



# **Lincoln Christ's Hospital School**

## **Staff Code of Conduct Policy**

**Link member of staff: Martin Mckeown**

**Date presented to Governors: July 2017**

**Review Date: July 2019**

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1** This policy sets out clear guidance on the standards of behaviour expected from all staff at LCHS. The principles underlying the guidance aim to encourage staff to achieve the highest possible standards of conduct and minimise the risk of inappropriate conduct occurring.
- 1.2** School staff are in a unique position of trust and influence as role models for students. Therefore, staff must adhere to behaviour that sets a good example to all students within the school.
- 1.3** Staff also have an individual responsibility to maintain their reputation and the reputation of the school, both inside and outside of working hours and the work setting.
- 1.4** This policy applies to all staff and volunteers in the school regardless of their position, role or responsibility. References to 'staff' throughout the policy relate to all of the following groups:
  - 1.4.1** All members of staff including teaching and support staff
  - 1.4.2** Volunteers, including Governors
  - 1.4.3** Casual workers
  - 1.4.4** Temporary and supply staff, either from agencies or engaged directly
  - 1.4.5** Student placements, including those undertaking initial teacher training and apprentices.
- 1.5** LCHS requires that all staff have read and agree to comply with this policy.
- 1.6** Breach or failure to observe this policy will result in action being taken under the school disciplinary procedures including, but not limited to, dismissal.
- 1.7** This code of conduct is not an exhaustive list of acceptable and unacceptable standards of behaviour. In situations where guidance does not exist in this policy, staff are expected to exercise their professional judgement and act in the best interests of the students and the school.

## **2 Expectations**

- 2.1** All staff are familiar with, adhere to, accept and enforce all LCHS policies, copies of which are available on the school website.
- 2.2** Staff are expected to demonstrate the highest possible standards of personal and professional conduct and behaviour and consistently act with honesty and integrity. LCHS expects staff to treat each other, students, parents and the wider community with dignity and respect at all times.
- 2.3** Staff must act in accordance with their duty of care to students and ensure that the safety and welfare of students are accorded the highest priority.
- 2.4** Staff must have regard for the ethos and values of the school and must not do or say anything which may bring the school or Governing Body into disrepute. Care should be taken by staff to avoid any conflict of interest between activities undertaken outside school and responsibilities within school. Staff should act in accordance with the school's policies and procedures at all times.

### **3 Dress and Appearance**

Please refer to the Staff Dress Code

### **4 Smoking, alcohol and other substances**

- 4.1 LCHS is a non-smoking site. Staff must not smoke on school premises or outside school gates. Any member of staff wishing to smoke must leave the school grounds.
- 4.2 Staff must not smoke whilst working with or supervising students offsite.
- 4.3 Staff must not consume or be under the influence of alcohol, illicit drugs or other illegal substances on or near school premises.
- 4.4 Staff who are in supervisory or safeguarding capacity must refrain from the consumption of alcohol and other substances at school/student events (i.e. Proms, residential visits) both within the school premises and outside the school setting. Each event must have named responsible personnel for the welfare of every child.

### **5 Relationships with Students**

- 5.1 Staff must maintain professional boundaries with students appropriate to their position and must always consider whether their actions are warranted, proportionate, safe and applied equitably. Staff should act in an open and transparent way that would not lead any reasonable person to question their actions or intent. Staff should think carefully about their conduct so that misinterpretations are minimised.
- 5.2 Staff must not establish or seek to establish social contact with students for the purpose of securing a friendship or to pursue or strengthen a relationship. If a young person seeks to establish social contact you should exercise your professional judgement in making a response and be aware that such social contact could be misconstrued.
- 5.3 Staff must not develop personal or sexual relationships with students and should not engage in any sexual activity with a student.
- 5.4 Working Together to Safeguard Children<sup>1</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.
- 5.5 Staff should be mindful of Section 16 of The Sexual Offences Act 2003.<sup>2</sup>
- 5.6 Contact with students should be through LCHS's authorised mechanisms using school email or phone communication only. Personal phone numbers, email addresses or communication routes via all social media platforms should not be used, unless previously discussed with and approved by the Headteacher. Staff should not share their home address with students. If contacted via an inappropriate route, the member of staff must contact the Headteacher immediately.
- 5.7 LCHS school staff must not accept friend invitations or become friends with any student of LCHS school on any social media platform.

<sup>1</sup>[http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/419595/Working\\_Together\\_to\\_Safeguard\\_Children.pdf](http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419595/Working_Together_to_Safeguard_Children.pdf)

<sup>2</sup>Section 16 of The Sexual Offences Act 2003 provides that it is an offence for a person aged 18 or over (e.g. teacher, youth worker) 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 the relationship is consensual. A situation where a person is in a position of trust could arise where the child is in full-time education and the person looks after children under 18 in the same establishment as the child, even if s/he does not teach the child.

## **6 Infatuations**

- 6.1** It is not unusual for students, or sometimes, their parents to develop infatuations towards members of staff. All such situations must be responded to sensitively to maintain the dignity of those concerned.
- 6.2** Staff should also be aware that such circumstances carry a risk of words or actions being misinterpreted and for allegations to be made against staff. Any indications of an infatuation towards yourself or another member of staff must be reported to your line manager.

## **7 Gifts/Hospitality**

- 7.1** Staff need to take care that they do not accept any gift/offer of hospitality that might be construed as a bribe by others, or lead the giver to expect preferential treatment. However, there may be occasions where students or parents wish to give a small token of appreciation to staff, for example at religious festivities or at the end of the year.
- 7.2** It is unacceptable to receive gifts on a regular basis or to suggest to students that gifts are appropriate or desired. Money must not be accepted as a gift. If you are unsure whether to accept a gift you should consult your line manager.

## **8 Physical Contact with students**

- 8.1** There are occasions when it is appropriate and proper for staff to have physical contact with students, but it is crucial that they only do so in ways appropriate to their professional role. A 'no touch' approach is the role for most staff and circumstances. When physical contact is made with students it should be in response to their needs at that time, of limited duration and appropriate to their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background.
- 8.2** Extra caution should be exercised where a child is known to have suffered previous abuse or neglect. Such experiences may sometimes make a child exceptionally needy and demanding of physical contact and staff should respond sensitively by deterring the child through helping them to understand the importance of personal boundaries.
- 8.3** Staff supervising PE and games or providing musical tuition should demonstrate the use of a particular piece of equipment/instruction on another member of staff, if possible. However, they may be required to initiate physical contact with students to support a child to perform a task safely, to demonstrate the use of a particular piece of equipment/instrument or to assist them with an exercise. Contact under these circumstances should be done with the student's agreement, for the minimum time necessary and in an open environment. Staff should remain sensitive to any discomfort expressed verbally or non-verbally by the student.
- 8.4** If a member of staff believes that an action could be misinterpreted, the incident and circumstances should be reported to your line manager, recorded and, if appropriate, a copy placed on the child's file.

## **9 Showers and changing**

- 9.1** Students are entitled to respect and privacy whilst they are changing or showering after PE/games or swimming. However, there needs to be an appropriate level of supervision in order to safeguard young people, meet health and safety requirements and to ensure that bullying does not take place. The supervision should be

appropriate to the needs and age of the students and sensitive to the potential for embarrassment.

- 9.2** Staff should be vigilant about their own behaviour and announce their intention of entering a changing room. Staff must not change or shower in the same place as children.

## **10 One to one situations**

- 10.1** Staff working individually with students should be aware of the potential vulnerability of students and staff in such situations. Staff should manage these situations with regard to the safety of the student and to themselves.

- 10.2** Individual work with students should not be undertaken in isolated areas or rooms where there is no external viewing panel. Where it is necessary to close doors for reasons of confidentiality, a colleague should be made aware of this and asked to remain vigilant.

## **11 Transporting students**

- 11.1** In certain circumstances, it may be appropriate for staff to transport student's offsite, for example, sports fixtures or other out of school activities. A designated member of staff should be appointed to plan and provide oversight of all transport arrangements and to respond to any difficulties that may arise. Business Insurance cover will be required.

- 11.2** Staff should ensure that the driver is not distracted while the vehicle is in motion for any reason other than an emergency and should also ensure all passengers are wearing correctly fastened seatbelts. Staff should never transport students while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

- 11.3** Prior to transporting students offsite consent must be obtained from students' parent/carer and staff should be aware that the safety and welfare of the students is their responsibility until this is safely passed back to their parent/carer.

## **12 E-Safety**

- 12.1** Staff should follow LCHS's Acceptable Use Policy at all times.

- 12.2** Staff must not engage in inappropriate use of social network sites which may bring themselves, the school or the school community into disrepute. Staff should adopt the highest security settings on any personal profiles they have.

- 12.3** Staff should remain mindful of their digital footprint and exercise caution in all their use of social media or any other web based presence they have. This includes written consent, videos or photographs and views expressed either directly or by 'liking' certain pages or posts or following certain individuals or groups.

- 12.4** Staff must not make contact with students, must not accept or initiate friend requests nor follow student's accounts on any social media platform. Staff must not communicate with students via social media, websites, instant messenger accounts or text messages. The only acceptable method of contact is via the use of school email accounts or telephone equipment.

- 12.5** Staff should not make contact with students' family members, accept or initiate friend requests or follow students' family members' accounts on any social media platform.
- 12.6** However, LCHS acknowledges that staff may wish to make contact with parents, who are friends, over social media. Staff must exercise caution and professional judgement in these circumstances and should not have any contact with students' family members via social media if that contact is likely to constitute a conflict of interest or call into question their objectivity.
- 12.7** Mobile phones and personally-owned devices may not be used during lessons or formal school time. They should be switched off (or silent) at all times. The Bluetooth functionality of a mobile phone should be switched off at all times and may not be used to send images or files to other mobile phones.
- 12.8** Mobile phones and personally-owned mobile devices brought in to school are the responsibility of the device owner. LCHS school accepts no responsibility for the loss, theft or damage of personally-owned mobile phones or mobile devices.
- 12.9** Mobile phones may be used in private offices/dept offices or staff rooms but never in the presence of a student or in open areas such as classrooms, corridors or school fields.

### **13 Photography, video and images of children**

- 13.1** Many school activities involve recording images as part of the curriculum, extra school activities, and publicity or to celebrate an achievement. In accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998, the image of a student is personal data. Therefore, it is a requirement under the Act for consent to be obtained from the parent/carer of student for any images made. It is important to take into account the wishes of the student, remembering that some students do not wish to have their photograph taken or be filmed. Personal devices should not be used for this purpose.
- 13.2** Using images for publicity purpose will require the age-appropriate consent of the individual concerned and their parent/carer. Images should not be displayed on websites, in publications or in a public place without their consent. Staff should also be clear about the purpose of the activity and what will happen to the photographs/images/video footage when the lesson or activity is concluded.
- 13.3** Photographs/stills or video footage of students should only be taken using school equipment for purposes authorised by the school and should be stored securely and only on school equipment.
- 13.4** Staff should ensure that a member of the Senior Leadership Team is aware of the proposed use of photographic/video equipment and that this is recorded in lesson plans. All photographs/stills and video footage should be available for scrutiny and staff should be able to justify all images/video footage made.
- 13.5** Staff should remain aware of the potential for images of students to be misused to create indecent images of children and/or for grooming purposes. Therefore, careful consideration should be given to how activities which are being filmed or photographed are organised and undertaken. Particular care should be given when filming or photographing young or vulnerable students who may be unable to

question how or why the activities are taking place. Staff should also be mindful that students who have been abused through the use of video or photography may feel threatened by its use in a teaching environment.

## **14 Confidentiality**

- 14.1** Members of staff may have access to confidential information about students, their parents/carers or their siblings. Staff must not reveal such information except to those colleagues who have a professional role in relation to the student on a need-to-know basis.
- 14.2** Staff should never use confidential or personal information about a student or her/his family for their own, or others' advantage (including that of partners, friends, relatives or other organisations). Information must never be used to intimidate, humiliate, or embarrass the student.
- 14.3** All staff are likely at some point to witness actions which need to be kept confidential. For example, where a student is bullied by another student. This needs to be reported and dealt with in accordance with the appropriate school procedure. It must not be discussed outside the school, including with the student's parent or carer, nor with colleagues in the school except by a senior member of staff with the appropriate authority to deal with the matter.
- 14.4** Staff have a statutory obligation to share with LCHS's Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead any information which gives rise to concern about the welfare or safety of a student or that might suggest a student is in need, or at risk of, significant harm. Staff should pass on information without delay in accordance with LCHS's Safeguarding Policy and Procedures and this should be recorded. Staff must never promise a student that they will not act on or pass on any information that they are told by the student.
- 14.5** Staff should refer to the Department of Education's document *Information sharing: advice for practitioners providing safeguarding services*<sup>3</sup> for further guidance on information sharing. If you are in any doubt about whether to share, you should seek guidance from a member of the Senior Leadership Team.
- 14.6** Any media or legal enquiries should be passed to the Senior Leadership Team and only approved staff and Governors should communicate to the media about the school.

<sup>3</sup>[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/419628/Information\\_sharing\\_advice\\_safeguarding\\_practitioners.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419628/Information_sharing_advice_safeguarding_practitioners.pdf)

## **15 Whistleblowing**

- 15.1** Whistleblowing is the mechanism by which staff can voice their concerns, without fear of repercussion.
- 15.2** All school staff have a duty to report any behaviour by a colleague which raises concern. Staff should refer to LCHS's Whistleblowing Policy for further guidance. This is particularly important where the welfare of students may be at risk.

## **16 Compliance**

- 16.1** All staff must complete the form in Appendix 1 to confirm they have read, understood and agree to comply with this policy. This form should be signed and dated and a copy retained on the member of staff's file.

**Appendix 1**

**Confirmation of compliance**

I hereby confirm I have read, understood and agree to comply with LCHS's Staff Code of Conduct Policy.

Name: .....

Position Held: .....

Signed: .....

Dated: .....

**Once completed, signed and dated, please return this form to the HR Manager.**