



## Oasis Code of Conduct

This policy is based on the value of being 'Ethical'

### **Related Policies/Guidance**

Keeping Children Safe In Education (KCSIE) 2022

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Low Level Concerns Policy

Whistle Blowing Policy

Inclusion Policy

Disciplinary Procedures

Staff Employment Policy

### **Policy Statement**

All employees have personal, professional and legal responsibilities, including treating others with dignity and respect, acting honestly, using public funds and Oasis equipment appropriately, adhering to health and safety guidelines and practicing equal opportunities at all times. These expectations are set out below and should be fully observed by all employees. This document is not a prescriptive guide to what employees should and should not do. It highlights the principle areas where employees need to be aware of their responsibilities when working inline with Oasis framework for promoting emotional wellbeing, they are familiar with the specific policies that underpin these behaviours through reference.

### **Compliance with the Code of Conduct**

The Code of Conduct forms part of a employees and Trustee's contract. Failure to comply with it and with the associated related policies may result in disciplinary action being taken, and the Oasis reserves the right to take legal action against employees or Trustees where breaches of the Code warrant such action.

### **Policy Procedures**

#### **Professional behaviour and conduct**

**Treating other people with dignity and respect (Please see Appendix 1)**

All employees and Trustees are expected to treat other colleagues, pupils and external contacts, such as parents, with dignity and respect.

All employees and Trustees are required to comply with the Oasis Equality and Diversity Policy in respect of colleagues, pupils and other contacts such as parents. Unacceptable behaviour such as discrimination, bullying, harassment or intimidation will not be tolerated at Oasis. This includes physical and verbal abuse, abuse of position of seniority, use of inappropriate language or unprofessional behaviour with colleagues, pupils and parents.

### **Appropriate relationships with children**

Employees and Trustees are expected to act in an open and transparent way that would not lead any reasonable person to suspect their actions or intent. Employees and Trustees are in a position of trust and have a duty to protect young children from discrimination and harm and to maintain appropriate professional boundaries. It is equally important for employees to avoid behaviour that might be misinterpreted by others in order to protect both children and themselves. Employees and Trustees are required to read and understand Oasis's safeguarding and child protection, Low Level Concerns and Whistleblowing policies.

Oasis values good professional relationships between employees, Trustees and pupils. These are heavily reliant on mutual trust and confidence and can be jeopardised when an employee or Trustee enters into any relationship with a young person that is deemed to be inappropriate. Inappropriate relationships can erode professionalism and result in an abuse of power.

Employees and Trustees must not enter into any relationship or indulge in any behaviour with a young person that is likely to bring the Oasis into disrepute. In particular, sexual relationships with young children are expressly prohibited and, if proven to be taking place, will be treated as gross misconduct.

### **Communication with young people**

Communication with young people should take place within clear and explicit professional boundaries. This includes the wider use of technology such as mobile phones, text messaging, e-mails, digital cameras, web cams, personal websites and social networking sites. Accordingly:

- You should not give your personal contact details, including your mobile phone number, to a young person unless the need to do so is appropriate to your professional role and has been discussed with your Manager/Deputy Manager.

### **Personal Living Space**

No young person should be invited into the home of an employee or Trustee unless reason for this has been firmly established with your Senior Manager/Deputy Manager and the parent/carer. Accordingly:

- You are responsible for being vigilant in maintaining your privacy and avoiding placing yourself in a vulnerable situation.

Note: Many children are children of members of employees or Trustees and friends of children of employees or Trustees. It is not necessary to inform senior managers of these students visiting the home as part of any normal such relationship. However, it is important that a professional stance with regard to Oasis matters is maintained.

### **Relationships Between Employees and Trustees**

Where relationships occur between an employee or Trustee, it is in their interests and that of the Oasis to ensure they deal appropriately with potential conflicts of interest or possible disruption to working arrangements with colleagues or children. Broadly, employees and Trustees should not engage in any behaviour which is likely to bring the Oasis into disrepute or have a serious adverse effect on peer activities, child's learning, pastoral matters, or others aspects of working life.

### **Professional behaviour**

Employees and Trustees must not misuse or misrepresent their position, qualifications or experience or bring the reputation of Oasis in disrepute. Such behaviour may lead to disciplinary action. Professional misconduct of a more serious nature may lead to a referral to LADO/Ofsted.

Employees and Trustees must be mindful of their behaviour outside of the setting that could affect their suitability to work with children (also known as transferable risk). This includes situations where an employee, Trustee or volunteer is involved in an incident outside of the setting which did not involve children but could have an impact on their suitability to work with children, such as domestic violence, losing their cool on a night out, etc.

The issues listed below must be brought to the attention of any new employee and Trustee and all existing employees and Trustees should be reminded of these issues. This will ensure that all employees and Trustees involved in the provision of teaching and learning are clear about boundaries and expectations.

Language - employees and Trustees should refrain from using inappropriate, foul and abusive language. This type of language used in an aggressive, insulting or offensive manner will lead to disciplinary action.

Avoid physical contact - even what is meant as a comforting gesture can be misconstrued.

Home telephone numbers - you should not give your home telephone number to young people.

Favouritism - it is important to be seen to treat all children consistently and with equity. Avoid circumstances where it might appear that you are giving anyone undue attention. This does not mean that you cannot give extra time to a pupil where the situation merits it.

All employees and Trustees have a responsibility to contribute to the settings' responsibility to protect children and encourage a 'safer working culture'.

Employees and Trustees will be expected to follow the settings' agreed policies and procedures, without fear of recrimination, to bring to the attention of the Senior Manager any concerns about practice.

Employees and Trustees have a responsibility to understand and adhere to current legislation and guidance that supports their role.

If employees have concerns regarding Trustees, the Senior Manager or other senior employees the Whistleblowing Policy must be followed.

Employees are responsible for nurturing and educating young children as well as providing information and support to parents/carers.

Employees should seek to improve their understanding of the development of young children through ongoing education and collaboration with colleagues.

### **Employees and Trustees Dress**

It is important to dress professionally in ways that are appropriate to role and to tasks undertaken. Those who dress in a manner, which could be considered inappropriate, could render themselves vulnerable to criticisms or allegations. Accordingly:

- Your appearance and clothing should not be likely to be viewed as offensive, revealing, or sexually provocative.
- You should not wear clothing that is likely to distract, cause embarrassment or give rise to misunderstanding.
- You should not wear clothing that has overtly political or otherwise contentious slogans.

The above are open to interpretation and thus are at the Manager/Deputy Managers discretion

### **Employees and Trustees going off site**

Employees and Trustees must 'Sign in and out" in the book provided if it is necessary to leave the premises during the day- This is a requirement in the event of a fire to ensure all employees are accounted for.

### **Smoking/Alcohol/Drugs**

Alcohol may not be consumed during working hours. Employees and Trustees are not permitted to smoke/ use e-cigarettes anywhere on any of the Oasis premises or grounds or within view of either centre. Oasis guidelines are that employees and Trustees should be role models to children and young people, so any smoking should be done outside the premises and completely out of the sight of children. The Oasis has a zero tolerance with the use of illegal drugs both in and out of the setting.

### **Criminal actions**

Employees and Trustees must inform the Senior Manager/Deputy Manager immediately if they are subject to a criminal conviction, caution, ban, policy enquiry, investigation or pending prosecution. The Senior Manager will discuss this with the employee or Trustee in the context of their role and responsibilities in order to help safeguard children and other employees at Oasis.

### **Declaration of pecuniary or business interests**

All employees and Trustees are required to declare any interests which would be considered to be in conflict with the ethos of the Oasis. Membership of a trade union would not need to be declared.

Employees and Trustees should also consider carefully whether they need to declare to the Oasis their relationship with any individual(s) where this might cause a conflict with Oasis activities. For example, a relationship with an employee and trustee, a relationship between an employee or a relationship between an employee or a Trustee with a contractor who provides services to the Oasis.

Failure to make a relevant declaration of interests is a very serious breach of trust and therefore if employees and Trustees are in doubt about a declaration, they are advised to take advice from the Manager/Deputy Manager.

All declarations, including nil returns, should be submitted in writing to the Senior Manager or Chair of Trustees.

### **Use of own private vehicles at work**

Employees who use their own vehicles for journeys in connection with their work, as opposed to their regular commutes, need to be aware that this is classified as 'business use'. Failure to do so will result in insurance cover being invalidated.

Employees are required to declare whether their vehicle is insured for 'Business use' and provide a copy of their certificate of insurance.

### **Probity of records and other documents**

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

Where employees who has claimed any benefit, including housing benefit, either directly or indirectly and 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.

## **Financial inducements**

### **Financial Regulations**

All employees and Trustees must comply with the Oasis Financial Regulations. Employees and Trustees requirements are summarised below.

### **Business Contacts**

In this section, 'business contact' refers to any person, body or organisation with which the Oasis is involved on a financial or charitable basis (including contractors; developers; consultants; regional or national charities). This also includes business contacts who are potential suppliers (e.g. they are tendering for future business).

### **Declaration of gifts**

Any gifts that are received should be declared in writing to the Senior Manager/Deputy Manager on the Register of Gifts, (Appendix 2). With the exception of those items specifically identified below. This document shall remain available for inspection by the Oasis Trustees.

### **Gifts to an employee or Trustee**

Where a business contact offers a personal gift, personal payment or other incentive such as secondary employment to an employee or Trustee, these should not be accepted and should be returned with a suitable official letter. Such offers should be declared to the Manger or Chair of Trustees and recorded in the Register of Gifts.

If it is not possible to return gifts, the employee who deals with that supplier should declare the gift to the Senior Manager or Chair of Trustees who will keep a record of it and decide how it is to be used. Such gifts remain the property of the Oasis and should be included in the Register of Gifts.

The only exceptions to these are:

- Low cost, functional items suitable for business use rather than personal.
- Use and displaying the supplier's logo e.g. diaries, calendars and pens. These items may be accepted and do not have to be included in the Register of Gifts.
- Gifts offered by parents to Oasis an employee to express their thanks, such as boxes of chocolates, however, only gifts with an individual value of £20 or less may be accepted. Such gifts do not have to be declared in writing to the Trustees or be included in the Register of Gifts. For the avoidance of doubt employees must always refuse gifts of money.

### **Other employment**

Employees are permitted to take up secondary employment outside of the Oasis, as long as the activity does not constitute a conflict of interest, adversely affect their primary employment at the Oasis or exceed the legal maximum working week of 48 hours as defined by the Working Time Regulations.

The secondary employment must be undertaken outside the working hours of the employees normal post and employees are required to keep the Senior Manager/Deputy informed of their employment at other organisations.

**Required reading:**

Health and Safety Policy.

## **Health and safety**

Employees and Trustees must adhere to the Oasis's Health and Safety policy, procedure and guidance and must ensure that they take every action to keep themselves and everyone in the Oasis Community safe and well.

This includes taking immediate safety action in a potentially harmful situation (either at Oasis or off-site) by complying with statutory and Oasis guidelines and collaborating with colleagues, agencies and the local authority.

The taking of illegal drugs during working hours is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. All employees and Trustees are expected to attend the setting without being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs and without their performance being adversely impacted by the consumption of alcohol or illegal drugs.

If alcohol or drug usage impacts on an employees working life, the Oasis has the right to discuss the matter with the employee and take appropriate action, having considered factors such as the Oasis reputation and public confidence.

## **Use of Oasis premises, equipment and communication systems**

Oasis equipment and systems (telephone, email and computers) are available only for Oasis related activities and should not be used for the fulfilment of another job or for personal use. This is unless authorised by the Manager/Deputy Manager; in case of an emergency, or where used for periods outside of working hours.

This includes photocopy facilities, stationery and premises. It also applies to access provided for remote use (e.g. handheld portable devices etc.) and to employees working outside of Oasis premises and using their own IT equipment.

Illegal, inappropriate or unacceptable use of Oasis equipment or communication systems may result in disciplinary action and in serious cases could lead to an employee's dismissal. This list is not exhaustive and includes;

- creating, sending or forwarding any message that would reasonably be considered inappropriate or unacceptable
- committing or implying commitment to any contractual arrangements
- accessing, publication or circulation of illegal, offensive, unacceptable
- inappropriate or non work-related material
- any illegal activities
- posting confidential information about the setting and/or other



- employees, children or parents
- gambling or gaming
- unauthorised use of Oasis facilities (or employee's personal IT equipment), for personal use during employee's working time

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 their Manager/Deputy Manager.

The Oasis has 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 Oasis suspects that the employee has been misusing systems or facilities, or for the investigation of suspected fraud or other irregularity.

Accredited Trade Union representatives can use Oasis communication systems for the purposes of undertaking trade union duties and these will be treated as confidential.

Passwords should not be shared and access to computer systems must be kept confidential. Breach of this confidentiality may be subject to disciplinary action. Where appropriate the Oasis should consider a system of proxy access.

Any Oasis equipment that is used outside Oasis premises, for example laptops, should be returned to the Oasis when the employee leaves employment or upon request by the Manager/Deputy Manager.

### **Social networking websites**

Oasis employees and Trustees must not access social networking websites for personal use (i.e. non job- related use) during work/setting time.

Access to some journals, blogs and social networking sites is permitted during work time for the purposes of undertaking job related duties only. Oasis employees and Trustees must act in the best interests of the Oasis and not disclose personal data or information about any individual including employees, Trustees, young people, or children. This includes images. Access may be withdrawn, and disciplinary action taken if there is a breach of confidentiality or defamatory remarks are made about the Oasis employees, Trustees, young people or children.

The Oasis respects the employees and Trustees private life. However, it must also ensure that confidentiality and its reputation are protected. Employees and Trustees using social networking websites in their private life;

- must refrain from identifying themselves as working or volunteering for the Oasis, in a way which has, or may have, the effect of bringing the Oasis into disrepute.
- must not identify other Oasis employees, Trustees, children, or young people without their consent.
- must not make any defamatory remarks about the Oasis, its employees, Trustees, children or young people, or conduct themselves in a way that is detrimental to the Oasis.
- disclose personal data or information about the Oasis, employees, Trustees, children or young people, that could breach the Data Protection Act 2018, for example, posting photographs or images of children or young people.
- must not allow pupils to access their personal social networking accounts and where they are contacted by a pupil, they should bring it to the Managers/Deputy Managers attention.

### **Personal Websites and Blogs**

Employees and Trustees who wish to set up personal web forums, weblogs or 'blogs' must do so outside of work, not using Oasis equipment and adhere to the points detailed in the paragraph above.

### **Confidentiality**

All Oasis employees and Trustees come into contact with a significant volume of data and information in relation to pupils, employees, Oasis activities and many other matters. There is an obligation to read and to observe the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018.

### **Managing data**

Under the Data Protection Act, employees and Trustees are required to collect, maintain and dispose of sensitive or personal data in a responsible manner.

### **Disclosing data**

Employees and Trustees should not disclose sensitive information about the Oasis, its employees or the local authority to other parties, for example, parents or colleagues. There are particular exceptions to this; for example, disclosure of suspected or alleged abuse of a pupil to Child Protection officers; discussion with a person accompanying or representing an employee in a formal meeting or disclosure under the Whistleblowing Procedure. All communication with the media must be directed through the Manager/Deputy Manager.

There are circumstances in which employees and Trustees are obliged to release pupil data, for example, parents seeking information about pupil progress or other colleagues in the Oasis.

Employees and Trustees should be aware that, from time to time, information about Employees' salaries is matched with other public sector information (for example housing benefits) in order to prevent fraudulent claims.

### **Access to data**

Everyone has the right to request access to data that is held about them and such requests should be made to the relevant Senior Manager/Deputy Manager who will address the request in conjunction with the Oasis's Data Protection Officer.

### **Copyright**

Copyright legislation should be displayed next to photocopier machines and employees are required to adhere to the guidance provided about use of educational resources.

### **Reputation**

Employees and Trustees must be careful to ensure that nothing they say or do brings the Oasis into disrepute. Gossip in the communities can be very damaging. Employees and Trustees should not gossip, or speak inappropriately, about any of the Oasis pupils, parents, employees and Trustees, including discussing incidents.

The reputation of the Oasis is very precious. It takes a long time to build and can be knocked down in a moment.

Adopted by The Oasis Management Committee on: 08.08.2023  
Representative of Management Committee Signature: Lorna Trudgeon  
Review Date: August 2024

## Appendix 1

### The Seven Principles of Standards of Public Life NOLAN PRINCIPLES

#### Introduction

The Committee on Standards in Public Life (The Nolan Committee) has set our seven principles of public life, which it believes should apply to all public service. The following are the seven principles of conduct that underpin the work of public authorities. The employee and Trustees are asked to adopt these principles as a basis for working practices across the Oasis Centres. All employees and Trustees should recognise the importance of these principles and to uphold them at all times.

1. Selflessness:

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other benefits for themselves, their family or their friends.

2. Integrity:

Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

3. Objectivity:

In carrying out public business, holders of public office must take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, including making appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

4. Accountability:

Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

5. Openness:

Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict

information only when the wider public interest clearly demands it, or there is a lawful reason for so doing.

6. Honesty:

Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest

7. Leadership:

Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour or contravention of these principles.

## Appendix 2

### Declaration of Gift Form

#### SECTION 1

Details of the offer - to be completed by and employee or Trustee receiving the offer.

*Please tick box A or B to indicate that you have been offered and have either accepted or declined a gift.*

I have been offered a gift which I have declined

I have been offered a gift which I have accepted

#### Declaration Details

Date offer was made	
Name of firm or individual	
What is the relationship with the individual/organisation offering the gift	
Nature of gift	
Estimated value	

I believe my objectivity and independence in relation to the above external organisation has not been impaired in any way by the offer of gifts.

Employee/Trustee signature .....

Date.....

Name.....

SECTION 2

Action authorised by the Board of Trustees

<b>Record of action</b> (delete as appropriate)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Acceptance authorised</li><li>• Acceptance <b>Not</b> Authorised</li><li>• Agree action to decline</li></ul> <p>Please ensure the employee or Trustee who received the offer is aware of your decision</p>
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SIGNED

DATE

Chair of Trustees ..... ..

Manager/Deputy Manger ..... ..

Completed forms should be sent to Senior Manager or Chair of Trustees and entered into the Gift Register

