



Glendower Preparatory School

# Staff Code of Conduct

2022-2023

Reviewed: January 2023

Next review: January 2024

Procedures for promoting safe practice in this section are indivisible from and expected to operate in conjunction with our other school policies including:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Capability Procedure
- Educational Visits and Trips Policy
- Visiting Organisations Clubs Agreement
- Acceptable User and Security Policy for Staff
- Taking, Storing and Using Images of Children Policy

These Procedures incorporate guidance produced by the DfE in the document 'Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education Settings' 2009.

### **Basic Principles**

Glendower Preparatory school expects all staff and volunteers to:

- Treat pupils with respect, dignity, sensitivity and fairness
- Value and respect all pupils as individuals
- Demonstrate that they are willing to listen to pupils' views and opinions
- Provide suitable opportunities for pupils to be involved in decision making processes
- Provide positive encouragement and praise to all pupils
- Provide an example of good conduct for pupils
- Ensure that relationships with pupils remain on a professional footing
- Avoid behaviour that could lead a reasonable observer to question their conduct, intentions or suitability to care for children.

### **Guidelines on Acceptable Behaviour of Staff and Volunteers**

- Do not address a pupil by any name other than his/her first or preferred name
- Be mindful of how you touch pupils – your actions could be misconstrued. Do not carry a child unless absolutely necessary and try not to handle a child below the shoulder unless there is a justifiable reason for doing so
- Be cautious when comforting a distressed pupil with physical contact – which should never be in private. Whenever a teacher touches a child, she/he should be aware that the action may be misconstrued or cause offence. Bear in mind the pupil's age and ethnicity, the nature of the distress and her needs and the physical environment. Common sense dictates, however, there are some situations where appropriate physical contact is either necessary or reasonable action to take (see

below). If a girl's reaction shows that she is uncomfortable with being touched, the teacher should adjust his/her behaviour accordingly

- Exercise caution in use of social media by having the highest privacy settings possible on any social media platforms and ensure you are working within the confines of the school's ICT Acceptable Use Agreement
- Do not single out individual pupils for special gifts or favours or unnecessary individual attention
- Do not encourage or engage in inappropriate humour or chat or gestures (e.g. swearing, sexual connotation or innuendo)
- Do not allow pupils to use inappropriate language unchallenged. Positively challenge inappropriate chat, e.g. racist/ sexist comments, swearing or inappropriate jokes
- Male staff and volunteers should avoid entering girls' toilets, changing rooms or showers except in an absolute emergency and ideally accompanied by a female member of staff/volunteer. Situations where male staff have had to enter these particular areas should be openly discussed with the member of staff's line manager as soon as practical and recorded
- Avoid excessive personal compliments about a pupil's appearance
- Do not enter into arguments or heated debates in front of pupils or parents
- Do not allow any allegations made by a pupil or third party to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon.
- Do not make visits to pupils in their homes or receive pupils at your home unless in an *emergency* and ideally with parental permission
- If you need to talk to a pupil privately, make sure that this does not put you at risk, i.e., the room should afford privacy but still be in the view of others. If any physical contact occurs in a one-to-one situation, a prompt report should be made to the Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Do not give pupils personal contact details (e.g., e-mail, telephone number, address) or take personal contact details from pupils except in an emergency, (in which case a member of SLT must always be informed)
- It should not be necessary for staff to have pupils' personal contact details on a routine basis. Where staff might require such details e.g., for the organisation of school activities such as a school trip, it is essential that the school provides a contact number for the pupils and it is made clear that whenever personal contact numbers are taken for pupils, the lists are destroyed after the trip and are never stored in any device belonging to a member of staff
- Do not offer car journeys to pupils unless in an *emergency* and ideally with parental permission. Always inform your line manager and log details and reason for the journey ASAP.
- Do not arrange to socialise with pupils at events other than those relating to school events and with the permission of parents/guardians *and* the Headmistress (e.g., End of term celebrations, at weekends or evenings)

(The above guidelines do not apply in relation to the behaviour of staff towards their own children or other close relatives if these children are Glendower Preparatory School pupils, or in relation to home visits that also involve their own children.)

### **Misuse of Alcohol and Drugs**

All Glendower Preparatory School staff and volunteers are not permitted to misuse, or be under the influence of, alcohol or illegal drugs, on school premises or whilst in charge of pupils at any other venue in the UK or abroad. *Disciplinary Action may follow if these guidelines are not upheld.*

### **Physical Contact between Staff and Pupils**

Safeguarding pupils requires both pupils and staff to be clear about safe and acceptable physical contact. However, it is just as important for all staff and volunteers to feel comfortable in contributing to providing a safe and caring environment for all pupils, especially for very young children. Staff and volunteers need to feel comfortable in responding to pupils' practical and emotional needs.

It is important to avoid making assumptions about whether or not a pupil wants physical contact, even with very young children, or to assume that one response fits all circumstances. Members of staff should use their professional judgement in specific situations, taking into account the pupil's needs at the time, their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background.

If a member of staff believes that an incident could be misinterpreted, they should inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately.

### **When is Physical Contact with Pupils Acceptable?**

The paramount consideration is the need of the child. Staff should use their professional judgement to comfort or reassure children while maintaining appropriate distance. Never do anything of a personal nature for children that they can do for themselves (e.g., help with toileting, putting on sun cream, drying after swimming or getting dressed).

There are times when it is appropriate for a member of staff/ volunteer to touch a pupil, for example:

- Young children in particular quite often need immediate physical comfort after a fall/ injury
- Helping very young children with personal care tasks (dressing/ drying after swimming) *\*see also acceptable behaviour above*
- Strapping seat belts for young children
- Pupils with particular disabilities
- Providing first aid treatment
- Pupil recovering from an accident (e.g., pupils using crutches or in plaster cast)
- Pupils who are extremely emotionally upset
- To avoid accident or injury in an emergency
- To prevent serious damage to property or another
- Some contact sports see further Appendix 1
- Some arts activities see further Appendix 2

- Holding the hand of a child at the front/back of the line when going to assembly or when walking together around the school

If a child needs to sit on your lap, sit the child on your lap in a quiet area, in view of other staff or pupils and ask the child to sit 'side saddle', i.e., with her legs together, folded across your lap.

### **Responding to Pupils Making Physical Contact with You**

Should a pupil of any age seek you out for physical contact or seem to want to establish an intimate relationship with you, *always* discuss this with your line manager. It may be that other staff have experienced similar issues with the same pupil or group of pupils. For example, a young child needs to be encouraged to demonstrate their affection in different ways in different situations. An older pupil may have developed a "crush" on you and this needs to be sensitively and openly managed with your line manager, to avoid leaving you open to allegations of misconduct or abuse.

In all situations where a pupil initiates inappropriate physical contact, it is the responsibility of the adult to distance themselves and help the pupil understand the importance of personal boundaries. It is important that the incident and the circumstances should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead Teacher and recorded as soon as possible, and, if appropriate, a copy placed on the confidential file relating to that pupil.

### **Sexual Behaviour**

Children of any age may behave in a sexual way.

Pupils may need guidance on:

- Self-Awareness
- Social Skills
- Establishing appropriate peer relationships
- Bullying
- Emotional support
- Information and advice about how their behaviour may be perceived by others and possible consequences of their behaviour

Sometimes, inappropriate sexual behaviour may require the pupil to receive advice and guidance from professionals outside of the school. It is also possible that inappropriate sexual behaviour is a sign that the pupil could be at risk of significant harm. These matters need to be considered under the school safeguarding procedures.

### **Confidentiality**

Members of staff have access to confidential, personal information in order to undertake their everyday responsibilities. This information must be handled responsibly and sensitively.

It is important to:

- Avoid sharing information casually in conversation or other than on a need-to-know basis

- Avoid holding sensitive discussions about pupils in public areas, such as corridors, dining areas or playgrounds
- Keep notes and records about pupils suitably secure
- Be careful about the kinds of personal information about pupils which are on view in staff rooms, work areas and offices, especially if these areas are used or visited by parents, visitors or contractors
- Make sure you are familiar with the Record Keeping section within the Safeguarding Children Policy
- Ensure you are familiar with your responsibilities under the Data Protection Act 2018

In areas where confidentiality may be an issue, it is important to remember that it is the welfare and safety of the pupil which is the key focus.

Children need to be educated that other members of staff may have to pass information on to others in order to help them and keep them safe. In certain circumstances, it may also be the case that pupils themselves receive a disclosure and should understand the importance of passing such information on and who to speak to. It is important to reassure pupils, including very young children, that if their personal information is shared it will only be passed on to those who need to know and will not become common knowledge amongst other staff/pupils. This can be brought to the attention of pupils through:

- PSHEE and Relationships and Sex Education
- RE discussions on ethical issues
- Assemblies
- Displays of material about external organisations which offer help and support
- Leaflets and other material telling pupils and parents about pastoral care arrangements
- Discussions with parents

It is essential that staff avoid being pressured into promising that they will keep information 'secret' when pupils give them information about changes in their family, their concerns, worries or other possible indications of abuse. The dangers of keeping secrets are that this approach:

- helps perpetuate the cycle of secrecy and concealment which characterises much abusive behaviour
- leads to the child feeling a greater sense of betrayal when material has to be disclosed, again reinforcing a sense that adults cannot be trusted
- will put you into an impossible situation, for example, if the child then discloses evidence of extensive abuse or a situation in which a vulnerable sibling is clearly at risk of significant harm

### **Behaviour Management**

Our Behaviour Policy communicates clearly to staff, pupils and parents our approach which promotes a positive behaviour management system of rewards and sanction. We believe that this approach pays due regard to the DfE guidance in the document 'Behaviour and

Discipline in Schools' and encourages positive behaviour, respect for others and a sense of self-discipline appropriate to our pupils' age and understanding. Our Behaviour Policy gives clear guidance for staff on the sanctions that are acceptable to use and indeed those which are not. We wish to reiterate here that **the following sanctions are not permissible**:

- Physical violence e.g., punching, kicking, pushing, shaking or pulling limbs, hair or clothing
- Persistent or aggressive shouting (other than to ensure safety in an emergency)
- Throwing missiles e.g., objects, books, pencil cases, chalk, rubbers
- Humiliation (e.g., wearing distinctive or inappropriate clothes)

No forms of corporal punishment are permissible. Corporal punishment is defined as: *"Any degree of physical contact which is deliberately intended to cause pain, injury or humiliation"*

### **Controlling Anger and Responding to Aggression**

In the unlikely event of a staff member or volunteer feeling threatened verbally by a pupil, s/he could:

- Point out to the pupil that their language is inappropriate and offensive and tell them to stop
- Direct the pupil to an activity, task or quiet area
- Request the pupil to report to a teacher/the Headmistress/wait in reception area (depending on the pupil's age and understanding) provided that you have considered the safety of the pupil
- Request the pupil to leave the room (depending on the pupil's age and understanding) provided that you have considered the safety of the pupil
- If a pupil removes herself from your charge, you should suggest a safe place for her to "cool off" and ensure that another staff member or volunteer checks that the pupil is safe
- If the pupil appears to be placing herself "at risk" you must contact another member of staff *immediately* to help you respond to the situation.

In the unlikely event of a staff member or volunteer feeling threatened physically by a pupil, you will have to judge whether it is best for you to:

- walk away and get further help, or
- calmly reason with the pupil

If you are so emotionally upset that you leave the pupils in your charge you *must inform* another member of staff *immediately*, to allow for the safe supervision of the pupils. You should always report the incident to your line manager or supervisor so that you can be supported, and the pupil can be sanctioned appropriately and receive guidance on her behaviour.

### **Use of Reasonable Force**

All members of staff (and other people whom the Headmistress has temporarily put in charge of pupils such as volunteers or parents accompanying pupils on a school organised

visit and volunteers with the permission of the Headmistress) are legally entitled to use reasonable force to control or restrain pupils but must not use force as a punishment. This entitlement applies not only whilst on school premises but also whenever the teacher (or other person with the permission of the Headmistress) has lawful control or charge of pupils.

Reasonable force can be used to prevent pupils from hurting themselves or others, from damaging property, or from causing disorder.

The decision on whether or not to physically intervene is down to the professional judgement of the staff member concerned and should always depend on the individual circumstances.

The following list is not exhaustive but provides some examples of situations where reasonable force can be used:

- To prevent immediate danger/injury to the pupil concerned, any other pupils, staff, or volunteers
- To prevent serious damage to property
- To prevent serious breaches of school discipline
- To prevent a pupil behaving in a way that disrupts a school event or a school trip/visit
- To remove disruptive children from the classroom where they have refused to follow an instruction to do so
- To prevent a pupil leaving the classroom where allowing the pupil to leave would risk their safety or lead to behaviour that disrupts the behaviour of others

Safe methods of reasonable force must be used for the *shortest period* of time necessary and with the *minimum amount of force necessary to achieve the desired result*.

The use of inappropriate or excessive force may result in disciplinary action or criminal charges. Inappropriate use of force is using force as a punishment or when the situation could have been resolved without using force or degrading the pupil. Excessive force is using too much force and / or using force for too long a period of time.



## **Appendix 1: Guidelines for Sport**

Glendower Preparatory School believes that sport should be carried out in a safe, positive and encouraging atmosphere of healthy competition which assists in the promotion of pupils' welfare. Pupils should be encouraged to enjoy sport in an environment which encourages *all* to develop a healthy lifestyle, self-confidence, enjoyment and fun, as well as providing opportunities for skill development, sporting excellence and achievement. We know that safeguarding concerns can occur in different situations, including the sporting environment. To help promote clear expectations about the behaviour of coaches, here at Glendower we expect our coaches (staff, outside sport coaches or volunteers) to adhere to guidance on best practice from leading organisations, such as the Coaches Charter set out below.

### **The Coaches Charter**

1. Coaches must respect the rights, dignity and worth of every person and treat everyone equally within the context of their sport.
2. Coaches must place the well-being and safety of the performer above the development of performance. They should follow all guidelines laid down by their sport Governing Body and hold appropriate insurance cover.
3. Coaches must develop an appropriate working relationship with performers, especially children, based on mutual trust and respect. Coaches must not exert undue influence to obtain personal benefit or reward.
4. Coaches must encourage and guide performers to accept responsibility for their own behaviour.
5. Coaches should hold up-to-date nationally recognised Governing Body coaching qualifications.
6. Coaches must ensure the activities they direct or advocate are appropriate for the age, maturity, experience and ability of the individual.
7. Coaches should at the outset clarify with performers, and where appropriate their parents, exactly what is expected of them and what performers are entitled to expect from their coach.
8. Coaches should co-operate fully with other specialists (e.g., other coaches, officials, sport scientists, doctors, physiotherapists) in the best interest of the performer.
9. Coaches should always promote the positive aspects of their sport (e.g., fair play) and never condone rule violations or the use of prohibited substances.
10. Coaches must consistently display high standards of behaviour and appearance.

This Charter is reproduced by courtesy of Sports coach UK. For more information on guides for sports coaches visit <http://www.sportscoachuk.org/>.

Our Head of PE should ensure that staff, outside coaches or volunteers, do not:

- Introduce training regimes which by their nature and intensity of training, exceeds the capacity of the pupil's immature and growing body
- Encourage the use of drugs to improve the young person's performance

- Engage in constant criticism, bullying or unrealistic pressure to perform to consistently high expectations

Our Head of PE should ensure that staff, outside coaches or volunteers:

- Always liaise with parents/guardians before recommending specific diets and that parents should be encouraged to seek further medical advice before starting a specific diet designed to build stamina, strength or sporting performance
- Consider how they congratulate young performers i.e., in accordance with guidelines on acceptable and unacceptable physical contact

### **Additional Guidelines on safe Physical Contact in Sport**

It is important that the Head of PE has an awareness of the views and position of sporting governing bodies with regards to safe physical contact for any sport undertaken in school. Not all sporting governing bodies have developed protocol around safe physical contact but many sporting organisations are in the process of doing so. Further information can be obtained at <http://www.thecpsu.org.uk/>. Developing this awareness and knowledge base is essential and will help avoid situations of coaches claiming that physical contact is necessary when in fact it may not be necessary at all. In general, the following points should be borne in mind:

- Physical contact should only take place to help with complex skills or movements or to avoid injury
- Over handling must be avoided
- Any physical contact must not be invasive of sensitive parts of the body
- The pupil should always be easily observed by others
- Parents should not be discouraged from watching (by prior arrangement with the school and coach) performances or coaching sessions.

### **Protocol in Changing Rooms and Showers**

- Wherever possible, swimming in public leisure facilities should take place in sessions which are specifically for use of schools to reduce public access to pupils
- Pupils should use single sex changing rooms and showers
- Only female staff and volunteers should supervise girls in showers and changing areas
- Staff should not shower at the same time as pupils
- In the event of a pupil misbehaving in the showers staff should take a minimal intervention approach in terms of what they say and any action they take to effectively resolve the situation. Staff can then follow up any further intervention when the pupil is fully dressed
- Team tactics should be discussed outside of the changing areas. If this is not possible, a suitable time should be agreed in advance when the member of staff can enter the changing rooms e.g., 10 minutes before play, and all pupils need to be changed into their sport kit before staff can enter

### **Photography**

For guidance, please refer to the school's 'Acceptable User and Information Security Policy' and the 'Taking, Using and Storing Images of Children Policy'.

## **Appendix 2: Guidelines for the Arts (including all Arts media, music, dance and drama)**

Here at Glendower Preparatory School, we are committed to promoting the Arts and a broad spectrum of arts activities in schools through provision of a rich and diverse curriculum. We believe education must provide opportunities for pupils to express their own ideas, values and feelings. The arts can provide a very potent channel for this expression and a means of giving it unique form and meaning. In order to promote good safeguarding practice in the arts and protocol adhered to by major arts organisations, we will ensure that:

- A member of staff is present during activities with visiting artists and arts groups in school
- Adults involved in performing arts events have separate dressing rooms/changing/toilet facilities
- Individual tuition should only take place in rooms with glass windows where teacher and pupil are visible (notices covering vision panels should be removed during individual lessons) or with doors remaining open
- Quality of individual lessons should be monitored on both a planned and ad hoc basis

### **Visiting Peripatetic Staff**

In keeping with safeguarding procedures (see section on Communication Plan) schools should ensure that all visiting arts teachers will have undergone the relevant safeguarding checks, have attended school safeguarding training and are familiar with and agree to adhere to the school Safeguarding Children (Child Protection) Policy, together with the following additional guidelines:

### **Safe Physical Contact in Arts Education**

Physical contact may be necessary in some arts activities, for example, certain dance positions or movements. When teaching singing or a musical instrument it may be necessary to touch a pupil for example, to adjust posture, correct hand position, breathing, or embouchure. Touch is only appropriate when it is absolutely necessary to assist the pupil achieve an activity, position or dance movement.

Physical contact with pupils should take place only when it is absolutely necessary in relation to the particular arts activity and is in keeping with the school code of practice with regards to safe physical contact with pupils.

- Do not touch a pupil around the chest, waist, diaphragm or ribs to teach breathing
- Consider explaining the correction of movement or the point you are trying to explain in another way e.g., by you or another pupil demonstrating and then copying

### **Visiting Artists and Arts Groups**

Any visiting artists and arts groups will be supplied with a copy of the School's Safeguarding Children (Child Protection) Policy and will be asked to adhere to the following guidelines, which will take the form of a polite request statement:

- Treat pupils with dignity and respect
- Address pupils by their first name
- Provide constructive feedback rather than negative criticism

- Seek to promote equality with regards racial and cultural and religious backgrounds
- Avoid handling a pupil below the shoulder unless absolutely necessary; consider you or another adult or pupil demonstrating instead
- Avoid encouraging young pupils to sit on your lap
- Do not encourage or engage in inappropriate humour, chat or gestures (e.g., sexual innuendo or swearing)
- Do not give pupils your personal contact details
- Do not offer car journeys to pupils
- *Please report any concerns about a pupil's welfare or behaviour to your accompanying member of staff, the DSL or the Headmistress.*