



Code of Conduct

Purpose

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

The behaviour code aims to promote the best practice we can do, help us protect children and young people from abuse and reduce the possibility of unfounded allegations being made. It has been informed by the views of children and young people.

Citywise Project Leaders and Staff must make sure that everyone working on 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 and young people, you are acting in a position of trust. You are likely to be seen as a role model and must act appropriately. Staff and volunteers are expected to conduct themselves in the following ways when attending a Citywise Project:

- In recognising they may be working with vulnerable children they commit to attending every mentoring session in order to give the children they work with the best possible experience of the Citywise programme.
- Mobile phones are not used and are left in bags during projects in order to give the children our fullest attention and avoid safeguarding issues. If connecting virtually, an effort is made to use a computer for this rather than a mobile phone. Project leaders are permitted to use a mobile phone for project purposes only.
- Any disciplinary action is left to the project leader to enact, concerns about child behaviour should be brought to their attention.

What we ask our staff and volunteers

Responsibility

You are responsible for:

- Prioritising the welfare of children and young people
- Providing a safe environment for children and young people
 - This includes ensuring equipment is used safely and for its intended purpose.
 - This includes 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 (which can be found in our Safeguarding Policy)
- Staying within the law at all times
- Modeling good behaviour for children and young people to follow
- Challenging all unacceptable behaviour by adults involved in Citywise's work and reporting any breaches of this Code of Conduct to the Project Leader and Safeguarding Lead
- Reporting all allegations/suspensions of abuse following our reporting procedures (which can be found in our Safeguarding Policy)
 - This includes abusive behaviour being displayed by an adult or child and directed at anybody of any age.

Rights

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 between yourself and others, and appreciate that all participants bring something valuable and different to the project.
- Challenge discrimination and prejudice
- Encourage young people and 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
- Avoid favouritism
- Be patient with others
- Use special 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 work of the project you are involved in
- Ensure that there is more than one adult present during activities with children and young people
 - If this isn't possible, ensure that you are within sight or hearing of other adults.
 - No one should ever be alone in a room 1:1 with a child behind closed doors, doors must remain open.
 - In the case of any 1:1 time in a video call, the project leader is on site with the children and all calls are recorded by Citywise (not by the mentor).
- 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 and ensure that you are within sight of other volunteers whilst respecting confidentiality.
- Only provide personal care in an emergency and make sure there is more than one adult present if possible.
 - 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.

Respect

We believe that every human being has intrinsic worth. 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
 - In some cases it may be necessary to break confidentiality in order to follow child protection procedures; if this is the case, it is important to explain this to the child or young person at the earliest opportunity. A helpful quote to learn and explain at the start of any relationship with a child is:

"I cannot promise to keep a secret, but I can keep what you tell me confidential which means no one else needs to know unless I think you are in danger, then I would have to tell the person in charge of keeping children safe at Citywise"

Unacceptable 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
 - This includes having any form of sexual contact with a child or young person. Including 16-18 year olds.
- Let children and young people 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 and young people
- Make sarcastic, insensitive, derogatory or sexually suggestive comments or gestures to or in front of children and young people
- Use vulgar language or swear around young people
- NB: Usually physical contact with children is not necessary, where possible this should be avoided and not initiated by a volunteer or staff member. This ensures appropriate boundaries are respected and no misunderstandings can occur. In the case of comforting an upset child or aiding an injured child contact may be deemed appropriate but must be done in full view of other staff or volunteers.

Upholding this code of behaviour

You should always follow this code of behavior and never rely on your reputation or that of our organisation to protect you.

By working with Citywise, you agree to abide by this code of conduct.

If you have behaved inappropriately you will be subject to our disciplinary procedures. Depending on the seriousness of the situation, you may be asked to discontinue your work with Citywise. 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 your Project Leader and the Safeguarding Lead. If necessary you should follow the whistle-blowing procedure and child protection/safeguarding procedures.