OMNIA
FOUNDATION

RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES POLICY

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POLICY FOR RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

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

The purpose of this policy is to

- To support our students in developing pro-social strategies for regulating their emotional responses
- To help our students develop into caring and thoughtful people who respect and value the feelings, opinions, beliefs and property of others
- To help our students develop a vocabulary around self-expression
- To set out the language that the foundation will use regarding students' emotional responses and reactions
- To help our students feel good about themselves and others
- To develop a consistent and fair approach to reaction and response management
- To encourage staff, students and home settings to value good regulation
- To encourage students to cooperate with one another and with adults
- To create a positive and stimulating learning environment, having high expectations of our work
- To work alongside home settings and to encourage our young people to develop socially, personally, academically, morally and spiritually in preparation for a positive role in society

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Me, Myself & I Policy, Critical Incident Policy, Use of Physical Intervention Policy, Screen and Search Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy and Child Protection Policy.

This policy recognises that every member of the foundation has

- the right to feel safe – which means emotional and psychological safety, as well as physical safety
- the right to learn without undue distraction and disruption – which means that staff must be able to lead, guide and encourage our students in their responsibilities
- the right to respect and fair treatment – which includes the way all adults, as teachers, model courtesy, respect and fair treatment
- a responsibility to respect boundaries and expectations – which means consistency within relationships and taking accountability when things go wrong
- a responsibility to demonstrate respect for each other – which means encouraging use of positive language at all levels
- a responsibility to trust each other to keep each other safe – which means allowing all members to execute their role in maintaining boundaries and expectations

OMNIA
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THE CORE VALUES

The Core Values of the Omnia Foundation and the supporting framework underpins all aspects of life here. We believe that if students can live out the values they will grow and mature into responsible young people, confidently able to manage their thoughts and feelings. The Core Values are as follows and the full framework can be found in Appendix 1.

Open-minded

Key concepts - clarity * trust * change

When we are open-minded, we promote a culture of openness and honesty, where we tackle difficult conversations and accept constructive criticism. We help to create an environment of trust, where all people are treated fairly and equally and where we can be relied upon to follow through with our commitments to others. We recognise and promote a culture where change is good and reflects progress and where we are adaptable and positive when faced with periods of transition.

Motivated

Key concepts – passionate * purposeful * pride

When we are motivated, we actively promote the ethos of our organisation, one in which we share positivity and demonstrate genuine commitment. We continually strive to create an environment where every member of the foundation can be at their most effective and where we each take ownership and responsibility for ourselves and everything we do. We support others to ensure that we are all working towards the same goals, taking pride in our contribution to the foundation community.

Noble

Key concepts – credibility * relationships * team

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.

Independent

Key concepts – brave * self-aware * decisive

When we are independent, we make and carry through informed decisions, are willing to take a stand even in the face of resistance and take accountability when things go wrong. We understand and manage how other people see us, proactively seeking personal development and we are able to minimise the impact of our responses and reactions on others. We have the best interests of the foundation at heart when we make decisions, thinking things through clearly and having a clear rationale before we act.

Achievers

Key concepts – solutions * innovation * results

As achievers, we are recognised by others as being able to see things from different points of view, remaining objective and positive in the face of challenge. We promote and contribute to a culture where people feel empowered to challenge the status quo and share new ideas that we are willing to support and develop. We continually review and evaluate our own progress, demonstrating the belief that anything can be achieved and trying and trying again until everything that can be done is done.

Fundamental Principles of the Policy

At the Omnia Foundation, we recognise that traditional models of discipline have failed our students, leaving them hurt, angry and misunderstood. We believe that a radically different approach to promoting good emotional regulation is required in order to provide our young people with a sound sense of self and the ability to choose from a range of strategies to help them manage their actions and reactions.

1 Be Kind. Always.

Our default position is kindness and understanding, rather than judgment and condemnation. No one can be fully aware of what any person has experienced prior to coming on-site and, in line with the core values, it is crucial to keep an open mind when a student is struggling to communicate. At the point of struggle, we, as staff and as responsible adults in our students' lives, have a duty of care to model language and coping strategies that will be helpful to the student in developing autonomy in emotional regulation.

2 Understanding the Stress Response

The foundation recognises that there are a number of factors that influence our students' responses and reactions when under pressure or in a stressful situation. This is often referred to as the "fight or flight" response and can present in several ways:

- Physical aggression (fight)
- Absconding (flight)
- Inability to act (freeze)
- Loss of consciousness (faint)
- Lustfulness ('filthy' language or gestures)
- Hunger (feed)
- Incontinence (faeces)

Most people will have a default response in a stressful situation and over time and with maturity will have developed coping strategies which enable a response that is relative to the size of the problem. This happens in a number of ways, for example, reward and incentive programmes at school or home that lead to the development of intrinsic motivation over time so the need for extrinsic "treats" is reduced.

The vast majority of neurotypical people will have learnt how to adapt and modify their responses before the age of seven. Students at the Omnia Foundation, however, are neurologically diverse and for many reasons have missed the opportunity and/or lacked the guidance and support necessary to help them better manage their emotional impulses. Addressing these challenges forms a significant part of the work that we do at the foundation.

How a student is likely to respond to stress is outlined in their risk reduction plan. All members of staff should be familiar with a student's triggers and plans should be put into place at the earliest opportunity by the emotional wellbeing team to support the student with and help them develop management and coping strategies.

3 Operational Language

The Omnia Foundation recognises that the vocabulary and language used when encouraging students to exercise their rights and responsibilities must be carefully selected, as certain words can be detrimental. It is important to bear in mind that the young people who come to us have often been blamed, named and shamed for overlooking the rights of others and forgetting their own responsibilities, so words such as "badly behaved" or "naughty" are actively discouraged in favour of more neutral, non-judgmental language such as "struggling" or "feeling fizzy." We use words such as "boundaries" and "expectations" instead of "rules;" we talk about "recognition" and "incentives" instead of "rewards" and we refer to "impact" and "consequences" rather than "sanctions" and "punishments."

We recognise that the way students react and respond in a given situation is a means of communication and that rather than "discipline" or "reprimand" students in those moments of crisis, anxiety or panic, it is important to ask them if they are ok and subsequently implement more therapeutic actions accordingly.

Often students will have "scripts" written into their Risk Reduction Plans (see the Use of Physical Intervention Policy) and it is essential that staff follow these as required in order to minimise stress for the student.

Often, when a student's emotional response is escalating in a moment of crisis, it is better to remain silent and present and wait for the student to calm down before attempting to engage them in talk. During escalation and at the peak of the crisis, it is of the utmost importance to avoid "lecturing" a student and highlighting how their reactions are impacting on you. This will only serve to intensify the student's anxiety and stress.

Questioning is a helpful strategy to use once the stress response is triggered. When students are questioned, information is directed through parts of the brain that necessarily have to process and require students therefore to engage in thinking. For example, using questions such as, "What words can you give me to explain how you feel?" or "How do you think we can solve this problem differently?" or "How is this going to help you?" is far more effective and offers a richer experience than telling a student, "Don't do that," or "Stop it!"

Questioning promotes enquiry and thinking skills. It is vital that good questioning is modelled by staff as, over time, these skills become internalised and students will begin to pose their own questions and learning about their emotional regulation becomes more meaningful. Staff are trained to use a variety of questioning techniques and this forms the central tool for learning in each hub.

Where staff feel that questioning may not be an appropriate strategy in the given moment, the Thrive WIN approach can be employed. Instead of asking a direct question, staff might say, "I wonder if there is a different way of doing this," or "I imagine there are lots of words going through your head right now." This is a means of reframing the question that will validate the student's feelings and engage them in proactive thought, helping them to apply the brakes, as it were.

4 Expectations

At the Omnia Foundation, we expect all interactions between students and staff alike to be pro-social. This means that when we express our feelings, we should do it in a way that is not to the detriment of ourselves or others. For example, it is important to remember that "banter" or "teasing" can quickly get out of hand when boundaries are crossed and can be perceived as offensive, even abusive, in some instances.

We believe that every feeling is important. Feelings should be acknowledged and the opinions behind them voiced and heard. It can be positive to show anger, for example, when an injustice is witnessed and it can be therapeutically healthy to shout or scream.

We believe that every member of the foundation, students and staff alike, has the RIGHT to express their feelings and opinions in a way that can be understood without detriment to others and that every member of the foundation, students and staff alike, has a RESPONSIBILITY to listen to the feelings and opinions of others and support them in developing strategies for communication.

Expectations of staff

In order to promote pro-social interactions, it is expected that there will be:

- Effective presence/supervision/time keeping by all staff
- Consistent modelling of values
- Consistent support of foundation policy
- Supportive yet firm approach/style
- Focused attention
- Realistic expectations
- Effective use of short-term targets
- Effective match of curriculum to the individual
- Effective use of pro-social attitudes, language and recognition in the moment
- Team responsibility
- Good organisation of space/resources/timetable
- Pro-social forms of communication – verbal and non-verbal including signs/symbols

Self-awareness

At the Omnia Foundation, we believe that knowing how your own reaction affects that of others is a vital component of managing difficult or dangerous responses. What someone says or does in response to a student affects whether their crisis escalates or stops. When staff are aware of this factor, and when they are equipped and empowered with other effective and respectful management strategies, they are better able to de-escalate difficult and dangerous stress responses and help students regain composure and make pro-social choices.

Rational detachment

We recognise that when staff are rationally detached, they hold the students' feelings more solidly by not taking offensive or abusive comments or actions personally. Without this key ability, team members may react instinctively or defensively, which will only serve to escalate a situation. Equipped with this skill, staff are better able to defuse difficult or dangerous responses.

Focused attention

We understand that when a student feels ignored, marginalised or not listened to, they often give an anti-social response. An effective way to counter such anxiety is to validate their feelings. Staff should pay close attention to what they say and give the student
plenty of personal space. They should use facial expressions and body language to show that they are listening. In this way, staff can demonstrate that the reasons for being stressed or anxious are understood and this provides a stable foundation from which the student can begin to regain composure.

Change of face

We believe that being a professional means that it is important for staff to recognise when it is time to step back during a critical incident. Staff operate as a team and support and backup is crucial in order to continue responding appropriately to the student.

Staff should keep in mind that sometimes the best decision is to recognise that they have exhausted their 'toolkit' and that requesting a 'change of face' (please refer to the Critical Incident Policy and Use of Physical Intervention Policy for full details) via the on-call WhatsApp chat is the next course of action. This should be seen as proactive management of the situation rather than "accepting defeat." It is important for staff, especially those new to the team, to recognise the limits within a critical incident and understand that remaining in situ once energy is depleted may be more harmful than beneficial.

We recognise that no one person has all the solutions and that withdrawing from a situation is a reflection of evaluation and analysis, resulting in a clear decision that is in the student's best interests.

Debrief

We believe that talking about a critical incident as a team can help relieve the stress and anxiety that arises as a result. It is also important to consider what was done well and how to respond better the next time a situation occurs. Details of the evaluation and reflection from the debrief should be recorded in full on CPOMS by a senior member of staff and policies and practices reviewed in light of actions taken.

Expectations of students

In order to develop pro-social interactions, it is expected that there will be:
- Consistent effort in upholding values
- Consistent support of and effort in meeting foundation expectations
- Pro-social response to support, guidance and advice from staff
- Focused attention
- Consistent effort in engaging with curriculum activities
- Consistent effort in reaching short-term targets
- Use of pro-social attitudes, language and recognition in the moment
- Team responsibility
- Good use of space/resources/timetable
- Pro-social forms of communication – verbal and non-verbal including signs/symbols

Recognition of Independence

It is important that students are made aware of when they are successful in managing their own responses and reactions and when they try to implement strategies that are being developed with them, whatever the degree of success achieved in the implementation. In the process of acquiring self-regulation techniques, they will make mistakes but the effort they are investing in trying to improve must be acknowledged as a priority. Conversations around what could be done better will be had as part of the follow-up work with their Emotional Wellbeing Coordinator.

Principles of Recognition

Encouragement is an important part of rebuilding our students' self-esteem and is something that the vast majority will not have experienced in their journey thus far. Many of our students dislike public recognition and it is important to bear this in mind. However, receiving praise in public helps develop self-esteem and also provides good role models and life examples for other students in terms of the foundation's core values.

It is important to recognise a student's success in the moment so encouraging them with comments such as "I can see you've worked really hard on that today. Well done!" or "Well done! Your effort with this has really paid off," is a key tool. It is important that the students have a clear
understanding of what their successes look like so that they can build a picture of their strengths: they are already well aware of their weaknesses.

Daily Contact

At the end of each day, a member of the hub team will call the home setting to report on the good things that the students have achieved.

Values Postcards

When a student has clearly demonstrated an aspect of one of the Core Values, a postcard of that particular value is sent to the home setting, describing what the student has done to exemplify the value.

Jack Petchey Award

This award is presented each term to the student who has most impressed their peers and the staff across the previous few months. The student is presented with a certificate and a cash prize which can be spent on resources or equipment for student use at the foundation.

Incentives & Competition

At the Omnia Foundation, we recognise that "rewards" can be more of a hindrance than a help and at their worst, may be a "bribe" under a different name. Research has shown that there are a number of negative effects of using extrinsic reward systems in educational settings, including demotivating students when "rewards" are removed and fostering a culture of "what's in it for me?" Using incentives in this way is strongly discouraged at the foundation.

However, we also recognise that in the wider world, especially in the world of work, commitment, effort and making a positive contribution to an organisation will result in promotions and pay awards. It is highly unlikely that a person will go to work for nothing and be satisfied with a certificate every now and again that says they are doing a good job. Performance Management and appraisal is an integral part of most workplaces in the 21st century so we would be selling our students short if we did not prepare them for this aspect of employment.

The Values Framework has therefore been designed to break down the foundation's Core Values into a set of personal attributes and attitudes on a progressive scale and forms part of an appraisal process for students and part of the Performance Management Process for staff. Its purpose is to provide a framework for self-improvement against which all members of the foundation are held accountable.

Consequently, the foundation believes that incentives work best when there is a benefit for a whole team rather than an individual. Working collectively towards a common goal supports and develops team spirit and the achievement of the goal can be shared by everyone. And of course a little bit of friendly competition raises the bar for everyone! An example of how we do this would be…

Negotiation

Given the social, emotional and mental health needs of our students, instant gratification is a common need so there are inevitably occasions when situations have to be negotiated in order to achieve the best possible outcomes for all parties concerned.

A central strategy that we use to this effect is "first" and "then." This provides a structure in which students needs can be met but in which they are also enabled to meet hub and foundation expectations. Using this strategy also renders the word "no" ineffective, as students are able to have their needs met without confrontation, all the while developing resilience and understanding that sometimes they may have to wait for something they want and that instant gratification is not always an option.

Impact & Consequences

In order to better manage their stress responses, it is absolutely vital that students are aware of the impact of their actions on others and the consequences of those.

Impact

The emotional wellbeing team work on "impact" through a number of different strategies, for example, using activities from the Zones of Regulation. Talking through how our actions impact on others is very useful in raising a students' awareness of their place in the foundation community and recognising that often the reason they come under attack from others is because they have acted in a way that is upsetting, abusive or offensive to other students and staff.

Staff will work constantly with students to develop their understanding of the potential positive impact of their actions, for example, using their frustration to effect change through debate and dialogue where they feel that they have been treated unfairly or unjustly.

Consequences

Where a student's action results in abuse or damage of some description, of course there must be consequences. Our students demand a fair process from us as staff, as this is fundamental to their feelings of security: they need to be able to trust us to keep them safe and treat them fairly.

Consequences will depend on whether the reactions from a student are "dangerous" or "difficult:" dangerous would generally mean that the safety of self or others is at risk; difficult would mean that a student needs adult support/intervention to manage their feelings but they do not pose a risk to themselves or others. For example, 'throwing a chair' could be difficult if it is a student's means of letting off steam but if that chair is thrown at someone, then it would be dangerous, as the safety of another person is compromised.

The consequences of an action, response or reaction will depend on the context and will be determined using a range of

factors on a case by case basis.

We believe that every member of the foundation, students and staff alike, has the RIGHT to feel safe whilst in our care and that every member of the foundation, students and staff alike, has a RESPONSIBILITY to ensure that that right is protected.

• Protective consequences

This is a short-term change in provision for no other reason than safety while learning is done around the situation that resulted in   a stress response. This may be, for example, 2-1 staffing, being collected from home by a member of staff rather than a taxi or an off- site activity. The duration of the protective measures will be the minimum necessary for safety reasons. It should not impact on the
learning provision if at all possible, for example, if a student is off-site as a protective consequence, they should still have the equivalent opportunity for learning (on-line, off-site teaching, etc)

• Educational consequences

This is a planned intervention or programme designed to understand the stress response (triggers, unconscious motivation, group dynamics, previous experience, learnt responses, etc) the purpose being to reduce risk, provide management strategies and challenge unhelpful thinking. This may be, for example, a targeted smart thinking activity, a therapeutic intervention, modelling and rehearsing strategies or a meeting with home settings. Any change in strategies, or provision as a result should be updated in the RRP and shared with key staff. This could be anything from a conversation on the way into the foundation to a longer-term structured change in provision, the aim being to eliminate or reduce the need for the protective consequence.

Students and home settings will be made aware of the consequences of dangerous or difficult stress responses during the induction process and once on the foundation roll, all staff will reinforce the concept of impact and consequences as part of the Me, Myself & I programme of study.

Equal Opportunities

All members of the Omnia Foundation community should have the same expectations for their responses and reactions, whilst considering the needs of individuals recognised by the foundation. The system is there to support the whole community and ensure clear boundaries are established that benefit everyone.

Support for Emotional Wellbeing

At the Omnia Foundation it is of the utmost importance to us that communication between home settings and the foundation is effective and supportive. This is undertaken by all staff with all taking responsibility for:

- Regular liaison with members of home settings
- Working in partnership with other agencies
- Supporting students with emotional regulation
- Supporting students one-to-one with home settings/foundation issues

Contribution of home settings

Home settings play a crucial role in shaping the attitudes which produce pro-social interactions in the Omnia Foundation. Home settings are the front line in providing their children with firm guidance and pro-social role models through their own attitudes and use of language. The Omnia Foundation acknowledges that some home settings may have reduced capacity to do this effectively. Therefore, our staff will work with them to develop appropriate and effective strategies.

The foundation recognises its duty to accept responsibility for the care and welfare of students during the school day. Home settings can expect:

- Their children to be in a safe environment
- That their child will be treated in a manner that reflects this policy
- To be informed first of the significant problem or difficulties that may be affecting their child
- To be informed of instances where their child's efforts in self-regulating has deserved congratulations

The Omnia Foundation can expect home settings:
- To trust and respect the work of the staff on behalf of their children
- To support the foundation in enabling children to develop and progress
- To support and encourage their child to make a positive contribution to the life of the foundation
- To be informed when a Restrictive Physical Intervention (RPI) has had to be used for their child in line with policy and consulted when an emotional reaction or response triggers the need for an RRP.

Involvement of home settings

Home settings will be asked to support this policy by:
- Engaging in relevant meetings throughout the year
- Communicating with staff appropriately via email, text or calls.

Dealing with a Critical Incident

If a student's stress responses continually disrupt their own and other students' learning or give rise to difficult and/or dangerous actions and reactions, which place themselves or others at risk of injury or harm or are likely to cause damage to property, staff will refer to the Critical Incident Policy.

Suspensions and Permanent Exclusions

At the Omnia Foundation, we believe that exclusions of any kind are ineffective and unproductive. Where students are failing to thrive on-site, we will redesign their programme and offer alternative educational provision which will more closely meet their needs at a given time. It is always the aim of the foundation to reintegrate students into full time on-site provision when appropriate.

Appendix I – Values Framework

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THE OMNIA FOUNDATION VALUES FRAMEWORK 2022

We are …		Developing the values	Embedding the values	Living the values
OPEN-MINDED	DELIVERS CLARITY	Is respectfully direct and honest at all levels. Asks questions and explores more deeply in the event of lack of understanding	Tackles difficult conversations and accepts constructive criticism	Promotes a culture of openness and honesty
	DEMONSTRATES TRUST	Trusts others to do what they say will. Is dependable and reliable and always follows through with commitments to others	Treats people fairly and equally	Helps to create an environment of trust
	EMBRACES CHANGE	Unafraid to try something new and encourages others to take a positive outlook when faced with change. Is prepared to be flexible and can adapt to changing situations	Understands that people deal with change differently and adapts their responses and reactions effectively	Recognises and promotes a culture where change is good and means progress
MOTIVATED	PASSIONATE	Demonstrates they love what they do. Demonstrates genuine commitment	Has a positive outlook and shares this with others	Actively promotes the organisation
	WORKS SMART	Works with a sense of purpose, making sure that everything they do counts. Takes ownership of and responsibility for workload, prioritising and planning accordingly	Ensures that every hub/foundation member knows their purpose for that day/week/month/term	Continually strives to create the best environment for the hub/foundation to be at their most effective
	QUALITY DRIVEN	Takes pride in their own work and strives to achieve the highest standard. Takes responsibility for own work and rectifies errors as quickly as possible	Recognises the risk to standards and acts appropriately without apportioning blame	Supports others to ensure that the whole hub/foundation can meet standards
NOBLE	CREDIBLE	Is fair and takes a considered and thoughtful approach with all members of the foundation community. Is honest and respectfully says it how it is	Is able to be trusted and is a good role model for others	Is liked and admired and their opinions sought by other members of the foundation
	RELATIONSHIP BUILDER	Approachable and friendly to others and cooperates and with and supports others. Does all they can to build trust with everyone in the foundation and wider community	Works collaboratively with all and understands the importance of supportive relationships	Leads by example on the importance and impact of building strong relationships across the foundation
	TEAM PLAYER	Always considers the impact of their actions on the hub/foundation. Is willing to listen to new ideas	Fixes divisions in the hub/foundation quickly and with consideration	Demonstrates team work by participating in activities across the foundation and works collaboratively with others

OMNIA
FOUNDATION

We are …		Developing the values	Embedding the values	Living the values
INDEPENDENT	BRAVE	Willing to take a stand and act on own principles even in the face of resistance. Unafraid to take accountability when things go wrong	Willing to admit areas of personal/hub/whole foundation development	Makes and carries through decisions even if they are unpopular, difficult or controversial
	SELF-AWARE	Able to manage emotions and impact of mood appropriately. Aware of own responses and reactions and can minimise impact on others	Proactively seeks personal development	Understands and manages how others perceive them
	DECISIVE	Thinks through the impact of decisions before making them. Thinks clearly in difficult situations	Is able to back-up decisions with a clear rationale	Always considers the wider context of the hub/foundation when making tough decisions
ACHIEVERS	SOLUTIONS FOCUSED	Demonstrates a positive attitude towards a challenge. Focuses on improvement, identifying gaps and working on solutions	Can maintain their own position in a situation and remain objective	Is recognised by others as being able to see situations from a number of points of view
	INNOVATIVE	Is prepared ot be flexible and can adapt to changing situations. Challenges the status quo in a healthy way	Enjoys new ideas and is willing to support and develop them	Promotes and open culture where people feel empowered to try new things and share new ideas
	RESULTS FOCUSED	Takes action to resolve problems and fulfil own responsibilities. Will try and try again until everything that can be done is done	Demonstrates the belief that anything can be achieved as long as the effort is invested	Continually reviews and evaluates personal progress and that of the organisation