

Policy Number: 527

Colleague Code of Conduct

Purpose, Scope and Principles

A Code of Conduct is designed to give clear guidance on the standards of behaviour all Colleagues (i.e. employees) are expected to observe. The organisation notifies Colleagues of this code and the expectations therein at induction, and during ad-hoc briefings from time to time.

This Code of Conduct applies to all Colleagues.

As a Colleague, no matter in which part of the organisation you work, you make a valuable contribution to the delivery of high quality care and support. Following the guidance set out in this document will give you the reassurance that you are striving toward providing safe and compassionate care to a high standard and have the confidence to challenge others who are not. It is important to recognise professional boundaries and by following this code of conduct you help protect yourself as an employee in terms of safeguarding and health and safety.

Phoenix employees are role models and are in a unique position of influence and must adhere to behaviour that sets a good example to all the individuals we support. As a Colleague of our organisation, we have an individual responsibility to maintain our personal reputation and the reputation of our services, whether inside, or outside our working hours. We are all learners and should benefit from our peers knowledge and experiences. Colleagues should be able to work without distraction or interference from, for example, horseplay or tomfoolery.

Colleagues should be aware that a failure to comply with the following Code of Conduct could result in disciplinary action including dismissal. Colleagues should also be cognisant that common sense should be applied when reading this policy and that whilst this document is updated periodically not every eventuality can be readily identified and duly listed.

Note: "individuals we support" is an encompassing term to include; 'Service Users' (Adults services), 'Learners' (College), 'Students' (Schools) and 'Young People' (Children's residential services)

As an employee you must:

- Be accountable by making sure you can answer for your actions or omissions
- Promote and uphold the privacy, dignity, rights, safeguarding and wellbeing of individuals who use our services
- Work in collaboration with your Colleagues to ensure the delivery of high quality, safe, compassionate care and support
- Communicate in an open and effective way to promote the health, safety and wellbeing of individuals we support.
- Respect an individual's and your right to confidentiality
- Strive to improve the quality of healthcare, care and support through continuing professional development
- Uphold and promote quality, diversity and inclusion

The following sections explore this in more detail.

Accountability

We expect you to be honest with yourself and others about what you can do, recognise your abilities and the limitations of your competence and only carry out, or delegate, those tasks agreed in your job description and for which you are competent to do so.

In particular;

- Always behave and present yourself in a way that does not call into question your suitability to work in a care, education or support environment, this includes your conduct outside of the workplace. In particular, criminal offences that involve violence or possession, or use, of illegal drugs or sexual misconduct; are likely to be regarded as unacceptable to your ongoing employment
- Be able to justify and be accountable for your actions or your omissions
- Always ask your Manager, or other suitable person, for guidance if you do not feel able, or adequately prepared, to carry out any aspect of your work or if you are unsure how to effectively deliver or complete a task
- Tell your manager about any issues that might affect your ability to do your job competently and safely. If you do not feel competent to carry out an activity you must report this
- Establish and maintain clear and appropriate professional boundaries in your relationships with people who use our health and care services. This also applies to fellow professionals (e.g. social workers, clinicians) and your Colleagues at work
- Never accept offers of loans, gifts, benefits or hospitality from anyone you are supporting or anyone close to them which may be seen to compromise your position, this includes gifts from suppliers of the organisation, with the exception of

“one off” token gifts from individuals we support (or for example their parents). Personal gifts from individual employees to individuals we support are potentially inappropriate and could be misinterpreted. If in doubt ask your line manager but always ensure you report to them any gift no matter how small given to you, or indeed that you give, for your protection.

- You must comply with the Bribery Act 2010. A person may be guilty of an offence of bribery under this act if they offer, promise or give financial advantage or other advantage to someone; or if they request, agree or accept, or receive a bribe from another person. If you believe that a person has failed to comply with the Bribery Act, you should refer to the Whistleblowing procedure
- Comply with Phoenix Learning & Care’s ways of working including our policies and procedures, always refer to them if you are unsure what do to.
- Maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in your work. This includes the handling and claiming of money and the use of Company property and facilities including vehicles.
- Understand the support we provide and honour that commitment (e.g. 1:1 or 2:1 support then ensure that your reasonable attention is focused on providing that)
- Report any omissions that either you, or your Colleagues may have done that you feel may compromise the safety or care of people who use our services and if necessary use the Whistleblowing procedures to report any suspected wrong doing
- You may undertake work outside your employment with Phoenix Learning and Care either paid or voluntary, provided that it does not conflict with the interests of the organisation nor be to a level which may contravene the working time regulations or affect your individual work performance. Always inform your Line Manager.
- Apply *Physical Intervention* only as a last resort and in compliance with agreed (e.g. NAPPI or Team Teach) procedures that you have been trained to use. This should always be reported to and recorded by your line Manager.
- Play-fighting with individuals we support is not permitted

Promote and uphold the privacy, dignity, rights and wellbeing of Individuals who use our services

You are expected to respect the right of any individual we support to be just that; an individual. Our role is to ensure their rights are voiced and upheld and that the Individuals are safe and healthy.

In particular;

- Always act in the best interest of individuals who use our services
- Always treat people with respect and compassion
- Put the needs, goals and aspirations of individuals who use our services first, helping them to be in control and to choose the care and support they receive
- Promote individuals we support independence, assisting those who use our services to exercise their rights and make informed choices
- Always maintain the privacy and dignity of the individuals who use our services
- Be alert to any changes that could affect an individuals needs or progress and report your observations in line with our policies and procedures
- Always make sure that your actions or omissions do not harm an individual's health or wellbeing. You must never abuse, neglect, harm or exploit those who use our services, their carers/families or your Colleagues
- Challenge and report dangerous, discriminatory or exploitative behaviour or practice
- Always take adverse comments and complaints seriously, respond to them in line with company procedure and inform your line manager

Work in collaboration with your Colleagues and Individuals we support in the delivery of high quality, safe and compassionate care

The only way to successfully achieve excellence in the standard of care and support we provide is to be able to work together as a team benefiting from the respective skills and abilities of all our Colleagues and the individuals we support.

In particular;

- Understand and value your contribution and the vital part you play in your team
- Involve the individuals we support in decisions about them
- Recognise and respect the roles and expertise of your Colleagues both in your team and from other parts of the Company, professional agencies and other stakeholders
- Work openly and co-operatively with Colleagues including those from other disciplines and agencies and treat them with respect
- Work openly and cooperatively with people who use our services and their families (where applicable) and treat them with respect

- Honour your work commitments, agreements and arrangements and be reliable, dependable and trustworthy
- Actively encourage the delivery of high quality care and support

Communicate in an open and effective way to promote the health, safety and wellbeing of the individuals we support who use our services

In addition to working together as a team it is important to communicate in a clear and timely manner both verbally and in the written word (e.g. completing forms, diaries) to ensure that tasks are understood and delivered correctly by your Colleagues. Accurate written communication and record keeping helps protect both you as an individual and the organisation in the verification of any care that we have delivered.

In particular;

- Communicate respectfully with people who use our services in an open, accurate, effective straightforward and confidential way
- Communicate effectively and consult with your Colleagues as appropriate including good communication on shift handovers between Colleagues.
- Maintain clear and accurate records of the care and support you provide. Immediately report to a line manager/team leader any changes or concerns you have about a person's condition
- Recognise the extent and the limits of your role, knowledge and competence when communicating with individuals we support who use our services and any other stakeholders
- Read and understand the Company's safeguarding protection policies and guidance documents on wider safeguarding issues, for example bullying, behaviour, physical contact and information sharing. The duty to safeguard individuals we support includes the duty to report concerns about an individual we support to your line manager or the Designated Senior Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for Child Protection
- When receiving a *disclosure* always take notes immediately whilst it is fresh in your mind. Record verbatim what was said to you. Do not interpret into your own words. It is often advisable to have a small notepad with you and pen
- Always write in black ink on any document you complete (e.g. diary/log book/MAR sheet) to facilitate copies being made if required
- Be a good listener

Respect people's right to confidentiality

None of us would like information about ourselves shared inappropriately or inaccurately either verbally or in written form. It is important to recognise the importance of confidentiality including who might overhear conversations in public places. It is also important to note that Colleagues have an obligation to share with their manager or the Company's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) any information which gives rise to concern about the safety or welfare of an individual we support.

In particular;

- Treat all information about individuals we support who use health and care services and their support workers as confidential
- Only discuss or disclose information about individuals we support and their Support workers in accordance with legislation and agreed ways of working (i.e. to those that have a professional and relevant interest in respect to the individual concerned)
- Always seek guidance from a senior Colleague regarding any information or issues that you are concerned about; at some point you are likely to witness actions that need to be confidential. This needs to be dealt with in accordance with the appropriate Company procedure
- Always discuss issues of disclosure with the Headteacher/Principal, Registered Manager or the Company's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- Always exercise caution when using information technology/social media and be aware of the risks to yourself and others. Never discuss work related issues on your personal social media account. Do not engage in inappropriate use of social network sites which may bring you, or the organisation into disrepute.
- Colleagues must **never** promise an individual we support that they will not act on information that they are told by the individual we support.

It is also important to respect that your private life should not impinge on your work activity and particular attention is drawn to the following that Colleagues must never;

- under any circumstance take an individual we support to your home
- bring your own families or friends into your place of work
- transport individuals we support in our care together with your own families/ friends
- take individuals we support on any activity with your own families or friends

Strive to improve the quality of care and support through Continuing Professional Development

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is important. The Company encourages and strives for individual employees to develop their careers with Phoenix and to become as knowledgeable and competent as the individual employee's aspirations and capabilities allow and the position requires.

In particular;

- Ensure up-to-date compliance with all statutory and mandatory training, in agreement with your Line Manager
- Participate in Continuing Professional Development to achieve the competence required for your role
- Carry out competency based training/education in line with your agreed ways of working
- Improve the quality & safety of the care you provide with the help of your Line Manager
- Maintain an up-to-date record of your training and development
- Contribute to learning and development of others as appropriate

Uphold and promote Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

The world we live in is increasingly more diverse and complex. Individuals have choice in many aspects of their lives and we should not differentiate between people where it is not appropriate.

In particular;

- Respect the individuality and diversity of the individuals we support, their Stakeholders (e.g. parents, social workers) and your Colleagues. You must not seriously demean or undermine individuals we support, their parents, carers, or your Colleagues.
- Do not discriminate or condone discrimination against individuals who use our services, their stakeholders or your Colleagues
- Do promote equal opportunities and inclusion for the individuals who use our services including their stakeholders your Colleagues.
- Report any concerns regarding equality, diversity and inclusion to your line manager or other senior manager as soon as possible
- Encourage positive, respectful and safe behaviour amongst your Colleagues and the individuals we support

- Maintain appropriate standards of conversation and interaction with and between individuals we support and/or your Colleagues and avoiding the use of sexualised or derogatory language (including swearing, racism and belittling or ridiculing language)

“U” Universal IT Network Drive

All Company policies are listed on the “U” (Universal”) shared drive for every employee to view. Some of these maybe printed in your particular service- always check the latest policy which will be on the shared drive.

There is a list of Group Policies which apply across all our services and numbered in the 500 series. There are also sector specific policies listed on the IT Drive applicable to each operational element of the business (i.e. Children’s residential, College, Schools and Adults services)

Please also note a Group Organisation chart is also viewable on the “U” shared IT drive. This helps identify the management structure including the Companies Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and members of the Board, Executive and School Governance Committees.