



Hope for Children - Code of Conduct

Hope for Children's Code of Conduct outlines the standards of behaviour expected towards children and vulnerable young people and between people associated with our work. The purpose of the Code of Conduct is to: -

- Provide guidance on what is appropriate and inappropriate actions and behaviour with children and young people and in the work place.
- Reduce the risk of harm and abuse of children by adults working with or representing Hope for Children.
- Help children and families feel safe when in contact with Hope for Children staff or representatives.
- Reduce the risk of misplaced allegations about individual conduct.

Personal conduct outside work

Hope for Children expects those working with or for us exemplify high personal standards in their personal (out of work) contact as well as professional (in work) contact with children. Actions or behaviours that cause or put a child at risk of harm outside of work hours or duties will also be considered a violation of this policy.

Do

- ALWAYS report any child safeguarding concern swiftly to your manager or Safeguarding Officer.
- ALWAYS report any concerns or breaches of the Code of Conduct, regardless of who it is.
- Treat all children with kindness and equal respect, without discrimination, regardless of their gender, culture, ethnicity, age, religion, sexual orientation, or ability.
- Obtain informed consent and ensure proper handling, use and storage of children's images and data that you handle in the course of your role.
- Use the "two-adult" rule, whereby your contact with children is always known, supervised, and accompanied by (or at least within sight of) another member of staff.
- Wait for appropriate physical contact to be initiated by a child e.g. holding hands.
- Look out for and report potential for child-to-child bullying, or harmful behaviour by a child towards another child.
- Seek advice from your Child Safeguarding Officer (CSO) if in any doubt about appropriate behaviour and interactions with children.

Do Not

- Hit or in any other way cause physical pain or discomfort to a child; never physically punish a child (e.g. smacking or use of cane).
- Shout, use language or behave in ways that may threaten, frighten, or humiliate a child.
- Use derogatory language on grounds of race, culture, age, gender, disability, religion, sexuality, or political persuasion.
- Be alone, or out of sight of others, with a child where your actions cannot be accounted for, this includes being alone in a car no matter how short the journey. *If you end up in this situation (e.g. taking a child for emergency treatment) you must inform your manager or contact person at Hope for Children immediately.*
- Share personal contact details (email, phone, or social media) with a child, or have private social media or phone contact with a child in Hope for Children's projects. *If a child requests or contacts you, you must inform your manager or Hope for Children contact person. Where children's contact details are kept for necessary work reasons this should be known and approved by a line manager.*
- Take a photo of a child, even if requested by the child or encouraged by their carer. Hope for Children supports Chance for Childhood's **OverExposed** campaign to remove identifiable features of children from imagery and video footage, including removing children's faces from all fundraising campaigns, and it follows that we will not take new images.
- Invite a child to come to your home or hotel or allow a child to visit and stay. *If a child or family does visit uninvited this must be reported to your manager or Hope for Children contact person.*
- Engage in sexual activity with children under the age of 18. Mistaken belief in the age of the child does not constitute a defence.
- Visit a child's home unaccompanied, even if their parents/guardians are at home. *If your role includes home visits then follow the guidelines for this strictly.*
- Show favouritism, spend excessive time, or encourage close attachments with individual children or families.
- Do things of a personal nature that a child could do themselves e.g. dressing, bathing. *If your job includes providing care to children follow the guidelines for this strictly.*
- Give gifts or money to children or families without seeking prior agreement with your manager. This is to reduce the risk of adults grooming children or families for through such gifts.
- Hug, kiss or touch a child in an inappropriate or culturally insensitive way.
- Make, share, or download sexually explicit images of children or view or share pornography with or around children. Any such behaviour known to Hope for Children will be reported to the police.
- Drink alcohol, smoke or use drugs in front of children and don't give alcohol, drugs, or cigarettes to children.
- Engage a child in work (paid or unpaid) that poses a risk to their physical, mental, or social well-being or interferes with their education. This includes forms of domestic "home helps" sometimes provided by family relatives.

Sexual Activity and Relationships

Sexual relationships or any form of sexual activity (includes touching outside of clothes) with a child is always prohibited, regardless of the age of consent in the country concerned. No money, gifts, or

anything else should be offered in exchange for sex. In most cases, such acts will also be illegal and as such will be reported by Hope for Children to relevant police/law enforcers. In the case of British nationals Hope for Children will report such incidents to the UK social services and/or police.

Hope for Children recognises that power and gender power imbalance, which can translate into an imbalance in sexual interactions, may enable sexual exploitation. Hope for Children therefore prohibits its employees in the UK and overseas from paying women for sex.

Given the inherent power imbalance and potential for exploitation between staff/representatives of Hope for Children and beneficiaries in our projects, Hope for Children prohibits sexual relationships between staff and young people (18-21 years) who are beneficiaries in our projects.

Giving and Receiving of Gifts

Gifts can be used as part of grooming, leading into the abuse of vulnerable children and young people. For this reason, Hope for Children requires all staff, representative or visitors to seek prior approval from their manager or contact person before offering a gift to any child or family in our projects. Staff may consult the CEO or CSO if in doubt about the appropriateness of the gift.

Work Place Etiquette

Do

- Seek to care for and protect the rights of children, vulnerable adults and adults at risk and act in a manner that ensures that their best interests shall be the paramount consideration.
- Remain informed about Hope for Children's policies, objectives, and activities.
- Demonstrate integrity, truthfulness, dedication, and honesty in your actions.
- Be patient, respectful and courteous to all persons with whom you deal in an official capacity, including children and young people, representatives of operational and implementing partners, governments, and donors.
- Observe local laws, and meet all private legal and financial obligations, and not seek to take personal advantage that the privilege of my employment with Hope for Children may confer.
- Your utmost to ensure that the conduct of members of your household does not reflect unfavourably on the integrity of Hope for Children.
- Show respect to all colleagues, regardless of status or position, allow all colleagues the opportunity to have their views heard, and to contribute from their knowledge and experience to team efforts.
- Recognise that there is an inherent conflict of interest and potential abuse of power in having intimate and sexual relations with staff under your supervision. Be aware that Hope for Children strongly discourages such relations. Should you find yourself in such a relationship, you will resolve this conflict of interest without delay.
- Refrain from making racist or sexually offensive jokes.
- Refrain from sexting and online bullying.
- Exercise due care in all matters of official business, and not divulge any confidential information about beneficiaries, colleagues, and other work-related matters in accordance with the terms of employment and current guidelines.
- Protect, manage, and utilise Hope for Children's human, financial and material resources efficiently and effectively, aware that these resources have been placed at Hope for Children's disposal for the benefit of the charitable work that it funds.

- Remain aware of and comply with all instructions designed to protect your health, welfare, and safety.
- Always consider the safety of staff in operational decisions.
- Share any doubts regarding an instruction that is considered threatening to safety and bring this immediately to the attention of a manager.
- Respect my colleagues' privacy and avoid spreading misinformation. I will not have personal conversations at my desk or in other workplace settings which may distract others, or which may expose me to others' gossip.
- Communicate openly and share relevant information (subject to confidentiality requirements) with other colleagues and endeavour to respond in a timely manner to queries and emails.
- Use internal procedures and processes to express unhappiness and will not use social media for such purposes.
- Resolve differences and solve problems when they arise, and contribute to building constructive dialogue, guided by mutual respect and an open, positive approach, between management and staff representatives.
- Accept that not all the changes which I wish to promote will necessarily be adopted by the organisation.
- Be open as a manager to the views of all team members. I will provide timely feedback on the performance of each team member through guidance, motivation, and full recognition of their merits.

Do Not

- Harass anyone in the workplace on the grounds of any kind of diversity/difference.
- Make gestures or sexual remarks about someone's body, clothing, or appearance.
- Ask questions about someone's sex life.
- Make sexual comments or jokes about someone's sexual orientation or gender reassignment.
- Make sexually suggestive remarks.
- Make physical contact such as touching or pinching.
- Record the content of any meetings without the express permission of attendees.
- Gossip about colleagues or the organisation. Rather, promote positive engagement with all employees and use formal channels to raise issues of concern with the organisation.

Complaints and reports

Each person who signs this code must bring to the attention of the relevant manager any potential incident, abuse, or concern that they witness, are made aware of, or suspect which appears to breach the standards contained in this Code.

Staff members who have a complaint or concern relating to breach of the Code should report it immediately to the Safeguarding Officer. If the staff member does not feel comfortable reporting to either one of these post holders (for example if they feel that the report will not be taken seriously, or if that person is implicated in the concern), they may report to any other appropriate staff member or the Safeguarding Trustee. Staff members receiving reports or concerns must act or refer the report immediately as per the reporting procedures of Hope for Children.

Victims / survivors and subject(s) of concern of allegations must participate in any investigation that may ensue the making of a complaint.

The HR Director or other person assigned such duties, and the Safeguarding Lead will evaluate the complaint. An initial response will be made within twenty-four hours. Following the gathering of facts,

a strategy meeting will be convened to consider next steps. Depending on the nature of the allegation a response will be made within ten working days.

Should the complainant wish it, complaints may be anonymized.

I _____ accept and declare that by appending my signature herein on this document, I confirm that I have read and understood the Code of Conduct and its standards. I understand that any divergence from these standards may result in disciplinary measures, up to termination of my employment/voluntary contract with Hope for Children, and, where an act of criminality is concerned, a referral to the appropriate legal authorities.

Signature: _____ Date: _____ Time: _____