



## Governor Code of Conduct

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September 2021

## CODE OF CONDUCT FOR GOVERNORS

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Relationships with staff members, fellow governors, trustees, contractors, visitors, volunteers, students and their parents, guardians or carers should be reasonable and mutually respectful at all times. This Code has been produced to place the welfare of children at the centre of the School and its culture and to ensure that all those who govern the School and may have contact with children are clear on the rules of conduct and the expectations of the School. Children place trust in those connected to the School creating obligations, which we must all meet to ensure the successful outcomes achieved by the children in our care.
- 1.2 This Code has regard to the School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures and the following (collectively referred to in this Code as the **Guidance**):
- *Keeping children safe in education* (September 2020) (**KCSIE**):
    - KCSIE incorporates the additional statutory guidance, *Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006* (July 2018);
    - KCSIE also refers to the non-statutory advice for practitioners: *What to do if you're worried a child is being abused* (March 2015).
  - *Working together to safeguard children* (July 2018) (**WT**):
    - WT refers to the non-statutory advice: *Information sharing* (July 2018).
  - *Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales* (2015) (**Prevent**). Prevent is supplemented by:
    - *The Prevent duty: Departmental advice for schools and childminders* (June 2015);
    - *Channel Duty Guidance: Protecting vulnerable people from being drawn into terrorism* (2015)
    - *The use of social media for online radicalisation* (July 2015).
  - Guidance on Female Genital Mutilation, to include:
    - *Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation* (April 2016)
    - Home Office statutory guidance *Mandatory Reporting of Female Genital Mutilation: procedural information* (October 2015).
    - Guidance published by the Department for Health which provides useful information and support for health professionals which will be taken into account by the School's medical staff.
- 1.3 This Code has regard to the *Governors' Information Booklet*.

## **2.0 PURPOSE**

- 2.1 The purpose of the Code is to set out the expectations of standards and behaviour to be maintained by governors and to help governors establish safe practices and reduce the risk of false accusations or improper conduct.

## **3.0 SCOPE**

- 3.1 The Code of Conduct (**Code**) applies to all governors and trustees and to those appointed by them in a paid, or voluntary, capacity (**Governors**).
- 3.2 Governors should also follow the Guidance. The School also has a duty of care to its staff, parents, guardians or carers and students and the implementation of the practices in this Code will help to discharge that duty.
- 3.3 The Code should be read in conjunction with the School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy (and policies mentioned therein), the School's Images Policy and the School's Whistleblowing Policy.

## **4.0 GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

- 4.1 Principles for all governors;
- All governors should put the wellbeing, development and progress of all students first by:
- being familiar with the School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Procedures;
  - reading and understanding Part 1, Part 5 and Annex A of KCSIE (September 2020);
  - knowing the role, identity and contact details of the current Designated Safeguarding Lead and their Deputies; and
  - knowing the role, identity and contact details of the Nominated Safeguarding Governor.
- 4.2 All governors should demonstrate respect for diversity and take steps to promote equality.
- 4.3 All governors should work as part of a unified Staff body by:
- developing productive and supportive relationships with staff and governors;
  - exercising any management responsibilities in a respectful, inclusive and fair manner;
  - recognising the role of the School in the life of the local community; and
  - upholding the School's reputation and standing within the local community and building trust and confidence in it.
- 4.4 All governors should understand that the School has a legal duty to have regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism, and consequently should be aware of the requirement to inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead of any concerns.

- 4.5 All governors should maintain public trust and confidence in the School by:
- demonstrating honesty and integrity;
  - understanding and upholding their duty to safeguard the welfare of children and young people;
  - maintain reasonable standards of behaviour whether inside or outside of normal school hours and whether on or off the School's site
- 4.6 All governors should raise any concerns relating to female genital mutilation (FGM) with the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- 4.8 It is expected that governors will follow all School policies in the execution of their duties. Failure to do so could be construed as misconduct.

## **5.0 GOVERNOR / STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS**

- 5.1 Allegations of unprofessional conduct or improper contact or words can arise at any time. Professionalism and vigilance are required so as to ensure the safety of children in our care, and to reduce the risk of an allegation of impropriety against a governor. This guidance applies to all governors.
- 5.2 It is a grave breach of trust, which may lead to criminal prosecution and will be considered to be gross misconduct for a governor to have a sexual relationship or sexual contact with any students or encourage a relationship to develop in a way which might lead to a sexual relationship (grooming) or have sexually-inappropriate conversations with or in front of a student.

## **6.0 GENERAL CONDUCT**

- 6.1 **School property:** Governors must take proper care when using school property and they must not use school property for any unauthorised use or for private gain. Such authority to use school property may be gained from a member of the Senior Leadership Team.
- 6.2 **Use of premises:** Governors must not carry out any work or activity on school premises other than pursuant to the terms and conditions of governorship without the prior permission of the Head Master or the Chair of Governors.
- 6.3 In every case, it is expected that governors who are visiting the School, for a reason other than a board meeting or sub-committee meeting, will give the Head Master prior notification of the visit, including the purpose of the visit.

## **7.0 MEETINGS WITH STUDENTS**

- 7.1 If a governor wishes to conduct a meeting with a student, he/she should inform a member of the Senior Management Team or the student's Hm of the requirement for the meeting and hold the meeting in compliance with school policy. Of course, this clause, and other clauses in this Code, are not intended to preclude normal social occasions involving, for example, children of fellow parents who are family friends.

Guidance can be sought from the Designated Safeguarding Lead, whose advice on the matter is final.

- 7.2 It is accepted that the children of governors may at times invite their friends to their homes and as a result there is the possibility of students visiting. In these instances, governors are reminded to comply with this Code of Conduct. Overnight stays are permitted and if concerns arise as a result of an overnight stay, the Designated Safeguarding Lead should be informed.

## **8.0 LANGUAGE AND APPEARANCE**

- 8.1 **Language:** Governors should use appropriate language at all times, especially when communicating with students.
- 8.2 **Dress:** Governors should dress appropriately and in a professional manner. Dress must not be offensive, distracting, revealing, sexually provocative, embarrassing or discriminatory. Political or other contentious slogans or badges should be avoided.

## **9.0 PHYSICAL CONTACT (See Discipline and Rewards Policy)**

- 9.1 Governors should not make physical contact with students apart from during normal greetings and goodbyes.
- 9.2 All instances of physical contact, including accidental contact, should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately.

## **10.0 CODE OF CONDUCT FOR CONDUCT OUTSIDE SCHOOL**

- 10.1 Governors should avoid unnecessary contact with students outside school (but see clause 10.2). Governors should avoid personal contact with individual or groups of students, unless absolutely necessary and with the assent of the Hm or Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- 10.2 **Friendships with parents, guardians or carers and students:** Governors who are friends with parents, guardians or carers of students will of course have contact with those students outside school. However, it is important that governors conduct themselves in a manner that befits their responsibility to the School.
- 10.3 Governors should not discuss operational or strategic matters relating to the School with social contacts or family members, unless this information is already in the public domain. The Chairman or Head Master must be made aware of any approach made by current or former parents to a governor and the governor must not divulge privileged information nor engage in speculation or gossip.

## **11.0 COMMUNICATION**

- 11.1 All e-mail communication on School matters should be via the governor's Rugby School e-mail account, taking full account of GDPR requirements.
- 11.2 Governors should not use messaging services or other social media to contact staff or

students, other than when necessary to execute their governance role.

## **12.0 CODE OF CONDUCT FOR PHOTOGRAPHS AND VIDEOS**

- 12.1 Permission required:** Governors should seek permission from the Deputy Head or Designated Safeguarding Lead before taking photographs or video camera footage of any students in class, at any school events or on a trip. They should also seek permission before displaying these photographs. See the Rugby School Images Policy.
- 12.2 Personal social media:** Governors must not publish anything which could identify students, parents or guardians on any personal social media account, personal webpage or similar platform without the prior consent of the Head Master in writing. This includes photos, videos, or other materials such as student work. Any queries should be directed to the Marketing Department or Deputy Head.

## **13.0 GIFTS AND REWARDS**

- 13.1 Anti-bribery and corruption policy:** Before accepting or giving any gifts or rewards, governors must familiarise themselves with the Anti-Bribery and Corruption Policy available on the Governor's Portal.
- 13.2 If a gift is received:** If a governor receives a gift from a student or parent they should:
- declare the gift where there is a possibility it could be misconstrued to the Chief Operating Officer (COO). The COO at their absolute discretion may require them to decline the gift;
  - act in accordance with the Anti Bribery and Corruption Policy; and
  - decline outright gifts that could be perceived as a bribe or that have created an expectation of preferential treatment. Although it is accepted for parents, guardians or carers or children to make small gifts to show appreciation, governors must not receive gifts on a regular basis or receive anything of significant value.
- 13.3** Governors should not give gifts or rewards to students under any circumstances.

## **14.0 REPORTING OBLIGATIONS**

- 14.1 Termination of governorship:** If the School ceases to use the services of a governor because they are unsuitable to work with children, a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service will be made promptly if the criteria for a referral are met. Any such incidents will be followed by a review of the safeguarding procedures within the School, with a report being presented to the Governors without delay. The School may also need to consider a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service if a governor is suspended, or deployed to another area of work that is not regulated activity.
- 14.2 Resignation:** If a governor tenders his or her resignation, or ceases to provide his or her services to the School at a time when child protection concerns exist in relation to that person, those concerns will still be investigated in full by the School and a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service will be made promptly, if the criteria for a referral are met.

## **15.0 BREACHES OF THE POLICY**

- 15.1 Breaches of this policy by any governor will be dealt with under a disciplinary procedure and, in serious cases, may be treated as gross misconduct leading to summary termination of their governorship.

## **16.0 RELATED POLICIES**

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Discipline and Rewards Policy

Equal Opportunities Policy

Images Policy

Pre-employment and Vetting Policy

Whistleblowing Policy

## **17.0 UPDATES**

This Code of Conduct will be updated by the Deputy Head from time to time as guidance changes and at least every two years.

<b>Authorised by the Compliance Committee</b>
<b>Date:</b> 22 September 2021