Code of Conduct for Staff & Volunteers

Purpose

This behaviour code outlines the conduct Tom's Trust expects from all our staff and volunteers. This includes agency staff, interns, students on work placement and anyone who is undertaking specific duties for the organisation, whether paid or unpaid.

The behaviour code aims to help us protect children, young people and vulnerable adults from abuse and reduce the possibility of unfounded allegations being made. It has been informed by the views of children, young people and vulnerable adults.

As part of a new employee / volunteer induction, the respective line manager must make sure that everyone taking part in our services 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

When working with or for children, young people and vulnerable adults, you are acting in a position of trust. You are likely to be seen as a role model and must act appropriately.

Responsibility

You are responsible for:

- prioritising the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults
- providing a safe environment for children, young people and vulnerable adults
- this includes 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
- this includes policies and procedures for child protection/safeguarding, whistleblowing and online safety
- staying within the law at all times
- modelling good behaviour for children, young people and vulnerable adults to follow
- challenging all unacceptable behaviour and reporting any breaches of the behaviour code to the Chief Executive Officer
- reporting all allegations/suspicions of abuse following our reporting procedures
- this includes abusive behaviour being displayed by an adult or child and directed at anybody of any age.

Rights

You should:

Registered office: Tom's Trust, PO Box 276, Saffron Walden, CB10 9GE
Reg charity no: 1183559 www.tomstrust.org.uk

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

Relationships

You should:

- promote relationships that are based on openness, honesty, trust and respect and avoid favouritism
- be patient with others
- use special caution when you are discussing sensitive issues with children, young people and vulnerable adults
- ensure your contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults is appropriate and relevant to the work of the project you are involved in
- ensure that whenever possible, there is more than one adult present during activities with children, young people and vulnerable adults
- if a child specifically asks for or needs some private 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. NB This is unless you are working under specific circumstances where it has been agreed that the provision of personal care is part of your role and you have been trained to do this safely.

Unacceptable behaviour

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

- allow concerns or allegations to go unreported
- take unnecessary risks
- smoke, vape, consume alcohol or use illegal substances
- develop inappropriate relationships with children, young people and vulnerable adults

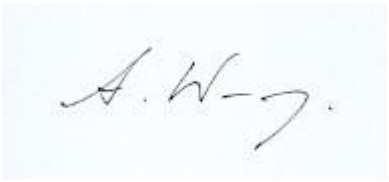
- make inappropriate promises to children, young people and vulnerable adults
- engage in behaviour that is in any way abusive
- this includes having any form of sexual contact with a child, young people or vulnerable adult
- let children, young people and vulnerable adults have your personal contact details (mobile number, email or 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, young people and vulnerable adults
- make sarcastic, insensitive, derogatory or sexually suggestive comments.

This policy should be followed in line with any individual staff members and volunteers' professional code of conduct set out by their governing body, that may apply to their job role with Tom's Trust.

We may also make a referral 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 the Chief Executive Officer.

This is the Tom's Trust Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers Policy
It will be reviewed every 2 years. Date of next review **January 2027.**



Andrew Woosey
Chair
January 2025