



## **OXLEY PARK ACADEMY**

### Staff Code of Conduct Policy

The following code of conduct has been adopted by the Governing Body of Oxley Park Academy to enable it to discharge its functions under the School Staffing (England) Regulations 2009 in relation to its duty under Regulation 7 to establish procedures for the regulation of the conduct of the staff at the school.

This code of conduct applies to all employees in the Academy. All schools and academies are entitled to demand a level of conduct from employees which is of the highest standard. In the case of teachers, it applies in conjunction with Part B of the Teachers' Standards. This code aims to give clear guidance on the usual standards of conduct expected of all employees. As a member of a school community, each employee has an individual responsibility to maintain their reputation and the reputation of the school, whether inside or outside working hours.

The principles of this code of conduct will reflect Oxley Park Academy's core values: it sets down the way in which an employee of Oxley Park Academy is expected to conduct themselves.

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As an employee, you must not put yourself in a position where duty and private interests conflict and you must not make use of your employment to further your private interests.

The Code consists of:

1. General Principles
2. General Code of Conduct
  - Safeguarding Children
  - Application and Intent
  - Personal Interest
  - Gifts and Responsibility
  - Sponsorship
  - General Confidentiality
  - Dealing with the Academy's Money
  - Criminal Charges and Convictions
  - Other Employment
  - Intellectual Property and Copyrights
  - Publications and Dealing with the Press
  - Equipment and Materials

- Political Restrictions and Neutrality
- Equal Opportunities
- Employment Matters
- Discrimination/Harassment
- Fitness for Work
- Health and Safety
- Attendance
- Smoking
- Mobile Phones
- Dress Code
- Identity Badges
- Disciplinary Rules
- Following Instructions

### General Principles

As an employee of the Academy you are expected to carry out your duties in accordance with the Academy's policies and procedures.

You are expected to uphold the following principles:

- **Selflessness:** - your decisions must be taken in terms of the values and mission of the Academy and not in order to gain financial or other material benefits
- **Integrity:** - you must not place yourself in a situation where your position is compromised.
- **Objectivity:** - all decisions must be made on merit alone.
- **Accountability:** - you must accept accountability for your decisions and actions.
- **Openness:** - you should be as open as possible about all your decisions and actions.
- **Honesty:** - you should declare any private interests relating to your duties and take lawful steps to resolve any conflicts to ensure that public interest is protected.
- **Leadership:** - you must support and promote these principles by example.
- **Conduct:** - you must avoid bringing the Academy, into disrepute (eg by the use of social networks or the internet).
- **Respect:** - you must treat others with respect.

### General Code of Conduct

#### **Safeguarding children**

All employees have a duty to safeguard children from

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Neglect

The duty to safeguard children includes the duty to report concerns about a child to the Academy's Designated Safeguarding Lead. The Designated Safeguarding Lead is Cathy

Higgins. The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads are Glynis Wiles, Mary Younger and Deb Frayne-Johnson.

Staff are provided with personal copies of the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection policy and Whistleblowing procedure and staff must be familiar with these documents.

Staff must take the upmost care of children under their supervision with the aim of ensuring their safety and welfare.

### **Application and Intent**

You will be expected to act in accordance with the Code. The Code has been designed so that you are not left in any doubt as to what is acceptable or unacceptable behaviour. The Code of Conduct places rules and regulations on certain activities and any breach of these prohibitions may lead to disciplinary action.

### **Personal Interest**

You must not in your official capacity:

- Allow your personal interests to conflict with the Academy's requirements.
- Use your position improperly to confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person.

You must:

- Not disclose information given to you in confidence, or information acquired which is of a confidential nature, without the consent of a person authorised to give it.
- Not prevent another person from gaining access to information to which that person is entitled to by law.
- Ensure that your relationships with Pupils, Parents, Governors, Staff and any other people with whom you may come into contact with in the course of your duties are professional at all times.

### **Gifts and Hospitality**

The Academy seeks to maintain the highest standards of conduct and probity in its business.

The acceptance of gifts and/or hospitality must be treated with extreme caution. No offer of a gift or inducement, whether made at specific occasions (e.g. at Christmas) or casually, should be accepted when the gift is made by, or indirectly by, a person, firm or organisation which, to the knowledge of the employee, has or seeks to do business of any kind with the Academy which maintains the school or to have an interest in its decisions.

The receipt of minor articles, often by way of trade advertisements, which will be used on the Academy's business (e.g. diaries, calendars, office requisites etc., which are customarily distributed at Christmas and, occasionally, at other times) is acceptable.

If you are in any doubt, you should seek guidance from the Principal or Line Manager before accepting any gifts or hospitality offered. If there is any doubt, further advice can be requested from the Senior Finance Officer.

Employees should also refrain from making gifts to external organisations or to the employees of organisations which provide services to the Academy or which are potential providers of such services.

## **Sponsorship**

Where the Academy, or parties to the Academy, sponsors an event or service, you, or any partner, spouse or relative must not benefit from the sponsorship.

You must seek guidance from your manager if you are involved with any event or service that the Academy proposes to sponsor.

## **General Confidentiality**

You may, in the course of your duties, obtain information which is confidential.

You must not:

- Pass on any information received or obtained through your employment to anyone who is not entitled to have that information.
- Use information for personal advantage.
- Misuse your position by seeking information which you do not need to know to carry out your duties.

You must:

- Work within the requirements of Data Protection Act 1998 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000.
- Observe the Academy's procedures for the release of personal information held about other employees or members of the public.

Examples of abuse of confidence would include:

- Ill-considered gossip whether with colleagues or outsiders which may be misconstrued and re-quoted.
- Exploitation of confidential information for personal gain.
- Premature and/or unauthorised disclosure to other parties of policy proposals, with the object of generating adverse publicity e.g. to the press, interest groups.

## **Dealing with the Academy's Money**

You must:

- Ensure that public funds are used in a responsible and lawful manner.
- Strive to ensure value for money to the Academy and avoid legal challenge to the Academy.
- Ensure compliance with the Academies Financial Handbook and Financial Regulations Manual.

## **Criminal Charges and Convictions**

In accordance with the Independent School Standards Regulations, the Academy requires all applicants to disclose criminal convictions, whether committed in the UK or elsewhere.

You must:

- Notify the Academy in writing if charged with any criminal offence or if convicted of any criminal offence, this includes cautions.
- If charged with an offence, advise the Academy as your employer immediately after you are charged (i.e. next working day)

It should be noted that the term 'conviction' includes a finding of guilt, regardless of whether or not a conviction is recorded. Failure to notify the Academy in either case will constitute grounds for disciplinary action.

### **Other Employment**

In some instances, your contract of employment may:

- Prevent you from undertaking other employment without the written permission of the Principal. This will be stated within your individual contract.
- It is important that you ensure that any additional employment does not conflict with the interests of the Academy or affect your ability and credibility to do your job.
- Where you have more than one job, both the Academy and your other employer(s) are responsible for ensuring that the 48 hour week is complied with. You should therefore ensure that you inform the Principal about any work you undertake for other employer(s). (You may opt to work more than 48 hours per week and should you wish to do so, you will need to complete the form 'Working Time Regulations Opt Out Agreement' and submit it to the Principal).
- You must ensure that Academy time and equipment are not utilised in connection with any other employment.
- If in doubt, the best thing to do is to discuss the circumstances with the Principal.

### **Intellectual Property and Copyrights**

All intellectual property rights, (that is copyright, design rights and the right to patent inventions) relating to anything created or invented by you in the course of your duties belongs automatically to the Academy, unless otherwise agreed, you cannot exploit the rights to any such thing without written permission from the Academy.

### **Publications and Dealing with the Press**

You must not:

- Publish any material with comments on the activities, policies etc. of the Academy without the consent of the Principal.
- Make comments to the press or media unless specifically authorised to do so.

Where requests for comments are received they should be passed on to the Principal.

Where you wish to publish an article unconnected with the Academy then the article must not link you to the Academy.

### **Equipment and Materials**

You must:

- Not use the equipment and premises of the Academy or of other places where you work during your contract of employment for unauthorised purposes.
- Only make personal telephone calls and emails when necessary and within reason.
- Only use the internet for personal use in your own time.
- Follow the Academy's protocols regarding the use of the internet.

## **Political Restrictions and Neutrality**

There are a number of posts that are politically restricted. These fall into two broad categories:

- Specified posts
- Sensitive posts

If you are in a politically restricted post then this will be indicated in your contract of employment and you are restricted in certain political activities.

## **Political Neutrality**

The Academy will not concern itself with the political beliefs of individuals however you must not allow your own political beliefs to interfere with the work of the Academy.

You must not display party political posters, including election material, in any place of work.

## **Equal Opportunities**

The Academy is committed to the promotion and implementation of equal opportunities both internally and externally.

The Academy aims to ensure that everyone who comes into contact with it is treated equally and not in any way disadvantaged by factors which could prevent the implementation of fair policies and operations.

The Academy will recognise the differences which exist and will seek to understand the needs of people within the groups which are afforded protection or assistance through this policy.

The Academy expects all its employees to uphold its Equal Opportunity Policy and to accept the duty not to discriminate, either in employment practices or in the provision of facilities and services by reference to age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

## **Employment Matters**

If you are involved in making appointments you must:

- Ensure that such appointments are made on the candidate's ability to do the job.
- Ensure that your personal preferences should not influence judgements made.
- Declare your interest where you are related to an applicant or have a close personal relationship outside work with him/her.

## **Discrimination, Harassment and Victimisation**

You must treat all other employees, pupils, parents, and people whom you come into contact with courtesy and respect, and must not make any remarks or gestures relating to the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation which may cause offence.

Any complaint of discrimination, harassment, or victimisation or complaints made on the grounds of any of the protected characteristics listed above, will be taken seriously and be the subject of a thorough investigation.

## **Fitness for Work**

The Academy accepts that alcohol is legally and freely available. You must:

- Ensure that the use of alcohol out of work does not adversely affect your work performance, the health, safety or welfare of yourself or others and does not damage the Academy image and reputation.
- Not consume or be under the influence of alcohol, use illicit drugs or other illegal substances while at work.
- Ensure that the use of any of them out of work does not adversely affect the work performance and safety of yourself or others, and does not bring the Academy into disrepute.
- If taking medication, you must seek the advice of your doctor to ensure such medication will not impede your ability to do your job (e.g. operate machinery)
- Inform the Principal or Line Manager of any situations where a risk to yourself or others may arise because of this.
- The Principal will consider the options available for assisting employees who are required to take legally prescribed drugs and whose levels of performance has been impaired. In these circumstances, a risk assessment should be undertaken.

## **Health and Safety**

You have a duty to take reasonable care of yourself and to cooperate with management under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. These responsibilities are identified in the Academy's Health and Safety policy.

You are required to act at all times in accordance with this policy and generally act in such a way to ensure your own safety and that of others.

Any action which potentially puts at risk the health and/or safety of yourself or others will be viewed seriously and may result in disciplinary action being taken.

## **Attendance**

Your contract of employment contains the main terms and conditions of your employment within the Academy.

It is expected that you are available to work during these hours and take an unpaid lunch break.

You must record your attendance in accordance with the workplace time recording system, which is currently an electronic fob entry system.

## **Smoking**

The Academy is a non-smoking organisation.

You are not permitted to smoke in any of the Academy's offices, or any other building or grounds owned or occupied by the Academy, at any time.

Smoking whilst on the Academy's premises may be subject to disciplinary action.

## **Mobile Phones**

A code of conduct is promoted with the aim of creating a cooperative workforce, where staff work as a team, have high values and respect each other; thus creating a strong morale and sense of commitment leading to increased productivity.

It is therefore ensured that all staff:

- Have a clear understanding of what constitutes misuse.
- Know how to minimise risk.
- Avoid putting themselves into compromising situations which could be misinterpreted and lead to possible allegations.
- Understand the need for professional boundaries and clear guidance regarding acceptable use.
- Are responsible for self-moderation of their behaviours.
- Are aware of the importance of reporting concerns promptly.

It is fully recognised that studies consistently indicate that imposing rigid regulations and/or 'bans' on the actions of others can be counterproductive, leading to a culture of suspicion, uncertainty and secrecy.

The imposition of rigorous, inflexible rules is therefore avoided, unless the potential risks of not enforcing them out-weigh the benefits. An agreement of trust is therefore promoted regarding the carrying and use of mobile phones within the school environment, which is agreed to by all staff.

### **Personal Mobiles**

- Staff who are in contact with children are not permitted to use their mobile phones in school during their directed hours/paid hours of employment. Mobile phones must only be used in areas of the school where children are not present during staff break times.
- Staff should ensure that their mobile is on silent at all times whilst in classrooms with children and in staffrooms. They should not be left on display.
- Staff are not permitted to use recording equipment on their mobile phones. Any photographs or videos must be taken using school equipment. Staff must only save images on school equipment.

## **Dress Code**

The Academy values and welcomes the ethnic diversity of its workforce and therefore dress codes will take account of ethnic and religious dress requirements with sensitivity ensuring that employees are free to observe them. It is expected that employees should dress in a manner for work which reflects the ethos of the school, maintains a professional appearance and is of the same high standard that we expect for the children. All staff who have contact with the children during core school time will dress in smart workwear in a manner which meets health and safety requirements and reflects the professional nature of the job they are employed to do. If we are to act as role models for the children and the community then this dress code must be adhered to. All staff who support PE will be required to wear clothing appropriate to the activities and no jewellery.

Where there is a clear business case or a health and safety reason then the Academy may introduce appropriate dress codes to suit the services provided and expectation of the Academy. For example no flip flops, Birkenstock, or Scholl footwear, and any open toed sandals must be securely attached to the foot with a strap.

### **Identity Badges**

Employees are issued with identity badges and should wear them at all times.

### **Disciplinary Rules**

The Academy has a disciplinary procedure.

The disciplinary procedure is concerned with instances of alleged misconduct, either ordinary or gross. It is anticipated that the vast majority of breaches will be of a minor nature and that they can be resolved without recourse to a formal procedure. Some breaches will be more serious or there may be circumstances where there is a repetition of a minor breach. In such circumstances, the matter will be formally investigated and progressed under the formal procedure.

The Academy also has a separate capability procedure which provides a framework for managers and employees to cope with issues of poor performance. The underlying intention of the procedure is to give the employees who are falling below the established acceptable standards the opportunity to improve.

### **Following Instructions**

You are expected to follow all reasonable and lawful instructions by a person with the authority to issue such instructions unless:

- There is a danger to a person's health and safety.
- A conflict of interest may exist.
- It does not comply with Academy policy and practice.

The Principal and Line Managers must be able to justify their instructions and decisions in line with their delegations, authority, and Academy policy and procedures, and be open and respond promptly to constructive questions.

### **Contract of Employment**

Your contract of employment is an agreement between the Academy and you which sets out your employment rights, responsibilities and duties and this includes the Code of Conduct.

### **Data Protection Act**

The Data Protection Act protects personal data which relates to living identifiable individuals and deals with the way in which personal information is collected, held, recorded and used.

It works in two ways:

- It gives you certain rights
- It states that those who record and use personal information must be open about how the information is used and must follow the 8 data protection principles.

## **Freedom of Information Act 2000**

The Freedom of Information (FOI) Act (2001) gives significant rights of access to information held by all public authorities.

## **Internet Usage**

Internet users must not display, access, use, extract, store, distribute, print, reveal or otherwise process any kind of image, document or other material which is sexually explicit or offensive in any other way, on any school system. This activity would be a violation of the school's policies, particularly relating to conduct and discrimination.

If access to this information is required for business purposes, a request must be submitted to the Principal detailing a legitimate business reason for the access. If you are authorised to use this sort of material, you should take great care not to offend others when the material is revealed, and not to retain such material or access to it when it is no longer needed for business reasons.

You must not post any comments, photographs, images or conversations on social networking sites which may bring you or the Academy into disrepute. Security settings should be maintained at the highest level in order to prevent members of the public seeing any of your personal information. You should also follow the 'Social Networking Policy'.

<b>Reviewed:</b>	Autumn 2015
<b>Review cycle:</b>	Annual
<b>Next review:</b>	Autumn 2016

## **Appendix 1 : Aide memoire for staff**

When we speak to others, we will:

- use a positive statement rather than a negative one, so that children can learn what we expect of them in any situation.
- use a calm tone of voice at all times, to explain something to or instruct the children, so that they can follow our words without feeling threatened or uncomfortable.
- avoid using sarcastic words or phrases as these demean children and prevent them from developing high self-esteem.

As professionals, we will:

- maintain confidentiality about anything that we see or hear in the school, so that parents and children can trust us, and as a way of showing respect to our fellow professionals.
- work as part of a team, contributing as well as learning from others and helping to build up a strong workforce so that we can provide the best possible learning opportunities for the children.
- work within the school's policies and practices, so that what we do is consistent with what has been agreed between all members of the staff and the governors.
- treat everyone with respect.
- dress appropriately, so that we set a good example for the children and to show that we are here to work.
- behave in a positive way despite any personal problems that we may have, especially in front of the children.