



RUGBY  
SCHOOL  
GROUP

## Code of Conduct

September 2024

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Relationships with fellow Staff, staff members, governors, trustees, contractors, visitors, students and their parents, guardians or carers must be reasonable and mutually respectful at all times. The purpose of this Code is to:
- 1.1.1 place the welfare of children at the centre of the Rugby School Group's and its culture;
  - 1.1.2 confirm and reinforce the professional responsibilities of all Staff;
  - 1.1.3 clarify the legal position in relation to sensitive aspects of Staff / student relationships and communication including the use of social media;
  - 1.1.4 set out the expectations of standards and behaviour to be maintained within the Rugby School Group; and
  - 1.1.5 help adults establish safe practices and reduce the risk of false accusations or improper conduct.

## 2 SCOPE

- 2.1 This Code of Conduct (including its Appendices) (**Code**) applies to all Staff working at Rugby School Group, whether paid or unpaid, whatever their position, role or responsibilities and Staff includes employees, governors, trustees, contractors, work experience / placement students and volunteers (Staff). All Staff will be required to read and accept they have understood and will abide by this policy.
- 2.2 This Code must be read in conjunction with the Group's policies including the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures, the Whistleblowing Policy, and the guidance set out at Appendix 1.
- 2.3 It is the contractual duty of every member of Staff to observe the rules and obligations in this Code. You must also follow the Guidance. The Rugby School Group 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.
- 2.4 All Staff are under a duty to report their own wrongdoing, or any wrongdoing or proposed wrongdoing of any other member of Staff or any conduct which they may suspect to be inappropriate. This duty applies even if the concern is no more than one which causes a sense of unease or a nagging doubt. Staff are under a duty to report suspected, known or proposed wrongdoing in conjunction with the Rugby School Group's policies including the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures, and the whistleblowing policy. This includes suspected, known or proposed wrongdoing brought to the attention of a member of staff by a student, parent or other adult.
- 2.5 Some of the behaviours contained in this Code (and in particular at Appendix 2) may indicate that a child has been, or is currently being, abused, exploited or neglected. Any incident involving children that could give cause for concern, must always be reported promptly in accordance with the Rugby School Group's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures.

- 2.6 Comprehensive records are essential. All concerns, discussions and decisions made and the reasons for those decisions must be recorded in writing. Records must include a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern, details of how the concern was followed up and resolved, a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome. Information must be kept confidential and stored securely. Any incident involving children that could give cause for concern, must always be reported promptly to a Designated Safeguarding Lead in accordance with the Group's child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures. If there is any doubt about recording requirements this must be discussed with a Designated Safeguarding Lead.

### **3 GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR STAFF**

- 3.1 The Rugby School Group prioritises the welfare of children, its diverse and inclusive culture, and the maintenance of positive and professional relationships between Staff and fellow Staff, students and their parents, guardians and/or carers. All Staff must follow the guiding principles set out in this paragraph (Principles) and refer to the Appendices for further detail of the application of the Principles.

### **4 PUBLIC TRUST AND CONFIDENCE**

- 4.1 All Staff must maintain public trust and confidence in the Rugby School Group and in their profession by:
- 4.1.1 demonstrating honesty and integrity;
  - 4.1.2 understanding and upholding their duty to safeguard the welfare of children and young people;
  - 4.1.3 understanding and demonstrating fundamental British values as defined by the DfE as democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
  - 4.1.4 maintaining reasonable standards of behaviour whether inside or outside of normal Rugby School Group hours and whether on or off the Group's sites; and
  - 4.1.5 maintaining an effective learning environment.

### **5 APPROPRIATE STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS**

- 5.1 All Staff must put the well-being, development and progress of all students first by:
- 5.1.1 taking all reasonable steps to ensure the safety and well-being of students under their supervision, taking particular account of the detailed guidance at Appendix 2;
  - 5.1.2 using professional expertise and judgment to protect the best interests of students in their care;
  - 5.1.3 following the guidance at Appendix 3 to ensure they maintain appropriate, professional and effective student-staff relationships at all times; ensuring all interactions with students about political matters are conducted in a balanced and impartial way without promoting partisan political views, taking into account the guidance at Appendix 3;

- 5.1.4 following the guidance at Appendix 4 to ensure all communication with students and former students (including where technology is used) remains appropriate and professional at all times;
- 5.1.5 following the guidance at Appendix 5 in any situation where you are taking photo or video camera footage of a student or students;
- 5.1.6 demonstrating self-awareness and taking responsibility for their own actions and for providing help and support to students;
- 5.1.7 following the guidance at Appendix 6.6 in respect of the use of force or physical restraint on students, and Appendix 7 in respect of physical contact with students in other circumstances;
- 5.1.8 raising concerns about the practices of teachers or other professionals where these may have a negative impact on students' learning or progress, or may put students at risk;
- 5.1.9 being familiar and acting in accordance with the Group's safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures and the various Student behaviour policies;
- 5.1.10 reading and understanding Part 1, and where appropriate Annex A, of KCSIE (September 2024);
- 5.1.11 knowing the role, identity and contact details of the current Designated Safeguarding Lead and their Deputies;
- 5.1.12 knowing the role, identity and contact details of the Nominated Safeguarding Governor; and
- 5.1.13 being aware that they are in a position of trust (i.e. the adult is in a position of power or influence over the student due to their work); that the relationship is not a relationship between equals and that this position must never be used to intimidate, bully, humiliate, coerce or threaten students.

## **6 EQUALITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION**

- 6.1 All Staff must demonstrate respect for diversity and take steps to promote equality by:
  - 6.1.1 acting appropriately and in accordance with this Code and other relevant policies including the Rugby School Group's Harassment and Bullying Policy and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.
  - 6.1.2 demonstrate best practice in inclusive behaviour; and
  - 6.1.3 addressing issues of discrimination and bullying whenever they arise; and
  - 6.1.4 helping to create a fair and inclusive school environment.

## **7 UNITED STAFF BODY**

- 7.1 All Staff must work as part of a united Staff body by:
  - 7.1.1 developing productive and supportive relationships with colleagues;
  - 7.1.2 exercising any management responsibilities in a respectful, inclusive and fair manner;
  - 7.1.3 complying with all Rugby School Group policies and procedures;
  - 7.1.4 participating in the Rugby School Group's development and improvement activities;

- 7.1.5 recognising the role of the Rugby School Group in the life of the local community; and
- 7.1.6 upholding the Rugby School Group's reputation and standing within the local community and building trust and confidence in it.

## **8 LANGUAGE AND APPEARANCE**

8.1 You must use appropriate language at all times. You must:

- 8.1.1 avoid words or expressions that have any unnecessary sexual content or innuendo; avoid displays of affection either personally or in writing (e.g. messages in birthday cards, text messages, emails etc) or social media (see Social Media Policy);
- 8.1.2 avoid any form of aggressive or threatening words;
- 8.1.3 avoid any words or actions that are over-familiar;
- 8.1.4 not swear, blaspheme or use any sort of offensive language in front of students;
- 8.1.5 avoid the use of sarcasm, discriminatory or derogatory words when punishing or disciplining students and avoid making unprofessional personal comments about anyone. Any sanctions must be in accordance with the Rugby School Group's behaviour and discipline policies; and
- 8.1.6 be aware that some parts of the curriculum may raise sexually explicit subject matters. Care must be taken in subjects where rules / boundaries are relaxed (e.g. drama or art). Staff must have clear lesson plans and must take care to avoid overstepping personal and professional boundaries.

8.2 You must 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 are not allowed. Please refer to the schools Appearance Policy for more details.

## **9 GIFTS AND REWARDS**

9.1 Before accepting or giving any gifts or rewards, Staff must familiarise themselves with and follow the Group's Anti-bribery and Corruption Policy.

## **10 GENERAL CONDUCT**

10.1 You must take proper care when using Rugby School Group property and you must not use Rugby School Group property for any unauthorised use or for private gain.

10.2 You must not carry out any work or activity on Rugby School Group premises other than pursuant to your terms and conditions of employment without the prior permission of the Head Master.

10.3 You must be aware that the behaviour of your partner or other family members or any member of your household may raise concerns which could affect the welfare of a member of the Rugby School Group community, a member of the public, or bring the Rugby School Group into disrepute and you must bring any such behaviour to the immediate attention of the Rugby School Group. Such concerns will be given careful

consideration as to whether they constitute a potential risk to children at the Rugby School Group or its reputation.

## **11 ADDITIONAL PRINCIPLES FOR TEACHERS**

11.1 Teachers must take responsibility for maintaining the quality of their teaching practice by:

11.1.1 meeting the professional standards for teaching applicable to their role and position within the Rugby School Group;

11.1.2 reflecting on their current practice and seeking out opportunities to develop knowledge, understanding and skills;

11.1.3 helping students to become confident and successful learners; and

11.1.4 establishing productive relationships with parents, guardians or carers by:

(a) providing accessible and accurate information about their child's progress;

(b) involving them in important decisions about their child's education; and

(c) complying with this Code.

## **12 BREACHES OF THIS CODE**

12.1 The Rugby School Group will take appropriate action in accordance with its policies and procedures in the event of a breach of this Code.

12.2 In the event that a breach of this Code places the Rugby School Group under any reporting obligations, the guidance contained at Appendix 9 will apply.

## **13 RELATED POLICIES**

Equality, diversity and inclusion Policy

Pre-employment and Vetting Policy

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures

Whistleblowing Policy

Images Policy

Harassment and Bullying Policy

Student behaviour and discipline policies

Appearance Policy

Social Media Policy

Online Safety Policy

## **14 FURTHER INFORMATION**

Further information and guidance regarding this policy or its application can be obtained from the HR Department; [hr@rugbyschool.net](mailto:hr@rugbyschool.net).

## Appendix 1 RELEVANT POLICIES AND GUIDANCE

This Code has regard to the Rugby School Group's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures and the following guidance (collectively referred to in this Code as the Guidance):

- 1 Keeping children safe in education (September 2024) (KCSIE) (which refers to the non-statutory advice for practitioners: What to do if you're worried a child is being abused (March 2015));
- 2 Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 (August 2018);
- 3 Working together to safeguard children (July 2018, updated December 2020) (WT):
  - 3.1 WT refers to the non-statutory advice: Information sharing (July 2018).
- 4 Revised Prevent Duty Guidance: for England and Wales (April 2021) (Prevent). Prevent is supplemented by:
  - 4.1 The Prevent duty: Departmental advice for schools and childminders (June 2015);
  - 4.2 Channel Duty Guidance: Protecting vulnerable people from being drawn into terrorism (February 2021);
  - 4.3 The use of social media for online radicalisation (July 2015).
- 5 Guidance on female genital mutilation, to include:
  - 5.1 Multi-agency statutory guidance on female genital mutilation (July 2020);
  - 5.2 Home Office statutory guidance Mandatory Reporting of Female Genital Mutilation: procedural information (October 2015);
  - 5.3 Guidance published by the Department for Health which provides useful information and support for health professionals which will be taken into account by the Rugby School Group's medical staff.
- 6 Guidance on mental health, to include:
  - 6.1 Preventing and Tackling Bullying (July 2017);
  - 6.2 Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools (November 2018); and
  - 6.3 Promoting children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing (March 2015)
- 7 Political impartiality in schools (February 2022).
- 8 All other statutory policies relevant to Staff working at a School.

## **APPENDIX 2 PROTECTING CHILDREN FROM ABUSE, EXPLOITATION OR NEGLECT**

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 All Staff should know what to do if they suspect or are told a child is being abused, exploited or neglected. This Appendix provides more information on the kinds of abuse children may suffer both within and outside the home, and how Staff should respond.
- 1.2 The Rugby School Group encourages an open and transparent culture in which it may identify concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour early, minimise the risk of abuse and ensure that all Staff working in or on behalf of the Rugby School Group are clear about professional boundaries and act within these boundaries. All Staff should be aware of their responsibility in relation to even low-level concerns which should be reported in accordance with the Rugby School Group's raising allegations and concerns policy contained at Appendix 4 of the Rugby School Group's safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures and the guidance in Part 1 of KCSIE, September 2024.
- 1.3 If you are involved in a situation where no specific guidance exists, you should discuss the circumstances with the Designated Safeguarding Lead but always act within the spirit of these guidelines. A written record should be kept that includes justification for any action taken.

### **2.0 GENERAL GUIDANCE**

- 2.1 You should be aware of the general guidance that will apply in all cases of abuse, exploitation or neglect. In particular you:
  - 2.1.1 must be familiar with procedures for reporting concerns in accordance with the Rugby School Group's whistleblowing policy and be aware that if Staff raise concerns about working practices at the Rugby School Group to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or an appropriate senior member of Staff that they will be protected from detriment under the Whistleblowing Policy;
  - 2.1.2 must be familiar with the local reporting guidelines and the Local Safeguarding Partners reporting threshold document in respect of any concerns relating to children;
  - 2.1.3 must be familiar with procedures for handling allegations against Staff as set out in the Rugby School Group's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and procedures;
  - 2.1.4 must seek guidance from the Designated Safeguarding Lead if you are in any doubt about appropriate conduct; and
  - 2.1.5 must report any actions which could be misinterpreted, any misunderstandings, accidents or threats involving you and a student or a group of students to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- 2.2 You should take particular care when dealing with a student who:
  - 2.2.1 appears to be emotionally distressed, or generally vulnerable and / or who is seeking expressions of affection;
  - 2.2.2 appears to hold a grudge against you;



- 2.2.3 acts in a sexually provocative way, or who is inclined to make exaggerated claims about themselves and others, or to fantasise, or one whose manner with adults is over familiar; and
- 2.2.4 may have reason to make up an allegation to cover the fact that they have not worked hard enough for public examinations.

2.3 Some of these behaviours may be indications that a child has been, or is currently being, abused and should therefore be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead under the Rugby School Group's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and procedures.

### **3.0 DISCLOSURE OF ABUSE, EXPLOITATION OR NEGLECT**

3.1 All Staff should know what to do if a child tells them that they are being abused, exploited or neglected. All Staff should be able to reassure victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

3.2 Staff should know how to manage the requirement to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality. This means only involving those who need to be involved, such as the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy) and children's social care. Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of any form of abuse, as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child.

3.3 Staff should follow the appropriate Rugby School Group procedure, including the safeguarding and child protection policy, and/or the whistleblowing policy, in order to report a concern or an allegation that has been made.

### **4.0 SUSPICION OF ABUSE, EXPLOITATION OR NEGLECT**

4.1 Staff may from time to time suspect a child is suffering abuse exploitation or neglect within or outside the home. Staff should follow the appropriate Rugby School Group procedure, including the safeguarding and child protection policy (and particularly the raising allegations and concerns policy within the safeguarding and child protection policy), and/or the whistleblowing policy, in order to report any such concerns.

### **5.0 CHILD ON CHILD ABUSE**

5.1 Staff must be aware of the risks of child-on-child abuse and be familiar with procedures for handling allegations against other children and bullying as set out in the Rugby School Group's child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures. Examples of child-on-child abuse are bullying (including cyberbullying), physical abuse, sexual violence and sexual harassment, up skirting, the consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi nudes images and videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery) and initiation and hazing (which could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a

group and may include an online element especially around chat groups, and the sharing of abusive images and pornography).

## **6.0 MENTAL HEALTH CONCERNS**

- 6.1 Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Staff however, are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.
- 6.2 It is key that Staff are aware of how experiences such as abuse, neglect or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences can impact on a child's mental health, behaviour and education. All Staff should be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.
- 6.3 If Staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, following the Rugby School Group's child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures.

## **7.0 EXTRA-FAMILIAL HARM**

- 7.1 All Staff should be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the Rugby School Group and/or can occur between children outside of the Rugby School Group environment. All Staff, but especially the designated safeguarding lead (and deputies) should consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation, and serious youth violence.
- 7.2 All Staff must be aware of indicators that children are at risk from or are involved with serious violent crime. These may include being male, increased absence from school or having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from Rugby School Group, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, having experienced child maltreatment, having been involved in offending such as theft or robbery, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs.

## **8.0 TERRORISM AND EXTREMISM**

- 8.1 All Staff should understand that the Rugby School Group has a legal duty to have regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism, and consequently should be aware of:
- 8.1.2 what extremism and radicalisation means and why people - including students and fellow Staff members - may be vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism as a consequence of it;

- 8.1.3 what measures are available to prevent people from becoming drawn into terrorism and how to challenge the extremist ideology that can be associated with it; and
- 8.1.4 how to obtain support for people who may be being exploited by radicalising influences.

## **9.0 HONOUR BASED ABUSE AND FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION (FGM)**

- 9.1 All Staff should raise any concerns relating to so-called “honour” based abuse (to include FGM and forced marriage) with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and involve children’s social care as appropriate in accordance with the Rugby School Group's child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures. Teachers must also report to the police cases where they discover (either through disclosure by the victim or visual evidence) that an act of FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under the age of 18. The report should be made orally by calling 101, the single non-emergency number. It will be rare for teachers to see visual evidence, and they should not be examining students but those failing to report such cases will face disciplinary sanctions.

## **APPENDIX 3 GUIDANCE ON STAFF/STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS**

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 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 member of Staff. This guidance applies to all Staff.
- 1.2 The Rugby School Group supports and encourages the establishment and maintenance of positive working relationships between Staff and students in order to maintain a healthy school environment. Staff should build good rapport with students, whilst at the same time always maintaining professional boundaries by following the guidance in this Code.
- 1.3 Staff in charge or control of students must maintain good order and discipline at all times when students are present on Rugby School Group premises and whenever students are engaged in authorised Rugby School Group activities, whether on Rugby School Group premises or elsewhere.

### **2.0 MEETINGS WITH STUDENTS**

- 2.1 If you are teaching one student, or conducting a one-to-one meeting or teaching session with a student, you should take particular care in the following ways:
  - 2.1.1 when working alone with a student is an integral part of your role, conduct and agree full risk assessments with the Designated Safeguarding Lead or your Head of Department;
  - 2.1.2 use a room that has sufficient windows onto a corridor so the occupants can be seen, or keep the door open, or inform a colleague that the lesson / meeting is taking place;
  - 2.1.3 arrange the meeting during normal Rugby School Group hours when there are plenty of other people about;
  - 2.1.4 do not continue the meeting for any longer than is necessary to achieve its purpose;
  - 2.1.5 avoid sitting or standing in close proximity to the student, except as necessary to check work;
  - 2.1.6 avoid using "engaged" or equivalent signs on doors or windows;  
avoid idle discussion;
  - 2.1.7 avoid all unnecessary physical contact and apologise straight away if there is accidental physical contact;
  - 2.1.8 avoid any conduct that could be taken as a sexual advance;
  - 2.1.9 report any incident that causes you concern to the Designated Safeguarding Lead under the Rugby School Group's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and procedures, and make a written record (signed and dated); and
  - 2.1.10 report any situation where a student becomes distressed or angry to the Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as the meeting has finished.

### **3.0 CONTACT WITH STUDENTS' OUTSIDE RUGBY SCHOOL GROUP**

- 3.1 Pre-arranged meetings with students outside Rugby School Group are not permitted unless approval is obtained from their parents, guardians or carers and the Deputy Head or Designated Safeguarding Lead. If you are holding such a meeting, you should inform colleagues before the meeting.
- 3.2 You should avoid unnecessary contact with students outside Rugby School Group. You should:
- 3.1.1 not give students your home address, home telephone number, mobile telephone number or email address;
  - 3.1.2 not send personal communications (such as birthday cards or faith cards, text messages etc) to children unless agreed with the Deputy Head or Head Master;
  - 3.1.3 not make arrangements to meet students, individually or in groups, outside Rugby School Group other than on Rugby School Group trips authorised by the Deputy Head Co-Curricular or equivalent;
  - 3.1.4 avoid contacting students at home unless this is strictly necessary, and you should keep a record of any such occasion;
  - 3.1.5 not give a student a lift in your own vehicle other than on Rugby School Group business and with permission from the Designated Safeguarding Lead;
  - 3.1.6 avoid inviting students (groups or individuals) to your home unless there is a good reason and it has been approved by Deputy Head or Head Master. This prohibition also applies if you have on site accommodation;
  - 3.1.7 report and record any situation which may place a child at risk or which may compromise the Rugby School Group's or your professional standing;
  - 3.1.8 ensure that students do not see anything in your home that may cause embarrassment or that might become the subject of inappropriate gossip or rumour; and
  - 3.1.9 never engage in secretive social contact with students or their parents, guardians or carers.

### **4.0 HOME VISITS**

- 4.1 In limited circumstances, home visits may be necessary. You should:
- 4.1.1 discuss the purpose of any visit with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and adhere to any agreed work plan / contract;
  - 4.1.2 follow the risk management strategy and ensure appropriate risk assessments are in place. Where there is insufficient information to complete a risk assessment, ensure that you are accompanied by a colleague;
  - 4.1.3 not visit unannounced if this can be avoided;
  - 4.1.4 leave the door open where you will be alone with students;
  - 4.1.5 keep records detailing times of arrival and departure, and work undertaken;
  - 4.1.6 ensure that any behaviour or situation that gives rise to a concern is reported and actioned;
  - 4.1.7 discuss with the Designated Safeguarding Lead anything that gives cause for concern in accordance with the Rugby School Group's child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures; and
  - 4.1.8 have a mobile telephone and an emergency contact.

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## **5.0 THE USE OF PERSONAL LIVING SPACE**

- 5.1 Students should not be in or invited into the personal living space of any member of Staff, unless agreed with the parents, guardians or carers and the Deputy Head / Designated Safeguarding Lead. It is accepted that children of Staff (whether in Rugby School Group accommodation or not) may at times invite their friends to their homes. In these instances, Staff are reminded to comply with this Code, must ensure that the Deputy Head and Designated Safeguarding Lead is informed in advance and that any overnight visit is subject to a written risk assessment. See also clause 5.3.
- 5.2 Students should not be asked to assist with chores or tasks in the personal living space. Personal living spaces should not be used as an additional resource for the Rugby School Group. This also applies to on site Staff accommodation.
- 5.3 Staff should not use Rugby School Group pupils as babysitters for their own or for others' children.
- 5.4 Boarding and day houses, where the Resident Staff live in, may have living quarters which include areas which current and prospective students and parents can be invited into under supervision. This is in order for communication between the relevant parties to be effective and at times confidential and to allow for entertaining of parents and students in line with the Rugby School Group's guidelines for Resident Staff.

## **6.0 SOCIAL CONTACT**

- 6.1 You should be aware that where you meet children or parents, guardians or carers socially, such contact could be misinterpreted as inappropriate, an abuse of a position of trust or as grooming. Any social contact that could give rise to concern should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, the Deputy Head, or the Head Master.
- 6.2 Members of Staff who are friends with parents, guardians or carers of students or who, for example, are voluntary workers in youth organisations attended by students, will of course have contact with those students outside Rugby School Group. However, members of Staff should still respect the above advice wherever possible and should keep the Head of Safeguarding or Head informed of such relationships.
- 6.3 The same guidelines should be applied to after School clubs, Rugby School Group trips, and especially trips that involve an overnight stay away from the Rugby School Group. There are separate, more detailed guidelines for Rugby School Group trips in the educational visits policy. The principles of this guidance also apply to contact with children or young people who are students at another school.

## **7.0 TRANSPORT, AFTER RUGBY SCHOOL GROUP ACTIVITIES AND EDUCATIONAL VISITS**

- 7.1 There may be some situations when Staff are required to transport students. You should:
- 7.1.1 ensure that you are fit to drive and free from any substances that may impair your judgement or ability to drive;
  - 7.1.2 be aware that until the student is passed over to a parent / carer, you have responsibility for that student's health and safety;

- 7.1.3 record the details of the journey;
- 7.1.4 record, be able to justify impromptu or emergency lifts and notify the Designated Safeguarding Lead;
- 7.1.5 ensure that there are proper arrangements in place to ensure vehicle, passenger and driver safety, including appropriate insurance, seat belts, adherence to maximum capacity guidelines etc; and
- 7.1.6 wherever practicable, you should avoid using private vehicles and should try and have one adult additional to the driver to act as an escort.

7.3 When taking part in educational visits, you should:

- 7.2.1 follow the Rugby School Group's educational visits manual;
- 7.2.2 be accompanied by another adult unless otherwise agreed with the Deputy Head Co-Curricular or equivalent;
- 7.2.3 undertake a risk assessment; and
- 7.2.4 obtain parental consent.

## **8.0. OVERNIGHT SUPERVISION**

8.2 Where overnight supervision is required:

- 8.2.1 you should ensure that a risk assessment has been undertaken and that all members of the household have had the appropriate checks;
- 8.2.2 arrangements should be made with and agreed by parents, guardians or carers and the student;
- 8.2.3 one to one supervision should be avoided where possible;
- 8.2.4 choice, flexibility and contact with "the outside world" should be incorporated, so far as it is consistent with appropriate supervision and the Rugby School Group's guidelines;
- 8.2.5 whenever possible, independent oversight of the arrangements should be made; and
- 8.2.6 any misinterpretation, misunderstanding or complaint should be reported.

## **9.0 INAPPROPRIATE RELATIONSHIPS**

9.1 Staff must not:

- 12.1.1 have any type of sexual relationship with any student;
- 12.1.2 have sexually suggestive or provocative communications with a student;
- 12.1.3 make sexual remarks to or about a student; and
- 12.1.4 discuss their own sexual relationships in the presence of students.

9.2 Sexual relationships or sexual contact with any students, or encouraging a relationship to develop in a way which might lead to a sexual relationship or any relationship just considered inappropriate with any student at the Rugby School Group is a grave breach of trust that will usually lead to disciplinary action and may also lead to criminal prosecution. It is the criminal offence of an abuse of a position of trust to have any sexual relationship with any Rugby School Group student under the age of 18, and whilst not a criminal offence, it is a breach of this Code and considered to be gross

misconduct to have a sexual relationship with any student from the Rugby School Group, even if over the age of 18.

- 9.3 Forming inappropriate personal relationships with children or young people who are students or students at another school will be a criminal offence if they are under 16 but may also be a criminal offence if under the age of 18 and will be regarded as gross misconduct. Such behaviour tends to bring the Rugby School Group into disrepute and gives rise to concern that the Staff involved cannot be trusted to maintain professional boundaries with students and students at the Rugby School Group. Whilst not necessarily a criminal offence, the Rugby School Group considers it unacceptable for Staff to form inappropriate personal relationships with a student from any school, irrespective of their age.



## **APPENDIX 4 COMMUNICATING WITH STUDENTS AND FORMER PUPILS (including the use of technology)**

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

1.1 All communication with students, former students or parents, guardians or carers should conform to Rugby School Group policy and be limited to professional matters. Except in an emergency communication should only be made using Rugby School Group property. Colleagues are requested to make the Designated Safeguarding Lead aware of contacts which may not fit the policy.

### **2.0 SCOPE**

2.1 These rules apply to any form of communication including new technologies (including 3G / 4G/ 5G technologies) such as mobile telephones, web-cameras, social networking websites and blogs. You should also ensure you comply with the more detailed, Online Safety policy and Social Media policy.

### **3.0 DEALING WITH “CRUSHES”**

3.1 Crushes, fixations or infatuations are part of normal adolescent development. However, they need sensitive handling to avoid allegations of exploitation. Such crushes carry a high risk of words, actions and expressions being misinterpreted, therefore, the highest levels of professionalism are required. If you suspect that a student or a former student has a crush on you or on another colleague you should bring it to the attention of the Designated Safeguarding Lead at the earliest opportunity.

3.2 Suggestions that a student or a former student may have developed a crush should be recorded. Staff should avoid being alone with students who have developed a crush on them and if the student sends personal communications to the member of Staff, this should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and recorded.

### **4.0 ACCEPTABLE USE**

4.1 Adults must establish safe and responsible online behaviours and must comply with the Online Safety Policy and Social Media policy. Adults should report to senior colleagues, any new and emerging technologies which may have a bearing on Rugby School Group practices and on the review of the Online Safety Policy. Local and national guidelines on acceptable user policies should be followed. Staff should also:

4.1.1 ensure that your own personal social networking sites are set as private and ensure that students and former students are not approved contacts;

4.1.2 ensure that you do not use any website or application, whether on a Rugby School Group or personal device, which publicly identifies your location while on Rugby School Group premises or otherwise in the course of your employment;

4.1.3 never use or access social networking sites of students or former students and do not use internet or web-based communication channels to send personal messages to students;

- 4.1.5 never use your own equipment (e.g. mobile telephones) to communicate with students or former students - use equipment provided by the Rugby School Group and ensure that parents, guardians or carers have given permission;
- 4.1.6 only make contact with students or former students for professional reasons; and
- 4.1.7 recognise that text messaging should only be used as part of an agreed protocol and only when other forms of communication are not possible.
- 4.1.8 Staff must communicate with groups of students only using Rugby School Groups communications tools, that is email or Teams, in order to safeguard students, establish their whereabouts, or communicate important information.

## **5.0 PERSONAL DETAILS**

- 5.1 Adults must not give their personal contact details to students or former students, including email addresses, home or mobile telephone numbers, unless the need to do so is agreed with the Deputy Head or Designated Safeguarding Lead and parents, guardians or carers.

## **6.0 PERSONAL MOBILE TELEPHONES AND ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

- 6.1 It is understood that Staff may need to check text messages and / or personal emails in the case of an emergency or during break times. Personal use must not interfere with your work commitments (or those of others). It is a privilege and not a right. Staff shall set an example and shall never use their own personal mobile telephones or other electronic devices whilst they are on duty (whether in a classroom or otherwise) and any such mobile devices should be switched off except in the case of an emergency and be kept out of sight of parents or students.
- 6.2 Email or text communications between an adult and any student or former students outside agreed protocols may lead to a report to external agencies in accordance with the Rugby School Group's child protection and safeguarding policy and procedures, disciplinary action and / or criminal investigations. This also includes communications through internet-based websites.

## **7.0 POLITICAL IMPARTIALITY**

- 7.1 You must not promote partisan political views to students, whether as part of the curriculum, in any extra-curricular activity or in general conversation or other interaction inside or outside Rugby School Group. This means you must not encourage students to support or adopt particular political views and must present any political views in a balanced way that ensures opposing views are aired.
- 7.2 Although you must not promote partisan political views to students, there are some concepts and views that are shared principles that underpin our society, rather than political views. These shared values include fundamental rights, tolerance and challenging discrimination and prejudice. Shared values must be reinforced by all staff.

If you are in any doubt about whether a particular topic is a political issue or a shared value, you should seek guidance from your line manager in the first instance.

- 7.3 Communication with former students: the school is aware that as a result of its strong sense of community, former students may wish to keep in touch with us after they leave. This is supported through the school's alumni, as the School wishes to support the growth of an ever stronger community. As a precaution and to protect you however, the guidance in this policy also applies to contact with former students. To the extent that it is necessary to have contact with former students (for example if arranging a careers fair or writing a future reference), you must use your School email address and ensure that communication remains professional at all times. Using personal social media and email accounts creates risk of allegations about the abuse of power in a former Staff/student relationship, or even of a former student being groomed. This risk is not time limited and may be alleged at any time. Indeed the sector is increasingly aware of former students making allegations at other schools. So to protect yourself, you must not use your personal social media or email to maintain contact with former students of the School. These guidelines are designed to protect you from potentially career-ending allegations. Should any former pupil make personal contact with you, you must notify the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately and follow guidance issued to you in order to ensure the School email system is used for a professional response.
- 7.4 Please note the Group sees the use of LinkedIn as a professional network that is useful for our students in terms of their future careers. If you link with students using this medium you must ensure that your profile is up to date with your correct school job title and school contact details are that these are clearly visible. You must not use the chat functionality within this medium to speak with current or former students and any communications made through LinkedIn must use your school email contact details so there is an auditable trail if it is required.
- 7.5 Staff are advised not to make any contact via social media with former students for three years after the equivalent school leaving age. If in any doubt staff are advised to speak with the Deputy Head and/or Designated Safeguarding Lead before any communications/links are made.

## **APPENDIX 5 PHOTOGRAPHS AND VIDEOS**

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 You should refer to the School's Images Policy, which lays out the protocols for the taking and processing of images.

### **2.0 APPROPRIATE MATERIAL**

- 2.1 The Rugby School Group recognises that many children have unlimited and unrestricted access to the internet via 3G, 4G and 5G. You must ensure children are not exposed to inappropriate or indecent images. Viewing, retrieving or downloading of pornographic, terrorist or extremist material, or any other material which the Rugby School Group believes is unsuitable is strictly prohibited and constitutes gross misconduct. This includes at any time when on Rugby School Group premises or otherwise in the course of your employment, including using the Rugby School Group's ICT network, or via 3G, 4G and 5G whether or not on a Rugby School Group or personal device. You should not allow unauthorised access to Rugby School Group equipment and should keep your computer passwords safe. If you discover material that is potentially illegal or inappropriate, you must isolate the equipment and contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead in accordance with the Rugby School Group's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures immediately. Students must not be exposed to unsuitable material on the internet and Staff should ensure that any film or material shown is age appropriate.

### **3.0 YOUTH PRODUCED IMAGERY**

- 3.1 Where safeguarding incidents involve youth produced sexual imagery, staff must not intentionally view or forward sexual imagery reported to them and will follow the Rugby School Group's policy on sharing nudes and semi-nude images and videos as set out in Appendix 3 of the Rugby School Group's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures and Searching, screening and confiscation: advice for schools (DfE, July 2022).

## **APPENDIX 6 THE USE OF FORCE OR PHYSICAL RESTRAINT**

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

1.1 All forms of corporal punishment are unlawful and the use of unwarranted physical force is likely to constitute a criminal offence. Corporal punishment must never be used by any member of staff. The use of physical intervention should be avoided if possible. There are circumstances when it is appropriate for Staff to use force to safeguard children. This is enshrined in law and applies to any member of Staff at the Rugby School Group. It can also apply to people whom the Head has temporarily put in charge of students such as unpaid volunteers or parents accompanying students on a Rugby School Group organised visit.

### **2.0 APPLICATION**

2.1 Physical restraint must only be used where no other form of control is available and where it is necessary to intervene. The use of force or physical contact must be reasonable and proportionate to the circumstances in order to prevent a student from doing, or continuing to do any of the following:

2.1.1 committing a criminal offence;

2.1.2 injuring themselves or others;

2.1.3 causing damage to property, including their own; or

2.1.4 engaging in any behaviour prejudicial to good order and discipline at the Rugby School Group or among any of its students, whether that behaviour occurs in a classroom or elsewhere.

2.2 Before intervening physically you should, wherever practicable, tell the student to stop and what will happen if he or she does not. You should continue attempting to communicate with the student throughout the incident and should make it clear that physical contact or restraint will stop as soon as it ceases to be necessary. You should always avoid touching or holding a student in a way that might be considered indecent. You should also avoid any form of aggressive contact such as holding, pushing, pulling or hitting which could amount to a criminal assault, and must not act in a way that might reasonably be expected to cause injury.

2.3 You should inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Head Master immediately following an incident where force has been used. This is to help prevent any misunderstanding or misrepresentation of the incident, and it will be helpful in the event of a complaint. You should provide a written report as soon as possible afterwards. This should include written and signed accounts of those involved, including the student. The parents, guardians or carers of the student should be informed about serious incidents involving the use of force. In the EYFS setting, the parents, guardians or carers will be informed about any use of force on the same day or as soon as reasonably practicable. The DSL or Head Master will advise as to when parents should be contacted.

- 2.4 The law allows anyone to defend themselves against an attack provided they do not use more force than is necessary. Similarly, where a student is at risk of immediate injury or on the point of inflicting injury on someone else, any member of Staff (whether authorised or not) would be entitled to intervene.

### **3.0 USING REASONABLE FORCE**

- 3.1 There is no legal definition of "reasonable force". It will always depend on the circumstances. The term "reasonable force" covers the broad range of actions used by staff that involve a degree of physical contact to control or restrain children. This can range from guiding a child to safety by the arm, to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or where a young person needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury. "Reasonable" in these circumstances means "using no more force than is needed". The use of force may involve either passive physical contact, such as standing between students or blocking a student's path, or active physical contact such as leading a student by the arm out of the classroom. Note that:
- 3.1.1 any use of force should be proportionate to the behaviour of the student involved and the seriousness of the harm prevented;
  - 3.1.2 you should recognise the additional vulnerability of children with SEN, disabilities and certain medical conditions before using reasonable force;
  - 3.1.3 physical force could not be justified to prevent a student from committing a trivial misdemeanour;
  - 3.1.4 any force should always be the minimum needed to achieve the desired result; and
  - 3.1.5 whether it is reasonable to use force and the degree of force that could be reasonably employed might also depend on the age, understanding and sex of the student.

## **APPENDIX 7 PHYSICAL CONTACT WITH STUDENTS**

You are referred to Appendix 6 for specific guidance on the use of force or physical restraint against students. The guidance in this Appendix concerns physical contact in other circumstances.

### **1.0 WHEN PHYSICAL FORCE MAY BE APPROPRIATE**

1.1 Physical contact with a student may be necessary and beneficial in order to demonstrate a required action, or a correct technique in, for example, singing and other music lessons or during PE, sports and games. Any physical contact should be in response to the student's needs, of limited duration and appropriate to the student's age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background. Physical contact can be easily misinterpreted and should be limited. Staff should use professional judgement.

### **2.0 GUIDANCE ON USING PHYSICAL FORCE**

2.1 You should observe the following guidelines (where applicable):

- 2.1.1 explain the intended action to the student;
- 2.1.2 do not proceed with the action if the student appears to be apprehensive or reluctant, or if you have other concerns about the student's likely reaction;
- 2.1.3 ensure the physical contact continues for as short a time as possible;
- 2.1.4 ensure that the door is open and if you are in any doubt, ask a colleague or another student to be present during the demonstration; and
- 2.1.5 consider alternatives if it appears likely that the student might misinterpret the contact.

2.2 If you are at all concerned about any instance of physical contact, inform the Head of Safeguarding, the Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Head Master without delay, and make a written record in the incident book and on the student's file if necessary.

### **3.0 OFFERING COMFORT TO DISTRESSED STUDENTS**

3.1 Touching may be appropriate where a student is in distress and needs comforting. You should use your own professional judgement when you feel a student needs this kind of support and should be aware of any special circumstances relating to the student. For example, a child who has been abused may find physical contact particularly difficult. You should always notify the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), or the Head Master when comfort has been offered, record the action and should seek guidance if unsure whether it would be appropriate in a particular case.

### **4.0 ADMINISTERING FIRST AID**

4.1 When administering first aid you should explain to the child what is happening and ensure that another adult is present or is aware of the action being taken. The treatment must meet the Rugby School Group's health and safety at work rules and intimate care guidelines, and parents, guardians or carers should be informed. Staff should:

- 4.1.2 adhere to the Rugby School Group's policies on first aid and administering medication;
- 4.1.3 comply with the necessary reporting requirements;
- 4.1.4 make other adults aware of the task that is being undertaken;
- 4.1.5 explain what is happening;
- 4.1.6 report and record the administration of first aid;
- 4.1.7 have regard to any health plans; and
- 4.1.8 ensure that an appropriate health / risk assessment is undertaken prior to undertaking certain activities.

## **5.0 STUDENTS ENTITLEMENT TO PRIVACY**

- 5.1 Children are entitled to privacy when changing or showering. However there still must be an appropriate level of supervision to ensure safety. You should:
  - 5.1.2 avoid physical contact or visually intrusive behaviour when children are undressed;
  - 5.1.3 announce yourself when entering changing rooms and avoid remaining unless required;
  - 5.1.4 not shower or change in the same place as children; and
  - 5.1.5 not assist with any personal care task which a student can undertake themselves.

## **6.0 INTIMATE CARE**

- 6.1 Sometimes intimate care is required, for example when assisting with toileting or removing wet clothes. You should:
  - 6.1.1 comply with the Rugby School Group's intimate care guidelines;
  - 6.1.2 advise other Staff of the task being undertaken and consult where there is any change from the agreed procedure. A record should be kept of the justification for any variations and this information should be shared with parents, guardians or carers;
  - 6.1.3 explain to the child what is happening;
  - 6.1.4 comply with applicable professional codes of practice, as appropriate; and
  - 6.1.5 comply with regularly reviewed, formally agreed plans, as appropriate.]

## **7.0 WHERE A CHILD HAS BEEN ABUSED**

- 7.1 Where a child has previously been abused, Staff should be informed on a "need to know" basis and should be extra cautious when considering the necessity of physical contact. Some children may seek inappropriate physical contact. Staff should sensitively deter the student and help them understand the importance of personal boundaries. Such incidents should be reported and discussed with the Designated Safeguarding Lead and where appropriate parents, guardians or carers.

## **8.0 CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OR DISABILITIES**

- 8.1 Some children may need more physical contact to assist their everyday learning, which should be agreed and understood by all concerned, justified, openly applied and open to scrutiny. The Designated Safeguarding Lead will establish whether any reasonable adjustments are required for such students.



## APPENDIX 8 CHILDCARE DISQUALIFICATION

- 1 **Offence:** The Childcare Act 2006 and the Childcare (Disqualification) and Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlement) (Amendment) Regulations 2018 state that it is an offence for the Rugby School Group to employ anyone to provide childcare in connection with our early years provision (EYP) or later years provision (LYP) who is disqualified, or for a disqualified person to be directly involved in the management of EYP or LYP (a Relevant Role).
- 2 **EYP** includes usual school activities and any other supervised activity for a "young child" which takes place on the Rugby School Group premises during or outside of the normal Rugby School Group day (a child is a "young child" during the period between birth and up to 1 September following their fifth birthday).
- 3 **LYP** includes provision for children not in EYP and under the age of 8 which takes place on Rugby School Group premises outside of the normal Rugby School Group day, including, for example breakfast clubs, after school clubs and holiday clubs. It does not include extended school hours for co-curricular activities such as sports activities.
- 4 **"Childcare"** means any form of care for a child, which includes education and any other supervised activity for a "young child". "Childcare" in LYP does not include education during Rugby School Group hours but does cover before and after school clubs.
- 5 **Grounds for disqualification:** The grounds on which a person will be disqualified from working in connection with EYP or LYP are set out in the Rugby School Group's recruitment, selection and disclosure policy and procedure. Staff are required to familiarise themselves with this document.
- 6 **Duty of disclosure:** Staff in a Relevant Role are under an on-going duty to immediately notify the Rugby School Group if their circumstances change so that they meet any of the criteria for disqualification at any point during their employment with the Rugby School Group. Any failure to disclose relevant information will be treated as a serious disciplinary matter.
- 7 **Ofsted:** Where the Rugby School Group receives disqualification information about a member of Staff working in a Relevant Role and is satisfied that the member of Staff may be disqualified as a consequence, the Rugby School Group is under a duty to report the circumstances of the disqualification to Ofsted.
- 8 **Waiver:** A member of Staff who discloses information which appears to disqualify them from working in a Relevant Role may apply to Ofsted for a waiver of the disqualification.

## **APPENDIX 9 REPORTING OBLIGATIONS**

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The Rugby School Group's position: It is a contractual requirement as well as in your interests to follow the Code of Conduct to maintain appropriate standards of behaviour and your own professional reputation. A breach of this Code may be treated as misconduct and will render you liable to disciplinary action including in serious cases, dismissal.
- 1.2 All staff are trained so that they understand they are expected and encouraged to raise concerns they have, whether related to the safeguarding and welfare of students, the conduct of staff or other matters, during the course of their employment in accordance with the Rugby School Group's policies (including the whistleblowing policy, the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures and this Code). Safeguarding children is at the centre of the Rugby School Group's culture.

### **2.0 CHILDCARE DISQUALIFICATIONS**

- 2.1 The Rugby School Group is prohibited from employing anyone to provide childcare in connection with our early years provision (EYP) or later years provision (LYP) who is disqualified, or for a disqualified person to be directly involved in the management of EYP or LYP. You are referred to Appendix 8 for more information on childcare disqualification.

### **3.0 TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT**

- 3.1 If the Rugby School Group ceases to use the services of a member of Staff because they are unsuitable to work with children, a settlement agreement (formerly known as a compromise agreement) will not be used and 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 Rugby School Group, with a report being presented to the Governors without delay. The Rugby School Group may also need to consider a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service if a member of Staff is suspended, or deployed to another area of work that is not regulated activity.
- 3.2 If a member of Staff tenders their resignation, or ceases to provide their services to the Rugby School Group at a time when child protection concerns exist in relation to that person, those concerns will still be investigated in full by the Rugby School Group and a referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service will be made promptly if the criteria for a referral are met.

- 3.3 **Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA):** Separate consideration will also be given to making a referral to the TRA where a teacher has been dismissed (or would have been dismissed had he or she not resigned) because of unacceptable professional conduct, conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute, or a conviction at any time for a relevant offence. An interim referral to the TRA may also be considered and made if appropriate.