

MERE SCHOOL

Code of Conduct for Safe Practice

Introduction

This document provides a guide for adults working in schools (including staff, governors, volunteers and visitors) about acceptable and desirable conduct to protect both adults and pupils. It refers to and complements other policies and guidance in your school, including:

- School Child Protection Policy
- School Behaviour Policy
- School policy on physical interventions.

This policy is based upon the attached DfES document 'Guidance for Safe Working Practice for the Protection of Children and Staff in Education Settings' (Sept 2006), in which you can find useful examples of acceptable and unacceptable conduct, together with discussion of the issues raised.

All adults working in the school should know the name of the Designated Child Protection Teacher in the school, be familiar with local child protection arrangements, and understand their responsibilities to safeguard and protect children and young people.

Basic principles

- The child's welfare is paramount (Children Act 1989).
- Adults working in school are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should avoid any conduct which would lead a reasonable person to question their motivation or intentions.
- Adults working in the school must work and be seen to work in an open and transparent way.
- Adults should discuss and/or take advice promptly from their line manager or another senior member of staff about any incident which could give rise to concern. This would include reporting infatuations by a pupil for that or another member of staff, to ensure that such situations can be handled promptly and sensitively.
- A record should be kept of any such incident and of decisions made/further actions agreed, in accordance with school record keeping policy.
- Staff should apply the same professional standards regardless of gender or sexuality.
- Staff should be aware that breaches of the law and other professional guidelines could result in criminal or disciplinary action being taken against them.

All staff, volunteers and visitors to the schools must:

- Be familiar with and work in accordance with the school's policies including in particular:
 - Child Protection,
 - Positive Behaviour,
 - Physical Intervention,

- Internet Safety,
 - Intimate Care,
 - Health and Safety,,
 - Use of Photography and Video,
 - Whistleblowing.
- Provide a good example and a positive role model to pupils.
 - Behave in a mature, respectful, safe, fair and considered manner. For example, you must ensure that you:
 - are not sarcastic, and do not make remarks or 'jokes' to pupils of a personal, sexual, racist, discriminatory, intimidating or otherwise offensive nature
 - do not embarrass or humiliate children.
 - Do not discriminate favourably or unfavourably towards any child. For example,
 - treat all pupils equally – never build 'special' relationships or confer favour on particular pupils,
 - do not give or receive (other than token) gifts unless arranged through school.
 - Ensure that your relationship with pupils remains on a professional footing. For example, you must:
 - only touch pupils for professional reasons, and when this is necessary and appropriate for the pupil's wellbeing or safety (more guidance on this is set out in the DfES Guidance for Safe Practice referred to above).
 - not behave in a way that could lead a reasonable observer to question your conduct, intentions or suitability to care for other people's children.
 - not make arrangements to contact, communicate or meet with pupils outside your work (this includes use of email, text and other messaging systems).
 - not develop 'personal' or sexual relationships with pupils. In particular your attention is drawn to the provisions of the Sexual Offences Act 2003, which creates a new criminal offence of abuse of a position of trust (when a person aged 18 or over is in a 'position of trust' with a person under 18 and engages in sexual activity with or in the presence of that child, or causes or incites that child to engage in or watch sexual activity).

Reference documents

- Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education DfES Jan 2007
- School policies handbook
- LSCB Local Safeguarding Children Procedures
- Guidance for Safe Working Practice for the Protection of Children and Staff in Education Settings DfES (IRSC)

