



Guidance Concerning Staff Conduct Policy

EBN Trust

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Section 1: 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. It is the EBN Academy Trust's duty to ensure that all adults who work with or on behalf of children and young people in the academies are competent, confident and safe to do so.

The vast majority of adults who work with children 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. 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 nationally about the potential vulnerability of adults in this area of work. It has been suggested that there is a need for clearer advice about what constitutes illegal behaviour and what might be considered as misconduct. This document is based on *Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with children and young people*, which was produced for the DfE in **March 2009** in response to these concerns. That document 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 is in part, achieved by raising awareness of illegal, unsafe and inappropriate behaviours. This document follows the national guidance, adjusted and expanded as required by the academy's particular circumstances.

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 this guidance. In these circumstances members of staff will always advise their senior colleagues of the justification for any such action already taken or proposed.

The principles and guidance outlined in this document apply to volunteers and contractors from outside the academy as well as employees, and should be followed by any adult whose work brings them into contact with children and young people.

Section 2: Using the Guidance

2.1. Audience for this policy

This document is for the guidance of all adults working in the Academy Trust who might come into unsupervised contact with students at any time. This covers not only employees of the academies but also volunteers (including Governors) and contractors and other regular visitors (eg cleaners, catering contractor, auditors, photocopying and other engineers) who are not accompanied at all times. Regular contractors will be sent a copy of this policy and must confirm that they have incorporated it into their standing instructions to their staff. Other contractors will be required to acknowledge receipt of this policy as a condition of their being awarded contracts. All contractors will be required to sign on the first day of their visit to confirm that they have read and understood, and will abide by, this policy.

2.2. Purpose of Guidance

It is important that all staff understand that the nature of their work and the responsibilities related to it, place them in a position of trust. This guidance provides clear advice on appropriate and safe behaviours for all staff working in the Academy Trust in paid or unpaid capacities, in all settings and in all contexts. The guidance aims to:

- keep students safe by clarifying which behaviours constitute safe practice and which behaviours should be avoided;
- assist staff to work safely and responsibly and to monitor their own standards and practice;
- support managers in setting clear expectations of behaviour and/or codes of practice relevant to the services being provided;
- give a clear message that unlawful or unsafe behaviour is unacceptable and that, where appropriate, disciplinary or legal action will be taken;
- minimise the risk of misplaced or malicious allegations made against staff;
- reduce the incidence of positions of trust being abused or misused.

2.3. Underpinning Principles

- The welfare of the child is paramount.
- It is the responsibility of all adults to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people.
- Adults who work with children 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.
- However, the academies have a duty of care to staff to provide guidance and training to allow them to fulfil their responsibilities.
- Adults should work and be seen to work in an open and transparent way.
- The same professional standards should always be applied regardless of culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity.
- Staff should continually monitor and review their practice and ensure they follow the guidance contained in this document.

2.4. Definitions

Young People: Anyone who has not yet reached their 20th birthday, whether a student of the academy or not.

Student: Any young person who undertakes activities at the academy, whether as an enrolled student, a participant in community classes or in any other way.

Staff: Any adult who is employed, commissioned or contracted to work with or on behalf of young people in either a paid or unpaid capacity.

Manager: The term 'manager' refers to those adults who have responsibility for managing services including the supervision of employees and/or volunteers at any level.

Safeguarding: Process of protecting children from abuse or neglect, preventing impairment of their health and development, and ensuring they are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care that enables young people to have optimum life chances and enter adulthood successfully.

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 young person involved in any activity for which that individual or organisation is responsible. Any person in charge of, or working with young people in any capacity is considered, both legally and morally, to owe them a duty of care.

2.5. How to Use the Document

Each section provides general guidance about a particular aspect of work undertaken with young people with specific examples of conduct which should be avoided or which are recommended.

2.6. Bringing the Policy into effect

- The policy will be introduced to all staff at the staff induction meeting, and all staff will be required to confirm that they have read and understood it.
- Every member of the Senior Leadership Team will speak to the staff of the areas under their control to discuss how the policy will affect their area in particular, so that necessary adjustments or guidance can be decided on and put into place. This will include determining arrangements for the policy to be brought to volunteers' notice, and for identifying regular contractors who need to be contacted.
- All contractors identified will be asked for their formal confirmation that they have incorporated it into their standing instructions to their staff.
- This policy will be explicitly incorporated into our induction procedures for all future new staff.

2.7. Other relevant policies

- Child Protection
- Whistle-blowing
- Complaints
- Behaviour
- Health and Safety
- First Aid
- Data Protection
- Offsite Visits
- Social Media

2.8. Who to contact concerning the Policy

This policy is the responsibility of the Principal. If anyone has any concerns about this policy or about other people's application of it, they should in the first instance contact the person/people detailed in the relevant

section. However, if they have done so but it has not acted upon, or they are unsure as to who is appropriate, they should contact the Principal. Also, any questions concerning the policy's application or amendment should be addressed to her/him.

Section 3: Guidance for Safe Working Practice

3.1. Context

All academy staff are in a position of trust and influence over the young people in their charge. They must ensure not only that they do not abuse that position, but also that no-one could reasonably think that they have. This guidance has been produced to safeguard young people and to reduce the risk of staff being unjustly accused of improper or unprofessional conduct.

This guidance identifies behaviour which is expected of staff; where circumstances do not exactly coincide, the governing principles need to be applied. Those 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 young people. Therefore, all staff should:

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

3.2. Duty of Care

All staff are accountable for the way in which they exercise authority; manage risk; use resources; and safeguard young people. They have a duty to keep young people safe and to protect them from sexual, physical and emotional harm. Young people have a right to be treated with respect and dignity. It follows that staff are expected to take reasonable steps to ensure the safety and well-being of young people. Failure to do so may be regarded as neglect. Everyone expects high standards of behaviour from adults who work with young people. When staff accept such work, they need to understand and acknowledge the responsibilities and trust inherent in that role. Consequently, staff should:

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

EBN Trust academies also have a duty of care towards their staff under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. This requires them to provide a safe working environment for adults and provide guidance about safe working practices. The Human Rights Act 1998 sets out important 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 staff to take care of themselves and anyone else who may be affected by their actions or failings. The academy's duty of care and staff's duty of care towards young people should not conflict. This 'duty' can be demonstrated through the academy's use and implementation of these guidelines. In particular, the academy should:

- 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
- ensure all adults have access to and understand this guidance and related, policies and procedures.

3.3. Making a Professional Judgement

This guidance cannot provide a complete checklist of what is, or is not appropriate behaviour for staff in

all circumstances. There may be occasions and circumstances in which staff have to make decisions or take action in the best interests of the student which could contravene this guidance or where no guidance exists. Individuals are expected to make judgements about their behaviour in order to secure the best interests and welfare of the young people in their charge. Such judgements should always be recorded and shared with a senior manager as soon as is reasonably practicable. In addition, any misunderstanding, accidents or threats must be discussed with a senior manager. In undertaking these actions individuals will be seen to be acting reasonably.

3.4. Confidentiality

Staff may have access to confidential information about 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 and with whom it is in interests of the young person to do so. Staff must be clear about when information can be shared and in what circumstances it is appropriate to do so; if there is any doubt, advice must be taken from a senior member of staff.

Such information must not be used to intimidate, humiliate, or embarrass the child or young person concerned.

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

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

3.5. Power and Positions of Trust

As a result of their knowledge, position and/or the authority invested in their role, all staff 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 relationship.

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

Staff 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. Staff must not use their status and standing to form or promote relationships which are of a sexual nature, or which may become so. In this context, it should be understood that it is not only unacceptable to form such relationships with current students, but also with former students unless it is clear from the circumstances that the relationship started entirely after the student had left the Academy. The relevant circumstances will generally include the time elapsed between the student leaving the Academy and the start of the relationship, and might include other factors, such as there being an identifiable occasion at which the relationship started.

The abuse of a position of trust is an act of gross misconduct in terms of the academy's discipline policy, is likely to affect registration as a teacher, and might be a criminal offence. It should also be noted that under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, where a person aged 18 or over is in a specified position of trust with a child under 18, it is a criminal and disciplinary offence for that person to engage in sexual activity with or in the presence of that child, or to cause or incite that child to engage in or watch sexual activity.

3.6. Propriety and Behaviour

All staff have a responsibility to maintain public confidence in their ability to safeguard the welfare and best interests of 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. They must not behave in a manner which would lead any reasonable person to question their suitability to work with children or act as a role model. Misuse of drugs, alcohol or acts of violence would be examples of such behaviour.

Staff should therefore understand and be aware that safe practice involves using judgement and integrity about behaviours in places other than the work setting.

Staff with accounts on social networking web sites (eg Facebook) should be careful that they do not put on public view information on activities which might affect the confidence and respect of the public in general and those with whom they work. Staff should use the privacy settings to ensure that this is the case, and they must make sure that students do not have access to private information by being accepted as “friends” on the account.

National guidance also states that 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 and young people in the workplace.

3.7. Dress and Appearance

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;
- are not likely to be viewed as offensive, revealing or sexually provocative;
- do not carry political or otherwise contentious slogans; or
- could be considered to be discriminatory culturally insensitive.

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

3.8. Personal Living Space

No student should be in or invited into, the home of a member of staff, unless (very exceptionally) the reason for this has been firmly established and agreed with parents/carers and senior managers. Under no circumstances should a student assist with chores or tasks in the home of a member of staff. Neither should they be asked to do so by friends or family of that adult.

3.9. Gifts, Rewards and Favouritism

The giving of gifts or rewards to students should be part of an agreed policy for supporting positive behaviour or recognising particular achievements. In some situations, the giving of gifts as rewards may be accepted practice for a group of students, whilst in other situations the giving of a gift to an individual will be part of an agreed plan, recorded and discussed with senior management.

It is acknowledged that there might be specific occasions when a member of staff may wish to give a student a personal gift. This is only acceptable practice where the adult has first discussed the giving of the gift and the reason for it with a senior manager and the action is recorded. Any gifts should be given openly and not be based on favouritism. Staff need to be aware however, that the giving of gifts can be misinterpreted by others as a gesture either to bribe or groom a young person.

Staff should exercise care when selecting students 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 students 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.

3.10. Infatuations

Occasionally, students may develop infatuations with members of staff. 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.

An adult who becomes aware that a child or young person is developing an infatuation should discuss this at the earliest opportunity with a senior manager or parent/carer so appropriate action can be taken to avoid any hurt, distress or embarrassment.

3.11. Communication with Children and Young People (*including the Use of Technology*)

Communication between students and staff, 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, videos, web-cams, websites (including social websites) and blogs. Staff should not share any personal information with a student. They should not request, or respond to, any personal information from the student other than that which might be appropriate as part of their professional role. Staff should ensure that all communications are transparent and open to scrutiny. They should also ensure that their communications with students do not leave them open to misinterpretation of their motives or of behaviour which could be construed as grooming.

Staff should not give their personal contact details to students (subject to the exceptions set out below), including home e-mail, home telephone number and home address, unless the need to do so is agreed with senior management. Please note the following specific considerations:

- Mobile phone (including text message) contact between staff and students is permissible using a work mobile phone only. This to be used to aid supervision on academy trips, to inform students of absent teachers or to follow up lateness or absence etc. Staff need to be aware that, if there is any doubt as to the appropriateness of their use of their personal mobile phone, they may be asked to disclose their call log and explain the reasons for such activities.
- An academy mobile will be made available.
- Staff can access their work email account from home. Consequently, there is no reason for staff to give students their personal email address, and this is not appropriate. Likewise, staff may email students about work matters from their academy account, but not from their personal account.
- While it is recognised that social networking web sites (eg Facebook) are a useful tool in contacting and communicating with former students, they are entirely unsuitable as a means of communication with current students, and must not be used, except that students may be contacted via the Alumnus account at the time of their leaving the Academy. The potential risks to reputation posed by such websites should also be considered (see s.3.6).

Communications outside agreed protocols between a member of staff and a student may lead to disciplinary and/or criminal investigations.

3.12. Social Contact

Staff should not seek to have social contact with individual students or their families. If a student or parent seeks to establish social contact, or if this occurs coincidentally, the staff member should exercise her/his professional judgement in making a response but should always discuss the situation

with their manager. Staff should be aware that social contact in certain situations can be misconstrued as grooming.

It is accepted that occasional social contact with groups of students (eg after a performance) is an unavoidable and generally desirable adjunct to work duties. Great care must be taken to maintain appropriate personal and professional boundaries. It is not acceptable to have regular social contact with select groups of students, and it is never appropriate, for even a short amount of time, for a member of staff to be in a social situation on their own with a single student.

Staff must not contact students via social networking websites (see s. 3.11) and it is entirely inappropriate for staff to have current students as “friends” on their page, or to allow themselves to be shown as a “friend” on a student’s page.

Where social contacts are made through interests outside of work or through the staff member’s own family or personal networks, again great care must be taken to maintain appropriate personal and professional boundaries.

It is recognised that some staff 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 member of staff 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 order to fulfil its duty of care, the academy may question members of staff about any social contacts with students and ask for explanations as required. Enquiries of this nature should not be taken as a sign of suspicion of improper behaviour. However, if a staff member is found to have given incomplete, evasive or misleading answers to these enquiries that will be a disciplinary matter which might amount to potential gross misconduct.

3.13. Sexual Contact

All staff should clearly understand the need to maintain appropriate boundaries in their contacts with students. Intimate or sexual relationships between staff and students will be regarded as a grave breach of trust. Allowing or encouraging a relationship to develop in a way which might lead to a sexual relationship is also unacceptable. Consequently, staff must not use language which could be interpreted as sexually suggestive or provocative in any communication by any means. Equally, staff must never discuss their own sexual relationships with or in the presence of a student. Any sexual activity with a student may be regarded as a criminal offence and will always be a matter for disciplinary action.

Young people are protected by specific legal provisions regardless of whether the young person consents 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 to engage in or watch sexual activity or the production of pornographic material.

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

3.14. Physical Contact (General)

Some elements of the curriculum cannot be taught without staff and students having some physical contact (see Section 3.15 below). However, it is crucial that in all circumstances, staff should touch students only in ways which are appropriate to their professional or agreed role and responsibilities.

Not all young people feel comfortable about physical contact, and staff should not make the assumption that it is automatically acceptable to use touch as a means of communication. Permission should be

sought from the student before physical contact is made. Physical contact should be of limited duration and appropriate to the activity being undertaken and the student's age, gender, ethnicity and background.

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, they must inform their manager as soon as possible. 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.

It is recognised that some young people may seek inappropriate physical contact. Staff should be particularly aware of this when it is known that a child has suffered previous abuse or neglect. In the young person's view, physical contact might be associated with such experiences and lead to some actions being misinterpreted. In all circumstances where a young person 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 senior manager and the parent/carer.

3.15. Activities that require Physical Contact

Staff who work in certain settings, for example sports or performing arts, will have to initiate some physical contact with students, for example to demonstrate technique in the use of a particular piece of equipment, to adjust posture, or to support a student so they can perform an activity safely or prevent injury. Such activities should be carried out in accordance with existing codes of conduct, regulations and best practice.

Physical contact should occur only when it is necessary in relation to a particular activity and 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 student and undertaken with their permission.

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.

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/carers and students informed of the extent and nature of any physical contact may also prevent allegations of misconduct or abuse arising.

3.16. Behaviour Management

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

Staff should not use any form of degrading treatment to punish a student. 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 and whilst there may be a legal defence for parents who physically chastise their children, this does not extend, in any circumstances, to those adults who work with or on behalf of children and young people.

Where students display difficult or challenging behaviour, staff must follow the Academy's Behaviour Policy and use strategies appropriate to the circumstance and situation. The use of physical intervention can only be justified in exceptional circumstances: to prevent personal injury to the student him/herself or other people, to prevent serious damage to property, or in what would reasonably be

regarded as exceptional circumstances. See "Behaviour policy".

Where a student has specific needs in respect of particularly 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.

3.17. Children and Young People in Distress

There will be occasions when a distressed young person needs comfort and reassurance and this may involve physical contact. Staff should use their professional judgement to comfort or reassure a young person whilst maintaining clear professional boundaries, and should be particularly careful in one-to-one situations.

Where a member of staff is concerned that an action may be misinterpreted, this should be reported and discussed with a senior manager.

3.18. First Aid and Administration of Medication

Staff should be suitably trained and qualified before administering first aid and/or any agreed medication.

When administering first aid, wherever possible, staff should ensure that another adult is aware of the action being taken. Parents should always be informed when first aid has been administered.

In circumstances where students need medication or medical attention regularly a health care plan should be established to ensure the safety and protection of students and staff. Students should, where appropriate, be encouraged to self-administer medication or treatment including, for example any ointment or use of inhalers.

3.19. One to One Situations

Where there is a need for a member of staff to be alone with a student, procedures and explicit safeguards must be in place. This applies to all adults working within the academy, not just those directly employed by the academy.

One to one situations have the potential to make students more vulnerable to harm by those who seek to exploit their position of trust. Staff working in one to one settings with students may also 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. There are some basic safeguards which should be always be applied, subject to exceptions mentioned below:

- avoid meetings with a child or young person in remote, secluded areas;
- always inform colleagues about the meeting beforehand, assessing the need to have them present or close by;
- do not obstruct vision panels in doors when having the meeting;
- 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 a child becomes distressed or angry to a senior colleague.

The main exception to the above is in the conduct of counselling, where client confidentiality issues make many of these safeguards undesirable. Counselling has its own code of conduct which acts as a safeguard in this area. The chief review mechanism provided by this code is supervision. All counsellors must meet with their supervisor regularly, and must discuss all of their clients; failure to do so will be deemed to be a breach of these safeguards and will render the counsellor liable to disciplinary action.

The application of the above safeguards might cause practical issues in some other circumstances, for example on work experience visits, where the staff member and student might need to find a secluded area to discuss a problem with the placement. In this instance, the member of staff would be expected to report back to their Line-manager concerning the matter discussed, and in all similar situations the fact and subject of the meeting must be disclosed to an appropriate person as soon as possible.

One to one meetings between staff and students outside agreed working arrangements must not take place without the agreement of senior managers. Failure to observe this rule will leave a staff member liable to disciplinary action.

3.20. Transporting Children and Young People

There will be occasions when staff are asked to transport students as part of their duties. They must do so only if they are fit to drive and if the vehicle is roadworthy and appropriately insured. They must also ensure that their car's maximum capacity is not exceeded.

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. Where staff transport students in a vehicle which requires a specialist license/insurance (e.g. PCV or LGV) staff should ensure that they have an appropriate licence and insurance to drive such a vehicle.

It is generally inappropriate for staff to offer lifts to students outside their normal working duties, or with any degree of regularity. The guidance on one to one situations in Section 3.19 is drawn to staff's attention. However, there may be occasions where a student requires transport in an emergency situation or where not to give a lift may place them at risk. Such circumstances must always be recorded and reported to a senior manager.

3.21. Academy Trips

Staff should take particular care when supervising students on trips and outings, where the setting is less formal than the usual workplace. Staff 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. All of the sections of this policy apply as much in these circumstances as they do inside the academy.

Where activities include overnight stays, careful consideration needs to be given to sleeping arrangements. Senior managers, students 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/student ratios and to the gender mix of staff especially on overnight stays. The Staff Handbook contains separate policies for day and overnight academy trips.

Health and Safety arrangements require members of staff to keep colleagues aware of their whereabouts, especially when involved in activities outside the usual workplace.

3.22. Photography and Videos

It needs to be recognised that there are general sensitivities about the taking and use of photographic images of young people. The Academy's stated position on this is that students who are intent on a career in the arts need to expect to have their photographs taken and used publicly, including for publicity purposes, or published in the media and on the Internet. The Academy also expects that these images will be retained by the Academy for its further use.

Photographs and videos should not be taken in secret or in one to one situations, and it will generally not be appropriate to show a single student with no surrounding context. The students photographed should be appropriately dressed, bearing in mind the context of the activity pictured (so, for example, risqué clothing which would be unacceptable in general might be acceptable when clearly in a production shot).

All images of students must be stored in the Academy or on the Academy's ICT system. It is not appropriate for staff to take photographs of students for their personal use; if such pictures are found on a staff member's own computer or photographic equipment or on their social networking website page disciplinary action will be taken.

3.23. Access to Inappropriate Images and Internet Usage

There are no circumstances that will justify staff possessing indecent images of children. Staff who access and possess links to such websites will be viewed as a significant potential threat to children. Accessing, making and storing indecent images of children 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 the Academy to access adult pornography; neither should personal equipment containing these images or links to them be brought into Academy. This would raise serious concerns about the suitability of the member of staff to continue to work with children.

Staff should ensure that students are not exposed to inappropriate images or web links. The Academy's systems have filters to try to limit access to unsuitable material, but staff should be vigilant. Where images which would otherwise be deemed unsuitable are required for educational purposes (eg an 18 certificate film for study in media or Broadcast), the use of the material must be covered by a relevant policy and students must be properly prepared for the images in class beforehand. Where students miss the class at which this preparation takes place they may not see the material until this omission has been rectified.

Where indecent images of children or other unsuitable material are found, the police will 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.

3.24. Whistleblowing and Allegations

All members of staff have an individual and personal responsibility to bring matters of serious concern to the attention of senior management. This is particularly important where the welfare of children may be at risk. Disclosures should be made to the Principal, although staff may consult their line manager for advice.

Whistleblowing is the mechanism by which staff can voice their concerns, made in good faith, without fear of repercussion. Our Whistle Blowing Policy is published in the handbook. Please note that information must be given to senior management in the first instance unless there are exceptional circumstances, in which case relevant external agencies may be approached direct. The employment rights of staff using the whistleblowing procedure are protected by law.

Staff should be aware of the Academy's child protection procedures including procedures for dealing with allegations against staff. All allegations, whether made by a member of staff or a student, must be taken seriously and properly investigated in accordance with the Academy's procedures and statutory guidance. Staff who are the subject of allegations are advised to contact their professional association. Accurate and comprehensive records will be maintained wherever concerns are raised about the conduct or actions of a member of staff.

In the event of any allegation being made to someone other than a manager, information should be clearly and promptly recorded and reported to a senior manager without delay.

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

Signed:.....**(Chair) Date:**.....