



Staff Code of Conduct

Leighton Park School (**School**) values and respects all members of the community. Colleagues are expected to work in cooperation and collaboration, within the Quaker ethos of mutual trust, honesty and confidence and the Quaker values of:

- simplicity
- truth
- respect
- integrity
- peace
- equality
- sustainability

All Staff (as defined below) must be committed to promoting the safety, welfare and interests of children.

Purpose and application

- 1 **Purpose:** Relationships with fellow staff, employees, governors, contractors, visitors, volunteers, students and their parents or guardians should be professional and mutually respectful at all times. This Code has been formulated in order to maintain this balance and to set out clear guidance on the standards of behaviour expected from all Staff at the School. The principles underlying the Code aim to encourage Staff to achieve the highest possible standards of conduct and minimise the risk of inappropriate conduct occurring.

This Code of Conduct is not an exhaustive list of acceptable and unacceptable standards of behaviour. Staff have an individual responsibility to maintain their reputation, both inside and outside working hours and whether they are inside or outside the work setting. This Code of Conduct therefore applies equally when Staff are conducting lessons online or when it is necessary for them to work offsite or from home.

The School understands the need for a whole school child-centred approach to safeguarding: all systems, processes and policies are designed and operate with the best interests of our students at their heart.

This Code has regard to the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and the following (collectively referred to in this Code as the **Guidance**):

- 1.1 *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)* which refers to the non-statutory advice for practitioners: What to do if you're worried a child is being abused (March 2015).
- 1.2 *Relationship and Sex Education: Statutory guidance relating to Sex and Relationship Education* (2025).
- 1.3 *Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006* (August 2018).
- 1.4 *Working Together to safeguard children* (2023) (**WT**):
 - 1.4.1 WT refers to the non-statutory advice: *Information sharing* (March 2015).
- 1.5 *Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales* (2023) (**Prevent**). Prevent is supplemented by non-statutory advice and a briefing note:

- 1.5.1 *The Prevent Duty: Departmental advice for schools and childminders* (2015).
- 1.5.2 *The use of social media for online radicalisation* (July 2015).
- 1.6 Guidance on female genital mutilation, to include:
 - 1.6.1 *Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation* (July 2020).
 - 1.6.2 Home Office statutory guidance *Mandatory Reporting of Female Genital Mutilation: procedural information* (January 2020).
 - 1.6.3 Guidance published by the Department for Health which provides useful information and support for health professionals which will be taken into account by the School's medical staff.
- 1.7 *Teachers' Standards* (December 2021):
 - 1.7.1 Part 1 and Part 2 of the standards apply equally.
- 1.8 *National Minimum Standards for Boarding* (September 2022).

Therefore, the purpose of the Code is to:

- 1.9 confirm and reinforce the professional responsibilities of all Staff
 - 1.10 clarify the School's rules and requirements in relation to Staff/student relationships and communication including the use of social media
 - 1.11 set out the expectations of standards and behaviour to be maintained within the School and
 - 1.12 to help adults establish safe practices and reduce the risk of false accusations or improper conduct
- 2 **Application:** The Code of Conduct (**Code**) applies to all Staff working in Leighton Park School, whether paid or unpaid, whatever their position, role or responsibilities and "**Staff**" includes employees, casual workers, governors, contractors, temporary and supply staff, students and volunteers.
 - 3 **Your duty:** It is the duty of every member of Staff to observe the rules and obligations in this Code. The School also has a duty of care to its Staff, parents, guardians or carers, and students and the implementation of the practices in this Code will help to discharge that duty.
 - 4 **Wrongdoing:** All Staff are required to report their own wrongdoing, or any wrongdoing or proposed wrongdoing of any other member of Staff to the Head. The School operates a Whistleblowing Policy which should be followed where there is perceived wrongdoing. This can be done as a low level concern, reported to the DSL.
 - 5 **Application with other policies:** The Code should be read in conjunction with the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and the Whistleblowing Policy.

Safeguarding Students

- 6 **All Staff** have a duty to safeguard students from:
 - Physical abuse;
 - Sexual abuse including sexual harassment and sexual violence;
 - Emotional Abuse;
 - Neglect;
 - Extremism; and
 - All forms of child on child abuse, bullying, harassment and harmful sexual behaviour, noting that we have zero tolerance for such abuse.

Good practice in relation to safeguarding includes:

- treating all students with respect;
- setting a good example by behaving appropriately
- involving students in decisions that affect them;
- encouraging positive, respectful and safe behaviour among students;
- being a good listener;
- being alert to changes in students' behaviour and to signs of abuse, neglect, exploitation and extremism;
- recognising that challenging behaviour may be an indicator of abuse;
- maintaining an attitude of "it could happen here";
- reading and understanding the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, the applicable part(s) of KCSIE and guidance documents on wider safeguarding issues, for example bullying, behaviour, relationship and sex education, physical contact including the use of reasonable restraint, sexual exploitation, extremism, e-safety and information-sharing;
- maintaining appropriate standards of conversation and interaction with and between students and avoiding the use of sexualised or derogatory language;
- being aware that the personal and family circumstances and lifestyles of some students lead to an increased risk of abuse;
- applying the use of reasonable force only as a last resort and in compliance with School and Local Safeguarding Partners procedures;
- referring all concerns about a student's safety and welfare to the DSL, or, if necessary, directly to police or children's social care as well as using School systems (eg MyConcern, etc) to promptly log issues; and
- following the School's rules regarding relationships with students and communication with students, including on social media. Communication with students should only be via School email addresses or via Google Classroom and other Google Apps where appropriate.

Guiding principles***Principles for all Staff***

- 8.1 All Staff should put the wellbeing, development and progress of all students first by:
- 8.1.1 taking all reasonable steps to ensure the safety and wellbeing of students under their supervision;
 - 8.1.2 using professional expertise and judgment for the best interests of **all** students in their care (boarding and day);
 - 8.1.3 demonstrating self-awareness and taking responsibility for their own actions and for providing help and support to students;
 - 8.1.4 raising concerns about the practices of teachers or other professionals where these may have a negative impact on students' learning or progress, or may put students at risk;
 - 8.1.5 being familiar with the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy;
 - 8.1.6 knowing the role, identity and contact details of the current Safeguarding Lead and their deputies; and
 - 8.1.7 being aware that they are in a position of trust (i.e. the adult is in a position of power or influence over the student due to his or her work); that the

relationship is not a relationship between equals and that this position must never be used to intimidate, bully, humiliate, coerce or threaten students.

- 8.2 All Staff should demonstrate respect for diversity and take steps to promote equality by:
- 8.2.1 acting appropriately and in accordance with this Code of Conduct and the Safer Recruitment Consortium's *Guidance for Safer working practice for those working with young people in education settings, February 2022*, towards all students, parents, guardians or carers and colleagues;
 - 8.2.2 complying with the School's Equality and Anti-Bullying policies and this Code of Conduct;
 - 8.2.3 addressing issues of discrimination and bullying whenever they arise; and
 - 8.2.4 helping to create a fair and inclusive School environment.
- 8.3 All Staff should work as part of a unified Staff body by:
- 8.3.1 developing productive and supportive relationships with colleagues;
 - 8.3.2 acting in a respectful, collaborative, inclusive and fair manner, which includes in person and in communications such as Email, texts and other communications software;
 - 8.3.3 complying with all School policies and procedures;
 - 8.3.4 participating in the School's development and improvement activities;
 - 8.3.5 recognising the role of the School in the life of the local community;
 - 8.3.6 upholding the School's reputation and standing within the local community, building trust and confidence in it and not bringing the School into disrepute in any way. This means you must not make any comments that could damage the School's interests or reputation, or those of its Staff, even indirectly. This obligation extends to your use of social media, on which further details of your obligations are set out at paragraphs 80.7 and 80.10 below; and
 - 8.3.7 Advising the HR Manager should you be cautioned or convicted of any criminal offence. All disclosures will be managed respectfully and in line with appropriate guidance and the School's policies.
- 8.4 All Staff should understand that the School has a legal duty to have regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. This is known as the Prevent duty. Schools are required to assess the risk of children being drawn into terrorism, including support for extremist ideas that are part of terrorist ideology. Consequently Staff should be aware of:
- 8.4.1 what extremism and radicalisation means and why people – including students and fellow Staff members – may be vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism as a consequence of it;
 - 8.4.2 what measures are available to prevent people from becoming drawn into terrorism and how to challenge the extremist ideology that can be associated with it; and
 - 8.4.3 how to obtain support for people who may be being exploited by radicalising influences.
- 8.5 All Staff must speak to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy) with regard to any concerns about female genital mutilation (FGM) and involve children's social care as appropriate. Teachers must report to the police cases where they discover that an act of female genital mutilation appears to have been carried out or is

about to be carried out. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining students.

- 8.6 Staff should take responsibility for maintaining the quality of the educational services provided by the School by:
- 8.6.1 meeting the professional standards and expectations of their role and position within the School (including the Teaching Standards for teachers);
 - 8.6.2 reflecting on their current practice and seeking out opportunities to develop knowledge, understanding and skills;
 - 8.6.3 helping students to become confident and successful learners; and
 - 8.6.4 establishing productive relationships with parents, guardians or carers by:
 - (a) providing accessible and accurate information about their child's progress as directed by the School;
 - (b) involving them in important decisions about their child's education; and
 - (c) complying with this Code.
- 8.7 Staff should maintain public trust and confidence in the School by:
- 8.7.1 demonstrating honesty and integrity;
 - 8.7.2 understanding and demonstrating fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs;
 - 8.7.3 understanding and upholding their duty to safeguard the welfare of children and young people;
 - 8.7.4 maintaining good standards of behaviour whether inside or outside of normal School hours and whether on or off the School's site; and
 - 8.7.5 maintaining an effective learning environment.

Staff/ Student relationships

- 9 **Leighton Park is a Quaker School** and is founded on the conviction that there is 'that of God in everyone'. As Staff in a Quaker school we should look for the good in everyone and try to build on that; we should be positive in our approach rather than negative; and we should aim to help each individual student to fulfil their potential in mind, body and spirit.
- 10 **Application:** Allegations of unprofessional conduct or improper contact or words can arise at any time. Professionalism and vigilance are required so as to ensure the safety of children in our care, and to reduce the risk of an allegation of impropriety against a member of Staff. This guidance applies to all adults working in this School, and not just teachers.
- 11 **Professional boundaries:** Staff should ensure that their relationship with pupils clearly takes place within the boundaries of a respectful, professional relationship and avoid behaviour which may be misinterpreted by others.
- 12 **Self-referring:** Staff are encouraged to self-refer under the School's Low-Level Concerns Policy if they have found themselves in a situation which may be misinterpreted, might appear compromising to others, and/or on reflection they believe they have behaved in a way that may be considered to fall below the expected professional standard. All concerns will be handled sensitively and will be dealt with appropriately and proportionately. Staff should report these directly to the DSL.

Staff should advise senior staff if they intend to have an interaction with student(s) on a personal basis. This would normally be where your child attends LP and they are having an LP student over for tea or a sleepover or a similar event. If you are giving a friend of your

child a lift in your car this would also apply. If you are friends with parents and are socialising, this would also be a case to self-report. The email will be acknowledged. If in doubt self-report. the email address is selfreport@leightonpark.com

13 **Sexual contact:** Staff must not:

- 13.1 have any type of sexual relationship with a student or students;
- 13.2 have sexually suggestive or provocative communications with a student;
- 13.3 make sexual remarks to or about a student;
- 13.4 discuss their own sexual relationships in the presence of students; or
- 13.5 include references to sexual relationships or behaviour when using social media.

14 **Abuse of a position of trust and inappropriate relationships with School students:**

Sexual relationships or sexual contact with any students, or encouraging a relationship to develop in a way which might lead to a sexual relationship or any relationship considered inappropriate with any student at the School is a grave breach of trust that will usually lead to disciplinary action and may also lead to criminal prosecution. It is a criminal offence of an abuse of a position of trust to have any sexual relationship with any School student under the age of 18. It is a breach of this Code and considered to be gross misconduct to have a sexual relationship with any student of this School, even if over the age of 18.

15 **Inappropriate relationships with students at another school:** Forming relationships with children or young people who are students or students at another school will be a criminal offence if they are under 16 but may also be a criminal offence if under the age of 18 and will be regarded as gross misconduct. Such behaviour tends to bring the School into disrepute and gives rise to concern that the Staff involved cannot be trusted to maintain professional boundaries with students and students at the School. Whilst not necessarily a criminal offence, the School considers it unacceptable for Staff to form inappropriate relationships with a student of any school, irrespective of their age.

16 **General guidance:** You should be aware of the general guidance that will apply in all cases. In particular you:

- 16.1 need to exercise professional judgement but always act within the spirit of these guidelines. If you are involved in a situation where no specific guidance exists, you should discuss the circumstances with the Designated Safeguarding Lead. A written record should be kept that includes justification for any action taken;
- 16.2 must be aware of the risks of child-on-child abuse and be familiar with procedures for handling allegations against other children and bullying as set out in the School's child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures. Examples of child-on-child abuse are bullying (including cyberbullying), physical abuse, sexual violence and sexual harassment, upskirting, sexting and initiation and hazing;
- 16.3 must be aware of indicators that children are at risk from or are involved with serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs;
- 16.4 should be aware that some actions may be misconstrued by students as unprofessional conduct. Therefore, Staff should all be alert to situations where they and other Staff are potentially vulnerable to false allegations of abuse;
- 16.5 must be familiar with procedures for handling allegations against Staff;

- 16.6 must be aware of the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Whistleblowing Policy; and
- 16.7 must seek guidance from the Designated Safeguarding Lead if you are in any doubt about appropriate conduct.
- 17 ***Behaviour giving particular cause for concern:*** You should take particular care when dealing with a student who:
- 17.1 appears to be emotionally distressed, or generally vulnerable and/or who is seeking expressions of affection;
- 17.2 appears to hold a grudge against you;
- 17.3 acts in a sexually provocative way, or who is inclined to make exaggerated claims about themselves and others, or to fantasise, or one whose manner with adults is over-familiar; or
- 17.4 may have reason to make up an allegation to cover the fact that he or she has not worked hard enough for public examinations
- 18 ***Procedure to be followed in these cases:*** Some of the behaviours set out in the above paragraph may be indications that a child has been or is currently being abused and should therefore be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead under the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- 19 ***Record keeping:*** Comprehensive records are essential. Any incident involving children that could give cause for concern, whether contemplated in these guidelines or not, must be recorded, with justifications for any action taken. In addition, any incident should be reported promptly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. At Leighton Park all concerns should be entered onto MyConcern as soon as possible and supporting documents attached. Original documents must always be kept.
- 20 ***Good order and discipline:*** Staff in charge or control of students must maintain good order and discipline at all times when students are present on School premises and whenever students are engaged in authorised school activities, whether on School premises or elsewhere.

Alcohol and Illegal Drugs

- 21 Consumption of alcohol is not permitted on site, save where at a School function or as otherwise agreed by the Head when modest amounts of alcohol may be consumed. Staff that reside on site may consume modest quantities of alcohol in private accommodation when they are not on duty or on call. Consumption of illegal drugs is never permitted.

Your conduct and performance must not be adversely impacted by alcohol or drugs when undertaking your duties. If this is deemed to be the case, it may become a disciplinary matter.

Smoking

- 21 To promote a healthy and pleasant working environment and because of the fire risk, smoking (in any form, including the use of e-cigarettes/ vapes) is not allowed anywhere on site or within any of the School's vehicles. You must not smoke on School premises or outside school gates. Any member of Staff wishing to smoke must leave the School grounds.

You must not smoke whilst working with or supervising pupils offsite.

Health and Safety

- 23 All Staff have a duty to ensure that a safe working environment exists. Fire and evacuation procedures must be adhered to at all times

Relationships with Colleagues

- 24 Leighton Park School is committed to being a fair and equitable employer, as set out in the School's Equalities Policy, which asserts its commitment to an employment culture in which people can feel confident of being treated with fairness, respect, dignity, politeness and tolerance, irrespective of their individual differences.
- 25 The School's Grievance Policy explains what employees should do if they have a grievance, or if they feel they are being bullied harassed or victimised, and how the School will deal with such issues.
- 26 The School will not tolerate harassment or bullying within the School community. All staff have a duty to ensure everyone is treated reasonably and without fear of bullying, harassment or victimisation.

Personal/Romantic Relationships

- 27 Where two members of Staff embark a personal/romantic relationship with one another, both members of Staff must notify their respective line managers of the relationship. The information will be treated in confidence, although line managers may need to discuss the matter with certain colleagues in order to manage any potential conflicts of interest.
- 28 Where there is a personal/romantic relationship between members of Staff, personal issues and discussions must be kept outside of school.
- 29 Any personal/romantic relationship between a member of Staff in a management or leadership role and a more junior colleague, must be notified to the Head. The School is aware of the inherent risk of coercion and the perception by others of exploitation in such relationships. Staff are referred to the School's Equality Policy and the Anti-Bullying Policy, and are reminded of the School's zero tolerance of harassment and bullying. If any member of Staff feels uncomfortable as a result of the behaviour or sexual advances of a more senior colleague, they should refer their concerns to anyone in a leadership or management role. Any such concerns will always be taken seriously and will always be investigated.

Equal Treatment

- 30 The School is committed to equal treatment for all Staff and pupils regardless of their race or colour, nationality or national or ethnic origins, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, marital or civil partnership status, gender reassignment, age, and disability (together known as "Protected Characteristics").
- 31 We aim to create a friendly, caring and perceptive environment in which every individual is valued. We treat all our pupils and their parents fairly and with consideration which we expect them to reciprocate towards each other, the Staff and the School. Bullying, harassment, victimisation and discrimination will not be tolerated, whether the issue relates to Staff, pupils or parents.
- 32 The School applies the following definitions to harassment, bullying, victimisation and discrimination:
 - 32.1 Harassment is defined by the Equality Act 2010 as unwanted conduct related to a relevant Protected Characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual.
 - 32.2 Bullying will often involve persistent, maybe deliberate, harm, intimidation or humiliation. Bullying is often, although not always, related to the misuse or abuse of power or position. It is not necessarily always obvious or apparent to others and may happen in the workplace without an employer's awareness. It can also occur in written communications, by phone or through email, not just face-to-face.

32.3 Victimisation may occur when a person is treated less favourably than another person because they have made, or supported, a complaint of harassment, bullying or discrimination.

32.4 Discrimination as defined in the Equality Act 2010.

Staff should ensure that they are familiar with the School's Equality Policy and the Anti-Bullying Policy. Allegations of bullying both in relation to Staff and students will always be investigated.

33 The School will take all reasonable steps to fulfil its obligations to protect its Staff from inappropriate conduct and where it does occur, will offer and provide where needed, support to Staff.

General conduct

34 **School property:** You must take proper care when using School property and you must not use School property for any unauthorised use or for private gain.

35 **Use of premises:** You must not carry out on School premises any work or activity other than pursuant to the terms and conditions of your contract with the School without the prior permission of the Head.

36 **Behaviour of others:** You should be aware that the behaviour of your partner or other family members or any member of your household may raise concerns. You must bring to the immediate attention of the School any concerns or behaviour which could affect the welfare of a member of the School community or bring the School into disrepute. Such concerns will be given careful consideration as to whether they constitute a potential risk to children at the School.

Meetings with students

37 **One-to-one meetings:** Staff working individually with pupils should be aware of the potential vulnerability of pupils and Staff in such situations. If you are conducting a one-to-one meeting or teaching session with a student (e.g. an individual instrumental lesson), you should take particular care in the following ways:

37.1 when working alone with a student is an integral part of your role, conduct and agree full risk assessments with the Senior Deputy Head/ Head;

37.2 use a room that has sufficient windows onto a corridor so the occupants can be seen, or keep the door open, or inform a colleague that the lesson/meeting is taking place;

37.3 arrange the meeting during normal School hours when there are plenty of other people about;

37.4 do not continue the meeting for any longer than is necessary to achieve its purposes;

37.5 avoid sitting or standing in close proximity to the student, except as necessary to check work;

37.6 avoid using "engaged" or equivalent signs on doors or windows;

37.7 avoid idle discussion;

37.8 avoid all unnecessary physical contact and apologise straight away if there is accidental physical contact;

37.9 avoid any conduct that could be taken as a sexual advance;

37.10 report any incident that causes you concern to the Designated Safeguarding Lead under the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and make a written record (signed and dated);

37.11 report any situation where a student becomes distressed or angry to the Senior Deputy Head/Head;

- 37.12 wherever possible one to one work should only be undertaken with the knowledge and consent of a senior member of Staff to minimise risk to those involved; and
- 37.13 where it is necessary to conduct a one to one session online (for example, using a platform such as Zoom or Teams) Staff must ensure that a senior member of Staff is aware of the session and, wherever possible, arrange for a parent to be in the same room, or alternatively, ask a colleague or a member of SLT to join the session.
- 38 **Pre-arranged meetings:** pre-arranged meetings with students outside School should not be permitted unless approval is obtained from their parents, guardians or carers and the Senior Deputy Head/ Head. If you are holding such a meeting, you should inform colleagues before the meeting.
- 39 **In boarding spaces:** all Staff should be aware of relationships within the boarding environment, which can be different from those in a day context. Staff should:
- 39.1 be respectful of boarders' space and privacy;
- 39.2 knock before entering the bedroom, giving time for a student to respond before entering (unless there is a fear of risk or immediate danger to the student);
- 39.3 not spend too much time in a student's room - any lengthy conversations or social time, playing board games etc. should be done in the duty room or the social spaces of the house. Always keep the door open when going into a single occupancy room and do the same if alone with a boarder in a multiple occupancy room;
- 39.4 be aware of times when boarders may be in a state of undress and afford them the privacy they deserve;
- 39.5 announce yourself when entering changing rooms/ bathrooms and avoid remaining unless required. Be mindful, in a shower a student may not hear you enter; and
- 39.6 be especially careful of times when, as a boarding member of Staff, you may be in a one to one position with a student.
- 40 **The use of personal living space:** students should not be in or invited into the personal living space of any member of Staff, unless agreed with the parents, guardians and carers and the Senior Deputy Head/Head. Students should not be asked to assist with chores or tasks in the personal living space. Personal living spaces should not be used as an additional resource for the School.

Language and appearance

- 41 **Language:** You should use appropriate language at all times. You should:
- 41.1 avoid words or expressions that have any unnecessary sexual content or innuendo;
- 41.2 avoid displays of affection either personally or in writing (e.g. messages in birthday cards, text messages, emails etc);
- 41.3 avoid any form of aggressive or threatening words;
- 41.4 avoid any words or actions that are over-familiar;
- 41.5 not swear, blaspheme or use any sort of offensive language in front of students;
- 41.6 avoid the use of sarcasm, discriminatory, or derogatory words when punishing or disciplining students and avoid making unprofessional personal comments about anyone. Any sanctions should be in accordance with the School's behaviour and discipline policies.
- 42 Be aware that some parts of the curriculum may raise sexually explicit subject matters. Care should be taken in subjects where rules/boundaries are relaxed (e.g. drama or art). Staff should have clear lesson plans and should take care to avoid overstepping personal and professional boundaries.

- 43 **Dress:** You should dress appropriately and in a professional manner. Dress must not be offensive, distracting, revealing, or sexually provocative, embarrassing or discriminatory. Political or other contentious slogans or badges are not allowed. When working from home or remotely (including the delivery of online lessons, or virtual meetings using a virtual meeting platform such as Zoom and/or Teams) Staff must ensure they are dressed appropriately in clothing that is smart and of a similar style to what they would wear on a normal School day.

The use of force or physical restraint

- 44 **Physical restraint:** All forms of corporal punishment are unlawful and the use of unwarranted physical force is likely to constitute a criminal offence. The use of physical intervention should be avoided if possible. However, by law, Staff who are authorised by the Head to have control or charge of students, may use such force or physical contact as is reasonable and proportionate in the circumstances to prevent a student from doing, or continuing to do any of the following:
- 44.1 committing a criminal offence
 - 44.2 injuring themselves or others
 - 44.3 causing damage to property, including their own
 - 44.4 engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to good order and discipline at the School or among any of its students, whether that behaviour occurs in a classroom or elsewhere
- 45 **Application of physical restraint policy:** This applies when a teacher, or other authorised person, is on School premises and when he or she is in control or charge of the student elsewhere, for example on a field trip or other authorised out of school activity. It only applies where no other form of control is available and where it is necessary to intervene.
- 46 **Before intervening:** Before intervening physically you should, wherever practicable, tell the student to stop and what will happen if he or she does not. You should continue attempting to communicate with the student throughout the incident and should make it clear that physical contact or restraint will stop as soon as it ceases to be necessary. You should always avoid touching or holding a student in a way that might be considered indecent. You should also avoid any form of aggressive contact such as holding, pushing, pulling or hitting which could amount to a criminal assault, nor act in a way that might reasonably be expected to cause injury.
- 47 **Inform senior Staff:** You should inform the Senior Deputy Head/ Head immediately following an incident where force has been used. This is to help prevent any misunderstanding or misrepresentation of the incident, and it will be helpful in the event of a complaint. You should provide a written report as soon as possible afterwards. This should include written and signed accounts of those involved, including the student. The parents, guardians or carers of the student should be informed about serious incidents involving the use of force. The Head will advise when parents should be contacted.
- 48 **Action taken in self-defence or in an emergency:** The law allows anyone to defend themselves against an attack provided they do not use more force than is necessary. Similarly, where a student is at risk of immediate injury or on the point of inflicting injury on someone else, any member of Staff (whether authorised or not) would be entitled to intervene.
- 49 **Using reasonable force:** There is no legal definition of "reasonable force". It will always depend on the circumstances. Note that:
- 49.1 any use of force should be proportionate to the behaviour of the student involved and the seriousness of the harm prevented;
 - 49.2 physical force could not be justified to prevent a student from committing a trivial misdemeanour;
 - 49.3 any force should always be the minimum needed to achieve the desired result; and

- 49.4 whether it is reasonable to use force and the degree of force that could be reasonably employed might also depend on the age, understanding and sex of the student.

Physical contact in other circumstances

- 50 **When physical contact may be appropriate:** Physical contact with a student may be necessary and beneficial in order to demonstrate a required action, or a correct technique in, for example, singing and other music lessons or during PE, sports and games. Any physical contact should be in response to the student's needs, of limited duration and appropriate to the student's age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background. Physical contact can be easily misinterpreted and should be limited. Staff should use professional judgement.
- 51 **Guidance on using physical contact:** You should observe the following guidelines (where applicable):
- 51.1 explain the intended action to the student;
 - 51.2 do not proceed with the action if the student appears to be apprehensive or reluctant, or if you have other concerns about the student's likely reaction;
 - 51.3 ensure that the door is open and if you are in any doubt, ask a colleague or another student to be present during the demonstration; and
 - 51.4 consider alternatives if it appears likely that the student might misinterpret the contact.
- 52 **Report concerns:** If you are at all concerned about any instance of physical contact, inform the Senior Deputy Head/ Head without delay, and make a written record in the incident book and on the student's file if necessary.
- 53 **Offering comfort to distressed students:** Touching may be appropriate where a student is in distress and needs comforting. You should use your own professional judgement when you feel a student needs this kind of support and should be aware of any special circumstances relating to the student. For example, a child who has been abused may find physical contact particularly difficult. You should always notify the Senior Deputy Head/Head when comfort has been offered in an 'unusual' situation that is out of the ordinary, record the action and should seek guidance if unsure whether it would be appropriate in a particular case. Ultimately, Staff should avoid all but the most necessary contact with students.
- 54 **Administering first aid:** When administering first aid you should explain to the child what is happening and ensure that another adult is present or is aware of the action being taken. The treatment must meet the School's Health and Safety Manual and First Aid Policy, and parents, guardians or carers should be informed. Staff should:
- 54.1 adhere to the School's policy on administering first aid/medication;
 - 54.2 comply with the necessary reporting requirements;
 - 54.3 make other adults aware of the task that is being undertaken;
 - 54.4 explain what is happening;
 - 54.5 report and record the administration of first aid;
 - 54.6 have regard to any health plans; and
 - 54.7 ensure that an appropriate health/risk assessment is undertaken prior to undertaking certain activities.
- 55 **Students' entitlement to privacy:** Children are entitled to privacy when changing or showering. However there still must be an appropriate level of supervision to ensure safety. You should:
- 55.1 avoid physical contact or visually intrusive behaviour when children are undressed;

- 55.2 announce yourself when entering changing rooms/ bathrooms and avoid remaining unless required;
- 55.3 announce yourself when entering a boarding student's room;
- 55.4 not shower or change in the same place as children; and
- 55.5 not assist with any personal care task which a student can undertake themselves.

56 **Where a child has been abused:** Where a child has previously been abused, Staff should be informed on a 'need to know' basis and should be extra cautious when considering the necessity of physical contact. Some children may seek inappropriate physical contact. Staff should sensitively deter the student and help them understand the importance of personal boundaries. Such incidents should be reported and discussed with the Senior Deputy Head/Head and parents, guardians or carers where appropriate. You should never view any part of the pupil's body normally covered by clothing.

57 **Children with special educational needs or disabilities:** Some children may need more physical contact to assist their everyday learning, which should be agreed and understood by all concerned, justified, openly applied and open to scrutiny. The Designated Safeguarding Lead and School SENCO will establish whether any reasonable adjustments are required for such students.

Code of conduct for contact outside School

58 **Contact outside School:** You should avoid unnecessary contact with students outside School. You should:

- 58.1 not give students your home address, home phone number, mobile phone number or email address;
- 58.2 not send personal communications (such as birthday cards or faith cards, text messages etc) to children unless agreed with the Head;
- 58.3 not make arrangements to meet students, individually or in groups (whether in person or online), outside School other than on school trips authorised by the Head;
- 58.4 not contact students at home unless this is strictly necessary, and you should keep a record of any such occasion;
- 58.5 not give private tuition to current students of, or applicants to, the School;
- 58.6 not give a student a lift in your own vehicle other than on School business and with permission from the Head;
- 58.7 not invite students (groups or individuals) to your home unless there is a good reason, and it has been approved by the Head. This prohibition also applies if you have on site accommodation;
- 58.8 report and record any situation which may place a child at risk or which may compromise the School's or your professional standing;
- 58.9 ensure that students do not see anything in your home that may cause embarrassment or that might become the subject of inappropriate gossip or rumour; and
- 58.10 never engage in secretive social contact with students or their parents, guardians or carers.

59 **Social contact:** You should be aware that where you meet children or parents, guardians or carers socially, such contact could be misinterpreted as inappropriate, abuse of a position of trust or grooming. Any social contact that could give rise to concern should be reported to the Senior Deputy Head/ Head.

Where Staff have access to confidential information about students or parents or carers, Staff must not reveal such information except to those colleagues who have a professional role in relation to the student. This includes informal discussions in social environments.

- 60 **Friendships with parents, guardians or carers and students:** Members of Staff who are friends with parents, guardians or carers of students or who, for example, are voluntary workers in youth organisations attended by students, will of course have contact with those students outside School. However, members of Staff should still respect the above advice wherever possible and should always keep the Head informed of such relationships, and should consult the Head for advice if they are ever in doubt about the appropriateness of any such contact. Using the selfreport@leightonpark.com email address should be used for these issues.
- 61 **Friendships of Staff children with students of the School:** where a member of Staff's children are friends with students of the School, there may be occasions when students come to a Staff member's house. Staff should take care to ensure that other colleagues are aware of this and to liaise as appropriately with other parents. Where students are staying over, Staff should adopt the approach as set out for boarding Staff above. A senior colleague should always be informed when this happens. If in doubt, seek advice from the Senior Deputy Head about how best to proceed. Using the selfreport@leightonpark.com email address should be used for these issues.
- 62 **Staff who have children who attend the School:** It is acknowledged that some Staff also have children who attend the School. It is recognised that in these cases the Staff fulfil a dual role of parent and employee. Parents as employees should ensure that they uphold boundaries between the two roles and that their behaviour may not be perceived as constituting a conflict of interest and that it does not impact on the reputation of the School. For example, they must maintain the same level of confidentiality despite social expectations. Parent-staff should discuss any potential inter-role conflict or other concerns with the Head.
- There may be occasions when students of the School attend the house of a member of Staff by virtue of the fact that those students are friends with the children of that member of Staff's children. Where this occurs, Staff should follow the rules set out about for "Friendships of Staff children with students of the School".
- The School acknowledges that Staff who are also parents may wish to make contact with other parents, over social media. Staff must exercise caution and professional judgement in these circumstances and should not have any contact with pupils' family members via social media if that contact may constitute a conflict of interest or call into question their professionalism or if this may be damaging to the reputation of the School. If the member of staff is unclear on any issue, they should discuss this with the Head. [OS1]Using the selfreport@leightonpark.com email address should be used for these issues.
- 63 **Scope of application of Code on contact outside School:** The same guidelines should be applied to after school clubs, school trips, and especially trips that involve an overnight stay away from the School. There are separate, more detailed guidelines for school trips in the Educational Visits Policy. The principles of this guidance also apply to contact with children or young people who are students at another school.
- 64 **Transporting students:** There may be some situations when Staff are required to transport students on approved School business. You should:
- 64.1 ensure that you are fit to drive and free from any substances that may impair your judgement or ability to drive;
 - 64.2 be aware that until the student is passed over to a parent/carer, you have responsibility for that student's health and safety;
 - 64.3 record the details of the journey;
 - 64.4 contact the Senior Deputy Head or DSL or a member of her team to obtain permission should this not already have been given;
 - 64.5 record and be able to justify impromptu or emergency lifts and notify the Head;

- 64.6 ensure that there are proper arrangements in place to ensure vehicle, passenger and driver safety, including appropriate insurance, seat belts, adherence to maximum capacity guidelines etc;
 - 64.7 wherever practicable, you should avoid using private vehicles and should try and have one adult additional to the driver to act as an escort; and
 - 64.8 Seek advice from the Senior Deputy Head or EVC regarding these issues well before they are planned to take place.
- 65 **Educational visits:** When taking part in educational visits, you should:
- 65.1 follow the School's policy on Educational Visits;
 - 65.2 be accompanied by another adult unless otherwise agreed with the Senior Deputy Head/ Head and/ or EVC;
 - 65.3 always undertake a risk assessment;
 - 65.4 obtain parental consent; and
 - 65.5 never share bedrooms unless in a dormitory situation and arrangements have been discussed and agreed previously with the Head and, where appropriate, parents, guardians or carers and students
- 66 **Overnight supervision:** Where overnight supervision is required, eg. to preserve the integrity of the examination process:
- 66.1 you should ensure that a risk assessment has been undertaken and that all members of the household have had the appropriate checks;
 - 66.2 arrangements should be made with and agreed by parents, guardians or carers and the student;
 - 66.3 one to one supervision should be avoided where possible;
 - 66.4 choice, flexibility and contact with "the outside world" should be incorporated, so far as it is consistent with appropriate supervision and the School's guidelines;
 - 66.5 whenever possible, independent oversight of the arrangements should be made; and
 - 66.6 any misinterpretation, misunderstanding or complaint should be reported.

Communication

- 67 Good communication between all members of the School community is vital. All communication between Staff, pupils and parents should take place within clear, explicit and professional boundaries. This includes both in person communication and online, via Email text or other communication software.

Communication with students

- 68 **Communicating with students:** All communication with children should conform to School policy and be limited to professional matters. Staff should carefully consider the manner in which they communicate with pupils at all times so as to avoid any possible misinterpretation of their motives or behaviours. Except in an emergency communication should only be made using School devices.
- 69 **Application:** These rules apply to any form of communication including mobile phones, web-cameras, social networking websites and blogs.
- 70 **Dealing with "crushes":** Crushes, fixations or infatuations are part of normal adolescent development. However, they need sensitive handling to avoid allegations of exploitation. Such "crushes" carry a high risk of words, actions and expressions being misinterpreted; therefore, the highest levels of professionalism are required. If you suspect that a student has a "crush" on you or on another colleague, you should bring it to the attention of the Head at the earliest opportunity. Suggestions that a student may have developed a

"crush" should be recorded. Staff should avoid being alone with students who have developed a "crush" on them and if the student sends personal communications to the member of Staff, this should be reported to the Senior Deputy Head/Head and recorded. Staff should deal with these situations sensibly and appropriately to maintain the dignity and safety of all concerned. Using the selfreport@leightonpark.com email address should be used for these issues.

- 71 **Personal details:** Staff should not give their personal contact details to students, including email addresses, home or mobile telephone numbers, nor should they communicate with them by social media, text message or personal email. If they need to speak to a student by telephone, they should use one of the School's telephones and email using the School system. Any communication on video call platforms, such as Microsoft Teams or Zoom must be for professional reasons only and should accord with the rules of this Code of Conduct at all times.
- 72 **Communicating on trips and visits:** The group leader on all trips and visits involving an overnight stay should take a School-issued mobile phone with him/her and may ask the pupils for their mobile numbers before allowing them out in small, unsupervised groups. The School-issued mobile should be used for any contact with pupils that may be necessary. The group leader will delete from the School-issued mobile any record of pupils' mobile phone numbers at the end of the trip or visit and should ensure that pupils delete any phone numbers that they may have acquired during the trip for the School-issued mobiles being used by Staff. Staff must never use their personal devices to contact pupils.
- 73 **Communicating outside the agreed protocols:** Communications between an adult and a student outside agreed protocols may lead to a report to external agencies in accordance with the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, disciplinary action and/or criminal investigations. This also includes communications through internet-based websites.

Communication with Parents

- 74 Form tutors are expected to be the first point of contact between parents and the School, although enquiries will also come through the School Office. Staff can contact parents by telephone, email or letter. Staff should not contact pupils, parents or conduct any School business using personal email addresses.
- 75 Where a member of Staff receives an email from a parent, a reply should normally be made within one working day. If a full reply cannot be made within that time, the member of Staff should send a brief acknowledgment e-mail and let the parent know when a fuller reply can be expected.
- 76 Staff sending emails to parents/carers are advised to send a copy (cc or bcc) to their line manager.
- 77 Staff must inform their line manager if they receive an offensive email.

Communication with Colleagues

- 78 You must work collaboratively with colleagues, respecting their skills and contributions, and treating them fairly and with respect in line with the Schools' values
- 79 All communication with colleagues, whether written or verbal, should be professional and polite in tone, and you should use appropriate language. Intimidating and angry written communications are not helpful and should be avoided.

Acceptable Use of Technologies:

- 80 Staff must establish safe and responsible online behaviours and must be familiar and comply with the Social Media Policy and IT Acceptable Use Policy at all times. Local and national guidelines on acceptable user policies should be followed. Staff should also:

- 80.1 ensure that your own personal social networking profiles are set as private, with the highest security settings, and ensure that students are not approved contacts;
- 80.2 never use or access social networking sites of students;
- 80.3 not contact pupils, their guardians or family members, accept or initiate friend requests or follow pupils' or their guardians' accounts on any social media platform;
- 80.4 do not use your own equipment or devices (e.g. mobile phones) to communicate with students - use equipment or devices provided by the School and only make contact with students for professional reasons;
- 80.5 recognise that text messaging should only be used as part of an agreed protocol and only when other forms of communication are not possible;
- 80.6 avoid any discussions about the School or their students, parents or employees in online areas that may subsequently or inadvertently become available to others;
- 80.7 not contact Leighton Park students by means of personal social media sites unless they are over the age of 18 and left the School at least 1 year (12 months) ago;
- 80.8 exercise care when using dating websites where Staff could encounter students;
- 80.9 not engage in inappropriate use of social network sites which may bring themselves, the School or the School community into disrepute;
- 80.10 remain mindful of their digital footprint and exercise caution in all their use of social media or any other web based presence they have. This includes written content, videos or photographs and views expressed either directly or by 'liking' certain pages or posts or following certain individuals or groups.
- 80.11 Should there be any concern the selfreport@leightonpark.com email address should be used to record these issues and gain support..

Code of conduct for photographs and videos

- 81 **Permission required:** You should only take photographs or video footage, of students in class, or at a school event or on a trip, for strictly educational purposes and in line with the School's Use of, Taking and Storing of Images Policy. You must not take images of children using personal mobile telephones or other photographic device; you should use equipment provided by the School for this purpose. Appropriate consents for taking and displaying photographs should be obtained from parents, guardians or carers where appropriate. It is also important to consider the wishes of the pupil, remembering that some pupils do not wish to have their photograph taken or be filmed. In accordance with data protection legislation, the image of a pupil is personal data.
- 82 **Guidance where parental permission obtained:** Where permission has been obtained, the following should be considered:
 - 82.1 the purpose of the activity should be clear as to what should happen to the photographs or videos. You must be able to justify images in your possession;
 - 82.2 all images should be made available in order to determine acceptability;
 - 82.3 images should not be made during one-to-one situations;
 - 82.4 ensure that the student is appropriately dressed;
 - 82.5 ensure that the student understands why the images are being taken and has agreed to the activity;
 - 82.6 only use equipment provided or authorised by the School;
 - 82.7 if an image is to be displayed in a place to which the public have access it should not display the student's name. Similarly, where a student is named (in a school prospectus, for example) the name should not be accompanied by a photograph or video;

82.8 all images of children should be stored securely and only accessed by those authorised to do so; and

82.9 images must not be taken secretly.

- 83 **Appropriate material:** You must ensure children are not exposed to inappropriate or indecent images. Inappropriate material, such as pornography, should not be brought to work and you must not use School property or the School network to access such material. You should not allow unauthorised access to School equipment and should keep your computer passwords safe. If you discover material that is potentially illegal or inappropriate, you must isolate the equipment and contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead under the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy immediately. Students must not be exposed to unsuitable material on the internet and Staff should ensure that any film or material shown is age appropriate.

Gifts and rewards

- 84 **It is expected that:** all Staff will maintain a high standard of honesty and integrity in their work. This includes the handling and claiming of money and the use of School property and facilities.

- 85 **Anti-bribery and corruption policy:** Before accepting or giving any gifts or rewards, Staff must familiarise themselves with the Anti-Bribery and Corruption Policy.

- 86 **If a gift is received:** If you receive a gift from a student or parent you should:

86.1 declare the gift where there is a possibility it could be misconstrued, or in any event where the gift is of a value of more than £100. The Bursar may in their absolute discretion require you to decline the gift; and

86.2 decline outright gifts that could be perceived as a bribe or that have created an expectation of preferential treatment. Although it is accepted for parents, guardians or carers or children to make small gifts to show appreciation, you must not receive gifts on a regular basis or receive anything of significant value.

- 87 **Giving gifts and rewards:** Where you are thinking of giving a gift or reward:

87.1 it should only be provided as part of an agreed reward system;

87.2 in all cases except the above, the gift or reward should be of little monetary value and should be discussed and agreed with the Head and where appropriate, the parent, guardian or carer;

87.3 selection processes should be fair and where possible should be agreed by more than one member of Staff; and

87.4 gifts should be given openly and not based on favouritism.

- 88 **Allocation of gifts and rewards:** Decisions regarding entitlement to benefits or privileges such as admission to school trips, activities or classroom tasks must avoid perceptions of bias, grooming or favouritism. The selection process must be based on transparent criteria. Similar care should be exercised when excluding a child from an activity without prior consultation with the Head or the Senior Deputy Head.

- 89 **Staff gifts and rewards;** The use of departmental budgets for providing gifts to Staff (e.g for leavers gifts) should not occur. These gifts are considered personal and so should be funded through personal Staff contributions. Gifts using School funds in extraordinary circumstances (e.g long service) should always be cleared with the Head prior to any purchases.

Consequences of breaching this policy

- 90 **The School's position:** It is a contractual requirement as well as in your interests to follow this Code so as to maintain appropriate standards of behaviour and your own professional reputation. A breach of this Code may be treated as misconduct and will render you liable to disciplinary action including, in serious cases, dismissal.

- 91 **Termination of employment:** If the School ceases to use the services of a member of Staff because they are unsuitable to work with children, a settlement agreement (formerly known as a compromise agreement) will not be used and a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service will be made as soon as possible if the criteria for referral are met. Any such incidents will be followed by a review of the safeguarding procedures within the School, with a report being presented to the Governors without delay.
- 92 **Resignation:** If a member of Staff tenders his or her resignation or ceases to provide his or her services to the School at a time when child protection concerns exist in relation to that person, those concerns will still be investigated in full by the School and a referral will be made to the Disclosure and Barring Service as soon as possible if the criteria for referral are met.
- 93 **Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) (previously known as the National College for Teaching and Leadership):** Where a teacher has been dismissed, or would have been dismissed had they not resigned, because of unacceptable professional conduct, conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute, or a conviction for a relevant offence, separate consideration will be given as to whether a referral to the TRA should be made.

Concerns or Complaints

- 94 The School aims to create an atmosphere in which a diverse range of people can work together openly in the spirit of mutual respect and trust towards a common purpose. Nevertheless, we recognise that it is possible for misunderstandings and disagreements to arise or for mistakes to occur.
- 95 **Staff Complaints:** Complaints should be dealt with immediately and openly and Staff should try to resolve issues informally in the first instance. If this approach is impractical or unsuccessful, Staff may wish to raise their concerns more formally in accordance with the School's Grievance Procedure or Whistleblowing Procedure, depending upon the nature of the concern.
- 96 **Parental Complaints:** Staff must ensure that parental complaints are dealt with in accordance with the School's Parental Complaints Policy and Procedure.
- 97 **Safeguarding:** For procedures for dealing with concerns or allegations about a child or disclosures / allegations of abuse, Staff should refer to the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.
- 98 **Low-level concerns:**

As part of our whole school approach to safeguarding, we promote an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about adults working in or on behalf of the School are dealt with promptly and appropriately. This includes any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' - that an adult working in or on behalf of the School may have acted in a way that:

- 98.1 is inconsistent with this Code of Conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work; and
- 98.2 does not meet the harm threshold set out in Part 4 of the statutory guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), or is otherwise not serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

Such allegations or concerns are referred to as "low-level concerns" within KCSIE. The term "low-level" does not mean that it is insignificant. Such behaviour can exist on a wide spectrum, from the inadvertent or thoughtless, or behaviour that may look to be inappropriate, but might not be in specific circumstances, through to that which is ultimately intended to enable abuse.

In order to create and embed a culture of openness, trust and transparency in which the School's values and expected behaviour set out in this Code of Conduct are lived, monitored and reinforced constantly by all Staff, it is vital that any such low-level concerns are shared in accordance with the School's Low-Level Concerns Policy.

Any questions regarding low-level concerns and/or the procedure for reporting them should be raised with the Head.

Queries and Clarification

- 99 If Staff are ever unclear about any of the rules set out in this Code of Conduct, or if they ever find themselves in a situation in which they need clarity as to the appropriate course of action, they should consult the Head or Senior Deputy Head for advice.

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