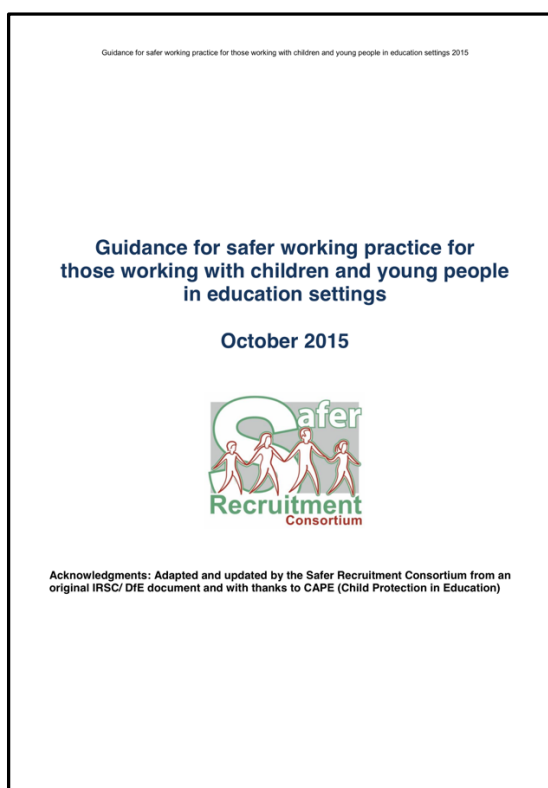


Developing Safe Working Practices

- Safer Recruitment strategies in place
- Appropriate induction and training
- Open and transparent safeguarding ethos
- Professional code of conduct
- Regular briefing and discussion of safeguarding issues
- Ensuring that children are aware of safeguarding issues through the curriculum



‘Guidance for Safer Working Practice for adults who work with children and young people’ was originally published in 2009, and was updated and republished in 2015. It provides a good starting point for developing a staff code of conduct.

The school’s code of conduct must include advice around the use of email, mobile phones, internet and social media; and expectations about professional relationships, including the Position of Trust offence.

Download: www.safeguardinghandbook.co.uk/saferworking

Establishing Good Practice: Minimising Vulnerability to Allegations

Always:

- ✓ ...work in an open environment. Avoid private or out of sight locations and encourage open communication.
- ✓ ...speak clearly, without whispering, so that students do not need to come close to hear
- ✓ ...avoid spending time alone with individual students away from others
- ✓ ...treat all students, regardless of race, disability, religion or belief, gender, sexual orientation, equally and with respect and dignity.
- ✓ ...ensure the student's welfare comes first and record it.
- ✓ ...be aware of the impact of proxemics; maintain safe and appropriate distances; Know where and how to place your body.
- ✓ ...avoid touching students, but where **educationally necessary** staff should follow these guidelines:
 - ✓ try to demonstrate without touching first
 - ✓ ask permission; say what you intend to do first and explain why
 - ✓ if a pupil seems uncomfortable: stop
 - ✓ only touch hands, arms or shoulder nearest you (don't reach across the body)
 - ✓ be aware of overall proximity; maintain physical space; don't stand behind
 - ✓ inappropriate areas for touch include: chest, diaphragm, waist, thighs
 - ✓ move away as soon as the contact is no longer required
- ✓ ...maintain professional boundaries, perhaps using a specific mobile number or email address for work purposes, rather than sharing personal details
- ✓ ...present as an exemplary role model by not smoking or drinking alcohol, swearing, allowing suggestive conversations or jokes or wearing less than professional clothing when in the company of a student
- ✓ ...seek to be enthusiastic and constructive when giving feedback rather than making negative or critical remarks
- ✓ ...record any injury that occurs and seek attention from a qualified First Aider or parent.
- ✓ ...record any incident of concern involving student's welfare.

Never:

- ✘ ...allow allegations made by a child to go unchallenged, unrecorded or not acted upon (this applies to any form of abuse or bullying);
- ✘ ...lock doors, cover windows or use 'Do Not Disturb' signs;
- ✘ ...impose humiliating or power based punishments on a student or reduce a child to tears;
- ✘ ...engage in rough, physical or sexually provocative games, including horseplay;
- ✘ ...allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching;
- ✘ ...share a bedroom with a child;
- ✘ ...allow children to use inappropriate language unchallenged;
- ✘ ...make sexually suggestive comments to a young person, even in fun;
- ✘ ...engage in any form of relationship, sexual or otherwise, with a young person you work with even if they are over the age of consent, but under 18 (older with vulnerable adults);
- ✘ ...do things of a personal or intimate nature for children or disabled young people that they can do for themselves;
- ✘ ...invite or allow children to stay with you at your home unsupervised;
- ✘ ...'friend' a child on their social media or yours; social media can blur boundaries;
- ✘ ...take photographs or videos of children unless written/signed consent has been obtained from a parent/carer; this includes the use of phones.
- ✘ ...seek physical contact. Try to gently discourage contact, rather than reject students. Model appropriate contact, eg. shaking hands or patting the shoulder. Never allow physical contact when you are alone.
- ✘ ...take a child in your car, but where this is unavoidable:
 - ◆ prepare a risk assessment
 - ◆ ensure your insurance covers business passengers (NB This may provide a very good reason for not being able to take students in your car.)
 - ◆ obtain parental permission, preferably in writing
 - ◆ take more than one person
 - ◆ sit child in the back
 - ◆ travel directly to the destination
 - ◆ keep conversation professional