



# REIGATE GRAMMAR SCHOOL VIETNAM

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## Staff Code of Conduct

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| <b>Policy Author:</b>                      | Educational Leadership Team |
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## 1. Introduction

### “It could happen here”

Staff have a crucial role to play in shaping the lives of young people. They have a unique opportunity to interact with children and young people in ways that are both affirming and inspiring. This guidance has been produced to help staff establish the safest possible learning and working environments which safeguard young people and reduce the risk of staff being falsely accused of improper or unprofessional conduct.

We recognise our moral and statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children.

The purpose of this policy is to provide staff with the framework they need in order to keep children safe and secure in our School by ensuring all staff uphold the expected professional standards and behaviours. Adults whose practice deviates from this code of conduct may bring into question their suitability to work with pupils or children and young people.

Staff Induction provides clear guidance to new staff on their responsibilities and we expect staff to use appropriate language, staff must avoid discriminatory behaviour and they should, at all times, demonstrate the highest standards of professionalism. This policy has been developed in accordance with the principles established by the UK's Children Acts 1989 and 2004 and the Education Act 2002. It also reflects UK KCSIE (2021), DoF (England) Teacher Standards 2012 and Surrey Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP) procedures. We also reflect Vietnamese law.

#### ***This means that these guidelines:***

- apply to **all** adults working at Reigate Grammar School Vietnam (RGSV), whatever their position, roles or responsibilities.

## 2. Duty of Care

Reigate Grammar School Vietnam (RGSV) requires that all staff have read and agree to comply with the policy. All staff have a duty to keep young people safe and to protect them from sexual, physical and emotional harm. Children have a right to be safe and to be treated with respect and dignity. It follows that trusted adults are expected to take reasonable steps to ensure the safety and well-being of pupils. Failure to do so may be regarded as professional neglect.

The duty of care is, in part, exercised through the development of respectful, caring and professional relationships between staff and pupils and behaviour by staff that demonstrates integrity, maturity and good judgement.

#### ***This means that all adults should:***

- understand the responsibilities, which are part of their employment or role, and be aware that sanctions will be applied if these provisions are breached.
- always act, and be seen to act, in the child's best interests.
- avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their intentions.
- take responsibility for their own actions and behaviour.

## 3. Professional Behaviour and Conduct

All staff are expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct. All staff must uphold public trust in their professional position and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, by:

- treating children with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to professional position

#### ***This means that the School should:***

- foster a culture of openness and support.
- ensure that systems are in place for concerns to be raised.
- Ensure that there is in place effective recording systems which confirm discussions, decisions and the outcomes of any actions taken.

- having regard for the need to safeguard children's well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions
- showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs
- ensuring that personal beliefs are not expressed in ways which exploit children's vulnerability or might lead them to break the law
- all staff must have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the School in which they work and teach, and maintain high standards in their own attendance, personal presentation and punctuality.
- all staff must have an understanding of, and always act within their professional duties and responsibilities.
- all staff should avoid any conflict of interest between activities undertaken outside school and responsibilities within school.

- *ensure that staff are not placed in situations which render them particularly vulnerable.*

***This means that the Board of Management should:***  
*ensure that appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures are adopted, implemented and monitored in school.*

Allegations against staff (including supply staff, volunteers, contractors and any adult working with children) will be dealt with in accordance with the School's *Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy*.

Staff need to be aware that the School must also manage low level concerns.

### **Lower-level Concerns**

The purpose of considering lower level concerns is to embed a culture of openness, trust and transparency in which our values and expected behaviours are consistently lived, monitored and reinforced by all staff.

Concerns may be graded low-level if the concern does not meet the criteria for an allegation (harms test); and the person has acted in a way that is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work. Example behaviours include, but are not limited to:

- being over friendly with children;
- having favourites;
- taking photographs of children on their mobile phone;
- engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door; or
- using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language.

Staff should be encouraged and feel confident to self-refer, where, for example, they have found themselves in a situation which could be misinterpreted, might appear compromising to others, and/or on reflection they believe they have behaved in such a way that they consider falls below the expected professional standards.

Low-level concerns should be recorded in writing, including:

- name of individual sharing their concerns
- details of the concern
- context in which the concern arose
- action taken

Staff are expected to act in accordance with the School's policies and procedures at all times. **Please see the school's *Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy* for more information.**

## 4. Exercise of Professional Judgement

This guidance cannot provide a complete checklist of what is or is not, appropriate behaviour for staff. It does highlight, however, behaviour that is illegal, inappropriate or inadvisable. There will be occasions and circumstances in which staff have to make decisions or take action in the best interests of the child or young person which could contravene this guidance or where no guidance exists. Individuals are expected to make judgements about their behaviour in order to secure the best interests and welfare of the children in their charge and in so doing, will be seen to be acting reasonably.

Staff should always consider whether their actions are warranted, proportionate, safe and applied equitably.

***This means that where no specific guidance exists staff should:***

- *discuss the circumstances that informed their action or their proposed action, with a senior leadership colleague. This will help to ensure that the safest practices are employed and reduce the risk of actions being misinterpreted.*
- *always discuss any misunderstanding, accidents or threats with a senior leader.*
- *always record discussions and actions taken with their justifications.*

## 5. Power and Positions of Trust

As a result of their knowledge, position and/or the authority invested in their role, all adults working at the School are in positions of trust in relation to the young people in their care. A relationship between a member of staff and a pupil cannot be a relationship between equals. There is potential for exploitation and harm of vulnerable young people and staff have a responsibility to ensure that an unequal balance of power is not used for personal advantage or gratification.

Wherever possible, staff should avoid behaviour which might be misinterpreted by others, and report and record any incident with this potential.

Where a person aged 18 or over is in a position of trust with a child under 18, it is an offence under Vietnamese law for that person to engage in sexual activity with or in the presence of that child or to cause or incite that child to engage in or watch sexual activity.

***This means that adults should not:***

- *use their position to gain access to information for their own advantage and/or a child's or family's detriment.*
- *use their power to intimidate, threaten, coerce or undermine pupils.*
- *use their status and standing to form or promote relationships with pupils, which are of a sexual nature or which may become so.*

## 6. Confidentiality

Members of staff may have access to confidential information about pupils in order to undertake their everyday responsibilities. In some circumstances staff may be given highly sensitive or private information. They should never use confidential or personal information about a pupil or her/his family for their own or others' advantage (including that of partners, friends, relatives or other organisations). Information must never be used to intimidate, humiliate or embarrass the pupil.

Confidential information about a child or young person should never be used casually in conversation or shared with any person other than on a need-to-know basis. In circumstances where the child's identity does not need to be disclosed the information should be used anonymously.

There are some circumstances in which a member of staff may be expected to share information about a child, for example when abuse is alleged or

***This means that staff:***

- *are expected to treat information they receive about children and young people in a discreet and confidential manner. However, information which may affect a child's welfare **MUST** always be passed on to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).*
- *should seek advice from a senior member of staff if they are in any doubt about sharing information they hold or which has been requested of them.*
- *need to be cautious when passing information to others about a pupil.*

suspected. In such cases, individuals have a duty to pass information on without delay, but only to those with designated child protection responsibilities.

If a member of staff is in any doubt about whether to share information or keep it confidential he or she should seek guidance from a senior member of staff. Any media or legal enquiries should be passed to senior management.

- *need to know the procedures for handling allegations against staff and to whom any concerns or allegations should be reported.*
- *need to know the name of those with delegated child protection responsibilities in school and be familiar with local child protection arrangements.*

## 7. Propriety and Behaviour

All staff have a responsibility to maintain public confidence in their ability to safeguard the welfare and best interests of children and young people. They should adopt high standards of personal conduct in dealing with all persons in order to maintain the confidence and respect of their peers, pupils, parents and the public in general and all those with whom they work.

There may be times, for example, when an adult's behaviour or actions in their personal life come under scrutiny from local communities, the media or public authorities. This could be because their behaviour is considered to compromise their position in the workplace or indicate an unsuitability to work with pupils. Misuse of drugs, alcohol or acts of violence would be examples of such behaviour.

Adults in contact with pupils should therefore understand and be aware that safe practice also involves judgement and integrity about behaviours in places other than the work setting.

All members of our community should be treated with respect

Disciplinary action may be taken against individuals who are not deemed as acting appropriately with others. Staff should contact their Line Manager if they believe there is an issue. Refer to Complaints and Grievances policy.

***This means that staff should not:***

- *behave in a manner which would lead any reasonable person to question their suitability for the RGSV work environment, especially as we work with children or act as a role model.*
- *make sexual remarks to or about, anyone*
- *discuss their own sexual relationships with or in the presence of pupils.*
- *discuss another person's or pupil's sexual relationships in inappropriate settings or contexts.*
- *make (or encourage others to make) unprofessional personal comments which scapegoat, demean or humiliate or might be interpreted as such.*

***This means that adults should:***

- *be aware that behaviour in their personal lives may impact upon their work with others, especially pupils.*

## 8. Dress and Appearance

A person's dress and appearance are matters of personal choice and self-expression. However, staff should consider the manner of dress and appearance appropriate to their professional role and suitably appropriate for the cultural context of Vietnam, which may be different to that adopted in their personal life.

As also mentioned in the *Whole School Staff Handbook*, members of staff are required to set positive examples in terms of their dress and appearance, given that we, as much as the pupils, reflect the image of the School. Staff must, therefore, in all respects be smart, professional and business-like. In and around school, all staff, teaching and non-teaching, should wear appropriate attire. Exceptions to this will be staff when they are specifically carrying out technical or manual duties as part of their role e.g. PE staff when teaching sport.

***This means that adults should wear clothing which:***

- *promotes a positive and professional image.*
- *is appropriate to their role.*
- *is not likely to be viewed as offensive, revealing or sexually provocative (i.e. no slogans on clothes, no bare shoulders, no low cut tops, no midriff showing).*
- *does not distract, cause embarrassment or give rise to misunderstanding.*
- *Is absent of any political or other contentious slogans*

Please see below for specific expectations for staff dress:

- Nursery, Reception, Year 1 teachers may opt not to wear a tie in the classroom, but otherwise, the expectations are the same and male teachers must have a tie to wear to meetings etc.
- Male Primary (Year 2 to year 6) and secondary male teachers wear ties with top button done up
- Shirts to be tucked in
- Skirts and dresses: below knee length
- Trousers: no pockets on the outside
- Must have a smart jacket in school
- Footwear: smart (business style) shoes: not trainers, flip flops, crocs, canvass
- Piercings: Health & safety: no jewellery that may be a hazard (eg. big hoop style earrings).

Those who dress or appear in a manner which could be considered as inappropriate could render themselves vulnerable to criticism or allegation.

## 9. Behaviour Management

All pupils have a right to be treated with respect and dignity. Corporal punishment is not allowed. Equally, staff should not use any form of degrading treatment to punish a pupil. The use of humour can help to defuse a situation. The use of sarcasm, demeaning or insensitive comments towards pupils is not acceptable in any situation.

### ***This means that adults should:***

- *not use force as a form of punishment.*
- *try to defuse situations before they escalate.*
- *keep parents informed of any sanctions.*
- *adhere to the School's policy on sanctions.*

## 10. Physical Education and Other Activities that Require Physical Contact

Some staff, for example, those who teach PE or who offer music tuition, will on occasions have to initiate physical contact with pupils in order to support a child so they can perform a task safely, to demonstrate the use of a particular piece of equipment/instrument or assist them with an exercise. This should be done with the pupil's agreement.

Contact under these circumstances should be for the minimum time necessary to complete the activity and take place in an appropriate environment. Staff should remain sensitive to any discomfort expressed verbally or nonverbally by the child.

### ***This means that staff should:***

- *consider alternatives, if it is anticipated that a pupil might misinterpret any such contact, perhaps involving another member of staff or a less vulnerable pupil in the demonstration.*
- *be familiar with and follow the guidance contained in this document.*
- *always explain to a pupil the reason why contact is necessary and what form that contact will take.*

## 11. Showers and Changing

### ***This means that staff should:***

Young people are entitled to respect and privacy when changing clothes or taking a shower. However, there needs to be an appropriate level of supervision in order to safeguard young people, satisfy health and safety considerations and ensure that bullying or teasing does not occur. This supervision should be appropriate to the needs and age of the young people concerned and sensitive to the potential for embarrassment.

Staff therefore need to be vigilant about their own behaviour and be mindful of the needs of the pupils.

- *avoid physical contact when children are in a state of undress.*
- *announce if entering a changing room.*
- *avoid remaining in the room unless a pupil needs or requires it.*

***This means that staff must not:***

- *change in the same place as pupils.*
- *shower with pupils.*

## 12. Care, Control and Physical Intervention

The use of physical intervention should, wherever possible, be avoided. It should only be used to manage a child or young person's behaviour if it is necessary to prevent injury to the child, other children or an adult, to prevent serious damage to property or in what can reasonably be described as exceptional circumstances.

Staff should have regard to the health and safety of themselves and others and the scale and nature of any physical intervention must be proportionate to both the behaviour of the individual to be controlled and the nature of the harm they may cause. The minimum force should be used.

Under no circumstances should physical force be used as a form of punishment. The use of unwarranted physical force is likely to constitute a criminal offence.

In all cases where physical intervention is deemed necessary, the incident and subsequent actions should be documented and reported to senior management immediately. This should include written and signed accounts of all those involved, including the child or young person. The parents/carers must be informed on the same day.

***This means that staff should:***

- *avoid physical intervention unless absolutely essential.*
- *always use minimum force for the shortest period necessary.*
- *Always seek to diffuse situations*
- *record and report as soon as possible after the event any incident where physical force has been used.*

## 13. Gifts, Rewards and Selection of pupils

There are occasions when children or parents wish to pass small tokens of appreciation to staff e.g. at Christmas or as a thank-you - which is perfectly acceptable. However, it is unacceptable to receive gifts or hospitality on a regular basis or of any significant value.

Similarly, it is inadvisable to give such personal gifts to pupils. This could be misinterpreted as a gesture either to bribe or single out the young person. It might be perceived that a 'favour' of some kind is expected in return.

Any reward given to a child should be consistent with the School's rewards policy, recorded and not based on favouritism. If in doubt, please seek guidance from a senior member of staff.

Staff should exercise care when selecting pupils for School teams, productions, trips and/or specific work tasks in order to avoid perceptions of favouritism or

***This means that adults should:***

- *ensure that gifts received or given in situations which may be misconstrued are declared.*
- *generally, only give gifts to an individual child as part of an agreed reward system.*
- *where giving gifts other than as above, ensure that these are of insignificant value and given to all children equally.*
- *ensure that all selection processes are fair and that, wherever practicable, these are undertaken and agreed by more than one member of staff.*

injustice. Similar care should be exercised when pupils are excluded from an activity. Methods of selection and exclusion should always be subject to clear, agreed criteria.

## 14. Social Contact

Staff should not establish or seek to establish social contact, physically or virtually, with pupils for the purpose of securing a friendship or to pursue or strengthen a relationship. If a pupil or parent seeks to establish social contact or if this occurs coincidentally, the member of staff should exercise her/his professional judgement in making a response. There will be occasions when there are social contacts between pupils and staff, where for example the parent and teacher are part of the same social circle. These contacts however, will be easily recognised and openly acknowledged.

If staff wish to organise an event for pupils e.g. at the end of a DP course/show/sporting season then they must have this agreed and authorised in advance by a member of the Educational Leadership Team (ELT).

Staff need to be particularly aware of the potential dangers of contacts made through outside interests or the staff member's own family and be aware that such social contact could be misconstrued.

It is recognised that staff can support a pupil or parent who may be in particular difficulty. Care needs to be exercised in those situations where the pupil/parent comes to depend upon the staff member for support outside their professional role. This situation should be discussed with the DSL & Head of section who may seek, where necessary, to make a referral to an appropriate support agency.

### ***This means that adults should:***

- *have no secret social contact with pupils.*
- *communicate with pupils and parents only via school email/message or school virtual platforms (not texts, social media or messaging services i.e. Zalo, Whatsapp, Messenger)*
- *always be aware of the potential dangers of social contact with pupils or parents.*
- *advise senior management of any social contact they have with a pupil which may give rise to concern.*
- *report and record any situation, which they feel might compromise the School or their own professional standing.*

## 15. Communication with pupils (including the use of technology)

In order to make best use of the many educational and social benefits of new technologies, pupils need opportunities to use and explore the digital world, using multiple devices from multiple locations. It is now recognised that e-safety risks are posed more by behaviours and values than the technology itself. Adults working in this area must therefore ensure that they establish safe and responsible online behaviours.

Communication between pupils and adults, by whatever method, should take place within clear and explicit professional boundaries. This includes the wider use of technology such as mobile phones, text messaging, e-mails, digital cameras, videos, webcams, websites, social media and networking sites and blogs. Staff should be particularly careful with regard to social media such as WhatsApp or Zalo, where mobile phone numbers are used and should not join pupil chat groups. The only acceptable method of contact is via the use of School email accounts, School media or telephone devices.

Staff should exercise caution in use of social media or any other web based presence they have. This includes written content, videos or photographs and views expressed either directly or by 'liking' certain pages or posts or following certain individuals or groups.

### ***This means that staff should:***

- *ensure that any communication is justifiable and cannot be misinterpreted.*
- *ensure that personal social networking sites are set to private and pupils are never listed as approved contacts.*
- *never use or access social networking sites of pupils.*
- *not give their personal contact details to pupils, staff personal mobile telephone number should only be used with permission from ELT (e.g. for school trips)*
- *only make contact with children for professional reasons and in accordance with any School policy.*
- *recognise that text messaging should only be used as part of an agreed protocol and when other forms of communication are not possible.*
- *not use internet or web-based communication channels to send*

Staff must be vigilant when using dating websites/apps where staff could encounter pupils or ex-pupils.

Staff should not make contact with a child's family member, accept or initiate friend requests or follow a child's family member's account on any social media platform.

RGSV acknowledges that staff who are also parents may make contact with other parents, who are friends, over social media. Staff must exercise caution and professional judgement in these circumstances and should not have any contact with pupils' family members via social media if that contact is likely to constitute a conflict of interest or call into question their professionalism.

Adults should not share any personal information with a child or young person. They should not request or respond to any personal information from the child/young person, other than that which might be appropriate as part of their professional role. Adults should ensure that all communications are transparent and open to scrutiny.

Adults should also be circumspect in their communications with children so as to avoid any possible misinterpretation of their motives or any behaviour which could be construed as grooming. They should not give their personal contact details to pupils including personal email, home or mobile telephone numbers or social media unless the need to do so is agreed with ELT.

Email or text communications between an adult and a child/young person outside agreed protocols may lead to disciplinary and/or criminal investigations. This also includes communications through internet based web sites or social networking sites.

*personal messages to a child/young person.*

- *Staff must be aware that they must only use their personal mobile telephone or other electronic device to take photographs or videos of pupils in accordance with current school policy, upload any images/videos to the School's Google Drive and delete from their personal device. School devices should be used where possible*

## 16. Physical Contact

There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate and proper for staff to have physical contact with pupils, but it is crucial that they only do so in ways appropriate to their professional role.

When physical contact is made with pupils this should be in response to their needs at the time, of limited duration and appropriate to their age, stage of development, gender, ethnicity and background. Staff must seek the child's permission before initiating contact. Staff must observe and take note of the child's reaction or feelings and use a level of contact which is acceptable to the child for the minimum time necessary. Staff must use their professional judgement at all times.

Staff must never touch a child in a way which may be considered inappropriate.

Staff must not engage in rough play, tickling or fun fights with pupils.

Extra caution should be exercised where a child is known to have suffered previous abuse or neglect. Such experiences may sometimes make a child exceptionally needy and demanding of physical contact. Staff should respond sensitively by deterring the child through helping them to understand the importance of personal boundaries.

Staff supervising PE or providing musical tuition should demonstrate the use of a particular piece of equipment/instrument on another member of staff if possible. However, they may be required to initiate physical contact to support a child to perform a task safely or to assist them. Contact under these

### ***This means that adults should:***

- *be aware that even well intentioned physical contact may be misconstrued by the child, an observer or by anyone to whom this action is described.*
- *never touch a child in a way which may be considered indecent.*
- *always be prepared to explain actions and accept that all physical contact be open to scrutiny.*
- *always encourage children, where possible, to undertake self-care tasks independently.*

circumstances must be done with the pupil's agreement, for the minimum time necessary and in an open environment.

Physical contact must never be secretive, for the gratification of the adult or abuse a position of trust. If a member of staff believes that an action could be misinterpreted, the incident and circumstances should be reported to their line manager; recorded and, if appropriate, a copy placed on the child's file.

There may be occasions when a pupil is in distress and in need of reassurance. This may include age-appropriate physical contact. Staff should remain self-aware at all times in order to avoid misinterpretation of their actions. Such incidents should always be recorded and shared with their line manager and the DSL. If staff have a particular concern about the need to provide this type of care and reassurance they should seek further advice from their line manager.

## 17. First Aid, Administration of Medicine and pupils in Distress

Health and safety good practice places duties on all employers to ensure appropriate health and safety policies and equipment are in place and an appropriate person is appointed to take charge of first-aid arrangements, i.e. the School Nurse. Appropriate training should be given before an individual takes on a role which may require administering first aid or medication.

Some pupils may need medication during school hours. In circumstances where children need medication regularly a health care plan should be drawn up to ensure the safety and protection of pupils and staff. With the permission of parents, children should be encouraged to self-administer medication or treatment including, for example any ointment, sun cream or use of inhalers.

If a member of staff is concerned or uncertain about the amount or type of medication being given to a pupil, this should be discussed with the School Nurse in the presence of the appropriate senior colleague (Pastoral Leader or ELT member) at the earliest opportunity. When administering first aid, wherever possible, staff should ensure that another adult is present or aware of the action being taken. Parents should be informed when first aid has been administered by the School Nurse.

There may be occasions when a distressed pupil needs comfort and reassurance. This may include age-appropriate physical contact. Staff should remain self-aware at all times in order that their contact is not threatening, intrusive or subject to misinterpretation.

Where a member of staff has a particular concern about the need to provide this type of care and reassurance s/he should seek further advice from the relevant section's Deputy/Assistant DSL or DSL.

**Staff taking medication** which may affect their ability to care for children should seek medical advice regarding their suitability to do so and providers should ensure that they only work directly with children if that advice confirms that the medication is unlikely to impair their ability to look after children. They must inform ELT, HR & the Nurse when taking such medication. Failure to do so may lead to disciplinary action.

Staff medication on the premises must be responsibly stored and out of reach of children at all times.

### ***This means that adults should:***

- *explain to the child what is happening when administering First Aid*
- *always act and seem to be acting in the best interests of the child*
- *have regard to any health plan which is in place*
- *ensure that an appropriate risk assessment is undertaken prior to undertaking certain activities e.g. overnight trips*

### ***This means that adults should:***

- *consider the way in which they offer comfort to a distressed pupil.*
- *Never touch a child in a way that could be considered indecent*
- *Not assume that all children seek physical comfort if they are distressed.*
- *always tell a colleague when and how they offered comfort to a distressed child.*
- *record situations which may give rise to concern.*

## 18. One to One Situations, Home Visits and Transporting pupils

Staff working in one to one situations (one adult and one child alone) with children and young people may be more vulnerable to allegations. Staff should recognise this possibility and plan and conduct such meetings accordingly. Every attempt should be made to ensure the safety and security needs of both staff and pupils are met. In a one to one situation the participants should be visible to all outside of the space, and where possible there should be a door open and a 1m distance, ideally with a table in between the individuals. Pre-arranged meetings with pupils away from the school premises should not be permitted unless there is good reason and approval is obtained from their parent(s) and a member of ELT. This includes visits to the pupil's home which should happen only in exceptional circumstances (such as where a pupil is taking a public exam at home due to poor health and arrangements are made to invigilate them) and only with prior agreement of ELT.

If staff wish to engage in any tutoring this must be agreed by the Headmaster. It is not usually the case that RGSV staff would tutor RGSV pupils. Staff should never tutor children in their own home and if in an exceptional circumstance the Headmaster has agreed to a member of staff offering tutoring, this should not take place in the member of staff's home. If agreed, the member of staff might tutor the child in the child's home in which case a parent or guardian should be present.

In exceptional situations staff or volunteers may agree to transport children. Wherever possible and practicable it is advisable that transport is undertaken other than in private vehicles, with at least one adult in addition to the driver acting as an escort. Children should sit in the back seat. Parental consent should be sought before a child is transported by a member of staff and a member of the ELT consulted.

Where a private vehicle is used adults should ensure that the vehicle is roadworthy, appropriately insured, with an up-to-date Ministry of Transport of Vietnam vehicle roadworthy test and that the maximum capacity is not exceeded.

All passengers should wear seatbelts and it is the responsibility of the staff member to ensure that this requirement is met. It is inappropriate for adults to offer lifts to children outside their normal working duties, unless there has been prior agreement with ELT. There may be occasions where the child requires transport in an emergency situation or where not to give a lift may place a child at risk. Such circumstances must always be recorded and reported to a member of the ELT & the DSL.

### ***This means that staff should:***

- ensure that when lone working is an integral part of their role, staff have taken necessary precautions to ensure the safety and security of the pupil and themselves
- avoid meetings with pupils in remote, secluded areas of school.
- ensure there is visual access and/or an open door in one to one situations.
- inform other staff of the meeting beforehand, assessing the need to have them present or close by.
- avoid use of 'engaged' or equivalent signs wherever possible. Such signs may create an opportunity for secrecy or the interpretation of secrecy.
- always report any situation where a child becomes distressed or angry to a senior pastoral colleague.
- agree the purpose of any home visit with a member of the ELT in advance.

### ***This means that staff should:***

- ensure that they are fit to drive and free from any drugs, alcohol or medicine which is likely to impair their judgement and/or ability to drive.
- ensure that their behaviour is appropriate at all times.
- ensure that there are proper arrangements in place to ensure vehicle, passenger and driver safety.
- ensure that any emergency arrangements of lifts are recorded and can be justified when questioned.

## 19. Infatuations

Staff need to be aware that it is not uncommon for pupils to become strongly attracted to a member of staff and/or develop a heterosexual or homosexual infatuation. All situations should be responded to sensitively to maintain the dignity of all concerned. Staff should also be aware that such circumstances always carry a high risk of words or actions being misinterpreted and for allegations to be made against staff and should make every effort to ensure that their own behaviour is above reproach.

### ***This means that adults should:***

- report to the DSL any indications (verbal, written or physical) that suggest a pupil may be infatuated with a member of staff.
- always maintain professional boundaries.

Any adult who becomes aware that a pupil may be infatuated with a member of staff should discuss this at the earliest opportunity with the DSL so that appropriate action can be taken. In this way, steps can be taken to avoid hurt and distress for all concerned.

## 20. Sexual Contact, Harassment and Violence

Any sexual behaviour by a member of staff is inappropriate and with or towards a pupil it is illegal. Children and young people are protected by the same Vietnamese laws as adults in relation to non-consensual sexual behaviour. They are additionally protected by specific legal provisions. This includes the prohibition on adults in a position of trust.

The sexual activity referred to does not just involve physical contact. It may also include non-contact activities, such as causing children to engage in or watch sexual activity or the production of pornographic material. Sexual abuse can be defined as “forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening”.<sup>1</sup>

There are occasions when adults embark on a course of behaviour known as 'grooming' where the sole purpose is to gain the trust of a child, and manipulate that relationship so sexual abuse can take place. Staff should be aware that conferring special attention and favour upon a child might be construed as being part of a 'grooming' process.

Any adult who becomes aware of an issue or concern about a pupil should contact the DSL, and about a member of staff, should contact the Head of School, at the earliest opportunity so that appropriate action can be taken. Refer to Whistle Blowing policy.

### ***This means that adults should:***

- *not pursue sexual relationships with children and young people either in or out of school.*
- *avoid any form of communication with a child or young person which could be interpreted as sexually suggestive or provocative, including verbal comments, letters, notes, electronic mail, phone calls, texts or physical contact.*
- *not make sexual remarks to or about a child/young person*
- *not discuss their own sexual relationships with or in the presence of pupils*
- *take care that their language or conduct does not give rise to comment or speculation. Attitudes, demeanour and language all require care and thought, particularly when members of staff are dealing with adolescent boys and girls.*

## 21. Educational Visits and After-School Activities

Staff should take particular care when supervising pupils in the less formal atmosphere such as an after-school activity. Adults remain in a position of trust and need to ensure that their behaviour remains professional at all times and stays within clearly defined professional boundaries.

Where out of school activities include overnight stays, careful consideration needs to be given to sleeping arrangements. Pupils, staff and parents should be informed of these prior to the start of the trip. In all circumstances, those organising trips and outings must pay careful attention to ensuring safe staff/child ratios and to the gender mix of staff especially on overnight stays. Refer to the 'Offsite Visits/Trips/Events' policy.

### ***This means that adults should:***

- *ensure that their behaviour remains professional at all times.*
- *never share beds with pupils.*
- *not share bedrooms with pupils.*

## 22. Curriculum

Many areas of the curriculum can include or raise subject matter which is sexually explicit or of an otherwise sensitive nature. Care should be taken to

### ***This means that staff should:***

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<sup>1</sup> KCSIE

ensure that resource materials cannot be misinterpreted and clearly relate to the learning outcomes identified by the lesson plan. This plan should highlight particular areas of risk and sensitivity and be shared with the line manager and appropriate ELT member.

The curriculum can sometimes include or lead to unplanned discussion about subject matter of a sexually explicit or otherwise sensitive nature. Responding to pupils' questions can require careful judgement and staff may wish to take guidance in these circumstances from an appropriate senior colleague (i.e. Line Manager).

## 23. Photography and Videos

Working with pupils may involve the taking or recording of images. Any such work should take place with due regard to Vietnamese law and the need to safeguard the privacy, dignity, safety and well-being of pupils.

Careful consideration should be given as to how activities involving the taking of images are organised and undertaken. Care should be taken to ensure that all parties understand the implications of the image being taken, especially if it is to be used for any publicity purposes or published in the media or on the Internet. Parents have all given permission for the use of their child's image at enrollment.

Adults need to remain sensitive to any children who appear uncomfortable, for whatever reason, and should recognise the potential for such activities to raise concerns or lead to misunderstandings.

Adults must not take photographs of children for their personal use.

It is recommended that when using a photograph for public use the following guidance should be followed:

- *if the photograph is used, avoid giving the full name of the pupil*
- *if the pupil is named, avoid using their photograph*

As stated above, RGSV asks for parental consent for images to be used upon enrollment and the School keeps a record of children who have asked for their image not to be used.

Many school activities involve recording images. These may be undertaken as part of the curriculum, extra-curricular activities, for publicity or to celebrate achievement. Staff need to be aware of the potential for these aspects of school life to be misused.

Children who have been previously abused in this way may feel threatened by the use of photography, filming etc. in the teaching environment. Staff should remain sensitive to any children who appear uncomfortable and should recognise the potential for misinterpretation. They should inform their line manager, appropriate ELT member and the DSL if they feel there is an issue.

Using images of pupils for publicity purposes will require the consent of their parent(s). Images should not be displayed on websites, in publications or in a public place without such consent. The definition of a public place includes areas where visitors to the School have access. If in doubt, please seek further guidance from ELT.

- *have clear written lesson plans and be aware of the potential for unplanned discussion of a sexual nature.*

***This means that adults should not:***

- *enter into or encourage inappropriate discussion about sexual activity.*

***This means that adults should:***

- *be clear about the purpose of the activity and about what will happen to the photographs/film when the lesson/activity is concluded.*
- *ensure that all images/videos are available for scrutiny in order to screen for acceptability. Any images on a staff's personal device must be uploaded to the School system within 24 hours and then deleted from their own personal device.*
- *be able to justify images of children taken.*
- *avoid making images/videos in one to one situations.*

***This means that adults should not:***

- *take, display or distribute images of children unless they have consent to do so.*
- *not keep images/videos of children using personal devices, but immediately upload them to the GDrive and delete them from their personal device.*

## 24. Inappropriate Images

Staff should take extreme care to ensure that children and young people are not exposed, through any medium, to inappropriate or indecent images or web links.

Under no circumstances should any adult use school equipment to access such material, including adult pornography. Personal equipment containing these images or links to them should never be brought into or used in the workplace. Breaches of this guidance will raise serious concerns about the suitability of the adult to continue working with children and young people.

Accessing indecent images of children on the internet, whether using school or personal equipment, on or off school premises and making, storing or disseminating such material is illegal. If proven, this will lead to criminal proceedings and the individual being barred from work with children and young people.

Where indecent images of children or other unsuitable material are found, the DSL and Director of Education should immediately be informed. Adults should not attempt to investigate the matter themselves as this may lead to evidence being contaminated which in itself can lead to criminal prosecution.

### ***This means that staff should:***

- *ensure that pupils are not, through the use of any medium, exposed to indecent or inappropriate images.*

## 25. Sharing Concerns and Recording Incidents

All staff should be aware of the school's safeguarding and child protection procedures, including procedures for dealing with allegations against staff. All allegations must be taken seriously and properly investigated in accordance with local procedures and statutory guidance.

In the event of an incident occurring, which may result in an action being misinterpreted and/or an allegation being made against a member of staff, the relevant information should be clearly and promptly recorded and reported to the DSL.

Members of staff should feel able to discuss with their line manager any difficulties or problems that may affect their relationship with pupils so that appropriate support can be provided or action can be taken. It is essential that accurate and comprehensive records are maintained wherever concerns are raised about the conduct or actions of adults working with children or young people.

### ***This means that adults:***

- *should take responsibility for passing information where they have concerns about any matter pertaining to the welfare of an individual in the School.*

## 26. Smoking, Alcohol, E-cigarettes (Vaping) and Other Substances

School is a non-smoking site. Staff must not smoke or use e-cigarettes on the school premises or outside the school gates. Staff must not smoke or use e-cigarettes whilst supervising children in a residential setting or offsite. Staff must not consume or be under the influence of alcohol, drugs or unlawful substances on or near school premises.

### ***This means that adults:***

- *should not consume alcohol or drugs or smoke while at work. There may be occasions such as an end of term party held on school premises out of working hours where staff may enjoy a drink socially.*

## 27. Parents as Employees

Some staff also have children who attend the School. It is recognised that in these cases the staff fulfil a dual role of parent and employee. There are many advantages to having children attending school where you work but it can also bring some challenges, for example as a member of staff you will be privy to a wealth of information and data which parents cannot access quite so readily. You will also have relationships with the colleagues you work with, who are also your son/daughter's teacher. This can quite easily lead to a conflict of interest and where possible, it is helpful to observe the following guidelines.

### How to manage the dual role with respect to the child

There can be a temptation for both parent-staff and RGS Vietnam staff informally to expect to be able to talk about the pupil/their child's concerns, where the pupil's parent is also a teacher at the School. While this might seem entirely natural, it can lead to conflicts of interest.

We would encourage staff who are also parents, to raise any concerns in the usual way another parent might, i.e. via email, request for a meeting or a phone-call.

Staff who are also parents should not expect colleagues to answer concerns about their child, for example, while they are having lunch, or a break.

Conversely, teaching staff should not raise concerns with a colleague who is also a parent informally, they should make contact through email, or a call, asking for an appointment to talk or to meet. This helps to keep the boundaries between the role of parent and the role of staff clear for all.

Parents as employees should ensure that they uphold boundaries between the two roles and that their behaviour does not constitute a conflict of interest. For example, they must maintain the same level of confidentiality despite social expectations. Parent-staff should discuss any inter-role conflict with their line manager and ELT.

Through being parent-staff they may have contact with pupils at the School within their own home (meals, sleepovers, parties) or in everyday situations such as giving a lift to pupils in their car as a result of their children's friendships. These are considered entirely normal acts of parenting, and it is logistically unrealistic to expect staff members to alert the safeguarding team every time they are going to have contact with a pupil (i.e. a friend of their son or daughter) outside of the school context.

Common sense should apply – whilst we would not expect staff members to inform us of such situations, it would be wise to follow normal safeguarding principles, such as:

- Not being in a 1-to-1 situation alone with that child, if possible;
- Maintaining good and open communication with the child's parent/s;
- Adapting behaviour/dress if necessary, just as would be considered normal when having a guest in the home;
- Informing the DSL/safeguarding team as a matter of urgency of any situation which may have been/may be uncomfortable/compromising/inappropriate.

## Overnight Stays/Sleepovers

Although we do not require staff to alert us when a pupil (friend of their son or daughter) is staying overnight with them, it may be wise to do so to demonstrate that safeguarding the pupils remains a priority for the staff member in those situations. The DSL & safeguarding team will maintain a record of this, should a staff member choose to make this known.

Staff members have been trained in safeguarding and should follow normal procedures if they have a concern about the welfare or safety of a child. This is probably the most important principle of all; there have been instances in other schools when staff members chose to deal with a situation 'as a parent' or tried to resolve a concern themselves 'among the parents', rather than alerting the DSL and/or the local children's services to a concern. The training staff members have received should be used regardless of whether they become aware of a concern in school or at home/outside of school.

**In the event of a staff member being made aware in their capacity as a parent of abuse or suspicion of abuse, the police **MUST** be informed in the normal way and within the normal timeframes.**

## 28. Labour, Discipline and Material Responsibility

### General

This procedure will be followed when any staff member conducts himself/herself in a manner which is inappropriate or unacceptable, or where his attitude to work, attendance at work, competence or performance does not reach the required level.

Examples of performance or conduct which would lead to RGSV following this procedure are detailed below and fall into three main categories:

- Gross Misconduct
- Misconduct
- Performance

The lists of examples below are intended as guides and are not exhaustive.

The following are examples of **Gross Misconduct**.

- Conducting any act of theft or embezzlement.
- Gambling within the premise of the School.
- Intentionally causing injury.
- Using illegal drugs within the workplace.
- Disclosing business and technological secrets, know-how or any other confidential information of the School without permission;
- Committing any act, whether intentionally or due to negligence of duty or lack of responsibility, causing serious damage to the production, business, property or interest of the School as provided under this Regulation;
- Being unwarrantedly absent from work for five (05) days aggregately in a month or twenty (20) days aggregately in a year without proper reasons;
- Inappropriate removal or possession of property.
- Dishonesty - including the acceptance or offering of bribes.
- Falsification of timekeeping records.
- Violence or threatening violence.

- Incapability through alcohol or other substances.
- Any form of harassment, including sexual and racial harassment or bullying of staff members or others.
- Inappropriate use of foul or abusive language in front of others, including pupils.
- Gross insubordination or other disrespectful conduct.
- Possession of dangerous or unauthorised materials, such as explosives or firearms, in the workplace.
- Conviction of a criminal offence.

The following are examples of **Misconduct**:

- Failure to comply with reasonable and lawful instructions.
- Failure to comply with the RGSV's policies, procedures, rules or working practices.
- Unauthorised and / or unreasonable absence or consistently poor time keeping.
- Negligence or irresponsibility in carrying out duties.
- Abuse of status or responsibilities.
- Intransigent or unreasonably negative attitude to management or fellow staff members.
- Failure to comply with RGSV's sickness notification and certification procedures.
- Smoking in prohibited areas.
- Violation of safety or health rules.
- Conduct unbecoming of a colleague.
- Spread emails/communication to all staff with the purpose of instigation.
- Unsatisfactory performance or conduct and/or lack of application.
- Incompetence.

The following are examples of **Poor Performance**:

- Incapability.
- Unsatisfactory performance or conduct and/or lack of application.
- Incompetence.
- Failure to adhere to set deadlines or complete tasks to the required standard.

All complaints or concerns about a staff member should be made in writing to the relevant Line Manager and will be fully investigated and considered before a decision is taken under this procedure.

RGSV has the right to suspend on full pay and benefits a staff member against whom a complaint is made while that complaint is investigated. Such suspension is not considered to be disciplinary action. During any such period of suspension, RGSV may require the staff member not to enter any premises of RGSV and to refrain from contacting any pupils, parents, staff members or suppliers of RGSV .

### Sanctions for Gross Misconduct and Misconduct

The following sanctions will apply in case of alleged misconduct or gross misconduct. RGSV may move straight to the second, third or fourth stage of the procedure in appropriate cases.

**Stage One, Verbal** - If the staff member's conduct is not of an acceptable standard, he/she will be warned verbally of this. The staff member will be given reasons for this as well as suggestions, if appropriate, on how to improve standards of conduct.

**Stage Two, Written** - If the staff member's conduct does not improve, or any further unacceptable conduct occurs; the staff member will be warned of this in writing and informed of the nature of RGSV's concerns about his/her conduct and what action is required to remedy the situation.

RGSV may begin with Stage Two of the procedure for a first instance of unacceptable conduct if the matter is considered by RGSV to be sufficiently serious.

**Stage Three, Final Written** - If the staff member's conduct does not improve, or any further unacceptable conduct occurs, then the staff member will be warned of this in writing and informed that should his conduct not reach an acceptable standard his/her employment may be terminated.

RGSV may begin with Stage Three of the procedure for a first instance of unacceptable conduct if the matter is considered by RGSV to be sufficiently serious.

**Stage Four, Dismissal** - If a staff member's conduct does not improve, or any further unacceptable conduct occurs, after the full consideration of the matter at an appropriate meeting or hearing, the dismissal of the staff member may follow.

Dismissal may be with or without notice depending on the circumstances.

Where it appears that there may be grounds on which the employment of the staff member may be terminated summarily (e.g. because of gross misconduct or by Labour codes of Vietnam) RGSV will normally begin with Stage Four of this procedure.

## Sanctions for Poor Performance

The following procedure will apply in cases of poor performance.

- **First Warning** - In the first case of poor performance, the staff member will normally be given a first warning by a member of the Educational Leadership Team. This warning will also be given to the staff member in writing and will specify the nature of the poor performance and the nature of the improvement required. The warning will also state that their performance will be reviewed at a set date after the date of the warning. If appropriate, the staff member may be offered training and/or other assistance to help the staff member achieve the required standard of performance.
- **Final Warning** - In the second case of poor performance or where a staff member fails to achieve the improvement required by the first warning by the set date, the staff member will normally be given a final warning by a member of the Educational Leadership Team. This warning will also be given to the staff member in writing and will state the nature of the poor performance and the nature of the improvement required. The warning will also confirm that, unless their performance improves to a specified standard within a specified period after the date of the warning, their employment may be terminated. If appropriate, the staff member may be offered training and/or other assistance to help the staff member achieve the required standard of performance.
- **Dismissal** - If a staff member fails to achieve the improvement required by the final warning within the specified period, the staff member will normally be dismissed in the presence of the Head of School.. The decision to dismiss a staff member will be confirmed to the staff member in writing.

In exceptional cases where the actual or potential consequences of a single negligent act or omission are or could be very serious, RGSV may decide that it is not appropriate to follow the above procedure and RGSV may in such cases dismiss a staff member without giving prior warnings and with immediate effect (without any right to notice or payment in lieu of notice).

Subject to satisfactory performance and conduct, any warning under this procedure for poor performance will lapse after twelve months or such other period as RGSV specifies in the warning.

## 29. Protection of Property and Confidential Business

### Confidentiality

The protection of confidential information is vital to the interests and the success of RGSV. Such confidential information includes, but is not limited to, the following examples:

- Compensation data
- Computer processes
- Computer programs and codes
- Pupil lists or records
- Financial information
- Academic material
- Pending projects and proposals
- Development strategies

### Security

Any attempt (whether successful or not) to gain unauthorised access to, or to tamper with, any computer system or software or installation will be regarded as gross misconduct. This includes the malicious deletion or

alteration of documents created by staff members or others in the course of their duties. Staff members may be liable to disciplinary or criminal action, even where no damage results from their action.

Staff member's passwords are confidential and must be kept as such. When leaving the office, staff members must log out of the system to prevent unauthorised access through their terminal. This also enables the virus checks on their computer to be updated. Unauthorised use of a password without good reason will also be treated as gross misconduct.

### Use of e-mail

Staff members should make every attempt to speak to people in person, and use email when this is not possible.

As email is not a totally secure system of communication and can be intercepted by third parties, external email must not normally be used in relation to confidential transactions.

Email messages do not cease to exist when staff members delete them from their terminal. They remain on RGSV's systems and can be retrieved if required by RGSV or the courts. The content of emails may be relevant to legal action against RGSV and therefore emails may have to be disclosed. Messages sent on the email systems for all purposes must therefore accord, in both the form and content of language used, to the high professional standards applied by RGSV to all other written forms of communication. Care must be taken to avoid entering into binding contractual relations inadvertently, making negligent statements or breaching any confidentiality obligations.

Emails must never be used to send abusive, offensive, sexist, racist, biased or defamatory material, including jokes, pictures or comments which are potentially offensive.

If staff members receive unwanted messages of this nature, staff members must bring this to the attention of the relevant ELT member & HR Manager.

General messages to a wide group must only be sent where necessary.

Please ensure to follow this use of CC & BCC:.

- CC - name the people, if more than 3 people then write et al.
- CC - keep using CC during a thread.
- BCC - for security and privacy reasons, it is best to use BCC when sending an email message to a large number of people, in order to hide everyone's addresses from the recipients of the email.

Reasonable use of the internal and external email systems for purposes other than the duties of their employment is a discretionary privilege given to staff members by RGSV but must be kept to a minimum.

### Internet access

Staff members must not use RGSV's internet facilities to visit, bookmark or download material from obscene, pornographic or otherwise offensive websites on the internet. This could infringe copyright, incur an expense for the firm or expose it to criminal penalties or liability for harassment or defamation.

Reasonable personal use of the internet is a discretionary privilege given to staff members by RGSV but must be kept to a minimum.

Examples of Forbidden Online Activities

- Any illegal activity.

- Any obscene or pornographic purposes which include, but are not limited to, the retrieving or viewing of any sexually explicit material.
- Soliciting or distributing information with the intent to incite violence, cause personal harm or bodily injury or harass or “stalk” another individual.
- Gambling, junk mail, and political lobbying.
- Using profanity, obscenity or language that is generally considered offensive or threatening to persons of a particular race, gender, religion, sexual orientation or to persons with disabilities.

### Telephones

Mobile telephones must not be used in classrooms, unless it is part of the lesson's instruction. RGSV recognises that staff members may have an occasional need to make or receive a personal call. These calls shall be held to a minimum.

Mobile telephone use in the workplace must be minimal. Personal business must be conducted during breaks or lunch. Ringers must be set on vibrate or silence during the work-day, as a professional courtesy.

For all of the above, staff are expected to adhere to the School's *Safeguarding & Child Protection policy*, *Technological Devices & Digital Citizenship Policy & Guidelines* and other relevant school policies and local authority regulations.

## Appendix I: Staff Code of Conduct Declaration

I, the undersigned, confirm that I have received a copy of the Reigate Grammar School Vietnam's Staff Code of Conduct.

I also confirm that I have read, understood and agreed to adhere to the terms laid out in these procedures.

**Signed:**

**Print Full Name:**

**Date:**

***(Please print this sheet and return a signed copy to HR)***