



Long Sutton Church of England Primary School

Staff Code of Conduct Procedure and Guidance

Date of Last Review	Date of Next Review
September 2023	September 2024
Responsibility for Review and Monitoring / Auditing	
Headteacher in partnership with FGB and Safeguarding Governor. As a school, we review this policy at least annually in line with HCC Model Code of Conduct and the school's Safeguarding & Child Protection Policies	
Next Audit Due:	Frequency of Auditing:
September 2023	Annual (As part of Hampshire Safeguarding Audit)
Purpose	
To provide staff with a framework to outline the high expectations of conduct and minimise the risks of improper conduct	

I. Purpose

This Code of Conduct aims to establish a set of principles which underpin the expected conduct of staff at **Long Sutton C of E Primary School** with the intention of encouraging staff to achieve the highest standards of conduct at work and of minimising the risk of improper conduct occurring.

The school requires that all staff have read and comply with the Code of Conduct. Where clarification is needed on any aspect of this document, this should be sought from the Headteacher.

Breach or failure to observe the provisions of this document may lead to action being taken under the school disciplinary procedure. This document is available to all

staff from the school office, as well as being provided on induction to all new members of staff.

The Code of Conduct is not exhaustive in defining acceptable and unacceptable standards of conduct and behaviour and in circumstances where guidance does not exist individuals are expected to use their professional judgement and act in the best interests of the school and its pupils.

Our Values:

LOVE COURAGE & HOPE

Our Vision:

Through our core Christian values of Love, Courage & Hope, we nurture, encourage and challenge each unique child to be kind, be respectful and be the best they can be.

At Long Sutton Church of England Primary School, we aim to provide rich, memorable learning experiences which build character in each individual child. Strong relationships underpin all we do in our small church school, where we value and respect each other's uniqueness. We provide the space for all children to flourish and be the best they can be. Our broad curriculum inspires great learning through engagement with the outdoor environment and enables our children to develop positive emotional and mental health and an understanding of their place in the wider world. Our children are nurtured and challenged to become resilient learners with high aspirations.

How our Vision and Values impact this policy:

The strong relationships which are fostered between staff and children in our small school contribute to a culture of openness and trust. In the context of this code of conduct, we expect all staff to demonstrate respect to all members of the school community, both in how they talk to them and how they talk about them, and to be role models for the children through living out our school values and rules. Staff show love through the way they talk to and listen to children; courage through sharing concerns about the conduct of colleagues and other staff (including volunteers) where it falls short of our high expectations; hope through knowing that being good role models for behaviour and sharing concerns where necessary will result in improving the lives of the children in our care.

2. Scope

The Code of Conduct applies to:

- all members of staff, including teaching and support staff;
- volunteers, including governors;
- casual workers;
- temporary and supply staff, either from agencies or engaged directly;
- student placements, including those undertaking initial teacher training, and apprentices.

References to 'staff' throughout the Code of Conduct refer to all of the above groups.

Any links within this document to other documents are for ease of use and do not form part of this Code of Conduct.

The Code of Conduct exists in addition to Hampshire County Council's [Local Government Code of Conduct](#).

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Professional standards at work

Staff are expected to demonstrate the highest possible standards of personal and professional conduct and behaviour and consistently act with honesty and integrity. The school expects staff to treat each other, pupils, parents and the wider school community with dignity and respect at all times.

Furthermore, staff must have regard for the ethos and values of the school as well as its policies and procedures and act in accordance with these at all times, including in their dealings with those who come into contact with the school e.g. visitors.

Staff must act in accordance with their duty of care to pupils and ensure that the safety and welfare of the children and young people at the school are accorded the highest priority. In this and other ways staff should always maintain standards of conduct and behaviour which sustain their professional standing and that of the school.

Safeguarding

Teachers are reminded of, and are expected to uphold, their wider responsibilities as set out in the [Teachers' Standards](#), including an understanding of, and acting within, the statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities.

Long Sutton C of E Primary School recognises its statutory and moral duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils and understands that staff play a vital role in meeting these responsibilities. Staff must be aware of their individual safeguarding responsibilities, including to provide a safe environment in which children can learn, to be aware of the signs of abuse and neglect, to identify children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm and to take appropriate action in such cases to prevent concerns from escalating.

All members of staff must be aware of the school's systems for supporting child safeguarding, including the role of the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

In this school the DSL(s) is/are: **Hannah Inglis (DSL), Selena Cameron (DDSL) & Kathryn Maidment (DDSL)**

Staff have a professional duty to report concerns about the welfare of a child. Any such concerns must be raised without delay to the school's DSL in the first instance or to a **DDSL** if the DSL cannot be located. In the event that none of the above are available, concerns raised by volunteers or visiting professionals must be shared with a member of school staff, and referrals can be made directly to the **Hampshire County Council's Safeguarding team (01962 876364)]**. There should be no

delay in reporting a concern if there is risk of immediate serious harm to a child.

Staff are reminded of their duty to report safeguarding concerns about staff. Any concerns or allegations must be raised without delay to the school's **DSL** in the first instance or to a **DDSL** if the DSL cannot be located.

Staff should be familiar with the school's child protection policy, which is available to all staff via the school office and is shared with all staff (including volunteers) annually. All staff will receive appropriate child protection training and will be provided with guidance on child safeguarding as part of their induction to the school.

In accordance with the statutory guidance published by the Department for Education 'Keeping Children Safe in Education', all staff in **Long Sutton C of E Primary School** who work directly with children are required to read Part One 'Safeguarding information for all staff'. Those staff who do not work directly with children are required, as a minimum, to read Annex A (a condensed version of Part One). Staff will be provided with either Part One or Annex A, as applicable, as part of their induction to the school.

The full document is available via

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2> or from the **DSL**.

Further information is found in the guidance document '[The avoidance of unnecessary contact and allegations](#)' and in '[Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings](#)' (May 2019) provided by the Safer Recruitment Consortium.

Appropriate relationships

Pupils

Individuals who work or volunteer in a school environment are in a position of trust. Staff should be mindful of the need to maintain professional boundaries 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.

Positive touch can be a very important form of support for many children and we use positive touch in an appropriate and professional way, when necessary and beneficial to the child. Staff must avoid unnecessary physical contact with children. Where physical contact is essential for safety reasons,

the pupil's permission must be gained for that contact if possible, or staff must warn the child that this will be necessary, in order to give the child a chance to turn things around themselves. If physical contact is made to remove a pupil from a dangerous situation, or remove an object from a pupil to prevent either harm to themselves or others, staff must tell the child that they will be making physical contact in order to keep them or others safe, and any physical intervention must be recorded and reported to **the DSL**. In cases where accidental physical contact was made, it must be reported to **the DSL**. In all cases staff should act in accordance with the school's **Restrictive Physical Intervention Policy**.

Any sexual behaviour by a member of staff with or towards a pupil, child or young person whether inside or outside of work is unacceptable. Staff are reminded that under the Sexual Offences Act 2003, it is a criminal offence for a person aged 18 or over 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. Keeping Children Safe in Education defines a child as everyone under the age of 18.

Special Schools will often work with pupils and vulnerable adults over the age of 18. The principles within the Code of Conduct applies to all under the care of the school

Parents

Staff are expected to interact with parents in a polite and respectful manner and recognise parents' entitlement to express any concerns they may have about their child's learning, safety or wellbeing. Staff should avoid discussing school matters with parents outside school if approached and should instead refer the parent to the normal school communication channels.

Use of IT including social media

Internal e-mail and internet systems must be used only in accordance with the school's acceptable use of ICT policy.

Social networking sites offer the opportunity for communication with children, young people and their parents outside normal professional boundaries. School staff must take care to protect their privacy and protect themselves from risk of allegations in relation to inappropriate relationships and cyberbullying. Staff must not have any unauthorised contact or accept 'friend' requests through social media with any pupil. Staff must exercise caution when having contact online through social media with parents so as not to compromise the school's reputation or school information.

Please refer to the school's acceptable use of ICT policy and E-Safety Policy (available via the school office) for further guidance on acceptable and unacceptable use of IT, social media and mobile phones.

For further information on the acceptable use of school IT Resources, staff should refer to the school's leaflet '[Use of ICT Resources Do's and Don'ts: advice for school staff](#)'

Confidentiality and disclosure of information

Staff must ensure that they do not disclose confidential information to anyone who does not have the right to receive it. Where information is disclosed this should be in line with the principles of the [General Data Protection Regulations \(GDPR\) 2016](#) and the [Data Protection Act 2018](#). Equally staff should not prevent another person from gaining access to information to which that person is entitled by law. If there is doubt about whether or not to share information, advice must be sought from the Headteacher, or an appropriate senior member of staff.

Information obtained during the course of an individual's work should never be used for personal gain or benefit, nor should it be passed onto others who might use it in such a way.

Dress and appearance

An individual's dress and appearance is a matter of personal choice; however, staff should ensure that they dress appropriately, decently and safely for a school environment and for the role they undertake, as well as setting a good example to both pupils and visitors.

We do not have a strict dress code, however we do request that staff ensure they are dressed in a smart and professional way; we also acknowledge the need for comfort and practicality, for example teaching or duties outside. Staff may wear PE kit for the full working day on a day when PE is taught. Smart, coloured jean-style trousers are acceptable but blue denim jeans should not be worn.

Staff should have particular regard to the health and safety risks involved with certain lessons i.e. physical education/food technology and the need to dress appropriately and safely when undertaking these activities, such as wearing appropriate footwear, removing jewellery etc.

The school recognises the diversity of cultures and religions of its staff and will take a sensitive approach when this affects dress and uniform requirements. However, priority will be given to health and safety, security and other similar considerations of other staff, pupils and the school.

The Governing Body of the school is committed to equality for all in the appointment, development, training and promotion of staff, and in all dealings with pupils and parents of the school. It also recognises that all members of

Equal opportunities

staff have the right to work in a safe environment without fear of discrimination, harassment or abuse.

All pupils, colleagues, parents, members of the public and wider school community have the right to be treated with fairness and equality and must not be discriminated against. The school expects staff to uphold these principles.

Please refer to the school's equalities policy statement for further guidance.

Conduct outside work

Care must be taken by staff to avoid any conflict of interest between activities undertaken outside school and responsibilities within school. In no case should actions or activities undertaken outside of work (including but not limited to relationships and social media contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults) bring the school into disrepute.

Staff must disclose any misconduct or alleged misconduct made against them, including any incidents arising from alternative or additional employment outside of this school. Disclosure must be made to **The Headteacher** without delay, after which consideration will be given to the relevance or otherwise of the misconduct to their role in the school.

Teachers are reminded that the [Teachers' Standards](#), and specifically Part Two: Personal and Professional Conduct, set out their responsibilities in relation to upholding public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school.

Where staff are in doubt as to whether there is a conflict of interest advice must be sought from **the Headteacher**.

Low level concerns

The term 'low level concerns' is outlined in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' and refers to concerns about an adult working in or on behalf of the school who may have acted in a way that is inconsistent with this code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work. This concern does not necessarily meet the allegations threshold for referral to the LADO, but nevertheless should be shared responsibly, recorded and dealt with appropriately.

The purpose of managing low level concerns is to create and embed a culture of openness, trust and transparency; also to protect staff from potential false allegations or misunderstandings.

Staff can protect themselves by following this code of conduct and ['The avoidance of unnecessary contact and allegations'](#) guidance, including the Do's and Don'ts.

Low level concerns about a staff member, including a volunteer or contractor, should be reported in the same way as allegations as outlined in the school's Child Protection policy.

Staff should consider carefully whether they need to declare to the school any relationship with an individual where this might cause a conflict with the school's activities, for example, a relationship with a Governor, another staff member or a contractor who provides services to the school. Where such a declaration is necessary this should be made to the Headteacher.

Staff may undertake work outside school, either paid or voluntary, provided it does not conflict with the interests of the school nor be at a level which may contravene the [Working Time Regulations](#) or affect an individual's performance at work.

Declaration of interests

The [Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998](#) (as amended) gives protection to people who disclose reasonable concerns about serious misconduct or malpractice at work. This is sometimes known as Whistleblowing. The Governing Body of the school will treat all matters of malpractice very seriously and allegations about such matters will be dealt with quickly and with appropriate confidentiality.

Staff should acknowledge their individual responsibilities in bringing matters of concern to the attention of senior leadership in the school. This is particularly important where the welfare of children may be at risk.

Whistleblowing

A clear procedure is provided for staff to raise issues with the purpose of assisting in reducing the risk of serious concerns being mishandled, whether by the individual or by the school. Please refer to the school's [Procedure for Protected Disclosures \("Whistleblowing"\)](#) for further information **(shared with staff annually upon review and available via the school office)**

Health and safety

Staff must adhere to the school's Health and Safety policy and should ensure that they take every action to keep themselves and others in the school environment safe.

Please refer to the school's Health and Safety policy for further information **(available via the school office and shared with staff annually upon review).**

Gifts and hospitality

There may be occasions where children or parents wish to pass small tokens of appreciation to staff, for example as an end of year 'thank-you', and this is acceptable. However, it is unacceptable to receive gifts on a regular basis or of any significant value or to suggest to pupils that gifts would be appropriate or desired. Money should never be accepted as a gift from individual parents.

It is not acceptable for staff to give gifts to pupils and any rewards given to children must be given in agreement with the declared reward practice of the school. Small class gifts at the end of a term are acceptable, however there is no requirement for this.

Use of school resources and funds

Staff should not solicit or accept any gift, hospitality or other reward from external parties which influences the way in which they carry out their duties or leads the giver to expect preferential treatment.

The use of school resources, property and equipment is for school-related activities only, except where otherwise agreed.

All members of staff must use any public or school funds entrusted or handled by them in a responsible and lawful manner.

Annex I: Low Level Concerns Policy

Policy statement

Our school recognises its statutory and moral duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils and understands that staff play a vital role in meeting these responsibilities.

Our school works to ensure that we promote an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about adults working in or on behalf of the school are dealt with promptly and appropriately.

Scope

All employees employed at this school including:

- Teachers
- Support staff
- Supply teachers
- Volunteers
- Local Authority visiting staff
- Contractors

2.2 The term 'staff' throughout this policy refers to all of the above.

Policy aims

To help create a culture in which all concerns about adults are shared responsibly and with the right person and are recorded and dealt with appropriately.

To enable schools to identify concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour early.

To minimise the risk of abuse occurring.

To ensure that adults working in or on behalf of the school are clear about professional boundaries and act within these boundaries and in accordance with the ethos and values of the school.

3.5 To help create an environment where staff are comfortable to self-refer, where, for example, they have found themselves in a situation which could be misinterpreted, might appear compromising to others, and/or on reflection they believe they have behaved in such a way that they consider falls below the expected professional standards.

Definition

The term 'low level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant. It means that the behaviour towards a child does not meet the harm threshold for an allegation.

'Keeping Children Safe in Education' defines a low level concern as:

“any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a ‘nagging doubt’ – that an adult working in or on behalf of the school or college may have acted in a way that:

- *is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work; and*
- *does not meet the allegations threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO”*

Avoiding low level concerning behaviour

Behaviour defined as a 'low level concern' can exist on a spectrum, from the inadvertent or thoughtless, or behaviour that may look to be inappropriate but is not in specific circumstances, through to that which is ultimately intended to enable abuse.

Staff education and reinforcement on avoiding circumstances which may put them in a difficult situation is key to avoiding the need for dealing with these types of concerns.

5.3 Our school ensures that staff are clear about what appropriate behaviour is through their induction and regularly reinforcement of documents such as:

- Staff Code of Conduct
- 'Avoiding Allegations' guidance
- Safeguarding and Child Protection policies and regular training
- Teachers' Standards (for teaching staff)

Reporting a low level concern

Low level concerns about a member of staff should be reported to the DSL and/or Headteacher as per the school's Child Protection procedures. If the concern is about the Headteacher this should be reported to the Chair of Governors.

Low level concerns about supply staff, contractors and local authority visiting staff will also be reported to their employers.

Dealing with a low level concern

Where a concern is raised about the practice or behaviour of a member of staff, this information must be recorded and passed to the Headteacher.

The Headteacher must then make an assessment to determine if the matter is a 'low level concern' or an 'allegation' and follow one of the following routes.

- **Allegations that meet the harm threshold will be referred to the LADO for advice.**
- **Low level concerns that the school feel may need further guidance on will be referred to the LADO for advice.**
- **Low level concerns that the school feel they can deal with internally will be dealt with via the school's usual child protection investigation process.**

The school will engage with its HR provider where it is necessary to undertake further investigation and/or deal with the concern under relevant processes.

Recording a low level concern

All low level concerns should be recorded by a member of staff when they are made aware of them. This record should then be passed to the Headteacher (or Chair of Governors if the concern is about the Headteacher).

The record should include:

- **Details of the concern,**
- **The context in which the concern arose,**
- **The outcome of the investigation and any action taken, and**
- **The name of the individual sharing their concerns (if known) (unless the individual wishes to remain anonymous which must be respected as far as possible).**

Relevant records will be retained confidentially on the personnel file. A separate record will also be kept of low level concerns to more easily identify patterns that may involve more than one member of staff. All records must be kept in line with data protection principles.

Reviewing a low level concern

Records will be reviewed so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

Where a pattern of such behaviour is identified, the Headteacher will decide on a course of action, which may include:

- Disciplinary investigation and/or proceedings
- Management Advice, including recommendations for training
- Referral to the LADO (where a pattern of behaviour moves from a concern to meeting the harm threshold).

The school will take advice, where appropriate, from their HR provider in respect of low level concerns.

The school will also review appropriate policies and training, or other wider cultural issues in the school, to see whether anything needs to be done to minimise the risk of similar behaviour happening again.

Relevant records will be retained confidentially on the personnel file. A separate record will also be kept of low level concerns to more easily identify patterns that may involve more than one member of staff. All records must be kept in line with data protection principles.

Low level concerns will not be included in a reference unless they relate to issues which would normally be included in a reference (e.g. misconduct or poor performance). Low level concerns which relate solely to safeguarding will not be included in a reference, subject to paragraph 9.7.

A low level concern (or group or pattern of concerns) which has met the harm threshold and has therefore been referred to the LADO may be included in a reference depending on the circumstances.

Related guidance

The policy links to the following guidance documents:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE)
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Avoiding Allegation guidance (Manual of Personnel Practice)

- Safeguarding Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy

Annex 2: Allegations, Low Level Concerns & Appropriate Behaviour Spectrum of behaviour

Allegation

Behaviour which indicates that an adult who works with children has:

- behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child; and/or
- possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child; and/or
- behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they may pose a risk of harm to children; and/or
- behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

Low level concern

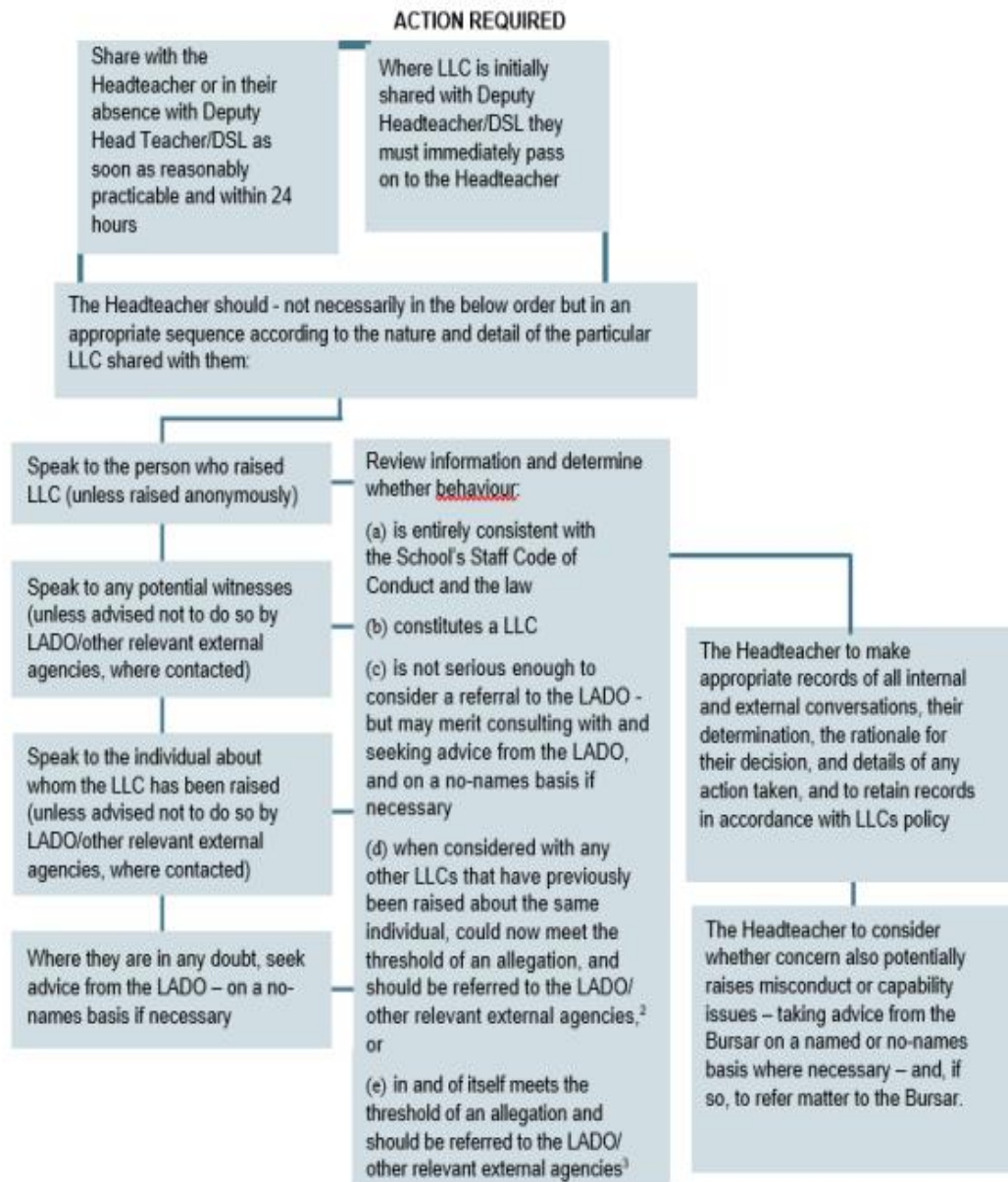
Does not mean that it is insignificant, it means that the adult's behaviour towards a child does not meet the threshold set out above. A low-level concern is any concern – no matter how small, and even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' – that an adult may have acted in a way that:

- is inconsistent with the School's Staff Code of Conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work; and
- does not meet the allegation threshold or is otherwise not serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO – but may merit consulting with and seeking advice from the LADO, and on a no-names basis if necessary.

Appropriate Conduct

Behaviour which is entirely consistent with the School's Staff Code of Conduct, and the law.

Annex 3
Sharing low level concerns: Flowchart of action



Annex 4: Do's and Don'ts for ICT systems & resources

Do's and Don'ts: Advice for Staff

Whilst the wide range of ICT systems and resources available to staff, both in school and outside of school, have irrefutable advantages, there are also potential risks that staff must be aware of. Ultimately if staff use ICT resources inappropriately, this may become a matter for a police or social care investigation and/or a disciplinary issue which could lead to their dismissal. Staff should also be aware that this extends to inappropriate use of ICT outside of school.

This Dos and Don'ts list has been written as a guidance document. Whilst it is not fully comprehensive of every circumstance that may arise, it indicates the types of behaviours and actions that staff should not display or undertake as well as those that they should in order to protect themselves from risk.

General issues

Do

- ensure that you do not breach any restrictions that there may be on your use of school resources, systems or resources
- ensure that where a password is required for access to a system, that it is not inappropriately disclosed
- respect copyright and intellectual property rights
- ensure that you have approval for any personal use of the school's ICT resources and facilities
- be aware that the school's systems will be monitored and recorded to ensure policy compliance
- ensure you comply with the requirements of the Data Protection Act when using personal data
- seek approval before taking personal data off of the school site
- ensure personal data is stored safely and securely whether kept on site, taken off site or accessed remotely
- report any suspected misuse or concerns that you have regarding the school's systems, resources and equipment to the Headteacher or designated manager and/or Designated Safeguarding Lead as appropriate
- be aware that a breach of your school's Acceptable Use Policy will be a disciplinary matter and in some cases, may lead to dismissal
- ensure that any equipment provided for use at home is not accessed by anyone not approved to use it
- ensure that you have received adequate training in ICT
- ensure that your use of ICT bears due regard to your personal health and safety and that of others

Don't

- access or use any systems, resources or equipment without being sure that you have permission to do so
- access or use any systems or resources or equipment for any purpose that you don't have permission to use the system, resources or equipment for
- compromise any confidentiality requirements in relation to material and resources accessed through ICT systems
- use systems, resources or equipment for personal use without having approval to do so
- use other people's log on and password details to access school systems and resources
- download, upload or install any hardware or software without approval
- use unsecure removable storage devices to store personal data
- use school systems for personal financial gain, gambling, political activity or advertising
- communicate with parents and pupils outside normal working hours unless absolutely necessary

