

Staff Code of Conduct (Trust Employees & Volunteers)

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Relevant Policies

- I. It is important that the Code of Conduct is read in conjunction with the Trust policies that have bearing on how staff members and volunteers relate to pupils.
- II. These policies include, but are not necessarily exclusive to, the following:
 - The Trust Child Protection Policy
 - The Trust Health and Safety Policy
 - The Trust Pupil Physical Restraint Policy
 - The Trust Pupil Transportation Policy
 - First Aid Policy
 - Administration of Medicine Policy
 - Staff Acceptable Use Policy
 - Accepting and Receiving Gifts Policy
 - Dismissal and Disciplinary Policy
 - The School Visits and Trips Policy
 - Equality and Diversity Policy
 - Contractors Policy
 - Whistleblowing Policy
 - Smoking, Alcohol and Drugs Policy
- III. The Code of Conduct has been written with regard to KCSIE 2018 and the Teacher Standards.

1. Introduction

- I. Bede's seeks to provide a safe and supportive environment which secures the well-being and very best outcomes for the pupils in its care.
- II. As part of that ambition, we have produced this Code of Conduct to help all employees understand the sensitivities and demands of the field in which we work. The document should not replace common-sense and good judgement but aims to offer important guidance by illustrating what *can* happen when professional misjudgements are made.
- III. All of the examples cited have happened at other institutions and so should serve as a sobering reminder to us that, without watchfulness of our own behaviour and that of others, they *could* happen here.
- IV. This Code of Conduct exists for all adults (teachers, support staff, volunteers) working at Bede's and sets out what is expected of them in terms of their conduct and professional behaviour by:
 - a) indicating clearly what is expected of all adults working in the Trust;
 - b) providing advice as to what constitutes illegal behaviour;
 - c) setting out what might be considered as misconduct;
 - d) describing safe practices to be followed and behaviours to be avoided.
- V. This document may not necessarily include all situations and scenarios, thus there may be times when professional judgements are made in situations that are not covered by this document. It is expected that in these – indeed in all – circumstances Trust employees will always immediately inform their senior colleagues providing an explanation for any such action already taken or proposed.
- VI. Members of staff who are parents of Bede's pupils, friends with parents of pupils or who, for example, are voluntary workers in or members of other organisations (charity groups, sports clubs) attended by pupils, will of course have contact with pupils outside the Bede's context. However, they should still use their professional judgement to respect the spirit of this code.

VII. It is important to note that where a member of staff does not follow this Code of Conduct, their actions may lead to disciplinary procedures.

2. Underlying Principles of the Code of Conduct

I. Pupil welfare

a) The welfare of all Trust pupils is our paramount concern.

II. Employees are professionally accountable for the welfare of pupils

- a) Employees are responsible for their own actions and behaviour, and should avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions.
- b) Employees should work and be seen to work, in an open and transparent way.
- c) Employees should discuss and/or take advice promptly from their line manager or another senior member of staff with regard to any incident which may give rise to or cause a concern.
- d) Records should be made of any such incident and of decisions made or further actions agreed.

III. Trust values

- a) Employees are required to act in accordance with the aims and values of the Trust, showing professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the Trust.
- b) Employees should treat pupils with dignity, developing relationships based on mutual trust. At all times, staff should observe proper boundaries appropriate to their position as responsible adults.
- c) Employees should show tolerance and respect for the rights of others, ensuring that personal beliefs do not in any way exploit pupils' vulnerability or lead pupils to break the law.
- d) Employees should treat each other with courtesy and dignity in all professional interchanges and relationships, without discrimination.

IV. Safeguarding pupils

- a) All adults working or volunteering within the Trust are required to know the name of the 'Designated Safeguarding Lead' for child protection, be familiar with the Trust's child protection arrangements and, in so doing, understand their responsibilities to safeguard and protect pupils.
- b) The law and other professional guidelines. As legal and professional frameworks underpin this Code of Conduct, all employees should be aware that breaches of the law and other professional guidelines could result in criminal or disciplinary action being taken against them.
- c) All staff are required to be aware of the Trust's safeguarding procedures, including procedures for dealing with allegations against staff. All staff must be aware of, and comply with, the Trust's safeguarding procedures with respect to safer recruitment. Recruiting managers need to work closely with the HR Department to ensure the following: i) new staff members, contractors or volunteers do not start work before the HR department has confirmed that all relevant checks are in place and ii) that all communications with prospective new members of staff are consistent with the provisional nature of the employment offer being subject to such checks.
- d) Staff need to be aware that under section 16 of The Sexual Offences Act 2003, it is an offence for a person aged 18 or over (e.g. teacher, youth worker) to have a sexual relationship with a child under 18 where that person is in a position of trust in respect of that child, even if the relationship is consensual. A situation where a person is in a position of trust could arise where the child is in full-time education and the person looks after children under 18 in the same establishment as the child, even if s/he does not teach the child.

3. Keeping Pupils Safe

- I. This guidance has been produced to help all staff establish the safest possible learning *and* working environments. Bede's aims to safeguard young people at all times and reduce the risk of staff being falsely accused of improper or unprofessional conduct.

- II. This guidance applies to *all* adults working in the Trust whatever their position, roles, or responsibilities, including those who are volunteers.
- III. All employees, including those who are designated volunteers or those carrying out in-service placements, are expected to undergo safeguarding training.

1.1. Behaviour management

- a) All pupils have a right to be treated with respect and dignity. Staff should not use any form of degrading treatment to punish a pupil. The use of sarcasm, demeaning or insensitive comments is entirely unacceptable in any situation. Shouting is rarely helpful and to be avoided except in extreme circumstances, such as an emergency.

1.2. Duty of Care

- a) *Protecting pupils from physical and emotional harm.* All adults working in the Trust are accountable for the way in which they conduct themselves within the school environment. It is the duty of all employees and volunteers to keep young people safe and protect them from physical and emotional harm. Integral to this is how staff exercise authority, manage risk, use resources and protect pupils from discrimination and avoidable harm.
- b) *Ensuring appropriate professional relationships.* This duty is in part exercised through the development of respectful, caring and professional relationships between adults and pupils whereby employee behaviour demonstrates integrity, maturity and good judgement.
- c) *Acting in the best interests of pupils:* as part of their duty of care, employees are expected to:
 - a) always act, and be seen to act, in a child's best interests, giving appropriate weight to the views of the child;
 - b) avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question an employee's motivation and intentions;
 - c) take responsibility for their own actions and behaviour.
- d) *High expectations.* Bede's has legitimately high expectations of its employees' professional conduct with pupils. Staff are expected to know, understand and acknowledge the responsibilities and trust inherent in their professional roles. Employees should be fully cognisant of the Trust's expectations and be aware of the possible consequences should they fall short of these expectations.
- e) *Duty of care to employees:* The Trust has a duty of care towards its employees and, as such, requires them to provide a safe working environment for staff and guidance about safe working practices. This means that the Trust ensures that:
 - a) safeguarding and health and safety procedures are in place and reviewed;
 - b) systems are in place for concerns to be raised;
 - c) adults are not placed in situations which render them particularly vulnerable.

1.3. Prevent

- a) *Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales (2015) refers: It is also supplemented by non-statutory advice and a briefing note:*
 - a) *The Prevent duty: Departmental advice for schools and childminders* (June 2015);
 - b) *The use of social media for online radicalisation* (July 2015).

- b) All Staff should understand that the Trust has a legal duty to have regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and consequently, through safeguarding induction, should be aware of:
- a) what extremism and radicalisation means and why people - including pupils and fellow staff members - may be vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism as a consequence of it;
 - b) 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
 - c) how to obtain support for people who may be being exploited by radicalising influences.

1.4. Female Genital Mutilation

- a) As of October 2015, all teachers must report to the police cases where they discover that an act of female genital mutilation appears to have been carried out. Unless the teacher has a good reason not to, they should still consider and discuss any such case with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and involve children's social care as appropriate. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining pupils.

4. Exercise of Professional Judgement

- I. Notwithstanding the comprehensiveness of this guidance, it is acknowledged that no single document can provide a complete checklist of what is, or is not, appropriate behaviour for staff. Consequently, there will be occasions and circumstances where staff will have to make decisions or take action in the best interests of the pupils that might contravene this guidance or where no guidance exists.
- II. This means that where no specific guidance exists staff are expected to:
 - a) discuss the circumstances that informed their action, or their proposed action, with a senior colleague. This will help to ensure that the safest practices are employed and reduce the risk of actions being misinterpreted;
 - b) discuss any misunderstanding, accidents or threats with a senior leader;
 - c) follow professional best practice and, where available, guidelines from external agencies;
 - d) record discussions and actions taken with their justifications;
 - e) where an issue relates to the safeguarding of a pupil or group of pupils, employees and volunteers are always expected to act in accordance with their safeguarding training and the Trust's *Child Protection Policy*.
- III. Ultimately, individuals will, in the course of their duties, be expected to make judgements about their professional behaviour that secures the best interests and welfare of the pupils in their charge. Moreover, in so doing, it is vital that they will be seen and judged to have acted reasonably.

1. 1. Physical contact

- I. Some staff, for example those who teach PE, Dance or Drama or who offer Music tuition, will on occasions in a coaching situation, have to initiate physical contact with a pupil in order to support them safely, to demonstrate the use of equipment or assist them with a movement or exercise. In these circumstances the contact should be for the minimum time necessary, in an open environment and in line with written departmental guidance.
- II. There may be times when a distressed pupil needs comfort and reassurance. This may include age-appropriate physical contact. Employees should remain self-aware at all times in order that their contact is not threatening, intrusive or subject to misinterpretation. Staff should always tell a colleague – normally the Housemaster – when and how they comforted a pupil in distress.

5. Power and Positions of Trust

- I. All adults be they volunteers or paid employees, who come into contact with pupils within the Trust are, by virtue of their employment, in a position of trust and responsibility. Further, all pupils will be treated consistently and fairly, and no specific group should be favoured above others.
- II. This status means that:
 - a) a relationship between a member of staff and a pupil cannot be a relationship between equals. There is potential for exploitation and harm of vulnerable young people;
 - b) employees have a responsibility to ensure that an unequal balance of power is not used for personal advantage or gratification;
 - c) employees should always maintain appropriate professionalism and avoid behaviour that might be misinterpreted by others;
 - d) employees should be mindful of the potential dangers of being alone with a pupil;
 - e) employees should report and record any incident that has either the potential for misrepresentation of their conduct or motivation or compromises the safety of a pupil;
 - f) employees should not use their position to gain access to information for their own advantage and/or a pupil's or family's detriment; or, use their power to intimidate, threaten, coerce or undermine pupils; or, use their status and standing to form or promote a relationship with a pupil which is of a sexual nature; or, attempt to initiate a relationship with a recent ex-pupil, which is of a sexual nature.
- III. Where a person aged eighteen or over is in a position of trust with a child under eighteen, it is an offence for that person to engage in sexual activity with or in the presence of that child, or to cause or incite that child to engage in or watch sexual activity. Where a person aged eighteen or over is in a position of trust established with a person who has only recently left the school and is still under the age of twenty-one, any attempt to engage in sexual activity with that person will be a cause for concern and will be treated as a breach of trust established in that prior relationship.
- IV. When pupils leave school some may be reluctant to end the close working relationship they have enjoyed with members of staff. However, it is important to remember that when a pupil leaves school the professional duty of care ends and remains solely with the parents or guardians. Any meetings or communications to help with UCAS, gap year advice, references and the like should be conducted in a professional manner through the normal school channels.

6. Confidentiality

- I. Members of staff may have access to confidential information about pupils, their families and other members of staff in order to undertake their everyday responsibilities. In some circumstances staff might be given additional highly sensitive or private information.
- II. This means that staff should:
 - a) be mindful of the dangers of making informal comments or having conversations about any other party which are not professionally necessary, and might be construed as gossip;
 - b) never use confidential or personal information about a colleague, a pupil or their family for their own or others' advantage. Information must never be used to intimidate, humiliate, or embarrass the pupil. Staff are expected to treat information they receive about pupils in a discreet and confidential manner;
 - c) never use confidential information casually in conversation or shared with any person other than on a need to know basis. In circumstances where a pupil's identity does not need to be disclosed the information should be used anonymously. Staff are expected to exercise caution when passing information to others about a pupil;
 - d) pass any sensitive information they gain about pupils to the appropriately designated member(s) of staff, for example when abuse is alleged or suspected. In such cases, individuals have a duty

to pass information on without delay, but *only* to those with designated child protection responsibilities;

- e) seek advice from a senior member of staff if they are in any doubt about sharing information they hold or which has been requested of them;
- f) know the correct person to whom any concerns or allegations should be reported.

1.1. Seeking guidance

- I. If a member of staff is in any doubt about whether to share information or keep it confidential, he or she should seek guidance from a senior member of staff.
- II. Any media or legal enquiries should be passed to the relevant Headmaster or Deputy Head(s).

1.2. Safeguarding protocols

- I. Adults need to be aware that although it is important to listen to and support pupils, they must not promise confidentiality. In addition, adults should not request that pupils promise confidentiality.

1.3. Allegations about adults

- I. Additionally, concerns and allegations about adults should be treated as confidential, and passed to the appropriately designated members of staff without delay and in line with the Trust's Child Protection and Whistleblowing policies.

7. Property and Behaviour

- I. All employees have a responsibility to maintain public confidence in their ability to safeguard the welfare and best interests of pupils. Consequently, staff should adopt high standards of personal conduct in order to maintain the confidence and respect of their peers, pupils, parents, governors, external agencies and the public in general.
- II. An individual's behaviour, either within or outside of the workplace, should not compromise their position within the work setting, nor should an employee behave in such a way that could be construed as damaging to the Trust's reputation. Consequently, it is essential that due care and attention is exercised outside of the school environment with respect to an employee's professional responsibilities and standing.
- III. Membership of organisations whose goals sit in conflict to the values and equality policies of the Trust is not acceptable.
- IV. This means that employees should:
 - a) not behave in a manner that would lead any reasonable person to question their suitability to work with pupils or act as a role model to young people;
 - b) not drink or purchase alcohol for pupils in public or private places unless within the context of an authorised school function (e.g. a formal dinner);
 - c) not drink alcohol when supervising pupils or on school trips. This expectation applies even when there are no pupils present, as a member of staff may be called to act if an emergency occurs;
 - d) not smoke on all Trust premises at any time, except in designated smoking areas
 - e) not come to work or remain at work under the influence of alcohol;
 - f) not come to work or remain at work under the influence of any drugs, including prescription drugs, whose side effects could have an impact on your work or behaviour
 - g) not to use, possess or deal in any controlled substances (this is a criminal act);
 - h) if staff finds themselves in a pub or other meeting place in which current pupils are drinking, the member of staff should not join the pupils and may need to draw the attention of staff to the age of pupils;

- i) not make inappropriate remarks to a pupil (be that by email, text messages, phone or letter or any other form of communication either written or verbal);
 - j) not discuss their own sexual relationships with or in the presence of pupils;
 - k) not discuss a pupil's sexual relationships in inappropriate settings or contexts;
 - l) not make (or encourage others to make) unprofessional personal comments in any form of communication (e-mail, face-to-face conversations, social networking comments or verbal context). This point applies to both pupils *and* staff;
 - m) not swear, blaspheme or use offensive or discriminatory language in the presence of pupils;
 - n) be aware that their personal conduct may well impact on the lives of pupils.
- V. Teaching materials (books, videos, films, texts) of an explicit or sensitive nature, particularly in relation to language or sexual behaviour, must be given careful consideration to ensure their selection is not offensive or subsequently misinterpreted. There must always, therefore, be a clear link with the scheme of work and what is presented to pupils.
- VI. Materials and social activities provided for entertainment or recreation at school must be similarly appropriate to the age and feelings of the pupils concerned and used in a suitable context.
- VII. Staff behaviour should not undermine fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

1.2 Infatuations

- I. Adults need to be aware that it is not unknown for teenage pupils to be strongly attracted to a member of staff and/or develop an infatuation. Employees and volunteers should be aware that such circumstances always carry a higher risk of words or actions being misinterpreted and of allegations being made against them. An employee who becomes aware that a pupil may be infatuated with them or a colleague should discuss this at the earliest opportunity with a senior member of staff so that appropriate action can be taken. In this way steps can be taken to avoid hurt and distress for all concerned.
- II. Similarly, if an employee is concerned that they are developing a friendship with a pupil which has the potential to become an unacceptable relationship they are required to ensure that the relationship does not develop further. Again, it is advised that guidance is sought from a senior member of staff in such situations.

8. Dress and appearance

- I. Staff should consider the manner of dress and appearance appropriate to their professional role. Staff should ensure they are dressed appropriately and safely for the tasks they undertake.
- II. Staff that present themselves in a manner which could be considered as inappropriate could render themselves vulnerable to criticism or allegation.
- III. This means that staff should:
 - a) promote a positive and professional image;
 - a. not dress in such a way as might be viewed as offensive, revealing, or sexually provocative; such that their self-presentation does not distract, cause; embarrassment or give rise to misunderstanding (including anything that is construed as political or contentious).

9. Communication Protocols

- I. Communication between pupils and adults, by whatever method, should take into account the protocols below.

1.1. Professional boundaries

- a) At all times communication between employees and pupils should take place within clear and explicit professional boundaries. This stipulation includes all digital communication, but is not limited to, telephony, mobile phones, text messaging, e-mails, digital cameras, videos, web-cams, websites, social networking sites, online gaming and blogs.
- b) All communication with parents and pupils should be formal and use the digital communication services provided by the Trust.
- c) Communication, by whatever medium, should be professional in all settings – whether it be between colleagues, pupils and staff or between staff and parents. Employees should ensure that the appropriate tone and language for any professional communication is deployed at all times.
- d) Communication should never be bullying, intimidating or threatening, or be able to be construed as such.
- e) Staff should not share any personal information with a pupil. They should not request or respond to any request for personal information from a pupil, other than that which might be appropriate as part of their professional role.
- f) Employees are expected to be circumspect in their communications with pupils. This avoids any possible misinterpretation of their motives. Staff should not give their personal contact details to pupils including e-mail, home or mobile telephone numbers, unless the need to do so has been agreed in writing by the Headmaster or a Deputy Head.
- g) E-mail or text communications between an adult and a pupil outside agreed protocols may lead to disciplinary and/or criminal investigations. This includes but is not limited to communications via social networking sites platforms, instant messaging or gaming.
- h) In order to ensure transparency of motive, employees should ensure that contact with former pupils under the age of twenty-one is conducted through the Trust's formal communication services.
- i) Employees should ensure that *all* communications are transparent and open to scrutiny.

1.2. Use of social media and social contact

- a) Where employees choose to use social media, the Trust requires that staff profiles are set to 'private' and only visible to "confirmed or accepted" parties so that pupils or parents do not have access to personal data or images.
- b) Employees are required to deny current or former pupils under the age of twenty-one access to their on-line profiles so as to avoid being compromised or placed in a vulnerable position. Employees should be aware that they leave themselves open to a charge of professional misconduct if images of them in a compromising situation are made available on a public profile.
- c) If a pupil does gain access to the profile of a member of staff by fraudulent means (impersonation or hacking), the employee should inform their line-manager immediately.
- d) Under no circumstances should staff seek out students or share online usernames or handles with students.
- e) Staff should not seek to establish on-line contact with pupils or their families for the purpose of securing a friendship or to strengthen a personal relationship.
- f) Bede's has a clear policy regarding online communication and the use of social networking. Please refer to the **Staff Acceptable Use Policy** – for comprehensive guidelines.

1.3. Photography, videos and other creative arts

- a) There are some activities that involve recording images. These may be undertaken as part of the curriculum, out of school activities, for publicity, or to celebrate achievement.
- b) Staff should be aware of the potential for these aspects of teaching to be misused for pornographic or 'grooming' purposes. Careful consideration should be given as to how these activities are organised, undertaken and represented or reproduced.
- c) Staff are encouraged to make use of Trust's equipment to take photographs however staff using personal equipment must use Trust provided removable media.

- d) Under the *Home-School Agreement*, parents have consented to the Trust using images of their children for the school's publicity purposes. Staff should check periodically with the Marketing Department for any instances where parents have opted out of this.
- e) Images should not be displayed on external websites, in publications or in a public place without the specific consent of the Marketing Department.
- f) Bede's has a clear policy regarding the creation, storage, publication and distribution of digital images/video. Please refer to the **Mobile Device and Digital Content Policy Senior** for comprehensive guidelines.

1.4. School digital systems / devices and Acceptable User Policy

- a) Under no circumstances should employees access illegal images. Accessing child pornography or indecent images of children on the internet, and making, storing or disseminating such material, is illegal and, if proven, will invariably lead to criminal proceedings against the individual.
- b) Using Trust equipment or network to access inappropriate or indecent material, including adult pornography, will normally lead to disciplinary action, particularly if as a result, students might be exposed to inappropriate or indecent material.
- c) Bede's has a clear policy regarding access to and the use of the Internet. Please refer to the **Staff Acceptable Use Policy** for comprehensive guidelines.

10. Whistleblowing

- I. The Trust encourages all staff to raise any concerns they might have about the conduct of others in the organisation, whether this be peers or people in authority. All Bede's employees must be aware of the importance of preventing and eliminating wrongdoing at work, and are therefore expected to be watchful for unethical conduct and report anything of that nature as soon as they become aware of it.
- II. Any matter raised under this procedure will be investigated thoroughly, promptly and confidentially and the outcome of the investigation will be reported back to the person who raised the concern. It is important to note that no Trust employee will be victimised for raising a matter under this procedure.
- III. Victimisation of an employee for raising a qualified disclosure is a disciplinary offence. It is also a disciplinary offence to make a false allegation in a malicious manner.
- IV. Furthermore, an instruction to cover up wrongdoing is itself a disciplinary offence. Employees should not remain silent if they have been told not to raise or pursue any concern, even if this is by a person in authority such as a manager, this should be reported to the Prep School Headmaster, Senior Headmaster or, in the absence of the latter, the Principal Deputy Head.
- V. When a member of staff has a concern about the conduct of the Prep School Headmaster, they should contact the Senior Headmaster / CEO of the Trust. If there is a concern about the Senior Headmaster's conduct, employees should contact the Chairman of Governors.

Teaching Staff children

1. Introduction

- I. There is no doubt that the presence of the children of staff members within the school is a good thing, for all parties. Staff families benefit from having access to a service that, without generous staff discounts, they would be unlikely to be able to afford; the school, meanwhile, is able to welcome a number of pupils who contribute enormously¹.
- II. If we are to judge pupil contribution solely on exam results achieved, then the children's performance of teaching staff, find great success:

GCSE	Staff children			All pupils	
	Number	A*-C	A*-A	A*-C	A*-A
2018	5	98	68	93	38
2017	4	100	77	92	43
2016	3	100	79	92	45

A Level	Staff children			All pupils	
	Number	A*-B	A*-A	A*-B	A*-A
2018	3	100	66	71	37
2017	2	83	33	80	46
2016	2	100	83	78	53

- I. However, the contribution of such pupils extends well beyond simple academic results. The pupils included in these statistics include superb musicians, sportspeople and dramatists – as well as those who are, simply, delightful girls and boys, young men and women, who make the school a better place by their presence within it.
- II. However, the presence of staff children in the school does raise a number of matters, relating to fairness, confidentiality and expectation. The purpose of this document is to help guide all staff towards better practice in their dealing with the children of colleagues, and, particularly, to help guide those staff members whose children are educated within the St Bede's School Trust so as to make it more likely that they will get things right. This document should be read in conjunction with the Staff Code of Conduct.

2. Teaching the children of colleagues

- I. It goes without saying – or, at least, it *should* go without saying – that teachers should give each child under their care the same level of service. Just as we would decry the idea that a child should gain preferential treatment because their parent was in some way of interest (through friendship, fame, wealth or notoriety), so too would we want all children of colleagues to be treated just as their fellows are treated. Such children should receive a brilliant service, should be nurtured and cared for, encouraged and supported – but so too should *all* children within the school. No colleague should ever feel as if they need to respond differently to a child in front of them because of who that child's parents happen to be.

3. Communication between parents and school

¹ There are currently three children of teachers in Year 11, five in Year 10, seven in Year 9, three in Year 8, six in Year 7, two in Year 6, seven in Year 5, five in Year 4, three in Year 3, two in Year 2, three in Year 1 and five in Reception. These figures do not include the children of non-teaching staff, or the children of *former* teachers.

- I. Staff children should be treated in exactly the same way as other pupils in the school. Communication regarding such children should thus follow the normal channels – in both directions. It is a real privilege to work alongside those who are teaching your child, and it would be unrealistic not to expect both parties – teacher and parent / teacher – to take advantage of that situation at times, to pass on a message or to offer praise. It is very nice to be able to tell a colleague how much your daughter is enjoying her Physics lessons, or to mention to a parent / teacher that their son has performed particularly well in a History test. But it is not appropriate for a teacher to pass on a minor negative to a parent / teacher, if they would not do so for any other parent; nor is it appropriate for a parent / teacher to use their privileged access to their child's teachers to raise concerns or issues, without using the appropriate avenues. This point should, especially, be noted when a formal discussion needs to take place: there should not be an expectation that a colleague should deal with a parent / teacher with any greater alacrity than they would be expected to deal with any other parent.

4. Parents' evenings and other public occasions

- I. Parents Evenings are busy occasions, and a teacher's first responsibility is their professional one: parents will wish to use such an occasion to discuss their own children's progress. If at all possible, a non-teaching parent should use the opportunity to attend, feeding back to the teacher / parent later. If this is not possible, and if the teacher / parent is not required to meet parents themselves, they are welcome to make appointments to discuss their child's progress. However, if such appointments are in short supply, the needs of other parents should be put first and another mutually convenient time should be arranged, bearing in mind the ample opportunities for such discussions during the working day.
- II. At other public occasions, it is important that the teacher / parent recognises that their attendance is as a teacher – unless they have secured the time off to be able to attend as a parent.

5. Rewards, conduct and recognition

- I. The children of teachers must expect to be treated in exactly the same way as all other pupils in the school. This not only means that they will be subject to the same disciplinary code, but also that they will have access to the same possibilities for public recognition and reward. However, when any child of a teacher is given particular recognition in the school – as a prefect, for example, or with a leading role in a sports team, a dramatic production or a musical event – then the possibility of nepotism being thought to have taken place is one of which we must always be aware. Thus it is essential that we do not allow ourselves to be in a position in which such accusations may be possible – the process must not only be fair, but also be *seen* to be fair. Transparency and openness are even more important than under normal circumstances!

6. Access to confidential information

- I. All staff are able to access a great deal of information about other children within the school. Should they do so for reasons that are not professional – for example, to find out about their child's friends – they must expect to receive firm censure. Looking at a child's discipline record because you are worried about whether they are a good influence on your own son or daughter would obviously be unacceptable. However, even looking up a child's address so as to be able to drop your own child off at the house would be breaking data protection laws.

7. Confidentiality at home

- I. All families talk. It is inevitable that, if your child is a pupil at the school, you will hear stories about what a colleague has said or done in a class, and you will be aware of your child's feelings about individual teachers. It would be wholly inappropriate to bring such information to work. No teacher should have to worry about one of their pupils reporting back on what they have said and done (unless they have said or done something which is genuinely reckless). A parent / teacher must recognise that what their child says, at home, must – in nearly all cases – *remain* at home. Similarly, any child

whose parents are teachers at the school will, from time to time, be aware of information or attitudes of which other children will be ignorant. They must recognise that their privileged position brings with it certain demands of confidentiality.

8. Teaching your own children

- I. All else being equal, it is best for children not to be taught by their own parents. However, sometimes it is unavoidable that this will happen. If it does, it should only be after full discussion with the relevant HoD or Academic Leader. Under such circumstances, fairness must not only be done but must be *seen* to be done. Of course, a child taught by her own parent should not expect favourable treatment, but neither should she expect to be treated especially *harshly*, never given the opportunities that her peers are given for fear of being seen to be being given special treatment. It is a hard balancing act – and one which is best avoided if at all possible!

9. Dealing with other parents

- I. One of the biggest difficulties for parent / teachers can be other parents. Some parents will recognise and accept your dual role, as a parent and as a teacher. Others will not, and will seek to gain information from you, consciously or not leading you towards the revelation of things that would not, under normal circumstances, be revealed to a parent. It is difficult, but as an employee of the school you are not a 'normal' parent, and thus you must always be alert to the possibility of your being encouraged to say things you might regret – about a colleague, for example or about the organisation of some aspect of school life. Things *can* be taken out context!

10. Children's friends

- I. If you have children at the school, they will – hopefully – make friends with whom they will want to spend time, including, possibly, at your house. Again, the dual role – parent and teacher – is one of which you will need to be aware under such circumstances. Your child's friends will, to some extent, see you as Doris's mother or father, but they will also see you as a teacher. Things are different for you, compared to other (non-teaching) parents. The best advice: be careful, and think before acting! Likewise, your child's friend's parents may have different expectations of you because you are a teacher: if there are any mishaps 'on your watch' it will – fairly or unfairly – be regarded as a comment on your professional competence.

11. Public exams

- I. The JCQ guidance here is worth repeating in full: "If preparing either your own child or the child of a colleague for public examinations please ensure you adhere strictly to all exam board regulations. If you are teaching or preparing your child, step-child or foster-child for public examinations please ensure that you inform the Exams Office of this before the entry deadline of examination series concerned, as this information has to be reported to the exam board concerned. If you are present at the exam room on the day of the exam, please make sure you do not have unaccompanied access to any exam materials. Please let the Exams Office know if you have been asked to read or invigilate in an exam room where your child is present. Please treat pre-release materials with extra care."

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