Positive Progress

Positive Progress Tuition Centre

(“Study Centre”)

**Code of Conduct for staff working with children and young people**

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(“the Instructor”)

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Amendments: N/A

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Signed:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Code of Conduct for staff working with children and young people**

1. **Overview**

The Instructor seeks to provide a safe and supportive environment, which ensures the well-being and very best outcomes for children and young people.

This document should clarify what is expected in terms of professional behaviour; it gives clear advice about what constitutes illegal behaviour and what might be considered misconduct. It also describes safe practice and which behaviours should be avoided.

**If a member of Staff does not follow this code of conduct this may lead to disciplinary procedures.**

In the event that a situation which is not covered by this document arises, staff should seek advice from the Instructor or Manager on duty.

1. **Core Principles**

* 1. The welfare of children and young people is paramount.

* 1. Staff are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions.

* 1. Staff should work, and be seen to work, in an open and transparent way.

* 1. Staff should discuss and/or take advice promptly from the Instructor or Manager on duty over any incident, which may give rise to concern.

* 1. Records should be made of any such incident and of decisions made/further actions agreed.

* 1. All staff should be familiar with child protection arrangements and understand their responsibilities to safeguard and protect children and young people.

* 1. Staff should be aware that breaches of the law and other professional guidelines could result in criminal or disciplinary action being taken against them.

**Safe working practices for the protection of children, young people and staff**

**1. Introduction**

This guidance has been produced to help all staff establish the safest possible learning and working environments. The aims are to safeguard young people and reduce the

risk of staff being falsely accused of improper or unprofessional conduct.

**This means that these guidelines** apply to **all** staff working with young people or attending the study centre.

**2. Duty of care**

All staff are accountable for the way in which they exercise authority; manage risk; use resources; and protect children and young people from discrimination and avoidable harm.

All staff, whether paid or voluntary, has a duty to keep children and young people safe and to protect them from physical and emotional harm.

The Manager has a duty of care towards staff which requires them to provide a safe working environment for staff and guidance about safe working practices.

**This means that staff should**:

* Understand their responsibilities, which are part of their employment and role, and be aware that sanctions will be applied if these provisions are breached.
* Always act, and be seen to act, in the child’s best interests.
* Avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions.
* Take responsibility for their own actions and behaviour.

**3. Power and positions of trust**

Staff working with children and young people are in positions of trust. A relationship between a member of staff and a student cannot be a relationship between equals. There is potential for exploitation and harm of vulnerable young people; staff have a responsibility to ensure that an unequal balance of power is not used for personal advantage or gratification.

Staff should always maintain appropriate professionalism, they should avoid behaviour which might be misinterpreted by others, and report and record any incident with this potential.

Where a person, aged 18 or over is in a position of trust with a child under 18, it is an offence for that person to engage in sexual activity with or in the presence of that child, or to cause or incite that child to engage in or watch sexual activity. Where a person aged 18 or over is in a position of trust, established with a person who has only recently ceased being a student, any attempt to engage in sexual activity with that person will be a cause for concern and will be treated as a breach of trust established in that prior relationship.

**This means that staff should not:**

* Use their position to gain access to information for their own advantage and/or a child or young person or family's detriment.
* Use their power to intimidate, threaten, coerce or undermine children and young people.
* Use their status and standing to form or promote a relationship with a student, which is of a sexual nature.
* Attempt to initiate a relationship with a former student.

**4. Confidentiality**

Members of staff may have access to confidential information about children and young people in order to undertake their everyday responsibilities. In some circumstances staff may be given additional highly sensitive or private information. They should never use confidential or personal information about a student or his family for their own, or others’ advantage. Information must never be used to intimidate, humiliate, or embarrass a child or young person.

Confidential information about children and young people should never be used casually in conversation and should only be used where appropriate

If a member of staff is in any doubt about whether to share information or keep it confidential, he or she should seek guidance from the Instructor or manager on duty. Any media or legal enquiries should be directed to the HR appointed person.

Staff need to be aware that although it is important to listen to and support children and young people, they **must not** promise confidentiality or request children and young people to do the same under any circumstances.

Additionally, concerns and allegations about adults should be treat as confidential and passed to the manager without delay.

**This means that staff:**

* Are expected to treat information they receive about children and young people in a discreet and confidential manner.
* Who are in any doubt about sharing information they hold, or which has been requested of them, should seek advice from a senior management member.
* Need to be cautious when passing information to others about children and young people.
* Need to know to familiarise themselves with the safeguarding Children and Young People Policy.

**5. Behaviour**

All staff have a responsibility to maintain public confidence in their ability to safeguard the welfare and best interests of children and young people. They should adopt high standards of personal conduct in order to maintain the confidence and respect of their peers, children and young people and the public in general.

**This mean staff should not:**

* Behave in a manner which would lead any reasonable person to question their suitability to work with children and young people.

▪ Drink alcohol with students.

* Make inappropriate remarks to children and young people (including via email, text, phone, letter, etc.).
* Discuss their own sexual relationships with or in the presence of children and young people.
* Discuss children and young people’s sexual relationships in inappropriate settings or contexts.
* Make (or encourage others to make) unprofessional personal comments in any form of communication (email, conversations or social networking comments)

**6. Dress and appearance**

Staff should consider the manner of dress and appearance appropriate to their role. Staff should ensure they are dressed decently, safely and appropriately for the tasks they undertake.

Staff will be provided with a Green/Black Positive Progress Polo and Sweatshirt and are responsible that it is kept clean and well presented and does not carry inappropriate smells.

Uniforms should only be worn inside the centre. If for any reason you have to travel to/from the centre in your uniform please be aware that you are identifiable as working for Positive Progress Tuition Centre and must not bring Positive Progress Tuition Centre or brand into disrepute through inappropriate behaviour/actions.

Tattoos must be covered up during work hours. Sleeve tattoos can be covered by wearing a long-sleeved T-shirt underneath the Positive Progress Tuition Centre Polo shirt or wearing the sweatshirt.

Staff will be provided with ID Badges which must be worn at all times, around the neck on the Lanyard provided. No badge means you cannot work your shift.

* Is appropriate to their role.
* Is not likely to be viewed as offensive, revealing, or sexually provocative.
* Is absent of any political or otherwise contentious slogans.

**This means that staff should ensure their appearance and clothing:**

**7.Gifts**

Staff need to take care that they do not accept any gifts that might be construed as a bribe by others, or lead the giver to expect preferential treatment.

There are occasions when children and young people or parents wish to pass small tokens of appreciation to staff, for example at Christmas or thank-you gestures, and this is acceptable. However, it is unacceptable to receive gifts on a regular basis or of any significant value.

Any staff concerned about whether they or their colleagues may be at risk of giving or receiving a bribe (financial or otherwise) should contact the Manager. Any gifts or entertainment valued at more than £100 should not be accepted.

Staff may not give personal gifts to children and young people.

**This means that staff should:**

* Ensure that gifts received or given in situations which may be misconstrued are declared.
* Not accept gifts of significant value.

**8. Infatuations**

Staff need to be aware that where there is regular contact there is potential for a child or young person to be strongly attracted to an adult and develop an infatuation. Staff should be aware that such circumstances always carry a high risk of words or actions being misinterpreted and for allegations to be made against staff.

A member of staff who becomes aware that a student may become infatuated with them or a colleague should discuss this at the earliest opportunity with the Instructor so that appropriate action can be taken. In this way, steps can be taken to avoid hurt and distress for all concerned.

**This means that staff should:**

* Report to the Instructor any indications (verbal, written, or physical) that suggest a student may be infatuated with a staff member.
* Be mindful if they are alone in a room with a student. Leave the door open if you have to.

**9.Personal living space**

No student should be invited into the home of a member of staff who works with them.

**This means that staff should:**

▪ Be vigilant in maintaining their privacy and be mindful of the need to avoid placing themselves in vulnerable situations.

▪ Be mindful of the need to maintain professional boundaries.

**10.Communication with children and young people (including the use of technology)**

Communication between children and young people and adults, by whatever method, should take place within clear and explicit professional boundaries. This includes the wider use of technology such as mobile phones, text messaging, emails, digital cameras, videos, web-cams, websites, social networking sites, online gaming and blogs. Staff should not share any personal information with a student.

They should not request, or respond to, any personal information from the student, other than that which might be appropriate as part of their role. Staff should ensure that all communications are transparent and open to scrutiny.

Staff should also be circumspect in their communications with children and young people so as to avoid any possible misinterpretation of their motives or any behaviour which could be construed as grooming. They should not give their personal contact details to children and young people, including, but not limited to email, home or mobile telephone numbers. Email or text communications between an adult and a student outside agreed protocols may lead to disciplinary and/or criminal investigations. This also includes communications through websites, such as social networking sites, instant messaging or gaming.

Communication with ex-students who are over the age of 18 is left to staff discretion. Be aware that actions that bring the Manager or Positive Progress Tuition into disrepute could lead to disciplinary procedures being taken.

**This means that staff should:**

▪ Not give their personal contact details to children and young people, including their personal mobile telephone number, unless for professional reasons and with the knowledge of the Manager.

▪ Communicate with children and young people in an appropriate and professional manner, making sure that parents have given permission for this form of communication to be used.

▪ Only make contact with children and young people for professional reasons.

▪ Not use web-based communication channels to send personal or any other messages to a student.

▪ Not to have images of children and young people stored on personal cameras, devices or home computers.

▪ Not make images of children and young people available on the internet.

* Be cautious in their contact with ex-pupils, as there is still a professional relationship and there may be contact with current pupils.

**11.Social contact**

Staff should not establish or seek to establish social contact with children and young people, or their families, for the purpose of securing a friendship or to pursue or strengthen a relationship. Even if a young person seeks to establish social contact, or if this occurs coincidentally, the staff member should exercise her/his professional judgement in responding but should always discuss this with the Manager.

Staff must be aware that social contact, in certain situations, could be misconstrued as grooming.

Staff should not give their personal details such as their home or email address, social network sites, gamer tags or web pages to children and young people. If children and young people do become aware of your gamer tag you must change it.

**This means that staff should:**

▪ Have no secret social contact with children and young people.

▪ Consider the appropriateness of the social contact according to their role and nature of their work.

▪ Report and record any situation, which they feel, might compromise the Manager, Positive Progress Tuition, or their own professional standing.

**12. Social networking sites and online gaming**

Staff may use social networking sites for personal use in accordance with the social media policy.

Staff must deny current or recent students’ access to your profiles or put yourself in a vulnerable position.

Where relationships exist between staff and the parents of students, social networking is acceptable but caution must be exercised so that professional standards are maintained and staff do not compromise themselves, the Manager, or Positive Progress Tuition.

**This means that staff should:**

▪ Not permit current and recent children and young people, or their parents, to have access to their profile.

▪ Ensure all your passwords are kept strong and secure.

**13. Physical contact**

There are occasions when it is entirely appropriate and proper for staff to have physical contact with children and young people, but it is crucial that they only do so in ways appropriate to their professional role.

A 'no touch' approach is impractical for most staff and may in some circumstances be inappropriate. When physical contact is made with children and young people, this should be in response to their needs at the time, of limited duration, and appropriate.

Staff should use their professional judgement at all times about the appropriateness of any physical contact.

Physical contact should never be secretive, or for the gratification of the adult, or represent a misuse of authority. If a member of staff believes that an action could be misinterpreted, the incident and the circumstances should be made clear to senior staff.

Physical contact, which occurs regularly with an individual student, is likely to raise questions and should be avoided.

**This means that staff should:**

▪ Be aware that even well intentioned physical contact may be misconstrued by the student, an observer or by anyone to whom this action is described.

▪ Never touch a student in a way which may be considered indecent.

▪ Always be prepared to explain actions and accept that all physical contact be open to scrutiny.

**This means that the Manager should:**

▪ Ensure they have a system in place for recording serious incidents and the means by which information about incidents and outcomes can be easily accessed by senior staff.

▪ Provide staff, on a "need to know" basis, with relevant information about vulnerable children and young people in their care

**14.Children and young people in distress**

There may be occasions when a distressed student needs comfort and reassurance. Where possible parents should be asked to comfort the child or young person, where parents are not on site, staff should remain self-aware at all times to ensure their contact is not threatening, intrusive, or subject to misinterpretation.

Where a member of staff has a particular concern about the need to provide this type of care and reassurance, they should seek advice from the Manager.

**This means that staff should:**

▪ Consider the way in which they offer comfort to a distressed student.

▪ Always tell the Manager when and how they offered comfort to a distressed student.

▪ Record situations which may give rise to concern.

**15. Behaviour management**

All children and young people have a right to be treated with respect and dignity. Staff should not punish a student.

**16.Care, control, and physical intervention**

Staff may legitimately intervene to prevent a student from injuring themselves or others, causing damage to property, engaging in behaviour prejudicial to good order and to maintain good order and discipline. Staff should have regard for the health and safety of themselves and others.

Under no circumstances should physical force, including smacking, etc. Be used. The use of unwarranted physical force is likely to constitute a criminal offence.

In all cases where physical intervention is deemed necessary, the incident and subsequent actions should be documented and reported.

**This means that staff should:**

▪ Always seek to defuse situations.

▪ Always use minimum force for the shortest period necessary.

**17.Sexual contact with children and young people**

Any sexual behaviour by a member of staff with or towards a student is both inappropriate and illegal. Children and young people are protected by the same laws as adults in relation to non-consensual sexual behaviour. They are additionally protected by specific legal provisions regardless of whether the child or young person consents. This includes the prohibition on adults in a position of trust.

Staff should be aware that offering special attention and favour upon a child might be construed as being part of a 'grooming' process, which is an offence.

**This means that staff should:**

▪ Not pursue sexual relationships with students.

▪ Avoid any form of communication with a child or young person which could be interpreted as sexually suggestive or provocative, i.e. verbal comments, letters, notes, email, phone calls, texts, physical contact, etc.

**18. One to one situations**

Staff working in one to one situations with children and young people are more vulnerable to allegations. Every attempt should be made to ensure the safety and security needs of both staff and children and young people are met.

Pre-arranged meetings with children and young people away from the study centre are forbidden. Staff should only meet with students in class environments, never take them home, or meet them elsewhere.

**19. Transporting children**

Under no circumstances should any member of staff agree to transport a student.

**20. Intimate care**

All contact of an intimate nature is prohibited (for example staff should not assist with going to the toilet or removing wet/soiled clothing).

Children should be encouraged to act as independently as possible and to undertake as much of their own personal care as is practicable, where the child is too young to manage this themselves, their parents should be asked to assist them.

**21. Photography, videos and other creative arts**

Activities may involve recording images. These may be undertaken where written parental consent has been obtained and only on company owned equipment.

Staff need to be aware of the potential for the footage to be misused. Careful consideration should be given as to how these activities are organised and undertaken. Images should not be displayed on other websites, in publications, or in a public place without additional consent.

**This means that staff should:**

▪ Be clear about the purpose of the activity and about what will happen to the photographs when the lesson/activity is concluded.

▪ Ensure that all images are available for scrutiny in order to screen for acceptability.

▪ Only use company owned equipment**.**

**This means that staff should not:**

▪ Have images of children and young people stored on personal cameras, devices or home computers.

**22.Sharing concerns and recording incidents**

All staff should be aware of the study centre’s Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy, including procedures for dealing with allegations against staff.

In the event of an incident occurring, which may result in an action being misinterpreted and/or an allegation being made against a member of staff, the Safeguarding Policy will be followed.

Staff should feel able to discuss with the Manager any difficulties or problems that may affect their relationship with children and young people so that appropriate support can be provided or action can be taken.

**This means that staff:**

▪ Should be familiar with the Manager’s Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy.

▪ Should take responsibility for recording any incident, and passing on that information where they have concerns about any matter pertaining to the welfare of a member of staff or student workplace. See Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy for further information