Habs Aspire – mentor code of conduct

We all have a responsibility to keep children safe. This code outlines the conduct that is expected of Habs Aspire mentors. The code is there to help us protect children and young people from abuse and to feel safe, respected and valued and to reduce the possibility of unfounded allegations of abuse being made against you. Everyone taking part in Aspire (or any other Haberdashers' Advantage activity) must agree to follow the code of conduct.

Safeguarding context

- Conversations with your mentee will take place on Microsoft Teams and will be recorded for periodic sampling by the Aspire Coordinators in the school
- Mentors are expected to comply with the Aspire Safeguarding policy
- All mentors will attend a safeguarding briefing as part of the mentor training
- All Mentors will receive a blank enhanced DBS check before being matched with a mentee

Responsibilities

In your role as a mentor, you are acting in a position of trust and authority and have a duty of care towards the child or children you are working with.

You are responsible for:

- Operating in accordance with the Aspire Safeguarding policy and mentor guidance.
- Ensuring all Teams calls are recorded.
- Staying within the law at all times.
- Prioritising the welfare of your mentee.
- Modelling good behaviour for your mentee to follow and setting an appropriate tone for your conversations.
- Challenging any inappropriate behaviour shown by other mentors and report any breaches of this code of conduct to the Aspire Coordinator.
- If you have any concerns that your mentee/s may be at risk of harm, or you see or hear something that concerns you, reporting it immediately to the relevant safeguarding team (this information can be found in the mentor guide). Do not discuss your concerns with the child or young person, do not promise confidentiality if a disclosure is made to you and do not carry out an investigation.

Respecting children and young people

You should:

- Listen to and respect your mentee at all times.

- Respect your mentee's right to personal privacy. You may communicate with the Aspire Coordinator to share positive updates or concerns but you should not generally discuss personal matters about your mentee except with the Aspire Coordinator.
- Treat your mentee fairly and without prejudice or discrimination, respecting differences in gender, sexual orientation, culture, race, ethnicity, disability and religious belief. This includes not making assumptions about them based on protected characteristics.
- Promote relationships that are based on openness, honesty, trust and respect.
- Avoid discussing sensitive issues with your mentee.
- Ensure your contact with your mentee is appropriate and relevant to the nature of the activity you are involved in.

Inappropriate behaviour

You must not:

- Take any screenshots or photographs or save any recordings on personal devices. Meetings should be recorded by the mentee, if you notice it is not recording you should ask them to do so.
- Develop inappropriate relationships/make inappropriate promises.
- Engage in behaviour that is in any way abusive, including having any form of sexual contact with a child or young person.
- Let your mentee have your personal contact details or have contact with them via a personal social media account. If any form of follow up contact is required, this should be arranged via the school.
- Act in a way that can be perceived as threatening or intrusive.
- Patronise or belittle your mentee.
- Make sarcastic, insensitive, derogatory or sexually suggestive comments or gestures to or in front of your mentee.
- Allow allegations of abuse or misconduct or breaches of this code to go unreported.

Consequences of breach of this code

Any breaches of the requirements set out in this code may result in your removal from the programme. Serious breaches will also result in a referral being made to a statutory agency such as the police, children's social care and/or the Disclosure and Barring Service. There may also be a duty on the charities associated with the Company to file a serious incident report with the Charity Commission.