



## Staff Code of Conduct

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Staff members must behave in a consistently professional way when they are doing their job and representing the school. This non-exhaustive code aims to confirm the main expectations of staff, to clarify expectations of standards to be maintained in the school and to help adults establish safe practices which reduce the risk of improper conduct or false accusations. Any queries about expected conduct should be directed to the Headmaster or Assistant Headmistress.

### General principles

- Staff should always act in the best interest of the students at Runnymede.
- Staff relationships with students should be respectful, caring and professional.
- Staff should ensure that students are not taken advantage of in any way.
- Staff should always maintain appropriate professionalism, avoid behaviour which could be misinterpreted by others, and report and record any incident with this potential.
- Staff should model good behaviour in front of students and behave respectfully towards each other.
- Staff must familiarise themselves with and adhere to all relevant school policies.

### Responding to concerns or complaints

Staff are expected to treat information they receive about students in a professional and sensitive manner, following the guidance provided in the key policies related to this area, linked below:

[RC Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy](#)

[RC Complaints Policy](#)

### Communication

- English should be used in all communications with parents, via school platforms only.
- Personal telephone numbers, e-mail accounts, text messaging or instant messaging accounts should not be used.
- Staff should communicate in respectful, professional and non-colloquial English.
- If staff receive inappropriate communication from parents, pupils or other staff members, they must notify their Head of School section immediately.
- Staff should exercise discretion in what they say to students and to parents, and avoid commenting to them about school policy, management or other staff - current, past or prospective. If a parent or pupil wants to discuss a problem or a concern, they must be directed to a member of the School Leadership Team.
- Confidentiality of relevant information must be maintained and under no circumstances should staff communicate information about students or their families publicly or to other pupils or parents.
- Communication with Old Runnymedians who are over 18 is left to staff discretion. However, staff must be conscious of the fact that Old Runnymedians may be in contact with current students.
- Staff must not create, transmit, display, publish or forward any material likely to harass, cause offense, inconvenience or needless anxiety to any other person, or anything which could bring their professional role or the school into disrepute.
- Staff should be aware that their reputation could be harmed by what others share about them, such as friends tagging them in inappropriate posts, photographs, or videos on social media.
- Staff should not speak to the press or other outside agencies about school matters without the express permission of the Headmaster.

### Relationships

Physical contact between staff and students should not occur for any reason, with the following exceptions:

- administration of first aid - staff should explain to the child what is happening and ensure that another adult is present or aware of the action being taken.
- when a pupil is in acute distress and in need of comforting - this is likely to be more appropriate for younger children with their prior consent
- when preventing a pupil from injuring themselves or others

Staff should take particular care when dealing with pupils in the less formal environment of non-lesson times, for instance:

- If meeting a pupil individually, ensure that a colleague is aware and that the location is clearly visible.
- Staff should not meet pupils alone off the school site, nor give a pupil a lift in their own vehicle other than with the permission of the Head of the school section.
- Staff should take special care when supervising students in the less formal atmosphere of a co-curricular activity.
- Where out of school activities include overnight stays careful consideration needs to be given to sleeping arrangements. Students, staff and parents should be informed of these prior to the start of the trip. Full details of trip planning and procedures can be found in the [RC Trips and Visits Policy](#).
- Members of staff who are parents of pupils, friends with parents or who work as volunteers outside the school at organisations attended by pupils, should also respect the spirit of the advice contained in this policy if they come into contact with pupils outside school or in their homes.

All school staff are in a position of trust, and great care should be taken to ensure that this position of trust is not abused or misconstrued. In particular:

- This position of trust should not be used to intimidate, bully, humiliate, coerce or threaten pupils.
- Allowing any sort of dependent relationship to develop with a student is a breach of this trust, and staff should not encourage students to share more of their personal life and private feelings than is appropriate or strictly necessary.
- Staff should not use their position to initiate or promote contact or a relationship with a pupil or recent ex-pupil, which is of a romantic or sexual nature. Forming such relationships with pupils or children under the age of 18 will be regarded as gross misconduct. Such behaviour tends to bring the school into disrepute and gives rise to concern that the staff involved cannot be trusted to maintain professional boundaries with pupils at the school. Regardless of whether or not it is deemed to be a criminal offence, Runnymede College considers it inappropriate for staff to form inappropriate relationships with a child or pupil of any school, irrespective of their age.

### **Dress Code and Physical State:**

- Staff should always dress smartly, appropriately and in accordance with their professional status and in line with what is expected of pupils. T-shirts, jeans, shorts and sportswear (including trainers) are not permitted and any tattoos or piercings should be discrete. Dress must not be offensive, distracting or revealing, embarrassing or discriminatory. Political and other contentious slogans and badges are not allowed.
- Alcohol may not be consumed during normal working hours except on celebratory occasions approved by a member of the Senior Management Team, neither may non-proprietary nor non-prescribed drugs be brought into the school's premises. It is strictly forbidden to work or remain at work under the influence of alcohol. Anyone found under the influence of drink or illegal drugs whilst at school or on a school outing/trip will be sent home and liable to disciplinary action.
- To promote a healthy and pleasant working environment and to comply with statutory regulations, smoking (including the smoking of electronic devices) is not allowed anywhere on the school site. Staff who wish to smoke must ensure that they do so discreetly at an appropriate distance from school so as not to be seen by members of the school community.

### **Gifts and Rewards**

As with most educational institutions it is accepted that parents or children make small gifts to show appreciation. However

- Staff must not receive gifts on a regular basis from any individual or receive anything of significant value where they feel that the gift may be an attempt to gain influence.
- If such a situation arises, or if an individual gift received exceeds the value of €100, the member of staff should notify the Headmaster.

### **Equality**

Runnymede College believes in equality and will not tolerate any harassment, intimidation, unfair discrimination or victimisation, by or against, school staff, pupils, colleagues, parents or other visitors.

- Staff must ensure that equality policies in relation to employment and their duties and responsibilities are adhered to.
- Staff should not by their manner or speech be discriminatory with regards to a person's age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

### **Private classes**

Runnymede College does not recommend paid private academic tuition, in addition to the high-quality teaching, support sessions and interventions that will take place in school routinely. Teachers may support parents in seeking appropriate additional tuition, if requested, however:

- Staff must not give paid private classes to their own pupils.
- There should be no private classes on the school premises.
- Approval from the Headmaster or the Assistant Headmistress must be received.

### **IT and Devices**

- Login credentials should be robust, and should not be shared.
- Devices should be locked when not being used.
- A member of the ICT team should be consulted on changing settings of devices or for the installation of software.
- All school data, resources and documentation must only be stored on school platforms, such as Box or Google Drive.
- Resources accessed, in print or online, must be copyright-compliant.
- The school wi-fi network is filtered suitably, and no attempt to circumnavigate this may take place.
- Staff are expected to set an example regarding use of mobile phones, which should not be used unless it is entirely unavoidable in the presence of pupils.
- **Safe use of mobile devices in the Pre-Prep.** Due to the very young age of the children in this part of the school, additional rules must apply, particularly with regard to mobile phones or other devices that may record images. Young children invest a great deal of trust in adults, particularly those in positions of authority, and are unlikely to question their actions even if the actions make the child feel uncomfortable or unhappy. Very young children may not have the understanding to know when something is inappropriate or the vocabulary to express their concerns. It is therefore very important that we have in place mechanisms to protect them.

**No member of staff working in, or visiting, the Pre-Prep School or Nursery should have their mobile phone out and in use near children during the working day.**

- Only mobile devices issued by the school may be used to photograph or record pupils, and they must be aware of the purpose of this.
- Staff should not form online connections with pupils, nor should they provide them with personal contact information.
- Pupil data and images should not be stored on personal devices of any sort, and should only be retained on school-issued devices if they serve a longer-term purpose.