FAMILIES AND VISITORS CODE OF CONDUCT

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Families and Visitors Code of Conduct

INTRODUCTION

Orchard Hill College and Academy Trust (OHC&AT) is a family of providers, comprising Orchard Hill College (OHC) and Orchard Hill College Academy Trust (OHCAT), working together for mutual benefit. We believe that together we can offer the very best for our pupils and students and for their local communities.

We recognise the crucial role that families play in supporting children and young people to learn and achieve. As such, we are committed to maintaining positive working relationships with all parents and carers. We ask that families return this commitment and work positively with OHC&AT, so that our pupils and students can maximise the benefit of their education. The majority of parents/carers and other visitors to OHC&AT provisions are very keen to work with us and supportive of the work that we do.

As an outward-facing organisation, we also recognise the benefits of working with and learning from colleagues across the sector and beyond. We regularly welcome visitors to our schools, College centres and central office including representatives from local, regional and national government, fellow educators, consultants and more, to build strong partnerships and further enhance the educational provision for our pupils and students. The Visiting Speaker Policy sets out clear guidelines for anyone delivering content to OHC&AT pupils/students/staff/governors and Trustees, however more widely there is an expectation that all visitors will abide by our principles of positive and respectful behaviour and co-working.

The purpose of this policy is to clearly state our expectations regarding family and visitor conduct and explain any measures that may be taken should any issue arise. OHC&AT recognises the importance of a whole school/college approach to behaviour management within each provision and across the organisation as a whole. We believe that modelling good conduct is an essential part of promoting equality, diversity and tolerance within our community, as well as setting a good example to our pupils and students. OHC&AT also operates a Staff Code of Conduct which clearly sets out expectations for staff and relevant measures that may be taken in the event of a breach. All policies are available to view on request.

VISITING PROCEDURES

To help safeguard our pupils, students, staff and members of the community, please note that all visitors must adhere to the following procedures:

- Upon arrival, visitors must sign in at reception and provide confirmation of identity.

- Once signed in, visitors will be provided with key safeguarding and health and safety information relating to the site they are visiting.
- Visitors will be accompanied at all times by a member of staff.
- Risk assessments are carried out as necessary e.g. for speakers invited to academies or College centres.
- All visitors must sign out upon leaving.

If you are planning to visit one of our sites and have any access requirements, please let us know in advance so that we can support you.

RESPECT AND CONCERN FOR OTHERS

At OHC&AT, we believe that children and young people are entitled to learn in a respectful and positive atmosphere, and as such we expect all members of the OHC&AT community, including parents/carers and visitors, to uphold these values. In particular, we ask parents/carers and visitors to show respect and concern for others by:

- Setting a good example in their own speech and behaviour towards all members of the OHC&AT community;
- Working together with OHC&AT staff for the benefit of pupils and students. This includes parents/carers approaching their child's provision to discuss any issues of concern and work towards a positive solution;
- Respecting reasonable staff working patterns and refraining from overly lengthy, frequent or out of hours contact, particularly with regard to email – it is often more effective to communicate in person, for example by booking a meeting or telephone call.
- Understanding and upholding OHC&AT and school/College policies around behaviour, safeguarding and equality, diversity and inclusion;
- Respecting the learning environment (both in school/College and offsite);
- Where relevant, parking with consideration and respect for others when transporting pupils/students to or from, or visiting school or College premises.

To support a peaceful and safe learning environment, OHC&AT does not tolerate:

- Disruptive or unreasonable behaviour which interferes with the operation of a classroom, an office area or any other part of OHC&AT premises;
- Abusive language, including swearing, hate speech and derogatory remarks;
- Abusive or threatening behaviour, whether directed at a pupil/student, a parent/carer, ~~or~~ a member of OHC&AT staff or any visitor to OHC&AT premises;
- Abusive, threatening, malicious/vexatious or inflammatory communications, whether by telephone, email or via social media;
- Consumption of alcohol or other drugs on OHC&AT premises, or accessing OHC&AT provisions while intoxicated.

The above behaviours in an OHC&AT provision will be reported to the relevant Principal and Chair of Governors, and appropriate measures will be taken. Measures may include restrictions/exclusion and/or contacting the police/legal action if necessary.

OHC&AT operates a Smoke Free Policy across the organisation and we ask parents, carers and visitors to respect this. Dogs (other than assistance or therapy dogs) are not permitted on site.

AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOUR

There may be rare occasions when behaviour can become aggressive on OHC&AT premises.

Types of behaviour that are considered serious and unacceptable may include:

- Shouting, either in person or over the telephone;
- Inappropriate language or malicious written communications, including email and social media;
- Unreasonably persistent or intimidating written/verbal communications
- Physical intimidation e.g. invading someone's space;
- Use of threatening gestures;
- Swearing;
- Aggressive physical contact e.g. pushing, hitting, kicking, spitting;
- Verbal abuse including racist, sexist and homophobic remarks, sexually abusive or intimidating comments, and derogatory remarks that contravene Equality, Diversity and Inclusion guidelines e.g. disablist/faith-based abuse.

This is an illustrative rather than an exhaustive list.

OHC&AT takes a zero tolerance approach to aggressive or abusive behaviour, whether directed at staff, pupils/students or other members of our community. We recognise that anger and frustration can be potent sources of aggression and we encourage all parents/carers and visitors to work with us to resolve any issues before they reach crisis point.

CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS

We encourage anyone with concerns to enter into constructive discussions with OHC&AT, the school or College in order to positively resolve any problems or complaints. Parents/carers can contact their school or the College by telephone, email, via the contact form on the relevant website, and are always welcome to discuss concerns with school or College staff in person. There is a clear Complaints Policy, available via the relevant website or from the school/College office, which is open to all members of the OHC&AT community who wish to raise a complaint.

We welcome constructive communication as this allows us to improve our provision for the benefit of all our pupils and students. Where parents/carers need support to raise a concern or make a complaint about their child's provision, we will work responsively with them to facilitate communication.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media can provide a useful platform for parents/carers and other interested parties to share information relating to school/College life. However, social media discussions can sometimes spiral into negativity and occasionally can fuel campaigns and complaints against schools/College, staff and even other parents/pupils/students. Venting concerns in this way on social media websites is not constructive or in the best interests of our pupils and students.

We ask all members of the OHC&AT community to be respectful in their communications via social media. In the event that any person is found to be posting libellous or defamatory comments about OHC&AT or an OHC&AT provision on social media sites, they will be reported via the site's 'report abuse' channels and consideration will be given to any further action that may need to be taken, including legal action. OHC&AT will also request and expect the person concerned to remove such comments immediately.

It is also important to bear in mind that cyber-bullying is a serious issue and that posting abusive remarks and conducting hate campaigns on social media can fall into this category.

RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Anti-Bullying Policy (schools/College)
Behaviour Policy (schools/College)
Child Protection, Adult Protection & Safeguarding Policy and Procedure
Complaints Policy and Procedure
Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy
Health & Safety Policy
Staff Code of Conduct
Visiting Speaker Policy

APPENDIX 1: Procedure in the event of aggressive behaviour

If a visiting adult displays aggressive behaviour towards a member of the OHC&AT community, the relevant Principal or appropriate senior staff member should immediately be alerted. Staff are expected to safeguard pupils and students in the first instance, e.g. by moving pupils/students to a place of safety and/or encouraging the aggressor to remove themselves to another location in order to continue the discussion in a more reasonable manner. Staff will not continue discussions when a person is behaving in an aggressive manner, and this will be politely made clear at the time.

If the person displaying aggressive behaviour agrees to relocating for a calm discussion, this should be arranged immediately with the Principal or other appropriate senior member of staff.

Where all procedures have been exhausted and aggressive or abusive behaviour continues, or where there is an extreme act of violence or abuse, the person in question may be excluded from OHC&AT premises for a period of time, subject to review by the relevant Principal and Chair of Governors.

Following an incident of unacceptable behaviour:

- The person will be informed in writing that they are to arrange any future meetings with staff in advance via the office, and that meetings will be attended by a member of the Senior Leadership Team.
- This arrangement will be reviewed within a stated timeframe.
- Further incidents of unacceptable behaviour may result in permanent exclusion from OHC&AT premises.

Following a further incident, or following an initial extreme act of violence or abuse:

- The person will be informed in writing that they are banned from the premises, subject to review. The letter will also explain any consequences of breaching this ban, e.g. police involvement or legal action.
- In the event of incidents involving police or other legal intervention at the time, the letter will clarify what has happened so far and the possible next steps.
- Where appropriate, arrangements for bringing pupils/students to and from school or College will be clarified.