

POLICY / PROCEDURE / ACADEMY DOCUMENT:	Code of Professional Conduct	
POLICY REF:	Q-HR-001	
POLICY STATUS:	Recommended ✓	Statutory
THIS VERSION APPROVED (DATE):	3 November 2025	
SIGNED: (CHAIR OF MEETING)		
MINUTED (DATE):	3 November 2025	
REVIEW DATE:	November 2026	
COMMITTEE:	Finance & Operations Committee	
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER:	Assistant Headteacher (B4L)	

‘Children want to be respected, their views to be heard, to have stable relationships with professionals built on trust and for consistent support provided for their individual needs. This should guide the behaviour of professionals.’

([Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2018](#)).

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Section 1: Overview

1.1 Background

All adults who come into contact with children in their work have a duty of care¹ to safeguard and promote their welfare.

The Children Act 2004, through the Stay Safe outcome of the Every Child Matters Change for Children programme², places a duty on schools/services to safeguard³ and promote the well-being of children. This includes the need to ensure that all adults who work with or on behalf of children are competent, confident and safe to do so.

The vast majority of adults who work with children act professionally and aim to provide a safe and supportive environment which secures the well-being and very best outcomes for children in their care. However, it is recognised that in this area of work tensions and misunderstandings can occur. It is here that the behaviour of adults can give rise to allegations of abuse being made against them. Allegations may be malicious or misplaced. They may arise from differing perceptions of the same event, but when they occur, they are inevitably distressing and difficult for all concerned. Equally, it must be recognised that some allegations will be genuine and there are adults who will deliberately seek out, create or exploit opportunities to abuse children. It is therefore essential that all possible steps are taken to safeguard children and ensure that the adults working with them are safe to do so.

It has been suggested that there is a need for clearer advice about what constitutes illegal behaviour and what might be considered as misconduct. This document has been produced in response to these concerns and provides practical guidance for anyone who works with, or on behalf of children regardless of their role, responsibilities or status. It seeks to ensure that the duty to promote and safeguard the wellbeing of children is in part, achieved by raising awareness of illegal, unsafe and inappropriate behaviours.

Whilst every attempt has been made to cover a wide range of situations, it is recognised that this guidance cannot cover all eventualities. There may be times when professional judgements are made in situations not covered by this document, or which directly contravene the guidance given by their employer. It is expected that in these circumstances adults will always advise their senior colleagues of the justification for any such action already taken or proposed.

It is also recognised that not all adults who work with children work as paid or contracted staff. The principles and guidance outlined in this document still apply and should be followed by any adult whose work brings them into contact with children.

The term 'child/children' is used throughout this guidance to apply to all children /young people/learners between the ages of 0-18 years who come in to contact with any adult working at The Ashley School Academy Trust.

Please reference HR Policy Suite – Q-HR-002.

¹ The duty which rests upon an individual to ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to ensure the safety of a child or young person involved in any activity, or interaction for which that individual is responsible. Any person in charge of, or working with pupils in any capacity is considered, both legally and morally, to owe them a duty of care

² www.everychildmatters.gov.uk

³ Process of protecting children from abuse or neglect, preventing impairment of their health and development, and ensuring they are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care that enables them to have optimum life chances... Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018: HM Government

1.2 Purpose of Guidance

It is important that all staff working with children understand that the nature of their work and the responsibilities related to it, place them in a position of trust. This practice guidance provides clear advice on appropriate and safe behaviours for all staff working with children in paid or unpaid capacities, in all settings and in all contexts for The Ashley School. The guidance aims to:

- keep children safe by clarifying which behaviours constitute safe practice and which behaviours should be avoided
- assist staff working with children to work safely and responsibly and to monitor their own standards and practice
- support employers in giving a clear message that unlawful or unsafe behaviour is unacceptable and that, where appropriate, disciplinary or legal action will be taken
- support safer recruitment practice
- minimise the risk of misplaced or malicious allegations made against staff who work with children
- reduce the incidence of positions of trust being abused or misused.

1.3 Underpinning Principles

The welfare of the child is paramount.⁴

- It is the responsibility of all staff to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. This responsibility extends to a duty of care for those staff employed, commissioned or contracted to work with children.
- Staff who work with children are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions.
- Staff should work and be seen to work, in an open and transparent way.
- The same professional standards should always be applied regardless of culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and/or sexual identity.
- Staff should continually monitor and review their practice and ensure they follow the guidance contained in this document.

Staff should follow this guidance in their day to day practice. It should also be referred to when taking on new work, different duties or additional responsibilities. Revisiting this guidance through induction, supervision, performance management, training programmes etc. will also help to ensure a safer children's workforce.

1.4 Context

Staff working at The Ashley School Academy Trust (TASAT) have a crucial role to play in shaping the lives of children. They have a unique opportunity to interact with children in ways that are both affirming and inspiring. This guidance has been produced to help **all** staff **whatever their position, role, or responsibilities** establish the safest possible learning and working environments which safeguard children and reduce the risk of staff working with them being falsely accused of improper or unprofessional conduct.

Employers have a duty of care towards their employees under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974⁵ which requires them to provide a safe working environment for staff and guidance about safe working practices.

⁴ Children Act 1989

⁵ Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 Part I, Section. 2 (1) and (2)

This means that employers should:

- foster a culture of openness and support
- ensure that systems are in place for concerns to be raised
- ensure that there is in place effective recording systems which confirm discussions, decisions and the outcomes of any actions taken
- ensure that staff are not placed in situations which render them particularly vulnerable
- ensure that all staff are aware of expectations, policies and procedures

1.5. Making a Professional Judgement

There may be occasions and circumstances in which staff have to make decisions or take action in the best interests of the child which could contravene this guidance or where no guidance exists. Staff are expected to make judgements about their behaviour in order to secure the best interests and welfare of the children in their charge. Such judgements should always be recorded and shared with a member of the senior management team and with the parent or carer. In undertaking these actions staff will be seen to be acting reasonably.

Staff should always consider whether their actions are reasonable, necessary and proportionate.

This means that where no specific guidance exists staff should:

- discuss the circumstances that informed their action, or their proposed action, with the Head teacher, senior member of the team and the parent/carer
- report any actions which could be mis-interpreted to their senior manager
- always discuss any misunderstanding, accidents or threats with a senior manager
- record any areas of disagreement about a course of action taken and if necessary refer to a higher authority
- ensure they have copies of records which confirm decisions, discussions and reasons why actions were taken including 'witness' statements

1.6. 'Unsuitability'

The guidance contained in this document is an attempt to identify what behaviours are expected of staff who work with children. Staff whose practice deviates from this guidance and/or their professional or employment-related code of conduct may bring into question their suitability to work with children in any capacity.

This means that staff should:

- have a clear understanding about the nature and content of this document
- discuss any uncertainties or confusion with their Head teacher or line manager
- understand what behaviours may call into question their suitability to continue to work with children

Staff can access further support and guidance regarding safe working practices via the Suffolk local safeguarding children board online procedures which can be accessed through a link on TAS website.

Keeping children Safe in Education, statutory guidance for schools and colleges latest version is [Here](#)

Section 2: The Ashley School Code of Professional Conduct

1. Duty of Care / Relationships

All staff are accountable for the way in which they exercise authority; manage risk; use resources; and protect children from discrimination and avoidable harm.

2. Supervision

At TASAT we are committed to the wellbeing of our staff, we recognise that working with pupils with complex needs can be challenging at times and offer a range of formal and informal opportunities for staff to discuss any issues they are having.

Supervision is important for all our staff who are working with pupils with complex needs. As awareness increases about the impact of adverse childhood experiences (ACE's), including the potentially lifelong impact, it is more important than ever that staff who engage with children who have experienced trauma, are protected themselves from the experience of vicarious trauma.

Supervision offers a safe, non-judgemental and reflective space within which professionals can give an account of their work, develop their skills and practice, safeguard good standards of work-related activity and have their own emotions recognised.

Supervision also links to good governance; it reflects organisational culture and ethos, promotes emotional wellbeing, reduces workplace stress and is conducive to staff retention.

Supervision is not counselling – it is different to personal therapy and not about resolving personal issues

Supervision is not line management – it is not performance management.

Proctor's 3 Function Interactive Model provides a framework for supervision which takes account of organisational needs, 'client' needs and supervisee needs:

- Formative (Learning): Developing skills and abilities
- Restorative (Support): Emotional coping skills in response to stresses of job (not counselling!)
- Normative (Accountability): Maintaining safety and effectiveness of work

All staff should:

- understand the responsibilities, which are part of their employment or role, and be aware that sanctions will be applied if these provisions are breached
- always act, and be seen to act, in the child's best interests
- avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions
- take responsibility for their own actions and behaviour
- keep children safe and protect them from sexual, physical and emotional harm
- take reasonable steps to ensure the safety and well-being of children. Failure to do so may be regarded as professional neglect
- develop respectful, caring and professional relationships with; children, their families, and colleagues, and behave with integrity, maturity and good judgement
- build open, honest and trusting relationships by respecting children, families and colleagues

and making them feel valued as partners

- model emotionally literate behaviour (social and emotional skills) and use The Ashley School's principles of 'common language' when interacting with children (*See appendix A*)
- access supervision as offered and/or seek additional supervision as required

3. Probation Period

Concerns raised during an employee's probationary period may be considered in determining whether or not the probationary period is completed satisfactorily. Where this is the case, the matter will normally be dealt with in accordance with the Trust's probation procedure and not the individual staffing procedure to which the issue relates, for example, sickness absence or disciplinary.

4. Confidentiality

Members of staff may have access to confidential information about children in order to undertake their every day responsibilities. In some circumstances staff may be given highly sensitive or private information. Staff must, in these circumstances, ensure that for example any probing for details cannot be construed as unjustified intrusion.

All parties must treat information relating to cases being dealt with in accordance with the Staffing Policy and Procedures as confidential, unless there is recourse to legal action or if there is police or LADO involvement in which case appropriate information will be shared by The Ashley School Academy Trust in accordance with Data Protection policies.

Where appropriate, an assessment of transferable risk to children with whom the person is working with should be undertaken. If in doubt, seek advice from the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer).

The employee and anyone accompanying the employee (including witnesses) must not make electronic recordings of any meetings or hearings conducted under this procedure. Failure to observe confidentiality could be a reason for disciplinary action under the School's disciplinary procedure unless expressly authorised and agreed by all parties.

This means that staff:

- must ensure that they store all confidential and personal information securely following the schools Data Protection Policy.
- be clear about when information can be shared and in what circumstances it is appropriate to do so (*refer to 'Information Sharing: Pocket guide'*)
- are expected to treat information they receive about children in a discreet and confidential manner
- should never use confidential or personal information about a child or her/his family for their own, or others' advantage
- must never use information to intimidate, humiliate, or embarrass a child
- never use confidential information about a child casually in conversation or share with any person other than on a need-to-know basis
- must use initials as part of radio protocol/internal phone calls and emails. The Trust format is (first letter of first name and first 2 letters of surname example Brain Smith, BSm)
- should seek advice from a senior member of staff if they are in any doubt about sharing information they hold or which has been requested of them
- need to know to whom any concerns or allegations should be reported.

5. Equalities

The Staffing Policy and Procedures will be operated in accordance with The Ashley School Academy Trust's Equality and Diversity Policy. The Trust is committed to developing, maintaining and supporting a culture of equality and diversity in employment. The impact of The Ashley School Academy Trust's Staffing Policy and Procedures will be monitored in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

6. Appraisal Process

The Ashley School Academy Trust assesses the overall performance of employees by the appraisal procedure and for supporting their development within the context of the Trusts' plan for improving educational provision and performance, and the standards expected of employees in their respective roles (see *TASAT Pay Policy, M-SP-001*).

Employees will receive constructive feedback on their performance throughout the year and as soon as practicable after an observation has taken place or other evidence has come to light. Feedback will highlight particular areas of strength as well as any areas that need attention.

If the appraiser, is not satisfied with the progress, the employee will be notified in writing that the appraisal system will no longer apply and that their performance will be managed under the capability procedure. The employee will be invited to a formal capability meeting.

7. Capability Procedures

For further guidance on the capability procedures see *TASAT HR Policy Suite – Q-HR002*.

8. Power and Positions of Trust

As a result of their knowledge, position and/or the authority invested in their role, all staff working in The Ashley School are in positions of trust in relation to the children in their care. It is vital for all those in positions of trust to understand the power this can give them over those they care for and the responsibility they must exercise as a consequence of this relationship.⁶

This means that staff should:

- always maintain appropriate professional boundaries and avoid behaviour which might be misinterpreted by others. They should report and record any incident with this potential.

This means that staff should not:

- use their position to gain access to information for their own or others' advantage
- use their position to intimidate, bully, humiliate, threaten, coerce or undermine children
- use their status and standing to form or promote relationships which are of a sexual nature, or which may become so

9. Propriety and Behaviour

All staff working with children have a responsibility to maintain public confidence in their ability to safeguard the welfare and best interests of children. It is therefore expected that they will adopt high standards of personal conduct in order to maintain the confidence and respect of their colleagues, children, the public in general, and all those with whom they work.

⁶ Caring for Young People and the Vulnerable. Guidance for Preventing Abuse of Trust Home Office

This means that staff should:

- be aware that behaviour in their personal lives may impact upon their work with children
- follow any codes of conduct deemed appropriate by The Ashley School
- understand that the behaviour and actions of their partner (or other family members) may raise questions about their suitability to work with children

This means that staff should not:

- behave in a manner which would lead any reasonable person to question their suitability to work with children or act as a role model
- make, or encourage others to make, unprofessional personal comments which scapegoat, demean or humiliate, or which might be interpreted as such

10. Dress and Appearance

A person's dress and appearance are matters of personal choice and self-expression. However, staff should dress in ways which are professional and appropriate to their role and this may need to be different to how they dress when not at work.

This means that staff should wear clothing which:

- is appropriate to their role and professional, reflecting and children's needs
- is not likely to be viewed as offensive, revealing, or sexually provocative
- does not distract, cause embarrassment or give rise to misunderstanding
- is absent of any political or otherwise contentious slogans
- is not considered to be discriminatory and is culturally sensitive

11. The Use of Personal Living Space⁷

No child should be in or invited into, the home⁸ of a staff member who works with them, unless the reason for this has been firmly established and agreed with parents/carers and a senior manager or Head teacher.

This means that staff should:

- be vigilant in maintaining their privacy and mindful of the need to avoid placing themselves in vulnerable situations
- challenge any request for their accommodation to be used as an additional resource for The Ashley School
- be mindful of the need to maintain professional boundaries
- refrain from asking children to undertake personal jobs or errands

12. Gifts, Rewards and Favouritism

The giving of gifts as rewards may be accepted practice for a group of children, whilst in other situations the giving of a gift to an individual child will be part of an agreed plan, recorded and discussed with a senior manager and the parent or carer.

This means that staff should:

- be aware of The Ashley School Academy Trust's policy on the giving and receiving of gifts
- ensure that gifts received or given in situations which may be misconstrued are declared
- generally, only give gifts to an individual child as part of an agreed reward system
- where giving gifts other than as above, ensure that these are of insignificant value
- ensure that all selection processes which concern children are fair and that wherever practicable these are undertaken and agreed by more than one member of staff

⁷ See also Section 10 Social Contact

⁸ This includes any home or domestic settings used or frequented by the staff member

- give any gifts openly and without favouritism
- not accept any gift that might be construed as a bribe by others, or lead the giver to expect preferential treatment

13. Infatuations

Occasionally, a child may develop an infatuation with a member of staff who works with them.

This means that staff should:

- report and record any incidents or indications (verbal, written or physical) that suggest a child may have developed an infatuation with a member of staff
- deal with these situations sensitively and appropriately to maintain the dignity and safety of all concerned
- always acknowledge and maintain professional boundaries
- make every effort to ensure that their own behaviour is above reproach

14. Communication with Children (*including the use of Technology*)

In order to make best use of the many educational and social benefits of new technologies, children need opportunities to use and explore the digital world, using multiple devices from multiple locations. It is now recognised that e-safety risks are posed more by behaviours and values than the technology itself.⁹

This means that staff should:

- ensure that personal social networking sites are set at private and children are never listed as approved contacts
- never use or access social networking sites of children
- never accept a child or parent as a friend on personal social networking sites or communicate with them via this medium
- recognise the guidance from The Ashley School with regards to personal/social networking with children who have now left The Ashley School, the recommendation is that staff do not engage in this. (*If you are contacted by an ex-learner then please discuss this with your line manager*)
- not give their personal contact details to children, including their personal mobile telephone number
- only use equipment e.g. mobile phones, provided by The Ashley School to communicate with children (making sure that parents have given permission for this form of communication to be used) and to communicate with parent(s) / carer(s)
- only make contact with children for professional reasons and in accordance with any Ashley School policy
- recognise that text messaging should only be used as part of an agreed protocol and when other forms of communication are not possible
- not use internet or web-based communication channels to send personal messages to a child
- not share any personal information with a child
- not request, or respond to, any personal information from a child, other than that which might be appropriate as part of their professional role
- ensure that all communications are transparent and open to scrutiny

Internal e-mail systems should only be used in accordance with the school's policy.

15. Social Contact and Social Networking

Communication between pupils and adults, by whatever method, should take place within clear and explicit professional boundaries. This includes the wider use of technology such as mobile

⁹ AUPs in Context: Establishing safe and responsible online behaviours

phones, tablets, text messages, emails, instant messages, websites, social media such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, chat-rooms, forums, blogs, apps such as Whatsapp, gaming sites, digital cameras, videos, webcams and other handheld devices. Adults should not share any personal information with pupils and they should not request, or respond to, any personal information from the child/young person, other than that which might be appropriate as part of their professional role. They should ensure that all communications are transparent and avoid any communication that could be interpreted as 'grooming behaviour'

Adults must not give their personal contact details such as home/mobile phone number; home or personal e-mail address or social networking details to pupils unless the need to do so is agreed in writing with senior management. If, for example, a pupil attempts to locate an adult's personal contact details and attempts to contact or correspond with them, the adult should not respond and must report the matter to their manager.

It is recommended that adults ensure that all possible privacy settings are activated to prevent pupils from making contact on personal profiles and to prevent pupils from accessing photo albums or other personal information which may appear on social networking sites.

Adults are personally responsible for what they communicate in social media and must bear in mind that what is published might be read by us, pupils, parents and carers, the general public, future employers and friends and family for a long time. Adults must ensure that their online profiles are consistent with the professional image expected by us and must not post material which damages the reputation of the Trust or which causes concern about their suitability to work with children and young people. Those who post material which may be considered as inappropriate could render themselves vulnerable to criticism or, in the case of an employee, allegations of misconduct which may be dealt with under the disciplinary procedure. Even where it is made clear that the writer's views on such topics do not represent those of the Trust, such comments are inappropriate.

Adults are advised not to have any online friendships with any young people under the age of 18 unless they are family members or close family friends. Adults are advised not to have online friendships with parents or carers of pupils or members of the Governing Body/Trustees. Where such online friendships exist, adults must ensure that appropriate professional boundaries are maintained

It is acknowledged that adults may have genuine friendships and social contact with parents or carers of pupils, independent of the professional relationship.

This means staff should inform Head Teacher of:

- Any relationship with a parent/carer where this extends beyond the usual parent/carer/professional relationship
- Any regular social contact they have with a pupil or parent/carer, which could give rise to concern
- Any requests or arrangements where parents/carers wish to use their services outside of the workplace e.g. babysitting, tutoring
- Any planned social contact with pupils or parents/carers with senior colleagues, e.g. when it is part of a reward scheme. If a parent/carer seeks to establish social contact, or if this occurs coincidentally, the adult should exercise their professional judgment and should ensure that all communications are transparent and open to scrutiny.

Some employees may, as part of their professional role, be required to support a parent or carer. If that person comes to depend upon the employee or seeks support outside of their professional role this should be discussed with senior management and where necessary referrals made to

the appropriate support agency.

This means that staff should:

- have no secret social contact with children or their parents
- consider the appropriateness of the social contact according to their role and nature of their work
- always approve any planned social contact with children or parents with senior colleagues
- advise senior management of any social contact they have with a child or a parent with whom they work, which may give rise to concern
- report and record any situation, which may place a child at risk or which may compromise The Ashley School Academy Trust or their own professional standing
- be aware that the sending of personal communications such as birthday or faith cards should always be recorded and/or discussed with line manager
- understand that some communications may be called into question and need to be **justified**

16. Sexual Contact

All staff should clearly understand the need to maintain appropriate boundaries in their contacts with children. Intimate or sexual relationships between children and the staff who work with them will be regarded as a grave breach of trust. Any sexual activity between a member of staff and the child with whom they work may be regarded as a criminal offence and will always be a matter for disciplinary action. The Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act 2000 established the criminal offence of the abuse of trust affecting education staff that are in a relationship of trust with 16-18 year olds (see [here](#))

This means that staff should:

- ensure that their relationships with children clearly take place within the boundaries of a respectful professional relationship
- take care that their language or conduct does not give rise to comment or speculation.
- Attitudes, demeanour and language all require care and thought, particularly when members of staff are dealing with adolescent boys and girls

This means that staff should not:

- have sexual relationships with children
- have any form of communication with a child which could be interpreted as sexually suggestive or provocative i.e. verbal comments, letters, notes, electronic mail, phone calls, texts, physical contact
- make sexual remarks to, or about, a child
- discuss their own sexual relationships with or in the presence of children

17. Physical Contact

There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate and proper for staff to have physical contact with children, but it is crucial that they only do so in ways appropriate to their professional role.

This means that staff should:

- be aware that even well-intentioned physical contact may be misconstrued by the child, an observer or by anyone to whom this action is described
- never touch a child in a way which may be considered indecent
- always be prepared to report and explain actions and accept that all physical contact be open to scrutiny
- not indulge in horseplay
- always encourage children, where possible, to undertake self-care tasks independently
- work within Health and Safety regulations
- be aware of cultural or religious views about touching and always be sensitive to issues of gender

- understand that physical contact in some circumstances can be easily misinterpreted
- seek the child's permission, where feasible, before initiating contact
- listen, observe and take note of the child's reaction or feelings and – so far as is possible - use a level of contact and/or form of communication which is acceptable to the child for the minimum time necessary
- adopt a general culture of 'limited touch', where appropriate, to the individual requirements of each child
- where a child initiates inappropriate physical contact, it is the responsibility of the member of staff to sensitively deter the child and help them understand the importance of personal boundaries. Such circumstances must always be reported and discussed with a senior manager and the parent/carer

18. Other Activities that require Physical Contact

Some staff who work in certain settings, for example sports, drama or outdoor activities or teach specific subjects such as PE or music, will have to initiate some physical contact with children. For example, to demonstrate technique in the use of a particular piece of equipment, adjust posture, or perhaps to support a child so they can perform an activity safely or prevent injury.

This means that staff should:

- treat children with dignity and respect and avoid contact with intimate parts of the body
- always explain to a child the reason why contact is necessary and what form that contact will take
- seek consent of parents where a child is unable to do so because of a disability
- consider alternatives, where it is anticipated that a child might misinterpret any such contact
- be familiar with and follow recommended guidance and protocols
- conduct activities where they can be seen by others
- be aware of gender, cultural or religious issues that may need to be considered prior to initiating physical contact

19. Behaviour 4 Learning

All children have a right to be treated with respect and dignity even in those circumstances where they display difficult or challenging behaviour. The Ashley School Academy Trust is a “Trauma Informed School”.

This means staff should be:

- emotionally available adults to all pupils within the school
- greet pupils in an open and friendly manner
- staff should use the collaborative problem solving approaches to help understand and solve pupils behaviours.
- Staff should need to recognise that at times they might need to be the first one to initiate the repairing process of a relationship with a pupil.
- not use force as a form of punishment
- try to defuse situations before they escalate
- inform parents of any behaviour management techniques used
- be mindful of factors which may impact upon a child's behaviour e.g. bullying, abuse and where necessary take appropriate action
- not use any form of degrading treatment to punish a child. The use of sarcasm, demeaning or insensitive comments towards children is not acceptable in any situation
- follow the behaviour 4 learning policy outlined by The Ashley School and use strategies appropriate to the circumstance and situation

- only use physical intervention (positive handling) in exceptional circumstances and as a last resort when other behaviour management strategies have failed
- always model emotionally literate behaviour (social and emotional skills) and use The Ashley School's 'common language' when interacting with children (See *appendix A*)

20. Use of Control and Physical Intervention (see *Positive Handling Policy, F-PH-001*)

There are circumstances in which staff working with children displaying extreme behaviours can legitimately intervene by using either non-restrictive or restrictive physical interventions. The use of physical intervention should, wherever possible, be avoided.

This means that staff should:

- adhere to The Ashley School 'Positive Handling Policy'
- always seek to defuse situations
- always use minimum force for the shortest period necessary
- record and report as soon as possible after the event any incident where physical intervention has been used
- not use physical force or intervention as a form of punishment

21. Children in Distress

There may be occasions when a distressed child needs comfort and reassurance and this may involve physical contact.

This means that staff should:

- use their professional judgement to comfort or reassure a child in an age-appropriate way whilst maintaining clear professional boundaries
- consider the way in which they offer comfort and reassurance to a distressed child and do it in an age-appropriate way
- be circumspect in offering reassurance in one to one situations, but always record such actions in these circumstances
- follow professional guidance or code of conduct
- never touch a child in a way which may be considered indecent
- record and report situations which may give rise to concern from either party
- not assume that all children seek physical comfort if they are distressed

22. Intimate/Personal Care (see *Intimate Care Policy R-MP-003*)

Children are entitled to respect and privacy at all times and especially when in a state of undress, changing clothes, bathing or undertaking any form of personal care. Arrangements for intimate and personal care should be open and transparent. Pupils should be encouraged to act as independently as possible. When assistance is required it should be undertaken by one member of staff, however they should try to ensure another appropriate adult is in the vicinity and aware of the task to be undertaken. All intimate and personal care tasks should be recorded. Please refer to the school intimate care policy for further guidance.

This means that staff should:

- avoid any physical contact when children are in a state of undress
- avoid any visually intrusive behaviour
- where there are changing rooms announce their intention of entering
- be vigilant about their own behaviour, ensure they follow agreed guidelines and be mindful of the needs of the children with whom they work
- adhere to schools intimate care policy
- make other adults aware of the tasks being undertaken
- always explain to the pupil what is happening before the procedure begins
- avoid any visual intrusive behaviour
- consult with colleagues where any variations to agreed procedure/care plan in necessary

This means that staff should not:

- change or toilet in the same place as pupils
- shower or bathe with pupils
- assist with any intimate or personal care task which a child can undertake by themselves

23. First Aid and Administration of Medication

Health and safety legislation places duties on all employers to ensure appropriate health and safety policies and equipment are in place and an appropriate person is appointed to take charge of first-aid arrangements.

This means that staff should:

- adhere to The Ashley School's policy for administering first aid or medication
- comply with the necessary reporting requirements
- make other staff aware of the task being undertaken
- explain to the child what is happening
- always act and be seen to act in the child's best interests
- report and record any administration of first aid or medication
- have regard to any health plan which is in place
- always ensure that an appropriate health/risk assessment is undertaken prior to undertaking certain activities

24. One to One Situations

One to one situations have the potential to make children more vulnerable to harm by those who seek to exploit their position of trust. Staff working in one to one settings with children may also be more vulnerable to unjust or unfounded allegations being made against them. Every attempt should be made to ensure the safety and security of children and the staff who work with them.

This means that staff should:

- ensure that when lone working is an integral part of their role, full and appropriate risk assessments have been conducted and agreed
- avoid meetings with children in remote, secluded areas
- always inform other staff and/or parents/carers about the contact(s) beforehand, assessing the need to have them present or close by
- avoid use of 'engaged' or equivalent signs wherever possible. Such signs may create an opportunity for secrecy or the interpretation of secrecy
- always report any situation where a child becomes distressed or angry to a senior member of staff
- carefully consider the needs and circumstances of the child/children when in one to one situations

25. Lone Working or Accessing the School Site Outside of Term Time

On rare occasions that staff access TASAT as a lone individual, every attempt should be made to ensure your health and safety.

This means staff should:

- Notify a Senior Leader as and when you arrive and leave

26. Home Visits

There are occasions, in response to urgent or specific situations where it is necessary to make one off or regular home visits. In these circumstances it is essential that appropriate policies and

related risk assessments are in place to safeguard children and the staff who work with them.

This means that staff should:

- agree the purpose for any home visit with senior management, unless this is an acknowledged and integral part of their role e.g. home tutors
- adhere to agreed risk management strategies (i.e. any previous history of concerns, wherever possible initial home visits to be carried out by 2 members of staff, leave details of visit with line manager or agreed colleague, ensure that an appropriate adult will be present during the visit)
- carry a charged mobile phone
- always make detailed records including times of arrival and departure and work undertaken
- ensure any behaviour or situation which gives rise to concern is discussed with their manager and, where appropriate action is taken
- never make a home visit outside agreed working arrangements

27. Transporting Children

There will be occasions when staff are expected or asked to transport children as part of their duties. Staff, who are expected to use their own vehicles for transporting children should ensure that the vehicle is roadworthy, appropriately insured and that the maximum capacity is not exceeded.

This means that staff should:

- ensure they are fit to drive and free from any drugs, alcohol or medicine which is likely to impair judgement and/or ability to drive
- be aware that the safety and welfare of the child is their responsibility until they are safely passed over to a parent/carer
- record details of the journey in accordance with agreed procedures
- ensure that their behaviour is appropriate at all times
- ensure that there are proper arrangements in place to ensure vehicle, passenger and driver safety. This includes having proper and appropriate insurance for the type of vehicle being driven
- ensure that any impromptu or emergency arrangements of lifts are recorded and can be justified if questioned
- ensure that all passengers should wear seat belts and it is the responsibility of the member of staff to ensure that this requirement is met
- staff should also be aware of current legislation and adhere to the use of car seats for younger children
- not offer lifts to a child outside their normal working duties, unless this has been brought to the attention of their line manager and has been agreed with the parents/carers

28. Educational Visits and After-School Activities

Staff should take particular care when supervising children on trips and outings, where the setting is less formal than the usual workplace. Staff remain in a position of trust and need to ensure that their behaviour remains professional at all times and stays within clearly defined professional boundaries.

This means that staff should:

- always have another member of staff present in out of workplace activities, unless otherwise agreed with a senior manager
- undertake risk assessments in line with The Ashley School's policy where applicable
- have parental consent to the activity
- ensure that their behaviour remains professional at all times (see section 7)
- never share beds with children
- not share bedrooms unless it involves a dormitory situation and the arrangements have been

- previously discussed with senior manager, parents and children
- keep colleagues/employers aware of their whereabouts, especially when involved in activities outside the usual workplace

29. Photography and Videos

Working with children may involve the taking or recording of images. Any such work should take place with due regard to the law and the need to safeguard the privacy, dignity, safety and well-being of children.

This means that staff should:

- gain informed written consent from parents or carers and agreement, where possible, from the child, before an image is taken for any purpose
- be clear about the purpose of the activity and about what will happen to the images when the activity is concluded
- be able to justify images of children in their possession
- avoid taking images in one to one situations or which show a single child with no surrounding context
- ensure the child understands why the images are being taken and has agreed to the activity and that they are appropriately dressed
- only use equipment provided or authorised by the school
- report any concerns about any inappropriate or intrusive photographs found
- always ensure they have parental permission to take and/or display photographs
- remain sensitive to any children who appear uncomfortable, for whatever reason, and should recognise the potential for such activities to raise concerns or lead to misunderstandings
- be clear who cannot have pictures taken

This means that staff should not:

- display or distribute images of children unless they have consent to do so from parents/carers
- use images which may cause distress
- use mobile telephones or any other similar devices to take images of children without authorisation
- take images 'in secret', or take images in situations that may be construed as being secretive

It is recommended that when using a photograph, the following guidance should be followed:

- *if the photograph is used, avoid naming the child*
- *if the child is named, avoid using their photograph*
- *The Ashley School should establish whether the image will be retained for further use*
- *images should be securely stored and used only by those authorised to do so*
- *not use a child's photograph once they have left the school*

30. Unacceptable use of ICT facilities and monitoring (see TASAT Acceptable Use Policy - REFERENCE)

Posting, creating, accessing, transmitting, downloading, uploading or storing any of the following material (unless it is part of an authorised investigation) is likely to amount to gross misconduct and result (where the adult is employed) in summary dismissal (this list is not exhaustive):

- Pseudo-images of children (child abuse images), pornographic or sexually suggestive material or images of children or adults which may be construed as such in the circumstances (that is, writing, texting, pictures, films and video clips of a sexually explicit or arousing nature).
- Any other type of offensive, obscene or discriminatory material, criminal material or material which is liable to cause distress or embarrassment to the Trust, Academy or others.

If indecent images of children are discovered at the premises or on the Trust's equipment/devices, an immediate referral should be made to Headteacher (unless they are implicated) and the LADO and, if relevant, the police contacted. The images/equipment should be secured, should not be used by others and should be isolated from the network. There should be no attempt to view, tamper with or delete the images as this could jeopardise any necessary criminal investigation. If the images are of children are known to the Trust, a referral should also be made to children's social care in accordance with local arrangements.

The contents of our ICT resources and communications systems are the Trust's property. Therefore, adults should have no expectation of privacy in any message, files, data, document, facsimile, telephone conversation, social media post, conversation or message, or any other kind of information or communications transmitted to, received or printed from, or stored or recorded on our electronic information and communications systems.

The Trust reserves the right to monitor, intercept and review, without prior notification or authorisation from adults. Usage of our IT resources and communications systems, including but not limited to telephone, e-mail, messaging, voicemail, CCTV, internet and social media postings and activities are monitored to ensure that our rules are being complied with and for the following purposes:

- To monitor whether the use of the e-mail system or the internet is legitimate and in accordance with this Code
- To assist in the investigation of alleged wrongful acts
- To comply with any legal obligation

Personal data will be stored in accordance with the Trust's Privacy Notices. We may store copies of data or communications for a period of time after they are created, and may delete such copies from time to time without notice. If necessary information may be handed to the police in connection with a criminal investigation.

A CCTV system monitors the TASAT for 24 hours a day. This data is recorded and may be used as evidence of any alleged wrongdoing.

Cyber-bullying can be experienced by adults as well as pupils.

This means that staff should:

- Notify the Headteacher if they are subject to cyber-bullying. The Trust will endeavour to protect adults and stop any inappropriate conduct.
- follow The Ashley School's guidance on the use of IT equipment
- ensure that children are not exposed to unsuitable material on the internet
- ensure that any films or material shown to children are age appropriate
- not use equipment belonging to The Ashley School to access adult pornography, or bring personal equipment containing these images, or links to them, into The Ashley School

31. Curriculum

Many areas of the curriculum can include or raise subject matter which is sexually explicit, or of an otherwise sensitive nature.

This means that staff should:

- have clear written lesson plans
- take care when encouraging children to use self-expression, not to overstep personal and professional boundaries
- be able to justify all curriculum materials and relate these to clearly identifiable lessons plans

This means that staff should not:

- enter into or encourage inappropriate discussions about sexual activity or any behaviours which may offend or harm others

32. Whistle blowing (see *Whistleblowing Policy – Q-HR-002*)

Whistle blowing is the mechanism by which staff can voice their concerns, made in good faith, without fear of repercussion.

This means that staff should:

- report any behaviour by colleagues that raises concern regardless of the source.

33. Sharing Concerns and Recording Incidents

In the event of any allegation being made, to someone other than a manager, information should be clearly and promptly recorded and reported to a senior manager without delay.

This means that staff should:

- be familiar with The Ashley School's system for recording concerns
- take responsibility for recording any incident, and passing on that information where they have concerns about any matter pertaining to the welfare of an individual in the workplace

34. Grievance procedures (see *HR Policy Suite – Q-HR-002*)

Most grievances can be resolved quickly and informally through discussion. If an employee feels unable to speak to the person causing the grievance, then the employee should speak informally to their immediate line manager. If this does not resolve the issue, the employee should follow the formal grievance procedure.

35. Sickness absence procedure (see *HR Policy Suite – Q-HR-002*)

This Sickness Absence Procedure should be read and applied in conjunction with The Ashley School Academy Trust's Staffing Policy Statement.

Unplanned staff absence

If you are absent due to illness or an unplanned absence, **you** must ring in to the school office between 07:45 and 08:00am on the morning of the illness/unplanned absence. If you are really unable to do this yourself due to illness, someone else can do this on your behalf. You may also text, message or contact your line manager or Key Stage Leaders, however, you must let the office team know **as well** because they have additional responsibilities to carry out that are not always obvious.

Setting Cover – short-term planned or unplanned absence

This does not apply to all of you as a team. However, it is precisely because we are a team that setting cover is important. If your absence is planned, detailed cover should be in place. If it is an unplanned absence through illness for example, it is still reasonable to expect some indication of 'topic'/'last learning point' reached so cover can be set for colleagues who cover classes. If this is too difficult on the day, we would suggest a bank of resources that colleagues can access that are updated. **Please email your cover work to several people, including the school office, office@ashleyschool.co.uk**

The Ashley School Academy Trust recognises its responsibility for the health, safety and welfare of its employees. This Sickness Absence Procedure sets out the process for reporting sickness absence and for the management of sickness absence in a fair and consistent way. This procedure places emphasis on proactive support for staff in the event of ill health difficulties.

Sickness absence can vary from short intermittent periods of ill-health to a continuous period of long-term absence and have a number of different causes (for example, injuries, recurring conditions, or a serious illness requiring lengthy treatment).

Sickness absence may result from a disability defined in the Equality Act 2010. Reasonable adjustments to this procedure may be considered in appropriate cases, depending on the specific circumstances. HR advice should be obtained where the line manager considers the employee is likely to have a disability.

The Ashley School Academy Trust has standards for attendance for employees, as it does for pupils, and measures will be taken to monitor and respond to actual and potential problems.

36. Keeping Up to date with School Policies

It is the responsibility of all staff to ensure that they have read and fully understand the policies within the school that are relevant to their role. When staff are asked to read and sign that they have read a policy it is the responsibility of the staff member to ensure this is correct and if they have any questions or are unsure of any element of the policy they must see the relevant member of staff who has responsibility for the policy before signing to say they have read and understood the policy.

This means that staff should:

- read, understand and sign for Part 1 of KCSIE (Keep Children Safe In Education)
 - Safeguarding policy
 - Code of conduct
 - Behaviour 4 Learning Policy
- seek support/clarity if anything within these policies/procedures is unclear

Appendix A

The Ashley School Academy Trust

A Common Language, a Common Approach

We use a common initial phrase to ensure learners at The Ashley School learn to take responsibility for their behaviour.

(Learner's name) you need to Thank you.

- ✓ Use the learner's name to gain his/her attention
- ✓ "You need to..." gives ownership of behaviour to the learner and "thank -you" shows the expectation of compliance.
- ✓ The phrase can be continued with a reason for the need for modification. Other phrases we use also ensure that learners are held responsible for the choices they make

You now have the opportunity to ...

I think you can make the right decision

You need to think about what might happen next and make the right choice

I'll give you ... minutes to calm down and then when you are ready we can talk about this

- ✓ Praise and verbally reinforce the positive actions and behaviours of others, catch them when they are getting it right!
- ✓ Verbal reinforcement of others can bring learners back on track and models positive behaviours.
- ✓ Aim to use at least 3 positive comments to one negative.
- ✓ Avoid adding a but to a positive comment as this prepares the learner for a negative statement
- ✓ Make the positive comments specific to the behaviour or action.
- ✓ Use quiet one to one praise for those learners who appear to shun praise.
- ✓ Contact parents and carers with positive outcomes.
- ✓ Role model by thanking and praising one another in front of learners.