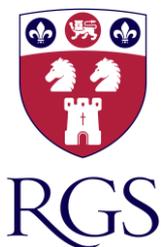




# **STAFF BEHAVIOUR POLICY**



RGS



## STAFF BEHAVIOUR POLICY

Newcastle upon Tyne Royal Grammar School

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A **Staff Behaviour Policy** is required by and follows the DfE regulations ***Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2020***. All workers, volunteers, members and others involved in the life of the School are required to and have a responsibility to abide by this code of conduct. This is required in order to support the School in providing a welcoming and safe environment for all students and in the implementation of its Safeguarding policy and procedures. This guidance is based on the ***Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education Settings*** document produced by the DfE in March 2009 and reviewed in line with ***Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018***.

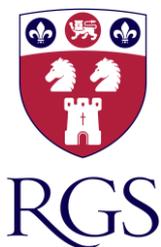
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### PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE FOR THE SAFETY OF STAFF AND STUDENTS

**It is the duty of everyone (whether staff or volunteer) who comes into contact with students and their families to safeguard children**

This means that everyone should make sure that their approach to their work and the students in the School is child-centered, considering at all times what is in the best interests of the child. If at any time you are concerned that the conduct of an adult in the School places a child at risk or contravenes this policy or the spirit of this policy, you should report your concerns without delay to the Headmaster or Deputy Head Pastoral. Further details regarding these procedures can be found in the ***PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING CONCERNS ABOUT AN ADULT WORKING WITH CHILDREN POLICY*** and the ***SAFEGUARDING POLICY***

1. Everyone has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action if they believe that a child is in danger of maltreatment or is in circumstances that prevent them from achieving the best possible outcomes.
2. If you have any concerns about the welfare of a child, report them as soon as possible to a more senior member of staff or someone with pastoral responsibility for the child remembering that children can be helped more effectively if there is early intervention.
3. You have a responsibility to help provide a safe environment in which children can learn and this includes both the physical and emotional environment in school. It is therefore part of your responsibilities to wear your staff lanyard and to challenge adults who are not identifiable as members of staff or approved visitors, report damage or unsafe areas of the school site, as well as concerns you may have about the attitudes or relationships between student and staff, students and students and between staff members.
4. Given the overriding duty of everyone in the School to safeguard the welfare of our students at all times, you have a general and on-going responsibility to supervise students when you are on the school site and when you are working with students away from school. This responsibility is not limited to times when you are the designated member of staff "on-duty" or solely to teaching staff.
5. If you have concerns about the conduct of an adult working at the School which may place a child, the member of staff concerned, another member of the community or the reputation of the School at risk, you have a duty to report it.



## **ALWAYS WORKING IN AN OPEN ENVIRONMENT**

We should always encourage open communication with no secrets both between staff and between staff and students.

- The best safeguard of our students is an understanding of appropriate behaviour and a willingness to raise concerns about adult behaviour which is inappropriate within the spirit of this Staff Behaviour Policy and the School's approach to safeguarding.
- Don't give the impression of having favourites. Generally only give gifts to a student as part of an agreed reward system. When giving gifts (say, Christmas chocolates for the class), ensure that these are of insignificant value and given to all students equally.

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## **NEVER ALLOWING OURSELVES TO BE LEFT ALONE WITH A STUDENT**

Generally we shouldn't seek meetings where we are not observed but we will encounter occasions when a confidential interview or a one-to-one meeting is necessary.

- Conduct the meeting in a room with an open door or visual access. Position chairs and furniture so that you can engage with the student, but are also visible from doors and windows. Where this is not possible, always ensure that there is another adult nearby. Let a colleague know that you are with a student and, where appropriate, arrange a time with the student. If your work regularly brings you into one-to-one contact with students make sure the Deputy Head Pastoral is aware of arrangements and send an updated log of meetings.
- If you unexpectedly find yourself in a private or potentially compromising situation, for example a student appears in your office before or after school, make sure you alert someone to the situation as quickly as you can, letting another colleague know what is happening or asking the student to come with you to a more "open" environment.
- In some circumstances being alone with a student is part of the role of a member of staff in school e.g. Visiting Music Teacher (VMT), Medical Officer, Careers Advisor, Counsellor. In these situations meetings with students should only take place via a recognized appointment system and in rooms appropriate to the nature of the meeting e.g. music practice rooms with windows in the doors. Ad hoc meetings should form part of a log sent to the Deputy Head Pastoral.
- The Deputy Head Pastoral or another member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) should be informed beforehand of any meetings with students (including former students) outside of school hours e.g. weekends and holiday times whether these are in school or not.

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## **AVOIDING TOUCHING STUDENTS UNLESS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY**

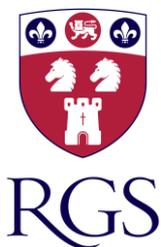
KCSIE states that it is not appropriate to have a "no contact" policy because it does not help us to fully support and protect our students. However, we must always be aware of the potential for misunderstanding when touching children. DfE advice makes it clear that when consoling a child who is upset we should do no more than put a gentle hand on their arm. Administering first aid or supporting a participant in an activity, for example, helping a student with additional physical needs, is acceptable and necessary contact, indeed it may be appropriate to offer help in order to fulfill our responsibilities within the 2010 Equality Act.

- If it is an accepted part of an activity (e.g. demonstrating, holding a gymnast for safety), touching should be appropriate to the situation, of limited duration and appropriate to the child's age. In such cases, or when administering first aid, minimize any risk of misunderstanding of your actions by asking the child if it is all right to touch them and

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explain exactly what you are going to do and why. Where appropriate for student safety or your own, don't hesitate to ask someone to fetch help e.g. from the School Nurse.

- Where students have SEN (either short or long term) which may require particular adjustments make sure you have read and understood the individual support plan for those students.

### **NEVER USE ACTIVE PHYSICAL FORCE AGAINST A STUDENT UNLESS THEIR ACTIONS PLACE THEMSELVES OR OTHERS IN DANGER**

If it is necessary to restrain a student - because they are in immediate danger to themselves or others or to property - the minimum amount of force should be used for the shortest amount of time. (*DfE Use of Reasonable Force 2013*)

- Force can mean passive force to control a situation, e.g. standing between two students, or active force such as leading someone out of the classroom by the arm.
- Restraint means to hold back physically or to bring a student under control. It is typically used in more extreme circumstances, e.g. when two students are fighting and refuse to separate without physical intervention. Any use of physical force or restraint should be reported to the Deputy Head Pastoral at the earliest opportunity.

### **AT NO TIME SHOULD CORPORAL PUNISHMENT OR THE THREAT OF CORPORAL PUNISHMENT BE USED.**

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### **REPORTING/RECORDING ANY INCIDENTS BETWEEN US AND A CHILD**

If we find ourselves in a situation like those listed above where there might be any scope for misunderstanding, we need to be prepared to share and discuss the circumstances that informed our action, or our proposed action, with a senior colleague. This will help to ensure that the safest practices are employed, procedures reviewed and reduce the risk of actions being misinterpreted.

- Always discuss any misunderstanding, accidents or threats with a senior colleague. Always (briefly) record your discussions and the actions you took, with reasons. For example, if a distressed child throws his/her arms round you and sobs, drop the Deputy Head Pastoral a brief email to say so. Someone else might have seen the episode and misconstrued it.

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### **TREATING INFORMATION GIVEN TO US WITH INTEGRITY AND CONFIDENTIALLY**

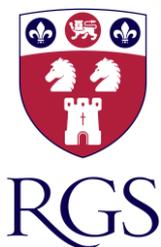
We are expected to treat information we receive about children and young people in a discreet and confidential manner. We may not use our position to gain access to information for our own advantage and/or a child's or family's detriment.

- Under GDPR rules, you are obliged to hold personal data regarding students e.g. assessments, grades, trip information safely and securely, which for electronic copies is in such a way that they cannot be accessed without the use of a password or encryption. As a rule of thumb, you should not share any student's personal data with anyone except the student themselves, their parents or another member of RGS staff. In all cases you should share the information with a care for security as explained in the GDPR rules. If you are in any doubt about sharing information you hold, or which has been requested of you, seek advice from a senior colleague. Similarly, if you are asked to withhold data from a student or parent also seek advice from a senior colleague. Be cautious when passing information to others about a child/young person, for example if you receive a telephone call asking

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for information it is good practice to take the name of the caller and a verifiable number on which you can call them back. Similarly, personal data should not be sent to an unsecured email address. Remember that conversations may be overheard and therefore that confidentiality may be inadvertently broken if due care is not taken.

- You should not use school databases or files to access personal information about students or their families, unless it is necessary for you to do so in order to undertake your school duties. Databases have systems in place to record who has accessed information to protect the privacy of students and their family and provide an audit trail should this become necessary.
- You should not hold photos or other images of students on your personal devices or other portable electronic storage arrangements e.g. memory sticks or cloud sharing. Avoid downloading anything school-related onto your personal devices. If you were in a situation that necessitated downloading school-related content then remember to check your *downloads* section of personal devices and delete any content relating to school that you may have downloaded. Any photos taken as part of a school event should be sent to the Communications Manager or added to the Event Photos (G:) drive and then deleted from your device. If you wish to keep a photo or other image, for example of a Duke of Edinburgh expedition group, then you should inform the Deputy Head Pastoral or the Headmaster. Such photos should not be shared via social networking (unless an official RGS channel) etc. as this would compromise the privacy of the students. Checks should always be made to ensure that appropriate consents have been obtained from parents and/or students for images to be held and published by the School in compliance with the school's GDPR and photography in school policies.

#### **ANY MEDIA OR LEGAL ENQUIRIES SHOULD BE PASSED IMMEDIATELY TO THE HEADMASTER**

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#### **TREATING STUDENTS WITH DIGNITY AND RESPECT**

We must never use our power and position to intimidate, threaten, coerce or, undermine students - nor to form or promote sexual relationships with young people in our charge (see below).

- Don't behave in a manner which would lead any reasonable person to question your suitability to work with children or act as a role model. Never make sexual remarks to a student (including email, text messages, phone or letter), nor discuss your own sexual relationships with, or in the presence of, students.
- Don't make (or allow others to make) unprofessional personal comments which scapegoat, demean or humiliate members of the community, or might be interpreted as such. Remember that children and young people, as well as staff, may be more sensitive to comments and that we have a duty to provide an environment where they feel at ease.

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#### **OUR POSITION AS A ROLE MODEL OBSERVED BY STUDENTS**

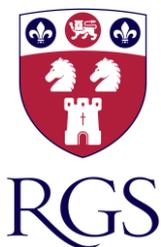
We should conduct our professional relationships and wear clothing that promotes a positive and professional image, is appropriate to our role, is not likely to be viewed as offensive, revealing, or sexually provocative, does not distract or cause embarrassment to students and/or other staff or give rise to misunderstanding.

- Children and young people are impressionable and will learn more than we think from observing our interactions and our professional identity. How we conduct ourselves around school; from the way that we dress, the way that we talk to each other, the warmth of our welcome to visitors and our interactions with students and their families are all part of a child's emotional learning.

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- Remember that it is not uncommon for students to be strongly attracted to a member of staff and/or develop an infatuation. All such situations should be responded to sensitively to maintain the dignity of all concerned. Such circumstances always carry a high risk of words or actions being misinterpreted and for allegations to be made against the teacher. If you become aware that a student may be infatuated with you or observe it happening with a colleague, discuss this at the earliest opportunity with a senior colleague so that appropriate action can be taken. In this way, steps can be taken to avoid hurt and distress for all concerned.
- You should be mindful to avoid creating a high-dependency relationship with a student, and becoming overly significant in the eyes of a student. If you feel that a student is forming a dependency on you, or the relationship with a student is becoming too intense, then it is your duty to share those concerns with a senior colleague in order to safeguard yourself and that student.

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### HOW OUR CONDUCT WITH FORMER STUDENTS OUT OF SCHOOL COULD BE MISCONSTRUED

The law forbids any member of staff (including visiting staff and volunteers) to develop a relationship with a former student where the relationship is based on the abuse of trust fostered through a normal staff - student relationship. For this reason, the School strongly advises staff that they should not embark on a sexual relationship with a former student unless it can be demonstrated that there is no imbalance of power within the relationship. Staff should always be aware that a sexual relationship with a former student, regardless of the time since they have left school, is likely to provoke questions regarding their integrity.

Inevitably, there will be times when we meet ex-students in more informal circumstances. We are required to act with the same degree of care and integrity as we would with a student at the School.

- The relationship between a teacher and an ex-student is still one of a role model/mentor and will have developed as a result of your contact with the student at school and the trust between a teacher and a student. If you are concerned about relationships with ex-students, discuss it with a senior colleague for clarification and advice. Contact between yourself and ex-students should still be via formal means such as school email and the Deputy Head Pastoral should be informed (for example by copying her into an email). If you are going to meet ex-students you should inform the Deputy Head Pastoral before the meeting to discuss arrangements and so that the meeting is logged.

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### AVOIDING SOCIAL CONTACT OUT OF SCHOOL

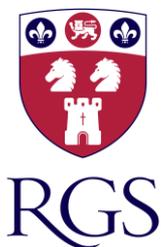
We should not establish or seek to establish social contact with students for the purpose of securing a friendship or to pursue or strengthen a relationship. Social contact with students should only ever be in the context of a **formal school activity** or as the result of a relationship between families. Even if a young person seeks to establish social contact, or if this occurs coincidentally, we must maintain our professionalism and be aware that such social contact could be misconstrued.

- Report and record any situation which may place a child at risk or compromise the School or your own professional standing. Sending personal communications such as personal letters of condolence, birthday or faith cards should be recorded and, where possible, should be discussed with a senior colleague beforehand.
- If you are also a parent of children at the School you will inevitably have social contact with other students; this is necessary and normal. You should generally be alert to any comments or actions which may be overheard or misconstrued, even in your own home.
- Restricting social contact to formal school activity means that you should never just go for a drink with student/s without making formal arrangements and ensuring that the School (usually the Deputy Head Pastoral) knows and parents are informed. Going to a nightclub

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or other social venue with students informally is unacceptable unless the contact is the result of family relationships outside of school and the Deputy Head Pastoral is aware.

- It is difficult to imagine any situation for staff who are professionally responsible for young people, where it would be acceptable to drink alcohol or be under the influence of alcohol. Social occasions arranged by/in school should have at the very least non-alcohol drinks available. Guidance for arranging formal school events outside of the school day e.g. evening and educational visits can be found in the *GUIDELINES FOR EVENING TRIPS AND MEALS* document in the staff handbook.

## COMMUNICATION AND SOCIAL MEDIA

We should not give our personal details such as home/mobile phone number; home or personal email address to students or their families unless the need to do so is agreed with a member of the SLT. Any involvement with students through social media must be discussed with a member of SLT immediately.

- When communicating with students remotely then only use official RGS channels, such as our Office 365 accounts, or official RGS Facebook or social media accounts (see below).
- If you ever needed to phone a student's home to speak to a student then you must seek permission from the parent/carer first.
- Ensure that **personal** social networking sites are set at private and students are never listed as approved contacts or friends. Never use or access the social networking sites of students. Text messaging should only be used as part of a previously agreed protocol e.g. fixtures and when other forms of communication are not possible. Don't use internet or web-based communication channels to send personal messages to a student. Internal email and messaging systems are the appropriate ways to communicate with students and should be used in accordance with school policy which includes proper policing.
- Social media such as Facebook groups and Twitter feeds may be a good way to disseminate information. A member of the SLT should always be informed about such communication or the establishment of groups and should be a member of them, as well as the Communications Manager. They should be closed or private groups and it is the responsibility of the member of staff who administers the group to add and remove members of the group. Remember that comments you post should remain professional and appropriate to the context of the group.
- Visiting music teachers (VMTs) and other peripatetic staff are also subject to these guidelines and should inform the Deputy Head Pastoral in writing at the start of the school year of the arrangements they have in place to contact students and parents in respect of arranging lessons, particularly if they contact students directly using personal phone numbers or email addresses. It is their responsibility to update the Deputy Head Pastoral during the course of the year if arrangements change.
- Remember (and assume) that your personal online profile is public (despite privacy settings) and may be tagged or shared by friends. Never post pictures or comments which could be used to question your professionalism or suitability to work with children.

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## NEVER TAKE CHILDREN ALONE IN A CAR ON JOURNEYS, HOWEVER SHORT

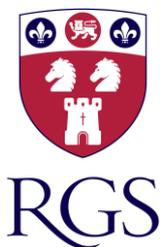
If it's necessary to transport a student in your car, plan and agree arrangements with all parties in advance, responding sensitively and flexibly to disagreements and remembering that you may not be insured for business use.

- If you really must transport a single student in your car, ensure that you are alone with the student for the minimum time possible (you might decide you are best placed to take them to A&E, for example). Remember that the safety and welfare of the child

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is entirely your responsibility until he/she is safely passed over in person to a parent/carer. Where practicable, inform a senior colleague of the nature of the journey, the route, timings and all arrangements in place to ensure the safety of vehicle, passenger and driver.

- Remember there is a nurse on duty in school from 8am-6pm and they are probably best placed to advise you in a medical emergency as well as accompany a child to hospital.

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### **NOTIFYING RELEVANT SENIOR COLLEAGUES WHEN ADULTS ARE VISITING THE SCHOOL**

Visiting speakers and advisers are of great benefit to the students and the School. Adults visiting the School who will not come into contact with children or who will be meeting students in large groups, supervised by teachers, do not need extra child protection checks. However, for security reasons, their name and details of their visit should be passed to the relevant senior manager and usually a **Visiting Speaker's Checklist** will need to be completed prior to the visit as part of our commitment to the Prevent strategy. Visitors must be signed in either at the Main Reception in the Senior School or at one of the Junior School receptions in Lambton and Brandling House, by the member of staff responsible for them, given a lanyard and accompanied by a member of staff as they move around the School.

Adults who are visiting the School on a short-term but regular basis and who will have regular contact with children (e.g. sports coaches) should be subject to the appropriate DBS checks. The member of staff who has arranged for these adults to come into school is responsible for contacting the Compliance Manager to put DBS checks in place and to notify the Deputy Head Pastoral about the nature and extent of the visits prior to them taking place and in sufficient time to allow for checks to be completed.

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### **TWO GOLDEN RULES**

If you are unsure of procedure or the checks required, contact the Deputy Head Pastoral for guidance. All adult visitors (including past students) must sign in at the front office and should wear a visitor's badge to show they are known to be in school.

If you see an adult behaving in a way which contravenes these guidelines, or the spirit of them, you should discuss your concerns with the Headmaster or Deputy Head Pastoral at the earliest opportunity. If you remain concerned you can also contact the **Newcastle LADO (local authority designated officer) Melanie Scott on 0191 277 4636 for advice.**

**(Please note amendments to this policy should we have moved to remote-learning: see Covid-19 Policy Amendments Document)**



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