

# **REVISED Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education 2019**

June 1, 2019

Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2019) states that schools must have a staff code of conduct, and that this is explained to new staff at induction. Although non-statutory, the document 'Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education' is an excellent starting point to understand professional conduct towards children and young people.

The Safer Recruitment Consortium has brought the guidance up-to-date and published the revised version in May 2019.

This document is non-statutory, but is very useful never-the-less and I think it is well-worth a read. It makes a good starting point for a staff behaviour policy.

Keeping Children Safe in Education says that schools should have 'A staff behaviour policy (sometimes called the code of conduct) which should, amongst other things, include – acceptable use of technologies, staff/pupil relationships and communications including the use of social media'. (Paragraph 55) All staff should be aware of the code of conduct and have it explained to them during induction.

The Guidance for Safer Working Practices covers all the required aspects of the staff behaviour policy. The document is particularly useful in that it has many examples of what the guidance means. The 2019 version has a forward by Nadhim Zahawi, Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Children and Families.

## **Changes since the previous version (2015) are outlined below: 6. Confidentiality**

Since the last edition of Safer Working Practices, the new Data Protection Act (DPA) has come into force bringing with the GDPR.

The guidance says that school leaders should ensure that all staff 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

## **7. Standards of Behaviour**

This section includes the changes to The Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2018, as reported widely last year.

## **12. Communication with children**

It has long been clear that staff should not communicate with pupils outside the context of their work. The new guidance reminds staff that they should not discuss or share data relating to children, parents or carers in staff social media groups.

## **18. Sexual conduct**

All staff should be aware that under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, it is a crime for an adult in a position of trust to engage in sexual activity with a person under the age of 18. Although this is not new information, teachers are still being prohibited from teaching for these offences.

Teachers are in a position of trust, along with people who look after, or are responsible for young people such medical professionals, foster carers and social workers.

## **21. Transporting pupils**

'Staff should not offer lifts to pupils unless the need for this has been agreed by a manager...[and there should be]...at least one adult additional to the driver acting as an escort.'

## **22. Educational visits**

Staff responsible for organising educational visits should be familiar with the Department for Education's advice on Health and Safety (updated November 2018) 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>

#### **24. Photography, videos and other images / media**

The message is clear here, that adults should not take images of a child's injury, bruising or similar (e.g. following a disclosure of abuse) even if requested by children's social care; or make audio recordings of a child's disclosure

#### **28. 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.'

This means that 'care should be taken to comply with the setting's policy on spiritual, moral, social, cultural (SMSC) [education] which should promote fundamental British values and be rigorously reviewed to ensure it is lawful and consistently applied. Staff should also comply at all times with the policy for relationships and sex education (RSE)'.

You can download a copy of the revised guidance here:  
[Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education \(May 2019 v2\)](#)