

Relationships between Pupils

Introduction

The aim of this policy is to give guidance about the appropriateness of relationships and behaviour between pupils at Tring Park School.

The school encourages its pupils to treat each other with respect and to value friendships. Whilst it is mindful of contemporary attitudes, it upholds the view that sexual relationships should be within consensual, committed, adult relationships, even when pupils are aged 16 or over. The school strives to extend the same human rights of equality and fairness to all of its pupils regardless of gender or sexual orientation whilst maintaining appropriate safeguarding measures in a boarding environment.

Relationships

The school is aware of the challenges that deepening friendships may bring to young people and therefore it sets certain boundaries that must be maintained, irrespective of whether a relationship is heterosexual or same-sex. These are informed by the school's ethos and dictated by both its pastoral and its legal responsibilities.

Public displays of affection are not appropriate and pupils must remain especially mindful of this in the environment of their boarding houses, in school buildings, in all other areas of the school grounds, in the local vicinity or when on school trips.

Safeguarding measures in a boarding environment

Relationships, beyond friendships, are generally inappropriate when there is a significant age difference between those concerned. Houseparents will talk to pupils and may inform parents where they have concerns about a relationship.

If it is known that there is a relationship between two pupils within the same boarding house, it is the school's policy not to place these two pupils in the same room. If it is subsequently discovered that two pupils who already share the same room are in a relationship, the school reserves the right to change the dormitory arrangements.

It is school policy that, if possible, pupils who are under the age of consent will not have single or double rooms and that pupils who are more than one year apart will not share the same room.

Pupils of different ages within a boarding house will have access to showers at different times. It is expected that all pupils using communal shower facilities will respect the privacy of any other pupil using the same facility. All forms of electronic communication or recording devices are banned from all of the school's washing facilities or from being used in changing facilities. Any breach of the above or any other inappropriate behaviour will be considered a disciplinary matter.

Sexual relationships or sexualised behaviour between pupils at Tring Park School are **always deemed inappropriate**; in some cases such relationships may also be illegal. Sexualised behaviour in other contexts, such as sexting, will also be treated as a very serious matter and may be considered as peer-to-peer bullying or even abuse. The school expects all members of its community to respect the wishes and feelings of others; any unwanted attention or breach of a pupil's privacy will not be condoned.

Consequences of inappropriate behaviour

Students in breach of this policy are likely to be subject to disciplinary action under the school's Behaviour policy. If a pupil is believed to have taken part in inappropriate sexual activity, the Principal will be informed immediately and he will inform parents at the earliest opportunity. Every incident will normally lead to expulsion.

Incidents that raise child protection or other legal concerns will be treated in accordance with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection policies and may have to be referred to the relevant Safeguarding Children Partnership or to the Police.

Support

The school is committed to the health and safety of its community and will take action to safeguard the wellbeing of its pupils. The school is also committed to widening pupils' understanding about related health and social issues including STDs. A programme of education about both appropriate sexual relationships and sexual health takes place through the school's PSHE programme and the school's medical team.

The school acknowledges the importance of its pastoral role in the welfare of young people and, through the general ethos of the school, will seek to persuade any pupil in need of support to come forward.