



# STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY

**Date of Last Review:** November 2017

**Date of Next Review:** May 2018

**Responsibility:** Mrs C. Riddle & Mr M. O'Shaughnessy

**Advisory Body Signature:**

## **Rationale**

This code of conduct is intended for all staff working at The Ravensbourne School. It does not cover all eventualities, but does aim to set out a set of professional expectations which both protects colleagues and ensures a consistency of professional conduct across the school. It has been prepared in the light of the DfE document 'Keeping children Safe in Education. Information for all school and college staff (September 2016). It applies to staff and volunteers.

1. All school staff have a responsibility to safeguard children. Staff have the responsibility to identify concerns early and provide help for children, to prevent concerns from escalating. Schools and colleges and their staff form part of the wider safeguarding system for children.
2. All school and college staff have a responsibility to identify children who may be in need of extra help or who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm. All staff then have a responsibility to take appropriate action, working with other services as needed. Staff should be aware of the statutory duty to report all cases of Female genital mutilation (FGM), whether it is the possibility of a girl being at risk or already having suffered FGM under section 5C of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (as inserted by section 75 of the Serious Crime Act 2015).
3. All staff should be made aware of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and what marks out exploitation is an imbalance of power in the relationship.
4. All staff should use their professional judgement in identifying children who may be at risk of radicalisation and act appropriately in making a referral to the Channel Programme. From 1 July 2015 specified authorities, including all schools, are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 ("the CTSA 2015"), in the exercise of their functions, to have "due regard<sup>12</sup> to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism"<sup>13</sup>. This duty is known as the Prevent duty.
5. School staff must ensure that children are safe from terrorist and extremist material when accessing the internet in schools. Schools should ensure that suitable filtering is in place and that staff monitor how the internet is used. It is also important that schools teach pupils about online safety more generally.
6. Relationship with students must reflect the age, sex and maturity of students. Demeanour, language and attitude of staff should be such that they do not give rise to misunderstandings on the part of students. Ambiguous conduct should be avoided.
7. Physical contact with students should be avoided. The only exception to this fundamental rule is in extreme cases where physical restraint is the only practical way of protecting oneself or another from likely serious injury. Any such physical contact with

students must be reported immediately to the line manager, designated safeguarding Lead (DSO) or Headteacher.

8. If comforting a student in distress, staff will need to exercise professional discretion and judgement. They should ensure that their actions are not in any sense open to misinterpretation, particularly if no other adult is present at the time.
9. If physical contact must take place as part of, for example a physical education lesson, again staff should be aware of the need to avoid the contact being misinterpreted or being in any way beyond what is necessary for the teaching taking place. Alternatives to such contact should be sought wherever possible.
10. Physical punishment of any sort is prohibited by law.
11. Emotional abuse includes belittling, embarrassing, demeaning, ridiculing or deliberately sapping the self esteem of a child, and is always to be avoided.
12. When meeting students on a one to one basis, staff should wherever practical ensure that they do so in a room with an open door or in a place where they could be visible to others. Glass panels in office and classroom doors must never be covered for this reason.
13. No meeting with a student should be arranged off the school premises or outside school hours without the permission of the line manager and for exceptional reasons. Before transporting students in private cars advice must always be sought from the line manager.
14. The use of teaching materials, including videos and films, which are inappropriate to the age of the students or whose contents or language are sensitive is inadvisable and should be done only after consultation with the line manager.
15. If called on to administer first aid, staff should wherever possible ensure that another adult is present, again restrict physical contact to the minimum necessary, and ensure the incident is reported fully immediately.
16. No medicine, including non-prescription drugs such as paracetamol, may be given to students by staff (other than the school nurse, to whom separate arrangements apply). The only exception is the administration of urgent life-saving treatment, such as an epipen following a severe allergic reaction.
17. Staff must avoid comments to students which have sexual overtones or which could be construed as in any way personally derogatory or intimidating. Encouraging students in any way to engage in such discussions is also unacceptable.
18. Staff who feel they may be the subject of a teenage 'crush' must report the problem to the DSL or head teacher and take advice on managing the situation. At no time should the member of staff speak with the young person concerned about the problem,

particularly not alone.

19. If a student reports any information to a member of staff which is of a serious personal nature, or which indicates that the student may be at risk, either physically or emotionally, the member of staff may not respect the student's wish for the information to be kept confidential and must report it to the DSO on My Concern.
20. Staff must not attempt to search a student's bag or personal possessions. Any suspicions which might prompt such a search must be referred to a senior colleague who will decide on appropriate action.
21. Staff must not give students their personal mobile or home telephone numbers and must not engage in text message correspondence with students. Staff must not engage with students via social media and should ensure their social media is on the highest security to prevent personal images being seen. E-mail may be used but the official school e-mail addresses must be used rather than personal addresses. It is important that e-mail correspondence respects the same norms as all other interaction with students. The receipt of inappropriate or unwarranted calls or messages from students must be reported the DSO or head teacher.
22. It is a criminal offence for any person employed in a position of trust, including all teachers, to have a sexual relationship with any person who is a student at the school at which they are employed, even if that person is over 16 years of age.
23. Staff must not knowingly enter into correspondence with students via internet social networking sites. When using such sites themselves, staff should remember that they can often be identified as employees of the school, and must respect the school's ethos and avoid bringing it or any individual employee or student into disrepute. Staff who use sites such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram should ensure that maximum privacy settings are activated and must not accept current students as 'friends'. Accepting past students as 'friends' is strongly discouraged.
24. Staff must not visit students in their homes, arrange to meet them socially outside school, or invite them to visit staff homes. Should there be exceptional reasons for any of these happening, for example family friendships or shared sports interests, staff are advised to ensure that their line manager is aware of the situation.
25. Staff should not give gifts or rewards to students outside the school's normal rewards processes, and should avoid displaying any favouritism towards particular students. Doing so may be misconstrued as grooming by the student or by others. Once again, should there be exceptional circumstances which appear to justify the giving of a personal gift, the DSL or head teacher should be consulted and informed.
26. When outside school in social settings, staff should again respect professional standards of interacting with students they may encounter, and avoid bringing themselves or the school into disrepute in any way.

27. When on a school trip, it is essential that all necessary procedures have been followed beforehand in organising the trip, and that teachers are fully aware of the nature of their responsibilities for supervision and care. They should take care that students do not misinterpret or abuse the more relaxed relationships which can arise during a school trip, and that professional boundaries remain in place.
28. Staff should not discuss colleagues with students and should support the school's policies and ethos at all times in discussion with students and parents. When working with students, staff are expected to dress in a professional way which reflects the seriousness and professionalism of their role, and which avoids conveying confusing or inappropriate messages. A standard of dress which at least reflects the expectations of personal presentation demanded of students is required. This means, practical considerations in some subject areas notwithstanding, normal smart business dress for both male and female colleagues.
29. On school visits, including particularly residential visits, these guidelines may appear more difficult to observe, and situations may appear more blurred. Nonetheless, the same principles apply, and staff must remember that they are adults, at work, with a responsibility for their behaviour and a duty of care for the young people they are with. If they feel relationships appear to students to be less formal than at school, there is all the more reason for observing the points in this guidance with greater care than ever.
30. Staff should be aware that they are responsible not only for their own safe behaviour, but for reporting any conduct by a colleague which gives rise to concern. The process for doing this is set out in the Whistle-blowing Policy.
31. All staff must gain permission from the Head teacher if they wish to bring any personal items/equipment on site. This includes any electrical equipment or personal belongings which will be left on site for more than 24 hours. A form may be obtained from the school Business Manager.