



Introduction

This document provides a guide for adults working at St Laurence (including staff, peripatetic teachers, governors, volunteers and visitors) about acceptable and desirable conduct to protect both adults and students. This Code includes our responsibility for safeguarding and also wider professional obligations. It refers to and complements other policies or guidance within the School and is based on the DfE document Keeping Children Safe in Education (Sept 2022). This code reflects the Wiltshire Council model. Useful examples of acceptable and unacceptable conduct, together with discussion of the issues raised, can be found in the DfE document named above.

All adults working at St Laurence School should know the name of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), the named deputy DSLs, be familiar with local child protection arrangements, and understand their responsibilities to safeguard and protect young people.

Basic principles

- The child's welfare is paramount (Children Act 1989); all adults in school are in a position of trust. All of us have a responsibility to maintain public confidence in our ability to safeguard the welfare and best interests of young people.
- All adults working at St Laurence should maintain an attitude of **"it could happen here"** as far as safeguarding is concerned and not assume that someone else will report a concern.
- All adults working at St Laurence should be aware of the process for making the different kinds of safeguarding referrals.
- Adults working in the School are responsible for their own action and behaviour and should avoid any conduct which would lead a reasonable person to question their motivation or intentions or bring the Academy into disrepute.
- Adults working in the School must work and be seen to work in an open and transparent way.
- Adults working in school must ensure that the manner and content of communications with other agencies and organisations reflects the values of integrity and fairness to which we are committed. Staff should seek advice from their line manager or a senior member of staff if in doubt about how to manage such communications.
- 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 student for an adult, 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.
- The same professional standards are applied regardless of gender or sexuality.
- Adults should be aware that breaches of the law and other professional guidelines, including this Code of Conduct, could result in criminal or disciplinary action being taken against them. If you become involved with the police for any reason (even as a victim), you should report it immediately to the headteacher.
- Staff should be aware of examples of behaviours which would be regarded as misconduct as listed in the Academy Disciplinary Procedure.
- Staff should adopt an approach of **"if in doubt, raise it"**. This includes personal or domestic issues which might give rise to questions being raised (e.g. by the press or on social media) about impact on your role in school – colleagues should raise any such concerns in confidence with the Headteacher.
- Staff must inform the headteacher immediately of any cautions, convictions, or relevant orders accrued during their employment, and / or if they are charged with a criminal offence, because this may have implications for your work with young people.

Code of Conduct

All staff, volunteers and visitors to the schools must:

- Be familiar with and work in accordance with the School's policies and procedures, available on the school network under Curriculum / Documents / Staff Policies, including in particular:
 - Child Protection
 - Behaviour Management / Behaviour for Learning
 - Use of Reasonable Force
 - ICT and E- Safety: this policy contains essential information and guidance on the full range of issues around the use of emails, electronic media and online behaviours (see also items below on acceptable use of technologies and social media)
 - Additional safeguarding guidance around the use of MS Teams and other means of online, live communication with students and classes.
 - Health and Safety
 - Personal / Intimate Care
 - Equalities
 - Data Protection
 - Use of Photography and Video: this is always important but should particularly be borne in mind when on school trips and activities. In addition, adults should not 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; or make audio recordings of a child's disclosure.
 - Whistleblowing: The school has adopted the LA Whistleblowing Policy which is based on the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998. This policy sets out procedures for any employee to raise concerns about danger or illegality that affects others and do not fall within the scope of other specific policies.
 - Dignity at Work Policy & Procedure for St Laurence Teaching and Support Staff
 - Teacher Standards (DfE)

- Be fully aware of the School's requirements for acceptable use of technologies, i.e.: school equipment will not at any time be used to view, download or store unsuitable content, including pornography and materials likely to incite hatred or discrimination. Staff should also be aware that written comments in emails or on social media may be regarded as written evidence and so care should be exercised when referring to students, parents or colleagues. Staff are advised not to identify themselves as members of the St Laurence School community on social media, unless using it for work purposes such as sharing good practice. Full guidance on acceptable use of technologies is given in the St Laurence ICT and e-Safety Policy, available on the school website and in the shared curriculum drive.

- Wear the appropriate St Laurence School identification badge / lanyard at all times on school site and challenge or report anyone you see on school site who is not wearing a lanyard.

- Provide a good example and a positive role model to students.

- Refrain from criticising colleagues, explicitly or implicitly, in front of students or parents.

- 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 students of a personal, sexual, racist, homophobic, discriminatory, intimidating or otherwise offensive nature.
 - avoid swearing in the hearing of students
 - do not embarrass or humiliate students – this includes shouting at them, unless it is an emergency and they are in danger.
 - use professional language about students and parents / carers at all times; do not make (or encourage others to make) unprofessional personal comments which scapegoat, demean, discriminate or humiliate, or might be interpreted as such. This applies to both spoken and written communications, including internal emails between staff.
 - must not discuss your personal or sexual relationships with or in the presence of students.

- Not discriminate favourably or unfavourably towards any young person. For example, you should

- treat all students equally – never build ‘special’ relationships or confer favour on particular students or arrange to meet students off site/out of hours
- do not give or receive (other than a token) gifts unless arranged through the School
- remain strictly within boundaries, as stated in school guidance, about counselling and giving advice to students, to avoid becoming inappropriately accessible or giving advice which could undermine work that is already taking place in school or with other agencies like CAMHS.
- Ensure that your relationship with students remains on a professional footing. For example, you must
 - only touch students for professional reasons, and when this is necessary and appropriate for the student’s wellbeing or safety. More guidance on this is set out in school policies or guidelines on The Use of Reasonable Force, Personal /Intimate Care and in the St Laurence Safeguarding Booklet and the DCSF Guidance for Safe Working Practice for Adults who Work with Children and Young People; Jan.2009.
 - not behave in a way that could lead a reasonable observer to question your conduct, intentions or suitability to care for young people
 - ensure that out of hours activities (including 1:1 tuition) are organised in accordance with school guidelines on safeguarding.
 - not make arrangements to contact, communicate or meet with students outside your work (this includes use of e-mail, text and other messaging systems).
 - all communications with students should be through official school channels (telephone, school e-mail, Class Charts) except in the case of an emergency. Staff should not use their home e-mail for receiving work.
 - if staff use social networking sites in their private lives they should ensure that details are not shared with children and young people and privacy settings are set at maximum. Staff are advised not to identify themselves as a member of staff at St Laurence School.
 - do not invite students to become network “friends” including former students with younger siblings still at school
 - do not accept attempts by students to establish social media contact.
 - if students attempt to contact or correspond with a staff member outside the normal and expected levels of contact as a teacher, tutor or other student-facing role, the adult should not respond and must report the matter to their line manager.
 - do not meet students outside school premises or on non-school days, unless as part of an organised school event. Staff need to exercise due professional care regarding out of hours and off-site contact with students who are friends of their own children or children of friends.
 - not make arrangements to carry out home visits or provide lifts for students without discussing this with the Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Headteacher. When permission is given to provide a lift, there should be at least one adult additional to the driver acting as an escort. In all cases of home visits or transporting students a risk assessment must be completed.
 - maintain the same professional standards in all school related settings e.g.
 - on school trips, residential activities and social situations where staff are designated as being on duty, they should not consume alcohol

- in social situations, including those where staff are there as guests, (leavers balls etc.) staff should ensure that their conduct is professional at all times (see point below about alcohol consumption).
- not develop 'personal' or sexual relationships with students. 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 young person or causes or incites that young person to engage in or watch sexual activity; this applies whether the young person consents or not).
- Immediately report to the Headteacher any report or indication, however small or seemingly insignificant, that a student has become or may be becoming infatuated with either themselves or a colleague. In this way appropriate early intervention can be taken which can prevent escalation and avoid hurt, embarrassment or distress for those concerned.
- The curriculum can sometimes include or lead to unplanned discussion about subject matter of a sexually explicit, political or otherwise sensitive nature. Responding to children's questions requires careful judgement and staff should take guidance in these circumstances from the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Care should be taken to comply with fundamental British values, as outlined on the school website. Staff should also comply at all times with the school policy for relationships and sex education (RSE).
- In situations where staff have social contact with parents / carers of our students, they need to ensure that any communication about the student's progress or behaviour or wellbeing at school is conducted in a professional manner. As much as possible colleagues should reach an understanding with parents / carers about professional boundaries in these situations.
- In situations where staff, outside of school and in their own time, find themselves taking part in team or club activities with under-18s (e.g. sports teams, drama groups, scouts etc), whether or not these are students of St Laurence School, please ensure that the Headteacher is made aware. This is for your own professional protection.
- Staff responsible for organising educational visits should be familiar with the Department for Education's advice on Health and Safety (updated November 2018). This includes ensuring that any member of staff who intends to drive a school minibus has current, up to date training. Trip leaders must NOT embark on a trip or visit before they have received authorisation from the Headteacher via the Evolve system.
- There must be NO consumption of alcohol by staff on any school activity involving students, residential or otherwise. This includes "off duty" times. Any potential exceptions to this for a particular situation (e.g. French or German exchanges when staff are staying with a host teacher) must be discussed in advance with the Headteacher.
- Members of staff who are parents / carers of a child at the school must respect the professional boundaries of colleagues. It is inappropriate to approach or challenge colleagues about one's own child outside the usual protocols for parental contact (email from personal account, arranged parent – teacher meeting etc) and staff who are parents should keep a professional distance from their child/ren where possible during the school day. If in doubt about how to proceed, please seek advice from your line manager or a member of the senior leadership team.
- Inform the Headteacher or Designated Safeguarding Lead of any requests or arrangements where parents wish to use their services outside of the workplace e.g. tutoring. This is to protect the professional reputation of staff members.

- If a member of staff or volunteer feels that they may have inadvertently acted in a way which contravenes any aspect of this Code of Conduct they should discuss this with the Headteacher at the earliest opportunity, in order to safeguard students and protect their own professional integrity.

July 2022 Tim Farrer, Headteacher

Reference documents

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE), DfE, 2022
- Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education DfES April 2011
- The Teachers' Standards, DfE July 2012 (intro updated June 2013)
- **The Sexual Offences Act 2003**
- School Policies, staff handbook (general), Child Protection Handbook
- What to do if you're worried a child is being abused, Advice for Practitioners Mar 2015
- Allegations against Adults, September 2020
- Information sharing, Advice for Practitioners March 2015

Wiltshire Safeguarding Vulnerable People Partnership guidance and website

<http://www.wiltshirescb.org.uk/professionals/local-policies-and-guidance/>

- DfE Advice on Health & Safety (2018)
- The Data Protection Act (DPA) 2018
- General Data Protection Regulations 2017 (GDPR)
- Revised Guidance for Safer Working Practice for adults who work with children and young people in education (June 2019) (Safer Recruitment Consortium), plus Addendum April 2020

This document forms part of the St Laurence School Child Protection Handbook, September 2022, and the Staff Handbook, September 2022. Copies of the Child Protection Handbook, together with a standalone version of this Code, can be found electronically in the Documents / Child Protection section of the Curriculum (W) drive on the school network.