

COMMUNICATION WITH FORMER STUDENTS POLICY

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Approved by (Name, date, signature)

Liz Keeble Summer 2022

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COMMUNICATION WITH FORMER STUDENTS POLICY

MISSION

We believe in investing in people. As professionals in the teaching and training professions, we strive to provide a better future for the children, young people and home settings we work with. Success for us means unleashing the potential of each individual so they can grow, develop and reach the potential of which they are capable. Our values are grounded in our determination to be the change we want to see in the world, through passion, commitment and integrity. We strive to plant a seed of kindness and compassion in a generation that will produce resilience and hope and enable them to aspire and achieve productive and fulfilled lives. Our success is measured in the lives we changed.

At the Omnia Foundation, we create a secure and safe environment that encourages communication, self-belief, mutual respect and success. We provide a rich and balanced curriculum that develops every child, allowing them to achieve their true potential.

Aims of the policy:

- to outline the rationale behind the foundation's approach to communication with former students
- to ensure that students are supported by the foundation beyond their time with us
- to ensure that home settings are aware of how to maintain contact with the foundation beyond their child's time with us
- to ensure that staff are aware of the protocols in order to comply with safeguarding legislation
- to ensure that former students and home settings understand the safeguarding concerns around maintaining contact

This policy has been created to ensure that the foundation complies with current safeguarding legislation (please refer to Appendix 1).

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Me, Myself & I and Child Protection Policies.

Fundamental principles

The foundation recognises that for the students in our care, feeling that they 'belong' is key to building trusting relationships and that these connections may be significant long after the student has left us. Our staff are expected to be good role models for our young people and it is natural for our former students to want to reach out in the future for a variety of reasons.

We are committed to maintaining contact and supporting our students and their home setting as they go forward in life to the best of our ability, whilst operating the safest practices possible.

This policy is written in line with the foundation's core value of Noble:

"When we are noble, we are admired by others and our opinions are sought because we are good role models, taking a considered and thoughtful approach with all members of the community. We lead by example and build strong relationships across the foundation, being approachable, friendly and doing all we can to build trust with others. We actively engage in foundation life, working collaboratively, always listening to new ideas and considering the impact of our actions on others."

The foundation recognises that although most people who work with children have their best interests at heart, organisations that work with children and young people have a responsibility to prevent anyone who is in a position of authority from abusing a child.

This policy is the code of conduct for all staff which sets out the foundation's expectations clearly. This helps staff understand boundaries and makes it easier to recognise if somebody is behaving inappropriately and protects staff themselves from such accusations being made against them.

Adults in a Position of Trust

'Position of trust' is a legal term that refers to certain roles and settings where an adult has regular and direct contact with children.

Examples of positions of trust include:

- teachers
- care workers
- youth justice workers
- social workers
- doctors.

This policy recognises that it is against the law for someone in a position of trust to engage in sexual activity with a child in their care, even if that child is over the age of consent (16 or over) so it is for this reason that the foundation operates a clear policy of contact with former students in order to protect them and the staff with whom they wish to maintain contact.

Correspondence

Staff are prohibited from reaching out to students themselves whatever their age.

If a concern about the student's welfare is raised or comes to the attention of the foundation, the Head of Foundation should be advised and contact with the home setting should be made in the first instance:

- Where students are under 18 years of age, consent from the home setting must be sought before contact is made with the student.
- Where students are over 18 years of age and contact details are available, the Head of Foundation may make written contact directly with the student or known agencies if they feel it is appropriate.

Staff's personal contact details must never be used or personal telephone numbers shared.

- Written correspondence should be addressed to the member of staff at the foundation address
- Email correspondence should be shared via the member of staff's foundation email

All correspondence must be shared with the Head of Foundation and logged on CPOMS.

- Copies of all letters and emails must be uploaded onto the file.

The foundation recognises that there are instances where bonds are made with students that are enduring. Where contact is made directly with staff via social media platforms, if the student is over the age of 18, staff should inform the Head of Foundation and make a judgment call around whether they choose to "add" or "follow" that student. If the student is under the age of 18, staff must ignore and delete messages and friend requests and inform the Head of Foundation of their actions.

In-person contact

Where a former student requests contact with a particular member of staff, the Head of Foundation must be notified. Where the student is under the age of 18, consent must be obtained from the home setting or protective agency. In the first instance, staff should be accompanied by another member of foundation staff who is familiar to the student. In-person contact should always take place during working hours and will be considered to form part of the foundation's 'extra mile.'

Where a former student over the age of 18 requests contact with a particular member of staff, the Head of Foundation must be advised. Whether staff choose to accept or decline such a request is their decision but this should be made taking into account the age of the student, how recently they left the foundation and the nature of the contact requested. Staff must always keep safe practices in mind.

Appendix 1

[Sexual Offences Act 2003](#)

[Key Safeguarding Legislation and Guidance for Schools](#)

[Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings](#)
