

Policy Number: 527

Colleague Code of Conduct

Purpose

Our ethos and culture as an organisation is embedded within the company's HEART values of *Honesty, Empathy, Aspiration, Respect* and *Teamwork*. Our company reputation for the delivery of excellent person-centred care is built upon these core values and the behaviours that derive from them that in turn enable our employees and those we care for to nurture and grow in order to flourish either in their careers or as positive contributors to society.

The Code of Conduct is designed to give;

- Consistency by colleagues setting the right example/s in their actions
- Guidance as to how colleagues should behave
- Clarity on what is expected

Scope

This policy applies to all Phoenix employees, workers (e.g. bank) and volunteers who go to make up the colleagues we work with.

The policy outlines the behaviours and conduct that are expected. Colleagues are briefed on this code and the expectations therein during their induction, through specific (i.e. Professional Boundaries/Equality & Diversity) training and during ad-hoc supervisions and briefings from time to time.

The Code of Conduct applies;

- Wherever you represent Phoenix. This includes within our services, during internal and externally delivered training, meetings, trips, visits and such like
- Whenever you are at work (irrespective of the day or time of day)
- Whatever you do (e.g. teaching, shopping, cooking, meeting colleagues or external professionals, recreational activities, travelling)

Standard Form SF16 enables you to countersign that you have read and understood the Code of Conduct and how it applies to your role in the Company.

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)

Principles and Context

No matter in which part of the Phoenix organisation you work, you make a valuable contribution to the delivery of high quality person centred care, education or support. Following the guidance set out in this document will give you the assurance that you are striving toward providing safe and compassionate care, teaching or support to a high standard and have the confidence to challenge other people who are not. It is important to recognise professional boundaries and by following this code of conduct you help protect yourself in terms of your safeguarding responsibilities and help ensure the health and safety of yourself and others.

All of us in the company are role models and are in a unique position of influence and must adhere to a standard of behaviour that sets a good example to all the vulnerable individuals we support. We all have an individual responsibility to maintain our personal reputation and the reputation of our services both during and outside our working hours. Collectively we should learn from each other's knowledge and experience to improve our personal competence.

Colleagues should be aware that failure to comply with both the content and spirit of the Code of Conduct will be subject to disciplinary investigation which may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. Please note that if a colleague is dismissed (or resigns when the outcome could have been dismissal) we are obliged under law to make a DBS referral. This could affect your ability to gain another job in the sector.

Phoenix strives for you to have an enjoyable and rewarding career with us. Many of the themes discussed in this policy are common sense but some topics may alert you to areas you can reflect upon and improve. The company provides a portfolio of training courses to help you develop and refine your practice. Please take advantage of these courses. You should be mindful that pragmatism should be used when applying this policy and that whilst this document is updated periodically not every eventuality can be identified and listed

In summary 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 vulnerable individuals who are in receipt of the services that we provide
- Work in collaboration with your colleagues to ensure the delivery of high quality, safe, compassionate care, teaching or support
- Act in an open and effective way to promote the health, safety and wellbeing of the individuals we support
- Respect both an individual's and your right to confidentiality
- Uphold and promote equality, diversity and inclusion
- Strive to improve competence & knowledge via continuing professional development

“U” Universal IT Network Drive

All company policies are listed on the “U” (“Universal”) shared network drive available to every colleague to view. Some of these policies may also be printed in your particular service. Always check the latest policy which will be on the shared drive, the policy indexes provide detail of when the policy was last updated and its version number.

There are Group Policies which apply across all our services and numbered in the 500 series. There are also sector specific policies listed on the U drive applicable to each operational element of the business (i.e. Children’s Residential, College, School/s and Adult/s Services).

Please also note the Group Organisation Chart is also accessible on the “U” network drive. This helps you identify the management structure including the companies Designated Safeguarding Lead/s and members of the company Board, Executive Management (EMT) and School Governance Committees.

Policies

Many policies contain further detail on conduct standards including for example the appropriate use of Information Technology, Mobile Phones, Photography, and Public Relations. The key policies are listed below and you should familiarise yourself with these.

- GRP 505 Absence – Planned & Unplanned
- GRP 506 Equality & Diversity
- GRP 508 Employee Substance Mis-use
- GRP 512 Public Relations
- GRP 517 Anti-Bribery and Conflict of Interest
- GRP 528 Data Protection
- GRP 530 Company Phone Usage
- GRP 532 Whistleblowing & Making Protected Disclosures
- GRP 333 Company Vehicles (Including driving at Work)
- GRP 536 Social Media
- GRP 537 Discipline and Grievance
- GRP 540 Gifts; Giving and Receiving
- GRP 545 Records, Record Keeping & Passing on Information
- GRP 549 Smoking
- GRP 551 Clothing (Employee)
- GRP 553 Mobile Phones including Photography and Video
- GRP 555 Internet Use and E-safety
- GRP 557 Bring Your Own Device (Information Technology)

The following sections detail the code standards in more detail. If you have any questions or are unsure please ask.

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 health environment. This includes your conduct outside of the workplace notably, but not limited to, inappropriate use of social media, being involved in and/or found guilty of a criminal offence, use of illegal drugs or sexual misconduct. These are likely to be regarded as unacceptable to your ongoing employment with us. Note; you **MUST** declare any criminal conviction you may receive to the Company whilst in our employment
- Be able to justify and be accountable for your actions or your omissions
- Always ask your Manager, or other suitable person (e.g. Designated Safeguarding Lead or a training professional) for guidance if you do not feel adequately prepared, able or are unsure of the requirement to undertake a task
- Tell your manager about any issues (personal or professional) that might affect your ability to do your job competently and safely.
- Establish and maintain clear and appropriate professional boundaries in your relationships with vulnerable individuals who use our services, fellow professionals (e.g. social workers) 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 materials or services to the Company. "One off" small token gifts from individuals we support (or their parents) may be acceptable. 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 your manager any gift no matter how small given to you for your own protection either now or in the future. Under **NO** circumstances are you to give a gift to anyone we support.
- 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 policy
- Comply with the company's ways of working including our policies and procedures, always refer to them if you are unsure what to do and question if you do not understand
- Maintain high standards of honesty and integrity in your work. This includes the handling and claiming of money, use of company property, facilities or vehicles

- Understand the service we provide to individuals and honour that commitment (e.g. the content of care and/or education plans, 1:1 or 2:1 resourcing ratios) and ensure that your reasonable attention is focused on providing that support
- Report any omissions immediately 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 policy to report any suspected wrong doing.
- You may undertake work outside your employment with Phoenix either paid or voluntary provided that it does not conflict with the interests of the organisation or be to such a level which may contravene the working time regulations or affect your individual work performance. Always seek the permission of the company.
- Apply *Physical Intervention* only as a last resort and in compliance with agreed (e.g. NAPPI, STAIR) procedures that you have been trained to use. This should always be reported to and recorded by your line manager
- Play-fighting, horseplay or tomfoolery with vulnerable individuals we support is not permitted
- Colleagues should be able to work without undue distraction/interference in their work

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

You are expected to respect the rights of any individual we support. Our role is to ensure their rights are respected, voiced and upheld so that individuals can lead safe, healthy and fulfilling lives.

In particular;

- Always act in the best interest of vulnerable individuals who use our services
- Always treat people with respect and compassion
- Put the needs, goals and aspirations of vulnerable individuals who use our services first, helping them to be in control and to choose the care and support they receive
- Promote independence, assisting those who use our services to exercise their rights and make informed choices
- Do not share your political, philosophical or religious beliefs, remember you are likely to influence an individual at a key time in their life
- Always maintain the privacy and dignity of the individuals who use our services
- Be alert to any changes that could affect a person's 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 potentially 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 competencies of all our team members and the individuals we support.

In particular;

- Understand and value your contribution and the vital part you play in your team
- Involve, where appropriate, 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 your colleagues including those from other disciplines and agencies and treat them with respect
- Work openly and cooperatively with those 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, either online or in paper form) to ensure that tasks and/or events are understood and delivered correctly by your colleagues. Accurate written communication and record keeping helps protect both you personally 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 someone's condition
- Recognise the extent and the limits of your role, knowledge and competence when communicating with people who use our services and any other stakeholders

- Read and understand the Company's safeguarding policies and guidance documents on wider safeguarding issues, for example bullying, 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 Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for Adult or 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 readily accessible 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 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 escalated confidentially. This needs to be dealt with in accordance with the appropriate Company procedure
- Always discuss issues of disclosure with the Headteacher, Principal, Registered Manager as applicable to your service type. Alternatively one of the the company's Designated Safeguarding Leads (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. Do not use your personal mobile to take photographs of vulnerable individuals we support
- **Never** promise a vulnerable individual we support that you will not act on information that they tell you

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

- under any circumstance take an individual we support to your home
- bring your own family members or friends into your place of work
- transport individuals we support in our care together with your own family/ friends
- take individuals we support on any activity with your own family or friends
- Use your own personal email address for work related activity or store work files on your personal computer

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 each employee to develop their careers with Phoenix and to become as knowledgeable and competent as your aspirations and capabilities allow.

In particular;

- Ensure up-to-date compliance with all statutory and mandatory training, in agreement with your line manager
- Participate in CPD to achieve the competence required for your role
- Carry out competency based training in line with the agreed ways of working
- Improve the quality of the work you do with the help of your Manager and mentors
- Maintain an up-to-date record of your training and development
- Contribute to the learning and development of others as appropriate
- Attend training opportunities, be on time, engage with the ethos of the subject under discussion, do not distract other learners or use your mobile phone during receipt of tuition

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 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 and 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, do not use sexualised or derogatory language (including swearing, racist or belittling language)

Use of Information Technology

The use of Information Technology in terms of hardware, software and data are an expected and essential part of our daily life at work. It is important you are aware of your professional responsibilities when using any form of technology (including telephones) at work.

- Only use the company's hardware, software (including; email/internet/social media/intranet/learning platform or database/s) and any related technologies for use deemed 'reasonable' by the company.
- Comply with the IT system security and do not disclose any access passwords provided or generated by you in accessing Company systems.
- Ensure that all electronic communications with vulnerable individuals we support are compatible with your professional role and duties.
- Do NOT give out your own personal details (e.g. personal mobile phone number, personal e-mail address) to the vulnerable individuals or their families that we support.
- Only use the approved, secure e-mail system(s) for transmitting sensitive personal data.
- Ensure that personal data related to employees or vulnerable individuals we support is kept secure and is used appropriately, whether within the Company premises or taken off the company premises and/or accessed remotely. Remote use of company data must be in-line with your job role. Personal or sensitive data taken off site must be encrypted.
- Do not install any hardware or software without permission of the IT team.
- Do not browse, download, upload or distribute any material that could be considered offensive, extremist, terrorist, illegal or discriminatory.
- Images taken of vulnerable individuals we support or Colleagues will only be taken, stored and used for professional purposes in-line with company policy and with written consent of the appropriate stakeholder (e.g. parent, carer, local authority or staff member). Images will not be distributed outside the company network without the permission of the respective stakeholder and the company.
- Support the company approach to online safety and not deliberately upload or add any images, video, sounds or text that could upset or offend people.
- Understand that all personal use of the internet and other related technologies can be monitored and logged for the purposes of identifying non-compliance to this acceptable usage document.
- Respect copyright and intellectual property rights.
- Ensure that any online activity, whilst at work will not bring your professional role into disrepute.
- Support and promote the company's e-Safety and data security policies and help those individuals we support to be safe and responsible in their use of ICT and related technologies.