



### Staff Conduct and Expectations Policy 2020-21

All staff should have access to this policy and sign to the effect that they have read and understood its contents

Date of last review:	September 2020	Author:	Network Associate Principal/DSL
Date of next review:	September 2021	Owner:	Ark Alexandra Academy
Type of policy:	<input type="checkbox"/> Network-wide <input type="checkbox"/> Set for school <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tailored by school	Approval:	Board
School:	ARK Alexandra Academy	Key Contact Name:	
Key Contact Email:		Key Contact Phone:	

### POSITIONING WITHIN ARK OPERATIONAL MODEL

Component	Element
<input type="checkbox"/> Strategic Leadership & Planning <input type="checkbox"/> Monitoring, Reporting & Data <input type="checkbox"/> Governance & Accountabilities <input type="checkbox"/> Teaching & Learning <input type="checkbox"/> Curriculum & Assessment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Culture, Ethos & Wellbeing <input type="checkbox"/> Pathways & Enrichment <input type="checkbox"/> Parents & Community <input type="checkbox"/> Finance, IT & Estates <input type="checkbox"/> Our People	Safeguarding

## Professional conduct and expectations

<b>Aims:</b>	To ensure the Academy staff all operate with a common set of high values and are self-monitoring. Adults have a crucial role to play in the lives of children. This policy has been produced to help establish the safest possible learning and working environments which safeguard children and reduce the risk of them being vulnerable to being accused of improper or unprofessional conduct.
<b>Targets / outcomes:</b>	Create a high quality professional environment ensuring high standards of conduct reflecting the ethos and the values of the Academy.
<b>Definition:</b>	This document is a set of explicit expectations, based on our core values: leading by example, working together, respecting individuals, dedication to learning and achieving, openness, commitment to all, fairness.

### Underpinning Principles

- The welfare of the child is paramount
- Staff should understand their responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- 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 intention
- Staff should work, and be seen to work, in an open and transparent way
- Staff should acknowledge that deliberately invented/malicious allegations are extremely rare and that all concerns should be reported and recorded
- Staff should discuss and/or take advice promptly from their line manager if they have acted in a way which may give rise to concern
- Staff should adhere to the same professional standards regardless of culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and sexual orientation
- Whilst on duty, 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 policy is followed
- Staff should be aware of and understand our Academy's safeguarding and child protection policy, arrangements for managing allegations against staff, whistle blowing procedure and the East Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership procedures.

### Power and positions of trust and authority

- As a result of their knowledge, position and/or the authority invested in their role, all those working with children in a Academy are in a position of trust in relation to all children on the roll.
- The relationship between a person working with a child/ren is one in which the adult has a position of power or influence. It is vital for adults to understand this power; that the relationship therefore cannot be one between equals, and the responsibility they must exercise as a consequence.
- The potential for exploitation and harm of vulnerable children means that adults have a responsibility to ensure that an unequal balance of power is not used for personal advantage or gratification.
- Staff should always maintain appropriate professional boundaries, avoid behaviour which could be misinterpreted by others and report and record any such incident.
- Where a person aged 18 or over is in a position of trust with a child under 18, it is an offence<sup>1</sup> for that person to engage in sexual activity with or in the presence of that child, or to cause or incite that child to engage in or watch sexual activity.
- Staff should also be aware that it is a criminal offence for anyone aged 18 or over to intentionally communicate with a child under 16, where the person acts for a sexual purpose and the communication is sexual or intended to elicit a sexual response. The offence applies to online and offline communication, including social media, emails, texts, letters, etc.
- It is therefore important staff consider how communications and behaviours which may not meet the criteria of a criminal offence, may raise concerns to a level where there is a consideration of position of trust and boundaries being breached which lead to internal investigation, disciplinary or dismissal processes.

#### **This means that staff should not:**

- **Use their position to gain access to information for their own advantage and/or a child's or family's detriment**
- **Use their power to intimidate, threaten, coerce or undermine children**
- **Use their status and standing to form or promote relationships with children which are of a sexual nature, or which may become so**

### Making professional judgements

- This document cannot provide a complete checklist of what is, or is not, appropriate behaviour for staff. It does highlight however, behaviour which is illegal, inappropriate or inadvisable.
- There will be rare occasions and circumstances in which staff have to make decisions or take action in the best interest of a child which could contravene this policy or where no guidance exists.
- Individuals are expected to make judgements about their behaviour in order to secure the best interests and welfare of the children in their charge and, in so doing, will be seen to be acting reasonably.
- These judgements should always be recorded and shared with a manager.

#### **This means that where no specific guidance exists staff should:**

- **Discuss the circumstances that informed their action, or their proposed action, with their line manager or, where appropriate, the designated safeguarding lead. This will help to ensure that the safest practices are employed and reduce the risk of actions being misinterpreted**
- **Always discuss any misunderstanding, accidents or threats with the headteacher or designated safeguarding lead**
- **Always record discussions and actions taken with their justifications**
- **Record any areas of disagreement and, if necessary refer to another agency/the LA/Ofsted/TRA/other regulatory body**

### Confidentiality

The storing and processing of personal information is governed by the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). Employers should provide clear advice to staff about their responsibilities under this legislation so that, when considering sharing confidential information, those principles should apply.

- Staff may have access to confidential information about children and their families which must be kept confidential at all times and only shared when legally permissible to do so and in the interest of the child. Records should only be shared with those who have a legitimate professional need to see them.
- Staff should never use confidential or personal information about a child or her/his family for their own, or others advantage (including that of partners, friends, relatives or other organisations). Information must never be used to intimidate, humiliate, or embarrass the child.
- Confidential information should never be used casually in conversation or shared with any person other than on a need-to-know basis. In circumstances where the child's identity does not need to be disclosed, the information should be used anonymously.
- There are some circumstances in which a member of staff may be expected to share information about a child, for example when abuse is alleged or suspected. In such cases, individuals have a responsibility to pass information on without delay, but only to the designated safeguarding lead.
- If a child – or their parent/carer – makes a disclosure regarding abuse or neglect, the member of staff should follow the Academy's procedures. The adult should not promise confidentiality to a child or parent, but should give reassurance that the information will be treated sensitively.
- If a member of staff is in any doubt about whether to share information or keep it confidential he or she should seek guidance from the designated safeguarding lead.
- Any media or legal enquiries should be passed to senior management.

#### This means that staff:

- **Are expected to treat information they receive about children and families in a discreet and confidential manner**
- **Should seek advice from a senior member of staff (designated safeguarding lead) if they are in any doubt about Sharing information they hold or which has been requested of them**
- **Need to be clear about when information can/must be shared and in what circumstances**
- **Need to know the procedures for responding to allegations against staff and to whom any concerns or allegations should be reported**
- **Need to ensure that where personal information is recorded using modern technologies that systems and devices are kept secure**

### Collective responsibility

- Uphold and promote the Academy vision and values in and out of school
- To maintain a safe working environment for everybody
- To follow and implement the Academy's policies
- To uphold safeguarding protocols
- Challenge and support colleagues and students who are not upholding the high expectations (in private)

### Standards of behaviour and responsibilities for all staff

All staff have a responsibility to maintain public confidence in their ability to safeguard the welfare and best interests of children. They should adopt high standards of personal conduct in order to maintain confidence and respect of the general public and those with whom they work, which includes how they conduct themselves with other staff.

There may be times where an individual's actions in their personal life come under scrutiny from the community, the media or public authorities, including with regard to their own children, or children or adults in the community.

Staff should be aware that their behaviour, either in or out of the workplace, could compromise their professional position within the Academy in relation to the protection of children, loss of trust and confidence, or bringing the employer into disrepute. Such behaviour may also result in prohibition from teaching by the TRA, a bar from engaging in regulated activity, or action by another relevant regulatory body.

#### This means that staff should not:

- **Behave in a manner which would lead any reasonable person to question their suitability to work with children or to act as an appropriate role model**
- **Make, or encourage others to make sexual remarks to, or about, a child**
- **Use inappropriate language to or in the presence of children**
- **Discuss their personal or sexual relationships with or in the presence of children**
- **Make (or encourage others to make) unprofessional personal comments which scapegoat, demean or humiliate, or might be interpreted as such**

#### This means that staff should:

- **Be aware that behaviour by themselves, those with whom they share a household, or others in their personal lives, may impact on their work with children**

### Managing positive working relationships

It is essential that we all work together and maintain a positive working environment

#### This means that staff should:

- To be kind in all interactions
- To be conscious of the impact of your language and tone
- To acknowledge effort and hard work of colleagues and students

- Get to know your colleagues
- Demonstrate your faith in yourself and fellow colleagues
- Always use appropriate language, even when in an office and think you are not being overheard
- Deliver and implement all the value related behaviours
- Respond to each other positively – smile at each other
- When there is conflict try and resolve it immediately and face to face, in private
- Manage confidentiality thoughtfully
- Share effective practice and collaborate across departments
- Be supportive of each other
- Never undermine another colleague or the Academy's policies and expectations

### **Appearance and presentation**

A person's dress and appearance are matters of personal choice and self-expression and some individuals will wish to exercise their own cultural customs. However staff should select a manner of dress and appearance appropriate to their professional role and which may be necessarily different to that adopted in their personal life. Staff should ensure they are dressed decently, safely and appropriately for the tasks they undertake. Those who dress or appear in a manner which could be viewed as offensive or inappropriate could render themselves vulnerable to criticism or allegation.

#### **This means that staff should:**

- Wear appropriate professional work attire including accessories that promote a positive and professional image
- Wear clothing appropriate to their role
- Wear closed toe and flat shoes
- Ensure that tattoos covered as best as possible
- Wear short skirts at knee length if worn
- Not wear clothing that has political or contentious slogans
- Not wear leggings or treggings as trousers
- Not wear spaghetti straps, shorts (unless engaging in sporting activity)
- Be aware of and maintain good personal hygiene
- Model the standards we would expect of students
- Meet the Academy's health and safety requirements

#### **Responsibilities as a form tutor**

- Ensure your statutory register is taken promptly, accurately and maintained including addressing any N codes
- Support your tutees on a daily basis by taking an interest in their academic and pastoral progress – be on hand to trouble shoot and praise where appropriate
- Be a role model to your tutees at all times fostering a team spirit
- Sign planners weekly and be the first point of contact for your tutee's parents
- Keep lines of communication with tutee's parents open and respond within 24 hours to any communications from parents
- Ensure your tutees exemplify the school's routines and rituals
- Take a proactive approach if your tutees are experiencing difficulties around school and be the first to reward them when they are doing well
- To support in escorting tutees to detention or intervention where necessary or applicable
- Ensure your tutees receive messages via the school reception or equivalent on a daily basis
- Promote excellent attendance and punctuality amongst your tutor group, including actively chasing up absences
- Support your tutees in advance of any internal or public assessment week or academic reviews
- Collate tutor group administration in good time and in an organised fashion
- Conduct pastoral investigations as directed by the HoY/DOP
- Conduct parent review meetings as required

#### **Duties and cover**

- Arrive to duties on time
- Undertake assigned duties to the best of your ability adopting a proactive approach in order to maintain school standards
- If you are unable to undertake your duty you must arrange for a colleague to swap with you. If this is not possible you should inform your line manager at least 48 hours in advance of your duty
- When setting cover work you should ensure it allows students to work independently with minimal effort from the cover supervisor
- Ensure any cover work can be easily accessed
- If you are asked to cover a lesson make every effort to complete this as it is very difficult and time consuming to re-write the cover timetable multiple times. Assigned cover will only be rescheduled if authorised by the Headteacher

### **Meetings and the line management structure**

- Attend all meetings, briefing, school events and lessons on time
- Do not walk into offices unannounced and expect to meet with your line manager/others immediately. You should knock first and recognise that you may need to book a time which is convenient for both you and your line manager
- Always follow the line management structure never seeking to usurp your line manager
- Attend line management meetings knowing the agenda, agreed actions from the previous meeting and being prepared to contribute fully
- Send proposed AOBs 24 hours in advance
- Be solutions focused – do not simply impart problems on your line manager – take the time to think about the best way forward
- Do not disturb meetings unless it is an emergency/urgent situation
- If you are unable to attend a meeting seek permission from your line manager at least 48 hours in advance and send apologies, always ensuring that you follow up on any agreed actions and/or seek to reschedule the meeting within 48 hours
- When chairing a meeting make every effort to ensure an agenda is sent out 24 hours in advance and agreed actions are shared within 48 hours of the meeting
- Do not send emails or be on your computer in meetings unless at the request of the chair
- Single meetings should last no longer than 60 minutes and double meetings no longer than 120 minutes

- l) Line managers should conduct line management meetings at least once every 2-weeks in accordance with agreed structures, taking minutes and actions and keeping excellent records
  - m) Contribute fully and positively to department, pastoral and other meetings
- Follow all reasonable requests from your line manager

## Communication

Staff should ensure that they establish safe and responsible online behaviours, working to local and national guidelines and acceptable use policies which detail how new and emerging technologies may be used.

- Communication with children both in the 'real' world and through web based and telecommunication interactions should take place within explicit professional boundaries. This includes the use of computers, tablets, phones, texts, e-mails, instant messages, social media such as Facebook, Twitter, work based Whatsapp groups chat-rooms, forums, blogs, websites, gaming sites, digital cameras, videos, web-cams and other handheld devices. (Given the ever-changing world of technology it should be noted that this list gives examples only and is not exhaustive.)
- Staff should not request or respond to any personal information from children other than which may be necessary in their professional role. They should ensure that their communications are open and transparent and avoid any communication which could be interpreted as 'grooming behaviour'
- Staff should not give their personal contact details to children for example, e-mail address, home or mobile telephone numbers, details of web based identities. If children locate these by any other means and attempt to contact or correspond with the staff member, the adult should not respond and must report the matter to their manager. The child should be firmly and politely informed that this is not acceptable.
- Staff should adhere to other Academy policies, including those with regard to communication with parents and carers and the information they share when using the internet.

### **This means that adults should:**

- **Uphold and promote the Academy vision and values in all interactions**
- **Use professional and formal language**
- **Communication maintains clear professional boundaries between the student, parent/carers and member of staff**
- **Not seek to communicate/make contact or respond to contact with children outside of the purposes of their work**
- **Not give out their personal details**
- **Use only equipment and Internet services provided by the Academy**
- **Follow the Academy's Acceptable Use policy**
- **Ensure that their use of technologies could not bring the Academy into disrepute**
- **Ensure their privacy settings on social media are high**
- **Refrain from expressing personal opinions about the Academy, their colleagues and/or events that may have occurred there on social media sites e.g. personal Facebook pages, Twitter and work based Whatsapp groups.**
- **Refrain from posting on social media any form of inappropriate content for example photographs and/or information that could cause offence or bring their profession into disrepute**
- **Any email communication between students/staff must only be on the Academy based system**
- **No student pictures to be taken/stored on mobile phones or any personal contact details (including 6<sup>th</sup> Form).**
- **Use the Academy email for trips and visits rather than personal phone numbers**

### **Communication with parents**

#### **This means that staff should:**

- Be empathetic and listen - be mindful that parents/carers may be angry and a calm and measured response is needed
- Be prepared for meetings with as much as information possible
- Do not engage in conversations about other students
- Only engage within the school environment
- Record and log all communication with parents/carers
- Use polite and professional language
- Use positive and respectful language to talk about students
- Talk about the behaviours not the child and end on a positive
- Be mindful that the parent has the right of access to everything written down about themselves and their child
- maintain professional formal language when recording events or incidents for students
- Use the schools signature template and appropriate font and sizing in written communication: Georgia, size 11 (for formal documents)
- Remain emotionally neutral and provide the facts only

### **E-mail, verbal and written communication with staff**

#### **This means that staff should:**

- The preference must be to communicate the message face to face first and email as a second option or as a follow up
- If a challenging conversation must be had, it must take place face to face and NOT via email in private
- Private conversations should only take place in your own office or a private space
- Difficult or inappropriate conversations must not happen in the corridor
- Professional and appropriate language should be used
- Conversations in front of students, parents and visitors should always be professional.
- Timely and accurate communication in advance of major events/CPD/INSET

### **Email**

- Emails are a record so the content must be of a professional nature
- Start each email with a greeting
- Use formal language only
- Reply to emails within 24 hours; if there is a delay – to acknowledge the email within 24 hours and specify by when you will reply in full
- Think before you send – is this better face to face in the first instance?
- To copy all' only when necessary
- To read and follow the school's acceptable use policy
- Please refer to the email protocol in regards to how we communicate as a school. As a courtesy to others please **do not**:
- Send emails to all staff - if you need to please send it to Jacquie Bowden in the first instance
- Reply all unless it is necessary



- CC in lots of people for information
- Emails should not contain a tone or emotional sentiment that might cause offence or upset
- BCC/CC and forwarding only the people who need to know
- Email records of meetings should accurately reflect the discussions of the meeting

#### **Social media**

##### **This means that staff should:**

- Use of social media follows any safeguarding protocols involving any content about themselves
- Understand the personal responsibility of their social media profile and privacy settings
- Articulate their views and beliefs appropriately on social media and accepts advice if mistakes are made.
- Professional distance on all forms of social media
- Avoid engagement in any social media that is detrimental to Ark Alexandra Academy.

#### **Social contact outside of the workplace**

It is acknowledged that staff may have genuine pre-existing friendships and social contact with parents of children, independent of the professional relationship.

- Staff should, however, also be aware that professionals who sexually harm children often seek to establish relationships and contact outside of the workplace with both the child and their parents, in order to 'groom' the adult and the child and/or create opportunities for sexual abuse.
- It is also important to recognise that social contact may provide opportunities for other types of grooming such as for the purpose of sexual exploitation or radicalisation.
- Staff should recognise that some types of social contact with children or their families could be perceived as harmful or exerting inappropriate influence on children and may bring the Academy into disrepute (e.g. attending a political protest, circulating propaganda).
- If a child or parent seeks to establish social contact, or if this occurs coincidentally, the member of staff should consult with their line manager at the first opportunity. This also applies to social contacts made through outside interests or the staff member's own family.
- Some staff may, as part of their professional role, be required to support a parent/carer. Should the parent/carer seek to extend this support outside of the previously agreed professional role, this should be immediately discussed with senior management and where necessary referrals made to the appropriate support agency. Staff should be working as part of an agreed plan and not in isolation.

##### **This means that staff should:**

- **Always approve any planned social contact with children or parents with SLT, for example when it is part of a reward scheme**
- **Advise SLT of any regular social contact they have with a child which could give rise to concern including new social contacts**
- **Staff only communicate with children or parents via school based media**
- **Inform senior management of any relationship with a parent where this extends beyond the usual parent/professional relationship**
- **Ensure that they have discussed the boundaries of any pre-existing friendships and social contacts with parents with their line manager**
- **Inform senior management of any requests or arrangements where parents wish to use their services outside of the workplace e.g. babysitting, tutoring**
- **Direct any concerns raised directly to them about another member of staff through the appropriate channels**

#### **Relationships at work**

##### **This means that staff should:**

- Colleagues need to treat each other with kindness
- Staff in a relationships should avoid physical displays of affection in the workplace and should not let it impact on their roles or responsibilities. Professional behaviour and distance should be maintained at all times.
- Professional distance in working relationships e.g. appropriate to the work role
- If there is a conflict of interests such as line management, this should be declared to the Executive Principal.

#### **Student Infatuations and 'crushes'**

All staff need to recognise that it is not uncommon for children to be strongly attracted to a member of staff and/or develop a 'crush' or infatuation. They should make every effort to ensure that their own behaviour cannot be brought into question, does not appear to encourage this and be aware that such infatuations may carry a risk of their words or actions being misinterpreted.

Any member of staff who receives a report, overhears something, or otherwise notices any sign, however small or seemingly insignificant, that a young person has become or may be becoming infatuated with either themselves or a colleague, should immediately report this to the Principal, or DSL if the Principal is not available. In this way appropriate early intervention can be taken which can prevent escalation and avoid hurt, embarrassment or distress for those concerned.

The Principal should give careful thought to those circumstances where the staff member, child and their parents/carers should be spoken to and should ensure a plan to manage the situation is put in place. This plan should respond sensitively to the child and staff member and maintain the dignity of all. This plan should involve all parties, be robust and regularly monitored and reviewed.

##### **This means that staff should:**

- **Report any indications (verbal, written or physical) that suggest a child may be infatuated with a member of staff**
- **Always maintain professional boundaries**

##### **This means that Principal/DSL should:**

- **Put action plans in place where concerns are brought to their attention**

#### **One to One Situations**

Staff working in one to one situations with children at the Academy, including visiting staff from external organisations, can be more vulnerable to allegations or complaints.

- To safeguard both children and adults, a risk assessment in relation to the specific nature and implications of one to one work should always

be undertaken.

- Each assessment should take into account the individual needs of each child and should be reviewed regularly.
- Arranging to meet with children from the Academy away from the work premises should not be permitted unless the necessity for this is clear and approval is obtained from the Principal or DSL, the child and their parents/carers.

**This means that staff should:**

- **Ensure that wherever possible there is visual access and/or an open door in one to one situations**
- **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**
- **Consider the needs and circumstances of the child involved**

## Sexual Conduct

Any sexual behaviour by a member of staff with or towards a child is unacceptable. It is an offence for a member of staff in a position of trust to engage in sexual activity with a child under 18 years of age and sexual activity with a child could be a matter for criminal and/or disciplinary procedures.

- Children are protected by the same laws as adults in relation to non-consensual sexual behaviour. They are additionally protected by specific legal provisions depending on their age and understanding. This includes the prohibition of sexual activity with children by adults in a position of trust.  
Sexual activity involves physical contact including penetrative and non-penetrative acts; however it also includes non-contact activities, such as causing children to engage in or watch sexual activity or the production of pornographic material.
- There are occasions when adults embark on a course of behaviour known as 'grooming' where the purpose is to gain the trust of a child, and manipulate the relationship so sexual abuse can take place.
- All staff should undertake appropriate training so they are fully aware of those behaviours that may constitute 'grooming' and of their responsibility to always report to the Principal or DSL any concerns about the behaviour of a colleague which could indicate that a child is being groomed.

**This means that staff should:**

- **Not have any form of sexual contact with a child from the Academy**
- **Avoid any form of touch or comment which is, or may be considered to be, indecent**
- **Avoid any form of communication with a child which could be interpreted as sexually suggestive, provocative or give rise to speculation e.g. verbal comments, letters, notes, by email or on social media, phone calls, texts, physical contact**
- **Not make sexual remarks to or about a child**
- **Not discuss sexual matters with or in the presence of children other than within agreed curriculum content or as part of their recognised job role**

## Physical Contact

The experience of physical contact is a subjective issue and will be experienced by each child differently according to their experiences. This is an area that can lead to misinterpretation and allegations of inappropriate behaviour. It is therefore essential that staff consider why they need to touch the child and whether it is really necessary.

- There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate and proper for staff to have physical contact with children, however, it is crucial that they only do so in ways **appropriate to their professional role and in relation to the child's individual needs, age, stage of development and any agreed care plan.**
- It is not possible to be specific about the appropriateness of each physical contact, since an action that is appropriate with one child, in one set of circumstances, may be inappropriate in another, or with a different child.
- Any physical contact should be appropriate to the circumstances at the time, of limited duration and appropriate to the child's age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background. Adults should therefore, use their professional judgement at all times. Staff should listen, observe and take note of the child's reaction or feelings and, so far as is possible, use a level of contact and/or form of communication which is acceptable to the child.
- Physical contact should never be secretive, or for the gratification of the adult, or represent a misuse of authority. **If a member of staff believes that an action by them or a colleague could be misinterpreted, or if an action is observed which is possibly abusive, the incident and circumstances should be immediately reported to the headteacher/manager and recorded.** Where appropriate, the Principal/DSL should consult with the local authority designated officer (LADO).
- Extra caution may be required where it is known that a child has suffered previous abuse or neglect. Staff need to be aware that the child may associate physical contact with such experiences. They also should recognise that these children may seek out inappropriate physical contact. In such circumstances staff should deter the child sensitively and help them to understand the importance of personal boundaries.
- A general culture of 'safe touch' should be adopted, where appropriate, to the individual requirements of each child. Children with identified additional and/or disabilities who require more physical contact to assist their everyday learning should have a clear and agreed plan that is shared with the parents and where appropriate the child. The arrangements should be understood and agreed by all concerned, justified in terms of the child's needs, consistently applied and open to scrutiny.

**This means that staff should:**

- **Be aware that even well -intentioned physical contact may be misconstrued by the child, or an observer never touch a child in a way which may be considered indecent**
- **Always be prepared to explain actions and accept that all physical contact can be open to scrutiny**
- **Never indulge in horseplay or fun fights**
- **Always allow/encourage children, where able, to undertake self-care tasks independently**
- **Ensure the way they offer comfort to a distressed child is age appropriate and is acceptable to the child**
- **Always tell their line manager when and how they offered comfort to a distressed child**
- **Report and record situations which may give rise to concern**
- **Be aware of cultural or religious views about touching and be sensitive to issues of gender**
- **Be aware of children who have a plan relating to their physical contact needs**

## Other activities that require physical contact

In certain curriculum areas, such as physical education, drama or music, staff may need to initiate some physical contact with children, for example, to demonstrate technique in the use of a piece of equipment, adjust posture, or support a child so they can perform an activity safely or prevent injury.

- Physical contact should take place only when it is necessary in relation to a particular activity. It should take place in a safe and open environment i.e. one easily observed by others and last for the minimum time necessary. The extent of the contact should be made clear and

undertaken with the permission of the child. Contact should be relevant to their age/ understanding and adults should remain sensitive to any discomfort expressed verbally or non-verbally by the child.

- Guidance and protocols around safe and appropriate physical contact may be provided, for example, by sports governing bodies and should be understood and applied consistently. Any incidents of physical contact that cause concern or fall outside of these protocols and guidance should be reported to the senior manager and parent/carer
- It is good practice if all parties clearly understand at the outset, what physical contact is necessary and appropriate in undertaking specific activities. Keeping parents/carers and children informed of the extent and nature of any physical contact may also prevent allegations of misconduct or abuse arising.

**This means that staff 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 is unable to give this e.g. because of a disability**
- **Consider alternatives, where it is anticipated that a child 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 and religious issues that may need to be considered prior to initiating physical contact**

## Gifts, Favouritism and Exclusion

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 e.g. at Christmas or as a thank-you and this is usually acceptable. However, it is unacceptable to receive gifts on a regular basis or of any significant value. Any gift of £50 and above must be declared.
- It is inadvisable to give such personal gifts to children or their families. This could be interpreted as a gesture either to bribe or groom. It might also be perceived that a 'favour' of some kind is expected in return.
- Any reward given to a child should be in accordance with agreed practice, consistent with the Academy's behaviour policy, recorded and not based on favouritism.
- Adults should exercise care when selecting children for specific activities, jobs or privileges in order to avoid perceptions of favouritism or injustice. **Similar care should be exercised when children are excluded from an activity.** Methods of selection and exclusion should always be subject to clear, fair, agreed criteria.

**This means that staff should:**

- **Be aware of and understand their organisation's relevant policies, e.g. Rewards and Consequences policy**
- **Ensure that gifts received or given in situations which may be misconstrued are declared and recorded**
- **Only give gifts to a child as part of an agreed reward system**
- **Where giving gifts other than as above, ensure that these are of insignificant value and given to all children equally**
- **Ensure that all selection processes of children are fair and these are undertaken and agreed by more than one member of staff**
- **Ensure that they do not behave in a manner which is either favourable or unfavourable to individual children**

## Educational Visits

The duties in the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the supporting regulations apply to activities taking place on or off the Academy premises (including school visits) in Great Britain. The Academy has a Health and Safety policy, and an Educational Visits policy and procedures for off-site visits, including residential visits and any school-led adventure activities. The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (1999) impose a duty on employers to produce suitable and sufficient risk assessments. This would include assessment of any risks to employees, children or others during an educational visit, and the measures that should be taken to minimise these risks.

- Staff should take particular care when supervising children in the less formal atmosphere of an educational visit where a more relaxed discipline or informal dress and language code may be acceptable. They should act as role models to students in a public forum: demonstrate manners, courteous behaviours.
- However, **staff remain in a position of trust and need to ensure that their behaviour cannot be interpreted as seeking to establish an inappropriate relationship or friendship.**
- Where out of school activities include overnight stays, careful consideration needs to be given to sleeping arrangements. Children, adults and parents should be informed of these prior to the start of the trip. In all circumstances, those organising trips and outings should pay careful attention to ensuring there is a safe staff/child ratio and suitable gender mix of staff.

**This means that staff should:**

- **Adhere to the Academy's educational visits guidance**
- **Always have another adult present on visits, unless otherwise agreed with senior staff**
- **Undertake risk assessments (with a 1:10 ratio school trip and residential trip, 1:15 on a low risk trip)**
- **Have parental consent to the activity**
- **Ensure that their behaviour remains professional at all times**
- **Never share beds with a child/children**
- **Never share bedrooms unless it involves a dormitory situation and the arrangements have been previously discussed with Principal, parents and children**
- **Refer to local and national guidance for Educational visits, including exchange visits (both to the UK and abroad) available on Exeant - <https://eastsussex.exeant.co.uk/>**

## Transporting Students

In certain situations staff or volunteers may be required or offer to transport children as part of their work. As for any other activity undertaken at work, the employer has a duty to carry out a risk assessment covering the health and safety of their staff and to manage any known risks.

- Staff should not offer lifts to children unless the need for this has been agreed by a manager. A designated member of staff, the educational visits co-ordinator (EVC), should be appointed to plan and provide oversight of all transport arrangements and respond to any concerns that may arise.
- Wherever possible and practicable it is advisable that transport is undertaken other than in private vehicles and with at least one adult additional to the driver acting as an escort.



- It is a legal requirement that all passengers wear seatbelts and the driver should ensure that they do so. They should also be aware of and adhere to current legislation regarding the use of car seats for younger children.
- Staff should ensure that their behaviour is safe and that the transport arrangements and the vehicle meet all legal requirements. They should ensure that the vehicle is roadworthy and appropriately insured and that the maximum carrying capacity is not exceeded.
- Staff should never offer to transport children outside of their normal working duties, other than in an emergency or where not doing so would mean the child may be at risk. In these circumstances the matter should be recorded and reported to both their manager and the child's parent(s). The Academy's health and safety policy and/or educational visits policy should set out the arrangements under which staff may use private vehicles to transport children

**This means that staff should:**

- **Plan and agree arrangements with all parties in advance**
- **Respond sensitively and flexibly where any concerns arise**
- **Take into account any specific or additional needs of the child**
- **Have an appropriate licence/permit for the vehicle**
- **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**
- **Ensure that the need to be alone with a child is for the minimum time**
- **Be aware that the safety and welfare of the child is their responsibility until this is safely passed over to a parent/carer**
- **Report the nature of the journey, the route and expected time of arrival in accordance with agreed procedures**
- **Ensure that their behaviour and all arrangements ensure vehicle, passenger and driver safety. This includes having proper and appropriate insurance for the type of vehicle being driven**
- **Ensure that any impromptu or emergency arrangements of lifts are recorded and can be justified**
- **Refer to Education Visits policy**

## Home Visits

All work with children and parents should usually be undertaken in the Academy. There are however occasions, in response to an urgent, planned or specific situation or job role, where it is necessary to make one-off or regular home visits (e.g. safeguarding or attendance).

- It is essential that appropriate policies and related risk assessments are in place to safeguard both staff and children, who can be more vulnerable in these situations.
- A risk assessment should be undertaken prior to any planned home visit taking place.
- The assessment should include an evaluation of any known factors regarding the child, parents/carers and any others living in the household.
- Consideration should be given to any circumstances which might render the staff member becoming more vulnerable to an allegation being made e.g. hostility, child protection concerns, complaints or grievances.
- Specific thought should be given to visits outside of 'office hours' or in remote or secluded locations.
- Following the assessment, appropriate risk control measures should be in place before the visit is undertaken. In the unlikely event that little or no information is available, visits should not be made alone.

**This means that staff should:**

- **Never take a child to their own home, the only exception is where it is part of previously agreed arrangement**
- **Agree the purpose for any home visit with their manager**
- **Adhere to agreed risk control strategies**
- **Avoid unannounced visits wherever possible**
- **Ensure there is visual access and/or an open door in one to one situations**
- **Always make detailed records including times of arrival and departure**
- **Ensure any behaviour or situation which gives rise to concern is discussed with their manager**

## Curriculum

Many areas of the curriculum can include or raise subject matter which is sexually explicit or of a political or sensitive nature. Care should be taken to ensure that resource materials cannot be misinterpreted and clearly relate to the learning outcomes identified by the lesson plan.

- This can be supported by developing ground rules with children to ensure sensitive topics can be discussed in a safe learning environment.
- This plan should highlight particular areas of risk and sensitivity and care should especially be taken in those areas of the curriculum where usual boundaries or rules are less rigorously applied e.g. drama
- The curriculum can sometimes include or lead to unplanned discussion about subject matter of a sexually explicit, political or otherwise sensitive nature.
- Responding to children's questions requires careful judgement and staff should take guidance in these circumstances from the designated safeguarding lead.  
Care should be taken to comply with our policy on spiritual, moral, social, cultural (SMSC) which should promote fundamental British values and be rigorously reviewed to ensure it is lawful and consistently applied.
- Staff should also comply at all times with the policy for relationships and sex education (RSE). It should be noted that parents have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of any sex education provided but not from the National Curriculum for Science.

**This means that staff should:**

- **Have clear written lesson plans**
- **Take care when encouraging children 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 which may offend or harm others**
- **Undermine fundamental British values**
- **Express any prejudicial views**
- **Attempt to influence or impose their personal values, attitudes or beliefs on children**

## Safeguarding responsibilities: sharing concerns and recording incidents

All staff should be aware of the Academy's safeguarding procedures, including the procedures for dealing with allegations against staff and volunteers. In the event of an allegation being made, by any person, or incident being witnessed, the relevant information should be immediately recorded and reported to the Principal or designated safeguarding lead as appropriate.

Members of staff should feel able to discuss with their line manager any difficulties or problems that may affect their relationship with or behaviour

towards children, so that appropriate support can be provided and/or action can be taken. In order to safeguard and protect children and colleagues, where staff have any concerns about someone who works with children they should immediately report this to the Principal or DSL in line with the Academy's procedures.

**This means that staff should:**

- **Prioritising the safety and welfare of students at all costs**
- **Never ignoring any situation or action that might impact on the safeguarding of our students and staff**
- **Be familiar with the Academy's arrangements for reporting and recording concerns and allegations using Impero Edaware**
- **Know how to contact the LADO/Ofsted/regulatory body directly if required**
- **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 school**

**Concerns and allegations relating to a member of staff**

- **Report to the Principal**
- **Concerns should not be discussed or shared with anyone on social media platforms such as Whatsapp Groups, Facebook, Twitter etc.**

**Respect for the work environment**

**Respecting the Academy environment**

**This means that staff should:**

- Parking in the appropriate place
- Ensuring that the relevant people are aware if and when you access the sites out of hours
- Reporting any damage or Health and Safety to Premises – see it and report it
- Clean and wash up your own cups and plates
- Dispose of all litter and be conscious of maintaining a clean environment
- Do not stick posters onto the Academy walls unless in designated areas

**Classroom environment**

**This means that staff should:**

- Ensure classroom and public/shared spaces are kept clean and tidy
- Leave classrooms as they are found (only if found in good condition, otherwise please tidy up)
- Leave equipment and resources in the appropriate places
- Take care of, maintain and update displays
- Report any damage or health and safety issues to the Premises Team

**Offices/communal social/work areas**

**This means that staff should:**

- Always discuss the Academy proudly and professionally
- Build a positive picture of the student body, never placing negative thoughts into the minds of others
- Communicate information on a need to know basis only
- Keep all work areas tidy

**Managing work/life balance**

**This means that staff should:**

- Communicate to line manager when help is required regarding work/life balance
- It is not necessary to check or respond to emails after 6pm or at weekends
- Be observant of colleagues and report any concerns
- Be proactive in making suggestions about how to reduce workload
- Follow and deliver all expectations so that we achieve 100% consistency for all staff and students
- Produce high quality live marking
- Use Employee Assistance Scheme if needed

**Smoking**

**This means that staff should:**

- Staff may only smoke off site and in designated areas
- Will keep the smoking area clean
- Make sure you do not smell of smoke

<b>SLT and MLT will:</b>	Model, promote and support staff in achieving the highest professional conduct. Emphasise the why and then the what Secure consistency from all staff
<b>Related documents</b>	Ark Policies: <a href="https://arkschools.sharepoint.com/ArkNetCentral/policies/Shared%20Documents/Forms/AllItems.aspx?id=%2FArkNetCentral%2Fpolicies%2FShared%20Documents%2FOur%20People">https://arkschools.sharepoint.com/ArkNetCentral/policies/Shared%20Documents/Forms/AllItems.aspx?id=%2FArkNetCentral%2Fpolicies%2FShared%20Documents%2FOur%20People</a>

