



Child protection

Example behaviour code for adults working with children

This example has been taken from the Safe Network *Are They Safe?* guide, and was originally adapted from policies developed by Leonard Cheshire Disability media project and NSPCC consultancy services.

(Name of group/organisation) behaviour code

This behaviour code outlines the conduct expected of staff and volunteers from (name of group/organisation), and staff from other organisations who engage with children and young people through (name of group/organisation) and its activities.

It has been informed by the views of children and young people.

Purpose

Following this code will help to protect children from abuse and inappropriate behaviour from adults. It will also help staff and volunteers to maintain the standard of behaviour expected of them and will reduce the possibility of unfounded allegations of abuse being made against them.

Upholding this code of behaviour

All members of staff and volunteers are expected to report any breaches of this code to (name of person or name of role that breaches should be reported to) under the whistle-blowing procedure or, if necessary, under child protection procedures.

Staff and volunteers who breach this code of behaviour may be subject to (name of group/organisation)'s disciplinary procedures. Any breach of the code involving a volunteer or member of staff from another agency may result in them being asked to leave (name of group/organisation).

Serious breaches may also result in a referral being made to a statutory agency such as the police, the local authority children's social care department and/or the Independent Safeguarding Authority.

The role of staff and volunteers

When working with children and young people for (name of group/organisation) all staff and volunteers are acting in a position of trust. It is important that staff and volunteers are aware that they may be seen as role models by children and young people, and must act in an appropriate manner at all times.

When working with children and young people, it is important to:

- operate within (name of group/organisation)'s principles and guidance and any specific procedures;
- follow the (name of group/organisation)'s child protection policy and e-safety policy and procedures at all times;
- listen to and respect children at all times;
- avoid favouritism;
- treat children and young people fairly and without prejudice or discrimination;
- value and take children's contributions seriously, actively involving children and young people in planning activities wherever possible;
- ensure any contact with children and young people is appropriate and in relation to the work of the project;
- always ensure language is appropriate and not offensive or discriminatory;
- follow the e-safety policy and report any breaches;
- always ensure equipment is used safely and for its intended purpose;
- provide examples of good conduct you wish children and young people to follow;
- challenge unacceptable behaviour and report all allegations/suspensions of abuse;
- ensure that whenever possible, there is more than one adult present during activities with children and young people or if this isn't possible, that you are within sight or hearing of other adults;
- be close to where others are working. If a child specifically asks for or needs some private time with you, ensure other staff should know where you and the child are;
- respect a young person's right to personal privacy;
- encourage young people and adults to feel comfortable and caring enough to point out attitudes or behaviour they do not like;
- recognise that special caution is required when you are discussing sensitive issues with children or young people.

You must not:

- patronise or treat children and young people as if they are silly;
- allow allegations to go unreported;
- develop inappropriate relationships such as contact with children and young people that is not a part of the work of (name of group/organisation) or agreed with the manager or leader;
- conduct a sexual relationship with a child or young person or indulge in any form of sexual contact with a child or young person. Any such behaviour between an adult member of staff or volunteer and a child or young person using the services of (name of group/organisation) represents a serious breach of trust on the part of the staff member or volunteer and is not acceptable under any circumstances;
- let children and young people have your personal contact details (mobile number or address);
- make sarcastic, insensitive, derogatory or sexually suggestive comments or gestures to or in front of children and young people;
- act in a way that can be perceived as threatening or intrusive;
- make inappropriate promises to children and young people, particularly in relation to confidentiality;
- jump to conclusions about others without checking facts;
- either exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues;
- rely on your reputation or that of the organisation to protect you.

The role of parents and carers

(Name of group/organisation) welcomes and encourages parental involvement. Parents and carers are regarded as valuable partners in promoting positive behaviour and will be involved as appropriate.

In the event of their child becoming the subject of behaviour sanctions, parents/carers will be informed and involved.

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Photography by Jon Challicom, posed by models.

