

Brighter Futures

Employees & Volunteer Code of Conduct



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Scope

This Code applies to all staff, volunteers, trustees, and sessional workers. All must maintain the highest standards of conduct when working with children, young people, families, and adults at risk within our programmes and facilities.

Core Values

All individuals working with or representing Brighter Futures must:

- Treat everyone with respect, kindness, and dignity, valuing each individual and avoiding discrimination
- Respect and promote individuals' rights to make their own decisions, unless their welfare or the safety of others is at risk
- Promote the welfare and safety of all members of our community while encouraging learning, development, and participation
- Ensure that personal political or religious views are not imposed on those we support
- Promote social justice by encouraging respect for diversity and actively challenging discrimination
- Maintain clear boundaries between personal and professional relationships
- Develop and maintain the skills and competence required for their role
- Adhere to all Brighter Futures policies and procedures at all times
- Manage their time effectively and responsibly

Core Principles

All individuals must:

- Prioritise the safety, wellbeing, and rights of all service users
- Recognise that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility
- Promote an inclusive, respectful, and non-discriminatory environment
- Act with integrity and accountability in all interactions

Professional Boundaries

Staff and volunteers must:

- Maintain appropriate and professional relationships at all times
- Avoid being alone or out of sight with a child or vulnerable adult unless necessary and in line with organisational procedures
- Ensure activities take place in open and observable environments wherever possible
- Not give or receive personal gifts or show favouritism

Behaviour and Interaction

All individuals must:

- Treat participants with dignity, respect, and patience
- Use appropriate language and behaviour at all times
- Encourage participation, confidence, and empowerment
- Never engage in behaviour that could be seen as abusive, coercive, or exploitative

Physical Contact

Physical contact must:

- Be minimal, appropriate, and only used when necessary (e.g. for safety or first aid)
- Respect the individual's needs and consent
- Never be secretive or open to misinterpretation

Communications, Online and Digital Conduct

All individuals must:

- Communicate with children and young people only through approved organisational channels
- Not use personal social media accounts to contact service users
- Ensure photos, videos, or digital content are only taken or shared with appropriate consent and in line with data protection policies

- Not use disappearing-message functions for youth-work contact or deliberately delete work-related communications with young people.
- Keep one-to-one digital communication transparent, limited to a legitimate youth-work purpose and conducted through an approved Brighter Futures account or system.
- Not share personal contact details with young people unless specifically authorised for a defined operational reason and appropriate safeguards are in place.
- Maintain the same professional boundaries online as in face-to-face work.

Safeguarding Responsibilities and Reporting

All staff and volunteers must:

- Remain alert to signs of abuse, neglect, exploitation, or harm
- Report concerns immediately to a Designated Safeguarding Officer
- Accurately record concerns in line with procedures
- Escalate concerns if they are not taken seriously
- Report low-level concerns about another adult even where the behaviour appears minor or does not appear to meet the threshold of a formal allegation.
- Report without delay if they believe they themselves may have crossed or blurred a professional boundary.
- Not investigate concerns themselves or delay reporting because they are unsure whether a safeguarding threshold has been met.

Working in a Community Setting

Due to the open-access nature of Brighter Futures:

- Staff and volunteers must remain vigilant to risks involving non-registered attendees, visitors, or family members
- Safeguarding responsibilities extend to everyone on the premises
- Unsafe or inappropriate behaviour must be challenged and reported

Professional Conduct and Supportive Environment

All individuals are expected to contribute to a positive and supportive culture:

- Employees must not place undue emotional burden on volunteers (e.g. persistent negative comments or complaints)
- Concerns or grievances must be raised through appropriate internal processes
- Volunteers must be supported, valued, and treated with respect
- Communication must remain constructive, professional, and solution-focused
- Behaviour that undermines morale, confidence, or wellbeing is not acceptable

Breaches of the Code

Failure to comply with this Code of Conduct may result in:

- Disciplinary action (including dismissal where serious or gross misconduct is substantiated)
- Removal from role or volunteering duties
- Referral to relevant statutory agencies where appropriate