OCL PARENTAL & CARER CODE OF CONDUCT

July 2019

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1.0 Introduction

Oasis Community Learning (OCL) is totally committed to developing the character and competence of every student and believes that all students should receive an exceptional education. This approach is underpinned by the Oasis ethos and 9 habits and expressed through the Education Charter.

We have a responsibility to ensure that we treat people with respect, openness and care. This desire is borne out of two of our five ethos values – our commitment to treat people equally, respecting differences and our commitment to healthy and open relationships. We are keen to work with parents and carers to develop a culture where everyone is approachable and we expect staff, parents and carers to all play their part.

To create and maintain healthy, open relationships and to ensure we remain committed to treating people equally, we seek to intentionally focus on being patient, honest, humble and forgiving. We believe students learn best in a safe and supportive environment based on respect and trust and underpinned by an effective partnership between parents, staff and the Academy community.

High standards of behaviour are required of students. Staff are expected to act professionally at all times. The positive support of parents and carers is needed and highly valued by OCL. We expect parents and staff to model the behaviour we wish to see in our students.

This Code of Conduct provides a reminder to all parents, carers and visitors to our Academies about the conduct that is expected of them. It sets out both what they should aim to do, and how any inappropriate conduct will be addressed. So we are all working in a spirit of partnership allowing relationships to flourish, progress and achieve in an atmosphere of mutual understanding.

This code complements the Trust's 'Complaints Policy' which is designed to handle parental concerns or complaints in a sensitive and mutually supportive manner (see link to OCL Complaints Policy). It also sits alongside the Trust's E-Safety policy, which sets out guidelines for appropriate use of social media and other online forums relating to the Academy.

2.0 Expectations

Our expectations of parents and carers (and, where appropriate, visitors):

- Respect the caring ethos and values of our Trust
- Be tolerant of each other's views, beliefs and opinions
- Work together with Academy staff for the benefit of their children
- Treat all members of each Academy community with respect using appropriate language and behaviour
- Approach the Academy to help resolve any issues of concern. The involvement of other agencies such as the police, the LADO, local authority or OFSTED is a parental right but we welcome open dialogue in the first instance to allow Academy staff to address the issue directly.
- Where appropriate, clarify a child's version of events with the Academy's view in order to bring about a peaceful solution to any issue
- Promote good student behaviour at all times, especially in public where it could otherwise lead to conflict, aggressive or unsafe behaviour. For example: children must not be encouraged to fight to resolve issues

- It is inevitable that at times there will be conflict between students in the Academy. To ensure that these incidents are dealt with safely and effectively, we ask that parents and carers speak to Academy staff (e.g. head of year or class teacher) rather than approaching the other student or parent directly or through social media to reprimand them.
- Email contact with staff is used in many Academies as a way to support collaboration. However, there is no expectation that staff must respond to emails within a specific timescale and staff may choose not to respond to any aggressive emails.
- Public communication regarding the Academy (e.g. on social media) should be factual and where there is a concern this should be shared with the Academy in the first instance to enable resolution.

In order to support a peaceful and safe Academy environment, the Trust will not tolerate parents, carers or visitors behaving in a way that threatens or harms the wellbeing of our students or staff. This includes exhibiting the following:

- Disruptive or other inappropriate behaviour which interferes or threatens to interfere with any of the Academy's operation or activities anywhere on the Academy premises
- Approaching another parent or student in order to discuss or reprimand them because of an issue between students – please talk to a member of Academy staff to resolve any problems
- Using loud or offensive language or displaying temper
- Threatening, in any way, a member of Academy staff, visitor, fellow parent/carer or student
- Using physical or verbal aggression towards another adult or child, including your own
- Any other behaviour, verbal or otherwise, which could be considered to be inappropriate, offensive, or abusive
- Sending abusive or threatening e-mails, text/voicemail/phone messages, or other written communications to anyone within the Academy community
- Defamatory, offensive or derogatory comments regarding the Academy or any of the students/parents/carers/staff at the Academy on Facebook or other social media
- Damaging or destroying Academy property
- Arriving on the Academy premises partially clothed
- Smoking (including e-cigarettes), taking illegal drugs or the consumption of alcohol on Academy premises (except where it is authorised)
- Bringing dogs (except for registered assistance dogs) or other animals into the Academy environment without prior agreement
- Driving unsafely in the vicinity of the Academy
- Taking photographs with phones or other devices on Academy premises without permission from the Academy

Where the above expectations are not upheld, the initial response will usually involve a conversation with the parent/carer or visitor. Where this is not sufficient to resolve the issue, the Academy may have to consider further action. This could include: banning from site for a fixed time (see 'barring from the Academy premises' below); contacting the police or seeking legal redress through the courts; restricting channels of communication (e.g. no longer allowed to email staff directly). In the case of defamatory comments posted online, we would also report the post to the site's admin. In some cases, we may also need to refer to Social Care if the behaviour of a parent/carer or visitor indicates that they may be unsafe around children.

We expect that parents, carers and visitors will assist OCL with the implementation of this policy and we thank you for your continuing support of our Academies. We ask that parents and carers ensure they make all persons responsible for collecting their children aware of this policy.

3.0 Social media sites

Inappropriate use of social network sites
Social media websites and online systems are being used increasingly to fuel campaigns and complaints against Academies, Principals, Academy staff, and in some cases other parents/students. OCL considers the use of social media websites being used in this way as unacceptable and not in the best interests of students or the whole Academy community. Any concerns you may have must be made through the appropriate channels by speaking to the class teacher, senior leader or the Principal (as outlined in the OCL Complaints Policy), so they can be dealt with fairly, appropriately and effectively for all concerned.

Defamatory posts
In the event that any student or parent/carer of a student being educated by OCL is found to be posting defamatory comments on Facebook or other social network sites, they will be reported to the appropriate 'report abuse' section of the network site. It is likely that the police will also be informed. All social network sites have clear rules about the content which can be posted on the site and they provide robust mechanisms to report contact or activity which breaches this. Each Academy will also expect that any parent/carer or student removes such comments immediately.

Cyber bullying
We take very seriously the issue of cyber bullying by one child or a parent to publicly humiliate another by inappropriate social network entry. We will deal with this as a serious incident of Academy bullying. Thankfully such incidents are extremely rare. In serious cases the Academy will also consider its legal options to deal with any such misuse of social networking and other sites.

4.0 Recording meetings

The recording of meetings is permitted by Academy staff/parents/carers. This must be for private use only and the party making the recording should be encouraged to make this clear at the start of a meeting or other event.

OCL encourages parents and staff to be open and honest about the recording of meetings. Any meeting held with parents that is recorded should ideally be agreed beforehand by all parties.

All staff should conduct meetings as though they were being recorded to ensure nothing inappropriate is said that could be used to form the basis of a formal complaint.

It is worth noting that:

- When Academies refuse to hold meetings with parents, who want to record them, it can cause a lack of trust between the Academy and parents/carers
- It could also suggest to the parent that the Academy has "something to hide"
- In addition, and most significantly, an Academy may be unable to exercise its duties relating to safeguarding and child protection if it simply refuses to meet with the parents who want to record the meeting

Secret filming/recording

Staff should ensure that they don't have conversations about students or parents in the general vicinity of other students/parents who may overhear and who could be recording them. All staff should conduct meetings as though they were being recorded to ensure nothing inappropriate is said that could be used to form the basis of a formal complaint.

5.0 Barring from the Academy premises

The public has no automatic right of entry to our Academies. Academies will therefore act to ensure they remain a safe place for students, staff and other members of their community.

If a parent's behaviour is a cause for concern, an Academy can ask him/her to leave Academy premises. In serious cases, the Principal or OCL can notify them in writing that their implied licence to be on Academy premises has been temporarily revoked subject to any representations that the parent may wish to make to the Principal. Academies should always give the parent the opportunity to formally express their views on the decision to bar in writing.

During the barring period all contact should go through the Principal's PA or a named member of staff either by email or telephone.

The Principal's decision to bar should be reviewed by the Regional Director. They should take into account any representations made by the individual and decide whether to either confirm or lift the bar. If the decision is confirmed, the individual should be notified in writing, explaining:

- how long the bar will be in place
- when the decision will be reviewed

Once the Academy's appeal process has been completed, individuals may be able to apply to the Civil Courts. Individuals wishing to exercise this option should seek independent legal advice.

Any ban should be reviewed at the end of the agreed timescale as outlined above.

Controlling access to school premises - https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/controlling-access-to-school-premises - provides more guidance on access to Academy premises.

See Appendix B for sample banning letters and letter from the Regional Director to uphold or dismiss the ban.

6.0 Monitoring arrangements

The Regional Director will monitor the effectiveness of the Academy's application of the parent code of conduct policy.

This policy will be reviewed by National Education Team regularly.

At each review, the policy will be approved by the National Education Team and any changes shared with the CSG for approval.

7.0 Links with other policies

The following policies should be read in conjunction with this:

- OCL Complaints Policy
- OCL Behaviour for Learning Policy
- OCL E-Safety Policy
- DfE Guidance on Controlling Access to School Premises

8.0 Training

Academy leaders may want to include training for colleagues in holding meetings with parents in their CPD plans so that all staff feel confident in working positively with parents and others.

Training will be based on the need in each Academy. National and Regional Directors are able to signpost colleagues to sources of best practice in holding meetings with parents.

Appendix A: Code of conduct for parents on a page

In our Academies we value the support we have from parents and carers. We want to hear your suggestions and feedback. We know that your son or daughter will do better in school if we all get on well and work together to do our very best for the children or students.

We want our parents and staff to model the behaviour we wish to see in our students. This Code of Conduct explains to parents, carers and visitors how to behave in and around the Academy.

The Trust will not accept parents, carers or visitors doing the following:

Bad Language

- Using loud or rude language
- Threatening anyone

Behaviour

- Being aggressive towards other adults/parents or students
- Physical attack or being aggressive toward staff or students
- Losing your temper
- Taking actions into your own hands rather than asking the Academy to sort out a problem
- Fighting with other parents or students
- Damaging or destroying Academy property
- Arriving on the Academy premises partially clothed
- Smoking (including e-cigarettes), taking illegal drugs or the drinking alcohol on the Academy premises
- Driving dangerously near the Academy
- Bringing dogs (except for registered assistance dogs or other animals with permission) into the Academy or the grounds
- Taking photographs with phones or other devices on Academy premises without permission from the Academy
- Behaving in a way that stops the Academy running smoothly

Social Media

- Sending unkind, rude or aggressive e-mails, texts/voicemails/phone messages, or other written messages to anyone in the Academy community
- Making rude or false comments about the Academy or anyone who works in it on Facebook or other social media
- Bullying using social media or online or by text. Sometimes this is called cyber bullying

What will happen?

- In all cases of physical or severe verbal assault towards our staff and students we will always seek prosecution
- The Academy may contact Social Services because they are concerned about you and your family
- You could be barred from the Academy for a period of time
- The police may be informed

Recording meetings

You are allowed to record meetings in the Academy but recordings are for your private use only. Parents should tell staff if they want to record a meeting rather than doing it secretly. This will encourage a good level of trust between everyone.

(Academy leaders have the option to remove this paragraph from this parental guidance section if they believe it will encourage an increase in the recording of meetings.)

Appendix B: Oasis Academy Silvertown Parent/Carer Code of Conduct

Parent/Carer Code of Conduct
We value and understand the importance of a good working relationship between home and the Academy. This agreement is designed to remind us of our responsibilities and provide you with an expected code of conduct.

We welcome and encourage families to participate fully in the life of our Academy, embracing the Oasis 9 Habits as a central part of our ethos. A way that is characterised by being compassionate, humble, patient, honest, joyful, considerate, hopeful, forgiving and self-controlled.

The 9 Habits remind us of the importance of establishing and maintaining relationships with everyone that we meet; they are intended to support character development. Good character sustains our moral compass and is essential when moulding a successful and fulfilling life.

We trust that parents and carers will support our Academy with the implementation of this agreement.

Parents/carers should ensure that they make anyone else who is responsible for the care of their child aware of this agreement.

Please sign below to acknowledge your understanding and support.

Signature of Parent_____Date_____

Name of student _____

We advise you to contact a member of the Pastoral team if you wish to discuss any concerns, or have any questions.

The Academy will not tolerate parents, carers and visitors exhibiting any of the behaviours as described below: Should any of these behaviours occur, we may contact the appropriate authority, and if necessary ban the offending adult(s) from entering the premises.

- Distracting Academy staff and trying to speak to them whilst they are supervising children.
- Breaching Academy security procedures, e.g. entering Academy gates without using the intercom system when other parents are leaving or entering.
- Attempts to gain entry to any part of the Academy without appropriate supervision.
- Disruptive behaviour, which interferes with the safe and smooth running of the Academy day.
- Using loud or offensive language, swearing, or using profane language.
- Threatening to do harm to a member of Academy staff, visitor, fellow parent/carer or student regardless of whether or not the behaviour constitutes a criminal offence.
- Damaging or destroying Academy property.
- Abusive, persistent or threatening e-mails / texts / voicemail / phone messages
- Defamatory, offensive or derogatory comments about the Academy or any of the students/parents/staff, at the Academy, in public, or on social media sites.
- The use of physical aggression towards another adult or child, including your own.
- Approaching someone else's child in order to discuss an incident or chastise them.
- Smoking (including e-cigarettes) and consumption of alcohol or other drugs whilst on Academy property.

Appendix C: Letters for use in barring from the Academy premises

Letter 1 Warning (sent by Principal)

Recorded delivery

Dear ……..

Oasis Community Learning promotes working, learning and developing together. We believe that good relationships are at the heart of everything we do.

However, I have received a report about your conduct at the Academy on **(enter date and time). (Add the expectation that was not adhered to and a factual summary of the incident and of its effect on staff, students and other parents.)**

I must inform you that Oasis Community Learning will not tolerate conduct of this nature on its premises and will act to protect its students and staff. We aim to treat all those we are in contact with in a respectful manner, because anything else goes against our ethos and the way we work.

Therefore if, in the future, I receive any reports of conduct of this nature I will be forced to consider removing your licence to enter the Academy grounds and buildings. If you do not comply with that instruction I will be able to arrange for you to be removed from the premises and prosecuted under Section 547 of the Education Act 1996. If convicted under this section, you are liable to a fine of up to £500.

Nevertheless, I wish to give you an opportunity to give me in writing any comments or observations of your own in relation to the report which I have received about your conduct.

These comments may include any expressions of regret on your part and any assurances you are prepared to give about your future good conduct. To enable me to take a decision on this matter at an early point, you are asked to send me any written comments you wish to make by **(state date ten working days from the date of letter).**

Yours sincerely,

Principal
cc: Regional Director

Letter 2 Withdraw permission pending review (sent by the Principal)

Recorded delivery

Dear

Oasis Community Learning promotes working, learning and developing together. We believe that good relationships are at the heart of everything we do.

However, I have received a report about your conduct on.....at……

(Add the expectation that was not adhered to and a factual summary of the incident and of its effect on staff, students and other parents.)

(Optional reference to first letter from Principal)

I must inform you that we will not tolerate conduct of this nature on the Academy premises and will act to defend Academy staff and students. Oasis Community Learning aims to treat all those we are in contact with in a respectful manner, because anything else goes against our ethos and the way we work.

I am therefore instructing you that until I have reviewed this incident, you are not to reappear on the Academy premises. If you do not comply with this instruction I shall arrange for you to be removed from the premises. If you cause a nuisance or disturbance on the premises you may be prosecuted under section 547 of the Education Act 1996; if convicted under this section, you are liable to a fine of £500.

The withdrawal of permission for you to enter the Academy premises takes effect immediately and will be in place for 15 Academy days in the first instance.

In the case of a primary Academy include:
For the duration of this decision you may bring your son(s)/daughter(s) **(complete as appropriate)** to Academy and collect them/him/her (delete as appropriate) at the end of the Academy day, but you must not go beyond the Academy gate.

In the case of EY/KS1 children, also insert
Arrangements have been made for your **(delete as appropriate)** son(s)/daughter(s) (insert child/rens names) to be collected, and returned to you, at the Academy gate by a member of the Academy's staff.

I wish to give you an opportunity to give me in writing any comments or observations of your own in relation to your conduct on the Academy site. These comments may be to challenge or explain the facts of the incident, to express regret and give assurances about your future good conduct.

Your letter will enable me to take a decision on whether or not you will be allowed on the Academy premises after the 15 days. Please send me any written comments you wish to make by (**date 10 WORKING days from date of letter).**

If on receipt of your comments, I consider that my decision should be confirmed, you will be supplied with details of how to pursue a review of your case.

Yours sincerely

Principal
cc: Regional Director

Letter 3a Withdrawal of permission confirmed (sent by the Principal)

Recorded delivery

Dear

Oasis Community Learning promotes working, learning and developing together. We believe that good relationships are at the heart of everything we do. However, on..... I wrote to inform you that I had withdrawn permission for you to come onto the premises of Oasis Academy ……..

To enable me to determine whether to confirm this decision for a longer period, I gave you the opportunity to give your written comments on the incident concerned by ……. .

I have not received a written response from you/I have received a letter from you dated ……, the contents of which I have carefully considered.

In the circumstances, and after further consideration of the incident of poor conduct, I have determined that the decision to withdraw permission for you to come onto Academy premises should be confirmed. I am therefore instructing that, until further notice, you are not to come onto the premises of the Academy without my prior knowledge and approval.

If you do not comply with this instruction I shall arrange for you to be removed from the premises of the Academy. If you cause a nuisance or disturbance on the premises, you may be prosecuted under Section 547 of the Education Act 1996; if convicted under this section, you are liable to a fine of up to £500.

Even though we have taken this decision, we remain committed to the education of your child/ren, who must continue to attend Academy as normal.

In the case of a primary Academy include:
For the duration of this decision you may bring your son(s)/daughter(s) **(complete as appropriate)** to Academy and collect them/him/her (delete as appropriate) at the end of the Academy day, but you must not go beyond the Academy gate.

In the case of EY/KS1 children, also insert
Arrangements have been made for your **(delete as appropriate)** son(s)/daughter(s) (insert child/rens' names) to be collected, and returned to you, at the Academy gate by a member of the Academy's staff.

This decision will be reviewed again..... **(insert review date which should be within a reasonable period and no longer than six months).**

When deciding whether it will be necessary to extend the withdrawal of permission to come onto the Academy premises, consideration will be given to the extent of your compliance with the decision, any appropriate expressions of regret and assurance of future good conduct received from you; and any evidence of your co-operation with the Academy in other respects.

Finally, I would advise you that your complaint is being considered under the appropriate stage of the Academy's parental complaints procedure. The Academy will contact you about this in due course. (**delete as appropriate**)

Yours sincerely

Principal
cc. Regional Director

Letter 3b Restore permission after review (sent by the Regional Director)

Recorded delivery

Dear

Oasis Community Learning promotes working, learning and developing together. We believe that good relationships are at the heart of everything we do.

On …… Mrs/Miss/Mr..... (Principal's name) wrote to inform you that he/she had temporarily withdrawn permission for you to come onto the premises of Oasis Academy……

To enable her/him to determine whether to confirm this decision for a longer period. You were given the opportunity to give your written comments on the incident concerned by …….

We have not received a written response from you/I have received a letter from you dated ……, the contents of which I have carefully considered.

In the circumstances, I have decided that it is not necessary to confirm the decision and I am therefore restoring to you permission to come onto the Academy premises, with immediate effect.

(Optional) I must warn you, however, that if it should become necessary in the future I shall not hesitate to withdraw permission for you to come onto the Academy premises once again.

Yours sincerely

Regional Director
cc. Principal

Letter 4a Continue ban after second review (sent by the Regional Director)

Recorded delivery

Dear

Oasis Community Learning promotes working, learning and developing together. We believe that good relationships are at the heart of everything we do.

On …… Mrs/Miss/Mr ..... (Principal's name) wrote to inform you that he/she had temporarily withdrawn permission for you to come onto the premises of Oasis Academy……

To enable her/him to determine whether to confirm this decision for a longer period. You were given the opportunity to give your written comments on the incident concerned by ……

We have not received a written response from you/I have received a letter from you dated ……, the contents of which I have carefully considered.

You were also advised that we would take steps to review this decision by ……

I have now completed the review. However, I have determined that it is not yet appropriate for me to withdraw my decision. **(Add brief summary of reasons).**

I therefore advise that the instruction that you are not to come onto the premises of Oasis Academy……., without my prior knowledge and approval remains in place …….. (insert date)

If you do not comply with this instruction I shall arrange for you to be removed from the premises and you may be prosecuted under section 547 of the Education Act 1996; if convicted under this section, you are liable to a fine of up to £500.

I shall undertake a further review of this decision by..... **(insert review date which should be within a reasonable period and no longer than six months).**

In the meantime you can write to me with a statement of your views, which I will consider.

Yours sincerely

Principal
cc: Regional Director

Letter 4b Restore permission after later review (sent by the Principal)

Recorded delivery

Dear

Oasis Community Learning promotes working, learning and developing together. We believe that good relationships are at the heart of everything we do.

I wrote to you on .....confirming that permission for you to come onto the premises of Oasis Academy.....had been withdrawn until further notice. I also advised you I would take steps to review this decision by …… .

I have now completed the review. I have decided that it is now appropriate to restore permission for you to come onto the Academy premises with immediate effect.

I trust that you will now work together with the Academy and there will be no further difficulties of the kind which made it necessary to restrict your access to the Academy premises.

(Optional) I must warn you, however, that if it should become necessary in the future I shall not hesitate to withdraw permission for you to come onto the Academy premises once again.

Yours sincerely

Principal
cc: Regional Director

Document Control

Changes History

Version	Date	Owned and Amended by	Recipients	Purpose
1.0	July 2019	Chris Chamberlain	All Principals & NET	Share effective practice and ensure consistency

Policy Tier

☐ Tier 1
☒ Tier 2
☐ Tier 3
☐ Tier 4

Owner

Chris Chamberlain

Contact in case of query

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Approvals

This document requires the following approvals.

Name	Position	Date Approved	Version
John Murphy	CEO, CSG		

Position with the Unions

Does the policy or changes to the policy require consultation with the National Unions under our recognition agreement?

☐ Yes
☒ No

If yes, the policy status is:

☐ Consulted with Unions and Approved
☐ Fully consulted (completed) but not agreed with Unions but Approved by OCL
☐ Currently under Consultation with Unions
☐ Awaiting Consultation with Unions

Date & Record of Next Union Review
N/A

Location

Tick all that apply:

☒ OCL website

☒ Academy website

☒ Policy portal

☐ Other: state

Customisation

☒ OCL policy

☐ OCL policy with an attachment for each Academy to complete regarding local arrangements

☐ Academy policy

☐ Policy is included in Principals' annual compliance declaration

Distribution

This document has been distributed to:

Name	Position	Date	Version
All Principals and the NET	All Principals and the NET	July 2019	1.0