Mentoring Agreement Draft

CONGRATULATIONS! As a mentor, you are now about to begin one of life’s most rewarding and fulfilling experiences. Your commitment indicates that you believe in young people. You recognise the magnitude of the responsibility that you accepted in choosing to work with youth and agree to interact appropriately with your mentee according to the highest ethical standards at all times.

We appreciate your desire to become a volunteer mentor for Oxygen. As a mentor, you play a pivotal role in the development of the lives of young people.

Before proceeding to start your role as a mentor, you are required to comply with the terms provided by Oxygen. This is to ensure that young people are kept safe and you are consistent with your commitment to the young person. Please read and sign the following agreement and guidance.

As a mentor we ask that you:

1. Commit to 2 years as a mentor for at least 2 hours per month. Should you not be able to continue to mentor due to any change in circumstances you commit to notify Oxygen of this at the earliest opportunity. This may be more frequent if all parties are willing.
2. Inform Oxygen of 1-2-1 sessions with any young people. We must know date, time and location you have proposed to mentees for any and all sessions.
3. Complete a review of each session. This must be completed within 24hrs of each session and submitted to the supervising member of Oxygen staff.
4. Undertake 3 Sessions of initial mentor training and at least 2 training/networking events a year. This is to keep you connected to the Oxygen team and so that the team can get to know you more. This is also to strengthen and sustain your mentoring skills. This is also necessary for updating you on current issues and training needs.
5. Inform us of any safeguarding needs. These must be flagged up immediately to the supervising member of Oxygen staff.

Signed: Signed supervisor (oxygen)

Date: Date

# MENTOR GUIDELINES AND CODE OF CONDUCT

The following information will be sent out to mentors for them to agree to before they start mentoring. The document contains three parts: a) Summary/Overview; b) Complying with Oxygen’s Safeguarding Children Policy; c) Code of Conduct. d) job role

## Summary/Overview

* All those in regular contact with children and young people are in a position to get to know those individuals well, to develop trusting relationships, observe changes in behaviour and may be chosen by the young person to share confidence and concerns. Regrettably, there are occasions where child abuse is alleged or suspected. All such situations must be taken seriously.
* It is the policy of Oxygen to safeguard the welfare of children and all others involved in Oxygen’s activities by protecting them from physical, sexual and emotional harm, and neglect.
* It is the responsibility of each adult to ensure that his/her behaviour is appropriate at all times. A Code of Conduct is included in this document to give positive guidance for all adults. It is essential that all adults follow the Code of Conduct whether they work with children, young people or adults. Details of the steps to take if abuse is alleged or suspected are also included in this document, although more detailed Safeguarding Children Guidelines are also available upon request.
* If there is an allegation or you have identified signs and indicators of abuse then this information MUST be passed immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead via email. It is the Designated Safeguarding Lead’s responsibility to collect all relevant information and make decisions on how to proceed, (this may include contacting the Children’s Social Care or police, who are the investigative agencies). At all times the welfare of the young person is paramount. Swift reporting will enable the investigative agency to give advice and take appropriate action. You have a legal duty of care to pass on all relevant information regarding any allegations of abuse, or identified signs and indicators of possible abuse.
* These procedures exist not to discourage adults from being involved in this service but to ensure that people who may abuse children do not get the opportunity to do so.
* Oxygen also has a responsibility to safeguard and protect the personal data of young people. Any personal information relating to under 18s needs to be treated sensitively and confidentially.

## Complying with Oxygen’s Safeguarding Children Policy

All adults coming into contact with children and young people through Oxygen must comply with the Safeguarding Children Policy and Code of Conduct.

As one such person, you are required to confirm that you’ve read this document and that you agree to comply with the policy and follow the Code of Conduct below. If you have any queries, please email john.trend@oxygen-online.org for assistance.

If you have identified any signs or indicators that a child/young person is being abused:

1. Immediately contact Oxygen’s Designated Safeguarding Lead, John Trend on john.trend@oxygen-online .org or on 07984 520038. If you are concerned that a young person might be in immediate danger then call the police.
2. Record the known facts in writing in the email and include any other information your feel is relevant, and pass on this as soon as possible to the above person.

If a child or young person discloses information relating to abuse:

1. Allow him/her to speak without interruption, encouraging them to tell you only what they feel comfortable telling you, and be accepting of what is said. Do not ask leading questions, for example ‘did they do this to you?’, as any testimony resulting from leading or closed questions is inadmissible. Only ask ‘what happened?’
2. Let him/her know that you MUST pass information to the Designated Safeguarding Lead
3. If they refuse to tell you anything unless you promise to keep it a secret, inform them that you want to help and that there is one person you have to tell. If they then refuse to tell you any more, please respect their decision and report this incident.
4. Immediately after a disclosure, contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
5. Record the facts as you know them in writing, including the account given to you by the young person using the words that they used as well as including any other information your feel is relevant. Everything must be written in the words used by the children themselves. You cannot use words like ‘abuse’ if they haven’t used them.
6. Provide this written information to the Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as you are able.

If you receive an allegation about any adult or about yourself:

1. Immediately tell the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
2. Record the facts as you know them in writing and give them to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

If you deal with the personal data of young people:

1. Handle all information with sensitivity and confidentiality.
2. The information should be kept securely and not be made available to others.
3. Where necessary, dispose of data relating to under 18s in a confidential manner.
4. Do not use the information inappropriately, especially if it will cause harm to the young person concerned.

If a mentee behaves inappropriately towards you:

1. Close down the conversation as soon as possible if you are talking online. If you have met up in a public place, find an excuse to leave.
2. Immediately report the incident to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, John Trend, at john.trend@oxygen-online.org.

## Code of Conduct

You must:

* Use the Oxygen Discord or text anywhere for all communication with your mentee.
* If there is an issue with the technology platform, and you need to contact your mentee directly, please CC mentoring@oxygen-online.org or include john 07984 520038 in your text.
* Treat all young people with respect.
* Treat all information and data (including photographs and video footage) pertaining to a young person with sensitivity.
* Avoid being isolated with a young person. If you meet in person you should be in a public place, like a coffee shop, park a public meeting room, a co-working space or classroom with the door open. Home visits can only be undertaken with the express permission of the Parent or Guardian of the young person and the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Sessions should take place in the kitchen, living room or garden and the parent **must** be in the house.
* Be sensitive to the needs of young people.
* Remember that someone else might misinterpret your actions, no matter how well-intentioned.
* Be aware that any physical contact with a young person can be misinterpreted and should always be avoided.
* Recognise that special caution is required when discussing sensitive issues with young people.
* Challenge unacceptable behaviour and report all allegations/suspicions of abuse to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
* Operate within Oxygen's Safeguarding Children Procedures in the event of any disclosure/concern.

You must not:

* Act in a manner that excludes the young people you are working with.
* Make suggestive or derogatory remarks in front of young people.
* Have inappropriate physical or verbal contact with young people.
* Be under the influence of alcohol or other substances when working on activities involving young people.
* Transfer the personal data of young people to third parties without express permission from relevant Oxygen staff, the young person or their family.
* Allow your own priorities to compromise the care, happiness or wellbeing of young people.
* Jump to conclusions about others without checking the facts.
* Either exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues.

**Your Role as a Mentor:**

* At the initial stages of the match, your mentee may appear to be hesitant, unresponsive, and unappreciative of the mentor relationship. This guarded attitude is simply a manifestation of his/her insecurity about the relationship. The mentee’s attitude will gradually take a positive turn as he/she realizes your sincerity about being a friend. Be patient! Don’t try to speed up the process by going out of your way to accommodate your mentee, such as seeing your mentee more than agreed.
* Remember that the mentor–mentee relationship has an initial phase. During this phase the mentee is more interested in getting to know how “real” you are and how much he/she can trust you. Establish how you will communicate with your mentee; how often you will meet; meeting location. Establish a time and phone number where you can usually answer calls or make contact. Mentees need encouragement to leave messages on your voicemail to confirm meetings as well as to cancel them.
* Don’t try to be something you are not (teacher, parent, disciplinarian, therapist, or babysitter.) It is counterproductive to assume roles other than a dependable, consistent, supportive advocate. Present information carefully without distortion and give all points of view a fair hearing. Listen carefully and offer possible solutions without passing judgment. Don’t criticize or preach. Be prepared to learn and to show the young person that you don’t have all the answers, but that together you can work things out.
* Think of ways to problem solve together rather than lecturing or telling the mentee what to do. Never tell them what they “should have done”. Ask them what they could have done to get a better outcome or what could they do to improve their chances of achieving their goal.
* Respect the uniqueness and honour the integrity of your mentee and influence him/her through constructive feedback. The mentor empowers the mentee to make right decisions without actually deciding for the mentee. Identify the mentee’s interests and take them seriously. Be alert for opportunities and teaching moments. Explore positive and negative consequences.
* Set realistic expectations and goals for your mentee and make achievement for them fun. Remember there is a big difference between encouraging and demanding. Encourage your mentee to complete his/her secondary education and pursue higher learning or vocational goals; provide access to varying points of view. Assist in making the connection between his/her actions of today and the dreams and goals of tomorrow. Don’t get discouraged if the mentee isn’t turning his/her life around or making great improvements. Mentors have a great deal of impact; it’s not always immediately evident. Look for signs such as increased school attendance, improved grades, showing up for meetings and expressing appreciation.
* As a trusted support you can share and advise, but know your limitations. Problems that your mentee may share with you regarding substance abuse, molestation and physical abuse are best handled by professionals. If you have any concerns, contact the mentor coordinator immediately.
* Be supportive of the parent, even when you may disagree. Don’t take sides or make judgments concerning any family conflict or situation. Leave the parenting to the parent
* This program is designed to assist your mentee with career exploration, tutoring, and self-esteem, there may be activities that you want to attend that cost money. Consult with your mentee about cost and consider how theses will be me. You can assist if you wish but ask for support from Oxygen/ parents to cover costs
* Remember their birthday! Make sure they have card with an encouraging message.
* Always call your mentee before your scheduled meeting or appointment to remind him/her. Be sure you have parental approval for activities that take place away from school / home premises.
* Return your mentee home at the agreed-upon time. If you are unable to or there is a change in plans, always call the parent to let him/her know.
* Discussions between you and your mentee are considered confidential. Be careful about sensitive personal issues. The mentee’s personal or family life may be difficult to discuss, particularly early in the relationship.
* If you have a concern you feel is beyond your ability to handle, call the mentor coordinator even if it seems trivial. There is no reason to feel helpless or hopeless.
* You will work with your mentee to establish mutual respect, friendship, motivation and measurable goals. Please don’t hesitate to ask questions if you find any part of the guidelines unclear or confusing. The mentor coordinator is available to assist you in any way possible.

**YOU ARE A:** POSITIVE ROLE MODEL, FRIEND, COACH**,** ADVISOR**,** SELF-ESTEEM BUILDER CAREER COUNSELOR, ADVOCATE.

Name of Mentor: Director:

Signature: Signed

Date: