



Apple Tree Farm Services CIC

Staff Conduct Policy

Purpose and Aims

This staff conduct policy outlines the conduct that *Apple Tree Farm CIC* expects from all our staff and volunteers. This includes trustees, agency staff, students on work placement and anyone who is undertaking duties for the organisation, whether paid or unpaid. To offer a fair and effective service to everyone at Apple Tree Farm, staff must have a clear understanding of the expectations in terms of behaviour so that these expectations can be conveyed to service users according to their individual level of understanding.



Objectives

To make Apple Tree Farm a happy and purposeful environment where relationships are friendly and caring. This naturally promotes a supportive and pro-active environment enabling everyone to achieve personal goals and objectives on a day-to-day basis whilst addressing the needs of the individual always.

The staff conduct policy is there to help us protect everyone at the farm.

Apple Tree Farm CIC is responsible for making sure everyone taking part in our activities has seen, understood, and agreed to follow the staff conduct policy, and that they understand the consequences of inappropriate behaviour.

The role of staff and volunteers

In your role at **Apple Tree Farm CIC**, you are acting in a position of trust and authority and have a duty of care towards the service users 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 always display appropriate behaviour. This includes behaviour that takes place outside our organisation and behaviour that takes place online.

Responsibility of staff and volunteers

You are responsible for:

- Involving service users in any decisions affecting them.
- Encourage service users to accept responsibility for their actions, and by ensuring that everyone understands that there is a cause for, and consequence to, every action.



- Encourage everyone to share concerns and care for each other.
- Promote positive relationships to achieve understanding and mutual respect.
- Provide service users with positive role models.
- prioritising the welfare of service users
- providing a safe environment for service users
- ensuring equipment is used safely and for its intended purpose
- having good awareness of issues to do with safeguarding and child protection and acting when appropriate.
- following our principles, policies, and procedures including our policies and procedures for safeguarding and child protection, whistleblowing, and online safety
- always staying within the law
- modelling good behaviour for service users to follow
- challenging all inappropriate behaviour and reporting any breaches of the staff conduct policy to *Brenda Pedroni – Designated Safeguarding Lead*
- reporting all concerns about abusive behaviour, following our safeguarding and/or child protection procedures
this includes inappropriate behaviour displayed by an adult or service user and directed at anybody of any age.

Respecting service users

You should:

- Always listen to and respect service users
- value and take service users' 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 to follow child protection procedures, it is important to explain this to the child or young person at the earliest opportunity.
- Establish and building on strong and positive relationships.
- Demonstrate a commitment to every individual's well-being.
- Be consistent, firm, and fair.

Diversity and inclusion

You should:

- treat service users fairly and without prejudice or discrimination
- understand that service users 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.



POLICY STATEMENT AND PROCEDURE REGARDING PERSONAL CONTACT BETWEEN STAFF AND DAY OPPORTUNITY SERVICE USERS

Staff should respond to every person's physical and emotional needs by offering an appropriate level of support and empathy

At referral stage it should be ascertained, through discussion and assessment, the relevance and significance of everyone's personal relationships with others and whether there are any issues surrounding gender and sexuality, which need to be addressed.

Necessary physical support given by staff to service users requiring help and supervision with personal care should be given sensitively, paying respect to privacy, dignity, and personal choice of the individual.

Inappropriate advances from service users towards staff should be addressed immediately by the staff member, reinforcing the boundaries expected of the service user in respect of the relationship.

Physical contact should not arouse or respond to sexual expectations or feelings. A sensitive but professional approach must always be maintained.

A service user asking for physical comfort should not be responded to automatically, neither should they be rejected without a sensitive response and explanation.

Privacy for physical expressions of affection or comfort may well be appropriate in such circumstances as bereavement but for everyone's protection **physical contact in private must be avoided.**

Avoid being "behind closed doors" on a one-to-one basis with service users (e.g., advocacy or counselling), endeavour to meet at a venue where you can easily be observed without intrusion, i.e., through a window or glass panel door.

Where necessary physical support is given with personal hygiene and care tasks, each service user must be afforded privacy, dignity, respect, and personal choice always. Staff supporting service users in such tasks must be appropriate to the age, gender, ability, and the needs of the individual.

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 service users or young people



- ensure your contact with service users 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 service users
- if a situation arises where you are alone with a service user, ensure that you are within sight or can be heard by other adults
- if a service user specifically asks for or needs some individual time with you, ensure other staff or volunteers know where you and the service user are

Unacceptable, Negative or Inappropriate Behaviours

Behaviour which is detrimental to the health, safety and well-being of others will be investigated thoroughly.

Care plans will be devised and implemented with advice and consultation from appropriate professionals, family advocates and care managers so that negative behaviour will be dealt with positively, effectively, and appropriately.

Unacceptable or negative behaviour must be recorded in a service user's file and in the event of serious behaviours such as self-harm, harm to others, damage to property etc, an incident form should be completed, signed, and witnessed by those involved. In the event of any resulting medical treatment being administered this must also be recorded.

At Apple Tree Farm good behaviour and discipline rely on good relationships, strong role models and positive interaction. We are opposed to the use of sanctions unless necessary, but we accept that sanctions may have to be implemented as part of the approach to an individual's personal development program. Any sanctions imposed must be constructive and positive, having been negotiated through discussion with the service user, family, advocates, and care managers.

When working with service users, you must not:

- allow concerns or allegations to go unreported
- take unnecessary risks
- smoke, consume alcohol or use illegal substances
- develop inappropriate relationships with service users
- make inappropriate promises to service users
- engage in behaviour that is in any way abusive
 - including having any form of sexual contact with a child or young person
- let service users 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 service users
- make sarcastic, insensitive, derogatory, or sexually suggestive comments or gestures to or in front of service users.

Find out more about recognising and responding to abuse



Upholding this staff conduct policy

You should always follow this staff conduct policy 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 **Apple Tree Farm CIC**. 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 **Brenda Pedroni – Designated Safeguarding Lead**. If necessary, you should follow our whistleblowing procedure and safeguarding and/or child protection procedures.

This policy must be reviewed every year, or sooner if deemed necessary, to ensure it is still fit for purpose.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Brenda Pedroni'.

Farm Manager

This policy was last reviewed on: 14/05/2026