



## The Minster School code of practice for all adults and staff

### Underpinning principles

- The welfare of the child is paramount

All adults and staff should:

- understand their responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils
- take responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions
- work, and be seen to work, in an open and transparent way
- acknowledge that deliberately invented/malicious allegations are extremely rare and that all concerns should be reported and recorded
- discuss/take advice promptly from their manager if their actions may give rise to concern
- apply the same professional standards regardless of culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and sexual orientation
- not consume or be under the influence of alcohol or any substance, including prescribed medication, which may affect their ability to care for children
- 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), or prohibition by the [Teaching Regulation Agency](#).
- (and managers) continually monitor and review practice to ensure this guidance is followed
- be aware of and understand their establishment's child protection policy, arrangements for managing allegations against staff, staff behaviour policy, whistle blowing procedure and their [Local Safeguarding Children Partnership \(LSP\) procedures](#)

### 1. Introduction

This code of behaviour and the accompanying guidance (please read) are based on established good practice issued by the Safer Recruitment Consortium and are intended to assist adults and staff in establishing safe, professional boundaries.

- [Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings \(2019\)](#), Safer Recruitment Consortium

### 2. Status of this document

This document is intended for use by all adults and staff associated with Minster School.

### **3. Responsibilities**

Pupils have a right to be safe and treated with respect and dignity; adults and staff must always:

- a) understand the responsibilities which are part of their employment or role, and be aware that sanctions will be applied if these provisions are breached
- b) act, and be seen to act, in the child's best interests
- c) take responsibility for their own actions and behaviour and avoid conduct which may lead a reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions

### **4. Making professional judgements**

No code of behaviour can cover every eventuality; adults and staff must:

- a) consider whether their actions are warranted, proportionate, safe and applied equitably; and, if they are in the best interests of the child(ren) in their care
- b) discuss the circumstances that informed any ambiguous action, or proposed action, with their line manager or designated (deputy) safeguarding lead. This will help to ensure that the safest practices are employed and reduce the risk of actions being misinterpreted
- c) discuss any misunderstanding, accidents or threats with the Head teacher or designated (deputy) safeguarding lead
- d) always record discussions and actions taken with their justifications
- e) record any areas of disagreement and, if necessary, refer to another agency/authority

### **5. Power and positions of trust and authority**

Relationships between adults and pupils in school are not equal.

adults and staff must:

- a) ensure that an unequal balance of power is not used for personal advantage or gratification
- b) maintain appropriate professional boundaries, avoid behaviour which could be misinterpreted by others; report and record any such incident.

adults and staff must not:

- a) use their position to gain access to information for their own advantage and/or a pupil's or family's detriment
- b) use their power to intimidate, threaten, coerce or undermine pupils
- c) use their status and standing to form or promote relationships with pupils which are of a sexual nature, or an exploitative nature, or which may become so.

### **6. Confidentiality**

adults and staff must:

- a) treat information they receive about pupils and families in a discreet and confidential manner
- b) be clear about when information can/must be shared and in what circumstances
- c) ensure that personal information is recorded using school approved means and kept securely
- d) be aware that the Data Protection Act 2018 is not a barrier to sharing relevant information to safeguarding children

adults and staff must not:

- a) use confidential or personal information about a pupil or her/his family for their own, or others advantage or, to intimidate, humiliate, or embarrass the child
- a) promise confidentiality to a child or parent but should give reassurance that the information will be treated sensitively.
- b) discuss confidential matters casually in conversation, or with others unless appropriate

## **7. Standards of behaviour**

adults and staff must:

- a) 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

adults and staff must not:

- a) 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
- b) make, or encourage others to make sexual remarks to, or about, a pupil
- c) use inappropriate language to or in the presence of pupils
- d) discuss their personal or sexual relationships with or in the presence of pupils
- e) make (or encourage others to make) unprofessional personal comments which scapegoat, demean or humiliate, or might be interpreted as such

## **8. Dress and appearance**

adults and staff must always adopt dress and appearance which:

- a) is appropriate to their role
- b) is safe and compliant with any professional standards
- c) is not likely to be viewed as offensive, revealing, or sexually provocative
- d) does not distract, cause embarrassment or give rise to misunderstanding
- e) is absent of any political or contentious slogans, and is not considered to be discriminatory

## **9. Gifts, rewards, favouritism and exclusion**

adults and staff must:

- a) be aware of and understand their organisation's relevant policies, e.g. reward and sanction
- b) ensure that gifts received or given, which could be misconstrued, are declared and recorded
- c) ensure gifts are of insignificant value, given to all pupils equally **OR** as part of a reward system
- d) ensure that all selection/exclusion of pupils is fair, and is undertaken and agreed by more than one member of staff
- e) ensure that behaviour is neither favourable nor unfavourable to individual pupils/families

## **10. Infatuations and crushes**

adults and staff must always maintain professional boundaries, and:

- a) report any indications (verbal, written or physical) that suggest a pupil may be infatuated with a member of staff to the head teacher

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

adults and staff must:

- a) approve any planned social contact with pupils or parents with senior colleagues, for example when it is part of a reward scheme
- b) advise senior management of any regular social contact they have with a pupil or parents which could give rise to concern
- c) refrain from personal communication with pupils/parents unless agreed with senior managers
- d) inform senior management of any relationship with a parent where this extends beyond the usual parent/professional relationship
- e) inform senior management of any requests or arrangements where parents wish to use their services outside of the workplace e.g. babysitting, tutoring

## **12. Communication with children (including the use of technology)**

adults and staff must:

- a) follow the guidance in section 7. 'Standards of Behaviour' in any communications with children
- b) ensure communication is open and transparent and avoid any communication which could be interpreted as 'grooming behaviour'
- c) adhere to the school's policies, including those with regard to communication with parents and carers and the information they share when using the internet, and the "Acceptable use" policy
- d) use only equipment and Internet services provided or approved by the school or setting
- e) ensure that their use of technologies could not bring their employer into disrepute
- f) Turn off their 3G/4G/5G data access whilst on school premises

adults and staff must not:

- a) communicate/contact or respond to contact with pupils outside of the purposes of their work
- b) offer, request, or respond to requests for, any personal information/details from children (other than that necessary in their professional role) including e-mail address, home or mobile telephone numbers, details of web based identities

## **13. Physical contact**

adults and staff must:

- a) be aware that even well intentioned physical contact may be misconstrued by the pupil, an observer or any person to whom this action is described
- b) be prepared to explain actions and accept that all physical contact be open to scrutiny
- c) allow/encourage pupils, where able, to undertake self-care tasks independently
- d) ensure the way they offer comfort to a distressed pupil is age appropriate
- e) tell a colleague when and how they offered comfort to a distressed pupil
- f) establish the preferences of pupils
- g) consider alternatives where a pupil might misinterpret/be uncomfortable with physical contact
- h) explain to the pupil the reason why contact is necessary and what form that contact will take
- i) report and record situations which may give rise to concern
- j) be aware of cultural or religious views about touching and be sensitive to issues of gender

adults and staff must not:

- a) touch a pupil in a way which may be considered indecent
- b) indulge in horseplay or fun fights

Minster School adult and staff code of behaviour V3

Dee Cooley, CSA. Sept 2019

#### **14. Other activities that require physical contact**

adults and staff must:

- a) treat pupils with dignity and respect and avoid contact with intimate parts of the body
- b) explain to a pupil the reason why contact is necessary and what form that contact will take
- c) seek consent of parents where a pupil is unable to give this e.g. because of a disability
- d) consider alternatives where a pupil might misinterpret/be uncomfortable with physical contact
- e) be familiar with and follow recommended guidance and protocols
- f) conduct activities where they can be seen by others, or easily interrupted
- g) be aware of gender, cultural and religious issues to consider prior to initiating physical contact

#### **15. Intimate / personal care**

adults and staff must:

- a) adhere to their organisation's intimate and personal care and nappy changing policies
- b) make other staff aware of the task being undertaken
- c) explain to the pupil what is happening before a care procedure begins
- d) consult with colleagues where any variation from agreed procedure/care plan is necessary
- e) record the justification for any variations to the agreed procedure/care plan and share this information with the pupil and their parents/carers
- f) avoid any visually intrusive behaviour
- g) where there are changing rooms announce their intention of entering
- h) consider the supervision needs of the pupils and only remain in the room if needs require this

adults and staff must not:

- a) change or toilet in the presence or sight of pupils
- b) shower with pupils
- c) assist with intimate or personal care tasks which the pupil is able to undertake independently

#### **16. Behaviour management**

adults and staff must:

- a) try to defuse situations before they escalate e.g. by distraction
- b) keep parents informed of any sanctions or behaviour management techniques used
- c) be mindful of factors inside/outside of the school which may impact on a pupil's behaviour
- d) follow the establishment's behaviour management policy
- e) behave as a role model
- f) avoid shouting at children other than as a warning in an emergency/safety situation
- g) refer to national and local policy and guidance regarding Restrictive Physical Intervention (RPI)
- h) be aware of the legislation and potential risks associated with the use of isolation and seclusion
- i) comply with legislation and guidance in relation to

adults and staff must not:

- a) use force as a form of punishment

## **17. The use of control and physical intervention**

adults and staff must:

- a) adhere to the school or setting's physical intervention policy
- b) seek to defuse situations and avoid the use of physical intervention wherever possible
- c) where physical intervention is necessary, use minimum force and for the shortest time needed

adults and staff must not:

- a) use physical intervention as a form of punishment

## **18. Sexual conduct**

adults and staff must:

- a) avoid any form of touch or comment which is, or may be considered to be, indecent
- b) avoid any form of communication with a pupil 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

adults and staff must not:

- a) have any form of sexual contact with a pupil from the school or setting
- b) make sexual remarks to or about a pupil
- c) discuss sexual matters with or in the presence of pupils other than within agreed curriculum content or as part of their recognised job role

## **19. One to one situations**

adults and staff must:

- a) ensure that where possible there is visual access and/or an open door in one to one situations
- b) avoid use of 'engaged' or equivalent signs wherever possible. Such signs may create an opportunity for secrecy or the interpretation of secrecy
- c) report any situation where a pupil becomes distressed or angry
- d) consider the needs and circumstances of the pupil involved

## **20. Home visits**

adults and staff must:

- a) agree the purpose for any home visit with their manager
- b) adhere to agreed risk management strategies
- c) avoid unannounced visits wherever possible
- d) ensure there is visual access and/or an open door in one to one situations
- e) make detailed records including times of arrival and departure
- f) ensure any behaviour or situation which gives rise to concern is discussed with their manager

## **21. Transporting pupils**

adults and staff must:

- a) plan and agree arrangements with all parties in advance
- b) respond sensitively and flexibly where any concerns arise
- c) take into account any specific or additional needs of the pupil
- d) have an appropriate licence/permit for the vehicle
- e) be fit to drive and free from drugs/alcohol/medicine likely to impair judgement/ability to drive
- f) ensure that if they need to be alone with a pupil this is for the minimum time
- g) be aware that the pupil's safety/welfare is their responsibility until safely passed to a parent/carer
- h) report the nature of the journey, the route and expected time of arrival in accordance with agreed procedures
- i) 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
- j) ensure that any impromptu or emergency arrangements of lifts are recorded and can be justified
- k) refer to Local and National guidance for Educational visits

## **22. Educational visits**

adults and staff must:

- a) adhere to their organisation's educational visits guidance
- b) have another adult present on visits, unless otherwise agreed with senior staff
- c) undertake risk assessments in an approved manner
- d) have parental consent to the activity
- e) ensure that their behaviour remains professional at all times
- f) refer to school and national guidance for Educational visits (both to the UK and abroad)

adults and staff must not:

- a) share beds with a child/pupil
- b) share bedrooms unless it involves a dormitory situation and the arrangements have been previously discussed with Head teacher, parents and pupils

## **23. First Aid and medication**

adults and staff must:

- a) adhere to the school health and safety and supporting pupils with medical conditions policies
- b) make other staff aware of the task being undertaken
- c) have regard to pupils' individual healthcare plans
- d) ensure that an appropriate health/risk assessment is undertaken prior to certain activities
- e) explain to the pupil what is happening.
- f) always act and be seen to act in the pupil's best interest
- g) make a record of all medications administered
- h) not work with pupils whilst taking medication unless medical advice confirms that they are able to do so

## **24. Photography, videos and other images (see section 12)**

adults and staff must:

- a) adhere to their establishment's policy
- b) only publish images of pupils where they/their parent/carer give explicit written consent
- c) only take images where the pupil is happy for them to do so
- d) only retain images when there is a clear and agreed purpose for doing so
- e) store images in an appropriate secure place in the school or setting
- f) ensure that a senior member of staff is aware that the photography/image equipment is being used and for what purpose
- g) be able to justify images of pupils in their possession
- h) avoid making images in one to one situations

adults and staff must not:

- a) take images of pupils for their personal use
- b) display or distribute images of pupils unless they are sure that they have parental consent to do so (and, where appropriate, consent from the child)
- c) take images of children using personal equipment
- d) take images of children in a state of undress or semi-undress
- e) take images of children which could be considered as indecent or sexual
- f) take images of a child's injury, bruising or similar (e.g. following a disclosure of abuse) even if requested by children's social care/social workers
- g) make audio recordings of a child's disclosure

## **25. Exposure to inappropriate images (refer to ICT policy)**

adults and staff must:

- a) abide by the establishment's acceptable use and e-safety policies
- b) ensure that children cannot be exposed to indecent or inappropriate images
- c) ensure that any films or material shown to children are age appropriate

## **26. Personal living accommodation**

adults and staff must:

- a) be vigilant in maintaining their privacy
- b) be mindful of the need to avoid placing themselves in vulnerable situations
- c) refuse any request for their home to be used as an additional resource for the school or setting
- d) be mindful of the need to maintain appropriate personal and professional boundaries
- e) not ask pupils to undertake jobs or errands for their personal benefit

## **27. Overnight supervision for examinations and other purposes (not usually practised at TMS)**

adults and staff must:

- a) ensure a full health and safety risk assessment has been undertaken
- b) make all arrangements in partnership and agreement with the pupil and parents/carers
- c) incorporate as much choice, flexibility and contact with 'the outside world' into any arrangement so far as it is consistent with appropriate supervision



- d) incorporate, whenever possible, independent oversight of arrangements
- e) report any situation which gives rise to complaint, disagreement or misunderstanding have regard to any local and national guidance

## **28. Curriculum**

adults and staff must:

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

adults and staff must not:

- a) enter into or encourage inappropriate discussions which may offend or harm others
- b) undermine fundamental British values
- c) express any prejudicial views
- d) attempt to influence or impose their personal values, attitudes or beliefs on pupils

## **29. Whistleblowing**

adults and staff must:

- a) report any behaviour by colleagues that raises concern
- b) report allegations against staff and volunteers to their manager, or registered provider, or where they have concerns about the manager's response report these directly to the LADO

## **30. Sharing concerns and recording incidents**

adults and staff must:

- a) be familiar with their establishment's arrangements for reporting and recording concerns and allegations
- b) know how to contact the LADO and Ofsted/regulatory body directly if required
- c) 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 or setting