

## Declaration of a worker's adherence to the Statement of Primary Responsibilities

### RELEVANT LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

- The Children Act 1989
- The Children Act 2004
- The Protection of Children Act 1999
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Sexual Offences Act 2003
- NICE CG89 Child Maltreatment Guidance 2009
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2010
- Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (England) Regulations 2010
- The Children's Homes Regulations and Quality Standards 2015
- Nottinghamshire Children's Safeguarding Board (NSCB)

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#### 1. Introduction

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Nottinghamshire County Council recognises the importance of building a culture that allows all staff to feel comfortable about sharing information, in confidence, regarding concerns they have about a colleague's behaviour. This will also include behaviour that is not linked to child abuse but that has pushed the boundaries of professional behaviour beyond acceptable limits. Open honest working cultures where people feel they can challenge unacceptable colleague behaviour and be supported in doing so, help keep everyone safe.

We expect that all residential staff want, and are able to, deliver a warm, respectful and professional service to the children they are looking after. However, we feel it is vital to underline to staff their primary responsibilities towards the care of children. This is important for all staff in children's homes.

Managers of Children's Homes must ensure that all members of staff:

- Are familiar with all key policies and procedures relating to the care and welfare of the young people they look after; and must
- Sign to acknowledge their intent to abide by them.

#### 2. Policy

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##### General Guidelines for Staff Behaviour

Every worker must respect the dignity and worth, and support the growth and development of each child who is in the care of Nottinghamshire County Council. All relationships and actions should be geared to promoting the physical, mental, aspirational and emotional welfare of the child.

1. The actions of staff in residential care can be open to misinterpretation. Staff can often, by virtue of working with the most challenging young people in our care, be involved in very difficult situations. It is vital that staff are as open and as honest as possible about their actions and those of their colleagues: indeed this is a compulsory element of staff caring for each other and the young people. Staff must risk offending colleagues by challenging each other's practice; honestly, openly and formally in order to create the environment and culture where poor practice is not tolerated. Failure to do so can be viewed as collusion and could be considered as gross misconduct within the disciplinary procedures. It is vital that Registered Managers are aware of any concerns that a member of staff may have about the actions or demeanour of a colleague towards a young person.
2. Staff must, immediately, report to the Manager who is in charge at the time any instances, or *suspected* instances, of disrespect or bullying towards young people, any inappropriate handling of young people or concerns regarding the approach a colleague takes towards a young person that causes unease.
3. The Manager must report all suspicions, allegations or information, regarding inappropriate conduct or behaviour towards young people in a children's home to the Responsible Individual.
4. The Manager should make a written record of the information and the action considered or carried out.
5. If staff feel that appropriate action has not been taken to their satisfaction regarding the matter by the Registered Manager they have the right to take the matter directly to the RI (or above).
6. Residential staff who suspect similar inappropriate action by social work staff or any other individuals, must inform the Registered Manager.

These guidelines are here to protect children and staff alike. The list below is by no means exhaustive and all staff should remember to conduct themselves in a manner appropriate to their position.

- You must challenge unacceptable behaviour towards children by *anyone*.
- Role model professional conduct you wish others to follow.
- Respect a young person's right to personal privacy.
- Encourage children and young people to feel comfortable in speaking out about attitudes or behaviours they do not like.
- Involve children and young people in decision-making as appropriate.
- Be aware that someone else might misinterpret your actions.
- Do not engage in or tolerate any bullying of a child, either by adults or other children.

- Never promise to keep a secret about any sensitive information that may be disclosed to you but follow the practice guidance on confidentiality and sharing information.
- Never offer a lift to a young person in your own car unless it is part of a known, planned activity.
- Never exchange personal details such as your home address, personal 'phone number or any social networking details with a young person.
- Do not engage in or allow any sexually provocative games involving or observed by children.
- Never show favouritism towards, or reject any young person.
- Do not take into work any apparatus that could take still photographs or videos of young people. Or, record any confidential conversations or information relating to young people.
- Ensure that if you use social media you do not make any derogatory statements about your work, colleagues, young people, other professionals or the organisation.
- Or, that you do not use social media to engage in work related arguments, or post anything that could be construed as bullying behaviour towards colleagues.
- Or, make comments or express views that could call into question your professionalism or standing as someone working with vulnerable young people.

### 3. Declaration

I solemnly declare that I have read the above policy and understand that it is my duty to uphold the principles enshrined within this policy and the code of conduct appended to this document. Also, that I will report any concerns I have in relation to staff practice, conduct or demeanour to my manager(s). Failure to do so could be considered a breach of professional standards, be construed as a disciplinary matter and/or result in criminal proceedings.

Signed by:

Name in block capitals:

Date:

Witnessed by Registered Manager of (home name):

Signature:

Name in block capitals:

Date: