



# Code of Conduct

Last review: 10/08/2023

Date of Next Review: 10/06/2024

All members of the centre community, staff and students, are expected to maintain high standards of personal behaviour, particularly in relation to other people. This means in practice that we are expected to:

- show a high level of courtesy, self-discipline and respect for others
- give equal value to all people at the centre, whether they are students, staff or visitors
- accept personal responsibility for our actions at all times
- show respect for others, their beliefs and traditions, way of life and dress
- demonstrate honesty and integrity in our dealings with others
- show respect for the standards, traditions and the regulations of the centre.

There is a range of behaviour which is not acceptable under any circumstances which will result in disciplinary action being taken which may lead to dismissal:

- Possession of, or being under the influence of, alcohol or illegal drugs
- Consumption of alcohol on unlicensed centre premises or under the legal age
- Violent or aggressive behaviour towards other people
- Bullying, defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour to other students repeated over a period of time.
  - This includes:
    - physically hurtful behaviour (e.g. hitting, kicking, theft)
    - verbally hurtful behaviour (e.g. name calling, racist remarks)
    - indirectly hurtful behaviour (e.g. spreading rumours, encouraging exclusion of someone from particular social groups)
    - using electronic devices and media to abuse others (e.g. text, e-mail Facebook, etc.).
    - Malicious damage to the buildings, property of the centre, or its staff, students and visitors
    - Personally offensive behaviour of any kind
    - Ignoring the reasonable instructions of a member of centre staff
    - Use of foul or abusive language in any circumstances
    - Depositing litter or waste materials anywhere other than in proper facilities
    - Theft of property belonging to others
    - Possession of offensive weapons
    - Dangerous or irresponsible driving of a vehicle on centre premises
    - Downloading or distribution of offensive materials by any means, including email and the internet

- Spitting in any location, and smoking outside of the designated areas
- Writing of graffiti, or posting of any other material on centre property, except where authorised on centre notice boards
- Blatant disregard for the safety of others
- Attempting to gain unfair advantage in assessments related to qualifications being undertaken through the centre
- Cruelty or disregard for the welfare and care of animals

### **EmpowerEd Code of Conduct: Core Principles**

- The most central principle is that the welfare of the child is of paramount importance. The well-being of the child is the primary aim following any action or decision.
- Incidents of any significance can happen anywhere at any time and staff should always be alert.
- All staff have the responsibility to identify children who may be in need of extra help or who are suffering, or have the possibility of suffering significant harm. All staff have the responsibility to take appropriate action following any concerns.
- Students should be aware that the adults in work are there to turn to should they be worried.
- Staff members should ensure they record any incident in the book at all stages. This should be clear, providing as much information as possible including the date and time.
- Confidentiality of a student should not be promised to a child. Confidentiality is qualified and not absolute – do not hold information that should be shared and do not share information that should be withheld.
- Any issues should be dealt with promptly and reported at first instance. Do not investigate. Do not question the child beyond establishing that there is a cause to refer the case to an external agency.

### **Code of Conduct - Safer Practise**

Safer practice is essential for all staff and tutors working with children/young people. Safer practice affects all aspects of working with children/young people and is everyone's responsibility.

Embracing safer practise can prevent unsuitable people from working with children and will also provide a framework process to investigate complaints against staff and tutors appropriately. Safer practice should be exercised to minimise the risk to young people

and to protect our staff and tutors when they come into contact with children/young people

- The clear guidelines on safer working practice as outlined throughout this policy will be adhered to by all staff & tutors (including agency & temporary staff)
- Staff/tutors will be made aware of the company's Acceptable Behaviour policy
- All staff/tutors will be made aware of the professional risks associated with the use of social media and electronic communications, (such as email, mobile phones, texting, social networking) and Social Media.

As part of our approach to safeguarding, EmpowerEd has created and embedded a culture of openness, trust and transparency in which our values and expected behaviour as set out in our /code of conduct are constantly lived, monitored and reinforced by all staff (including tutors, volunteers) and where all concerns are dealt with promptly and appropriately.

- All staff and volunteers should feel able to raise any concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the company's safeguarding regime. The leadership team will take all concerns or allegations received seriously.
- The following behaviour code aims to help us protect children and young people from abuse and reduce the possibility of unfounded allegations being made.
- EmpowerEd is responsible for making sure everyone taking part in our services has seen, understood and agreed to follow the code of conduct, and that they understand the consequences of inappropriate behaviour.
- All staff /tutors (incl temporary agency or temporary staff) are expected to adhere to a code of conduct in respect of their contact with learners and their families. Children will be treated with respect and dignity.
- Whilst it would be unrealistic and undesirable to preclude all physical contact between adults and children, staff/tutors are expected to exercise caution and avoid placing themselves in a position where their actions might be open to criticism or misinterpretation.
- Where incidents occur, which might otherwise be misconstrued, or in the exceptional circumstances where it becomes necessary to physically restrain a pupil for their own protection or others' safety, this will be appropriately recorded and reported to the DSL and parents.
- Staff/tutors should exercise caution in situations where they are alone with learners, for their own safety and protection. The door to the room in which the 1:1 tuition is

taking place should be left open. Where this is not practicable because of the need for confidentiality, another adult will be asked to maintain a presence nearby and a record will be kept of the circumstances of the meeting. Please note this is only relevant to home tuition sessions, and any tuition sessions in the centre, will always be required to have a minimum of 2 staff members present, even if the nature of the session is a 1:1.

- Staff/tutors should also be alert to the possible risks that might arise from social contact with pupils outside of the school.
- Home visits or private tuition of children and young people should only take place with the knowledge and approval of EmpowerEd.
- Staff/tutors will only use EmpowerEd's digital technology resources and systems for professional purposes or for uses deemed 'reasonable' by the management team. Staff will only use the approved company email, or other company approved communication systems with parents/carers [only a company email or a company telephone number]
- Staff/tutors should be aware of the organisation's whistle-blowing and safeguarding procedures and share immediately any disclosure or concern that relates to a member of staff with the DSL/DDSL's.

In order to protect children, young people, staff and tutors, we encourage staff and tutors to conduct themselves professionally at all times. This covers appropriate dress, the understanding and adherence to relevant boundaries, social contact outside setting (including on social networking sites), the receiving and giving of gifts and favouritism and the safe use of technology. You should seek to keep your personal contact with children under review and seek to minimise the risk of any situation arising in which misunderstandings can occur.

### **Code of Conduct - Tutor/Student relationship**

#### **The following sensible precautions and advice must be closely adhered with when working with children and young people:**

- **Never** arrange to meet the student outside of the formal tutoring arrangements.
- **Never** use social networking sites – or similar technological platforms – to communicate with students. Never disclose any personal details in this regard.
- Do not give or accept gifts from, children and young people – this could be considered as a bribe or inducement to enter into a relationship, and could give rise to allegations of improper conduct

- Under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 it is a criminal offence for anyone working in an education setting to have a sexual relationship with a pupil even when the pupil is over the age of consent.
- **Never** ask a child or young person personal questions about their background
- Remain open to any questions or concerns a student may have about attitudes and behaviours they may not feel comfortable with.
- Act as a positive role model for every child and young person you work with.
  - Remember that others may misinterpret your actions, no matter how well intentioned.
  - Refrain from any physical contact with students, and ensure that inappropriate subjects are not discussed, or inappropriate banter exchanged.
- **Never** promise to keep any disclosure secret – you have a duty to report disclosures or any concerns you may have to the DSL.
- **Never** arrange to meet students outside of tuition sessions or to give them lifts to and from tuition in your car.
- **Never** communicate with students outside of tuition sessions, through any means. The only communication should be through a certified EmpowerEd communications channel, that has been approved by the DSL and the parents/carers and students [for example, an EmpowerEd email address may be used to share homework with the student].
- Refrain from giving out your personal numbers or private email addresses, or any other contact information to children and young people.
- **Never** arrange to meet the student outside of the formal tutoring arrangements.
- Be vigilant about your own presence on technological platforms and social networking sites, best practise is to ensure your full government name is not in use, and any accounts are set to **private**.
- DO NOT believe it could not happen to you; it could.

### **Sexual Contact**

Staff should clearly understand the need to maintain appropriate boundaries in their contacts with children and young people. Any sexual activity between an adult and the child or young person with whom they work will be regarded as a serious criminal

offence and reported accordingly. Additionally, this will always be a matter for disciplinary action.

Children and young people are protected by specific legal provisions regardless of whether the child or young person consents or not. The sexual activity referred to does not just involve physical contact. It may include non-physical acts such as causing children to engage in or watch sexual activity or the production of pornographic material.

There are occasions when a person may embark on a course of behaviour known as 'grooming' where the sole purpose is to gain the trust of a child or adult at risk, and manipulate that relationship so sexual abuse can take place. Adults should be aware that consistently conferring inappropriate special attention and favour upon a child might be construed as being part of a 'grooming' process and as such will give rise to concerns about their behaviour.

Relationships should be professional, healthy and respectful at all times. Your language, demeanour attitudes and conduct all require careful thought when dealing with adolescents.

### **Behaviour**

All children and young people have a right to be treated with respect and dignity even in those circumstances where they display difficult or challenging behaviour.

- Staff should not use any form of degrading treatment to punish a child or adult at risk. The use of sarcasm, demeaning or insensitive comments towards children and young people is not acceptable in any situation. Any sanctions or rewards used should be part of a behaviour management policy which is widely publicised and regularly reviewed.
- The use of corporal punishment for children and young people is not acceptable
- Where a child may display difficult or challenging behaviour, a person must follow the behaviour policy outlined by their place of work, and use strategies appropriate to the circumstance and situation. The use of physical intervention can only be justified in exceptional circumstances and must be used as a last resort when other behaviour management strategies have failed and there is a risk of harm to the individual and/or others.

### **Use of force:**

We acknowledge that tutors must only ever use physical intervention as a last resort, when a child is endangering him/herself or others and that at all times, it must be the minimal force necessary to prevent injury to another.

- If it is necessary to use physical action to prevent a child from injury to themselves or others, you should immediately inform the DSL. The DSL will share this information with the relevant local authority Children's Services department and/or the parents/carers of

the child or young person.

- Any concerns or allegations that a member of staff or tutor may have acted inappropriately should be immediately referred to the DSL.
- We understand that physical intervention of a nature which causes injury or distress to a child may be considered under child protection or disciplinary procedures.
- Please always alert staff members if a situation is escalating, EmpowerEd has staff members trained specifically in de-escalation and positive handling who can offer assistance.

### **Challenging behaviour:**

At EmpowerEd we use the following guidelines to deal constructively and effectively with negative behaviour.

- Tutors are made distinctly aware of what unacceptable behaviour is by managers and senior members of EmpowerEd Staff.
- Explain to children why certain behaviour is unacceptable. This makes children feel responsible for their behaviour and thus less likely to repeat it.
- Always make sure it is the behaviour that is punished and not the person. Always avoid labelling someone as 'bad'.
- If appropriate ignore bad behaviour for a while – a child may only be attention seeking. Give extra attention and praise for positive behaviour to discourage 'negative' behaviour.
- Seek further guidance from our Behaviour Policy and your line manager.

### **2.6 Physical contact**

There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate and proper for staff to have physical contact with children, but it is crucial that they only do so in ways appropriate to their professional role. The general culture of 'limited touch' should be adapted and staff should use their professional judgement at all times.

Physical contact should take place only when it is necessary in relation to a particular situation.

For example, some of these situations may be, during certain activities such as drama and sports, when a child is in distress, to support personal care, for restraint and physical intervention, medical and first aid needs,

This means that staff should not:

- Use physical force as a means of punishment and discipline. The use of unwarranted physical force is likely to constitute a criminal offence.



## **2.7 Tutor Setting and Environment**

- This advice relates to tuition sessions that may happen outside of EmpowerEd Tuition Centre.

Always ensure that another adult is present before entering a tuition setting. This could be a teacher, carer, parent or other adult who has responsibility for the welfare of the child. If no other adult is present, you should not enter the premises; explain to the child / young person that you cannot come in until such a person is present. Call your line manager to inform them of the situation immediately.

- Ensure that you work in a suitable environment, with the door ajar and in earshot of other adults. If you have a concern that the environment is not suitable, you should report this immediately to your line manager. If you have a concern that the environment poses a potential risk of harm to a child / young person, or to you, you should immediately inform the DSL.

- The tuition area represents a professional working space and therefore should have a table, chair, adequate lighting, and equipment. Distractions such as mobile phones, TV/radio should be switched off.

- Always dress appropriately for tuition, considering the setting you are working in and with respect to the religious and cultural backgrounds of the people you may come into contact with during tuition. If using the internet or other technology for the purposes of tuition, always seek the permission of the parent or carer and ensure that all material is age appropriate for children and young people and relevant to the purpose of tuition.

This code applies to all situations where a member of the EmpowerEd community is involved in activities relating to their work or study, including representing EmpowerEd away from the main site on work placements or visits and travelling to and from EmpowerEd. All EmpowerEd staff are particularly required to challenge unacceptable behaviour wherever it is taking place and appropriate training will be available. The consequences of not doing so are that the services that we offer will not be valued.

To generate expectations of high standards of behaviour from within the EmpowerEd community, we must apply and be seen to be applying them ourselves.