

Code of Conduct

At Young Epilepsy/St Piers, safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and underpins every aspect of our work. We are committed to creating and maintaining an environment in which children, young people and adults with care and support needs are safe, respected, supported and protected from harm.

This Code of Conduct sets out the standards of behaviour, professionalism and integrity expected of all adults working for or on behalf of Young Epilepsy/St Piers. It provides a framework for making safe, lawful, ethical and person-centred decisions and supports staff in maintaining appropriate professional boundaries at all times.

The Code reflects the legal and regulatory framework applicable in England, including the safeguarding duties and responsibilities set out in the Children Act 1989 & 2004, Working Together to Safeguard Children, the Care Act 2014 and other relevant statutory guidance.

All staff, volunteers, governors, trustees, contractors, agency workers and students on placement/work experience are expected to read, understand and adhere to this Code. Failure to do so may result in management action in accordance with organisational policies and procedures.

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, ensuring their safety, welfare and wellbeing remain paramount. Staff must take all reasonable steps to protect children, young people and adults with care and support needs from harm, neglect, exploitation, abuse or discrimination, intervening where appropriate and reporting concerns without delay in accordance with safeguarding procedures.
- 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. At Young Epilepsy/St Piers, safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and is strengthened through positive and respectful relationships between staff, where professional curiosity, reflective practice and appropriate professional challenge are encouraged and valued.
- 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 the wellbeing of children and young people, act in their best interests, and protect them from harm. Staff must take responsibility for understanding the needs, preferences, aspirations and support requirements of the students they work with and ensure these are reflected in their day-to-day practice. Staff are expected to contribute to the safe and effective delivery of health, care and support needs within the boundaries of their training, competence and role. This includes promptly escalating concerns, omissions in care, unmet needs, or risks to an appropriate colleague or manager to ensure students receive safe and consistent support.

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 positive role model for children, young people and adults with care and support needs by demonstrating professional, respectful, safe and inclusive behaviour at all times. Staff should recognise that their words, actions, attitudes and conduct can influence others and should therefore promote the values, expectations and standards of Young Epilepsy/St Piers.

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 allow relationships with students, service users, supporters, parents/guardians/carers or colleagues to affect your responsibility to raise safeguarding concerns. Concerns must be reported to the Safeguarding Team without delay, regardless of who is involved

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 advice from a manager without delay if you do not believe you are fit to carry out your role safely and effectively. This includes where your judgement, performance, alertness, health or wellbeing may be impaired by illness, fatigue, injury, medication, alcohol, drugs or any other circumstance that could impact your ability to fulfil your duties or safeguard those in your care.

1.17 Always behave in a lawful, safe, professional and ethical manner. Staff must ensure that their conduct, decisions and actions uphold the values of Young Epilepsy/St Piers and maintain the safety, wellbeing and confidence of those who use our services.

1.18 Staff must not give or receive gifts from students, service users, supporters, parents/guardians/carers or other stakeholders unless this has been declared to and approved by their line manager in accordance with organisational policy. Staff must ensure that gifts do not create, or appear to create, a conflict of interest or compromise professional boundaries.

1.19 Promote, model and uphold lawful, safe and professional practice. Staff should support others to work in accordance with organisational policies and procedures and must not ignore,

condone or overlook behaviour that is unsafe, inappropriate or inconsistent with safeguarding expectations.

1.20 Treat all people with dignity and respect. Never make inappropriate remarks or jokes or engage in behaviour that could reasonably be perceived as offensive, discriminatory, intimidating, degrading, humiliating or bullying.

1.21 Staff must never be in a state of undress in the presence of a child, young person or adult with care and support needs. Staff must ensure that personal privacy, professional boundaries and the dignity of all parties are maintained at all times.

1.22 Never abuse a position of trust to exploit, manipulate, or take advantage of any student, child, young person, parent, guardian, or carer.

1.23 Any requirement to transport a student, service user, or supporter must be planned in advance and agreed with a manager. Wherever possible, transportation should be undertaken by two members of staff, with an appropriate risk assessment and all required documentation in place. Where this is not possible, a lone-working travel risk assessment must be completed and approved by a manager before the journey takes place.

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 promptly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead/Officer for their area. Failure to report concerns or to follow the advice and direction of the DSL/DSO may result in formal management action.

1.26 Following discussion with the DSL/DSO, staff must record safeguarding concerns on the appropriate electronic reporting system as soon as possible. Records must be accurate, factual, objective, and completed in accordance with organisational guidance and any advice provided by the DSL/DSO.

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.

1.30 Staff must be mindful of the impact their behaviour may have on students, colleagues and neighbours. When arriving at or leaving work, particularly during evening, night and early morning hours, staff should do so quietly and considerately, avoiding unnecessary noise, loud

conversations, shouting, slamming vehicle doors, sounding vehicle horns or other behaviour that may disturb students who may be asleep, resting or sensitive to noise.

1.31 Staff must park responsibly and in accordance with traffic regulations, campus rules and local restrictions. Obstructing access routes, emergency vehicle access points, footpaths, neighbouring properties or designated disabled spaces without authorisation is not permitted. Staff must consider the safety of students, visitors and members of the public when parking on or around St Piers.

2. Dress and appearance

2.1 Staff must ensure that their dress and appearance are appropriate to their role. This may require staff to dress differently at work than they would in their personal lives.

2.2 Clothing, jewellery, and footwear worn at work must:

- Promote a professional appearance.
- Be appropriate for the tasks being undertaken.
- Be safe and suitable for the activities and environment in which staff are working.
- Not be offensive, discriminatory, revealing, or sexually provocative.
- Not display slogans, images, or messages that could reasonably be considered contentious, inappropriate, or likely to cause offence.
- Be respectful of and sensitive to cultural, religious, and individual differences.

2.3 When working indoors, staff should remove outdoor clothing, such as coats, hats, and similar items, unless required for health, safety, religious, cultural, or medical reasons. This helps to maintain a welcoming, professional, and homely environment for students, service users, and visitors.

2.4 Managers may address any concerns regarding dress and appearance where these do not meet the standards set out or where they may present a health, safety, professional, or safeguarding concern.

3. Conduct outside of work

3.1 Staff must be aware that their conduct outside of work may have an impact on their professional role. Staff must not engage in behaviour that could bring the organisation into disrepute, undermine public confidence, or negatively affect their own professional reputation or that of colleagues.

3.2 Staff must inform a senior manager if they are providing, or intend to provide, any services outside of Young Epilepsy/St Piers to students, service users, or their parents, guardians, or carers. Such arrangements are strongly discouraged as they may create conflicts of interest or blur professional boundaries established through employment with Young Epilepsy/St Piers.

3.3 Staff must declare any criminal investigation, caution, reprimand, warning, charge, conviction, or other matter that may affect their suitability to work with children, young people, or vulnerable adults. Any declaration will be considered in accordance with the organisation's recruitment, safeguarding, and suitability-to-work policies

3.4 The Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009 set out circumstances in which an individual may be disqualified from providing relevant childcare. Staff who believe they may meet any of the disqualification criteria must notify their Line Manager and Human Resources without delay and seek appropriate guidance.

3.5 Staff are required to maintain a valid Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check where their role requires one. Staff must respond promptly to requests to complete DBS applications, renewals, updates, or associated checks. Failure to do so may result in formal management action and could ultimately affect continued employment.

3.6 Staff must inform their manager of any change in circumstances that may affect their suitability to work with children, young people, or vulnerable adults, including matters that could have implications for safeguarding, professional registration, or regulatory compliance.

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 must maintain appropriate professional boundaries and must not establish or seek personal contact with children, young people, adults with care and support needs who use our services, or their families outside of their professional role.

5.2 Staff must not connect, communicate, or interact with children, young people, adults with care and support needs who use our services, or their parents, guardians, or carers through personal social media accounts or networking platforms. The only exceptions are interactions through official Young Epilepsy or St Piers social media channels, or engagement with content that has been published in connection with authorised Young Epilepsy or St Piers activities.

5.3 Communication with those who use our services, or their parents, guardians, or carers must only take place through authorised Young Epilepsy or St Piers communication systems, such as organisational email accounts, telephones, or other approved platforms, and only where there is a legitimate professional purpose.

5.4 Staff must inform their manager if they are approached by a child, young person, adult with care and support needs, or a parent, guardian, or carer through social media or any other personal communication platform. Any concerns regarding actual or attempted personal contact between staff and service users, students, or their families must also be reported to the Safeguarding Team without delay.

5.5 Staff involved in any safeguarding, disciplinary, grievance, complaint, or investigation process must not discuss, comment on, or share information relating to that process with colleagues through social media, messaging applications, personal email accounts, or any other unauthorised communication method.

5.6 Staff must not post, share, comment on, endorse, or otherwise engage with content that may reasonably be considered offensive, discriminatory, inappropriate, or inconsistent with the values and expectations of Young Epilepsy and St Piers. This includes the use of reactions, likes, shares, reposts, or similar functions that could be interpreted as endorsing such content.

5.7 Staff must never publish confidential, sensitive, or identifying information relating to students, service users, families, colleagues, or the organisation on social media or any other public platform.

5.8 Staff must not identify themselves as representing Young Epilepsy or St Piers when expressing personal views online unless authorised to do so as part of their role.

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/DSO 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 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 internet-enabled devices, including smart watches, tablets, and smart glasses, must not be used for personal purposes while supporting students, service users, or supporters. This includes while accompanying individuals during transitions across the campus. Exceptions may be made only in emergency situations.

7.2 Staff may use work-issued devices, and where authorised, personal devices, for legitimate work-related purposes. Any use of a device while supporting students, service users, or supporters must be proportionate, professionally justified, and must not compromise supervision, care, engagement, or safety.

7.3 Personal mobile phones and other electronic devices must be switched off or set to silent mode unless their use has been authorised for work-related purposes.

7.4 Staff must not carry or have access to any personal mobile phone or internet-enabled device while providing personal care or intimate care. This includes, but is not limited to, smartphones, smart watches, smart glasses, tablets, and similar technology.

7.5 Where a staff member needs to access a personal device during working hours due to an urgent personal matter, they must seek permission from their manager or the most senior person available before doing so.

7.6 Personal use of mobile phones and other internet-enabled devices is restricted to authorised break times and must take place away from students, service users, and supporters, unless required in an emergency.

7.7 Staff must not use personal devices, accounts, telephone numbers, email addresses, messaging services, or social media platforms to communicate with students, service users, supporters, or members of their families.

7.8 Staff must not provide personal contact details, including mobile telephone numbers, email addresses, or social media account details, to students, service users, supporters, or their parents, guardians, or carers.

7.9 Personal mobile devices must not be used to store, record, or retain contact details or personal information relating to students, service users, supporters, parents, guardians, carers, or colleagues unless expressly authorised and compliant with data protection requirements.

7.10 The use of personal devices to monitor a staff member's health condition, such as diabetes, cardiac conditions, or other medical needs, is recognised and supported. Staff requiring such adjustments must discuss their needs with their line manager. The use of such devices must be formally recorded, and an appropriate risk assessment completed to consider any potential impact on supervision, care, safeguarding and the safety of students and service users. Any agreed arrangements must be documented and reviewed periodically. Use of a device for health-monitoring purposes should be managed in a way that does not compromise the safety, dignity, supervision, or care of students and service users.

8. Contact, physical support and behaviour support

8.1 Staff must never engage in, seek to engage in, or encourage any sexual relationship, activity, or behaviour with a student, service user, supporter, or former student/service user where a position of trust exists or has recently existed.

8.2 Staff must be aware that even well-intentioned physical contact may be misinterpreted. Physical contact must always be necessary, proportionate, and appropriate to the circumstances. Staff must never touch a student, supporter, or service user in a manner that is, or could reasonably be perceived as, sexual, threatening, gratuitous, intimidating, or otherwise inappropriate.

8.3 Staff must never push, hit, kick, punch, pinch, slap, strike, throw objects at, deliberately cause pain to, or threaten to physically harm a student, supporter, or service user.

8.4 Staff must not engage in horseplay, rough play, wrestling, tickling, or similar physical interactions with students, supporters, or service users.

8.5 Staff must not deliberately embarrass, humiliate, ridicule, intimidate, or degrade students, supporters, or service users, including through inappropriate language, gestures, sarcasm, teasing, or humour.

8.6 Staff must not use punitive approaches, punishment, or unauthorised sanctions. Any behaviour support intervention at St Piers must be consistent with approved Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) approaches, organisational policies and individual support plans.

8.7 Staff must be respectful of cultural, religious, personal, and individual differences relating to physical contact and personal space.

8.8 Staff must report to the Safeguarding Team any action, interaction, or incident that could be misinterpreted, give rise to concern, result in a complaint, or may have intentionally or unintentionally caused harm to a student, supporter, or service user.

8.9 It is recognised that some students and service users may seek physical reassurance, comfort, or warmth. Staff must always follow the individual's guidance, care, behaviour support, and risk management plans and ensure that any physical contact remains appropriate, proportionate, and within professional boundaries.

8.10 Staff must never kiss a student, supporter or service user.

8.11 Staff must be familiar with and follow all relevant risk assessments, care plans, behaviour support plans, personal care plans, and other guidance relating to the individuals they support.

8.12 Before initiating physical contact, staff must communicate clearly with the student or service user, using a method appropriate to their communication needs, and explain the reason for the contact wherever practicable. Physical contact should take place with the individual's awareness and, wherever possible, their consent or agreement.

8.13 St Piers staff must follow the Personal and Intimate Care Guidelines and ensure that all personal and intimate care is delivered in a manner that promotes dignity, privacy, choice, independence, and wellbeing. Personal and intimate care must be appropriately recorded in accordance with organisational procedures.

8.14 Staff must actively encourage and support students and service users to undertake self-care tasks independently wherever possible, providing assistance only where necessary and in a way that promotes dignity, autonomy, and skill development.

8.15 Staff must immediately report any of the following to the Safeguarding Team and/or an appropriate manager:

- Any behaviour, action, omission, or situation involving themselves or another member of staff that could lead to a complaint, breach professional standards, compromise safeguarding, or be open to misunderstanding or misinterpretation.
- Any personal issue, circumstance, or difficulty that may affect their ability to carry out their role safely, professionally, or effectively, including situations where they feel inadequately trained, insufficiently skilled, unsupported, or unable to meet an individual's needs safely.
- Any conduct, behaviour, practice, or omission by another person working for or on behalf of Young Epilepsy/St Piers that raises safeguarding concerns, breaches this Code of Conduct, conflicts with organisational policies, or falls below expected professional standards, regardless of that person's role, status, or seniority.

8.16 Failure to report safeguarding concerns, professional conduct concerns, or situations that place children, young people, adults with care and support needs, colleagues, or the organisation at risk may be treated as a breach of professional duty and could result in formal action.

8.17 Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Staff must remain professionally curious, act promptly on concerns, and must never ignore, minimise, delay, or assume that someone else will raise a concern on their behalf.

8.18 Every member of staff has a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of all those who use our services. If something does not look, sound or feel right, staff must take immediate action and report their concerns without delay. Concerns must never be ignored, minimised or assumed to have been reported by someone else.

8.19 For further guidance on recognising and reporting safeguarding concerns, staff should refer to the Safeguarding Procedures for their services and the Whistleblowing and Confidential Disclosures Procedure.

Version table			
Date of creation: August 2020			
Approved by: Director of Education			
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
5	September 2026	Annual review. Updated to reflect current statutory safeguarding guidance and organisational practice. Comprehensive review of all sections to strengthen safeguarding expectations, professional standards, reporting responsibilities, professional boundaries, use of technology,	Gill Walters

		social media, mobile devices, confidentiality, personal care and behaviour support requirements. Addition of 1.30 (considerate conduct when arriving/leaving work). Addition of 1.31 (responsible parking expectations).	
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