MENTORING PROTOCOL

The following guidance has been developed to protect all staff and pupils from the risk of significant harm when engaging in the schools Mentoring Scheme.

Over recent years peer mentoring has increased in popularity and has been introduced in a number of schools where it is making a valuable contribution to the overall ethos of the school and pastoral support systems (Teachernet May 2008).

Appropriate peer support can and does increase the opportunity for social and personal development within individuals. It can provide additional support and encouragement with aspects of schoolwork, help build confidence and self esteem and encourage a more positive participation in school life (Teachernet May 2008).

In line with the requirements of Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 and related guidance 'Safeguarding Children in Education' schools must consider suitable vetting procedures where adults – including non-school staff are involved in mentoring activities on and of off school premises. These include enhanced CRB and List 99 checks.

All adult mentors whether paid or unpaid must have a basic understanding of child protection and will have attended the necessary courses prior to starting. It must be noted that staff will be expected to adhere to the following:

- *The Welfare of the Child is Paramount. (Children Act 1989)*
- *Staff must understand their responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people.*
- *Staff are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and must avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motives and intentions.*
- *Staff must work, and be seen to work, in an open and transparent way.*
- *Staff must discuss and /or take advice promptly from their line manager or another senior member of staff about any incident which may give rise to concern. ('Staff' all paid/unpaid adults working with children and young people).*
- *Records must be made of any such incident and of the decisions made /further actions agreed in accordance with the school policy of keeping and maintaining records.*
- *Staff must apply the same professional standards regardless of race, gender or sexuality.*
- *Staff must be aware to the risk of possible misinterpretation of motives and behaviour which could be construed as grooming.*

- *Staff must be aware that breaches of the law and other professional guidelines could result in criminal or disciplinary action being taken against them.*
- *Staff must know the procedures of managing allegations against staff and to whom they must report concerns.*

Mentoring programmes aim to meet the needs of various groups. Therefore communication between adults and children by whatever method, must take place within professional boundaries.

- The staff member must only use equipment provided by the school to communicate with children.
- The staff member must **not** use portable laptops provided by the school.
- It is **forbidden** for staff to contact children other than through the schools secure network.
- The staff member must not use any devices, audio or video to record the young people and the mentoring sessions.
- Must not send inappropriate texts.
- Mentors must register any mobile or other phone numbers that they use within the school.
- Must not send inappropriate emails
- The staff member must only use an email address issued to them by the school for the purpose of mentoring.
- It is **forbidden** for staff to contact children outside of the school secure network , i.e. using personal emails addresses and mobile phones.
- Staff must ensure contact with children is purely for a professional reason and in accordance with DCFS Guidance and school policy.
- **It is forbidden for staff to interact with children on social network sights**.
- Staff should report any attempts by children to contact them inappropriately

The staff member must report any indications (verbal, written or physical) that suggest a child may be infatuated with them or another staff member immediately to the Head Teacher.