

# Code of Conduct

This Code of Conduct reflects the legal and regulatory standards applicable in England, including safeguarding responsibilities outlined in the Children Acts 1989 and 2004, Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018, updated 2023), and the Care Act 2014.

At Young Epilepsy/St Piers, safeguarding is at the heart of everything we do. We are committed to ensuring that all children, young people, and adults with care and support needs in our care are safe, well-supported, and protected from harm. This commitment applies to everyone working with or on behalf of the organisation—including trustees, governors, casual and agency staff, volunteers, and student placements—without exception.

While we place trust in our staff to act with professionalism and integrity at all times, we also recognise that the nature of our work—combined with the vulnerabilities of the individuals in our care—can heighten the risk of maltreatment, exploitation, or abuse. Therefore, it is essential that all staff operate within the organisation's policies and procedures, understanding their position of trust and the responsibility that comes with it. You are a role model and must act accordingly.

This Code sets out the expected standards of conduct for all adults working in or on behalf of Young Epilepsy/St Piers. It is not an exhaustive list, but a guide to support sound professional judgement in all situations.

By reading and adhering to this Code, you are fulfilling your professional and legal responsibilities to uphold our statutory duty of care, and to protect the safety, dignity, and wellbeing of all children, young people, and adults with care and support needs

Our Employee Handbook and related policies offer further guidance on boundaries, procedures, and best practices to support a safe and caring environment for both staff and students.

Any behaviour that is deemed, or alleged to be, contrary to this Code will be investigated in accordance with the Disciplinary Procedure, and appropriate action will be taken where necessary.

## 1. Professional Behaviour and Conduct

Staff must:

1.1 Adhere to all our policies, procedures and guidelines.

1.2 Always treat students, colleagues, service users, supporters and stakeholders with dignity and respect.

1.3 Always act, and be seen to act, in accordance with their duty of care to students, supporters and service users and ensure their safety and wellbeing is of the highest priority. **This includes intervening if a child, young person or adult with care and support needs is suffering or about to suffer harm, neglect or abuse.**

- 1.4 Behave in a professional, respectful, safe, fair and considered manner always and in line with professional responsibilities and British Values.
- 1.5 Have regard for our vision, mission and values and not do or say anything that may bring the organisation into disrepute.
- 1.6 Avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation, intentions or suitability to care for other people's children or for adults at risk.
- 1.7 Help to create and maintain a culture of openness and support. The safeguarding culture in Young Epilepsy/St Piers is exercised in part, through positive and respectful relationships between staff, where professional challenge and curiosity are welcomed.
- 1.8 Maintain the highest standards of honesty and integrity in their work and be accountable for their behaviour and actions.
- 1.9 All staff at St Piers have a duty of care to promote children and young people's wellbeing, act in their best interests and protect them from harm. Staff should be aware of their needs, requirements, aspirations and likes and dislikes and promote their wellbeing accordingly when working with them. This includes ensuring that medication needs are met in line with the competencies of staff's training and skills (e.g. even if you are not medication trained, you may need to inform the shift leader that medication has not been administered when required or advise of bowel movements in line with their agreed PRN protocol).
- 1.10 Take reasonable steps to ensure the safety and wellbeing of any child, young person or adult with care and support needs in their care. This includes keeping them safe and protecting them from abuse. Failure to do so may be regarded as professional misconduct.
- 1.11 Provide a good example and be a 'positive role model' to the children, young people and adult with care and support needs in their care.
- 1.12 Maintain professional boundaries with colleagues, students, supporters and service users and adhere to the guidance produced by the Safeguarding Team regarding Professional Boundaries.
- 1.13 Build positive, supportive and caring relationships with all students and service users which promote independence, safety and learning.
- 1.14 Never let their relationships with students, service users, supporters, parents/guardians/carers or colleagues impact on their obligation to inform the Safeguarding Team if they have concerns about a child, young person or adult with care and support needs.
- 1.15 Act in a way that creates a culture of equality and treats people fairly. We celebrate diversity and staff should work with colleagues, students, service users and supporters to engender respect and acceptance.
- 1.16 Seek guidance from a manager if they do not feel they are in a fit state to perform their role- this includes symptoms from taking medication, being under the influence of any substance or alcohol or suffering from any mental health condition.
- 1.17 Always behave in a legal and safe manner.
- 1.18 Never give or receive gifts unless known and agreed by their line manager.

1.19 Always encourage others to act in a legal, proper and safe manner.

1.20 Never make inappropriate remarks or jokes of a personal, sexual, racial, discriminatory, intimidating or otherwise offensive nature about anyone.

1.21 Never be in a state of undress for any reason or during any activity in front of children, young people or adult with care and support needs.

1.22 Never abuse their 'position of trust' for any exploitation of students, children, young people or their parents/guardians/carers.

1.23 Where there is a need for transportation, this must always be pre-planned with a manager. Staff should always transport a student/service user/supporter in a vehicle with another member of staff present, and with the relevant risk assessment and required documentation in place. If this is not possible, a risk assessment must be in place for lone working travel with staff and this must be signed off by a manager.

1.24 Staff need to be sensitive, respectful and responsive to the diversity of beliefs, practices, cultural and linguistic needs of all children and young people, their parents/guardians/carers and professionals who use our services.

1.25 Staff must report any safeguarding concerns they have to the Lead or Deputy DSL for their area. Failure to do so or act on the advice of the DSL may result in more formal action.

1.26 St Piers Staff must record any safeguarding concerns on the appropriate online reporting system after discussion with the DSL/DSO in a timely manner. The report should be factual and in line with user guidelines and advice from the DSL.

1.27 St Piers-based staff must be prepared to support students with medical appointments and where appropriate when being referred to hospital or for a hospital admission. Failure to follow reasonable instructions from your manager or the night duty manager may result in more formal action.

1.28 Unless formally approved as a sleep-in shift by the Head of Service, all shifts are classified as waking duties and staff are required to remain fully alert and attentive throughout. Sleeping while on duty is not acceptable and will be treated as a disciplinary matter.

1.29 Staff who are subject to an internal investigation, are on a formal Performance Improvement Plan (PIP), or Absence Improvement Plan (AIP) are not permitted to take on additional hours or overtime until the plan or investigation is concluded and closed. This is to ensure full focus is given to addressing areas of concern and to support staff wellbeing and performance development.

## **2. Dress and appearance**

2.1 A person's dress and appearance must be appropriate to their role and therefore staff may need to dress differently at work to how they would in their personal life.

2.2 This means that staff should wear clothing, jewellery and footwear which:

- Promotes a professional appearance
- Is appropriate to the tasks they may be or will be completing

- Is safe according to the tasks that may be performed
- Cannot be interpreted as offensive, revealing or sexually provocative
- Is absent from any contentious slogans
- Is culturally sensitive.

2.3 If working indoors, staff should remove their outdoor clothing (e.g., coat, hat etc.) to provide a homely environment.

### **3. Conduct outside of work**

3.1 All staff must be aware that actions in their personal lives may impact on their work and must not engage in any conduct outside of work that could damage the reputation of the organisation or the staff member's own reputation or the reputation of other members of staff.

3.2 Staff must inform a senior manager if they have or are undertaking any services outside of Young Epilepsy/St Piers services, for parents/guardians/carers of students or service users. This is actively discouraged to ensure professionals boundaries are not blurred outside of their contract with Young Epilepsy/St Piers.

3.3 Criminal offences must be declared and will be assessed in line with our policies on suitability to be employed at Young Epilepsy/St Piers.

3.4 The Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009 set out grounds whereby a staff member would be disqualified from providing early or later years childcare, if they meet certain criteria (e.g., committed a relevant offence). Staff must speak to HR if they meet these criteria.

3.5 All staff are reminded that they must respond promptly to requests to renew their DBS, failure to do so may result in dismissal.

### **4. Confidentiality**

4.1 Staff have access to confidential information about children, young people and adults with care and support needs and service users, which may be highly sensitive or private and must always be handled, treated and stored appropriately and discreetly in line with Information Governance policies and procedures.

4.2 Staff must speak to a manager if they are in any doubt about what information can be shared with whom.

4.3 Staff must never use student/service user/supporter information to their own advantage and information about them must never be used to intimidate, humiliate or embarrass them.

4.4 Staff have a statutory obligation to share any concerns about a child, young person or adult with care and support needs wellbeing or safety to the Safeguarding Team and staff must pass this information on without delay in accordance with our Safeguarding Procedures.

## 5. Social media

5.1 Staff should not establish or seek contact with those children, young people or adults with care and support needs using our services outside of work.

5.2 Staff should not be Facebook friends or communicate on any social networking sites with those children, young people or adults with care and support needs using our services or their parents/guardians/carers. The only exception to this is via the organisation's main social networking accounts or if liking/sharing content the young person has posted if related to Young Epilepsy or St Piers activity.

5.3 The only acceptable method of contact with children, young people or adults with care and support needs using our services or their parents/guardians/carers is via a Young Epilepsy or St Piers email account or phone and all communication should be for clear professional reasons.

5.4 Staff should speak to their manager if they have been approached by a child, young person or adult with care and support needs using our services or their parents/guardians/carers to communicate with them via social media and staff must also alert the Safeguarding Team if they are concerned about any personal contact between themselves or staff, students or their parents/guardians/carers.

5.5 Staff who are involved in any disciplinary or safeguarding investigation must not communicate with colleagues via any means including social networking, about the investigation they are involved with.

5.6 Staff must never post anything on social media that may compromise their professionalism or professional reputation.

5.7 Staff must also not endorse inappropriate comments/memes on social media by 'liking' them as they may also risk compromising their professional reputation and undermine the values and ethos of the organisation as a result.

For more guidance on the appropriate use of social media, please refer to the Social Media Policy that can be found on the Intranet.

## 6. Use of technology

6.1 Staff must only use a Young Epilepsy/St Piers device when taking any photo or video of a student, supporter or service user and consent must be in place and recorded.

6.2 Staff must be able to professionally justify any photos or videos taken of students, supporters or service users.

6.3 Staff must take caution with saving and distributing photos, and photos of students, supporters or service users must only be emailed from a Young Epilepsy or St Piers email account and with a clear explanation for why the photos are being distributed, and this must remain within the remit of the consent given.

6.4 Staff must not take any photos or videos of students, supporters or service users which could be seen as indecent or inappropriate.

6.5 Staff must not use any Young Epilepsy or St Piers device to look at or distribute harmful, illegal or inappropriate content.

6.6 Staff should make sure that students, supporters or service users are never exposed to indecent, inappropriate or illegal images or content either on or offline.

6.7 Staff must never use student, supporter or service user devices for their own purposes and/or use their own log in on someone else's device.

6.8 Staff must never take pictures of injuries of students, supporters or service users unless requested to do so by the Lead DSL/Deputy DSL and only if requested to by external safeguarding teams and with consent of the person or if a best interest decision has been made. There is an exception in place for therapists and nurses who must adhere to the guidance in place, however, the young person or adult with care and support needs dignity, wishes or privacy should NEVER be compromised.

6.9 Due discussion must be had with the appropriate Executive, Lead DSL and Head of Marketing and Communications if sharing real life stories for marketing purposes (with the appropriate consents in place). Dignity should never be compromised.

## 7. Mobile Devices

7.1 Personal Mobile phones and other electronic devices (including internet enabled watches, tablets, glasses etc.) must not be used for any personal reason (other than emergencies) whilst working with students, supporters or service users and this includes during transitions across the campus.

7.2 Staff can use their personal and/or work phone for work purposes when with students, supporters and service users. However, staff must have due regard for professional boundaries and ensure that the use of a phone/device does not interfere with the care they are giving.

7.3 All staff must turn their personal phones and other mobile devices off or put on to silent when in the school/college/houses/medical centre.

7.4 Staff must never have their mobile phone, or any internet enabled device on their possession when they are supporting a student with any personal or intimate care. This includes smart phones, smart watches and smart glasses.

7.5 If they have a personal emergency where they need to respond to their personal mobile device whilst working with students, supporters or service users, they must seek explicit permission of a manager.

7.6 Staff's personal use of personal mobile phones and other internet enabled devices is strictly limited to break times away from students, supporters and service users, unless a phone needs to be used in an emergency.

7.7 Staff are not permitted to use their personal mobile phones or internet enabled devices for contacting students, supporters or service users or those connected with their families.

7.8 Staff should never give their personal mobile phone number to students, supporters or service users or their parents/guardians/carers.



7.9 Staff should never store parents' or students' telephone or contact details on their personal mobile phone.

7.10 We recognise that some staff may use personal mobile devices to monitor their own health conditions (e.g. diabetes or heart management). However, these devices must not be actively used or checked while working 1:1 with students or during direct care, unless in the case of a medical emergency. Staff must speak to their line manager if they have specific health needs that may require accommodation during working hours, so that appropriate plans can be put in place without compromising the safety, care or supervision of students.

## **8. Contact, physical support and behaviour support**

8.1 Staff must never develop sexual relations with any student or service user.

8.2 Staff should be aware that even well-intentioned physical contact may be misconstrued. Therefore, staff must never touch students or service users in a manner which is or may be considered sexual, threatening, gratuitous or intimidating, or in a manner which may be misinterpreted by the young person or adult with care and support needs.

8.3 Staff must never push, hit, kick, punch, pinch, slap, throw missiles with the intention to hurt or smack a student, supporter or service user or threaten to do so.

8.4 Staff must not indulge in 'horseplay' with students, supporters and service users.

8.5 Staff must not intentionally embarrass or humiliate students, supporters or service users, for example, by using gestures, sarcasm or humour in an inappropriate way.

8.6 Staff must not punish students, supporters or service users or use sanctions. This is not an accepted positive behaviour support approach.

8.7 Staff must be sensitive to cultural and religious views about touching others.

8.8 Staff should self-report any action that they think could be misinterpreted by others, or which may have intentionally or unintentionally caused harm to a student, supporter or service user, to the Safeguarding Team.

8.9 It is recognised that at St Piers, some students may seek physical contact and warmth and so staff must always act in accordance with a student's guidance and support plan and ensure that their own behaviour maintains professional boundaries.

8.10 Staff must never kiss students or service users.

8.11 Staff must be aware of any guidance or risk assessments for a particular child, young person or adult with care and support needs and ensure they follow these.

8.12 Staff at St Piers must always communicate clearly with a student before any physical contact takes place, explaining the reason for the contact in a way the student can understand. Physical contact must never occur without the student's awareness and, where possible, their agreement.

8.13 At St Piers, staff must follow the Personal and Intimate Care Guidelines and ensure that all personal and intimate care provided to children and adults, respects their dignity, privacy and welfare and that this care is always recorded.

8.14 At St Piers, staff must actively promote and support students to carry out self-care tasks independently, helping when necessary and in a way that maintains the student's dignity and encourages the development of their skills

**You must report immediately to the Safeguarding Team any of the following:**

- **Any behaviour, action, inaction, or situation involving staff that could lead to a complaint, compromise professional standards, or be open to misinterpretation or misunderstanding.**
- **Any personal difficulties impacting your ability to carry out your role safely and effectively — including challenges with a student or situation where you feel underqualified, insufficiently trained, or not confident to respond appropriately.**
- **Any conduct or behaviour by another individual working for Young Epilepsy/St Piers that causes you concern, breaches this Code of Conduct, or goes against organisational policies or safeguarding expectations — regardless of the person's role or seniority.**

**Failure to report such matters may be considered a breach of professional duty and could result in formal action. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, and concerns must never be ignored or minimised.**



## Reporting Safeguarding Concerns

EVERY staff member has a duty to raise concerns which relate to the wellbeing and safety of students, supporters and service users. This is not a choice but a mandatory requirement. Failing to raise concerns, or failing to intervene to prevent harm, is not only recognised as professional abuse and puts staff at risk but also leaves children and young people at risk of further harm.

Safeguarding concerns include any staff practice or behaviour which suggests that a child or young person or adult with care and support needs is not being treated with the dignity and respect that is expected when working at Young Epilepsy/St Piers, and any practice which goes against the Code of Conduct and which all staff are expected to have signed and to follow.

Please remember if something does not look, sound or feel right, then do the right thing, take immediate action and then report your concerns as soon you possible.

We know that it can sometimes be difficult to have the confidence to intervene and raise a concern, but regardless of the difficulty, this cannot be a reason for not doing so. If you do not feel confident speaking directly to the Safeguarding Team, you can speak to someone throughout the line management chain including up to the Chief Executive Officer or you can also use the procedure as outlined in the Whistleblowing and Confidential Disclosures Procedure (found on the policy and procedures library on the intranet) to raise your concern anonymously.

All concerns are taken very seriously when it comes to protecting children and young people from harm, so that we are sure that our students, young supporters and service users are safe and well. We know that most of the children and young people we work with find it difficult to tell us if there is something worrying or upsetting them, so they rely on us to be their eyes, ears and voices.

We know that most staff understand the importance of intervening to prevent harm, as well as reporting immediately when there is something worrying them, and for this we thank you.

If you have any concerns, no matter how small or trivial you think they are, please make sure you have raised these either to the Safeguarding Team, or Senior Leadership/Executive or via the whistleblowing procedure.

Remember, you can find out who to speak to from the Safeguarding Team by looking at the Safeguarding page on the intranet, looking at one of the posters displayed across campus or if in doubt contact Gill Walters; 07825 188820; [gwalters@stpiers.org.uk](mailto:gwalters@stpiers.org.uk)

Version table			
Date of creation:			
Approved by: Executive Principal			
Version no.	Date of changes	Reasons for change	Changes made by
1	August 2023	Annual review Combine reporting safeguarding concerns document Update sign off sheet	Gill Walters
2	March 2024	To cover YE services more robustly. Addition for St Piers staff regarding the total care of students and responsibilities	Gill Walters
3.	September 2024	Annual Review Vulnerable adult terminology – changed to adult with care and support needs Addition of 3.4	Gill Walters
4	September 2025	Annual Review Para 1 Addition of legal responsibility Addition of 1.28, 1.29 & 7.10 Amends to 8.12 & 8.14 Update Sign off sheet	Gill Walters



## Code of Conduct – Staff Declaration and Signing Sheet

I confirm that I have read, understood, and agree to fully comply with the Young Epilepsy/St Piers Code of Conduct.

I understand that this Code sets out the standards of behaviour expected of me at all times and reflects the legal, professional, and organisational responsibilities of my role.

I acknowledge that safeguarding is a mandatory and non-negotiable aspect of my role, and I agree to:

- Report all safeguarding concerns immediately and without delay, following the Safeguarding Procedure.
- Seek prompt advice from a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy DSL or Designated Safeguarding Officer, if I am unsure whether a concern meets the threshold for reporting.
- Discuss this Code of Conduct with my line manager to confirm my understanding of its content and the responsibilities and accountability it places on me.
- Use the appropriate safeguarding reporting systems and know how to access them.
- Know who the DSL(s) or Safeguarding Officers are in my area of service and how to contact them.
- Access safeguarding guidance and resources via the safeguarding section of the intranet.

I understand that failure to comply with this Code may result in disciplinary action, including potential dismissal.

A signed copy of this form will be retained by HR as part of your employment record.

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**Name (Please print):** .....

**Signed:** .....

**Date:** .....

**Please ensure you retain access to this document for your own reference.**