



BRITANNICA INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL, SHANGHAI

Staff Code of Conduct Policy

Updated September 2024

Committee Responsible:	Safeguarding Committee
Board/ Governor Lead:	K Wilkinson RHoS
Nominated Lead Member of Staff:	
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Safeguarding Statement 2023

“It could happen here”

We recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children.

We make every effort to provide an environment in which children and adults feel safe, secure, valued and respected.

The purpose of this policy is to provide staff, volunteers and board members with the framework they need in order to keep children safe and secure in our school by ensuring all staff uphold the expected professional standards and behaviours.

Terminology

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined as:

- protecting children from maltreatment;
- preventing impairment of children's health or development;
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care;
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Staff refers to all those working for or on behalf of the school, full or part time, temporary or permanent, in either a paid or voluntary capacity.

Child(ren) includes everyone under the age of 18. Overall, this will apply to students of our school; however, the policy will extend to visiting children and students from other establishments

Parents refers to birth parents and other adults who are in a parenting role, for example step-parents, foster carers and adoptive parents.

Social media refers to all forms of communication through internet, web-based applications, text and instant messaging.

Introduction

This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the Children Acts 1989 and 2004; the Education Act 2002.

The policy also reflects, both statutory guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' 2023 (KCSIE), Teacher Standards 2012 and generic UK Safeguarding Children Board Procedures.

The Board takes seriously its responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

This policy applies to all members of staff in the school as defined in the terminology

Policy Principles & Values

Introduction - Our High Standards of Working Together

As a school providing education to children, and as part of a group of international schools aiming to bring the best standards of British education to the world, we provide an extremely valuable and respected service to the communities we serve. As we are entrusted to develop and educate our children into global citizens of the future, we consider high standards central to everything we do.

Central to upholding high standards is our behaviour and values. We believe we play a critical role upholding values of honesty and integrity, mutual respect, and in setting and maintaining standards of exemplary behaviour, by acting in a fair, transparent and ethical way, at all times. It is, after all, only by demonstrating a shared commitment to these values, and modelling such behaviours, that we are able to instil similar core values and behaviour in our students which will support their successful futures.

We feel that our values, high standards, and principles also impact and reflect upon our reputation, profile, and standing as a School. All employees must recognise that their conduct and behaviour is integral to ensuring this, and to upholding the School's reputation and standing in the community and in our marketplace.

Such is the importance of these principles, we implement measures and actions as far as we are able, to ensure that these important values are upheld and maintained. We likewise expect our colleagues and all staff members to act in a similar way.

This policy sets out the standards of behaviour expected from all staff at Britannica International Shanghai.

Policy Aims

We have developed and updated this policy, to ensure that you are clear of what you can expect from us, but also clear about what is expected from you. The core aims of this policy are to;

- Demonstrate the school's commitment to upholding professional standards.
- Support staff understand their responsibilities to safeguard children and provide clarity around standards and expectations around appropriate conduct and behaviour at work.
- Encourage staff to minimise the risk of inappropriate conduct occurring and thereby enable staff to set a good example to children within the school.

SHARED COMMITMENTS

Greater detail and guidance are provided below, outlining specific guidance and expectations for colleagues across various aspects of their work.

Expectations are founded on the basis of common sense, with the general essence and principles of this policy underpinned by our **Core Shared Commitments**. These are commitments the school provides to you as an employee, but also commitments you are equally expected to uphold.

Shared Commitments	
We are ALL expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct, at all times. This applies in both our professional conduct at work, and high standards of conduct in our personal lives. Greater guidance is outlined within the Professional Behaviour and Conduct section below. Above all, we agree to treat others as we would wish to be treated.	
The School's Commitments to you	Your Commitments to the School
✓ To take all possible steps to ensure a school environment which is positively challenging, but also warm, supportive and approachable. ✓ We seek to ensure that we work in a fair, transparent, and ethical way at all times, recognising and valuing difference and diversity. ✓ We will endeavour to provide feedback and support which is constructive, non-critical, non-personal, and solutions focused, to best enable development and improvements	✓ To ensure a positive environment, all colleagues must ensure their approach & actions are warm, supportive, and approachable at all times. ✓ You should understand and embrace differences and diversity, recognising others may hold different views or have different ways of thinking to you. ✓ Difference in views does not necessarily mean others are wrong. Colleagues must work collaboratively to embrace difference, tackling issues constructively to overcome our challenges. ✓ You should raise any thoughts, issues, and concerns in an appropriate & professional way – This being non-critical, not accusatory or personally directed, constructive and solutions focused.

If you feel that you are not treated consistently in accordance with these commitments, you can raise a concern to your line manager, who will work with you to support and assist you. If you feel your issues remain unresolved you can raise the issue to a member of the SLT who will support you as outlined within the School's Employee Concerns / Grievance policy.

If your Management team feels that your behaviours are not consistent with these commitments or any aspect of this policy, these concerns will be addressed with you. If these behaviours continue, these issues may be addressed more formally in accordance with the School's Disciplinary procedure.

The School requires all staff to read and agree to comply with this policy.

This policy, and guidance provided below is not intended to be exhaustive. All staff are expected to ensure their actions and behaviours are consistent with the principles of our Shared Commitments and exercise their professional judgement to act in the best interests of the children and school at all times.

Compliance

All staff must complete the form in appendix 1 to confirm they have read, understood and agree to comply with this policy. This form should be signed and dated, and a copy retained on the member of staff's file.

Professional Behaviour and Conduct

All staff are expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct.

All staff must uphold public trust in their professional position and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, by:

- Acting as positive role models for students at all times in the way you behave, act, and dress.
- Treating children and other colleagues with courteous dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, sensitivity and fairness, always observing proper boundaries appropriate to professional position
- Ensure the equal treatment of all students, irrespective of ability, race, religion, gender or any other factor
- Having regard for the need to safeguard children's' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions
- Showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others not undermining fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect, and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.
- Not carrying out or engaging in any type of behaviour that may be considered contrary to principles of fair treatment and equal opportunities, which is discriminatory, and/or likely to cause offence, concern, alarm, or harm, to any other individual or group of individuals (ie/ sex, race discrimination or harassment etc);
- Ensuring that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways which exploit children's' vulnerability or might lead them to break the law
- All staff must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school in which they work and teach and maintain high standards in their own attendance and punctuality.
- All staff must understand, and always act within, the school policies and procedures as well as, where applicable, the local and national statutory frameworks which set out their professional duties and responsibilities
- All staff should avoid any conflict of interest between activities undertaken outside school and responsibilities within school.
- To not act in a way which conflicts, or risks conflicting, with the School's high values and principles referred to above, in both your professional capacity and in your personal life, or act in any way which results in the possibility of a third party concern regarding your suitability to work with children. *For the avoidance of doubt this includes any image you portray via social media, and you are expected to act in accordance with the school's social media policy & social media guidance detailed below.*
- Staff are expected to act in accordance with the school's policies and procedures at all times

Parents as employees

It is acknowledged that some staff also have children who attend the school. It is recognised that in these cases the staff fulfil a dual role of parent and employee.

Parents as employees should ensure that they uphold boundaries between the two roles and that their behaviour does not constitute a conflict of interest. For example, they must maintain the same level of confidentiality despite social expectations. Parent-staff should discuss any inter-role conflict with their line manager.

Dress and Appearance – see also Dress Code Policy

All staff are expected to dress in a manner that is appropriate to their role. Staff dress and appearance must not be offensive or revealing. Staff must dress safely and appropriately for the tasks they undertake. At all times staff dress and presentation should be respectful of local/ national laws and customs.

Staff should use common sense when dressing for work and always be aware of the impact their presentation may have on the young people they work with. All staff are expected to dress in a manner that is appropriate to their role. Generally, staff dress/ appearance should be clean, smart, business-like and professional. Male staff should wear a tie and shirt each day. Staff must dress safely and appropriately for the tasks they undertake. The school reserve the right to request a staff member refrains from wearing a certain type of dress, where this has an impact upon our students and young people.

Casual wear which may be fitting in other non-professional work-based settings is not appropriate. As a general rule, shorts, denim, short skirts, thin strapped, low cut or strapless tops and flip flops should be avoided, as these are not considered appropriate to wear to work in a school. Any form of body piercing and tattoos should be covered.

Lanyards and Identification

All staff should wear the identification badges and lanyards every day at school. These are used for identification of staff, parent and visitors. The badges should be worn unless otherwise directed by the Principal or SLT. This is an essential part of our security process.

Smoking, alcohol, e-cigarettes and other substances

Britannica Shanghai is a non-smoking site. Staff must not smoke or use e-cigarettes on the school premises or outside the school gates.

Staff must not smoke or use e-cigarettes whilst supervising children in a residential setting or offsite.

Staff must not consume or be under the influence of alcohol, drugs or unlawful substances on or near school premises.

Staff must refrain from the consumption of alcohol and other substances at school community activities both on and off school premises.

Failure to comply with the above may constitute gross professional misconduct and could lead to dismissal.

Members of Staff / Adults

Any adult found intoxicated/ under the influence of drugs or in possession of alcohol on school grounds during the school day with student's present will be reported to the Principal. Members of staff will be subject to disciplinary proceedings up to and including termination of employment.

In all of the above circumstances the Principal would liaise with the Regional Principals and adhere to the procedures outlined in the Delegation of Authority Manual.

Relationships

Staff must maintain appropriate professional boundaries in their interactions with children. Staff should act in an open and transparent way that would not lead any reasonable person to question their actions or intent.

Staff must not establish or seek to establish social contact with children for the purpose of securing a friendship or to pursue or strengthen a relationship. If a child seeks to establish social contact staff should exercise professional judgement when responding and be aware that such social contact could be misconstrued.

Staff must not develop personal or sexual relationships with children and should not engage in any sexual activity with a child.

Staff should be familiar with the contents of Working Together to Safeguard Children 2019, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 and the definition of sexual abuse. Staff are required to complete Safeguarding and Child Protection courses with annual refresher courses/ seminars provided by the school.

Staff should be familiar with sections 15A and 16 of The Sexual Offences Act 2003, regarding communication with children and the abuse of a position of trust.

Staff must not make sexual remarks to a child or discuss their own sexual relationships with, or in the presence of, children or discuss a child's sexual relationships in an inappropriate context.

Contact with students should be through the school's authorised mechanisms. Personal phone numbers, email addresses or communication via all social media platforms must not be used and staff must not share their home address with students. If contacted via an inappropriate route staff must inform the Principal immediately.

School staff must not follow or become friends with any student or parent of a student on any social media platform.

Staff must ensure they are familiar with and comply with the school's e-safety policy.

It is not unusual for students or, sometimes, their parents to develop infatuations towards members of staff. All such situations must be responded to sensitively to maintain the dignity of those concerned. Staff should also be aware that such circumstances carry a high risk of words or actions being misinterpreted and for allegations to be made against staff. Any indications of an infatuation towards staff must be reported to their line manager.

Intimate/Personal care

Staff should ensure that the health, safety, independence and welfare of children is promoted, and their dignity and privacy are respected. Arrangements for intimate and personal care must be open and transparent and accompanied by recording systems.

Children should be encouraged to act as independently as possible and to undertake as much of their own personal care as is possible and practicable. When assistance is required, this should normally be undertaken by one member of staff, however, they should try to ensure that another appropriate adult is in the vicinity who is aware of the task to be undertaken and that, wherever possible, they are visible and/or audible.

Intimate or personal care procedures should not involve more than one member of staff unless the child's individual healthcare plan specifies the reason for this. A signed record should be kept of all intimate and personal care tasks undertaken and, where these have been carried out in another room, should include times left and returned.

Any vulnerability, including those that may arise from a physical or learning difficulty should be considered when formulating the child's individual healthcare plan. The views of parents, carers and the child, regardless of their age and understanding, should be actively sought in formulating the plan and in the necessary regular reviews of these arrangements.

Children are always entitled to respect and privacy and especially when in a state of undress, including, for example, when changing, toileting and showering.

However, there needs to be an appropriate level of supervision in order to safeguard children, satisfy health and safety considerations and ensure that bullying or teasing does not occur. This supervision should be appropriate to the needs and age of the children concerned and sensitive to the potential for embarrassment.

First Aid/Medication

When administering first aid, wherever possible, staff should ensure that another adult is present, or aware of the action being taken.

After discussion with parents, children who are competent should be encouraged to take responsibility for managing their own medicines and procedures.

If a member of staff is concerned or uncertain about the amount or type of medication being given to a child, provided by a parent/carer or prescribed, this should be discussed with the Head of Section/Principal.

Staff taking medication which may affect their ability to care for children should seek medical advice regarding their suitability to do so and providers should ensure that they only work directly with children if that advice confirms that the medication is unlikely to impair their ability to look after children.

Staff medication on the premises must always be securely stored and out of reach of children.

Physical contact with children

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

When physical contact is made with children it must be in response to their needs at that time, of limited duration and appropriate to their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background.

Staff must seek the child's permission before initiating contact (unless it is absolutely necessary to restrain the child from injuring others or themselves). Staff must observe and take note of the child's reaction or feelings and use a level of contact which is acceptable to the child for the minimum time necessary. Staff must always use their professional judgement.

Staff must never touch a child in a way which may be considered inappropriate.

Staff must not engage in rough play, tickling or fun fights with students.

Extra caution should be exercised where a child is known to have suffered previous abuse or neglect. Such experiences may sometimes make a child exceptionally needy and demanding of physical contact. Staff should respond sensitively by deterring the child through helping them to understand the importance of personal boundaries.

Staff supervising PE and games or providing music tuition should demonstrate the use of a particular piece of equipment/instrument on another member of staff if possible. However, they may be required to initiate physical contact to support a child to perform a task safely or to assist them. Contact under these circumstances must be done with the student's agreement, strictly in non-intimate areas for the minimum time necessary and in an open environment.

Physical contact must never be secretive or abuse a position of trust. If a member of staff believes that an action could be misinterpreted, the incident and circumstances should be reported to their line manager, recorded and, if appropriate, a copy placed on the child's file.

There may be occasions when a student is in distress and in need of reassurance. This may include age-appropriate physical contact. Staff should always remain self-aware in order to avoid misinterpretation of their actions. Such incidents should always be recorded and shared with their line manager. If staff have a particular concern about the need to provide this type of care and reassurance, they should seek further advice from their line manager.

Showers and changing

Children are entitled to respect and privacy whilst they are changing or showering after physical activity or swimming. Supervision by staff should be appropriate to the needs and age of the children and sensitive to the potential for embarrassment.

Staff should be vigilant about their own behaviour and announce their intention of entering a changing room. Personal and school devices with a camera or video function must not be taken into areas where children are showering or changing. Staff must not change or shower in the same place as children.

One to one situation

Staff working individually with children should be aware of the potential vulnerability of the child and staff in such situations. Staff should manage these situations regarding the safety of the child and to themselves.

Individual work with children must not be undertaken in isolated areas or rooms with no external viewing panel. Where it is necessary to close doors for reasons of confidentiality a colleague must be made aware of this and asked to remain vigilant.

Transporting students

In certain circumstances it may be appropriate for staff to transport student's offsite for out of school activities. A designated member of staff should be appointed to plan and provide oversight of all transport arrangements and to respond to any difficulties that may arise.

Staff should ensure that the transport arrangements and the vehicle meet all legal requirements. Staff should ensure that the driver has the appropriate license for the vehicle, that the vehicle is roadworthy and is appropriately insured and that the maximum capacity is not exceeded.

Staff should ensure that the driver is not distracted while the vehicle is in motion for any reason other than an emergency and should also ensure all passengers are wearing correctly fitted, maintained and fastened seatbelts or if required appropriate child restraints/car seat. Staff should never transport students while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

Prior to transporting children offsite consent must be obtained from the child's parent. All staff must be aware that the safety and welfare of the child is their responsibility until the child is safely passed back to their parent

Educational visits

The duties in the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the supporting regulations apply to activities taking place on or off the school premises (including school visits) in the UK. **The school has a Health and Safety policy, which includes policy and procedures for off-site visits, including residential visits and any school-led adventure activities.**

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations impose a duty on employers to produce suitable and sufficient risk assessments. This would include assessment of any risks to employees, children or others during an educational visit, and the measures that should be taken to minimise these risks.

Staff should take particular care when supervising children in the less formal atmosphere of an educational visit where a more relaxed discipline or informal dress and language code may be acceptable. However, staff remain in a position of trust and need to ensure that their behaviour cannot be interpreted as seeking to establish an inappropriate relationship or friendship.

Where out of school activities include overnight stays, careful consideration needs to be given to sleeping arrangements. Children, adults and parents should be informed of these prior to the start of the trip. In all circumstances, those organising trips and outings should pay careful attention to ensuring there is a safe staff/child ratio and suitable gender mix of staff.

All staff are required to carry out Risk Assessments, please see Risk Assessment Template on the shared area for further information.

Social Media & Online Safety

Staff must always comply with the Online Safety policy and the Acceptable Use Policy. The only acceptable method of contact is via the use of school email accounts or telephone equipment.

Staff must not engage in inappropriate use of social media which may bring themselves, the school or the school community into disrepute. Staff must ensure their presence and actions on social media adheres to the school's Social Media policy at all times and should adopt the highest security settings on any personal profiles they have.

Staff should exercise caution in use of social media or any other web-based presence they have. This includes written content, videos or photographs and views expressed either directly or by 'liking' certain pages or posts or following certain individuals or groups.

Staff must be vigilant when using dating websites/apps where staff could encounter students or ex-students.

Staff should not make contact with students or ex-students or initiate/accept friend requests on any social media platform with students or ex-students. Staff must not communicate with students or ex-students via social media or text.

Staff should not make contact with a child's family member, accept or initiate friend requests or follow a child's family member's account on any social media platform.

School acknowledges that staff who are also parents may wish to contact other parents, who are friends, over social media. Staff must exercise caution and professional judgement in these circumstances and should not have any contact with students' family members via social media if that contact is likely to constitute a conflict of interest or call into question their professionalism.

Unless authorised by the Principal, mobile phones and personally owned devices such as tablets may not be used during lessons or formal school time. The Bluetooth functionality of a mobile phone or tablet should always be switched off. Mobile phones, personal recording devices, cameras and videoing equipment are not permitted in certain areas within the school site such as changing rooms and toilets.

The camera and filming functions of personal mobile devices must not be used in school, on school trips or on official school business. If staff receive permission from the Head of Section/ Principal to use these devices for a specific purpose, the content should be deleted after use from the mobile and transferred to a more appropriate medium of storage. A school mobile can be used for videos and images.

Mobile phones and personally owned mobile devices brought into school are the responsibility of the device owner. School accepts no responsibility for the loss, theft or damage of personally owned mobile phones or mobile devices.

Photography, video and digital images of children

In accordance with The Data Protection Act 1998 the image of a child is personal data. Therefore, it is a requirement under the Act for consent to be obtained from the parent of a student for any images made. It is also important to consider the wishes of the student, remembering that some students do not wish to have their photograph taken or be filmed.

Staff should obtain age-appropriate consent and consent from a child's parent for the use of images for publicity purposes. Images must not be displayed on websites, in publications or in a public place without consent.

Staff should check the list, which is updated regularly and available on the shared Drive.

Staff should ensure that a member of the Senior Leadership Team is aware of the proposed use of photographic/video equipment and that this is recorded in lesson plans. All photographs/digital images and video footage should be available for scrutiny and staff should be able to justify all images/video footage made.

Staff must ensure that photographs/digital images or video footage of children should only be taken using school equipment for purposes authorised by the school and should be stored securely on school equipment.

Staff should also be clear about the purpose of the activity and what will happen to the photographs/images/video footage when the lesson or activity is concluded.

Staff should remain aware of the potential for images of children to be misused to create indecent images of children and/or for grooming purposes. Therefore, careful consideration should be given to how activities which are being filmed or photographed are organised and undertaken.

Staff should take particular care when filming or photographing young or vulnerable children who may be unable to question how or why the activities are taking place.

Staff should be mindful that students who have been abused through the use of video or photography may feel threatened by its use in a teaching environment.

Confidentiality and sharing information

Staff may have access to confidential information about children, their parents and siblings. Staff must only reveal such information to colleagues on a need-to-know basis.

Staff should never use confidential or personal information about a child or a child's family for their own, or others' advantage.

All staff are likely at some point to witness actions which need to be confidential. For example, where a student is bullied by another student, this needs to be reported and dealt with in accordance with the appropriate school procedure. It must not be discussed outside the school, including with the child's parent, nor with colleagues in the school except by a senior member of staff with the appropriate authority to deal with the matter.

Staff have a statutory obligation to immediately share with the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead any information which gives rise to concern about the welfare or safety of a child. Staff should pass on information immediately in accordance with the school's safeguarding/child protection policies and procedures. Staff must never promise a child that they will not act on or pass on any information that they are told.

Any media or legal enquiries should be passed to the senior leadership team and only approved staff, Regional Principals (RHoS)/ Board members should communicate to the media about the school. The Principal should consult the RHoS before proceeding with any press/ media releases.

Sharing concerns and recording Incidents

All staff should be aware of their establishment's safeguarding procedures, including the procedures for dealing with allegations against staff and volunteers. In the event of an allegation being made, by any person, or incident being witnessed, the relevant information should be immediately recorded and reported to the Principal or if the allegation is against the Principal it should be reported to the Regional Principals (RHoS) / Board representative.

Policy Review

This policy is to be reviewed annually, though may be updated more frequently to reflect legal or procedural changes or process changes required especially regarding safeguarding and child protection arrangements which will be remedied without delay. The Principal and Regional Principals (on behalf of the Board) will undertake an annual review of the school's Staff Behaviour Policy/ Code of Conduct and of the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged.

Staff Behaviour Policy/ Code of Conduct

Appendix 1

Confirmation of compliance

I hereby confirm that I have read, understood and agree to comply with British International School's staff behaviour policy.

Name

Position/Post Held.....

Signed

Date

Once completed please return this form to the Principal.

Review and Evaluation

This policy is to be reviewed annually, though any deficiencies or weaknesses in the social media policy/ arrangements will be remedied without delay.

This policy will be reviewed by the Principal and leadership team and approved by the RHoS/ Board.

Due for next Review:

PREPARED BY: **Principal -**