



Code of Conduct for Safer Practice

Policy Co-Ordinator:	Jiten Patel
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Introduction

All education settings are required to have a clear and effective Code of Conduct for Adults working in the setting.

This document provides a guide for all adults working in schools (including staff, governors, volunteers and visitors) about acceptable and desirable conduct to protect both pupils and adults. It refers to and complements other policies and guidance in the school, including:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, including the safeguarding response to children who go missing from education
- School Behaviour Policy
- School policy on physical interventions
- School ICT policy
- Record keeping policy/procedure

This policy reflects the requirements set out in '**Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024**', and is based upon the attached DCSF document 'Guidance for Safe Working Practice for Adults Who Work with Children and Young People (education version) March 2022', in which useful examples of acceptable and unacceptable conduct, together with discussion of the issues raised can be found.

In particular all adults working in schools should keep the following statements from 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' in mind:

- **Everyone** who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play in safeguarding children
- **All** school and college staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn
- Staff members working with children are advised to maintain an attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned. When concerned about the welfare of a child, staff members should always act in the **best** interests of the child
- All adults working in the school must know who the Designated Safeguarding Lead is in the school, be familiar with the school's child protection and safeguarding policy and understand their individual responsibilities to safeguard and protect children and young people. They must also be aware of the Allegations against Staff Procedure and the role of the Headteacher and Chair of Management Committee in these circumstances.
- In addition, the Teachers' Standards 2012 (introduction updated June 2013, terminology updated December 2021 (which apply to maintained schools) state that teachers should safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession and in the reputation of the school as part of their professional duties.

Basic principles

- Adults working for THEC (The Helix Education Centre) are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should avoid any conduct which would lead a reasonable person to question their motivation or intentions
- Adults working for THEC must work and be seen to work in an open and transparent way
- Adults should discuss and/or take advice promptly from their line manager or another senior member of staff about anything which could give rise to concern. This would include for example reporting infatuations by a pupil for themselves or another member of staff, to ensure that such situations can be handled promptly and sensitively
- The THEC will keep a record of any such incident and of decisions made/further actions agreed, in accordance with the school's record keeping policy
- Staff should apply the same professional standards regardless of gender or sexuality
- Staff should be aware that breaches of the law and other professional guidelines could result in criminal or disciplinary action being taken against them.

As a general principle, when thinking about taking any course of action with a pupil or other child, adults should ask themselves the following questions:

- Is this needed to meet the pupil's needs?*
- Is there a professional reason for me to do it?*
- Can I do it in a way that is safe for both the pupil and for me?*

Only if the answer to all three questions is YES should the adult take the course of action.

All staff and visitors to The Helix Education Centre must:

Be familiar with and work in accordance with the school's policies, including in particular:

- Child Protection & Safeguarding
- Behaviour
- Positive Handling Policy
- Lone Working Policy
- Internet Safety
- Health and Safety
- Use of Photography and Video
- Whistleblowing – within the school and external e.g. direct contact with the Designated Officer or via the NSPCC Report Line: www.safecall.co.uk
- Provide a good example and a positive role model to pupils
- Behave in a mature, respectful, safe, fair and considered manner. For example, you must ensure that you are not sarcastic, and do not make remarks or 'jokes' to pupils of a personal, sexual, racist, discriminatory, intimidating or otherwise offensive nature
- Do not embarrass or humiliate children
- Do not discriminate favourably or unfavourably towards any child. For example, treat all pupils equally – never build 'special' relationships or confer favour on particular pupils or members of their family
- Do not give or receive (other than token) gifts unless arranged through school
- Ensure that your relationship with pupils remains on a professional footing
- Adhere to THEC's Advisory Dress Code

For example, you must:

- Only touch pupils for professional reasons, and when this is necessary and appropriate for the pupil's wellbeing or safety (more guidance on this is set out in the DfES 'Guidance for Safe Practice' referred to above)
- Not behave in a way that could lead a reasonable observer to question your conduct, intentions or suitability to care for other people's children
- Not make arrangements to contact, communicate or meet with pupils outside your work (this includes use of email, text and other messaging systems)
- Not develop 'personal' or sexual relationships with pupils. In particular your attention is drawn to the provisions of the Sexual Offences Act 2003, which creates a criminal offence of abuse of a position of trust (when a person aged 18 or over is in a 'position of trust' with a person under 18 and engages in sexual activity with or in the presence of that child, or causes or incites that child to engage in or watch sexual activity)

Exceptional circumstances

If in exceptional circumstances a member of staff needs to deviate from expected practices (e.g. in an emergency having to transport a child alone), they **must always** seek to notify and consult a senior member of staff in advance or as soon as practicable afterwards. The rationale for taking this action must be recorded and submitted to the Headteacher.

Reference documents

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE) September 2024
- Working Together to Safeguard Children Dec 2023
- School policies
- Local Safeguarding Children's Board - local safeguarding children procedures
- Guidance for Safe Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People (education version) DCSF March 2022
- The Teachers' Standards July 2012 (introduction updated June 2013, terminology updated July 2021)