



**OUNDLE**

School



**Laxton**  
Junior School

OUNDLE

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## Staff Code of Conduct

*The Corporation of Oundle School includes both Oundle School, a boarding and day School for pupils aged 11 – 18 and Laxton Junior School (LJS), a day School for pupils aged 4 - 11. This policy applies equally to both Schools and any reference to ‘the School’ relates to both Oundle and LJS.*

This is a non-contractual policy, and it may be amended by the School from time to time as it deems appropriate, for example to incorporate statutory and regulatory changes or in line with best practice.

This policy must be read, understood and followed by all Staff. The term “Staff” includes all full and part time Teaching and Support Staff (including Volunteers and self-employed Staff), and others associated with working with the School in some capacity whether paid or unpaid (including Governors, Contractors and Work Experience Students). Failure to comply with this Code of Conduct may lead to disciplinary action being taken under the School’s disciplinary procedure.

**This Code of Conduct covers the following areas:**

### **Part 1: Guidance for ALL Staff (as defined above)**

1. School ethos
2. Purpose and application
3. Guiding principles
4. General conduct and appearance
5. Contact with pupils
6. Communication with pupils (including the use of technology)
7. Staff/pupil relationships
8. Confidentiality
9. Reporting obligations

### **Part 2: Additional Guidance for Staff with pupil interaction and responsibility**

10. Guiding principles
11. Meetings with pupils
12. Behaviour management and physical restraint
13. Physical contact
14. Contact outside School

**This Code of Conduct must be read in conjunction with the policies in the Staff Handbook including:**

- Safeguarding Policy and policies referred to within it
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Disciplinary Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Countering Bullying and Cyberbullying Policy
- Physical Restraint Policy
- Dignity at Work Policy
- Staff Alcohol, Smoking, Drugs and Prohibited Substances Policy
- Staff IT Acceptable Use Policy and other IT Policies
- Anti-Bribery Policy
- Photography Filming and Publication of Images Policy

Volunteers and self-employed Staff can access these policies via their named School contact. Contractors should refer to the Contractors' portal.

## **Part 1: Guidance for ALL Staff**

### **1.0 School ethos**

**1.1 The School:** The Corporation of Oundle School (the "School") comprises Oundle School, an 11-18, co-educational, boarding and day School, and Laxton Junior School, a 4-11 co-educational day school. The School is committed to promoting and safeguarding the welfare of children and providing an all-round education to pupils between the ages of 4-18. High academic standards, excellence in the co-curriculum, and a happy, purposeful and inclusive living and working environment are central to the ethos of the School. The very highest standards of courtesy, behaviour and endeavour are expected from pupils. Staff, in return, are committed to providing pupils with the very best care and education.

**1.2 The Staff:** All Staff are expected to set high professional standards and play their part in ensuring that this ethos is maintained. They have a duty to ensure they are familiar with and follow this Code of Conduct and the other employment policies and practices detailed in the Staff Handbook. They must also abide by the terms and conditions of their contracts. For teachers this includes not carrying out any work other than pursuant to their terms and conditions of employment without the prior permission of the Head. For support staff if you carry out any employment outside your normal hours of work for the School, you are required to notify your line manager in writing to enable the School to ensure compliance with its obligations under the Working Time Regulations.

Staff are expected to declare any potential conflict of interest to the Head, in advance, for example in relation to copyright and intellectual property (see para 4.4 below) or in relation to any work undertaken for examination boards. In addition, all Teachers are expected to adhere to the DfE's Teachers' Standards, which have statutory force. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teachers-standards>

**1.3 Staff Training:** The School recognises the importance of appropriate training and ensures that all Staff receive Safeguarding training and familiarisation in School policies as appropriate, including this Code of Conduct, the Safeguarding policy, Whistleblowing Policy, Disciplinary Policy, Staff IT Acceptable Use policy and other policies as outlined in the training section of the Safeguarding Policy.

## 2.0 Purpose and Application

**2.1 Purpose:** This Code of Conduct (“Code”) has been produced to confirm the centrality of children’s welfare to the School’s culture and to ensure that all those who work in the School and may have contact with children are clear on the School’s rules of conduct and expectations. Parents and children place trust in those connected to the School, and all Staff have an obligation to promote and safeguard the children’s welfare. Relationships with pupils and all adults associated with the School (e.g. Governors, fellow Staff, Parents, Guardians and Carers, Contractors, Visitors, Volunteers) must be reasonable and mutually respectful at all times.

The purpose of the Code is to:

- confirm and reinforce the professional responsibilities of all Staff
- clarify the legal position in relation to sensitive aspects of Staff / pupil relationships and communications including the use of social media
- set out the expectations of standards and behaviour to be maintained within the School
- help adults establish safe practices and reduce the risk of false accusations or improper conduct

**2.2 Application:** All Staff have a duty to keep young people safe and to protect them from physical and emotional harm. This duty is in part exercised through the development of respectful, caring and professional relationships between Staff and pupils and behaviour by Staff that demonstrates integrity, maturity and good judgement. Staff should show respect for pupils, parents, visitors and colleagues through honesty, courtesy and punctuality.

It is the contractual duty of every member of Staff to observe the rules and obligations in this Code and all other relevant policies. The School also has a duty of care to its Staff under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 which requires it to provide a safe working environment for Staff and guidance about safe working practices. Staff have a duty to take care of themselves and anyone else who may be affected by their actions or failings. In this respect, the duty of care towards both Staff and pupils can be demonstrated through the use of these guidelines. The School also has a duty of care to parents, guardians or carers and pupils and the implementation of the practices in this Code will help to discharge that duty.

All Staff have a duty to report any illness promptly to their Departmental Head/Line Manager/LJS Deputy Head and maintain communication with the School during their absence so that colleagues can provide adequate cover.

## 3.0 Guiding Principles

**3.1 All Staff must put the wellbeing, development and progress of all pupils first by:**

- taking all reasonable steps to ensure the safety and wellbeing of pupils under their supervision
- using professional expertise and judgment for the best interests of pupils in their care
- demonstrating self-awareness and taking responsibility for their own actions and for providing help and support to pupils
- raising concerns about the practices of teachers, other professionals and volunteers where these may have a negative impact on pupils' learning or progress, or may put pupils at risk; this includes low level concerns as defined in the School’s Safeguarding Policy
- being familiar with the School's Safeguarding Policy and procedures
- reading and understanding the required sections of the current version of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) as identified in the Safeguarding Policy
- knowing the role, identity and contact details of the current Designated Safeguarding Leads for Oundle School and Laxton Junior School and their Deputy

- knowing the role, identity and contact details of the Governor with specific responsibility for Safeguarding
- being aware that they are in a position of trust (i.e. the adult is in a position of power or influence over the pupil due to their 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 pupils
- upholding School and House Rules and insisting on high standards of behaviour from the pupils
- not commissioning, requesting, or encouraging pupils to create artwork or other materials for personal or commercial purposes

### **3.2 All Staff must demonstrate respect for diversity and take steps to promote equality by:**

- acting appropriately and in accordance with this Code of Conduct, towards all pupils, parents, guardians or carers and colleagues
- complying with the School's Countering Bullying and Cyberbullying and Equal Opportunities Policies and this Code of Conduct
- addressing issues of discrimination and bullying whenever they arise
- helping to create a fair and inclusive School and work environment showing understanding and consideration for all without prejudice towards age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.

### **3.3 All Staff must work together respectfully and constructively as part of a unified Staff body:**

- Staff represent Oundle School/Laxton Junior School and are expected to show good manners, respect and courtesy towards all colleagues with whom they come into contact across the School and wider community. Where appropriate this includes:
  - upholding the School's reputation, role and standing in the local community
  - not acting in a way that brings the School into disrepute
  - treating all colleagues equally and with respect, communicating effectively and developing understanding, productive and supportive relationships with colleagues.
- In the event of challenges arising, Staff are expected to address matters directly and sensitively with a view to resolution which addresses the School requirement and where possible which works for everyone involved
- Managing colleagues with respect, inclusivity, fairness and compassion
- Staff are expected to undertake their responsibilities conscientiously and adhere to their contractual obligations
- Staff are expected to support the School's development and improvement activities within their spheres of responsibility
- Staff are expected to adhere to all School policies and procedures and promote adherence by colleagues

### **3.4 All Staff must understand that the School has a legal duty to have regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism or other forms of extremism, and must be aware of:**

- what extremism and radicalisation mean and why people - including pupils and fellow Staff members - may be vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism because of it
- what measures are available to prevent people from becoming drawn into terrorism or other extremist groups and how to challenge the extremist ideology that can be associated with it
- how to obtain support for people who may be being exploited by extremist or radicalising influences

### **3.5 All Staff must understand the importance of following the School's Safeguarding Policy with regard to Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), including:**

- the requirement for staff to report any concerns about suspected or at risk cases immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Teachers must also report to the police cases where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18. The report should be made orally by calling 101, the single non-emergency number. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining pupils, but failure to report such cases is a serious breach of this code of conduct

## **4.0 General conduct and appearance**

### **4.1 Language:** Staff must use appropriate language at all times. They must use discretion and avoid:

- using words or expressions that have any unnecessary sexual content or innuendo
- using any form of aggressive or threatening words, or words or actions that are over-familiar
- swearing, blasphemy or any sort of offensive language in front of pupils or towards colleagues
- using sarcasm, discriminatory or derogatory words at any point
- making unprofessional personal comments about anyone

**4.2 Dress:** Staff must be of smart appearance in keeping with the School's ethos and dress in a professional manner that is appropriate to the job. Staff act as role models for our pupils and as we expect pupils to wear smart uniform, we also expect staff to reflect and uphold this expectation. Academic staff are expected to dress formally and smartly during the academic part of the day, with adjustments for staff teaching practical subjects as appropriate to their area. Sports kit should not be worn to lessons unless there are timing issues which necessitate this. Jeans and trainers of any kind are not appropriate. If for purposes of safety, the School has provided staff with protective uniform or safety work wear, this must be worn correctly as and when required.

**4.3 School property:** Staff must take proper care when using School property and must not use School property for any unauthorised use or for private gain. Staff must not abuse privileges or opportunities which the School provides. School property and materials must not be appropriated for personal use, and events and trips organised for pupils must not involve any personal gain to the organiser. The School policy of allowing easy access to telephones and computers must not be abused by running up large bills for communications of a personal nature.

**4.4 Copyright and Intellectual Property:** Staff must observe copyright law concerning music, video and printed material and discuss the ownership of intellectual property with the Head before selling rights to publishers and third parties. Staff must declare any conflict of interest, seeking advice if necessary.

**4.5 School premises/accommodation:** Staff must not carry out any work or activity on School premises other than pursuant to their terms and conditions of employment without the prior permission of the Head. Staff may not enter into a private tutoring arrangement with current pupils. Any private tutoring (including online) must take place off-site. Staff must maintain School premises as if it were their own and, where appropriate, keep School accommodation in good order, in accordance with their occupancy agreement.

**4.6 Photographs and videos:** Staff should always bear in mind the purpose for which images are taken of children, ensuring that this is for legitimate School purposes only. They must exercise due caution when taking, displaying or publishing images of children. Staff must comply with the Photography, Filming and Publication of Images policy in the Staff Handbook and are responsible for being aware of

which pupils do not have parental consent for any aspect of photography. In any case of doubt, please refer to the Head of Marketing.

**4.7 Gifts and rewards:** Before accepting or giving any gifts or rewards, Staff must comply with the Anti-Bribery Policy contained in the Staff Handbook.

**4.8 Conduct outside work:** Staff must not engage in conduct outside work which could potentially damage the reputation and standing of the School.

- Staff must be aware that their acts and omissions both on and off duty and both on and off School premises may impact on their reputation and on that of the School and take care to act with the highest levels of awareness and integrity in all they do, at all times
- Staff must exercise caution with regard to their digital footprint, including the use of social networking sites, and be aware of the risks to themselves and others
- Staff must be aware that the behaviour of their partner or other family members or any member of their household should not raise concerns or affect the welfare of any member of the School community or a member of the public 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 or its reputation.

## 5.0 Contact with pupils

**5.1 Application** Excepting appropriate forms of interaction which arise for Staff who have children at the School with their children's friends, Staff must avoid any contact with pupils which is not wholly necessary for the purpose of their duties. The following precautions are recommended from a Staff protection point of view. Staff should:

- ensure all communication is professional and appropriate in line with their role. This includes not sharing personal information which it is not appropriate for pupils to hear.
- not give pupils their home address, home telephone number, personal mobile telephone number or personal email address: Teams and School email are the appropriate channels. It *may* be appropriate for Staff to give their personal mobile telephone number to pupils for School purposes on a trip, provided they instruct pupils to delete their number at the end of the trip, but Staff should not feel obliged to do so – Teams or the use of a trip phone are the alternatives
- not make arrangements to meet pupils, individually or in groups, outside School other than on School trips authorised by the Deputy Head Co-Curricular or LJS Deputy Head
- not give a pupil a lift in their own vehicle other than on School business and with permission from the Deputy Head Co-Curricular/LJS Deputy Head. If Staff use their own car to transport pupils, they should make sure they have business use on their policy. The School's insurance does provide cover for pupils being transported on an occasional basis, but if this becomes more routine, they should seek advice from the Bursary.
- never invite pupils (groups or individuals) to their home except in accordance with the strict safeguarding protocols at paragraph 11.2 below
- report and record any situation which may place a child at risk, or which may compromise the Schools or their professional standing
- never engage in secretive social contact with pupils or their parents, guardians or carers

The same guidelines must be applied to activities, 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 and Expeditions Policy. The principles of this guidance also apply to contact with children or young people who are pupils at another school.

It is not School policy to enable access to live lessons or to record lessons for live access. In cases of pupil absence at Oundle School, the School's policy is to make resources available. All contact with



pupils must be through School channels. Further guidance is available in the School's Online Meetings Protocol which can be found in the Staff Handbook.

**5.2 Transporting pupils:** In situations in which there is a need for Staff to transport pupils, Staff must:

- 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
- ensure they are fit to drive and free from any substances that may impair their judgement or ability to drive
- wherever practicable, avoid using private vehicles
- be aware that until the pupil is passed over to a parent / carer, they have responsibility for that pupil's health and safety
- record the details of the journey, including a justification of the need for any impromptu or emergency lifts including communication with the Hsm of the pupil(s) in question at Oundle School/the Deputy Head at Laxton Junior School

**5.3 Contact outside School:** Staff who are friends with parents, guardians or carers of pupils or who, for example, are voluntary workers in youth organisations attended by pupils, will of course have contact with those pupils outside school. In these situations, Staff must still respect the above advice wherever possible and must keep the Hsm/LJS Deputy Head informed of such relationships.

Staff must always bear in mind that where they meet children or parents, guardians or carers socially, such contact could be perceived as inappropriate, an abuse of a position of trust or as grooming. They should take sensible precautions to guard against misinterpretation. Any social contact or perceptions that could give rise to concern must be reported to Designated Safeguarding Lead so that the matter can be recorded and a strategy put in place.

## **6.0 Communication with pupils (including the use of technology)**

**6.1 Application:** Staff must ensure that they maintain appropriate professional distance in all communications with children (including Sixth Formers) including verbal comments, letters, notes, electronic mail, phone calls, texts, social media, or via appropriate physical contact. They must recognise that pupils' emotional immaturity may make them vulnerable to misinterpreting boundaries in these situations. It is not appropriate for Staff to use personal email or social media accounts to communicate with pupils.

**6.2 Dealing with "crushes":** Crushes, fixations or infatuations are part of normal adolescent development, but they need sensitive handling so that Staff can be protected against allegations of exploitation. These situations carry a high risk of words, actions and expressions being misinterpreted, and so the highest levels of professionalism are required.

If a pupil sends personal communications to a member of Staff, this should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and recorded. If Staff suspect that a pupil has a crush on them or on another colleague, they must bring it to the attention of the Designated Safeguarding Lead at the earliest opportunity so that the issue can be recorded and an appropriate strategy put in place. Staff must avoid being alone with a pupil who has developed a crush on them and must keep the Designated Safeguarding Lead updated of all matters arising.

**6.3 IT Acceptable use:** Staff must establish safe and responsible online behaviours. They must comply with the School's IT Policies and adhere to any instructions delivered via training. Staff must report to senior colleagues, any new and emerging technologies which may have a bearing on School practices and on the review of the IT Acceptable Use Policy. Staff must also:

- respect the email, internet and telephone protocols of the School

- not issue their network passwords to pupils or colleagues or allow others to access the network in their name
- only make contact with pupils for professional reasons and via School approved channels
- recognise that text messaging must only be used as part of an agreed protocol and only when other forms of communication are not possible.
- ensure that personal social networking sites are set as private and that current pupils are not approved contacts (excepting where Staff have their own children as approved contacts – in these cases privacy settings must be set to exclude other children). This includes ensuring that information is not visible to current pupils via the profiles of Old Oundelian contacts. Staff should apply the same common-sense precautions on leaving the School, both for their own protection and to protect the privacy of colleagues remaining in the School

**6.4 Appropriate material:** Staff should protect children from exposure to inappropriate or indecent images. If they discover material that is potentially illegal or inappropriate, they must isolate the equipment and contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead in accordance with the School's Safeguarding Policy and Procedures immediately. Staff must:

- not bring inappropriate material, such as pornography, to work
- not use School property or the School network to access such material
- not expose pupils to unsuitable material on the internet
- ensure that any film or material shown to pupils is age appropriate

**6.5 Communicating with children and parents, guardians or carers:** Excepting appropriate forms of interaction arising from social connections outside work, all communication with children or parents, guardians or carers must conform to School policy and be limited to professional matters. All written communication should be via the School systems (Teams or School email).

**6.6 Communicating outside the agreed protocols:** Email or text communications between an adult and any pupil outside agreed protocols may lead to a report to external agencies in accordance with the School's Safeguarding Policy and Procedures, disciplinary action and / or criminal investigations. This also includes communications through internet-based websites.

## 7.0 Staff/pupil relationships

**7.1 Application:** Allegations of unprofessional conduct or improper contact or words can arise at any time. Professionalism and vigilance are required to ensure the safety of children in the School's care, and to reduce the risk of an allegation of impropriety against Staff.

**7.2 General guidance:** Staff:

- need to exercise professional judgment but always act within the spirit of these guidelines. If Staff are involved in a situation where no specific guidance exists, they must discuss the circumstances with the Designated Safeguarding Lead. A written record must be kept that includes justification for any action taken
- 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 Safeguarding Policy and Procedures
- must be familiar with procedures for reporting concerns in accordance with the School's Whistleblowing Policy and be aware that if Staff raise concerns about working practices at the School to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or an appropriate senior member of Staff that they will be protected from detriment under the Whistleblowing Policy
- must be familiar with the local reporting guidelines and the Local Safeguarding Children Board reporting threshold document in respect of any concerns relating to children



- must be familiar with procedures for handling allegations against Staff as set out in the School's Safeguarding Policy and Procedures
- must seek guidance from the Designated Safeguarding Lead if they are in any doubt about appropriate conduct
- must report any actions which could be misinterpreted, any misunderstandings, accidents or threats involving them and a pupil or a group of pupils to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- must report to their Departmental Head/ Line Manager any concerns about the behaviour of Staff that may be in breach of this Code of Conduct

**7.3 Sexual contact:** Staff must not:

- have any type of sexual relationship with a pupil
- have sexually suggestive or provocative communications with a pupil
- make sexual remarks to or about a pupil
- discuss their own sexual relationships in the presence of pupils
- conduct any form of physical or intimate relationship with a former pupil that has its grounding in a Staff-pupil connection

**7.4 Abuse of a position of trust and inappropriate relationships with School pupils:** Sexual relationships or sexual contact with any pupils, or encouraging a relationship to develop in a way which might lead to a sexual relationship, or any relationship just considered inappropriate with any pupil 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 and an abuse of a position of trust to have any sexual relationship with any School pupil under the age of 18. Whilst not a criminal offence, it is a breach of this Code and considered to be gross misconduct to have a sexual relationship with any pupil of this School, even if **over** the age of 18.

If an intimate or sexual relationship were to develop between a member of Staff and a former pupil shortly after the pupil has left the School, this would raise concerns about possible abuse of the Staff member's professional position in grooming the young person whilst at the school. Any such concern would be referred by the school to the Designated Officer at the Local Authority and might lead to disciplinary action being taken against the member of Staff after an appropriate hearing.

**7.5 Inappropriate relationships with pupils at another school:** Forming relationships with children or young people who are pupils 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 is liable to bring the School into disrepute and gives rise to concern that the Staff involved cannot be trusted to maintain professional boundaries with pupils and students at the School. Whilst not necessarily a criminal offence, the School considers it inappropriate for Staff to form inappropriate relationships with a pupil of any school, irrespective of their age.

**7.6 Behaviour giving particular cause for concern:** Staff must take particular care when dealing with a pupil who:

- appears to be emotionally distressed, or generally vulnerable and/or who is seeking expressions of affection
- appears to hold a grudge against them
- 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 overfamiliar
- may have reason to make up an allegation against them

**7.7 Procedure to be followed in these cases:** Some of these behaviours may be indications that a child has been, or is currently being, abused and must therefore be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead under the School's Safeguarding Policy.

**7.8 Record keeping:** Comprehensive records are essential. All concerns, discussions and decisions made and the reasons for those decisions must be recorded in writing. Any incident involving children that could give cause for concern, must always be reported promptly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead in accordance with the School's Safeguarding Policy and Procedures. If there is any doubt about recording requirements this must be discussed with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

## **8.0 Confidentiality**

**8.1 Confidential information:** Members of Staff may have access to personal details about Staff and pupils in order to undertake their everyday responsibilities. In some circumstances, Staff may be given additional highly sensitive or private information. Such information must be treated in a confidential manner. Confidential information about a pupil or member of Staff must never be used casually in conversation or shared with any person other than on a need to know basis. In circumstances where the child's or Staff member's identity does not need to be disclosed, the information must be used anonymously.

Staff members should never give absolute guarantees of confidentiality to pupils or adults wishing to tell them about something serious. They should guarantee only that they will pass on information to the minimum number of people who must be told in order to ensure that the proper action is taken to sort out the problem and that they will not tell anyone who does not have a clear need to know. They will also take whatever steps they can to protect the informing pupil or adult from any retaliation or unnecessary stress that might be feared after a disclosure has been made.

**8.2 Information sharing:** There are some circumstances in which a member of Staff may be expected to share information about a child, for example when abuse is alleged or suspected. In such cases, individuals have a duty to pass information on without delay, in accordance with the Safeguarding Policy. If a member of Staff is in any doubt about whether to share information or keep it confidential, he or she must seek guidance in accordance with the School's Data Protection Policy.

**8.3 Data protection:** The storing and processing of personal information about pupils and Staff is governed by the Data Protection Act 1998 - see the Data Protection Policy in the Staff Handbook.

**8.4 Public Statements:** Staff must not make statements (including "no comment") to journalists concerning any aspect of the Corporation of Oundle School, unless with the express permission of the Head. Staff must not publicly speculate about any allegation of (or hint of) criminal offence made against an employee and must not respond to any requests from the media, pupils, parents or the public for statements or information, either written or verbal. All such requests must be directed to the School's Deputy Head Admissions. The same principle applies to Staff discretion with regard to confidential or sensitive information about pupils.

## **9.0. Reporting Obligations**

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

**9.2 Wrongdoing:** All Staff are required to report their own wrongdoing, or any wrongdoing or proposed wrongdoing of any other member of Staff or any conduct which they may suspect to be inappropriate to their line manager or to a member of the Leadership Team. The School operates a Whistleblowing Policy which is contained within the Staff Handbook.

### 9.3 Duty of disclosure

- **Disqualification:** Staff in a Relevant Role at LJS and those within The Corporation of Oundle School who may be working closely with children under 8 years of age are under an on-going duty to immediately notify the School if their circumstances change so that they meet any of the criteria for disqualification at any point during their employment with the School. Any failure to disclose relevant information will be treated as a serious disciplinary matter.
- **Criminal Offences:** If, at any time during their employment with the School, Staff or a member of their household are convicted of any offence; subject to a police or criminal investigation; or subject to any investigation relating to child protection, then Staff must immediately notify either the Head; the Bursar or the Director of HR so that the matter can be investigated if appropriate.

**9.4 Whistleblowing:** All Staff are trained so that they understand that they are expected and encouraged to raise any concerns they have, whether related to the safeguarding and welfare of pupils, the conduct of Staff or other matters, during the course of their employment in accordance with the School's policies (including the Whistleblowing Policy, the Safeguarding Policy and this Code).

**9.5 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 promptly if the criteria for a 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.

**9.6 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 Safeguarding concerns exist in relation to that person, those concerns will still be investigated in full by the School and a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service will be made promptly if the criteria for a referral are met. The School may also need to consider a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service if a member of Staff is suspended or deployed to another area of work that is not regulated activity.

**9.7 Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) (previously known as the National College for Teaching and Leadership):** Separate consideration will also be given to making a referral to the TRA where a teacher has been dismissed (or would have been dismissed had he or she not resigned) because of unacceptable professional conduct, conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute, or a conviction at any time for a relevant offence. An interim referral to the TRA may also be considered and made if appropriate.

## Part 2: Additional Guidance for Staff with Pupil Interaction and Responsibility

The term "Teaching Staff" is used in this section to designate full and part time teachers at the School, including Fellows, Visiting Music Teachers, LJS Teaching and Learning Support Assistants and Sports Coaches.

### 10.0. Guiding principles

**10.1 All Staff with pupil interaction and responsibility** must maintain public trust and confidence in the School and in their profession(s) by:

- demonstrating honesty and integrity

- understanding and upholding their duty to safeguard the welfare of children and young people
- maintaining an effective learning environment
- maintaining reasonable standards of behaviour whether inside or outside normal School hours and whether on or off the School's site

**10.2 Teaching Staff** must (in addition to the points outlined for all Staff):

- teach their allocated timetable competently and foster an enthusiasm for their subject
- take responsibility for maintaining the quality of their teaching practice by:
  - helping pupils to become confident and successful learners
  - meeting the professional standards for teaching applicable to their role and position within the School
  - preparing lessons thoroughly and assessing and monitoring pupil progress carefully
  - reflecting on their current practice and seeking out opportunities to develop knowledge, understanding and skills
  - using technology (including the use of AI) safely and responsibly and always in accordance with School policies and procedures
- be accessible and establish productive relationships with parents, guardians or carers as appropriate to their role by
  - providing accessible and accurate information about their child's progress
  - involving them in important decisions about their child's education
- play a full part in running the co-curricular activities of the School, unless exempted
- be aware that some parts of the curriculum may raise sexually explicit subject matter. Care must be taken in subjects where rules / boundaries are relaxed (e.g. Drama or Art) and Staff must have clear lesson plans and take care to avoid overstepping personal and professional boundaries.

**11.0 Meetings with pupils**

**11.1 One-to-one meetings:** If Staff are working with one pupil, or conducting a one-to-one meeting or teaching session with a pupil, they must follow departmental procedures and have regard to this Code

**11.2 The use of personal living space:** No pupil should visit the residential accommodation of any member of Staff. This includes School-owned staff accommodation that is attached to Boarding Houses, that which is not, privately-owned Staff accommodation and any private gardens.

In Boarding Houses, a clear but discreet notice should be put on each door between the House and any Staff private accommodation saying 'Private No Entry'. Any other connecting doors between House and Staff private accommodation should be kept locked. Pupils may not be escorted through the Private Side if they arrive/depart early or late and the alarms are on. They should go through the House with the alarms disabled and reset.

**The only exceptions to these rules are:**

- pupils' being allowed into their Hsm's /Deputy Hsm's studies under supervision where the study acts as an airlock between House and the Hsm's/Deputy Hsm's accommodation. Study doors should be kept closed when the Hsm/Deputy is not in the study.
- pupils' being invited as part of a group to the designated public space within the Hsm's, or the Head's, accommodation, this being logged with the Deputy Head Pastoral on each occasion.
- in exceptional circumstances, it might be necessary for an individual pupil to be taken through to the designated public space within the Hsm's accommodation, provided there is an adult present, for example if a child is distressed having received some bad news. Such cases must always be logged with the Deputy Head Pastoral with the reason why.

- if parents and pupils are invited to a social occasion by a Hsm, this may take place, but pupils should arrive and leave with their parents or an identified adult.
- children of Staff may invite friends who are day or boarding pupils to visit their family home, provided that
  - the Staff who are parents of the child hosting have given consent and there is an adult present during the visit, and
  - the parents/Hsm of the child visiting have given permission in advance.
- In the case of visits to the homes of Staff resident in Boarding Houses, access must be via the family's private front door rather than via the Boarding House.
- it is permissible for day pupils to baby-sit for Staff if this is arranged privately outside school, with both sets of parents' permission. Staff must take care to ensure that such arrangements do not lead to perceptions of favouritism or cross appropriate Staff-pupil boundaries. If day pupils provide baby-sitting in a Boarding House, it must be logged with the Deputy Head Pastoral.

**11.4 Home visits:** Home visits by Staff to pupils' homes are not necessary except in the most exceptional circumstances. Staff must:

- discuss the purpose of any home visit in advance with the Hsm/LJS Deputy Head and the Designated Safeguarding Lead and adhere to any arrangements which are in place for the benefit of the pupil in question
- adopt a risk management strategy and ensure appropriate risk assessments are in place. Where there is insufficient information to complete a risk assessment, Staff just ensure they are accompanied by a colleague
- not visit unannounced if this can be avoided
- leave the door open where they will be alone with a pupil or pupils
- keep records detailing times of arrival and departure, and work undertaken
- ensure that any behaviour or situation that gives rise to a concern is reported and the response recorded
- discuss with the Designated Safeguarding Lead anything that gives cause for concern in accordance with the School's Safeguarding Policy
- have a mobile telephone and an emergency contact.

## **12.0. Behaviour management and physical restraint**

**12.1 Good order and discipline:** Staff in charge or control of pupils must maintain good order and discipline at all times when pupils are present on School premises and whenever pupils are engaged in authorised School activities, whether on School premises or elsewhere.

**12.2 Behaviour management:** All pupils have a right to be treated with respect and dignity. All forms of corporal punishment are unlawful and the use of unwarranted physical force is likely to constitute a criminal offence.

- Any pupil rewards and sanctions must be in accordance with the School's behaviour policies.
- Staff must not use any form of degrading treatment to punish a pupil.
- the use of demeaning or insensitive comments towards pupils is not acceptable in any situation.

**12.3 Physical restraint:** The use of physical intervention must be avoided if possible. If however the use of force or physical restraint is needed, Staff must comply with the Physical Restraint policy in the Staff Handbook.

## **13.0. Physical contact**



**13.1 Appropriate physical contact:** Staff must not use corporal punishment or unreasonable restraint in their dealings with pupils. Any physical contact must be in response to the pupil's needs, of limited duration and appropriate to the pupil's age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background. Physical contact can be easily misinterpreted and must be limited. Staff must use professional judgement. If Staff are at all concerned about any instance of physical contact, they should inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead without delay and make a written record if necessary.

**13.2 Using physical contact in teaching:** Physical contact with a pupil 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. Staff must observe the following guidelines (where applicable) with the pupil's consent:

- explain the intended action to the pupil
- ensure that the door is open and if Staff are in any doubt, ask a colleague or another pupil to be present during the demonstration
- consider alternatives if it appears likely that the pupil might misinterpret the contact
- do not proceed with the action if the pupil appears to be apprehensive or reluctant, or if Staff have other concerns about the pupil's likely reaction

**13.4 Offering comfort to distressed pupils:** Touching may be appropriate where a pupil is in distress and needs comforting. Staff must use their own professional judgement when they feel a pupil needs this kind of support and must be aware of any special circumstances relating to the pupil. For example, a child who has been abused may find physical contact particularly difficult. It is good practice to seek a pupil's agreement before offering comfort to a distressed pupil. OS Staff must always notify the Hsm when comfort has been provided, record the action and must seek guidance if unsure whether it would be appropriate in a particular case. LJS Staff must notify the LJS Deputy Head if a concern is raised about an individual situation.

**13.5 Administering first aid:** When administering first aid Staff must 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 at work rules and any intimate care guidelines, and parents, guardians or carers must be informed. Staff must:

- adhere to the School's policies on first aid and administering medication
- comply with the necessary reporting requirements
- make other adults aware of the task that is being undertaken
- explain what is happening
- report and record the administration of first aid
- have regard to any health plans
- ensure that an appropriate health / risk assessment is undertaken prior to undertaking certain activities

**13.6 Pupils' entitlement to privacy:** Children are entitled to privacy at all times and especially when in a state of undress while changing, bathing, showering or undertaking any form of personal care. However there still must be an appropriate level of supervision to ensure safety and it must be appropriate to the needs and age of the pupils concerned and sensitive to the potential for embarrassment. Staff must be vigilant about their own behaviour and:

- avoid physical contact or visually intrusive behaviour when children are undressed
- announce their intention of entering any rooms where pupils might be changing and avoid remaining unless required
- avoid changing, using the same toilet facilities, or showering or bathing in the same place as pupils, and, if unavoidable, never do these things at the same time as pupils
- not assist with any personal care task that a pupil can and must undertake by themselves.

The importance of respecting children's privacy also applies online. Staff must follow the rules in the IT Acceptable Use Policy for All Staff, and also the guidance from the Deputy Head Academic on the use of classroom management software (Senso).

**13.7 Intimate care:** If intimate care should be required, for example when assisting with toileting or removing wet clothes. Staff must:

- have the required level of full recruitment checks in place and comply with the appropriate guidelines
- advise other Staff of the task being undertaken and consult where there is any change from the agreed procedure. A record must be kept of the justification for any variations and this information must be shared with parents, guardians or carer
- explain to the child what is happening and wherever possible seek permission
- comply with applicable professional codes of practice, as appropriate
- comply with regularly reviewed, formally agreed plans, as appropriate

**13.8 Where a child has been abused:** Where a child has previously been abused, Staff must be informed on a 'need to know' basis and must be extra cautious when considering the necessity of physical contact. Some children may seek inappropriate physical contact. Staff must sensitively deter the pupil and help them understand the importance of personal boundaries. Such incidents must be reported and discussed with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and where appropriate parents, guardians or carers.

**13.9 Children with special educational needs or disabilities:** Some children may need more physical contact to assist their everyday learning, which must be agreed and understood by all concerned, justified, openly applied and open to scrutiny. The Designated Safeguarding Lead, prompted by and in liaison with the OS SENCO/LJS Head of Educational Support will establish whether any reasonable adjustments are required for such pupils.

## 14.0 Contact outside School

**14.1 Educational visits or activities taking place away from School:** When taking part in educational visits, Staff must:

- follow the School's Educational Visits Policy
- be accompanied by another adult unless otherwise agreed with the Deputy Head Co-Curricular/LJS Deputy Head
- undertake a risk assessment
- obtain parental consent if required by terms and conditions
- give careful consideration to sleeping arrangements
- not sleep in the same bedrooms as pupils

**14.2 Overnight supervision (examinations):** If overnight supervision is required to preserve the integrity of the examination process, [JCO guidance notes](#) must be adhered to. In particular:

- Staff must ensure that a risk assessment has been undertaken and that all members of the household have had the appropriate checks
- arrangements must be made with and agreed by parents, guardians or carers and the pupil
- one to one supervision must be avoided where possible
- choice, flexibility and contact with "the outside world" must be incorporated, so far as it is consistent with appropriate supervision and the School's guidelines
- whenever possible, independent oversight of the arrangements must be made; and
- any misinterpretation, misunderstanding or complaint must be reported

Reviewer – Oundle	DLW
Reviewer – LJS	SMC
Post of Reviewer (s)	Senior Deputy Head
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