the School's [Whistleblowing Policy](#).

### **Sharing concerns and recording incidents**

All members of staff must be aware of the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures for sharing concerns and recording incidents. Refer also to the [Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy](#).

### **General expectations for behaviour**

The provision of guidelines for behaviour helps children understand what is expected of them and gives staff clear guidance on our shared values and aims. There will of course be times when we fall short of these ideals but we hope that both children and adults will be apologetic when they make mistakes and will want to learn from them. Refer also to our [Behaviour and Discipline Policies, Core Values, Pupil Code of Conduct \(GES Secondary\) and School Rules \(GES Early Years and Primary\)](#).

In general, a member of staff should, in line with the School's core values:

- Provide an example of the good and respectful behaviour that we expect in our community
- Treat colleagues, pupils and parents with courtesy and respect
- Promote a caring, friendly atmosphere
- Encourage pupils to look after each other
- Discourage rudeness, insolence and unkind words or actions
- Deal firmly, fairly and consistently with pupil misdemeanours, aiming to help the pupil to learn from his/her mistakes
- Praise acts of kindness, thoughtfulness and good behaviour
- Encourage self-discipline
- Promote a recognition of fairness and a moral sense of right and wrong
- Demonstrate courage and embrace change and innovation

Author: Tim Meunier, Head

Approved by the Board of Governors: December 2016

Reviewed: August 2018

Review date: July 2019