



Staff Code of Conduct

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Aim of this code of conduct

Odyssey Collaborative Trust expects all pupils to receive high-quality teaching and learning in a positive and respectful environment. This policy applies to staff members who are employed by the Trust and volunteers.

Employees should ensure that their own behaviour, and the manner in which they conduct themselves with colleagues, pupils, parents and other stakeholders, sets a positive and professional example for pupils. We recognise that the majority of staff members act appropriately and treat each other with dignity and respect; however, we consider it important to clarify the expected standards.

This policy forms part of a staff member's contract of employment and failure to comply with it, along with the associated school policies, may result in disciplinary action being taken, including legal action where this is warranted.

1. Professional behaviour and conduct

Staff are expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct such that public confidence in their integrity is sustained.

Staff will:

- Have proper and professional regard for the ethos, policies and practices of the school.
- Maintain high standards in their attendance and punctuality.
- Staff should ensure high standards of honesty and integrity in their role. This includes when dealing with pupils, engaging in procurement activities, claiming expenses and using school property and facilities.
- Cooperate with school and trust leaders in meeting their duties under the relevant regulations.
- Treat pupils, parents, colleagues and external contacts with dignity and respect.
- Observe proper boundaries appropriate to their professional position, showing tolerance of and respect for the rights of others.
- Inform the headteacher or CEO if they are subject to a criminal conviction, caution, ban, police enquiry, investigation or pending prosecution.
- Be aware that professional behaviour and conduct is expected to be extended to extracurricular trips and visits.
- Act appropriately in terms of the views they express – in particular, political views – and the use of school resources at all times.

Staff will not:

- Use foul or abusive language.
- Perpetrate discrimination, bullying, harassment, victimisation or intimidation, including physical, sexual and verbal abuse.
- Misuse or misrepresent their position, qualifications, or experience.
- Cause the School or Trust to be brought into disrepute.

2. Safeguarding pupils

In accordance with the current 'Keeping children safe in education' (KCSIE), staff have a responsibility to safeguard pupils, protect and promote their welfare, and ensure that they provide a learning environment in which pupils feel safe, secure and respected.

To effectively safeguard pupils, staff are required to follow the procedures outlined in this Staff Code of Conduct, the Behaviour Policy and the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, and ensure that they do not act in a way that may put pupils at risk of harm, or lead others to question their actions.

Copies of policies and a copy of Part one (or, where appropriate Annex A for staff not working directly with children) of KCSIE will be provided to staff at induction. Staff will have a clear understanding of the school's policies and procedures with regards to safeguarding issues, e.g. abuse, and the important role they play in preventing harm against pupils.

If a member of staff has any concerns about a pupil's welfare, they will act on them immediately. They will follow the necessary reporting and referral procedures outlined in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and speak to the DSL. Staff will be aware of the procedures to follow if a pupil tells them they are experiencing abuse, exploitation, or neglect.

Any member of staff member that has concerns about another staff member's (including volunteers and supply staff) actions or intent or believes these actions may lead to a pupil being put at risk of harm, will report this in line with the Allegations of Abuse Against Staff Policy or Whistleblowing Policy immediately so appropriate action can be taken.

3. Appearance and dress

The trust expects that staff will:

- Ensure that their appearance is clean and neat when at work or representing the school.
- Dress in a manner that is appropriate to their role – the school/trust will make reasonable adjustments to uniform expectations to suit disabilities, medical conditions, and religious and cultural beliefs.
- Not wear clothing that could have implications for the health and safety of themselves or others in their care.
- Remember that they are role models for pupils, and that their dress and appearance should reflect this.
- Not dress in a way that would cause embarrassment to pupils, parents, colleagues, or other stakeholders.
- Ensure that, if visible, tattoos do not cause offence to others; if tattoos are likely to cause offence, they must be covered up whilst in work.
- Ensure that jewellery and piercings are minimal and, in the health and safety interests of both staff and children, avoid anything that could catch or be caught by pupils.

4. Attendance

Staff will:

- Attend work in accordance with their contract of employment and associated terms and conditions in relation to hours, days of work and holidays.
- Comply with the school's notification of sickness absence procedures when they are absent from work due to illness or injury.
- Comply with the expectations of the Attendance Management Policy and all procedures that relate to this policy, including attending occupation health appointments when required.

- Maintain regular contact with the school/trust during any period of absence.
- Make routine medical and dental appointments outside of their working hours or during holidays where possible.
- Refer to the Trust's Leave of Absence Policy if they need time off for any reason other than personal illness.

5. Conduct outside of work

Staff will not engage in outside work which could seriously damage the reputation and standing of the school, the employee's own reputation, or the reputation of other members of the school community. Staff will also not engage in outside work at a level which may contravene The Working Time Regulations 1998 or affect an individual's work performance.

Staff committing offences that involve violence, possession or use of illegal drugs, or sexual misconduct is unacceptable, and will result in disciplinary procedures in line with the school's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

Staff will not engage in inappropriate use of social network sites which may bring themselves, the school, school community or employer into disrepute. This is explored further in the Acceptable use of technology section of this policy.

6. Smoking, e-cigarettes, alcohol, and other substances

Staff will not smoke or vape on school premises and whenever in the sight of pupils, parents or visitors.

Staff will not smoke or vape whilst working with or supervising pupils off-site, such as when on educational visits and trips.

Staff will report for work and remain in a condition to perform their duties free from the effects of drugs, alcohol or any other substances that may hinder judgement and cause changes in behaviour; this does not include over-the-counter painkillers such as paracetamol.

7. Health and safety

Staff will:

- Be familiar with, and adhere to, the school's Health and Safety Policy and ensure that they take every action to keep themselves and everyone in the school environment safe and well.
- Comply with health and safety regulations, adhering to any rules, routines and procedures in place, and cooperate with school leaders and colleagues on matters relating to health and safety.
- Use the correct equipment and tools for the job and any protective clothing supplied.
- Adhere to their common law duty to act as a prudent parent would when in charge of pupils.

8. Conflicts of interests

The trust is aware that situations may arise where family interests or loyalties conflict with those of the trust; however, staff have an obligation to act in the best interests of the trust to avoid situations where there may be a potential conflict of interest.

All staff will be able to demonstrate that they do not have a vested interest in any decision-making or budget spending. All declarations will be submitted in writing to the headteacher or CEO for inclusion on the school/trust Declared Conflicts of Interest Register.

Failure to make a relevant declaration of interests is a serious breach of trust and, therefore, if employees are in doubt about a declaration, they are advised to contact the school, trust or trade union.

Any member of staff found to be withholding information about a conflict of interest will be subject to disciplinary action in line with the Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

Contacts:

Staff members will not use school or trust business contacts for acquiring materials or services at trade/discount prices for non-school activities, unless participating in concessionary schemes arranged by trade unions or other such groups.

9. Maintaining professional relationships with pupils

The Trust expects that staff will:

- Maintain professional boundaries and relationships with pupils at all times, and will consider whether their actions are warranted, proportionate, safe and necessary.
- Act in an open and transparent way that would not lead to others questioning their actions.
- Ensure that they do not establish social contact with pupils for the purpose of securing a friendship, or to pursue or strengthen a relationship.
- Ensure that they do not develop personal or sexual relationships with pupils: this includes sexual remarks and discussing their own sexual relationships with, or in the presence of, pupils.
- Only contact pupils via the school's established mechanisms: personal phone numbers, email addresses or social media platforms will not be used to contact pupils.

Staff are aware that they must not:

- Discuss personal information with pupils, such as concerning their lifestyle or marital status, unless it is directly relevant to the topic being taught.
- Correspond in a personal nature through any medium with pupils, e.g. phone calls or text messages, unless it is within the staff member's role and via an approved communication method, e.g. school emails.
- Adopt an ongoing support role beyond the scope of their position.
- Discuss or share information regarding other pupils or members of staff; staff should be aware of their surroundings when speaking to others, as their conversations may be overheard.
- Ignore instances of sexual harassment and inappropriate behaviour amongst pupils.
- Invite or allow pupils to visit their home.
- Allow pupils to access staff members' personal devices.
- Attend pupils' homes or their social gatherings, unless approved by the SLT.
- Be alone with a pupil outside of teaching responsibilities, unless approved by the SLT.
- Enter changing rooms or toilets occupied by pupils, when supervision is not required or appropriate, use toilet facilities allocated to pupils, or undress in facilities intended for use by pupils.

- Carry out one-to-one tutoring, mentoring or coaching of pupils, unless approved by the headteacher or SLT.
- Give personal gifts or special favours, or disproportionately single specific pupils out for special duties or responsibilities.

If a pupil is consistently attempting to befriend or contact a member of staff on social media, the member of staff will inform the headteacher as soon as possible.

Staff are strongly discouraged from forming personal relationships with former pupils, including on social media, as well as with the parents of any pupils on social media.

In the event of the school becoming aware of a close relationship between a member of staff and a former pupil which may raise concerns about their suitability to work with children, the headteacher will contact the LA designated officer (LADO) for advice and guidance.

The Trust recognises that there may be circumstances whereby employees of the school are known to pupils outside of work. Examples include friends and family connections, sports clubs and private tutoring. Staff must declare to the Headteacher any relationships outside of school that they have with pupils which includes the pupils name(s) and their relationship.

Appropriate language

Staff will be informed that pupils should not be treated as friends. Staff will not:

- Use inappropriate names or terms of endearment.
- Allow inappropriate conversations or enquiries of a sexual nature to occur.
- Comment on a pupil's appearance, including personal flattery or criticism.
- Treat pupils disrespectfully or discriminatorily, based upon their perceived or actual protected characteristics.
- Subject pupils to humiliation, profanity, or vilification.
- Allow or partake in suggestive humour, banter, jokes or innuendos of a sexual nature.
- Use obscene or inappropriate gestures and language.
- Partake in personal conversations, including on the phone, where this may be overheard by pupils.

10. Physical contact with pupils

All staff members will respect the personal space and privacy of all pupils and will avoid situations which unnecessarily result in close physical contact.

The school understands that there are circumstances in which it is entirely necessary for staff to have physical contact with pupils, e.g. when applying first aid and assisting with intimate care, but staff will only do so in a professional and appropriate manner in line with relevant school policies.

When physical contact is made with pupils, it is imperative that it is conducted in a way which is responsive to the pupil's needs, is of limited duration and is appropriate to their age, stage of development, gender, and background.

Staff will seek the pupil's permission, where possible, before initiating contact.

Staff will always use their professional judgement when determining what physical contact is appropriate, as this may differ between pupils, and ensure that the pupil's feelings and wishes are always taken into account.

11. Transporting pupils

Staff are aware that the safety and welfare of pupils is the responsibility of the school until pupils are with their parents. The school is committed to taking all possible safety measures to ensure the safety of pupils.

When it is necessary to transport pupils off-site, staff will gain consent from parents before transporting pupils and adhere to the appropriate school policies and risk assessments.

Staff will ensure that they:

- Hold a full valid driving licence for the category of vehicle being driven and providing their licence details to the headteacher where required.
- Drive in accordance with the laws of the road and Highway Code.
- Check before each journey that the vehicle is roadworthy, e.g. tyres are properly inflated and meet legal requirements.
- Ensure that they are fit to drive; where their fitness to drive may be impaired, e.g. due to a medical condition or taking medication, they inform their line manager as soon as possible and notify the DVLA where required.
- Notify the headteacher where there is any change in their circumstance in relation to driving at work, e.g. if they acquire penalty points on their licence for motoring offences outside of work.

Staff will only use their own vehicle to transport pupils where there is no practical or reasonable alternative, and where agreed upon by the headteacher and parents in advance of the journey. Only members of staff with the appropriate level of DBS check and safeguarding and behaviour management training will be permitted to transport pupils.

When using their own vehicle to transport pupils, staff will ensure that their driving insurance is valid for the purposes of business use, including cover for persons travelling as business passengers. Two or more staff will be present in the vehicle to avoid any discrepancy regarding safeguarding concerns.

Staff will not offer pupils transport outside of their normal working duties, other than in an emergency or if a pupil is at risk. These circumstances will be recorded and reported to the headteacher and the pupil's parents.

12. Acceptable use of technology

When using technology staff will always adhere to the various procedures, freedoms and limitations outlined in the relevant school policies.

All staff will maintain a professional level of conduct in their personal use of technology, and read, sign, and adhere to the school's Technology Acceptable Use Agreement.

Staff will be vigilant to ensure their own behaviour is respectful and that pupils are using technology appropriately while under their care.

Staff will not use personal mobile phones and laptops, or school equipment for personal use, in front of pupils or in school times except in an emergency.

Social media

Staff will be aware that their conduct on social media can have an impact on their role and reputation within the school and trust.

Staff will remain mindful of their use of social media and their web-based presence including written content, videos or photographs, and views expressed directly or indirectly which may bring themselves, the school, school community or trust into disrepute.

Staff are required to employ the highest security settings on any personal profiles they may have.

Staff will not engage in inappropriate use of social networking sites including contacting pupils or their family members, accepting or inviting friend requests from pupils or their family members, or following pupils or their family members on social media.

The school understands that some staff are also parents of pupils at the school and, therefore, may wish to contact other parents. When doing so, staff will exercise their professional judgement and will not contact family members on social media if this would lead to a conflict of interest.

13. Photography, images and videos

Photographs, images and videos will only be taken using school equipment – using personal mobile phones or personal devices for this purpose is prohibited and taking images of pupils will not be taken for personal use.

Staff will ensure that imagery and videos will be kept in an appropriate and secure place in school. No pupil will be photographed in a state of undress or semi-undress, or in a situation which could be considered as indecent or sexual.

Staff will not take images of a pupil's injury, bruising or similar (e.g. following a disclosure of abuse), even if they have been requested to do so by children's social care and staff members will not make audio recordings of any disclosure made by a pupil.

Consent for taking photographs will be obtained from parents, or the pupil themselves, if they are deemed old enough and able to make the decision for themselves.

Careful consideration will always be given to the activities which are being filmed or photographed, to ensure that images or videos are not indecent and cannot be misused.

14. Premises, equipment, and communication

Staff are responsible for:

- Being aware of site security by securing windows and doors when rooms are not in use.
- Ensuring that all visitors sign in and out at the school /trust premises.
- Challenging any unidentified individuals and notifying the headteacher/CEO of any unauthorised person.
- Securing valuable equipment after use.
- Ensuring the security of school and trust equipment when taken off the school/trust premises, such as laptops.
- Reporting any minor security concerns to the headteacher.
- Reporting major security concerns directly to the police or emergency services, where appropriate.
- Being responsible for the security of any of their own property that they bring to the school site.

School equipment and systems are available only for school/trust -related activities and will not be used for the fulfilment of another job or for personal use, unless specifically authorised by the headteacher or CEO. Illegal, inappropriate, or unacceptable use of school equipment or communication systems may result in disciplinary action and, in serious cases, could lead to an employee's dismissal.

The school reserves the right to monitor emails, phone calls, internet activity or document production on school-owned equipment, principally in order to avoid offensive or nuisance material and to protect systems from viruses, but also to ensure proper and effective use of systems.

Communication systems may be accessed when the school/trust suspects that the employee has been misusing systems or facilities, or for the investigation of suspected fraud or other irregularity.

15. Data protection and confidentiality

All staff will be aware of their responsibilities as laid out in the Trust Data Protection Policy and in line with the core principles of the UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.

Staff members will not disclose sensitive information about the school, trust and its employees, or the LA to other parties. The only exception to this being when the confidential information gives rise to concerns about the safety or welfare of a pupil.

Before sharing data, all staff will ensure:

- They are allowed to share it.
- That adequate security is in place to protect it.
- Who will receive the data has been outlined in a privacy notice.

The school/trust holds the right to take the necessary disciplinary action against a staff member if they believe them to be in breach of the above security measures.

16. Monitoring and review

This document will be reviewed on an **annual** basis by the Board of Trustees, and any changes made will be communicated to all members of staff.

All members of staff are required to familiarise themselves with this document as part of their induction programme.