



Oakswood College

Empowering Through Education



Community and Outreach

Policy

PROMOTING EXCELLENCE • ENSURING COMPLIANCE
SUPPORTING OUR COMMUNITY



GOVERNANCE



QUALITY



COMPLIANCE



EXCELLENCE



Oakswood College

Empowering Through Education

(Trading name of Oakswood Group Ltd)

Community and Outreach Policy

Document Control & Version History

Document Title	Community and Outreach Policy
Document Type	Governance Policy
Policy Owner	Head of Governance, Quality, Compliance & Information Systems
Accountable Officer	Chief Executive Officer
Approved By	Board of Governors
Approval Date	18 March 2026
Effective From	18 March 2026
Review Cycle	Annual
Next Review Date	18 March 2027
Applies To	Board of Governors, Chief Executive Officer, Senior Leadership Team, staff involved in community engagement activities, external stakeholders, volunteers, students participating in outreach activities, and partner organisations
Version	1.0
Supersedes	New Policy
Related Policies	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Policy; Admissions, Recruitment and Widening Access Policy Framework; Safeguarding Policy; Access and Participation Statement; Student Code of Conduct
Related Appendices	Community Engagement Activity Log; Outreach Event Risk Assessment Template; Partnership and Stakeholder Engagement

	Register
Document Location	Oakwood College Policy Repository
Regulatory Reference	Office for Students (OfS) Conditions of Registration; Equality Act 2010; UK higher education widening participation and community engagement good practice

1. Purpose

Oakwood Group Ltd (trading as Oakwood College) is committed to widening participation, promoting social mobility, and fostering meaningful partnerships within the communities it serves across the West Midlands and beyond.

This Policy sets out Oakwood's structured approach to community engagement, outreach, and ethical marketing. It ensures that all outreach activities:

- Align with Oakwood's mission to provide accessible, high-quality higher education and training.
- Reflect our commitment to inclusivity, equality of opportunity, and social responsibility.
- Comply with regulatory expectations including Office for Students (OfS), ESFA, GDPR, and consumer protection requirements.
- Safeguard vulnerable individuals and promote ethical student recruitment practices.

Oakwood recognises that community trust, cultural awareness, and transparent communication are essential to sustainable institutional growth.

2. Scope

This Policy applies to:

- All Oakwood Group staff (permanent, temporary, and agency)
- Governors and senior leaders
- Contractors and third-party representatives
- Volunteers and ambassadors acting on behalf of Oakwood
- Marketing and recruitment partners

It applies across all campuses, outreach sites, and digital platforms.

3. Strategic Context

Community engagement at Oakwood supports:

- The Access and Participation objectives of widening access to underrepresented groups
- Local skills development priorities

- Social inclusion and employability pathways
- Safeguarding and Prevent responsibilities
- Ethical and compliant student recruitment

Outreach activities must be proportionate, transparent, evidence-based, and aligned with Oakwood's strategic plan.

4. Core Principles

Oakwood's outreach activities are guided by the following principles:

- **Inclusivity**

Engaging with diverse communities regardless of background, faith, ethnicity, gender, disability, age, or immigration status.

- **Integrity**

Ensuring all communications are accurate, transparent, and compliant with regulatory and consumer protection requirements.

- **Respect**

Building long-term trust through culturally sensitive, community-centred engagement.

- **Accountability**

Maintaining clear governance oversight, documented engagement activity, and measurable impact.

- **Impact**

Prioritising outreach that improves access to education, skills, and progression opportunities.

5. Objectives

Oakwood's community and outreach objectives are to:

- Strengthen Oakwood's presence within local and regional communities.
- Promote access to higher education, training, and professional development.
- Build sustainable partnerships with community organisations, charities, employers, and cultural groups.
- Support vulnerable, disadvantaged, and underrepresented communities.
- Enhance awareness of Oakwood's programmes through ethical and evidence-based marketing.
- Contribute positively to community development and local skills agendas.

6. Outreach and Community Engagement Methods

Oakwood may engage in the following structured outreach activities:

6.1 Charitable Partnerships

- Collaborate with local and national charities aligned with education, youth development, and social inclusion.
- Sponsor or participate in community initiatives that reflect Oakwood's mission.

6.2 Community Centres

- Deliver information sessions, workshops, and advice clinics.
- Participate in community-led events and awareness programmes.

6.3 Alumni and Word-of-Mouth Engagement

- Encourage responsible referrals from alumni, students, and partners.
- Maintain high academic and student service standards to strengthen reputation organically.

6.4 Cultural and Social Associations

- Engage with cultural groups, social clubs, and diaspora networks.
- Provide tailored information sessions where appropriate.

6.5 Faith-Based Organisations

- Engage respectfully with mosques, churches, temples, and other faith institutions.
- Offer education awareness sessions where invited.
- Ensure religious neutrality and cultural sensitivity at all times.

6.6 Tuition and Supplementary Education Centres

- Collaborate with tuition providers and training centres to promote progression routes into higher education.

6.7 Legal and Support Organisations

- Engage with organisations supporting asylum seekers, refugees, and migrants.
- Provide clear, lawful, and compliant guidance regarding eligibility and enrolment.

6.8 Cultural and Community Events

- Participate in community festivals, African and other cultural gatherings, and local authority events.
- Operate information stands and awareness sessions.

6.9 Exhibitions and Education Fairs

- Attend regulated education fairs and exhibitions.
- Provide accurate, approved promotional materials.

6.10 Open Days and Campus Engagement

- Host structured open days and campus tours.
- Provide presentations on academic programmes, student support, and progression pathways.

6.11 Digital and Social Media Engagement

- Use official social media platforms responsibly and professionally.
- Ensure compliance with marketing, safeguarding, and data protection standards.
- Avoid misleading claims or unverified statistics.

6.12 Printed Materials and Leafleting

- Distribute materials only in approved and lawful locations.
- Ensure accessibility, clarity, and regulatory compliance.

6.13 Community Skills and Free Training Initiatives

- Offer short courses, awareness workshops, and skills sessions to support community development.
- Ensure such initiatives are financially transparent and not used as coercive recruitment tools.

6.14 Additional Ethical Outreach

- Undertake additional outreach activities that align with Oakswood's mission and regulatory obligations.
- All new outreach approaches must be approved through appropriate governance channels.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

7.1 Board of Governors

- Provide oversight of community engagement strategy.
- Ensure outreach aligns with institutional mission and compliance requirements.

7.2 Senior Leadership Team (SLT)

- Approve annual outreach plans.
- Monitor performance, risk, and reputational impact.

7.3 Head Governance, Quality, Compliance & Information Systems (Policy Owner)

- Ensure governance oversight and regulatory compliance.
- Monitor documentation, risk management, and impact review.
- Ensure policy alignment with safeguarding, marketing, and data protection frameworks.

7.4 Marketing and Outreach Team

- Plan and deliver outreach activities.
- Maintain accurate records of engagement activities.
- Ensure materials meet branding, compliance, and consumer law requirements.

7.5 All Staff and Representatives

- Uphold Oakswood values during outreach.
- Report safeguarding, reputational, or compliance concerns immediately.

8. Safeguarding, Compliance and Ethical Marketing

All outreach activities must:

- Comply with Safeguarding and Prevent policies.
- Adhere to GDPR and data protection regulations.
- Follow OfS conditions of registration and consumer protection guidance.
- Avoid misleading statements, pressure tactics, or inappropriate incentives.
- Ensure transparent communication of course fees, funding, and progression routes.

Engagement with vulnerable groups must be handled professionally, respectfully, and in line with safeguarding protocols. Staff must have completed the requisite Safeguarding training prior to engaging in outreach activities. The Head of Academic Affairs or Head of

Governance, Quality, Compliance & Information Systems can be contacted for any queries about the Safeguarding Training.

9. Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting

- Outreach activity will be recorded and reviewed annually.
- Impact metrics may include engagement numbers, conversion rates, feedback, and progression outcomes.
- Risks associated with outreach (reputational, compliance, safeguarding) will be monitored through the institutional risk register.
- Policy updates require Board approval.