

The Governance, Leadership and Management of Radnor House Sevenoaks as a Proprietorial School

Applies to:

- All staff (teaching and non-teaching), the directors and volunteers working in the School.

Availability:

This policy is made available in the following ways:

- The School's website www.radnor-sevenoaks.org;
- Via Teams, All Staff Shared Documents, Compliance, Policies;
- On request a copy may be obtained from the School's Office.

Monitoring and Review:

- This policy will be subject to continuous monitoring, refinement and audit by the Head.
- The Board of Directors undertake a formal annual review of this policy.

Signed:



David Paton
Head



Ian Davies
Chairman of the Board of Directors

Reviewed: September 2025
Next Review: September 2026

1. Governance

- 1.1. Radnor House Sevenoaks (the School) recognises the value that independent governance can provide and has, therefore, sought to combine the best elements of the governance characteristics of charitable Schools and the corporate world by establishing strong systems of governance. Non-Executive and Executive Directors meet at least half-termly to discuss matters relating to strategy, finance, education, staffing and facilities across the School.
- 1.2. In addition, the School has a Board of Governance, chaired by the Chairman of the Board of Directors and drawing members from across the stakeholder groups, including two parents from the Prep School, two parents from the Senior School and two parents from the Friends of Radnor House Sevenoaks, which meets on a termly basis. Members of the Board of Governance assist Directors in supporting the Head and providing advice on holding the School to account. Its role is advisory, and it does not make policy changes or organisational decisions. Its responsibilities include advising the Head and Directors on the effectiveness of the School regarding meeting its aims and contributing to discussions drawn from the School's Development Plan.
- 1.3. The Board of Governance has standing agenda items for Education, Safeguarding, and Health and Safety. The Board of Governance does not discuss finance, premises, nominations, remuneration or any specific or named HR, staff, pupil, or parent issues.
- 1.4. The Board of Directors comprises independent members who are not involved in the day-to-day operations of the Schools. The Board comprises members with extensive experience in the education sector, as well as those with specialisms in finance, business development, and corporate governance. The Board of Directors has the final say in all matters of strategic importance to the School and ensures strict supervision of compliance with legislative and regulatory standards. The Board has the authority to seek independent professional advice, as needed, at the company's expense.
- 1.5. The Board of Directors receives the minutes of the Board of Governance meetings and a verbal report from the Chairman at the end of each term. The Board of Directors meets parents socially at School events and ensures that, by being known and also through the reports at the termly Board of Governance meetings, any matters of concern can be addressed in a forum independent of the executive management of the School.
- 1.6. The focus of the Board of Directors is to ensure compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2018 (ISSR with reference to:
 - 1.6.1. The quality of the education provided;
 - 1.6.2. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils;
 - 1.6.3. The welfare, health and safety of pupils;
 - 1.6.4. The suitability of staff and supply staff;
 - 1.6.5. The premises and accommodation;
 - 1.6.6. The provision of information; and
 - 1.6.7. The manner in which complaints are handled.

2. Leadership and Management

- 2.1. When evaluating the quality of leadership and management in our School, we consider how well we:
 - 2.1.1. Know the School and understand its strengths and weaknesses through being fully involved in the School's self-evaluation;
 - 2.1.2. Support and strengthen School leadership and contribute to shaping its strategic direction;
 - 2.1.3. Provide challenge and, where relevant, hold the Head and other senior leaders to account for improving the quality of teaching and the effectiveness of performance management systems;
 - 2.1.4. Work efficiently, including having a systematic approach to meeting statutory duties and

- 2.4.2.Improvements in the quality of teaching over time or the maintenance of good or better teaching;
- 2.4.3.Robust self-evaluation, which underpins actions and plans focused on the right areas to bring about improvement; noting that good intentions and an aspirational outlook, or a recent change of Head following a period of poor leadership, do not in themselves provide sufficient proof of the capacity to achieve improvement.
- 2.5. Use effective procedures for identifying and supporting disabled pupils, those with a special educational need and pupils with other significant disadvantages, so that they can maximise their potential and are enabled, wherever possible, to overcome their barriers to learning;
- 2.6. Manage safeguarding arrangements to ensure that there is safe recruitment and all pupils are safe, including, for example, the effective identification of children in need or at risk of significant harm, for instance:
 - 2.6.1.Maintain the single central register and appropriate arrangements for safeguarding and the safe recruitment of staff;
 - 2.6.2.Maintain the rigour with which absences of staff and pupils are followed up;
 - 2.6.3.Oversee how well safe practices and a culture of safety are promoted through the curriculum;
- 2.7. Ensure School premises meet the requirements of the Independent Schools Standards and relevant national minimum standards;
- 2.8. Use effective strategies and procedures for promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, including providing appropriate guidance to help pupils prepare for life in modern democratic Britain and a global society;
- 2.9. Promote the confidence and engagement of parents and carers, and where appropriate, placing authorities, in their children's learning and the development of good behaviour, and providing them with the information about the School they require;
- 2.10. Work in partnership with other Schools, external agencies and the community, including business, to improve the School, extend the curriculum and increase the range and quality of learning opportunities for pupils; and
- 2.11. Implement robust procedures for handling complaints.

3. The Board of Directors

- 3.1. The Board of Directors has the authority and power to commit the Head to a particular line of action. The Board of Directors at the School serves as a decision-making body, providing the Head with the best advice. Implicit in this is the Board of Directors' unreserved support for the educational aims, objectives and ethos of the School.

4. Composition of the Board of Directors

- 4.1. The composition of a Board of Directors requires careful thought and planning. The Directors, collectively, possess the knowledge and experience to speak authoritatively on the full range of matters that are likely to come before them. The Board conducts annual competency reviews to ensure that all relevant skills are represented or can be accessed as needed.
- 4.2. Continuity is important, and Directors are normally expected to serve for at least five years. At the same time, the regular infusion of fresh blood is equally important, and it is desirable to strike a balance in the range of Directors' experience.

5. Individual Directors

- 5.1. The strength of the Board of Directors lies in the talents of its members and in their ability to work together as a team. Each member has an equal right to participate and to make up his or her own mind about the issues presented. But once decisions are taken, individual members are bound by them.
- 5.2. Breaches of confidentiality, however inadvertent, can cause embarrassment or damage to

the School. In general, the business, discussions and minutes of the Board of Directors' meetings should be viewed as confidential to the Board of Directors, including what is discussed before a recommendation is made. But, once taken, the decision may, at the discretion of the Board of Directors, be open, as may the agreed reasons for arriving at it. It is the Board of Directors' responsibility to determine how best to meet the openness requirement, and individual members are expected to adhere to it.

- 5.3. Several Directors bring to the School not only their professional or technical expertise but also some experience in comparable roles.

6. The Chairman of the Board of Directors

- 6.1. The Board appoints the Chairman of the Board of Directors. In addition to ensuring that the business of the Board of Directors is conducted properly and the meetings are run efficiently, it is the Chairman's task to bring all members together as a cohesive team.
- 6.2. The office requires that time be given to its discharge and, if special difficulties arise, a great deal of time. The Chairman makes it their business to be fully informed about the affairs of the School. His or her information should, as far as possible, be firsthand and would normally come mainly from talks with the Head.

7. Meetings

- 7.1. The Board of Directors at the School meets at least half-termly. Members of the Senior Leadership Team and Heads of Departments are regularly invited to present to the Board on topics relevant to their responsibilities. This is followed by an interactive discussion between the Board and the staff member, during which views are challenged and actions are agreed upon as required.
- 7.2. The agenda varies from meeting to meeting but retains standing items, including the Head's report, health and safety, child protection/safeguarding and finance report. The agenda strikes a balance between educational and business items.

8. The Clerk to the Board ("Clerk")

- 8.1. The Clerk organises the agendas for meetings of the Board of Directors, with the approval of the Chairman and the Head. The Clerk's duties include convening the meetings and seeing that the dates of subsequent meetings are agreed upon. Notes of the meeting are taken by the Clerk, who then drafts the minutes for approval by the Board of Directors, as appropriate. The Clerk then distributes them accordingly and ensures that the authorised version is filed, along with reports presented at the meeting. A member of the Board of Directors holds the role of Clerk for each meeting.

9. Directors and the Head

- 9.1. The Board of Directors is concerned with aims, policies and plans. It supports the Head in formulating and implementing them. Acting within that framework, the Head and his/her team manage and administer the School with the support of the Board of Directors.
- 9.2. In supporting the Directors to deal with the exigencies of School life sensibly and consistently, the Head and the Board of Directors utilise policies. Some policies are required by law, but even when they are not, there is value in published policy statements that can be varied with changing circumstances: they reduce the risk of argument, and people know where they stand. On a regularly agreed-upon basis, the Directors review the list of policies to ensure there are no gaps that could leave the possibility of litigation open.
- 9.3. Where appropriate, development planning is an area where the Board of Directors and Head work closely together. The plan covers, among other things, education, buildings, and other relevant areas of the School.
- 9.4. The relationship between the Board of Directors and the Head should be one of complete trust, with unfettered frankness of discussion, support for the Head and clear accountability.

10. The Board of Governance

- 10.1. In addition to the half-termly Directors' meetings, Board of Governance meetings are held on a termly basis and have a greater focus on the quality of education provided at Radnor House Sevenoaks. Members of the Governance Board have an advisory role in monitoring, assessing and supporting the provision of education at the School.

11. Composition of the Board of Governance

- 11.1. The Board of Governance has 12 Members as follows:
- Non-executive Chairman of the Board of Directors (Chairman of the Board of Governance)
 - Head of Radnor House Sevenoaks
 - Head of Prep School
 - Senior School Deputy Head Academic
 - Senior School Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
 - Prep School Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
 - Parent Members selected by the following parent groups:
 - 2 Prep Class Reps
 - 2 Senior Class Reps
 - 2 Friends of Radnor House Sevenoaks
- 11.2. The Head's PA is the Minuting Secretary.
- 11.3. Parent Members serve on the Board for four years from the time of their appointment.

12. Meetings

- 12.1. These are held termly and will often follow the more regular Directors' meetings. The Head's PA is Secretary to the Board of Governance and distributes agendas, board packs and takes the minutes.
- 12.2. The Board of Governance aims to provide greater scrutiny and advice for certain areas of the School, carrying out a role more typically performed by a subcommittee in charitable trust Schools. The specific areas covered as standing items at each meeting are:
- Education and Academic Policy
 - Pastoral and Pupil Support
 - Health & Safety
 - Safeguarding

13. Parent Members seek to:

- 13.1. Develop opportunities for greater parental involvement in School life.
- 13.2. Engage further with the wider School community.
- 13.3. Ensure respectful and timely two-way communication for parents and the School.
- 13.4. Promote an effective and productive home-school partnership.
- 13.5. Provide opportunities for parents to support learning processes.

14. Going into School

- 14.1. Individual Directors are expected to visit the School, in their role as members of the Board of Directors, with the Head's encouragement. The Board of Directors plans visits to cover a wide range of School life, and visits have a clear purpose. Visits by members can be useful and informative. They do not replace professional inspection or the monitoring and evaluation carried out by the Head.