SAFEGUARDING CODE OF CONDUCT FOR STAFF

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September 2026

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR STAFF

City College Norwich seeks to provide a safe and supportive environment where the welfare and health and safety of students is paramount. You should seek to act professionally at all times but we recognise that tensions and misunderstanding can occur in the context of interaction between staff and students.

This guidance aims to help you safeguard students and reduce the risk of conduct which could be mistakenly interpreted as improper and lead to allegations being made against individuals.

This document does not replace nor supersede any established college procedures.This document is for all staff.

PRINCIPLES

- The welfare of young people and vulnerable adults is paramount. You are responsible for your own actions and behaviour. You should avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question your motivation and intentions
- You should understand your responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of students
- You should work and be seen to work in a transparent way
- You should report any incident which may give rise to concern to your senior manager
- All staff and work placement providers should be aware of and follow the college's safeguarding procedure
- Staff who breach this code of conduct may be subject to the college's disciplinary procedures
- You should apply the same professional standards regardless of culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief, sexual orientation or gender status
- Serious breach of this code may result in a referral being made to an external or statutory agency such as the Local Authority Designated Officer or the Police.

WORKING WITH STUDENTS

Attitudes, demeanour and language all require care and thought, particularly when dealing with adolescents and vulnerable students.

Comments by you to young and vulnerable students, either individually or collectively, can be misconstrued. As a general principle, you must not make unnecessary comments to and/or about students, which could be construed to have a sexual connotation.

It is also unacceptable for you to introduce or to encourage debate amongst students in a class, training situation or elsewhere, which could be construed as having a sexual connotation that is unnecessary given the context of the session or the circumstances.

However, it is recognised that a topic raised by a student is best addressed rather than ignored. It is appropriate for you to advise the student where they can access further advice and support.

You should:

- Treat all students with respect and dignity
- Always put the welfare of the student first
- Understand that the systematic use of insensitive, disparaging or sarcastic comments such as those that refer to a young person's body, intelligence, gender, sexual orientation or ethnicity in any way are unacceptable
- Not swear or use offensive or discriminatory language
- Never make sexual remarks to a student or discuss your own personal sexual relationships
- Avoid any communication which could be interpreted as sexually provocative
- End the discussion if it becomes uncomfortable or embarrassing
- Work in an open environment avoiding private or unobserved situations and encourage open communication
- Give enthusiastic and constructive feedback rather than negative criticism

- Always challenge inappropriate language from students or colleagues.
- Never allow allegations made by a student to go unrecorded or not acted upon
- Not do things of a personal nature for a student that they can do for themselves.

ONE TO ONE SITUATIONS

You should be aware of the potential risks which may arise when working alone with a student. It is recognised that there will be occasions when confidential interviews or meetings must take place:

- If possible leave the door open or use a room with a window in the door
- The use of "engaged" signs or lights are not advisable
- Where such conditions cannot apply, you are advised to ensure that another adult knows that the meeting is taking place
- Never meet a student away from the College unless your line manager has given permission
- Avoid travelling in a car with one student and inform someone if the situation is unavoidable.

EDUCATIONAL VISITS AND COLLEGE ACTIVITIES

You should take extra care in less formal situations and remember that you are still in a position of trust.

WORKING WITH EMPLOYERS

For guidance on safeguarding or health & safety requirements for employers providing industry and work placements, please contact the Industry and Work Placements Team. For support with employers who have already recruited or who plan on taking on an apprentice, please contact the Apprenticeships Team.

CONFIDENTIALITY

You should never share information about students in a casual manner or allow student access to information on staff computers or in staff rooms.

You should:

- Never give out your own personal details or a student's personal details to other students
- Log off or lock your computer whenever leaving it unattended
- Not allow students to use your computer unless you have logged off
- Use a student number in subject line of email to colleagues, not name. Depending on the immediacy of the response needed, using initials is acceptable.
- Only use students' college email addresses and not their personal email address.

YOUR BEHAVIOUR

You should adopt high standards of personal conduct at all times:

- Your clothing should reflect a professional appearance and should be suitable for the occupational area in which you are working
- You should dress in a manner which will avoid inappropriate comments
- Never act in a way that can be perceived as threatening
- Accessing or bringing images of pornography i.e. sexualised images without artistic merit on site is never acceptable, regardless of format
- Storing or disseminating such material on site or sharing links to such material via college equipment/ services is forbidden and if proven is highly likely to lead to the person being barred from working with young people
- When communicating with students electronically, you should only use college mobiles, college email or official college internet sites
- You should never keep images of students on personal equipment.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

All members of the College community have a responsibility for helping to ensure that individuals do not suffer any form of harassment and sexual or physical misconduct.

Everyone is responsible for what they say and for how they behave.

Any incident of harassment and sexual or physical misconduct will be regarded very seriously, and any such behaviours may result in formal disciplinary action being taken against an individual.

All allegations about sexual harassment or physical misconduct must be reported so that we can provide support to the victim as well as investigate in accordance with the Staff Disciplinary process. Victims can report to their line manager, or directly to the Human Resources team.

Saying 'it's just banter' or just a joke or a compliment is not an excuse for using inappropriate language, or sexual misconduct and it is never acceptable.

PHOTOGRAPHING STUDENTS

- You should always request a college phone/camera equipment for planned trips and include taking photos in the risk assessment for that activity
- Ensure you have got written consent to take photographs
- Never store photos of students for longer than is absolutely necessary
- Only take a picture of a student to showcase their activity,
  i.e. do not take casual snaps or selfies. It is okay if you are taking a picture of students at work to publish on college social media e.g. Tweeting a photo of a show or student work and tagging **@norwichcollege**
- If you need to have photos, ask if your students can take photos of each other and Tweet them, tagging the College so you can find them later? Or can they email the photo to you using their and your college email address?

YOUR CONTACT WITH STUDENTS

You should never contact a student for the purpose of friendship. This is particularly important when there is a possibility of a student becoming infatuated with a member of staff.

It is recognised that there may be occasions when accidental or reasonable social contact may be unavoidable, e.g. meeting students at social venues open to the general public or in shops or at private parties. In such circumstances, you should be mindful at all times of your professional relationship with students.

Providing lifts to students as part of a private arrangement is never acceptable without prior permission from your line manager. Giving lifts should not occur with any student other than family members, or their close friends, while they are present. Any lift that you provide to a student must be declared to your line manager. In the case of exceptional circumstances e.g. a stranded student with no other possible means of travel due to extreme weather conditions, you must speak to your line manager or the Duty Principal beforehand. The parents of the student must be contacted and their consent gained prior to the student getting into your vehicle. If the student is over the age of 18 years their parents must still be informed beforehand.

You should never lend money to students. Students who need money for food or travel should be directed to the Student Services where an emergency loan can be made. Outside the working hours contact Duty Principal.

- Do not accept gifts that could be construed as bribes (small token end of term gifts are fine, to a maximum value of around £5- to £10 pounds per student)
- Never give out personal contact details, mobile phone numbers, personal email, Twitter or Facebook addresses, personal user names or gamer tags
- Never accept friendship or access requests from students on any social networking sites, 'apps' with social functions or gaming platforms
- Social friendships or relationships with ex-students including via social media should only occur once the ex-student is over the age of 18 and left the college. Staff are advised to think carefully before embarking on social contact with ex-students and consider their professional standing and integrity as an educator
- Report any suspected infatuation to your senior manager
- Report any situation which you may feel compromises your professional standing

- Unavoidable social contact with a student must be reported to your line manager e.g. where you are a member of the same gym or sports club.

PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS WITH STUDENTS

We recognise that working in a large organisation may mean that there are occasions or a period of time where staff will come into contact with students who are known to them personally, for example their own children or friends of their children, who enrol onto a course.

In this circumstance, staff must be open and transparent with their line manager about the relationships and where they might come into contact with current students. We suggest that this is done in a conversation first, talked through fully and then followed up in writing. We recommend that this openness is continued throughout the year, as staff become aware of young people, they know personally who then go on to enrol at college.

Staff should refer to the Personal Relationships at Work Policy and discuss any questions with their line manager.

REPORTING CHILD PROTECTION DISCLOSURES AND CONCERNS

You should follow the process below if a student tells them about possible abuse:

- Listen carefully and stay calm
- Do not interview the student, but question normally and without pressure, in order to be sure that you understand what the student is telling you
- Do not put words into the student's mouth
- Reassure the student that by telling you, they have done the right thing
- Inform the student that you must pass the information on, but that only those that need to know about it will be told. Inform them of whom you will report the matter to
- Note the main points carefully
- Make a detailed note of the date, time, place, what the student said, did and your questions etc.
- Do not investigate concerns or allegations yourself, but report them immediately to the Safeguarding Officer.

Complete the Staff Incident Report Form by clicking on the Red Report Safeguarding button on the main page of Blackboard. This online form will go directly to the on duty Safeguarding Officer who will respond as soon as possible.

For matters which need immediate consultation with a Safeguarding Officer call:
07795487645

If, at any point there is a risk of immediate serious harm to a young person or vulnerable adult and a Safeguarding Officer is not available or you disagree with their decision making, a referral should be made to Children's or Adults Social Care immediately. Anybody can make a referral.
Children's Advice and Duty Service (CADS) 0344 800 8021 (Professional)
0344 800 8020 (Public)

A Safeguarding Officer should always be informed about any referrals made to Children's or Adult's social care as soon as possible.

Child protection records are kept centrally and securely by the Safeguarding Officer. Child protection records will not be made in the student's electronic Individual Learning Plan or tutorial file. You will be informed of relevant information in respect of individual cases regarding child protection on a 'need to know basis' only.

SEXUAL CONTACT

It is a criminal offence for a person in a position of trust to engage in any sexual activity with a person aged under 18 with whom they have a relationship of trust, irrespective of the age of consent, even if the basis for your relationship is consensual.

There is NO acceptable behaviour that has either explicit sexual connotations or innuendo. Any such behaviour will always be treated as extremely serious and must be reported immediately.

PHYSICAL CONTACT

It is not necessary to have physical contact with students, outside your job description, even when they are distressed and this should be avoided at all times.

- Try to defuse a situation before it escalates
- Never endanger your own safety
- Contact the Campus Services team **2222** for support when you have a concern not related to safeguarding such as a fight breaking out.

INCIDENTS THAT MUST BE REPORTED

- If a student is accidentally hurt
- If you are concerned that a relationship is developing that could represent an abuse of trust
- If you are concerned that a student is becoming attracted to you or a colleague
- If you are concerned that a colleague is becoming attracted to someone in his/ her care
- If a student misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done
- If you have had to use reasonable physical restraint to prevent a student harming themselves, or another, or from causing significant damage to property
- If a student makes an allegation of abuse
- If you see any suspicious marks on a student
- If you notice sudden changes in behaviour.

WHISTLEBLOWING

Whistleblowing should be part of transparent work practices and is not intended to set up mistrust or suspicion among members of staff.

It can be difficult to accept that a colleague may deliberately harm a vulnerable person. It may also be that the behaviour that causes concern is bad practice rather than abuse.

The college will support and protect all staff and students who, in good faith and without malicious intent, report suspicions of abuse or concerns about colleagues and their actions through the College Whistleblowing procedure, where the procedure is outlined in section 7.

SOCIAL MEDIA FOR STUDY

When setting up a Facebook (or other) page for study purposes you must declare this to your line manager. Also you should liaise with the College's marketing team to ensure that the page has the correct security and corporate logos in place. For any queries about social media email **marketing@ccn.ac.uk** for help.

BANTER

The college is not a permissive environment for banter and you should always challenge banter and bad language when you hear it.

You need to think about professional behaviour and the way that you are expected to interact with students in your role, particularly when taking breaks e.g. when using the smoking shelter.

You should reflect on your conversations with students and consider how your language may come across and be viewed by others.

Hostile and bullying language that masquerades as joking or banter are never acceptable.

MOBILE PHONES

You should only use college devices when contacting students i.e. not your personal mobile phone number. Do not allow a student to use or have access to your personal mobile phone / devices unless essential and unavoidable.

WHATSAPP GROUPS*

*Where WhatsApp is mentioned, assume this applies to all apps that permit groups and where group chat functions are enabled.

As a general rule, members of staff should avoid being in a WhatsApp group with students. Staff should always avoid any unnecessary social media contact with students.

If there is an occasion where it is unavoidable that a member of staff needs to be in a WhatsApp group with a student, they must talk this through with their line manager in the first instance and establish an open and transparent dialogue about the reason, type and nature of the contact.

An example might be if they are a member of the same sports team and the WhatsApp group is the only way to get team fixtures or make arrangements, or if a student is a fellow parent in a class WhatsApp group for their child's school. Purely social contact for the purposes of friendship is not acceptable.

Staff need to consider the tone and content of any messages they send to group chats and to think about how they will react and respond to any inappropriate content they see on the group. Staff must not be a by stander for harassment or bullying they witness through social media groups involving our students.

YOUR PERSONAL ONLINE PROFILE

Staff are responsible and accountable for the tone and content of their online profile, including social media accounts. This applies not only to professional accounts, but to all publicly available profiles, some of which may be personal accounts.

Staff are advised to consider the following question and to ensure that their accounts are managed and visible to the public as appropriate:

Is there anything on any of your publicly available social media accounts that may compromise your professional standing, or cause another person to question your suitability to work with children or vulnerable adults?

SAFEGUARDING INVESTIGATIONS

****NEW CONTENT FOR 2026 ****

The college recognises that safeguarding concerns can sometimes arise through personal or family associations.

Staff are expected to disclose any such matters that could present a risk to learners so that appropriate support, guidance, and safeguarding measures can be considered.

An example would be if a partner is on the Sex Offenders Register or is subject to bail conditions relating to children or is involved in child protection proceedings in relation to their own children.

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Owner	Version	Issue date	Contact for queries
Helen Richardson-Hulme *Assistant Principal* *- Student Services*	7 - 19/20 8 - 19/20 9 - 20/21 10 - 21/22 11 - 22/23	August 2019 February 2020 September 2020 August 2021 September 2022	Marie Pacey Samuel Warner Charlotte Hardiment *Safeguarding Officers*

Changes from Version 6:

Page 4: Addition of CADS contact details Back Page: Name change for Marie Pacey

Changes from Version 7:

Back Page: Additional Safeguarding Contacts

Changes from Version 9:

WhatsApp Groups and Sexual Harassment & Sexual Misconduct

Changes from Version 10:

Your Personal Online Profile

Changes from Version 11:

Working with Employers

Changes from Version 12:

Back Page: Additional Safeguarding Contact

2024 – Added Charlotte Hardiment phone number to contacts on Page 4.

Jan 2025 update to Sexual Harassment section, HRH.

August 2025 increased maximum value of end of term gift to £10, contact DP for out of hours emergency support, HRH.
September 2026 annual review, HRH added Safeguarding Investigations, Sept 2026

EASTON COLLEGE PASTON COLLEGE CITY COLLEGE NORWICH