

# **RUTHERGLEN HIGH SCHOOL PARENT PARTNERSHIP**

## **CODE OF CONDUCT**

### **For Office Bearers and Members**

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## **Introduction**

This Code of Conduct sets out the standards of behaviour expected of all Parent Council office bearers and members. It is designed to ensure that the Parent Council operates effectively, lawfully, and in the best interests of pupils, parents, and the school community.

All Parent Council members are expected to read, sign, understand and adhere to this Code of Conduct.

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## **Core Principles**

All Parent Council members must:

### **1. Act in the Best Interests of the School Community**

- Put the interests of parents, pupils, and the school above personal interests
- Make decisions that benefit the whole school community
- Focus on the educational and welfare needs of all children

### **2. Demonstrate Integrity and Honesty**

- Be truthful in all dealings
- Maintain high standards of personal conduct
- Declare any conflicts of interest promptly and appropriately
- Never use your position for personal gain

### **3. Respect Confidentiality**

- Keep confidential any sensitive information discussed at meetings
- Respect the privacy of pupils, families, and staff
- Only share information that is appropriate and in the public domain
- Ensure discussions about individuals are conducted privately and respectfully

### **4. Promote Equality and Inclusion**

- Welcome and value diversity within the school community
- Treat all members of the school community with respect and dignity
- Challenge discrimination in any form
- Ensure the Parent Council is accessible and inclusive to all parents

## 5. Work Collaboratively

- Support fellow Parent Council members in their roles
- Work constructively with school staff and management
- Listen to different viewpoints with an open mind
- Seek consensus while respecting democratic decisions

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## Specific Responsibilities

### At Meetings

- Attend meetings regularly and punctually
- Come prepared, having read papers in advance
- Participate constructively in discussions
- Respect the role of the chair in facilitating meetings
- Allow others to speak without interruption
- Accept majority decisions, even when you disagree
- Avoid side conversations that disrupt proceedings

### Communication Standards

#### General Communication

- Communicate respectfully, both in person and online
- Avoid gossip or speaking negatively about other members, staff, or families
- Present Parent Council views accurately to the wider community
- Make clear when expressing personal opinions that they do not represent the Parent Council
- Respond to communications in a timely manner

#### Written Communications (Texts, Emails, Messages)

- Maintain a professional and courteous tone in all written communications
- Think carefully before sending messages - consider how they may be interpreted
- Avoid sending messages when emotional or angry; wait and reflect before responding
- Use appropriate language - avoid sarcasm, capital letters (shouting), or aggressive punctuation
- Proofread messages to ensure they are clear and respectful
- Remember that written communications can be easily misinterpreted; if in doubt, speak in person or by phone
- Never send messages late at night or early in the morning unless urgent
- Be mindful that texts and emails can be forwarded or shared; write nothing you would not be comfortable being made public
- If you receive a communication you find upsetting, do not respond immediately - take time to consider an appropriate response
- Use group messages responsibly and only for relevant Parent Council business

### Representation

- Represent the views of the parent body fairly
- Seek input from the wider parent community on important issues
- Report back accurately on Parent Council activities and decisions
- Be honest about the limits of the Parent Council's role and influence

## Communication with the Council

- Keep the Parent Council informed of all relevant events, opportunities, and developments
- Share information about potential fundraising opportunities, grants, or partnerships
- Do not commit the Parent Council to any activities, expenditure, or partnerships without prior approval
- Seek approval from the Parent Council (or office bearers where urgent) before taking action on behalf of the Council
- Ensure all members have equal access to information about Council activities and opportunities
- Report back promptly on any external meetings or events attended as a Parent Council representative

## Social Media and Online Conduct

- Maintain professional standards in all online communications
- Do not post confidential Parent Council information on social media
- Avoid commenting on sensitive school matters publicly
- Be mindful that online posts reflect on the Parent Council

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## Conflicts of Interest

A conflict of interest occurs when personal interests could influence, or appear to influence, your decisions as a Parent Council member.

### You must:

- Declare any potential conflicts of interest as soon as you become aware of them
- Remove yourself from discussions and decisions where you have a conflict
- Not use your position to gain advantage for yourself, family members, or friends
- Be transparent about any relationships that could be perceived as conflicts

### Examples of conflicts include:

- Having a family member employed by the school
- Having a business relationship with a potential supplier
- Standing for election to a role your relative is also seeking

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## Unacceptable Behaviour

The following behaviours are not acceptable and may result in removal from the Parent Council:

- Bullying, harassment, or intimidation of any kind
- Discrimination based on protected characteristics
- Breaching confidentiality
- Using abusive, aggressive, or threatening language or behaviour
- Acting in a way that brings the Parent Council into disrepute
- Failing to declare conflicts of interest
- Using the Parent Council role for personal or political gain
- Sharing false or misleading information
- Persistently disrupting meetings or Parent Council activities

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# Office Bearer Additional Responsibilities

Those holding office bearer positions (Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, Treasurer) have additional responsibilities:

## Leadership

- Model exemplary conduct at all times
- Provide clear direction and support to members
- Address conduct issues promptly and fairly

## Accountability

- Ensure the Parent Council operates within its constitution
- Maintain accurate records and financial management
- Report transparently to the parent body

## Duty of Care

- Look after the wellbeing of Parent Council members
- Create a positive and inclusive environment
- Support new members to understand their role and responsibilities

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## Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG)

Office bearers and members who have regular contact with children through Parent Council activities must be PVG scheme members. The school will arrange appropriate disclosure checks in accordance with safeguarding requirements.

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## Raising Concerns

If you have concerns about another member's conduct:

1. Consider speaking directly with the individual if appropriate
2. Raise the matter with the Chair (or Vice-Chair if the concern relates to the Chair)
3. The office bearers will address the concern fairly and confidentially
4. Serious concerns may be referred to the school's headteacher or education authority

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## Breach of Code of Conduct

Breaches of this Code will be taken seriously. Depending on the nature and severity of the breach, actions may include:

- Informal discussion and guidance
- Formal warning
- Temporary suspension from meetings
- Removal from the Parent Council
- In serious cases, referral to appropriate authorities

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## Declaration

All Parent Council members should sign a declaration confirming they have read, understood, and agree to abide by this Code of Conduct.

**I confirm that I have read and understood the Parent Council Code of Conduct and agree to uphold its principles and standards.**

Name:

Signature:

Date:

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## Review

This Code of Conduct will be reviewed annually or as required to ensure it remains relevant and effective.

**Approved by Parent Council:** 27 Nov 2025

**Next Review Date:** Oct 2026