

**STAFF BEHAVIOUR POLICY**

This policy should be read in conjunction with the NDPS Staff Handbook and The Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education ( 9th January 2021). This policy is applicable to the whole school community including those in the EYFS.

Staff need to ensure that their behaviour does not inadvertently lay them open to allegations of abuse.  They need to treat all pupils with respect and 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 music lesson, or sports coaching lesson, it is good practice to ensure that others are within earshot.  Where possible, a gap or barrier should be maintained between teacher and child at all times.  Any physical contact should be the minimum required for care, instruction or restraint.  Staff should avoid taking one pupil on his/her own in a car. In the EYFS close contact is more of an issue particularly when changing dirty nappies etc. See also the NDPS ‘Nursery Feeding and Changing’ policy.

Staff are in a position of trust and must not engage in relationships with anyone under the age of 18 (at this or from any other school). All adults working with children and young people in education settings are in positions of trust in relation to the young people in their care.  A relationship between a member of staff and a pupil cannot be a relationship between equals.  There is potential for exploitation and harm of vulnerable young people and all members of staff have a responsibility to ensure that an unequal balance of power is not used for personal advantage or gratification. Wherever possible, staff should avoid behaviour which might be misinterpreted by others, and report and record any incident with this potential.  Staff should refer to the school's Staff Handbook and relevant policies.

**Lone Working/One to One Tuition**

Notre Dame Prep acknowledges the need for one to one tuition and in fact its many peripatetic teachers deliver an important part of our curriculum. Separate rooms are provided for Music, Drama and a range of other activities including SEN intervention work on a withdrawal basis. Staff working in one to one situations with pupils, including visiting staff from external organisations can be more vulnerable to allegations or complaints. To safeguard both pupils and adults, peripatetic staff who work with the school, are required to undertake Safer Recruitment checks before starting work, and undertake safeguarding training every year.

Arranging to meet with pupils from the school or setting away from the work premises should not be permitted unless the necessity for this is clear and approval is obtained from a senior member of staff and their parents.

All teaching rooms that are used for individual tuition are furnished with partly glazed doors as a matter of procedure.

**Physical contact with pupils**

There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate and proper for staff to have physical contact with pupils, but it is crucial that they only do so in ways appropriate to their professional role.  Staff should, therefore, use their professional judgement at all times.  Staff should not have unnecessary physical contact with pupils and should be alert to the fact that minor forms of friendly physical contact can be misconstrued by pupils or onlookers.

A member of staff can never take the place of a parent in providing physical comfort and should be cautious of any demonstration of affection.

Physical contact should never be secretive, or of the gratification of the adult, or represent a misuse of authority.  If a member of staff believes that an action could be misinterpreted, the incident and circumstances should be recorded as soon as possible, the DSL informed and, if appropriate, a copy placed on the pupil's file.

School is aware that young children can be particularly demonstrative and are prone to hugging members of staff. Staff are encouraged to receive hugs ‘side-on’ and encourage youngsters to do the same where possible. This is in line with the LA’s STEPS training. In addition, and in line with the Revised Safer Working Practice guidelines, horseplay with children is considered bad practice and may result in disciplinary action.

*A****rrangements for the supervision of changing rooms***

There should not be an assumption that adults need to remain in the room in order to maintain good behaviour although the KS1 children require full supervision. Older children are encouraged to be more independent when changing and this can be achieved by being in close proximity and pupils being aware of it. They should also know that adults will enter the room when necessary – in response to a disturbance, for example.

If there is a need for adults to enter the room it is recommended they should alert pupils to this by announcing it to give them the opportunity to cover up if they want to. All adults, but particularly those of the opposite sex, should avoid just standing in the changing room watching pupils, or repeatedly going in and out without good reason.

A code of behaviour should be established with all pupils so they are clear about expectations about their conduct whilst they are unsupervised.

Children up to the end of Prep 2 are likely to need additional help with changing particularly before and after swimming and every effort must be made to ensure that the comfort and safety of the children and staff are maintained. In such cases there must be at least two members of staff present either in the room or within earshot.

**Physical Restraint**

Any physical restraint is only permissible when a child is in imminent danger of inflicting an injury on himself/herself 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 DSL/Head Teacher who will decide what to do next.  Where this relates to the school's Nursery/EYFS setting, parents will be informed of any physical restraint used on their child the same day or as soon as reasonably practicable. Incidences of physical restraint will be followed up with welfare interviews for all young people involved (onlookers too) within 24 hours.

**Physical education and other activities requiring physical contact**

Where exercises or procedures need to be demonstrated, extreme caution should be used if the demonstration involves contact with pupils and, wherever possible, contact should be avoided.  It is acknowledged that some staff, for example, those who teach PE and games, or who offer music tuition, will, on occasions, have to initiate physical contact with pupils in order to support a pupil so they can perform a task safely, to demonstrate the use of a particular piece of equipment/instrument or assist them with an exercise.  This should be done with the pupil's agreement.

Contact under these circumstances should be for the minimum time necessary to complete the activity and take place in an open environment.  Staff should remain sensitive to any discomfort expressed verbally or non-verbally by the child.

***The Use of Technology and Communicating with Pupils***

Staff are aware that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and well-being issues. Children are at risk of abuse online as well as face to face. In many cases abuse will take place concurrently via online channels and in daily life. Children can also abuse their peers online. This can take the form of abusive, harassing and misogynistic messages, the non-consensual sharing of indecent images, especially around chat groups, and the sharing of indecent images, to those who do not want to receive such content. Staff are aware that for young people the connected world embraces both online and offline and for young people there is often no separation in their minds between ‘real life’ and the ‘online world.’

Online safety at Notre Dame Prep School both protects and educates the whole School community in the use of technology and establishes mechanisms to identify, intervene and escalate any incident where appropriate. Online safety is considered whilst planning the curriculum and training for new teachers. Access to the School’s internal network and the internet is essential as a means of providing valuable tools to support teaching and learning. While recognising these benefits, the School is also mindful of potential risks to the well-being of pupils through excessive and continual exposure to online content, some of which can be harmful.

When using the School’s ICT equipment facilities and wireless network, internet access is comprehensively filtered and monitored to prevent access to harmful or offensive websites. The database of blocked websites is regularly updated to capture any new and emerging online threats. At the same time as ensuring that appropriate filters and monitoring systems are in place, the School is careful that ‘over-blocking’ does not lead to unreasonable restrictions as to what children can be taught with regard to online teaching and safeguarding. Teachers may request the ‘unblocking’ of particular websites from the SMT.

Pupils at Notre Dame Prep are not allowed to bring their own devices into school, except those who have permission due to exceptional SEN requirements (none presently). In the event of an older pupil traveling to school on foot or by public transport, devices must be handed in to School Reception on arrival.

A comprehensive programme of online safety is delivered to all appropriate year groups during time tabled lessons and PSHE sessions. Topics are appropriately differentiated dependent upon age group, with a primary focus of preventative strategies. Clear guidelines when using the School computers are set out in the School’s Acceptable Use of IT Technology policy.

All staff should exercise caution in electronic communication with pupils other than in Google Classrooms. Staff should not give their personal mobile phone numbers or email addresses to pupils, nor should they communicate with them by text message, personal email or any online social media platforms.

The group leader on all trips and visits, including overnight stays, should ideally take a School mobile phone with him/her but may well use his/her own phone following agreement with the DSL or SMT member.

**All school staff must also:**

• ensure that their own personal social networking sites are set as private and ensure that pupils are not approved contacts;

• never use or access social networking sites of pupils (the only exception being if there is a serious safeguarding concern that has led to the DSL or Head Teacher giving permission to access a specific public networking site);

• never use internet or web-based communication channels to send personal messages to pupils;

• only make contact with pupils for professional reasons.

Notre Dame Prep School is aware that technology, the risks and harms related to it, evolve and change rapidly. As a result, the School carries out an annual review of its policy in order to keep abreast of new risk that pupils might face.

**Mobile Phones**

All staff should aim to ensure that their mobile phones, personal cameras and recording devices are not in use or in evidence in front of pupils. If a member of staff is using a mobile device in front of a pupil, they should be able to demonstrate that it for School business.

**Cameras**

Children should only be photographed or filmed on video for the purpose of recording their development or participation in events organised by the School. Parents are asked to consent to their child’s image being used in particular ways. Parents have the right of access to records holding visual images of their child.

Staff are allowed to:

• take photos on any School device of our pupils;

• store the photos on the School network;

• use the photos for School promotions (where permission has been given by

parents);

**In EYFS, staff must ensure they only take photos and videos using a School device.**

No Member of Staff may:

• keep photos unnecessarily on personal tablets or mobile phones;

• download photos to personal computers or devices at home;

• store any photos of pupils that have been obtained from elsewhere on personal

computers, e.g. Twitter; or

• name pupils by surname on any social media.

By following the above procedures, staff minimise their risk of being exposed to inappropriate images as contact is kept within professional boundaries. Images taken must be deemed suitable without putting the child in any compromising position that could cause embarrassment or distress. Staff must ensure that the pupil/s understand why the images are being taken and have agreed to the activity. Images should not be made during one-to-one situations. Staff should ensure that pupils are appropriately dressed. Images taken on a School camera must be downloaded as soon as practicable. Images should be downloaded to an approved network folder designated by the School Office. All images of children should be stored securely and only accessed by those authorised to do so. Images must never be taken secretively.

Images may only be uploaded to the School website and social media channels authorised staff and should never be uploaded to the internet for any other reason, including onto staff’s own social media accounts. If an image is to be displayed in a place to which the public have access, it should not display the pupil’s surname. Similarly, where a pupil is named (for example, in a School prospectus), the name should not be accompanied by a photograph or video. Under no circumstances must cameras of any kind be taken into lavatory or changing areas.

It is the responsibility of all members of staff to be vigilant and report any concerns to the DSL. Any non-compliance will be taken seriously, logged and investigated appropriately in line with the School’s disciplinary policies.

**Transporting pupils**

It is inadvisable for a teacher to give a lift in a car to a pupil alone.  Wherever possible and practicable it is advisable that transport is undertaken other than in private vehicles, with at least one adult additional to the driver acting as an escort.  If there are exceptional circumstances that make unaccompanied transportation of pupils unavoidable, the journey should be made known to a senior member of staff.

**Confidentiality**

Staff members should never give absolute guarantees of confidentiality to pupils or adults wishing to tell them about something serious.  They should guarantee only that they will pass on information to the minimum number of people who must be told in order to ensure that the proper action is taken to sort out the problem and that they will not tell anyone who does not have a clear need to know.  They will also take whatever steps they can to protect the informing pupil or adult from any retaliation or unnecessary stress that might be feared after a disclosure has been made. **Staff must not use their position of trust to share anything about children or families generally with other people. Information should only be passed on to their relevant managers or outside agencies when appropriate to do so.** *(See also the school’s policy on privacy and the protection of data).*

**ACTION IF A PUPIL IS MISSING**

N.B Please refer also to the school's Missing Child Policy and Procedures.

During the school day 8am to 3.30pm:

* first check with the staff on duty and the pupil's friends
* check with reception who will check the registers and if necessary inform the senior member of staff on duty who will then follow up this information.
* Emergency data file should be consulted and the child’s contact information and photograph located.
* A ‘Missing Child Form’ must be completed – these are located in the front of the emergency data file

During after school care 3.30pm to 5.45pm

* first check with the staff on duty and the pupil's friends
* the member of staff in charge of the ASC will check the ASC registers/Sign in/out sheets and if necessary inform the senior member of staff on duty or telephone the Head Teacher who will return to school and then follow up this information.
* Emergency data file should be consulted and the child’s contact information and photograph located.
* A ‘Missing Child Form’ must be completed – these are located in the front of the emergency data file

A record is kept by the school of any instances in which a pupil is missing from school without satisfactory permission and documentation, including the action taken and the pupil's explanation.

***Equal Treatment***

We are committed to equal treatment for all pupils regardless of sex, sexuality, race, caste, disability, religion or belief.  We keep a record of discriminatory incidents.

We aim to create a friendly, caring and perceptive environment in which every individual is valued.  We endeavour to contribute positively towards the growing autonomy, self-esteem and safety of each pupil.

***Bullying***

Bullying, harassment and victimisation and discrimination will not be tolerated.  We treat all our pupils, staff, and their parents fairly and with consideration and we expect them to reciprocate towards each other, the staff and the school. Any kind of bullying including cyber bullying is unacceptable and the school keeps a record of any incidents.  Please see our school policy on anti-bullying for further details.

***Complaints***

Copies of the school's complaints procedure can be sent to any parent on request. Any complaint arising from the implementation of this policy will be considered under the school's complaints procedure.

***Whistleblowing***

School defines Whistleblowing as when someone raises a concern about a dangerous, illegal or worrying activity from another adult or colleague. Raising a concern is known as "blowing the whistle" and is a key process in keeping our pupils safe from harm. Sharing information or ‘talking through’ a concern, even a low level concern or ‘niggling doubt’, is a critical part of our safeguarding strategy.

Please see our separate Whistleblowing Policy

The School wishes to foster a culture of openness and safety and the school's Whistleblowing Procedure reflects this. Should any member of staff have any concerns about the behaviour of another member of staff towards a pupil, he or she should report it at once to the Head Teacher and to the DSL (or to the Chairman of Governors where the concern relates to the Head or a governor).  Any concern will be thoroughly investigated under the school's whistle-blowing procedures.  Such reporting will be without prejudice to the member of staff's position in the school. Where there are allegations of criminal activity, the LADO, CADS or Duty Sergeant will always be informed, and advice taken, before the school undertakes any investigation of its own.  Wherever possible, and subject to the rights of the pupil, the member of staff will be informed of the outcome of the investigation.  No one who reports a genuine concern in good faith needs to fear retribution.  Under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 the member of staff may be entitled to raise a concern directly with an external body where the circumstances justify it.

***Low- Level Concerns***

There may be occasions where a member of staff’s behaviour towards a child does not meet the threshold of harm but is still of concern. This concern may be ‘low-level’ but this does not mean that it is insignificant. 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 working in or on behalf of the School 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.

Examples of such low-level concerns could include, but are not limited to:

• being overfriendly with children;

• having favourites;

• taking photos of children on their mobile phone (without permission from the DSL);

• engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door; or,

• using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language.

***How to Act on a Concern***

ALL allegations about staff (all staff), The DSL or DDSL and volunteers MUST BE REPORTED TO THE HEAD TEACHER or the Chair of Governors in in the absence of the Head.

Any allegations including those deemed ‘low level’ about the Head Teacher must be made to the Chair of Governors or in his absence the Deputy Chair of Governors – WITHOUT THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE HEAD.

***DAILY CONDUCT REQUIREMENTS FOR STAFF***

***Attendance and Timekeeping***

Should a staff member need to be absent or expect to be late for any reason, he/she should ask the Head Teacher in advance when possible. If this is not possible, he/she is asked to contact the Head Teacher at the earliest opportunity.

***Smoking***

To promote a healthy and pleasant working environment and because of the fire risk, smoking (in any form, including the use of e-cigarettes) is not allowed anywhere on site.

***Alcohol and Illegal Drugs***

Consumption of alcohol or illegal drugs is not permitted on site save where, in the case of alcohol, at a school function or otherwise agreed when modest amounts of alcohol may be consumed. Employees' conduct and performance must not be adversely impacted by alcohol or drugs when undertaking their duties

***Security***

Staff must not remove any school documents from the site nor take any photographs without due permission. The school reserves the right to search the outer clothing, bags, lockers and vehicles etc. of staff members whilst on site. The staff member may have a colleague in attendance on such (rare) occasions.

***Personal Appearance***

The school regularly receives visits from parents, potential parents and others, and naturally wishes to convey an impression of efficiency and organisation. Therefore whilst not wishing to impose unreasonable obligations on staff they are, nonetheless, required to look smart in appearance.

***Mobility and Flexibility***

Due to the demands and nature of the school, staff should be prepared to transfer upon request within departments either temporarily or permanently, to undertake work of a different nature, providing it is reasonable and safe to do so and the staff member is adequately trained.

***Acceptance of Gifts***

This policy does not prohibit normal and appropriate hospitality (given and received) to or from third parties.

The giving or receipt of gifts or hospitality is not prohibited, if the following requirements are met:

it is not made with the intention of influencing a third party to obtain or retain business or a business advantage, or to reward the provision or retention of business or a business advantage, or in explicit or implicit exchange for favours or benefits;

* it complies with local law;
* it is given in the School's name, not in your name;
* it does not include cash or a cash equivalent (such as gift certificates or vouchers);
* it is appropriate in the circumstances. For example, in the UK it is customary for small gifts to be given at Christmas time;
* taking into account the reason for the gift, it is of an appropriate type and value and given at an appropriate time;
* it is given openly, not secretly; and
* gifts should not be offered to, or accepted from, government officials or representatives without the prior approval of the Head Teacher.

From time to time parents or pupils may offer you gifts on an individual basis as a demonstration of their gratitude for the work you have done on their behalf, and this is perfectly legitimate. Any gifts of cash or other monetary equivalent (e.g. vouchers) of whatever value, or any other gifts of a value of £25 or over, should be reported to a member of the SMT.

**SEE ALSO RELATED POLICIES:**

* Safeguarding Policy
* Anti-Bullying Policy
* Missing Child Policy
* Safer Recruitment Policy
* Mobile Phone & Social Media Policy
* Whistleblowing Policy
* Visits & Trips Policy
* Health and Safety Policy
* School Regulations
* Taking, Storing and Using images of Children Policy
* Complaints Policy
* Nursery Feeding and Changing Policy
* Whistleblowing Policy
* After School & Extra Curricular Activities Policy
* Prevent Duty Risk Assessment
* Privacy and the Protection of Data Policy
* IT: Acceptable Use Policy
* E-Safety Policy
* Staff Handbook

***Reviewed September 2025 by S Smith***

***Approved September 2025 by K Laudan***

***To be reviewed no later than September 2026***