



Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

September 2023

Introduction

Protecting people and safeguarding responsibilities are priorities for The Ernest Cook Trust (“the Trust”).

The Trust supports and works with a wide range of people in many locations and recognises that some people the Trust come into contact with may be at risk of harm.

The Trust supports the rights of people to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. We aim to provide a safe and trusted environment that safeguards everyone, including beneficiaries, employees and volunteers.

The aim of this policy is to set out how the Trust promotes an organisational culture that prioritises safeguarding and manages reported incidents or concerns, sensitively and properly. It demonstrates how safeguarding concerns and incidents are prevented, identified and handled. It explains the responsibilities of the Board of Trustees to ensure that risks are managed appropriately, with clear routes of escalation.

Trustees have accountability to ensure the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults and to protect from harm anyone that comes into contact with the Trust.

The policy has been written in line with recommendations made within Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023, Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018, the Charity Commission guidelines 2021, the Children Act 1989, the Children Act 2004, Human Rights Act 1998, Care Standards Act 2000, Mental Capacity Act 2005, the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and the Care Act 2014.

Definitions

‘Safeguarding’ is a term which is broader than ‘child protection’ or ‘adult protection’ as it also includes prevention. Safeguarding has been defined as:

- All organisations working with children, young people and their families, or vulnerable adults, taking all reasonable measures to ensure that the risks of harm to children’s welfare are minimised; and
- Where there are concerns about children or vulnerable adults’ welfare, all organisations taking appropriate actions to address those concerns.

The definition of a ‘child’ is anyone who has not yet reached their 18th birthday. The fact, for example, that a child may have become 16 years of age, be living independently, in further education, in the armed forces, in hospital, or in a Young Offender’s Institution does not change their status, their entitlement to services, or their protection under the Children Act 1989.

The definition of an ‘adult at risk’ is any person aged 18 years and over who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental health issues, learning or physical disability, sensory impairment, age or illness and who is, or may be, unable to take care of themselves or unable to protect themselves against significant harm or serious exploitation.

The Trust has a wider definition of whom we consider to be adults at risk. This includes people encountering domestic abuse, sexual exploitation and/or human trafficking, people who are experiencing homelessness, people suffering from alcohol and substance misuse, those at risk of radicalisation, forced marriage, modern slavery, young offenders, engagement with gangs, in care or leaving care, and people who are refugees or asylum seekers.

The Trust has a duty to protect the children and vulnerable adults we work with from abuse. 'Abuse' is defined as any behaviour which knowingly or unwittingly causes harm, endangers life or violates rights. It is possible that the Trust will become aware of actual or potential abuse when carrying out its work, and this Policy sets out the Trust's commitments to protecting these groups from harm.

The main forms of abuse are divided into the following categories:

- Physical abuse – including hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint, inappropriate sanctions.
- Sexual abuse – including rape, sexual assault, sexual acts to which a person has not consented, could not consent or was pressurised into consenting.
- Psychological abuse – including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation, withdrawal from services or supportive networks.
- Financial or material abuse – including theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.
- Neglect and acts of omission – including ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life such as medication, adequate nutrition, and heating.
- Discriminatory abuse – including racist, or sexist slurs or similar treatment and those based on a person's disability or other forms of harassment.
- Institutional abuse, neglect and poor professional practice - this may take the form of isolated incidents of poor or unsatisfactory professional practice at one end of the spectrum, through to pervasive ill treatment or gross misconduct at the other.
- Online abuse, including cyberbullying - including sending threatening or abusive text messages, creating and sharing embarrassing images or videos, 'trolling' (sending menacing or upsetting messages on social networks, chat rooms or online games), exclusion from online games, activities or friendship groups, setting up hate sites or groups about a particular person, encouraging self-harm, voting for or against someone in an abusive poll, creating fake accounts, hijacking or stealing online identities to embarrass a person or cause trouble using their name.
- Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) - the grooming and exploitation of children into criminal activity, including "county lines", being coerced into moving drugs or money across the country, forced to commit financial fraud, or forced to shoplift or pickpocket.
- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) - a form of child sexual abuse which occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under the age of 18 into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. Child sexual exploitation does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.
- Child on child abuse - any form of physical, sexual, emotional and financial abuse, and coercive control exercised between children, and within children's relationships (both intimate and non-intimate), friendships, and wider peer associations. This can include bullying, physical or sexual abuse and initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.
- Domestic abuse – this can be psychological, physical, sexual, financial, or emotional, and can impact on children through seeing, hearing or experiencing the effects of domestic abuse and/or experiencing it through their own intimate relationships.

Staff should also be able to spot the signs of potential radicalisation, as per the Home Office's requirement on countering extremism. These include withdrawal from family and friends, or changing circle of friends, hostility towards others, talking as if from a script, being unwilling to discuss their views, increased levels of anger, being secretive, particularly around what they are doing on the internet, using extremist terms to exclude people or incite violence and expressing the values of extremist or terrorist organisations (including political or religious based grievances).

Principles and Responsibilities

We recognise that safeguarding and protecting people from harm goes beyond simply implementing policies and processes. Safeguarding and protecting people must go to the heart of the organisation's culture and is a fundamental responsibility for Trustees.

The Trust aims to provide a safe, trusted environment for all employees, volunteers and beneficiaries and to respond promptly and appropriately to reports of anyone who is actually or potentially at risk. This is done by:

- Safeguarding the welfare of all beneficiaries, employees and volunteers by embedding the necessary principles in all activities carried out by the Trust.
- Having suitable recruitment, selection and training procedures for employees and volunteers.
- Requiring all external agencies who work with the Trust to comply with the safeguarding requirements of the Trust.
- Requiring organisations receiving funding from the Trust to comply with our safeguarding requirements.
- Providing training to all employees, Trustees and volunteers to ensure they understand and follow the requirements of this policy at induction, with annual update training.
- Having procedures to ensure that concerns of abuse or neglect are dealt with appropriately and that action is taken promptly.
- Providing all employees with access to a designated lead who will have the details of the appropriate local agencies to whom they can report concerns.
- Ensuring fundraising activities are carried out in accordance with the Trust's values and ethical standards.
- Conducting a programme of Disclosure and Barring Service Checks (DBS) on employees in line with our Recruitment and Selection Policy.

The key responsibilities of the Trust and the Leadership Team are to:

- Ensure all activities involving young people and adults at risk are carried out in ways that will foster security, confidence and independence.
- Ensure suitable levels of supervision are present whenever young people or adults at risk are present.
- Provide an environment in which people feel safe, secure, valued, respected, feel confident and know how to approach staff if they are in difficulty with the belief that they will be listened to.
- Raise and maintain staff awareness of the need to safeguard young people and adults at risk and their responsibilities in identifying and reporting issues.
- Emphasise the need for good levels of communication between all members of staff.
- Develop structured procedures within the Trust that should be followed by all members of staff.
- Ensure that due diligence is carried out when working with, or funding a third party to work with, young people and vulnerable adults, or allowing access to our sites by a third party organisation. This includes checking safeguarding policies and requiring that serious incidents are reported to us.
- Ensure that all staff working within the organisation are appropriately checked as to their suitability, including verification of their identity, qualifications and a satisfactory Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check (to a level appropriate to their role) and that a central record is maintained.

Safeguarding within the Trust

We will ensure that:

- Everyone associated with the organisation is aware that safeguarding is everybody's responsibility and we must always consider what is in the young person/vulnerable adult's best interest.
- The Trust follows safer recruitment guidelines; all posts are subject to a DBS check, which is renewed every three years. The level of the check (ie, basic, standard or enhanced) will depend on the duties of the postholder, and will be reviewed if the role changes.
- For new recruitment, one member of each interview panel will have undertaken Safer

Recruitment training, which is refreshed every 3 years. The Trust also has a policy on recruitment of ex-offenders to ensure equal opportunities and safety.

Our recruitment process includes:

- advertising all posts with a clear safeguarding and child protection statement, highlighting that a DBS check will be required
- having a clear job description and person specification for all roles, which highlights safeguarding responsibilities
- advertising roles widely and recruiting based on *what* someone knows rather than *who* they know
- providing an applicant information pack and using a standard application form
- having clear shortlisting and interviewing procedures with a minimum of two staff at each stage, including at least one person on every interview panel with Safer Recruitment training. Interviews will be conducted in person, with all candidates being asked an agreed list of questions, including on their motivation for applying for the role and their attitude to safeguarding. Applicants identified as unsuitable to work with children and young people will be rejected.
- carrying out pre-employment checks (for staff and volunteers), including Right to Work, DBS and references which specifically ask about the candidate's suitability and ability to work with children and young people
- undertaking a thorough induction process, including safeguarding training and familiarisation with our Safeguarding policy

All staff understand and fulfil their responsibilities and undergo annual refresher training. Staff are trained to *Recognise, Respond, Report and Record* their concerns, through regularly updated training:

- *Recognise* – be able to identify signs of abuse, as listed above. This may include visible marks, changes in attitude or behaviour, persistent absenteeism, becoming unusually withdrawn or secretive, or suddenly possessing new, expensive items.
- *Respond* – know to call the emergency services in the case of immediate danger, and how to handle a disclosure from a young person, including remaining calm, listening carefully, continuing at the pace of the person making the disclosure, reassuring them but not promising to keep anything secret.
- *Report* – all disclosures or concerns must be reported to a manager or Designated Safeguarding Lead urgently. All details must be written down, directly quoting the young person's words wherever possible.
- *Record* – make a note of what you've seen and done, and share this with the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a manager.
- Safeguarding is also supported by our staff handbook, which includes our Code of Conduct, policies on protection for whistle blowers, and our disciplinary procedure, which would apply in cases where safeguarding requirements have not been fulfilled.
- New members of staff, volunteers and people on work experience placements are provided with Safeguarding training as part of their induction and will be made aware of those members of staff that they should contact to discuss concerns. All new staff will have a DBS check carried out prior to starting work with children, young people or adults at risk.
- All safeguarding concerns or allegations against staff or adults working for the Trust are referred to the relevant body at the Local Authority for advice. Such incidents may also be reported to funders, as required.
- Members of staff or volunteers found to be unsuitable to work with young people or adults at risk will be notified to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) for consideration for barring following resignation, dismissal, or when the Trust ceases to use their service as a result of substantiated allegation.
- If a young person or vulnerable adult is in immediate danger, staff will refer the matter immediately to the Local Authority or the Police.
- Support is available to staff involved in the management of safeguarding disclosures and allegations.

The role of Trustees

One of the key requirements of Trustees is that they can readily explain their charity's approach to managing Safeguarding. Trustees also need to ensure that any Safeguarding risks and mitigation are documented and reviewed.

To this end, the Trust will ensure that:

- Training is available to enable Trustees to fully understand and implement their Safeguarding duties.
- Safeguarding risks and mitigation are listed on the Trust's risk registers and updated as necessary.
- Support and guidance will be given to Trustees when undertaking site visits to the Trust's tenants and to other charities, to ensure that Safeguarding is investigated as part of due diligence checks. Safeguarding is included in the list of standard questions raised during a visit.

Reporting safeguarding concerns

All safeguarding issues raised by staff should be raised with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Senior Safeguarding Lead.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is responsible for:

- Being aware of all planned activities involving young people.
- Making a referral to the relevant authority if there are concerns about the abuse of a young person or adult at risk and acting as a focal point for staff to discuss concerns. Referrals will be made in writing, within 24 hours of a telephone call, using the Multi Agency Referral Form (MARF).
- Keeping records of concerns about a young person or adult at risk, even if there is no need to make an immediate referral.
- Liaising with other agencies and professionals.
- Informing the Senior Safeguarding Lead and Chief Executive immediately with details of any incidents and cases that have occurred.
- Providing Trustees with an annual report detailing any changes to legislation, policies and procedures, and details of any incidents and cases that have occurred. Serious concerns will be reported to Trustees at any meeting as a standard agenda item.
- Leading on the Trust's activities in relation to the Government's Prevent anti-radicalisation strategy. While the Trust does not have a statutory obligation in this area, it is an important part of our safeguarding considerations.

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSL) are able to carry out all of the duties above if the DSL is not available, and staff should contact a DDSL with any safeguarding concerns if they are not able to reach the DSL.

Staff concerned about a safeguarding issue or the conduct of a colleague should follow the *Recognise, Respond, Report, Record* process. Concerns should be reported within 24 hours; you do not need to be sure to make a report, don't delay while you gather further information. Anyone wishing to get further advice may also call the [NSPCC Helpline](https://www.nspcc.org.uk/08008005000) on 0800 800 5000.

What to report:

Recording Concerns Checklist

✓ Child's name	✓ Using the child's words
✓ Where/observations/witnesses/who were involved	✓ Clear about why you are concerned about the child
✓ Who passed information onto you	✓ Decisions, and reasons for those decisions, actions taken, referrals made or reasons for non-referral
✓ Date, time and day of the observations & when reported	✓ Name and your role
✓ Record the facts - i.e. what you saw, what you heard	✓ Sign and date the document
✓ Be careful to avoid any opinion, hearsay or gossip, or clearly identify it as such	✓ Who you are passing your concerns onto
Immediately	

Young people should also feel able to report concerns to the Trust, with confidence that they will be listened to. In most cases, we would expect young people to report safeguarding concerns to their school, setting or group leader, but particularly where we work with young people directly (eg trainees, apprentices, young advisers), we must ensure they are aware that our safeguarding team is available to support them. Our offices have posters up with contact details for our Safeguarding leads, and where appropriate, young people are introduced to the DSL or DDSL directly during their induction.

Any staff member discovering a case of FGM (Female Genital Mutilation) is legally required to contact the Police directly, immediately.

Safeguarding and Partnership Working/Collaboration

The Trust has developed successful partnerships with external organisations to help deliver its strategic aims.

Trustees and staff must confirm that adequate safeguarding measures are in place in organisations where they are seeking to develop external partnerships or collaboration opportunities.

Where the Trust is working in collaboration with an organisation, an agreed approach to Safeguarding must be in place, through either the acknowledgement of the Safeguarding Policy of the partner organisation, or in the case of longer term partnerships, the development of a joint approach to Safeguarding.

A due diligence process is undertaken and a written agreement put in place when working with external organisations. This includes the requirement for DBS checks for key roles, evidence of a safeguarding policy and a regular schedule of meetings.

Safeguarding and Grant Applicants and Recipients

Safeguarding is a key consideration in the assessment, award and monitoring of grants.

Grant Giving:

The Trust's grant giving guidelines and application process includes questions to ensure that all of the charities/organisations funded by the Trust can demonstrate a good understanding of Safeguarding and have appropriate policies in place. This includes confirmation that applicants

have a Safeguarding Policy that is reviewed regularly (preferably annually). A copy of the policy may be requested through the application process. The charity/organisation should be able to provide details of:

- A named lead person to whom staff report Safeguarding issues that arise;
- A process for reporting incidents; and
- Affirmation that all staff and volunteers who may have contact with children, young people and/or vulnerable adults have undergone successful Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks.

If there are any concerns about an organisation's Safeguarding Policy, approach, process or implementation, a grant will not be awarded until such concerns have been addressed. If during an application assessment Trust staff have serious concerns, they should contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) who, if appropriate, will contact the Charity Commission, the Safeguarding Team of the relevant local authority and/or police if necessary.

Complaints:

If the Trust is alerted to a safeguarding concern in a funded organisation by a complainant, the Trust will refer the complainant to the organisation in question so that its own procedures can be followed. If the Safeguarding issue or the organisation's approach to addressing the issue raises further concerns, then Trustees and Trust staff should bring the issue to the attention of the DSL. The DSL will decide on the severity of the incident and, if appropriate, will contact the Charity Commission, the Safeguarding Team of the relevant local authority and/or police if necessary.

Visits:

The Trust will also ensure that during visits by Trust Staff or Trustees to charities/organisations (whether currently funded or potential applicants), that appropriate safeguarding practices in line with The Ernest Cook Trust Safeguarding Policy are implemented. Any concerns will be brought to the attention of the organisation/charity's DSL and details will be reported to the Trust's DSL, who if appropriate will contact the Charity Commission, the Safeguarding Team of the relevant local authority and/or police if necessary.

Confidentiality and consent

The Trust acknowledges that all matters relating to safeguarding are sensitive. The DSL will disclose any confidential information about a child or vulnerable adult to other members of staff on a need to know basis only.

All staff have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard young people and adults at risk. Staff recognise that they cannot promise they will keep secrets that compromise safety or wellbeing.

We take a child/person-centred approach to safeguarding, considering the wishes of the person involved and what is in their best interest. This means that we aim to empower people to make their own decisions and give consent, work to prevent harm before it happens, and consider proportionality (ie – the least intrusive response appropriate to the risk).

Where concerns relate to a young person or vulnerable adult, their wishes for what they would like to happen should be considered and discussed with them. Consent is not needed to report a concern if it's in the public interest (eg, harm may come to them or others if nothing is done) or public duty demands (eg, a crime has been committed or will be committed), but transparency is important for trust with the person making the disclosure. The mental capacity of a vulnerable adult to consent to action being taken will also be relevant. Whether consent has been given or not, you may discuss your concerns with the DSL, who will be able to assist in making decisions on appropriate referrals where needed.

Supporting Staff

The Trust recognises that staff working with young people or adults at risk who have suffered harm or appear to be likely to suffer harm may find the situation stressful and upsetting. Support is available to staff experiencing such situations. The Health and Wellbeing of staff is addressed throughout the Trust's Staff Handbook.

Staff should take care not to place themselves in a vulnerable position, and take measures to ensure that they are never alone with beneficiary young person or adult at risk (eg through appropriate session design and staffing plans), and never make personal contact with them. Please note this is not required when the young person is an employee of the Trust as we recognise young employees are likely to need to spend time shadowing colleagues as their training, and it is not practicable for them to be chaperoned on all occasions. This may also be the case from time to time during work experience placements, in which case written parental permission must be sought in advance. A high level of professionalism and additional safeguarding training (eg focussing on 16-25 year olds) are recommended in these cases. Further guidance on appropriate professional behaviour is available in our Code of Behaviour (see appendix 1).

Prevention

The Trust can reduce the potential for ongoing harm to children by providing them with good lines of communication with trusted adults, supportive friends and an ethos of protection. We will therefore:

- Work to establish and maintain an ethos where children feel secure.
- Ensure that children are adequately supervised at all times, predominantly by visiting teaching staff but assisted by Trust staff.
- Make sure that children are encouraged to talk and are always listened to and that they know there is an adult whom they can approach if they are worried or in difficulty.
- Ensure that all staff are aware of the organisation guidance in regard to mobile, online and video conferencing technology and have discussed Safeguarding issues around the use of these technologies and platforms, and their associated risks. These issues are covered in our policies on Electronic Information and Communications systems, and Social Media.
- Recognise that children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and perceived differences, those with lower levels of school attendance and those from dysfunctional households (eg incarcerated relatives, issue around substance abuse, mental health issues, violence and divorce in their household) are more susceptible to being bullied or victims of child abuse, and be particularly vigilant for disclosures from these young people. Consideration should also be given to how LGBTQ+ children can be provided with a safe space to speak out or share their concerns with members of staff.
- Give learner-facing staff Prevent awareness training, in line with the Home Office's guidance on spotting radicalisation.

Planning Activities Involving Young People and Adults at Risk

All events and activities that are carried out by the Trust's Learning and Grants teams – on our own estates and elsewhere - will be planned to ensure all necessary risks relating to safeguarding and the activity itself are duly considered. Activities will consider the welfare of all involved in Learning activities. All necessary measures to supervise and monitor activities will be in place and all necessary risks assessed prior to sessions or engagement commencing. Any staff from other teams planning activities with young people should consult with the Learning team for input.

Risk assessments will also be discussed with school and visiting organisations' leaders to ensure they are also aware of the requirements. School and community groups are supplied with detailed guidance on safe supervision ratios, minimum adult numbers and other safety measures through our Booking Agreement. Permission forms are required when The Trust plans to take photos or videos of visiting groups.

Where online activities are planned, the guidance outlined in our Safeguarding in Online Engagement document must be followed.

In the event that a late change of staffing is required, for instance due to illness, arrangements will be made to ensure adequate levels of supervision can be met. In some cases, this may mean adjusting the activity, changing group sizes, arranging for additional staff to attend or even cancelling certain activities.

Support for Tenants

As we are not a social landlord, the Trust does not have a statutory safeguarding responsibility for our residential, commercial or agricultural tenants (beyond our duty of care to ensure that properties and practices are safe). However, we recognise that we can play a vital role in spotting signs of abuse and ensuring that safeguarding concerns regarding those we come into contact with are properly raised.

All staff are all trained in recognising abuse, and should inform the DSL of any concerns relating to tenants so that appropriate referrals can be made.

Monitoring and Evaluation

This policy will be monitored and evaluated on a regular basis to ensure it remains up to date and effective.

Contact details

Designated Safeguarding Lead Name: Emily Crawley
Email: emily.crawley@ernestcooktrust.org.uk Tel: 01285 842287 or 07983 143598

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead Name: Liz MacKenzie
Email: liz.mackenzie@ernestcooktrust.org.uk Tel: 01285 842290 or 07881 771635

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead Name: Victoria McDermott
Email: victoria.mcdermott@ernestcooktrust.org.uk Tel: 01285 703038 or 07435 893338

Senior Safeguarding Lead Name: Simon Eliot
Email: safeguarding@ernestcooktrust.org.uk Tel: 01285 703040

We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually.

This policy was last reviewed on: 14 September 2023

Signed:

Simon Eliot, Senior Safeguarding Lead

Date:

This policy will next be reviewed in September 2024

Appendix 1:

Behaviour code for adults working with children

The purpose and scope of the behaviour code

This behaviour code outlines the conduct that The Ernest Cook Trust expects from all our staff and volunteers. This includes Trustees, agency staff, interns, students on work placement and anyone who is undertaking duties for the organisation, whether paid or unpaid. The behaviour code is there to help us protect children and young people from abuse. It has been informed by the views of children and young people. The Ernest Cook Trust is responsible for making sure everyone taking part in our activities has seen, understood and agreed to follow the code of behaviour, and that they understand the consequences of inappropriate behaviour.

The role of staff and volunteers

In your role at The Ernest Cook Trust you are acting in a position of trust and authority and have a duty of care towards the children and young people we work with. You are likely to be seen as a role model by young people and are expected to act appropriately. We expect people who take part in our services to display appropriate behaviour at all times. This includes behaviour that takes place outside our organisation and behaviour that takes place online.

Responsibility of staff and volunteers

You are responsible for:

- prioritising the welfare of children and young people
- providing a safe environment for children and young people
- ensuring equipment is used safely and for its intended purpose
- having good awareness of issues to do with safeguarding and child protection and taking action when appropriate
- following our principles, policies and procedures, including our policies and procedures for safeguarding and child protection, whistleblowing and online safety
- staying within the law at all times
- modelling good behaviour for children and young people to follow
- challenging all inappropriate behaviour and reporting any breaches of the behaviour code to Emily Crawley, Designated Safeguarding Lead
- reporting all concerns about abusive behaviour, following our safeguarding and child protection procedures - this includes inappropriate behaviour displayed by an adult or child and directed at anybody of any age.

Respecting children and young people

You should:

- listen to and respect children at all times
- value and take children's contributions seriously, actively involving them in planning activities wherever possible
- respect a young person's right to personal privacy as far as possible - if you need to break confidentiality in order to follow child protection procedures, it is important to explain this to the child or young person at the earliest opportunity.

Diversity and inclusion

You should:

- treat children and young people fairly and without prejudice or discrimination
- understand that children and young people are individuals with individual needs
- respect differences in gender, sexual orientation, culture, race, ethnicity, disability and religious belief systems, and appreciate that all participants bring something valuable and different to the group/organisation
- challenge discrimination and prejudice
- encourage young people and adults to speak out about attitudes or behaviour that makes them uncomfortable.

Appropriate relationships

You should:

- promote relationships that are based on openness, honesty, trust and respect
- avoid showing favouritism
- be patient with others
- exercise caution when you are discussing sensitive issues with children or young people
- ensure your contact with children and young people is appropriate and relevant to the nature of the activity you are involved in
- ensure that whenever possible, there is more than one adult present during activities with children and young people - if a situation arises where you are alone with a child or young person, ensure that you are within sight or can be heard by other adults. If a child specifically asks for or needs some individual time with you, ensure other staff or volunteers know where you and the child are
- only provide personal care in an emergency and make sure there is more than one adult present if possible, unless it has been agreed that the provision of personal care is part of your role and you have been trained to do this safely.

Inappropriate behaviour

When working with children and young people, you must not:

- allow concerns or allegations to go unreported
- take unnecessary risks
- smoke, consume alcohol or use illegal substances
- develop inappropriate relationships with children and young people
- make inappropriate promises to children and young people
- engage in behaviour that is in any way abusive, including having any form of sexual contact with a child or young person
- let children and young people have your personal contact details (mobile number, email or postal address) or have contact with them via a personal social media account
- act in a way that can be perceived as threatening or intrusive
- patronise or belittle children and young people
- make sarcastic, insensitive, derogatory or sexually suggestive comments or gestures to or in front of children and young people.

Upholding this code of behaviour

You should always follow this code of behaviour and never rely on your reputation or that of our organisation to protect you. If you have behaved inappropriately, you will be subject to our disciplinary procedures. Depending on the seriousness of the situation, you might be asked to leave The Ernest Cook Trust. We might also make a report to statutory agencies such as the police and/or the local authority child protection services. If you become aware of any breaches of this code, you must report them to Emily Crawley, Designated Safeguarding Lead. If necessary, you should follow our whistleblowing procedure and safeguarding and child protection procedures.

This behaviour code has been adopted from an NSPCC resource and reflects best practice for those working with young people.