

Oakfield Primary School



Staff Code of Conduct

2024-2025

Statement of intent

Oakfield Primary School expects all of its pupils to receive the highest possible quality of teaching and learning within a positive and respectful environment.

Employees at Oakfield should understand that their own behaviour and the manner in which they conduct themselves with their colleagues, pupils, parents and other stakeholders, sets an example.

Oakfield Primary School recognises 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 document forms part of a staff member's employment contract and failure to comply with it and with the associated Oakfield Primary School policies may result in disciplinary action being taken, including legal action where it is warranted.

This document applies to all staff members who are:

- Employed by Oakfield Primary School, including the Headteacher.
- Employed in provisions that are attached to Oakfield Primary School

But this document does not apply to:

- Peripatetic staff members who are centrally employed by the LA.
 - Employees of external contractors and providers of services.
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1. Oakfield policies

This Code of Conduct should be read and adhered to in conjunction with the following Oakfield policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Single Equalities Policy
- Relational Behaviour Policy

2. Appearance and dress

The expectations are that staff members:

- Ensure that their appearance is clean and neat when at work or representing Oakfield Primary School
- Dress in a manner that is appropriate to their role.
- Remember that they are role models for pupils and that their dress and appearance should reflect this.
- Do not dress in a way that would cause embarrassment to pupils, parents, colleagues or other stakeholders.

3. Attendance

Our expectations are that staff members:

- Attend work in accordance with their contract of employment and associated terms and conditions in relation to hours, days of work and holidays.
- Make routine medical and dental appointments outside of their working hours or during holidays, where possible.
- Refer to Enquire Learning Trust's Leave of Absence Policy if they need time off for any reason other than personal illness.
- Follow Oakfield Primary School reporting procedure when they are absent from work due to illness or injury.

4. Professional behaviour and conduct

- Staff members are expected to treat other colleagues, pupils, parents, and external contacts with dignity and respect.
- Discrimination, bullying, harassment or intimidation, including physical and verbal abuse, will not be tolerated at Oakfield Primary School.
- Staff members must not misuse or misrepresent their position, qualifications or experience or bring Oakfield Primary School into disrepute.
- Staff members must inform the Headteacher if they are subject to a criminal conviction, caution, ban, police enquiry, investigation or pending prosecution.

5. Safeguarding children

Our expectations are for staff members to:

- Act in an open and transparent way that would not lead to any suspicion about their actions or intent.
- Respect their duty to protect children and young people from harm and to maintain professional boundaries.
- Read and understand Oakfield policies on child protection and safeguarding, including their obligations to undertake a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.

6. Low Level Concerns

The term 'low level' does not mean that it is insignificant, it means that the behaviour towards a child does not meet the threshold for harm.

A low level concern is any concern – no matter how small, even if no more than causing a sense of unease or a 'nagging doubt' – that an adult working on or behalf of the academy may have acted in a way that:

- Is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate behaviour outside of work; and
- Does not meet the allegation threshold or is otherwise not considered serious enough to consider a referral to the LADO.

Examples of such behaviour include, but are not limited to:

- Being over – friendly with children;
- Having favourites
- Taking photos on personal devices
- Engaging with children on a 1;1 basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door;

or,

- Humiliating children.

At Oakfield Primary Academy, we promote an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about all adults working in or on behalf of the academy (including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors) are dealt with promptly and appropriately.

All staff should share any low-level concerns they have, as set out in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. We encourage staff to self-refer if they find themselves in a situation that could be misinterpreted. If staff are not sure whether a behaviour would be deemed a low-level concern, we encourage staff to report it.

All reports will be managed in a sensitive and proportional way, any unprofessional behaviour will be addressed, and the staff member supported to correct it, at an early stage.

Further information can be found under Appendix 3.1 of the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

7. Declaration of interests

Staff members are required to declare their interests where the group or organisation would be considered to be in conflict with the ethos of Oakfield Primary School. Membership to a trade union or staff representative group would not need to be declared.

Staff members should also carefully consider whether they need to declare their relationship with any individual where this might cause a conflict with school activities.

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

All declarations, including nil returns, should be submitted in writing to the Headteacher on the Register of Business Interests.

8. Probity of records

The deliberate falsification of documents is not acceptable. Where a staff member falsifies records or other documents, including those held electronically, this will be regarded as a serious disciplinary matter and potentially a criminal offence.

Where a staff member has claimed any benefit, either directly or indirectly, or has failed to disclose their full earnings, this will be treated as gross misconduct and the employee may be dismissed and referred to the police.

9. Financial inducements

Staff members must:

- Familiarise themselves and comply with Oakfield Primary School's financial regulations.
- Declare to the AIC, in writing, any gifts received, with the exception of:
 - Low cost, functional items suitable for business rather than personal use and displaying the supplier's logo. These items may be accepted.
 - Gifts offered by parents or pupils to Oakfield Primary staff to express their gratitude, but staff members should always refuse gifts of money.
 - Hospitality in the shape of meals and drinks where it forms part of a normal business meeting, but offers to specific events should only be accepted after authorisation from the governing body.
 - Authorised visits by employees to exhibitions, demonstrations, conferences, business meals and social functions in connection with the school's business, which shall be at Oakfield Primary's expense.
- Not accept a personal gift, payment, or other incentive, from a business contact, which should be returned.
- Declare any gift that cannot be returned, to the AIC, who will decide how it will be used.

10. Oakfield Primary School contacts

Staff members shall not use Oakfield Primary School 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.

11. Health and safety

Staff members must:

- Be familiar with and adhere to Oakfield Primary School's Health and Safety Policy and must ensure that they take every action to keep themselves and everyone in the school environment safe and well.
- Comply with health and safety regulations and use any safety equipment and protective clothing which is supplied to them.
- Comply with hygiene requirements.
- Comply with accident reporting requirements.
- Inform their line manager of any paid work which is undertaken elsewhere for compliance with Working Time Regulations.

12. Alcohol and illegal drugs

The taking of illegal drugs or alcohol during working hours is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Staff members are expected to attend work without being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.

If alcohol or drug usage impacts on a staff member's performance, the headteacher has the right to discuss the matter with the employee and take appropriate action, including referral to the police.

13. Oakfield Primary School premises, equipment and communication

Oakfield Primary equipment and systems are available only for school-related activities and should not be used for the fulfilment of another job or for personal use, unless specifically authorised by the Headteacher.

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.

Employees receiving inappropriate communication or material or who are unsure about whether something he / she proposes to do might breach this Policy, should seek advice from the Headteacher.

The school reserves the right to monitor e-mails, phone calls, internet activity or document production, 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 suspects that the employee has been misusing systems or facilities, or for the investigation of suspected fraud or other irregularity.

Passwords should not be shared and access to computer systems must be kept confidential except on the express request of the Headteacher or Systems Manager. Breach of this confidentiality may be subject to disciplinary action.

Oakfield Primary equipment that is used outside school premises, for example laptops, should be returned to the school when the employee leaves employment or if requested to do so by the Headteacher.

14. School / Academy networking websites

Employees must not access social networking sites for personal use during classes.

Access to some journals, blogs and social networking sites is permitted during classes for the purposes of undertaking job related duties only.

Employees must act in the best interests of the school and not disclose personal data or information about any individual, including staff members, children and young people.

Staff members should not 'friend' pupils on social networking websites.

Access may be withdrawn and disciplinary action taken if there is a breach of confidentiality or defamatory remarks are made against any individual at Oakfield Primary School.

15. Data protection

Staff members are required, in accordance with General Data Protection Regulations, to collect, maintain and dispose of sensitive or personal data in a responsible manner.

Staff members should not disclose sensitive information about Oakfield Primary School, its employees, or the trust, to other parties, unless it gives rise to concerns about the safety or welfare of a pupil.

Staff members have the right to request access to data that is held about them and such requests should be made to the Headteacher.