

Code of Conduct

1. Introduction

The aim of this policy is to provide representatives of Staffordshire Parent Carer Forum (StaffsPCF) with clear guidance about their role and responsibilities, and to provide information for our partners about the measures that StaffsPCF employs to ensure that it meets its responsibilities.

2. Aims and Values

Our reputation and efficacy rely on us upholding and promoting StaffsPCF's aims and values. The conduct of members, employees and volunteers should demonstrate that we welcome and care for all, ensure that everyone is included and that we value the contributions they make.

We aim to engage in open, honest communication and work to build a partnership of trust, with Staffordshire Local Authority, CCGs and service providers. We strive to ensure that the voices and experiences of the children and young people of Staffordshire with SEND, and their families, are valued and used to inform the development of current and future services at strategic level.

We encourage a climate of openness and dialogue through which the opinions and free expression of concerns are welcomed as a helpful contribution. Any matters of concern regarding adherence to the expectations set out below should be shared with a member of the Steering Group.

3. Principles

We are guided by the *Seven Principles of Public Life* identified by the Nolan Committee:

- **Selflessness:** we make decisions:
 - for the good of all our members
 - in terms of our vision and mission statement
 - not only to gain individual financial or material benefits for ourselves, our family or friends
- **Integrity:** we uphold our professional boundaries. We do not place ourselves under obligations to individuals or organisations that might influence us in the performance of our duties.
- **Objectivity:** we always ensure that we represent a range of: disability, Special Educational Needs, cultures, social backgrounds and geographical areas.
- **Accountability:** we are accountable for our decisions and actions to the wider group membership, funders and other stakeholders, and submit ourselves to scrutiny.
- **Openness:** we are open about all decisions and actions that we take and we are able to give reasons for our decisions when required.



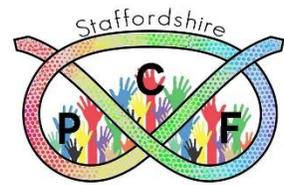
Staffordshire Parent Carer Forum

- **Honesty:** we declare private interests relating to our duties and take steps to resolve conflicts arising in a way that protects the reputation of the Staffs PCF
- **Leadership:** we promote and support the above principles with effective leadership and by personal example.

4. Personal Conduct

StaffsPCF members, employees and volunteers must:

- Ensure actions are transparent and avoid any suggestion of improper influence.
- Act in accordance with StaffsPCF Equality and Diversity policy therefore ensuring they do not discriminate on grounds of gender, geography, race, religion, age, ability, appearance, class, culture, ethnicity, education, employment, sexuality, sexual orientation and spirituality or any other protected characteristic under equality legislation.
- Demonstrate non-discriminatory, courteous, sensitive and respectful behaviour to all members of StaffsPCF, our partners and other individuals and groups with whom we work.
- Demonstrate integrity and uphold and promote the reputation of StaffsPCF at all times.
- Not bring StaffsPCF or any of its partners into disrepute through their behaviour and communication in the course of their duties within the forum or outside of their forum role, including through social media.
- Raise any concerns about StaffsPCF processes, other StaffsPCF members or their own involvement with the team's activities, with a member of the Steering Group.
- Ensure that the views of parent carers are fully and accurately represented. Whilst personal experience may inform this, we must not rely entirely on own experiences, views and judgements, but be fully representative of the wider membership.
- Not endeavour or expect to receive more favourable treatment for themselves or their child/young person due to their involvement in StaffsPCF or use StaffsPCF as a platform to further their own personal aims or beliefs.
- Ensure any Conflict of Interest is declared in line with StaffsPCF Conflict of Interest Policy.
- Maintain the confidentiality of individuals and partner organisations according to the data protection policy. Any known breach of confidentiality must be reported to the Chair of the Steering Group.
- No political statement or political bias or judgment shall be demonstrated by any individual or group representing StaffsPCF.



- Use the correct policies and procedures for reporting incidents, grievances or making complaints.

5. Meetings

- Ensure punctual and regular attendance at meetings and activities. In the case of an emergency, notify the Lead for that event as soon as possible
- Be properly prepared for meetings and undertake all actions agreed.
- Have read papers prior to the meeting.

We will show respect:

- for the agreed processes of the meeting e.g. the agenda
- for the facilitator e.g. the Chair
- for each other
- for other people's opinions, even if they are different from our own

We will listen and:

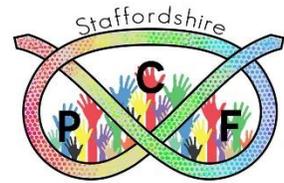
- try not to talk too much, or talk too little
- try not to repeat ourselves
- use encouraging body language
- try not to interrupt others

We will maintain confidentiality and:

- have useful discussions without sharing personal details or anecdotes
- learn from each other without divulging personal details or anecdotes
- always breach confidentiality if someone is at risk of being harmed

We will behave respectfully and:

- encourage healthy challenge from others
- be specific about the behaviour we are challenging
- always challenge bullying or offensive behaviour
- use 'I' statements so that the other person knows how we feel
- leave our phones in silent mode, taking urgent calls outside of the meeting



6. Breach of Code of Conduct

There must be no abuse of authority in our actions. All StaffsPCF members, employees and volunteers are required to uphold the spirit, as well as the wording, of this Code of Conduct.

In the event of an alleged breach of the StaffsPCF Code of Conduct any investigation or action will be initiated by at least 2 Steering Group members. Every attempt will be made to respond constructively, in confidence and with sensitivity in order to resolve the matter for everybody concerned.

Based on the outcome of the investigation, a range of actions may be taken ranging from seeking appropriate training and support for the individual member, to asking them to permanently step down, depending on the severity and impact of any alleged breach.

Please note: StaffsPCF fully appreciates the commitment of parent carer representatives attending meetings and will expect that other organisations' representatives will also offer our StaffsPCF members, employees and volunteers the same respect and consideration as laid down in this Code of Conduct.

Date first agreed: 5th October 2021
Agreed by: StaffsPCF Steering Group
Next review date: October 2022
