



## **S34: STAFF INTERACTION WITH PUPILS**

### INTRODUCTION

*Every member of staff should read this guidance in conjunction with the school's Code of Conduct for School Staff and the School Safeguarding Policy with both of which it overlaps. All staff are given a copy Part 1 of the DfE guidance: Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) which they are required to read, understand and abide by. Governors also receive copies of the KCSIE and the Safeguarding Policy.*

### STAFF INTERACTION WITH PUPILS

While it is vital that staff develop positive relationships with the pupils in their care, they need to ensure that their behaviour does not inadvertently lay them open to allegations of unprofessionalism or even abuse. They need to be seen to treat all pupils professionally and with respect.

#### **Physical Proximity**

It is sensible to try, as far as possible, not to be alone with a child or young person. Where this is not possible, for example, in an instrumental or singing lesson/rehearsal or in a personal tutorial etc, it is good practice to ensure that others are within earshot, that the room in which you are meeting is not so private that no one else is likely to use it and it should have windows that allow others to see in. Where possible, a gap should be maintained between teacher and child at all times.

Pupils should not be picked up (unless medically necessary or being restrained in accordance with the Restraint Policy S41, nor should they be allowed to sit on a member of staff's lap. They should be gently discouraged from hugging school staff, though matrons may consider that there are occasions when such comfort is appropriate and professionally sound. Any physical contact should be the minimum required for care, instruction or restraint. This is also relevant in singing lessons, Alexander Technique lessons or other instrumental lessons when a degree of physical contact may be necessary. The teacher should always ensure that the child feels comfortable with the physical contact. For example he/she should say something like, "Do you mind if I touch you here....?" The teacher must ensure that such contact does not ever breach professional boundaries.

Staff should avoid taking one pupil on his own in a car. An obvious exception to this would be an emergency visit to hospital, for example, but even in these circumstances staff should be healthily wary of putting themselves in a situation that could be misinterpreted.



In a small and personal school such as this it is very easy for staff and boys to get to know one another very well indeed. That is as it should be but staff must always keep a professional distance. They should avoid any suggestion of showing favouritism and they must maintain the demeanour of a responsible adult professional rather than that of an equal or friend. Staff accommodation in 3B Dean's Yard is strictly out of bounds to pupils and no member of staff should **share sleeping accommodation with pupils or invite them to their home alone.**

The Headmaster may on occasion invite groups of pupils (but never a lone pupil) into his study, dining room, sitting room or kitchen in 4DY, but boys will never be allowed to enter the private accommodation upstairs.

See also Policies: [S49 ADULTS STAYING IN BOARDING HOUSES; S57 CODE OF CONDUCT FOR SCHOOL STAFF](#)

### **Communication with Pupils**

Staff should not give their personal mobile phone numbers to pupils, nor should they communicate with them by text message, social networking site or personal email. For their own safety, they should maintain this professional distance even after a pupil has left the school, while he is still of school age. Staff may of course use the school email system to communicate with pupils for matters relating to school. The Group Leader on all trips and visits involving an overnight stay should take a school mobile phone with him/her. Except in cases of emergency, a school mobile phone should be used for any contact with pupils that may be necessary. If pupils' personal mobile phones have been used, the Group Leader will delete any record of their numbers at the end of the trip or visit.

### **Physical Restraint**

Any physical restraint is only permissible when a child is in imminent danger of inflicting an injury on himself or on another, and then only as a last resort, when all efforts to diffuse the situation have failed. Another member of staff should, if possible, be present to act as a witness. All incidents of the use of physical restraint should be recorded in writing and reported immediately to the headmaster. See also [S41 RESTRAINT](#)

### **Photography**

Parents have given consent to their child's photograph being used in external news or publicity material for the Choir School or the Abbey. It is the School's policy not to use a photograph and a name together, except in those publications distributed internally and to parents. In special circumstances where it is appropriate to provide a photograph and identify a particular pupil by name externally, the school will first seek consent from parents.

It is permissible for staff to take photographs of pupils engaged in *bona fide* school activities for the purposes of record keeping and for display around the school. Staff are not permitted to store images of pupils on personal computers, phones, cameras or other electronic devices. Any photographs of school pupils taken on such personal recording equipment must be either deleted or transferred permanently as soon as possible to the school's database. The use of

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## Choir School



cameras on mobile phones is not allowed in washing and changing areas, or in the dormitories, nor should photography be used in a manner that may offend or cause upset. The misuse of cameras in a way that breaches our anti-bullying policy would always be taken seriously and may be the subject of disciplinary procedures. The school expressly prohibits the use of images of the school or its pupils on any external website such as YouTube, Twitter, Facebook, Flickr etc. (other than the school's or Abbey's own website and Twitter feeds etc.) See also [S48 USE AND STORAGE OF IMAGES](#)