

## **Volunteer Code of Behaviour**

Herefordshire City of Sanctuary aims to ensure that volunteers involved with its activities with children, young people and or vulnerable adults understand the boundaries of appropriate behaviour. Every volunteer is required to demonstrate exemplary behaviour in order to protect children, young people and vulnerable adults from abuse and to protect themselves from allegations. Comprehensive safeguarding guidelines can be found in the document Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2019). The following are examples of behaviour that create a positive and safe environment for vulnerable groups as they participate with us in Herefordshire City of Sanctuary activities.

### **Volunteers should:**

- Treat everyone with fairness and respect and provide an example that they would wish others to follow
- Work openly avoiding private or unobserved situations and working in isolation. Aim to ensure that they are not the only adult present and are at least within sight or hearing of others.
- They are advised to always leave the door open if they find themselves in a room alone with a child, young person or vulnerable adult or use a room with glass observation panels.
- Maintain a safe and appropriate distance and be aware that physical contact may be misinterpreted
- Respect each child's, young person's or vulnerable adults right to privacy
- Exercise caution when discussing sensitive issues with children, young people or vulnerable adults
- Behave according to the guidance offered in this Code
- Ensure that if any form of manual/physical touching is required; it should be given in an open observable environment. The reason why this is necessary should be explained to the child, young person or vulnerable adult and their informed agreement gained.
- Unacceptable behaviour by volunteers should be challenged and all allegations or suspicions of abuse should be reported to the DSL and / or the DSO
- The welfare of the child, young person or vulnerable adult must be the first priority.
- In all activities feedback should be constructive rather than negative
- Report all concerns, allegations or suspicions of abuse immediately to the DSL or DSO.

### **Volunteers should never:**

- Spend excessive time alone with children, young people or vulnerable adults away from others

- Discuss their own personal issues
- Give out their personal contact details (personal phone or mobile number, email or home address) without informing the Herefordshire City of Sanctuary Chair
- Become 'friends' on social networking sites without informing the Herefordshire City of Sanctuary Chair
- Leave groups of children or young people unsupervised
- Allow a child, young person or vulnerable adult is to use inappropriate language without challenging it
- Do things of a personal nature that children, young people or vulnerable adults can do for themselves
- Allow allegations made by a child, young person or vulnerable adult to be ignored, not recorded or not acted upon
- Engage in rough physical or sexually provocative games
- Make sexually suggestive comments, even in fun
- Allow or engage in any form of inappropriate touching
- Reduce a child, young person or vulnerable adult to tears as a form of control.

It is a criminal offence under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 for a person over the age of 18 in a position of trust to enter into a sexual relationship with a child or young person under 18 years old or a vulnerable adult, even if the relationship is consensual. This means that any activity between a Herefordshire City of Sanctuary volunteer with an under 18 year old or vulnerable adult may be a criminal offence, If you have any queries or concerns about relationships with young people under 18 and vulnerable adults, please seek advice from the Herefordshire City of Sanctuary Chair.