



SAFEGUARDING BEHAVIOUR CODE

Date created: May 2014

Effective from: September 2016

Date last revised: October 2023

Approved by: Trustees

Review date: September 2024

Contact person: Julie Taylor

This behaviour code outlines the conduct expected of staff and volunteers from The Children's Literacy Charity (the charity) and staff from other organisations who support children and young people through the charity and its activities. It is based on guidance from the NSPCC Safe Network and 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 their line manager under the whistle-blowing procedure or, if appropriate, under child protection and safeguarding procedures.

Staff and volunteers who breach this code of behaviour may be subject to the charity'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 the charity.

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 the charity 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 the charity's principles and guidance and any specific procedures;
- follow the charity's safeguarding 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;
- 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/suspicions 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.
- respect a young person's right to personal privacy;
- encourage children and young people to feel comfortable enough to call attention to 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 your work or volunteering role with the charity 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 the charity 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); contact children or their families via social media or add pupils as friends on social networking sites.
- 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;
- use your personal mobile phone whilst working with children including keep photos or videos of children or young people on your phone, camera or any other mobile or electronic device;
- divulge school or pupil details via social media
- rely on your reputation or that of the organisation to protect you.



All staff need to understand the potential risks involved in electronic communication and actively promote responsible uses of all appropriate technologies. Inappropriate uses could lead to disciplinary action and possibly even dismissal.

The role of parents and carers

The charity welcomes and encourages parental involvement. Parents and carers are regarded as valuable partners in promoting positive behaviour and will be involved as appropriate.

Please also note that it is the responsibility of staff and volunteers to make their line manager aware if anything related to their DBS status and self-disclosure changes during the period of their involvement with the charity, for example if they incur a criminal record which would be disclosed during a subsequent check.

Reporting safeguarding concerns

If you are concerned by the behaviour of a colleague or volunteer you can use the flowchart in **Appendix A** to report a safeguarding incident or concern.

Reporting the behaviour of a colleague/volunteer can be an uncomfortable situation, particularly if you are unsure about what is happening. You might be worried that you are over-reacting and that you might be wrong. It is useful to consider what could happen if your concerns are well-founded and you fail to act: it is very likely that children will come to harm. So, it is better to be safe than sorry. Your role is to pass on concerns, not to investigate their merit. You have no option but to pass on information about behaviour in a colleague/volunteer that worries you.

The Whistleblowing Policy is designed to protect you during the process of investigation; if your concerns turn out to be mistaken, you should not be made to feel that you were wrong to bring it to anyone's attention. Whistleblowers are protected by the law.

Appendix A - Reporting of Safeguarding Incidents (inc. low-level concerns)

