



## **Stage West Safeguarding Code of Conduct for adults working with children**

### Purpose

This behaviour code outlines the conduct Stage West expects from all our staff and volunteers. This includes teaching staff, interns, students on work placement and anyone who is undertaking duties for the organisation, whether paid or unpaid. This behaviour code aims to keep children in our care safe, to help us protect children and young people from abuse and government guidelines on keeping children safe in out of school activities. It has been informed by the views of children and young people. Stage West is responsible for making sure everyone taking part in our services has seen, understood and agreed to follow our code of behaviour, and that they understand the consequences of inappropriate behaviour.

### The role of staff and volunteers

In your role at Stage West you are acting in a position of authority and have a duty of care towards the children and young people we work with. You are likely to be seen as a role model and are expected to act appropriately.

A vital part of Stage West's Child Safeguarding arrangements is that the school is run by a Principal/ Principals whose role is to supervise rather than teach. Whilst the tuition is delivered by specialist teachers the Principal is free to visit and observe all of the classes at the school. This means that safeguarding situations are more likely to be seen and dealt with earlier and more effectively, as the Principal acts with a professional curiosity towards possible safeguarding matters, such as child to child abuse, teacher conduct, absences etc..

Stage West requires all of its Principals, teachers and assistants to apply for enhanced clearance via the DBS - Disclosure and Barring Service (formerly CRB) and its structure is often used as an example of Best Practice when Child Safeguarding issues are discussed. We will cover the cost of your initial DBS but then will require the teachers and assistants to sign up for the update service.

### **Code of Conduct and Behaviour**

## Responsibility

You are responsible for:

- prioritising the welfare of children and young people providing a safe environment for children and young people
- having good awareness of issues to do with safeguarding and child protection and taking action when appropriate.
- following our principles, policies and procedures, including for child protection/safeguarding, whistleblowing and online safety
- staying within the law at all times
- modelling good behaviour for children and young people to follow
- challenging all unacceptable behaviour and reporting any concerns about breaches of the behaviour code including behaviour being displayed by an adult or child and directed at anybody of any age.
- value and take children's contributions seriously, actively involving them in curating activities wherever possible
- respect a young person's right to personal privacy as far as possible. If you need to break confidentiality in order to follow child protection procedures, it is important to explain this to the child or young person at the earliest opportunity.

You must:

- treat children and young people fairly and without prejudice or discrimination
- understand that children and young people are individuals with individual needs and respect differences in gender, sexual orientation, culture, race, ethnicity, disability and religious belief systems, and appreciate that all participants bring something valuable and different to class
- challenge discrimination and prejudice
- encourage young people and adults to speak out about attitudes or behaviour that makes them uncomfortable.
- try not to be alone with a student. Ask another student to stay or if working one-to-one do it in an open space, with the doors open or in a corridor.

You should:

- promote relationships that are based on openness, honesty, trust and respect
- listen to and respect children, avoid favouritism and respect diversity
- be patient with others
- keep an eye on your personal property eg. if you leave your phone or laptop open make sure there isn't anything inappropriate

## Inappropriate Behaviour

When working with children and young people, you must not:

- allow concerns or allegations to go unreported
- take unnecessary risks
- smoke, consume alcohol or use illegal substances

- develop inappropriate relationships with children and young people
- make inappropriate promises to children and young people
- engage in behaviour that is in any way abusive, including having any form of sexual contact with a child or young person
- let children and young people have your personal contact details (mobile number, email or postal address) or have contact with them via a personal social media account
- act in a way that can be perceived as threatening or intrusive
- patronise or belittle children and young people
- single out a student or humiliate them in front of others
- make sarcastic, insensitive, derogatory or sexually suggestive comments or gestures to or in front of children and young people.

#### Upholding this code of behaviour

You should always follow this code of behaviour and never rely on your reputation or that of our company to protect you. If an allegation is made involving you, you will be suspended without pay pending an investigation. Depending on the seriousness of the situation, you may be asked to leave Stage West. We may also make a report to statutory agencies such as the police and/ or the local authority child protection services. If you become aware of any breaches of this code made by other members of staff, you must report them too.

### **Procedures for dealing with safeguarding incidents**

#### Identifying concerns and disclosures

Children and young people may disclose abuse in a variety of ways, including:

- directly– making specific verbal statements about what’s happened to them
- indirectly – making ambiguous verbal statements which suggest something is wrong
- behaviourally – displaying behaviour that signals something is wrong (this may or may not be deliberate)
- non-verbally – writing letters, drawing pictures or trying to communicate in other ways.

#### [The 4 areas of abuse are : Physical, emotional, sexual, and neglect](#)

#### Responding to disclosures

Respond to safeguarding concerns or disclosures using the 4 R’s.

##### **1. Recognise -**

- be aware of changes in behaviour, patterns, body language, moods, general behaviour that isn’t typical

- children with SEN, additional needs or limited mobility/ communication may need non-verbal help.

## **2. Respond-**

- show you care, help them open up: Give your full attention to the child or young person and keep your body language open and encouraging. Be compassionate, be understanding and reassure them their feelings are important. Phrases such as 'you've shown a lot of courage today' help.
- always remain calm: and reassure the child they have done the right thing, never show shock, anger, or outrage at the child. It may make them more anxious, and feel that you think badly of them
- take your time, slow down: Respect pauses and don't interrupt the child – let them go at their own pace. Recognise and respond to their body language. And remember that it may take several conversations for them to share what's happened to them.
- show you understand, reflect back: Make it clear you're interested in what the child is telling you. Reflect back what they've said to check your understanding – and use their language to show it's their experience.
- don't make assumptions or speak for them: No leading questions, open questions only. If a child confides in you, ask basic questions to clarify what the child is confiding. Avoid 'why?' As this could imply guilt on the child, and avoid 'was it X who did this?' As it is a leading question
- don't make promises that you won't share the information: Sharing information is vital and if you suspect there is a safeguarding issue, act immediately, report the concerns to your DSL. Explain to the young person the safe guarding procedure and that you need to report it even if they don't want you to.

## **3. Report –**

- If they are in need of urgent medical care or are in immediate danger call the Emergency Services
- Any other concerns report to the Designated Safe Guarding Lead immediately and follow up with a report in writing within 24 hours of the incident

## **4. Record -**

- Keep detailed notes, writing down exactly what the child said using their exact words
- Record how you asked the child for consent to share information in order to keep them safe, whether they understood and their response. If they did not give consent explain how the conversation went including how you explained that you still have to share the information regardless of their wishes.

## **Nominated child protection lead**

Name: Hollie Taylor

Phone/email: 07886963633, info@stagewest.co.uk

## **Deputy child protection lead(s)**

Name(s): Laura Bradley

Phone/email: 07834 731132, info@stagewest.co.uk

Please note; it is not your responsibility to investigate concerns, just report them. However, if you have concerns relating to Stage West and cannot go to the Safe guarding leads please see the Whistleblowing procedure below and the Local Authority Child Protection Services.

### **Whistleblowing**

Whistleblowing is when someone reports wrongdoing on the basis that it is in the public interest for the wrongdoing to be brought to light. This is usually something they've seen at work but not always. The wrongdoing might have happened in the past, be happening now, or be something the whistleblower is concerned may happen in the near future.

Our Whistleblowing Advice Line offers free advice and support to professionals with concerns about how child protection issues are being handled in their own or another organisation.

Contact the Whistleblowing Advice Line on:

- 0800 028 0285
- [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)

The local authority designated officer is...

[Hounslow Safeguarding Children Partnership](#)

Children and Families,

7 Bath Road,

Hounslow,

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