



## **APPROPRIATE RELATIONSHIPS POLICY**

**AS ADOPTED BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**ON MAY 14, 2012**

**TO BE REVIEWED AGAIN IN MAY 2014**

## **OUR MISSION STATEMENT**

**Global Schoolroom is dedicated to sharing educational experience between communities worldwide to help eradicate poverty, promote economic development and build sustainable communities.**

## **OUR FIVE GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

**Education has the power to enlighten one another and expand each individual's scope for opportunity.**

**A primary education for every child is essential (the UN's Millennium Development Goal for universal education).**

**Sharing good educational practices enriches the collective educational experience and widens the cultural horizons of everyone involved.**

**Forging respectful links between educational partners works to their mutual benefit.**

**Working directly with teachers and communities is the best way to build a strong framework for high standards of teacher training which, once in place, can be delivered by sustainable local networks.**

## **OUR POLICIES**

**Global Schoolroom's policies are proofed against our Mission Statement and Guiding Principles and aim to reflect best international practice.**

## **STATEMENT ON APPROPRIATE RELATIONSHIPS**

Global Schoolroom regards the pedagogical relationship between tutor and student as critical to its educational mission. It recognises that any inappropriate relationship between an individual tutor and a student may seriously damage the educational experience of the student and that of his or her peers, may generate conflicts of interest, result in inequality of treatment and assessment of different students, may damage relationships with other individuals, and impose an additional burden on other tutors.

### **PROFESSIONAL ETHICS**

Global Schoolroom considers it a breach of professional ethics for staff or volunteers to have romantic or sexual relationships, even if consensual, with a student for whom they have (or are likely in future to have) responsibility of any kind. However, it also recognises that at least ostensibly consensual relationships do occasionally arise, and that successful long-term relationships sometimes result. Accordingly, it does not wish to place an absolute prohibition on such relationships, as some institutions and organisations do. This policy seeks to balance the risk of damage against the freedom of individuals.

### **NOTIFICATION**

Global Schoolroom declares a strong presumption against any romantic or sexual relationships between staff/volunteers and student, even if consensual. Both parties are accordingly expected to make serious efforts to prevent any such relationship occurring. If it arises in spite of such efforts, the staff member/volunteer has a clear duty to notify the team leader or colleague (in confidence) of the situation so that all their responsibilities for the student may be transferred to someone else.

If in the opinion of Global Schoolroom, such action is warranted, such notification need not include details of the relationship, and should be treated in complete confidence. Such a relationship is not in itself grounds for any disciplinary action; however failure to report such a relationship may be grounds for such action.

A student finding themselves in such a relationship may wish to consult another tutor or Global Schoolroom management, particularly if concerned that it may not have been disclosed by the staff member/volunteer.

No staff member/volunteer should accept any new responsibility for a student with whom they have any existing romantic or sexual relationship.

### **CONSENT**

Global Schoolroom recognises that the unequal status of staff/volunteer and student (the power and influence of the former, the need and dependency of the latter) may mean consensuality is not free even when it appears so. If the student involved in any such relationship does not truly welcome it, (s)he may take action under the Dignity in the Workplace Policy.

*Notes*

(i) The terms “tutor” and “student” here mean the senior and junior partner in any pedagogical or academic advisory relationship.

(ii) For good practice, in cases where existing family relationships exist between tutor and student, such relationships must be notified to Global Schoolroom.

## **TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

### **IRISH LAW**

You must respect the laws of Ireland and specifically, but not exclusively, be aware of your responsibilities under Irish law.

### **GLOBAL SCHOOLROOM POLICIES**

In addition, there are policies in a variety of areas, which Global Schoolroom Directors, Management, Staff, Volunteers and all other participants must be aware of and operate under where these policies are relevant.