



# WESTHOLME SCHOOL

Unrivalled Holistic Excellence

## STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT

Reviewed: January **2023**  
Date of next review: September **2024**  
Produced by: Principal

To be read in conjunction with the following policies:

Safeguarding Policy  
Safer Recruitment Policy  
KCSIE 2023  
Whistleblowing Policy  
Induction Policy  
Policy to Prevent Bullying  
Behaviour Management, Rewards and Sanctions Policy  
Dress Code  
Online safety Policy and Acceptable Use Policy  
All GDPR guidance  
Guidance for Safer Working Practices (February 2022)

**PLEASE NOTE: THIS POLICY SHOULD BE UNDERSTOOD IN CONJUNCTION WITH ADDITIONAL ADVICE, RISK ASSESSMENTS AND GUIDANCE IN RELATION TO COVID-19**

**Monitoring, evaluation and review**

The school will review this procedure annually and assess its implementation and effectiveness.

**This guidance is based upon an amended version of the original IRSC<sup>1</sup> document - ‘*Guidance for Safe Working Practice for the Protection of Children and young people and Adults in Education Settings*,<sup>2</sup> commissioned by DfES<sup>3</sup>.**

This policy has been compiled in accordance with Blackburn with Darwen Local Safeguarding Children’s Board guidance.

This document should be read in conjunction with Westholme School’s Safeguarding Policy and Whistleblowing Policy.

In addition: Induction Policy; Policy to Prevent Bullying; Behaviour Policy.

For staff: All these policies are accessible on the School network in the policies area and also on the School website in the ‘School Policies’ section along with the Safeguarding Policy, Safer Recruitment Policy and KCSIE (September 2023).

## Overview

### Background

All adults who come into contact with children and young people in their work have a duty of care to safeguard and promote their welfare. At Westholme we are fully committed to the care and welfare of all children and young people.

The Education Act 2002, places a duty on organisations to safeguard and promote the well-being of children and young people. This includes the need to ensure that all adults who work with or on behalf of children and young people in these organisations are competent, confident and safe to do so.

The vast majority of adults who work with children and young people act professionally and aim to provide a safe and supportive environment which secures the well-being and very best outcomes for children and young people in their care. However, it is recognised that in this area of work tensions and misunderstandings can occur. It is here that the behaviour of adults can give rise to allegations of abuse being made against them. Allegations may be malicious or misplaced. They may arise from differing perceptions of the same event, but when they occur, they are inevitably distressing and difficult for all concerned. Equally, it must be recognised that some allegations will be genuine and there are adults who will deliberately seek out, create or exploit opportunities to abuse children and young people. It is therefore essential that all possible steps are taken to safeguard children and young people and ensure that the adults working with them are safe to do so.

Some concerns have been raised about the potential vulnerability of adults in this area of work. It was suggested that there was a need for clearer advice about what constitutes illegal behaviour and what might be considered as misconduct. This provides practical guidance for anyone who works with, or on behalf of children and young people regardless of their role, responsibilities or status. It seeks to ensure that the duty to promote and safeguard the wellbeing of children and young people is in part, achieved by raising awareness of illegal, unsafe and inappropriate behaviours.

Whilst every attempt has been made to cover a wide range of situations, it is recognised that this guidance cannot cover all eventualities. There may be times when professional judgements are made in situations not covered by this document, or which directly contravene the guidance given by their employer. It is expected that in these circumstances adults will always advise their senior staff of the justification for any such action already taken or proposed.

It is also recognised that not all adults who work with children and young people work as paid or contracted employees. The principles and guidance outlined in this document still apply and should be followed by all adults whose work brings them into contact with children and young people.

The guidance contained in this document has due regard to current legislation and statutory guidance; Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2022.

Westholme School recognises its responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children and young people (up to 18 years of age). This is defined as:

- protecting them from maltreatment
- preventing impairment of their health or development
- ensuring that they grow up with safe and effective care
- taking actions to enable them all to have the best outcomes
- developing an ethos and culture of care across staff, students, governors and the wider school community that underpins a sincere commitment to protect and safeguard children and young people.

In order to ensure this, all staff working in the school are expected to follow the code of conduct set out in this policy.

### **Underpinning Principles**

- The welfare of the children and young people is paramount.
- It is the responsibility of all adults to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people. This responsibility extends to a duty of care for those adults employed, commissioned or contracted to work with children and young people.
- Adults who work with children and young people 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.
- Adults should work and be seen to work, in an open and transparent way that is in the best interests of all children and young people
- The same professional standards should always be applied regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation
- Adults should continually monitor and review their practice and ensure they follow the guidance contained in this document.

Westholme School's overall aim is to provide protection for the pupils within the school. This includes:

- providing staff and volunteers with guidance and training on child protection procedures
- taking all reasonable measures to ensure that risks of harm to the welfare of pupils are minimised
- ensuring all appropriate actions to address concerns about the welfare of a pupil are undertaken within a given timescale

- working to agreed policies and procedures in full partnership with other agencies.

This school seeks to safeguard pupils by:

- valuing them, listening to and respecting them
- adopting child protection guidelines and a code of conduct for staff and volunteers
- ensuring all necessary pre-appointment checks are made when recruiting staff/Volunteers/Governors/Supply staff etc
- sharing information about child protection concerns with parents, staff and relevant services
- providing effective management for staff/Volunteers/Governors/Supply through supervision, support and training.

### **Definitions for the purpose of this Westholme guidance**

**Children and Young People:** includes everyone under the age of 18 and equally all pupils of Westholme.

**Adults:** References to ‘adults’ or ‘volunteers’ refer to any adult or member of staff who is employed, commissioned or contracted to work with or on behalf of, children and young people, in either a paid or unpaid capacity.

**Leaders & Managers:** The term ‘leader and/or manager’ refers to those staff who have responsibility for managing services including the supervision of employees and/or volunteers at any level.

**Employer:** The term ‘employer’ refers to Westholme School which employs, or contracts to use the services of individuals in pursuit of the goals of that organisation. In the context of this document, the term ‘employer’ is also taken to include ‘employing’ the unpaid services of volunteers.

**Safeguarding:** Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined for the purposes of this guidance as: protecting children from maltreatment; preventing impairment of children’s health or development; ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes (Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2023)

**Duty of Care:** The duty which rests upon an individual or organisation to ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure the safety of a children and young people or young person involved in any activity or interaction for which that individual or organisation is responsible. Any person in charge of, or working with children and young people in any capacity is considered, both legally and morally to owe them a duty of care.

## **Guidance for Safer Working Practice**

### **1. Context**

All adults who work with children and young people have a crucial role to play in shaping their lives. They have a unique opportunity to interact with children and young people in ways that are both

*This means that these guidelines:*

- *apply to **all** adults working in all settings whatever their position, role, or*

affirming and inspiring. This guidance has been produced to help adults working at Westholme to establish safe and responsive environments which safeguard young people and reduce the risk of adults being unjustly accused of improper or unprofessional conduct.

## 2. 'Unsuitability'

The guidance contained in this document is an attempt to identify what behaviours are expected of adults who work with children and young people. Staff whose practice deviates from this guidance and/or their professional or employment-related code of conduct may bring into question their suitability to work with children and young people.

## 3. Duty of Care

Everybody working with or on behalf of children and young people is accountable for the way in which they exercise authority; manage risk; use resources; and safeguard children and young people.

Whether working in a paid or voluntary capacity, these adults have a duty to keep children and young people safe and to protect them from sexual, physical and emotional harm and neglect. Children and young people have a right to be treated with respect and dignity. It follows that trusted adults are expected to take reasonable steps to ensure the safety and well-being of children and young people. Failure to do so may be regarded as neglect.

The duty of care is in part, exercised through the development of respectful and caring relationships/boundaries between adults and children and young people. It is also exercised through the behaviour of the adult, which at all times should demonstrate integrity, maturity and good judgement.

Everyone expects high standards of behaviour from adults who work with children and young people. When individuals accept such work, they need to understand and acknowledge the responsibilities and trust inherent in that role.

Employers also have a duty of care towards their employees, both paid and unpaid, under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974<sup>4</sup>. This requires them to provide a safe working environment for adults and provide guidance about safe working practices. Employers also have a duty of care for the well-being of employees and to ensure that employees are treated fairly and reasonably in all circumstances. The Human Rights Act 1998 sets out important

*responsibilities*

- *may provide guidance where an individual's suitability to work with children and young people has been called into question.*

*This means that adults should:*

- *have a clear understanding about the nature and content of this document*
- *discuss any uncertainties or confusion with their leader or line manager*
- *understand what behaviours may call into question their suitability to continue to work with children and young people*

*This means that adults should:*

- *understand the responsibilities, which are part of their employment or role, and be aware that sanctions will be applied if these provisions are breached*
- *always act, and be seen to act, in the children and young people's best interests*
- *avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions*
- *take responsibility for their own actions and behaviour*

*This means that employers should:*

- *ensure that appropriate safeguarding and children and young people protection policies and procedures are adopted, implemented and monitored*
- *ensure that codes of conduct/practices are continually monitored and reviewed*
- *ensure that, where services or activities are provided by another body, the body concerned has appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures*
- *foster a culture of openness and support*
- *ensure that systems are in place for concerns to be raised*
- *ensure that adults are not placed in situations which render them particularly vulnerable*

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<sup>4</sup> Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 Part I, Section. 2 (1) and (2)

principles regarding protection of individuals from abuse by state organisations or people working for those institutions. Adults who are subject to an allegation should therefore be supported and the principles of natural justice applied.

The Health and Safety Act 1974 also imposes a duty on employees<sup>5</sup> to take care of themselves and anyone else who may be affected by their actions or failings. An employer's duty of care and the adult's duty of care towards children and young people should not conflict. This 'duty' can be demonstrated through the use and implementation of these guidelines.

## Guidance for Safe Working Practice and Professional Boundaries

### 4. Confidentiality and Information Sharing

Staff/Volunteers may have access to confidential information about children and young people in order to undertake their responsibilities. In some circumstances, they may have access to or be given highly sensitive or private information. These details must be kept confidential at all times and only shared when it is in interests of the children and young people to do so. Such information must not be used to intimidate, humiliate, or embarrass the children and young people or young person concerned.

If a volunteer or 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 or nominated children and young people protection person. Any actions should be in line with locally agreed information sharing protocols. In line with KCSIE September 2022 staff/volunteers should not assume a colleague or other professional will take action and share information that may be critical in keeping children safe – therefore they must take responsibility. Early information sharing is essential including the adhering to the seven golden rules.

Such confidential information should never be used casually in conversation or shared with another person other than on a need-to-know basis or in circumstances where the child or young person's identity does need to be disclosed the information should be used anonymously. This includes information through electronic devices.

Whilst adults need to be aware of the need to listen to and support children and young people, they must also understand the importance of not promising to keep secrets. Neither should they request this of a child or young person under any circumstances.

- *ensure all adults have access to and understand this guidance and related, policies and procedures*
- *ensure that all job descriptions and person specifications clearly identify the competences necessary to fulfil the duty of care*

*This means that adults:*

- *be clear about when information can be shared and in what circumstances it is appropriate to do so*
- *are expected to treat information they receive about children and young people in a discreet and confidential manner*
- *should 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*
- *need to know to whom any concerns or allegations should be reported*

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<sup>5</sup> Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 Part I, Section.7

Additionally, concerns and allegations about adults should be treated as confidential and passed to a senior manager without delay.

Since the last edition of Safer Working Practices, the new Data Protection Act (DPA) has come into force in conjunction with GDPR. School leaders should ensure that all staff/Volunteers who need to share 'special category personal data' are aware that the DPA 2018 contains 'safeguarding of children and individuals at risk' as a processing condition. This allows practitioners to share information without consent, if it is not possible to gain consent, it cannot be reasonably expected that a practitioner gains consent or if to gain consent would place a child at risk.

Further information regarding information sharing can be accessed through the Pan Lancashire Policies and Procedures using the link below:

<http://panlancashirescb.proceduresonline.com/index.htm>

## 5. Making a Professional Judgement

This guidance cannot provide a complete checklist of what is, or is not inappropriate behaviour for adults in all circumstances. There may be occasions and circumstances in which adults have to make decisions or take action in the best interests of the children and young people or young person which could contravene this guidance or where no guidance exists. Individuals are expected to make judgments about their behaviour in order to secure the best interests and welfare of the children and young people in their charge. Such judgments, in these circumstances, should always be recorded and shared with a senior manager. In undertaking these actions individuals will be seen to be acting reasonably.

Adults should always consider whether their actions are appropriate, necessary and in the best interests of the child or young person.

## 6. Power and Positions of Trust

As a result of their knowledge, position and/or the authority invested in their role, all adults working with children and young people are in positions of trust in relation to the young people in their care. Broadly speaking, a relationship of trust can be described as one in which one party is in a position of power or influence over the other by virtue of their work or the nature of their activity. It is vital for all those in positions of trust to understand the power this can give them over those they care for and the responsibility they must exercise as a consequence of this

*This means that where no specific guidance exists adults should:*

- *discuss the circumstances that informed their action, or their proposed action, with a designated senior person*
- *report any actions which could be mis - interpreted to their senior manager and/or designated senior person*
- *always discuss any misunderstanding, accidents or threats with a senior manager*
- *always record discussions and reasons why actions were taken.*
- *record any areas of disagreement about course of action taken and if necessary referred to a higher authority*

*This means that adults should not:*

- *use their position to gain access to information for their own or others' advantage*
- *use their position to intimidate, bully, humiliate, threaten, coerce or undermine children and young people*
- *use their status and standing to form or*



relationship.<sup>6</sup>

*promote relationships which are of a sexual nature, or which may become so*

A relationship between an adult and a pupil cannot be a relationship between equals. There is potential for exploitation and harm of vulnerable young people. Adults have a responsibility to ensure that an unequal balance of power is not used for personal advantage or gratification.

Adults should always maintain appropriate professional boundaries and avoid behaviour which might be misinterpreted by others. They should report and record any incident with this potential to their Line Manager and/or DSP.

Where a person aged 18 or over is in a specified position of trust<sup>7</sup> with children and young people under 18, it is an offence for that person to engage in sexual activity with or in the presence of that children and young people, or to cause or incite that child and young person to engage in or watch sexual activity.

## **7. Behaviour and Boundaries**

All adults working in our School environment have a responsibility to maintain public confidence in their ability to safeguard the welfare and best interests of children and young people. It is therefore expected that they will adopt high standards of personal conduct in order to maintain the confidence and respect of the public in general and all those with whom they work.

*This means that adults should not:*

- *behave in a manner which would lead any reasonable person to question their suitability to work with children and young people or act as a role model.*
- *make, or encourage others to make, unprofessional personal comments which scapegoat, demean or humiliate, or which might be interpreted as such*

There may be times, for example, when an adult's behaviour or actions in their personal life come under scrutiny from local communities, the media or public authorities. This could be because their behaviour is considered to compromise their position in their workplace or indicate an unsuitability to work with children and young people or young people. Misuse of drugs, alcohol or acts of violence would be examples of such behaviour.

*This means that adults should:*

- *be aware that behaviour in their personal lives may impact upon their work with children and young people*
- *follow any codes of conduct deemed appropriate by their organisation*
- *understand that the behaviour and actions of their partner (or other family members) may raise questions about their suitability to work with children and young people*

Staff at Westholme should therefore understand and be aware, that safe practice also involves using judgement and integrity about behaviours in places other than the work setting. This includes online, social media and through communication technology.

The School will on a bi-annual basis request all staff to complete a self-declaration form to inform the School that they have not received any cautions, reprimands or criminal conviction during their employment.

*This means that Staff should:*

- *Disclosure at their earliest convenience any cautions, reprimands or criminal convictions obtained during their employment.*

In this ever increasingly technological world adults working with

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<sup>6</sup> Caring for Young People and the Vulnerable. Guidance for Preventing Abuse of Trust Home Office

<sup>7</sup> Sexual Offences Act 2003. Sect 16-19 re-enacts and amends offence of abuse of position of trust

children and young people should be aware that the posting online of images, video and comments relating to their behaviour in places other than work, may also raise concerns about their suitability to work with children.

The behaviour of an adult's partner or other family members may raise similar concerns and require careful consideration by an employer as to whether there may be a potential risk to children at Westholme.

### **Allegations of abuse made against teachers, including supply teachers, other staff and volunteers**

This covers behaviour where an individual has behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children. The reason is because of transferrable risk. Where a member of staff or volunteer is involved in an incident outside of school which does not involve children but could have an impact on their suitability to work with children. For example, a member of staff is involved in domestic violence at home. No children were involved, but we need to consider what triggered these actions and could a child in the school trigger the same reaction, therefore being put at risk.

In line with KCSIE 2023.

## **8. Dress, Appearance and Conduct**

A person's dress and appearance are matters of personal choice and self-expression. However, staff should dress in ways which are appropriate to their role and this may need to be different to how they dress when not at work.

Westholme staff/volunteers who work with children and young people should ensure they take care to ensure they are dressed appropriately for the tasks and the work they undertake.

Those who dress in a manner which could be considered as inappropriate or unprofessional could render themselves vulnerable to criticism or allegations.

Staff and volunteers must remain professional and identifiable as practitioners. They are role models for pupils and represent Westholme therefore they should be dressed professionally, appropriately and set high standards.

Guidance is given in the Staff Dress Code although staff may always speak to their line manager or Senior staff if requiring clarification.

In line with our commitment to a 'healthy mind in a healthy body' (mens sana in corpore sano) and to protect and contribute to the health and well-being of all employees and pupils, Westholme is smoke free. The use of all tobacco and smoking products, including

*This means that adults should wear clothing which:*

- *is appropriate to their role*
- *is not likely to be viewed as offensive, revealing, or sexually provocative*
- *does not distract, cause embarrassment or give rise to misunderstanding*
- *is absent of any political or otherwise contentious slogans*
- *is not considered to be discriminatory and is culturally sensitive*

- *Westholme is a 'smoke free' school, including vaping*

chewing tobacco and electronic cigarettes (E-cigarettes), is banned from the workplace, except as designated in this policy.

Smoking is prohibited in all of the enclosed areas within all Westholme sites, without exception. This includes common work areas, classrooms, conference and meeting rooms, private offices, hallways, lunchrooms, stairs, restrooms, and all other enclosed facilities. No one may smoke along any pathway or walkway leading to or from Westholme premises, nor may employees smoke outdoors in any of the grassy areas or the parking areas or outside the gates to the school.

Employees may smoke in their personal vehicles, but the smoke and tobacco products must be completely contained within the vehicle. Nor should this be visible to pupils.

Staff consumption and use of alcohol on the premises (unless within an authorised function or event – including those during school hours) is not permitted. Gambling is not acceptable on site unless organised through a specific event or social occasion. This does not include the sale of raffle tickets for fundraising events although these must be approved by the Principal.

Staff should be mindful of their own digital footprint and online profile outside of school particularly in their personal use of social media. Association with Westholme and the teaching profession in general by comment, images or content that could bring the school into disrepute must be considered carefully.

## **9. Personal Living Space**

No children and young people should be in or invited into, the home<sup>8</sup> of a member of staff who works with them, unless the reason for this has been firmly established and agreed with parents/ carers and senior managers or the home has been designated by the organisation or regulatory body as a work place e.g. child minders, foster carers.

It is not appropriate for any other organisations to expect or request that private living space be used for work with children and young people.

*This means that adults should:*

- *be vigilant in maintaining their privacy and mindful of the need to avoid placing themselves in vulnerable situations*
- *challenge any request for their accommodation to be used as an additional resource for the organisation*
- *be mindful of the need to maintain professional boundaries*

## **10. Gifts, Rewards and Favouritism**

The giving of gifts or rewards to children and young people is part

*This means that adults should:*

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<sup>8</sup> This includes any home or domestic settings used or frequented by the adult

of celebrating success and achievement at Westholme; it supports positive behaviour. In some situations, the giving of gifts as rewards may be accepted practice for a group of children, whilst in other situations the giving of a gift to an individual will be part of an agreed plan, recorded and discussed with a senior manager and parents.

It is acknowledged that there are specific occasions when staff may wish to give a pupil a personal gift. This is only acceptable practice where, in line with the School policy and procedure, the adult has first discussed the giving of the gift and the reason for it, with the senior manager and/or parents and the action is recorded. Any gifts should be given openly and not be based on favouritism. Adults need to be aware however, that the giving of gifts can be misinterpreted by others as a gesture either to bribe or groom<sup>9</sup> a young person.

Staff should exercise care when selecting pupils for specific activities or privileges to avoid perceptions of favouritism or unfairness. Methods and criteria for selection should always be transparent and subject to scrutiny.

Care should also be taken to ensure that staff do not accept any gift that might be construed as a bribe by others, or lead the giver to expect preferential treatment.

There are occasions when pupils or parents wish to pass small tokens of appreciation to adults e.g. on special occasions or as a thank-you and this is acceptable. However, it is unacceptable to receive gifts on a regular basis or of any significant value.

See Anti-Corruption and Bribery Policy.

## 11. Infatuations

Occasionally, a pupil may develop an infatuation with an adult who works with them. Staff should deal with these situations sensitively and appropriately to maintain the dignity and safety of all concerned. They should remain aware, however, that such infatuations carry a high risk of words or actions being misinterpreted and should therefore make every effort to ensure that their own behaviour is above reproach.

At Westholme, an adult who becomes aware that a child or young person maybe developing an infatuation, should discuss this at the earliest opportunity with the designated senior person so appropriate action can be taken to avoid any hurt, distress or embarrassment.

## 12. Communication with Children and Young People

- *be aware of their organisation's policy on the giving and receiving of gifts*
- *ensure that gifts received or given in situations which may be misconstrued are declared*
- *generally, only give gifts to an individual young person as part of an agreed reward system*
- *where giving gifts other than as above, ensure that these are of insignificant value*
- *ensure that all selection processes which concern children and young people are fair and that wherever practicable these are undertaken and agreed by more than one member of staff*

*This means that adults should:*

- *report and record any incidents or indications (verbal, written or physical) that suggest a child or young person may have developed an infatuation with an adult in the workplace*
- *always acknowledge and maintain professional boundaries*

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<sup>9</sup> grooming' – the act of gaining the trust of a children and young people so that sexual abuse can take place.

### ***(including the Use of Technology)***

Communication between children and young people and adults, by whatever method, should take place within clear and explicit professional boundaries. This includes the wider use of technology such as mobile phones, text messaging, e-mails, digital cameras, social media, videos, web-cams, websites and blogs. Adults should not share any personal information with a child or young person. They should not request, or respond to, any personal information from the children and young people/young person, other than that which might be appropriate as part of their professional role. Adults should ensure that all communications are transparent and open to scrutiny and not communicating outside the context of their work.

Staff should also be circumspect in their communications with children and young people so as to avoid any possible misinterpretation of their motives or any behaviour which could be construed as grooming. They should not give their personal contact details to pupils including e-mail, home or mobile telephone numbers, unless the need to do so is agreed with senior management and parents. E-mail, messaging, video chat or text communications between an adult and a child/young person outside agreed protocols may lead to disciplinary and/or criminal investigations. This also includes communications through internet based web sites, social media and apps.

Internal school e-mail systems and messaging should only be used when communicating with children/young people or parents.

Staff searches and email are monitored periodically by Senior staff and inappropriate use of technology or school resources during working hours or using school devices will be tackled in line with disciplinary procedures if required.

Adults should turn off 3G/4G data access on school premises.

All staff are bound by the School's Acceptable Usage Policy regarding use of technology and must show due consideration to the requirements of GDPR and online safety at all times.

Further information can be obtained from:

<http://www.saferinternet.org.uk/>

### **13. Social Contact**

Staff and volunteers who work with children and young people should not seek to have social contact them or their families, unless the reason for this contact has been firmly established and

*This means that adults should:*

- *not give their personal contact details to children and young people or young people, including their mobile telephone number and details of any blogs or personal websites*
- *only use equipment e.g. mobile phones, provided by organisation to communicate with children and young people, making sure that parents have given permission for this form of communication to be used*
- *only make contact with children and young people for professional reasons*
- *recognise that text messaging is rarely an appropriate response to children and young people in a crisis situation or at risk of harm. It should only be used as a last resort when other forms of communication are not possible. Messaging, video chat and other forms of electronic communication should only be used as part of an agreed protocol either when other forms of communication are not possible or a valid educational reason has been established*
- *be aware that where parents or children and young people are legitimately part of their social media circle, other members of the organisation of local community may access their content and be extra vigilant about what they and others post*
- *not use internet or web-based communication channels to send personal messages to children and young people*
- *ensure that if a social networking site is used, details are not shared with children and young people and privacy settings are set at maximum. Please note that once shared, liked or tagged a post is no longer only visible to friends only*

*This means that adults should:*

- *have no secret social contact with children and young people or their parents*

agreed with senior managers. If a child or parent seeks to establish social contact, or if this occurs coincidentally, the adult should exercise her/his professional judgement in making a response but should always discuss the situation with their manager or with the parent of the children and young people or young person. Adults should be aware that social contact in certain situations can be misconstrued as grooming.

Where social contact is an integral part of work duties, e.g. pastoral work in the community, care should be taken to maintain appropriate personal and professional boundaries. This also applies to social contacts made through interests outside of work or through the adult's own family or personal networks.

It is recognised that some adults may support a parent who may be in particular difficulty. Care needs to be exercised in those situations where the parent comes to depend upon the adult for support outside their professional role. This situation should be discussed with senior management and where necessary referrals made to the appropriate support agency.

In addition some staff are also parents of pupils at Westholme. It is perfectly acceptable that family friendships will exist outside the working environment and may develop in this respect.

## 14. Sexual Contact

All staff should clearly understand the need to maintain appropriate boundaries in their contacts with children and young people. It is a crime for a person aged 18 or over, such as a teacher, 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, in the case of those over 16, the relationship is consensual (under the Sexual Offences Act 2003). Teachers are prohibited from teaching for such offences. Allowing or encouraging a relationship to develop in a way which might lead to a sexual relationship is also unacceptable.

Any sexual activity between an adult and a young person with whom they work may be regarded as a criminal offence and will always be a matter for disciplinary action even if the young person is over the age of 18.

Children and young people are protected by specific legal provisions regardless of whether they consent or not. The sexual activity referred to does not just involve physical contact including penetrative and non-penetrative acts. It may also include non-contact activities, such as causing children and young people to engage in or watch sexual activity or the production of pornographic material. 'Working Together to Safeguard Children

- *consider the appropriateness of the social contact according to their role and nature of their work*
- *always approve any planned social contact with children and young people or parents with senior colleagues,*
- *advise senior management of any social contact they have with children and young people or a parent with whom they work, which may give rise to concern*
- *report and record any situation, which may place children and young people at risk or which may compromise the organisation or their own professional standing*
- *be aware that the sending of personal communications such as birthday or faith cards should always be recorded and/or discussed with line manager.*
- *understand that some communications may be called into question and need to be justified.*

*This means that adults should not:*

- *have sexual relationships with children and young people including those over the age of 18*
- *have any form of communication with children and young people which could be interpreted as sexually suggestive or provocative i.e. verbal comments, letters, notes, electronic mail, phone calls, texts, physical contact*
- *make sexual remarks to, or about, children and young people*
- *discuss their own sexual relationships with or in the presence of children and young people*

*This means that adults should:*

- *ensure that their relationships with children and young people clearly take place within the boundaries of a respectful professional relationship*
- *take care that their language or conduct does not give rise to comment or*

and young people<sup>10</sup>, defines sexual abuse as “forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening”.

There are occasions when adults embark on a course of behaviour known as 'grooming' where the sole purpose is to gain the trust of children and young people, and manipulate that relationship so sexual abuse can take place. Adults should be aware that consistently conferring inappropriate special attention and favour upon children and young people might be construed as being part of a 'grooming' process and as such will give rise to concerns about their behaviour.

## 15. Physical Contact

Many jobs require physical contact with children and young people as part of their role. There are also occasions when it is entirely appropriate for other adults to have some physical contact with children and young people with whom they are working. However, it is crucial that in all circumstances, adults should only touch children and young people in ways which are appropriate to their professional or agreed role and responsibilities (e.g. supporting a sporting manoeuvre, comforting a distressed infant or administering first aid).

Not all pupils are comfortable with physical contact, and adults should not make the assumption that it is acceptable practice to use touch as a means of communication. Permission should be sought before physical contact is made where possible. Where the children and young people are very young, there should be a discussion with the parent about what physical contact is acceptable and/or necessary.

When physical contact is made with a pupil this should be in response to their needs at the time, of limited duration and appropriate to their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background. It is not possible to be specific about the appropriateness of each physical contact, since an action that is appropriate with one child or young person in one set of circumstances may be inappropriate in another, or with a different child or young person. It is expected for example that younger children especially may benefit from physical contact to comfort them when distressed. Adults, nevertheless, should use their professional judgment at all times, observe and take note of the children and young people's reaction or feelings and – so far as is possible - use a level of contact and/or form of communication which is acceptable to the children and young people for the

*speculation. Attitudes, demeanour and language all require care and thought, particularly when members of staff are dealing with adolescent boys and girls.*

*This means that adults should:*

- *be aware that even well intentioned physical contact may be misconstrued by the children and young people, an observer or by anyone to whom this action is described*
- *never touch children and young people in a way which may be considered indecent*
- *always be prepared to report and explain actions and accept that all physical contact be open to scrutiny*
- *not indulge in 'horseplay'*
- *always encourage children and young people, where possible, to undertake self-care tasks independently*
- *work within Health and Safety regulations*
- *be aware of cultural or religious views about touching and always be sensitive to issues of gender*
- *understand that physical contact in some circumstances can be easily misinterpreted*

*This means that organisations should:*

- *ensure they have a system in place for recording incidents and the means by which information about incidents and outcomes can be easily accessed by senior management*
- *make adults aware of relevant professional or organisational guidance in respect of physical contact with children and young people and meeting medical needs of children and young*

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<sup>10</sup> Working Together to Safeguard Children. HM Government 2023

minimum time necessary.

Clear guidance is given in our Safeguarding Policy regarding appropriate/acceptable and occasional use of force to protect and keep a child free from harm or (especially with younger children).

Physical contact which occurs regularly with individual children or young person is likely to raise questions unless there is explicit agreement on the need for, and nature of, that contact. This would then be part of a formally agreed plan or within the parameters of established, agreed and legal professional protocols on physical contact e.g. sport activities or medical procedures. Any such arrangements should be understood and agreed by all concerned, justified in terms of the pupil's needs, consistently applied and open to scrutiny.

Physical contact should never be secretive, or for the gratification of the adult, or represent a misuse of authority. If an adult believes that their action could be misinterpreted, or if an action is observed by another as being inappropriate or possibly abusive, the incident and circumstances should be reported to the senior manager outlined in the procedures for handling allegations and an appropriate record made. Parents/carers should also be informed in such circumstances.

Where a pupil seeks or initiates inappropriate physical contact with an adult, the situation should be handled sensitively and care taken to ensure that contact is not exploited in any way. Careful consideration must be given to the need of the child and advice and support given to the adult concerned.

It is recognised that some pupils who have experienced abuse may seek inappropriate physical contact. Adults should be particularly aware of this when it is known that children and young people have suffered previous abuse or neglect. In the children and young people's view, physical contact might be associated with such experiences and lead to some actions being misinterpreted. In all circumstances where a child initiates inappropriate physical contact, it is the responsibility of the adult to sensitively deter them and help them understand the importance of personal boundaries. Such circumstances must always be reported and discussed with a leader/manager, DSP and the parent.

## **16. Other Activities that Require Physical Contact**

Staff who work in certain settings, for example sports, drama or outdoor activities will have to initiate some physical contact with children and young people, for example to demonstrate technique in the use of a particular piece of equipment, adjust posture, or perhaps to support children and young people so they can perform an activity safely or prevent injury. Such

- *people where appropriate*  
*be explicit about what physical contact is appropriate for adults working in their setting*

*This means that adults should:*

- *treat children and young people with dignity and respect and avoid contact with intimate parts of the body*
- *always explain to children and young people the reason why contact is*



activities should be carried out in accordance with existing codes of conduct, regulations and best practice.

Physical contact should take place only when it is necessary in relation to a particular activity. It should take place in a safe and open environment i.e. one easily observed by others and last for the minimum time necessary. The extent of the contact should be made clear to the parent and once agreed, should be undertaken with the permission of the child and young person. Contact should be relevant to their age or understanding and adults should remain sensitive to any discomfort expressed verbally or non-verbally by the children and young people.

Guidance and protocols around safe and appropriate physical contact are provided by national organisations, for example sports governing bodies or major arts organisations, or the employing organisation and should be understood and applied consistently. Any incidents of physical contact that cause concern or fall outside of these protocols and guidance should be reported to the senior manager and parent or carer.

It is good practice if all parties clearly understand at the outset, what physical contact is necessary and appropriate in undertaking specific activities. Keeping parents, children and young people informed of the extent and nature of any physical contact may also prevent allegations of misconduct or abuse arising.

Guidance with regard to nappy changing, toileting, first aid, application of sun cream etc for younger children is outlined in specific policies and procedures.

## **17. Behaviour Management**

All children and young people have a right to be treated with respect and dignity even in those circumstances where they display difficult or challenging behaviour.

Adults should not use any form of degrading treatment to punish a pupil. The use of sarcasm, demeaning or insensitive comments is not acceptable in any situation. Any sanctions or rewards used should be part of the behaviour management policy which is widely publicised and regularly reviewed.

The use of corporal punishment is not acceptable or permitted at Westholme School.

Where pupils display difficult or challenging behaviour, adults must follow the behaviour policy, and use strategies appropriate to the circumstance and situation.

Where a child has specific needs in respect of particularly

*necessary and what form that contact will take*

- *seek consent of parents where children and young people are unable to do so because of a disability.*
- *consider alternatives, where it is anticipated that children and young people might misinterpret any such contact,*
- *be familiar with and follow recommended guidance and protocols*
- *conduct activities where they can be seen by others*
- *be aware of gender, cultural or religious issues that may need to be considered prior to initiating physical contact*

*This means that organisations should:*

- *have up to date guidance and protocols on appropriate physical contact in place that promote safe practice and include clear expectations of behaviour and conduct.*
- *ensure that staff are made aware of this guidance and that safe practice is continually promoted through supervision and training.*

*This means that adults should:*

- *not use force as a form of punishment*
- *try to defuse situations before they escalate*
- *inform parents of any behaviour management techniques used*
- *adhere to the behaviour policy*
- *be mindful of factors which may impact upon children and young people's behaviour e.g. bullying, abuse and where necessary take appropriate action*

*This means that organisations should:*

- *have in place an appropriate behaviour policy*
- *where appropriate, develop positive handling plans in respect of an individual child or young person.*

challenging behaviour, a positive handling plan may be drawn up and agreed by all parties. Only in these circumstances should an adult deviate from the behaviour management policy of the organisation.

The Behaviour Policy is regularly reviewed and expectations are clearly laid out for Prep and Seniors as appropriate. All staff should pay due diligence to these policies and ensure that implementation is consistent and fair.

## **18. Use of Control and Physical Intervention**

There are circumstances in which adults working with children and young people displaying extreme behaviours can legitimately intervene by using either non-restrictive or restrictive physical interventions. This is a complex area and staff must have regard to government guidance and legislation and the section that covers this in the behaviour policy.

The use of physical intervention should, wherever possible, be avoided. It should only be used to manage behaviour if it is necessary to prevent personal injury to the child or others, to prevent serious damage to property or in what would reasonably be regarded as exceptional circumstances. When physical intervention is used it should be undertaken in such a way that maintains the safety and dignity of all concerned

The scale and nature of any physical intervention must be proportionate to both the behaviour of the individual to be controlled and the nature of the harm they may cause. The minimum necessary force should be used and the techniques deployed in line with recommended policy and practice.

Under no circumstances should physical force or intervention be used as a form of punishment or as part of disciplinary matters. At Westholme the duty of care which applies to all adults requires that reasonable measures are taken to prevent harm. The use of unwarranted physical force is likely to constitute a criminal offence. (See Safeguarding Policy)

In the rare circumstances this may be required guidance is given to staff. Individual care plans, drawn up in consultation with parents/carers and where appropriate, the children and young people, should set out the strategies and techniques to be used and those which should be avoided. Risk assessments should be carried out where it is foreseeable that restrictive physical intervention may be required.

In all cases where physical intervention is employed the incident and subsequent actions should be documented and reported (see incident record in Appendix B of the School's Behaviour Policy). This should include written and signed accounts of all those

*This means that adults should:*

- *adhere to Westholme's physical intervention policy*
- *always seek to defuse situations*
- *always use minimum force for the shortest period necessary*
- *record and report as soon as possible after the event any incident where physical intervention has been used.*

*This means that organisations should:*

- *have a policy on the use of physical intervention in place that complies with government guidance and legislation and describes the context in which it is appropriate to use physical intervention*
- *ensure that an effective recording system is in place which allows for incidents to be tracked and monitored*
- *ensure adults are familiar with the above*
- *ensure that staff are appropriately trained*

involved. The parents/carers should be informed the same day.

## 19. Children and Young People in Distress

There are some settings, where adults are involved in managing significant or regular occurrences of distress and emotional upset in children and young people, for example in mental health circumstances, pastoral issues etc. In these circumstances professional guidance should be followed and adults should be aware of what is and what is not acceptable behaviour when comforting children and young people or diffusing a situation. This is particularly important when working on a one-to-one basis.

There will be occasions when distressed children and young people need comfort and reassurance and this may involve physical contact. They may need immediate physical comfort, for example after a fall, separation from parent etc. Staff should use their professional judgment to comfort or reassure children and young people in an age-appropriate way whilst maintaining clear professional boundaries. This is particularly likely at Infant level.

## 20. Intimate Care

Some job responsibilities necessitate intimate physical contact on a regular basis, for example assisting children with toileting or in the provision of medical care. The nature, circumstances and context of such contact should comply with professional codes of practice or guidance and/or be part of a formally agreed plan, which is regularly reviewed. The additional vulnerabilities that may arise from a physical or learning disability should be taken into account and be recorded as part of an agreed care plan. The emotional responses of any children and young people to intimate care should be carefully and sensitively observed, and where necessary, any concerns passed to senior managers. (See associated policies for EYFS in particular; 'Toileting Procedure' (Appendix 1) and 'Nappy Changing Procedure' (Appendix 2) Examples of this would be: nappy changing; toileting; cuddling; child sitting on someone's knee.

All children have a right to safety, privacy and dignity when contact of a physical or intimate nature is required and depending on their abilities, age and maturity should be encouraged to act as independently as possible.

## 21. Personal Care and Supervision of Children and Young People (e.g. changing rooms)

Pupils are entitled to respect and privacy at all times and especially when in a state of undress, changing clothes, bathing or

*This means the adult should:*

- *consider the way in which they offer comfort and reassurance to distressed children and young people and do it in an age-appropriate way*
- *be circumspect in offering reassurance in one to one situations, but always record such actions in these circumstances*
- *follow professional guidance or code of practice where available*
- *never touch children and young people in a way which may be considered indecent*
- *record and report situations which may give rise to concern from either party*
- *not assume that all children and young people seek physical comfort if they are distressed*

*This means that adults should:*

- *adhere to the organisation's intimate care guidelines or code of practice*
- *make other staff aware of the task being undertaken*
- *explain to the children and young people what is happening*
- *consult with senior managers and parents/carers where any variation from agreed procedure/care plan is necessary*
- *record the justification for any variations to the agreed procedure/care plan and share this information with parents*
- *ensure that any changes to the agreed care plan are discussed, agreed and recorded.*

*This means that adults should:*

- *avoid any physical contact when children and young people are in a state of*

undertaking any form of personal care. There are occasions where there will be a need for an appropriate level of supervision in order to safeguard young people and/or satisfy health and safety considerations. This supervision should be appropriate to the needs and age of the child and sensitive to the potential for embarrassment.

Staff need to be vigilant about their own behaviour, ensure they follow agreed guidelines and be mindful of the needs of the pupils with whom they work.

## 22. First Aid and Administration of Medication

It is expected that all staff working at Westholme should be aware of basic first aid techniques. It is not however, a contractual requirement and whilst adults may volunteer to undertake such tasks, they should be suitably trained and qualified before administering first aid and/or any agreed medication. Westholme has designated first aiders and a full-time Nurse.

When administering first aid, wherever possible, adults should ensure that another adult is aware of the action being taken. Parents should always be informed when first aid has been administered (see associated policies for further details).

In circumstances where pupils need medication regularly a health care plan should be established to ensure the safety and protection of children and young people and the adults who are working with them. Depending upon the age and understanding of the children and young people, they should where appropriate, be encouraged to self administer medication or treatment including, for example any ointment, use of inhalers and so on. Records of treatment are retained and recorded in school.

## 23. One to One Situations

In School it is unrealistic to state that one to one situations should

*undress*

- *avoid any visually intrusive behaviour*
- *where there are changing rooms announce their intention of entering*

*This means that adults should not:*

- *change in the same place as children and young people*
- *shower or bathe with children and young people*
- *assist with any personal care task which children and young people can undertake by themselves*

*This means that organisations should:*

- *ensure staff understand the extent and limitations of their role in applying basic care and hygiene tasks for minor abrasions and understand where an injury requires more experienced intervention*
- *ensure there are trained and named individuals to undertake first aid responsibilities*
- *ensure training is regularly monitored and updated*
- *always ensure that arrangements are in place to obtain parental consent for the administration of first aid or medication*

*This means that adults should:*

- *adhere to the School's First Aid policy*
- *comply with the necessary reporting requirements*
- *make other adults aware of the task being undertaken*
- *explain to the children and young people what is happening.*
- *always act and be seen to act in the children and young people's best interests*
- *report and record any administration of first aid or medication*
- *have regard to any health plan which is in place*
- *always ensure that an appropriate health/risk assessment is undertaken prior to undertaking certain activities*

*This means that adults should:*

never take place, e.g. music, drama, 1:1 tuition, sports coaching, nappy changing in EYFS, pastoral meetings, Learning Support or transporting pupils. It is however, appropriate to state that where there is a need for an adult to be alone with a pupil, certain procedures must be in place.

Staff will be offered training and guidance for the use of any areas of the workplace which may place themselves or children in vulnerable situations.

One to one situations have the potential to make children and young people/young person more vulnerable to harm by those who seek to exploit their position of trust. Staff may be more vulnerable to unjust or unfounded allegations being made against them. Both possibilities should be recognised so that when one to one situations are unavoidable, reasonable and sensible precautions are taken. Every attempt will be made to ensure the safety and security of children and young people and the adults who work with them.

There are occasions where managers will need to undertake a risk assessment in relation to the specific nature and implications of one to one work. These assessments should take into account the individual needs of the pupil and the individual worker and any arrangements should be reviewed on a regular basis.

Meetings outside usual working arrangements should not take place without the agreement of senior managers and parents.

## **24. Home Visits**

Occasionally home visits are required. In these circumstances, it is essential that appropriate policies and related risk assessments are in place.

Under no circumstances should a member of staff visit children and young people in their home outside agreed work arrangements or invite a child or young person to their own home or that of a family member, colleague or friend. If in an emergency, such a one-off arrangement is required, the adult must have a prior discussion with a senior leader/manager and the parents and a clear justification for such arrangement is agreed and recorded.

In some cases, pupils (with parental agreement) attend private music or speech lessons off site and out of school. This is by private arrangement with parents and teacher, although staff must inform school that this happens.

- *ensure that when lone working is an integral part of their role, full and appropriate risk assessments have been conducted and agreed where appropriate.*
- *avoid meetings with children and young people in remote, secluded areas,*
- *avoid use of 'engaged' or equivalent signs wherever possible. Such signs may create an opportunity for secrecy or the interpretation of secrecy*
- *always report any situation where children and young people become distressed or angry to a senior colleague*
- *carefully consider the needs and circumstances of the children and young people when in one to one situations*
- *if transporting a sole child by car or minibus – where possible ensure the child is in the back seat*

*These means that adults should:*

- *agree the purpose for any home visit with senior management, unless this is an acknowledged and integral part of their role*
- *adhere to agreed risk management strategies*
- *always make detailed records including times of arrival and departure and work undertaken*
- *ensure any behaviour or situation which gives rise to concern is discussed with their manager and, where appropriate action is taken*

*This means that employers should:*

- *ensure that all visits are justified and recorded*
- *ensure that adults are not exposed to*

- unacceptable risk*
- *ensure that adults have access to a mobile telephone and an emergency contact person*

## 25. Transporting Children and Young People

There will be occasions when staff are expected or asked to transport pupils as part of their duties. Staff expected to use their own vehicles for transporting must ensure that the vehicle is roadworthy, appropriately insured and that the maximum capacity is not exceeded. If travelling in their own vehicle, ideally there should be an additional adult acting as an escort, if not, the child should be seated in the rear of the vehicle.

It is a legal requirement that all passengers should wear seat belts and it is the responsibility of the staff member to ensure that this requirement is met. Adults should also be aware of current legislation and adhere to the use of car seats for younger children. Where staff transport pupils and young people in a vehicle which requires a specialist licence/insurance e.g. PCV or LGV<sup>11</sup>- staff should ensure that they have an appropriate licence and insurance to drive such a vehicle. (See Mini Bus policy.)

It is inappropriate for staff to offer lifts to pupils outside their normal working duties, unless this has been brought to the attention of the line manager and has been agreed.

There may be occasions where the pupil requires transport in an emergency situation or where not to give a lift may place a child or young person at risk. Such circumstances must always be recorded and reported to a manager and parents.

## 26. Trips and Outings

Staff should take particular care when supervising children and young people on trips and outings, where the setting is less formal than the usual workplace. Adults remain in a position of trust and need to ensure that their behaviour remains professional at all times and stays within clearly defined professional boundaries.

Where activities include overnight stays, careful consideration needs to be given to sleeping arrangements. Children, young people, adults and parents should be informed of these prior to the start of the trip. In all circumstances, those organising trips and outings must pay careful attention to ensuring safe staff/children ratios and to the gender mix of staff especially on overnight stays. (See Educational Visits policy for further details.)

*This means that adults should:*

- *ensure they are fit to drive and free from any drugs, alcohol or medicine which is likely to impair judgement and/ or ability to drive*
- *be aware that the safety and welfare of the children and young people is their responsibility until they are safely passed over to a parent/carer*
- *record details of the journey in accordance with agreed procedures*
- *ensure that their behaviour is appropriate at all times*
- *ensure that there are proper arrangements in place to ensure vehicle, passenger and driver safety. This includes having proper and appropriate insurance for the type of vehicle being driven*
- *ensure that any impromptu or emergency arrangements of lifts are recorded and can be justified if questioned*

*This means that adults should:*

- *always have another adult present in out of workplace activities, unless otherwise agreed with a senior manager*
- *undertake risk assessments in line with the EVC policy where applicable*
- *have parental consent to the activity*
- *ensure that their behaviour remains professional at all times(see section 7)*
- *never share beds with children and/or young people*
- *not share bedrooms unless it involves a dormitory situation and the arrangements have been previously*

<sup>11</sup> For further information see [www.dvla.gov.uk](http://www.dvla.gov.uk)

Health and Safety arrangements require members of staff to keep colleagues/employers aware of their whereabouts, especially when involved in activities outside the usual workplace. Staff responsible for organising educational visits should be familiar with the Department for Education's advice on Health and Safety (updated April 2022) available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/health-and-safety-advice-for-schools/responsibilities-and-duties-for-schools>

School trips and outdoor learning activities (HSE) <http://www.hse.gov.uk/services/education/school-trips.pdf>

## 27. Photography and Videos

Working in a School often involves the taking or recording of images. Any such work should take place with due regard to the law and the need to safeguard the privacy, dignity, safety and wellbeing of children and young people. Informed written consent from parents and agreement, where possible, from the children and young people, should always be sought before an image is taken for any purpose.

Adults should also not take images of a child's injury, bruising or similar (e.g. following a disclosure of abuse) even if requested by children's social care; or make audio recordings of a child's disclosure.

Careful consideration should be given as to how activities involving the taking of images are organised and undertaken. Care should be taken to ensure that all parties understand the implications of the image being taken especially if it is to be used for any publicity purposes or published in the media, or on the Internet.

Staff need to remain sensitive to any pupils who appear uncomfortable, for whatever reason, and should recognise the potential for such activities to raise concerns or lead to misunderstandings.

It is not appropriate at any time for adults to take photographs of pupils at Westholme for their personal use. (See Safeguarding Policy for further guidance especially regarding EYFS.)

## 28. Access to Inappropriate Images and Internet Usage

There are no circumstances that will justify adults possessing indecent images of children and young people. Adults who access

*discussed with senior manager, parents, children and young people.*

- *Report any situations to a senior manager where the sharing of bedrooms needs to occur, e.g. illness of child, etc.*

*This means that adults should:*

- *be clear about the purpose of the activity and about what will happen to the images when the activity is concluded*
- *be able to justify images of children and young people in their possession*
- *avoid making images in one to one situations or which show a single child and young person with no surrounding context*
- *ensure the children/young person understands why the images are being taken and has agreed to the activity and that they are appropriately dressed.*
- *only use equipment provided or authorised by the organisation*
- *report any concerns about any inappropriate or intrusive photographs found*
- *always ensure they have parental permission to take and/or display photographs*

*This means that adults should not:*

- *display or distribute images of children and young people unless they have consent to do so from parents/carers*
- *use images which may cause distress*
- *use mobile telephones to take images of children and young people*
- *take images 'in secret', or taking images in situations that may be construed as being secretive.*

*This means that organisations should*

and possess links to such websites will be viewed as a significant and potential threat to children and young people. Accessing, making and storing indecent images of children and young people on the internet is illegal. This will lead to criminal investigation and the individual being barred from working with children and young people, if proven.

Staff should not use equipment belonging to their organisation to access adult pornography; neither should personal equipment containing these images or links to them be brought into the workplace. This would jeopardise their suitability to continue to work with children and young people.

Staff should also not use school equipment or internet for their own personal use including online gambling, gaming or shopping.

All staff at Westholme should take all reasonable precautions to ensure that children and young people are not exposed to any inappropriate images or web links. Internet equipment used by children and young people have the appropriate controls with regards to access. e.g. personal passwords should be kept confidential, never shared and appropriate filtering and monitoring is in place.

Clear guidance for staff is outlined in Safeguarding Policies and all Privacy notifications related to GDPR.

Where indecent images of children or other unsuitable material are found, the police and Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) should be immediately informed. Staff should not attempt to investigate the matter or evaluate the material themselves, as this may lead to evidence being contaminated which in itself can lead to a criminal prosecution (see Safeguarding Policy).

Where indecent images or video are found in the possession of a pupil this should be reported to the Designated Senior Person for that site (this information can be found within the Safeguarding Policy and on the Safeguarding Notice boards at each site). Staff should not attempt to investigate the matter further as this may place them in a vulnerable position. School staff do have the right to delete files but this could result in evidence being deleted. Instead they should inform the Principal. (See Staff Acceptable User policy.) Guidance is outlined for delegated staff who may have to deal with pupil issues regarding sharing of inappropriate images or material (Safeguarding Policy).

## **29. Whistleblowing Reporting**

Whistleblowing is the mechanism by which staff can voice their concerns, made in good faith, without fear of repercussion. Westholme has a clear and accessible Confidential Reporting

- *have clear online safety policies in place about access to and use of the internet*
- *make guidance available to both adults and children and young people about appropriate usage.*

*This means that adults should:*

- *follow their School's guidance on the use of IT equipment*
- *report any accidental access to inappropriate sites*
- *ensure that children and young people are not exposed to unsuitable material on the internet*
- *ensure that any films or material shown to children and young people are age appropriate*

*This means that organisations should:*

- *ensure they have appropriate*



policy that meets the terms of the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998. Staff who use the whistleblowing procedure should be made aware that their employment rights are protected.

Staff should acknowledge their individual responsibilities to bring matters of concern to the attention of senior management and/or relevant external agencies. This is particularly important where the welfare of children and young people may be at risk, including concerns regarding the radicalisation of pupils.

### 30. Sharing Concerns and Recording Incidents

All individuals should be aware of Westholme pupils' protection procedures, including procedures for dealing with allegations against adults. All allegations must be taken seriously and properly investigated in accordance with local procedures and statutory guidance. Adults who are the subject of allegations are advised to contact their professional association.

In the event of any allegation being made, to someone other than a designated senior person, information should be clearly and promptly recorded and reported to the designated senior person immediately.

Adults should always feel able to discuss with their line manager any difficulties or problems that may affect their relationship with a pupil so that appropriate support can be provided or action can be taken.

It is essential that accurate and comprehensive records are maintained wherever concerns are raised about the conduct or actions of staff working with or on behalf of pupils at Westholme.

All procedures for sharing concerns and recording incidents can be found in the School's Safeguarding Policy.

### 31. Curriculum

The curriculum can sometimes include or lead to unplanned discussion about subject matter of a sexually explicit, political or otherwise sensitive nature. Responding to children's questions requires careful judgement and staff should take guidance in these circumstances from the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Care is taken to comply with our policy on spiritual, moral, social, cultural (SMSC) education which promotes fundamental British values and is rigorously reviewed to ensure it is lawful and consistently applied. Staff have received Prevent/Anti-radicalisation safeguarding training and should follow procedures in the Visitor Policy and discuss with the DSL before inviting

- *whistleblowing policies in place ensure that they have clear procedures for dealing with allegations against staff which are in line with their Local Safeguarding Children and young people Board's procedures.*

*This means that adults should:*

- *report any behaviour by colleagues that raises concern regardless of source*

*This means that adults:*

- *should be familiar with the School's system for recording concerns*
- *should take responsibility for recording any incident, and passing on that information where they have concerns about any matter pertaining to the welfare of an individual in the workplace*

*This means that organisations:*

- *should have an effective, transparent and accessible system for recording and managing concerns raised by any individual in the workplace*

speakers to school in order to ensure no extremist speakers gain access to school and our students. Staff should also comply at all times with the policy for relationships and sex education (RSE).

## **APPENDIX 1 – Toileting Procedures**

### **Toileting Procedure**

Westholme toileting procedures are:

- In conjunction with family requests
- Are consistent with each child's physical and emotional abilities

Listed below are Westholme EYFS guidelines for toileting;

- Staff should supervise children while in the bathroom area and assist children when necessary
- Staff must ensure that children wash their hands with liquid soap and running water after every use of the toilet
- Ensure the provision of paper towels/ hand driers for each child's use
- Clothes soiled by faeces, urine, vomit or blood should be double bagged in sealed plastic bags and stored apart from other items.
- The bag should be sent home on the same day
- Children will not be reprimanded for toileting accidents
- Children's privacy and dignity will be respected at all times