

Code of Conduct

Oakwood School.

Policy Author	Shilleen Freeth
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Review	This Policy will be updated when appropriate, in line with any legislative, regulatory or Company changes.
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Policy Level	Group
Staff Groups Affected	All staff

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1. Monitoring and Review

- 1.1.** The Proprietor will undertake a formal review of this policy for the purpose of monitoring and of the efficiency with which the related duties have been discharged, by no later than one year from the date of approval shown above, or earlier if significant changes to the systems and arrangements take place, or if legislation, regulatory requirements or best practise guidelines so require.
- 1.2.** The local content of this document will be subject to continuous monitoring, refinement and audit by the Head of Human Resources.

Signed:



Andrew Sutherland

Proprietor, Cambian Group
Date: November 2025



Louise Curel

Executive Headteacher

Date November 2025

2. Terminology

2.1. Our aim is to use consistent terminology throughout this policy and all supporting documentation as follows:

'Establishment' or 'Location'	this is a generic term which means the Children's Home/school/college. Oakwood School is a school.
Individual	means any child or young person under the age of 18 or young adult between the ages of 18 and 25. At Oakwood School we have children attending and/or residing between the ages of 5 – 16 years.
Service Head	This is the senior person with overall responsibility for the School. At Oakwood School this is the Executive Lead Headteacher who is Louise Curel.
Key Worker	Members of staff that have special responsibility for Individuals residing at or attending the Establishment.
Parent, Carer, Guardian	means parent or person with Parental Responsibility
Regulatory Authority	Regulatory Authority is the generic term used in this policy to describe the independent regulatory body responsible for inspecting and regulating services. At Oakwood School this is Ofsted.
Social Worker	This means the worker allocated to the child/family. If there is no allocated worker, the Duty Social Worker or Team Manager is responsible.
Placing Authority	Placing Authority means the local authority/agency responsible for placing the child or commissioning the service
Staff	Means full or part-time employees of Cambian, agency workers, bank workers, contract workers and volunteers.

3. Introduction

- 3.1. This policy deals with the requirement for all employees to conduct themselves in a professional and appropriate manner as expected of Cambian Group employees throughout their employment both inside and outside of the workplace.
- 3.2. It applies to all staff in our locations as well as being engaged in offsite activities.
- 3.3. Make sure you are familiar with the detail and what is expected of you under this and all Cambian policies.
- 3.4. Failure to comply with this policy may lead to formal disciplinary action in line with the policy GHR27 – Disciplinary Procedure.

4. Purpose

- 4.1. To provide a list of statements that describe the standards and expectations of professional conduct required for employees.
- 4.2. Whilst this document covers a number of key issues and common themes, **it is not exhaustive**, and employees are expected to conduct themselves professionally and appropriately at all times and adhere to local guidelines and directives as well as those highlighted within this document.
- 4.3. To embody Cambian's guiding principles and our commitment to compliance of legislation, regulatory requirements, other practice guidance and maintaining best practice for all individuals in our care.
- 4.4. To protect individuals in our care and employees, by promoting best practice.
- 4.5. To assist in the establishment and maintenance of appropriate and professional behaviour from employees regardless of position.
- 4.6. To provide information to individuals outlining professional expectations of Cambian employees.
- 4.7. To maintain professional standards of behaviour that are befitting to the nature of the Cambian Group.
- 4.8. To avoid any damage to, and to protect the reputation of the Company.

5. Policy

- 5.1. Employees must be aware that it is their responsibility to comply with all legislative and regulatory requirements relative to their job role.
- 5.2. Cambian encourage employees in all establishments to achieve and maintain the highest possible standards of conduct and behaviour.
- 5.3. All members of staff shall be made aware of and have access to the Code of Conduct for employees.
- 5.4. The guidance and details of the Code of Conduct for employees shall be covered in all induction programmes.
- 5.5. If an employee observes a colleague, contractor or visitor behaving inappropriately they should discuss this immediately with their Manager or HR Business Partner.

6. Professional Standards

Political Activity

- 6.1. Cambian recognises the right of employees to hold political opinions and to take part in political activity in their own time, it also recognises that politics is a subject on which individuals hold many different views. It is

therefore, the Company's policy that employees may not take part in any type of political activity while at work, during work time, on work premises, or use any of the Company's resources to do so.

- 6.2.** The Company's aim is to provide a working environment in which all staff feel comfortable and in which everyone is treated with respect and dignity.
- 6.3.** The Company's policy is therefore that colleagues, visitors, suppliers and service users should not be exposed to employees' personal political views at any time.
- 6.4.** The Company recognises that activity of this nature may take place outside of work however, employees should not conduct themselves in a way that could be detrimental to the Company or its reputation. Such activity must not:
 - 6.4.1. Interfere in any way with the work of the employee or the Company.
 - 6.4.2. Bring, or risk bringing, the Company's name into disrepute.
 - 6.4.3. Take place on any Company premises.
 - 6.4.4. Involve any criminal activity or behaviour.

Work related social events

- 6.5.** Although such social events usually take place away from the workplace and outside of normal working hours, the organisation's standard code of conduct applies to such events.
- 6.6.** It is in everyone's interests to impose certain rules of conduct for the protection and comfort of all. Specifically, employees who attend work-related social events must adhere to the following rules and principles:
 - 6.6.1. It is strictly forbidden for any employee to use or carry illegal drugs, including cannabis at any time, including at any work-related social event whether on Company premises or not.
 - 6.6.2. The Company policy GHR 02 Harassment and Bullying applies to all work-related social events.
 - 6.6.3. Employees should not do or say anything at a work-related social event that could offend, intimidate, embarrass or upset any other person, whether intended as a joke or not.
 - 6.6.4. Swearing and abusive or offensive language or behaviour is unacceptable at any time, including at work-related social events.
 - 6.6.5. Employees must not behave in any way or take any action at any time, including at a work-related social event, that could bring the Company's name into disrepute.
- 6.7.** Any breach of the above rules will render the employee liable to disciplinary action under the Company's disciplinary procedure, up to and including summary dismissal.
- 6.8.** The above rules are in place for the benefit of all employees and to ensure that everyone can enjoy work-related social events in an atmosphere of conviviality without fear of being made to feel uncomfortable by another employee's conduct.
- 6.9.** For the avoidance of doubt these principles apply to all social activity related to work including self-organised team events.

Personal relationships at work

The Company recognises that employees who work together may form personal friendships and, in some cases, close personal relationships. While it does not wish to interfere with these personal relationships, it is necessary to ensure that all employees behave in an appropriate and professional manner at work. The

following principles have therefore been devised, and apply to all employees regardless of their job or level of seniority.

- 6.10.** Any employee who develops a close personal relationship with another employee, must declare this relationship with their Manager at the first available opportunity.
- 6.11.** Any employee who is involved in a close personal relationship with another employee or contractor, must not allow that relationship to influence their conduct while at work.
- 6.12.** Intimate behaviour during work time, for example kissing, touching, holding hands, or sexual contact of any kind is expressly prohibited.
- 6.13.** This rule applies during all working time, whether at the normal workplace, or elsewhere. Any breach of this rule will be regarded as a disciplinary offence leading to disciplinary action.
- 6.14.** An employee who embarks on a close personal relationship with a colleague must declare the relationship to their manager even if they feel that this is a casual relationship.
- 6.15.** If the relationship is between a Senior member of staff or Manager and an employee whom they supervise, the relationship should be declared to a more senior Manager. The information declared will be treated with strict confidence.
- 6.16.** To avoid a situation in which an employee has Managerial authority over another with whom they have a close personal relationship, the Company reserves the right to elect to transfer one or both of the employees in the relationship to another location/department, and if appropriate under different line management. In these circumstances, the Company will consult both of the employees and seek to reach a satisfactory agreement regarding the transfer of one or both of them.

Criminal offences

- 6.17.** An employee must inform their Manager immediately where an allegation is made regarding them and/or they are under investigation for a criminal act (including road traffic offences), or they have been arrested in connection with a criminal action. This must be confirmed in writing at the earliest opportunity. They must also inform their Manager in writing if they have been found guilty and convicted of any offence or received a police caution.
- 6.18.** Failure to disclose this information may lead to disciplinary action under the Company's disciplinary procedure, up to and including summary dismissal.
- 6.19.** If an employee commits a criminal offence outside employment, the Company reserves the right to investigate the matter to ascertain whether there is any connection between the offence and the employee's employment, and the impact of this situation. If there is any adverse finding in this respect, this could result in disciplinary action under the Company's disciplinary procedure, up to and including summary dismissal.

Equality, diversity and inclusion

- 6.20.** It is the responsibility of every employee, regardless of position, to promote inclusivity and diversity. The Company seeks to ensure that the workplace is supportive of its staff and one where individual respect is

shown to everyone regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, ethnic background, culture, sexual orientation, religion or belief, sex or any other factor.

6.21. All employees should be supported to perform to their full potential.

Fraud

6.22. Any attempt to secure an unlawful gain of any kind, could result in disciplinary action under the Company's disciplinary procedure, up to and including summary dismissal.

6.23. Where appropriate, a report will also be made to the relevant authority which could lead to prosecution.

6.24. More information can be found in GHR 31 – Anti Bribery and Corruption.

Conflict of interest

6.25. It is important that, where decisions are made, which have a significant effect on the Company or any of its employees, and others, they are taken in a fair and balanced way. Any potential conflicts of interest must be declared so that individuals are not involved in decisions that could be regarded as biased. This would be considered to be a breach of the Company Code of Conduct for employees.

Mobile phones and other technology

6.26. This policy applies to the use of mobile telephones provided by the Company and also to the use of personal mobile phones and other equipment such as smart watches, while employees are considered to be at work, regardless of location.

Work Mobile phones

6.27. Work Mobile telephones are provided at the discretion of the Company on the basis of business need, and must be returned prior to the last day of employment.

Personal mobile phones and other technical or smart devices

6.28. Personal mobile phones and other devices which offer the same facilities (for example, smart watches) should not be used at all during working hours and should be stored with your personal belongings away from where

you are working. For the avoidance of doubt please refer to local direction and speak to your Manager regarding the use of such equipment.

- 6.29.** In the event that you feel you may need to be contacted from an external party whilst you are at work, please discuss this with your Manager and they can arrange for a message to get to you if needed.
- 6.30.** Using a hand-held mobile telephone, or other hand-held device that performs an interactive communication function by transmitting or receiving data, while driving is dangerous, and against the law.
- 6.31.** 'Driving', for these purposes includes any time while the vehicle is on the road and its engine is running, even if the vehicle is stationary. This includes time spent stopped at traffic lights or during other hold-ups.
- 6.32.** 'Interactive communication function' includes sending or receiving oral or written messages or still or moving images, or providing access to the internet.
- 6.33.** A mobile telephone or other device is "hand held" if it is, or must be, held at some point during the course of making or receiving a call, including to dial a number, or performing any other interactive communication. Any device cradled between the ear and the shoulder is deemed to be hand held
- 6.34.** The exception to these restrictions is where the use of a hand-held mobile telephone or other device is to contact the emergency services on 999 or 112 in the case of a genuine emergency and in circumstances in which it is unsafe or impracticable for the employee to stop driving in order to make the telephone call.
- 6.35.** Personal mobile telephones are not to be shared with young people for either their use or to access any of your personal details
- 6.36.** More information can be found in PR 02 – Mobile telephony Policy.

Social Media

- 6.37.** For the purposes of this policy, social media is any online platform or app that allows parties to communicate instantly with each other or to share data in a public forum. This includes social forums such as Twitter,

Facebook and LinkedIn. Social media also covers blogs and video and image-sharing websites such as YouTube and Zoom.

- 6.38. Employees should be aware that this list is not exhaustive and that there are many more examples of social media than can be listed here, and this is a constantly changing arena.**
- 6.39.** Employees are required to limit their use of social media to their own devices to their official rest breaks such as lunch break/times when they are not on duty.
- 6.40.** Regardless of being on a break or active duty, employees should be mindful of the appropriateness of any websites/images they choose to view, and these should not be deemed as offensive to other colleagues or inappropriate for service users in the vicinity.
- 6.41.** When accessing and using social media away from the workplace, employee should be aware that whilst they are not officially acting on behalf of the Company, the Company's reputation can be damaged if they are recognised as a Cambian employee.
- 6.42.** Any online profile (for example the name of a blog or a Twitter name) must not contain the Company's name or any identifier which could be linked to the Company or any of its subsidiary's.
- 6.43.** Any communication that employees make through social media **must not**:
- 6.43.1. Bring the Company into disrepute, for example by criticising or arguing with colleagues or perceived rivals;
 - 6.43.2. Making defamatory comments about individuals or other organisations or groups; or
 - 6.43.3. Posting images that are inappropriate or links to inappropriate content;
 - 6.43.4. Discussing Company information or future business plans that have not been communicated to the public;
 - 6.43.5. Breach copyright, for example by using someone else's images or written content without their permission;
 - 6.43.6. Do anything that could be considered discriminatory against, or bullying or harassment of, any individual, for example by: making offensive or derogatory comments relating to sex, gender reassignment, race (including nationality), disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief or age;
 - 6.43.7. Using social media to bully any other individual or
 - 6.43.8. Posting images that are discriminatory, offensive, sexually explicit, or links to any such content.

Smoking

- 6.44.** The health, safety and welfare of the Company's employees, contractors, and anyone else directly affected by its operations are of prime importance. The Company conforms to the requirements of the smoke-free legislation.
- 6.45.** This policy is applicable to all employees regardless of seniority, as well as any contractors who undertake activities on behalf of the Company and any visitors to Company premises.
- 6.46.** Staff members are not permitted to provide young people with cigarettes, purchase them on their behalf or give "lighters" to young people.
- 6.47.** Smoking is prohibited within Company premises except in certain designated outside areas. Employees may smoke only in these designated areas. Children's homes do not have such designated areas. Staff are not permitted to smoke in the grounds of these sites, you should also avoid smoking in groups or pairs near

children's homes. Staff members should never smoke in front of a young person or carry smoking equipment in sight of a child.

- 6.48.** The organisation provides receptacles for smokers to dispose of cigarette butts and other smoking waste at all outside locations where smoking is allowed. **If in doubt please check this before you commence.**
- 6.49.** Although E-cigarettes fall outside of the scope of smoke free legislation, the Company will apply the same rules to E-Cigarettes as cigarettes.
- 6.50.** Any employee who would like to give up smoking is encouraged to contact the NHS smoking helpline or visit their GP for further advice and guidance.
- 6.51.** More information can be found in GHR 38 – Smoking Policy

Alcohol and substance mis-use

- 6.52.** The health, safety and welfare of the Company's employees, contractors, and anyone else directly affected by its operations are of prime importance, the Company will therefore take all steps to eliminate the risk of injuries or incidents occurring due to individuals suffering from the effects of alcohol or substance abuse.
- 6.53.** This policy applies to all employees and all individuals entering Company premises.
- 6.54.** The Company expressly prohibits the drinking of alcohol at any time in the workplace or on Company business.
- 6.55.** The Company expressly prohibits the use of any illegal drugs (including psychoactive substances, including those formerly known as "legal highs") or any prescription drugs that have not been prescribed for the user.
- 6.56.** Employees are reminded that It is a criminal offence to be in possession of, use or distribute an illicit substance and to produce, supply or possess with intent to supply psychoactive substances.
- 6.57.** If any such incidents take place on Company premises, in Company vehicles or at a Company function, they will be regarded as serious, will be subject to a full investigation, and may lead to disciplinary action and subsequently be reported to the relevant authority.
- 6.58.** The Company will take all reasonable measures to prevent employees from carrying out any work-related activities if they are considered to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- 6.59.** No employee, contractor or visitor to Company premises shall:
- 6.59.1. Report or endeavour to report, for duty having consumed drugs or alcohol likely to render them unfit and /or unsafe for work;
 - 6.59.2. Consume or be under the influence of drugs or alcohol whilst on duty;
 - 6.59.3. Store drugs or alcohol in personal areas such as lockers, bags or desks;
 - 6.59.4. Attempt to sell or give drugs or alcohol to any other employee, service user or anyone connected with the Company.
- 6.60.** Employees must inform their Manager of any prescribed medication that may have an effect on their ability to carry out their role safely, and must follow any instructions subsequently given.
- 6.61.** Drugs that cause drowsiness must not be used at work.
- 6.62.** Any employee suffering from a drug or alcohol dependency should declare this to their Manager. Information given will be treated in the strictest confidence. The Manager will provide reasonable assistance and support in helping the employee to seek professional help.

6.63. Failure to accept help or to accept /continue with any treatment for the dependency, will render the employee liable to normal disciplinary procedures.

6.64. More information can be found in GHR 12 – Alcohol, Drugs and illegal substances.

Dress code and personal appearance of employees

6.65. Employees should read policy GHR 35 – dress Code and personal appearance of staff regarding appropriate dress code and fully understand what is expected of them under this policy.

Localised protocols

6.66. It is not possible or reasonable to provide a complete list of issues that would be considered a breach of the Company's code of conduct, it is therefore important that employees make themselves fully aware of what is expected of them in the locations they work. This includes any temporary or permanent relocation to another site.

6.67. Employees must make every effort to consider their daily actions and omissions, considering the impact that this could have on colleagues and service users.

6.68. Employees are required to ensure that they familiarise themselves regularly with all briefings/memos/circulations and information sources relevant to their place of work.

Personal belongings

6.69. All personal items brought into the work place should be locked away securely. Special considerations must be given to items that could cause significant harm if they fell into the possession of a service user such as, car keys, cash, mobile phones, medication etc.

6.70. The loss of any such personal items should be reported immediately to a Manager. Any act of carelessness that results in an incident could render the employee liable to disciplinary procedures.

Company Policy & Procedure

6.71. All employees, regardless of seniority have a responsibility to ensure they read and fully understand the Company's policies and procedures. If they have any questions, they should seek clarity from their Manager or a member of the HR team. The guidance outlined in this policy is not intended to be exhaustive and employees should conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times and in line with the Company's standards and expectations alongside local directives at their place of work. Employees are expected to follow any reasonable request from their Manager and failure to do so could result in a formal disciplinary process.

6.72. As part of their whole school or college approach to safeguarding, schools and colleges should ensure that they promote an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about all adults working in or on behalf of the school or college (including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors) are dealt with promptly and appropriately. For information about Allegations of abuse and who should they be reported to go to policy 25. Child Protection and Safeguarding, which also includes an appendix 11 dedicated to Low-level concerns (allegations/concerns that do not meet the harm threshold (LADO criteria).

Professional Boundaries

6.73. As our workforce are operating in a position of trust It is imperative that all staff maintain professional boundaries with both colleagues and the young people in our care.

6.74. It is important that staff members do not share detailed or sensitive information regarding their personal life with the young people. It is strictly forbidden for any child or young adult to be taken to a staff member's house or a social gathering involving a staff member or their friends or family. It is never appropriate for a

staff member to introduce a child or young adult to any personal acquaintances in the community or via any means including interactive media platforms.

- 6.75.** It is important that staff members do not take their own children to our services or share any information associated to the young people in our care to external parties.
- 6.76.** Staff should not share images of young people outside of the organisation or take photographs of them on personal mobile telephones.
- 6.77.** We do not permit staff members to be linked to any of the young people in our care on social media, including post-employment.
- 6.78.** It is important that staff members do not engage in “fun fighting” or “horseplay” with the young people in our care.
- 6.79.** Staff members are not permitted to provide the young people with gifts or receive gifts from young people. Staff can make anonymous donations or equipment to services with approval of the Registered Manager.

7. Standard Forms, Letters and Relevant Documents

- 7.1.** Staff should be aware that although the Code of Conduct provides guidance it is not a stand-alone document and staff should ensure that they must also comply with all company policies and procedures. In line with this policy staff should cross reference the following policies, sources of information, and information:
- GHS 04 - Health and Safety
 - 002 – Equality & Diversity
 - PR 02 – Telephony Policy
 - GHR02 – Harassment & Bullying
 - GHR 04 – Employment of near relatives
 - GHR 12 – Alcohol, Drugs and illegal substances
 - GHR 11 – Code of Practice
 - GHR 14 – Social Networking
 - GHR 31 - The Anti-Bribery and Corruption policy
 - GHR 35 – Dress code and personal appearance of staff
 - GHR 38 – Smoking
 - GIG 14 – Handling staff’s personal information
 - GHR 27 - Disciplinary procedures
 - GHR 29 - Grievance policy
 - NHS Drug addiction – getting help <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/drug-addiction-getting-help/>
 - NHS Stop smoking services – help you quit <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/quit-smoking/nhs-stop-smoking-services-help-you-quit/>