

# Voluntary and Community Action South Bedfordshire

## CODE OF CONDUCT

Voluntary and Community Action South Bedfordshire is committed to having a working atmosphere that is conducive to the nature of the work it undertakes; the values of the organisation; its public image and reputation; and the welfare and personal security of employees, volunteers and trustees. It also seeks to ensure quality delivery of services to clients and members.

This Code of Conduct sets out what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour for employees, volunteers and trustees while undertaking work on behalf of Voluntary and Community Action. The examples listed are not exhaustive. The following are examples of the kind of behaviour expected:

- Employees/Volunteers/Trustees are expected to perform the function and responsibilities of their role in accordance with any job/role description, work programme, office procedures, statutory requirement or quality standards adopted by Voluntary and Community Action.
- Employees are usually given reasonable freedom to determine their own actions within their own function and responsibilities and should satisfactorily perform these activities, and any reasonable request made by their line manager.
- Employees undertaking other paid employment must be able to properly discharge their duties and responsibilities with Voluntary and Community Action.
- Employees must have proper regard to the terms of their employment.
- Employees should ensure appropriate time keeping in line with the rules on flexi-time, agreed working patterns and core hours. All absence from work, except for reasons of sickness, should be authorised.
- Employees/volunteers/trustees must have regard to the health and safety of all staff, volunteers, trustees, clients and visitors and are expected to follow guidelines for their own personal safety. Due care should be taken when using electrical and office equipment.
- Non-discriminatory behaviour, verbal and non verbal language must be used at all times.
- Organisational property should only be removed from the premises with permission or when it is being used at other premises to carry out the work of the organisation.
- Employees'/volunteers'/trustees' conduct at work or when undertaking activities on behalf of Voluntary and Community Action, should be of an acceptable moral standard.

The following are examples of the kind of behaviour that is not permitted:

- Unauthorised access to confidential information or unnecessary disclosure of confidential information concerning the work of the organisation or its employees/volunteers/trustees/clients.
- Gambling, smoking, the taking of illegal drugs or the drinking of alcohol on the organisation's premises (except where the Trustees have authorised the drinking of alcohol at specific functions held on the premises).

- Threatening, abusive or violent behaviour or language towards another person.
- Behaviour or actions that would in any way jeopardise the safety or well-being of others.
- Repeated or serious failure to follow instructions.
- Making of long or numerous private telephone calls, internet use or emails.
- Harassment and bullying in any form.

[Sexual or racial harassment is defined as unwanted conduct that occurs with the purpose or effect of violating the dignity of a person, in particular when creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. Sexual harassment is additionally defined as subjection to repeated, unreciprocated and unwelcome comments, looks, actions, suggestions or physical contact which is found objectionable or embarrassing and which might create an intimidating working environment. Such behaviour may be physical, verbal or non-verbal and can include name-calling, jokes and the use of racist or sexist language.]

- Deliberately accessing Internet sites containing pornography, offensive or obscene material (unless it is necessary for a specific piece of work and express permission from the Director has been given).

The following are examples of the kind of behaviour that constitutes gross misconduct and will lead to summary dismissal:

- Physical violence towards another employee/volunteer/trustee/client of the organisation.
- Serious negligence that results in damage to property, loss or injury.
- Behaviour that seriously jeopardises health and safety.
- Serious misuse of the trust that exists between employees and clients, in particular young people and vulnerable adults.
- Inept or dangerous incapacity for work due to being under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol.
- Gross insubordination.
- Deliberate and serious damage to organisation property, theft or fraud.
- Unlawful discrimination or harassment.
- Behaviour causing serious damage to the business or reputation of the organisation.
- Serious infringement of the rules of the organisation.
- Criminal charges or convictions (whether or not they are related to a persons role within, or employment by, Voluntary and Community Action) that prevent them from undertaking their role or makes them unsuitable for their type of work.