



Safeguarding Policy

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Safeguarding at PQA

We strive to establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to when they have a worry or concern.

At PQA, we are committed to creating a strong culture of safety and an ethos that champions diversity and respect for difference, which places students' well-being at the heart of everything we do.

We strive to provide a caring, friendly, and safe environment for all our students, so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere free from oppression and abuse. We back this up by having the right procedures and policies in place for responding to complaints, concerns, and allegations of suspected or actual abuse.

All PQA team members must have read and signed this policy, read and adhere to all the linked policies listed in Appendix, attended safeguarding training and should be aware of how they may access safeguarding advice.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone's responsibility. Everyone who comes into contact with children has a role to play.

The purpose of this policy is to clearly outline the expectations that PQA has regarding safeguarding our students and how team members should behave with the students that are in their care.

Anyone involved with a PQA academy must be given a copy of this policy to read. Each Principal must ensure that every member of their team has read and signed this policy to show that they have not only read and understood it but that they are also bound by it.

All PQA team members receive safeguarding children training upon joining. This training is refreshed every two years to ensure that everyone at PQA is knowledgeable and aware of their role in creating and maintaining a safe environment and recognising the indicators of abuse or neglect.

All team members will know how to report any alleged malpractice, allegations and/or concerns relating to a child and will be supported when dealing with safeguarding concerns.

PQA aims to establish and maintain an environment where children feel secure, are encouraged to talk, and are listened to when they have a worry or concern.

The Safeguarding Team

PQA has a designated team of safeguarding experts who all have extensive experience in child safeguarding.

There is a dedicated number and email address through which you can contact the safeguarding team:

01494 917525

safeguarding@pqacademy.com

It is the role of the Safeguarding Team to:

- ❖ Act as a source of support, advice, and expertise for everyone at PQA
- ❖ To be the point of contact for all safeguarding partners
- ❖ As required, liaise with the local authority designated officers (LADO) for child protection concerns in cases which concern an adult
- ❖ To liaise and work with external safeguarding partners, organisations and agencies as needed
- ❖ Ensure that PQA operates within the legislative framework and recommended guidance
- ❖ Keep detailed accurate secure records of concerns, actions, and outcomes
- ❖ To provide and deliver safeguarding training
- ❖ Understand the emotional impact of dealing with disclosures and provide support as appropriate
- ❖ Ensure all team members have a DBS on the update service and are safe to work with children
- ❖ Ensure that PQA is following the most up-to-date safeguarding and prevent guidance
- ❖ Proactively work with Principals, teachers and Head Office to raise awareness of safeguarding issues and promote a culture of awareness and safety
- ❖ Investigate any issues raised through whistleblowing

The Safeguarding Team should be contacted in emergencies to seek support and advice, if you believe something is not right, then you must speak to the Duty Safeguarding Officer.

Safeguarding is also the 'Whistleblowing helpline' which is in place to manage calls from anyone wishing to raise a concern and feels that they have exhausted all avenues with the Principal or Manager. A link to our Whistleblowing Policy can be found in the Appendices at the end of this Policy.

Recruiting Team Members

PQA adheres to a 'Safer Recruitment' policy. Principals should refer to the Operations Manual for full details.

When recruiting a Team Member for PQA, a Principal must:

- ❖ Ensure the role specifically refers to suitability to work with children
- ❖ Scrutinize the applicant's CV and employment history for discrepancies and inconsistencies, and ensure that these are satisfactorily resolved
- ❖ Obtain at least two independent references, one must be from the last employer
- ❖ Conduct a face-to-face interview with the candidate, during which the Principal must explore their suitability for working with children and investigate any gaps in employment history
- ❖ Verify the applicant's identity
- ❖ Verify academic and/or vocational qualifications
- ❖ Check the candidate's employment history and discuss the most recent employment
- ❖ Obtain an enhanced DBS or the regional equivalent

The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) is there to assist and prevent unsuitable people from working with vulnerable groups, including children. A DBS checks if the applicant has a criminal record. It is the Principal's responsibility to ensure that all team members have a current, valid DBS in place and on the update service.

Any adult who is on academy premises and who does not have a full, current DBS (or the regional equivalent) will need to be always supervised.

Creating a safe environment at PQ Academies

Every member of the PQA team must demonstrate safe, appropriate behaviour to help create a safe and secure environment for our students and to protect ourselves from allegations of misconduct.

Bad Practice:

The following behaviour is unacceptable and should never be tolerated at PQA under any circumstances. If this behaviour is observed at any time, by anyone, it should be reported to the PQA Safeguarding Team immediately:

- ❖ Never use physical force against a child unless it constitutes reasonable force to protect them, another person or to protect property. In these circumstances, the incident must be reported in writing to PQA Safeguarding
- ❖ Never engage in rough or sexually provocative games, this includes horseplay
- ❖ Never use physical punishment
- ❖ Never engage in any kind of inappropriate touching
- ❖ Never make sexually suggestive comments or references to a student, even in a light-hearted manner
- ❖ Never use sarcasm or bad language as a form of control
- ❖ Never allow an allegation/concern made by a student to go unreported or not acted upon
- ❖ Never exchange contact details with a student this includes social media
- ❖ Never invite or allow students to stay at your home or meet with students away from the academy

Good Practice:

The following minimum standards help promote a positive, safe culture and environment: -

- ❖ Principals should have taken all reasonable measures to ensure that only PQA students and team members are able to access and move around the academy
- ❖ All students are expected to sign in at the beginning of the session and sign out at the end of the session. If students who are over the age of 11 years old and their parents wish for them to leave unaccompanied, they must provide written consent to the Principal.
- ❖ At PQA, we work in an open environment. No Principal or team member should ever be alone with a student. There may be occasions where it is appropriate to speak to a child in a 1:1 situation and in such circumstances, another member of the team must be informed and be close by, the conversation should be conducted in a room with an open door and/or there is clear visibility to the room and its participants
- ❖ Where physical contact is required, for directing movement and/or part of the process of creative interpretation, teachers must always explain the reason why beforehand. No student should ever be touched on a part of their body in a way that is indecent or that is covered by modesty clothing e.g., underwear
- ❖ All students should be treated with respect and dignity. PQA will proactively take action to eliminate discrimination against any person or group of people. All activities at PQA should be designed in a way to promote positive attitudes toward diversity.
- ❖ No adult should ever engage in an intimate, close relationship with any student
- ❖ Everyone at PQA has the responsibility of creating and maintaining a safe environment ensuring that they act in a responsible way for the best interest of the students
- ❖ Teachers and Principals should set a good example for students and model the behaviour that they want to see
- ❖ Alcohol and/or being under the influence of substances whilst at PQA and/or in the company of students is never acceptable
- ❖ Students should receive positive and constructive feedback. Teachers should never give overly negative feedback or make sarcastic comments to students
- ❖ There should always be two qualified First Aiders on site and any treatment must always be recorded, and parents informed. If any accident occurs and/or a student is injured in any way, this must be recorded in the accident log

Our PQA Student Code of Conduct

Good behaviour is important for everyone at PQA. Kindness, good manners and consideration for others, together with self-discipline are encouraged at all times. PQA is a caring community where we believe in celebrating the successes and differences of all our students.

We encourage all PQA students to make a full and meaningful contribution to their academies and we expect a high standard of behaviour from everyone in our community. This student code of conduct is a set of simple rules that we expect everyone to follow to help make PQA a fun, safe and creative environment that benefits everyone.

When at PQA we ask that you:

- ❖ Work to the best of your ability in every lesson
- ❖ Behave responsibly and listen to the instructions that are given
- ❖ Be kind, friendly and helpful to your fellow students
- ❖ Be polite, honest and respectful to your teachers and Principal
- ❖ Wear the PQA uniform with pride at every session along with joggers/leggings
- ❖ Wear suitable footwear for practical lessons
- ❖ Be prepared for your lessons and arrive at PQA on time
- ❖ Always strive to create a healthy, safe and secure environment
- ❖ Ensure forbidden items are not brought to the academy e.g., nuts or jewellery
- ❖ Be respectful of other people's possessions
- ❖ Mobile phones are brought to the academy at your own risk and must be switched off and placed in bags at all times

To keep everyone safe and to ensure that PQA is a friendly and inclusive environment, any bullying or serious rule-breaking will not be tolerated and should be immediately reported to the Principal. Fighting, name-calling, or any acts of unkindness will not be tolerated. This includes cyberbullying.

The Principal will then discuss the matter with the parents concerned and will decide on an appropriate course of action.

Team Members Responsibilities

If any team members are concerned about a child, they must inform the Safeguarding Team on the same day.

The Safeguarding Team will decide whether the concerns should be referred to the Local Children's Social Care or in certain cases the police. If it is decided to make a referral to Children's Social Care this will be discussed with the parents unless doing so would place the child at further risk of harm.

Particular attention will be paid to the attendance and development of any child about whom PQA has concerns, or who has been identified as being the subject of a child protection plan and a written record will be kept.

Confidentiality

Safeguarding children raises issues of confidentiality that must be clearly understood by all team members, but we must remember that Safeguarding overrides confidentiality and the Data Protection Act.

- ❖ All team members have a responsibility to share relevant information about the protection of children with other professionals, particularly the investigative agencies (Children's Social Services and the Police) if required.
- ❖ If a child confides in a member of the PQA Team and requests that the information is kept secret, it is important that the PQA Team member tells the child in a manner appropriate to the child's age/stage of development that they cannot promise complete confidentiality – instead, they must explain that they may need to pass information to other professionals to help keep the child or other children safe.
- ❖ PQA Team members who receive information about children and their families in the course of their work should share that information only within appropriate professional contexts.

Record Keeping

If a child has made a disclosure, the PQA Team member must:

- ❖ Make brief notes as soon as possible after the conversation
- ❖ Do not destroy the original notes in case they are needed by a court
- ❖ Record the date, time, place and any noticeable non-verbal behaviour and the words used by the child
- ❖ Draw a diagram/body map to indicate the position of any injuries
- ❖ Record statements and observations rather than interpretations or assumptions

- ❖ Sign and date records

All records need to be given to the Principal and the PQA Safeguarding team on the same day. No copies should be kept by team members.

What is Abuse?

Physical Abuse

May involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning, scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Indicators in the child

- ❖ Frequent or unexplained bruising, marks or injury
- ❖ Bruises that suggest the outline of an object used e.g., belt marks or handprints
- ❖ Cigarette burns
- ❖ Bite marks
- ❖ Unexplained broken or fractured bones
- ❖ Scales
- ❖ Fear of being contacted
- ❖ Reports of injury caused by parents or carers
- ❖ Scars of different sizes or ages, or on different parts of the body, or unusually shaped

Emotional Abuse

The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Indicators in the child

- ❖ Developmental delay
- ❖ Failure to thrive
- ❖ Abnormal attachment between a child and parent/carer e.g., anxious, indiscriminate or no attachment
- ❖ Behavioural problems e.g., aggression, attention seeking, hyperactivity, fearful, poor attention, tearful erratic mood swings
- ❖ Frozen watchfulness, particularly in preschool children
- ❖ Low self-esteem and lack of confidence
- ❖ Withdrawn or seen as a 'loner' - difficulty relating to others
- ❖ Inappropriate emotional responses to painful situations and neurotic behaviour (e.g., rocking, hair twisting, thumb sucking)
- ❖ Self-harm
- ❖ An air of detachment – a 'don't care' attitude
- ❖ Social isolation – does not join in and has few friends

Neglect

The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs is likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy, for example, as a result of maternal substance abuse. Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing, and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers); or ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

Indicators in the child

- ❖ Poor Hygiene
- ❖ Weight loss/Underweight Physical presentation
- ❖ Inadequately/Inappropriate clothing, clothing in a poor state of repair
- ❖ Unmanaged/physical and/or medical conditions including poor dental health
- ❖ General delay, especially speech and language delay
- ❖ Poor relationships with parents or carers
- ❖ Constant tiredness or listlessness
- ❖ Fear of going home

Sexual Abuse

Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is

happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue (also known as child-on-child abuse).

Indicators in the child

- ❖ Frequent unexplained abdominal pain and/or discomfort when walking or sitting
- ❖ Demonstrates sexual knowledge or behaviour inappropriate to age/stage of development, or that is unusually explicit
- ❖ Inappropriate sexualised behaviour
- ❖ Sudden changes in behaviour, such as becoming aggressive or withdrawn
- ❖ Self-harm e.g., eating disorders or self-harm
- ❖ Promiscuity
- ❖ Wetting or other regressive behaviours e.g., thumb sucking
- ❖ Reports of assault
- ❖ Substance/drug misuse

Bullying

Bullying can take many forms including

- ❖ Physical. hitting, kicking and theft
- ❖ Emotional e.g., name-calling, teasing, racist or homophobic taunts, sarcasm, threats, graffiti gesture, ridiculing humiliating, ignoring
- ❖ Sexual e.g., unwanted physical contact, abusive comments.
- ❖ Online / Cyber e.g., using social media platforms with intent to harm, which can include but is not limited to harassment, taunting, posting threats, spreading rumours, making sexual remarks, posting the victim's personal information

Teachers and Principals should be aware that cyberbullying involving mobile phones and the internet is virulent, especially via social media channels.

Other Types of Abuse

It is important to be aware of other types of abuse which if suspected or observed should also be reported to the PQA Safeguarding Team.

All team members should be aware of indicators of abuse and neglect. If team members are unsure, they should always speak to the Safeguarding Team without

delay.

Dealing with a Disclosure

Children may not find it easy to tell adults about their abuse, they can show signs or act in ways that they hope adults will notice and react to. In some cases, the victim may not make a direct report, it may be from a friend or a conversation that suggests a child has been harmed or the child's behaviour might indicate that something is wrong.

If a child discloses that he or she has been abused in some way, the member of team members/ should:

- ❖ Keep calm
- ❖ Reassure the child that they were right to tell you and that they are not to blame and take what the child says seriously.
- ❖ Be careful not to lead the child or put words into the child's mouth – ask questions sensitively. Record any non-verbal behaviour and specific words used by the child.
- ❖ Do not promise confidentiality.
- ❖ Fully document the conversation on a word-by-word basis immediately following the conversation while the memory is fresh. Use a body map if recording any injuries.
- ❖ Fully record dates and times of the events and when the record was made and ensure that all notes are kept securely. Sign the document and do not destroy it.
- ❖ Inform the child/ young person what you will do next and who you will tell.
- ❖ Refer to the Safeguarding Team.
- ❖ Only share information with those people who need to know.

Support

Dealing with a disclosure from a child, and safeguarding issues can be stressful. The Safeguarding Team are on hand to offer immediate support to team members. We strongly encourage them to consider seeking support for themselves and to discuss this with the Safeguarding Team.

Allegations against/concerns raised in relation to adults

An allegation is any information which indicates that a member of the PQA team may have:

- ❖ Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child
- ❖ Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child
- ❖ Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicated he or she may pose a risk of harm to children

- ❖ Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children. This includes behaviour that has taken place outside of PQA.

The person to whom an allegation is first reported to should take the matter seriously and keep an open mind. They should not investigate or ask leading questions if seeking clarification; it is important not to make assumptions.

Confidentiality should not be promised, and the person should be advised that the concern will be shared on a 'need to know' basis only.

The person must then:

- ❖ make an immediate written record of the allegation using the informant's words including the time, date, and place where the alleged incident occurred
 - brief details of what happened, what was said and who was present
- ❖ this record should be signed, dated, and immediately passed on to the Safeguarding Team via email at safeguarding@pqacademy.com or 01494917525

Any allegation MUST be reported to the Safeguarding Team straight away.

The Principal should not investigate the allegation themselves, or take written or detailed statements, but will refer the matter immediately to the Safeguarding Team.

The Safeguarding Team will then liaise with the relevant authority if it is appropriate to do so.

The Aftermath

PQA recognises that students who are abused or who witness violence may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth. Attending PQA may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the life of a child who is at risk. For this reason, we encourage teachers to allow students who have made disclosures to 'feel normal' at PQA.

APPENDIX 1 – Whistle Blowing Policy

What is the purpose of whistleblowing:

The purpose of whistleblowing is to eradicate unethical behaviour in the workplace.

What is a whistleblower:

A whistleblower is anyone who perceives misconduct by a person or organization. You can raise your concern at any time about an incident that happened in the past, is happening now or you believe will happen in the near future.

You are protected by the law and have the right to speak out without fear of recrimination. This is covered by the 'Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998

If you have any concerns and wish to speak to someone, please contact a member of the Safeguarding Team

- Email: safeguarding@pqacademy.com
- Tel: 01494 917525

All concerns will be taken seriously.

It is everyone's responsibility to protect the safety of both students and adults.

APPENDIX 2 – Anti-Bullying Policy

Introduction

All children and young people have the right to go about their daily lives without the fear of being threatened, assaulted, or harassed. No one should underestimate the impact that bullying can have on a person's life. It can cause elevated levels of distress, affecting young people's well-being, behaviour, academic and social development right through into adulthood.

At PQA, we are committed to creating a strong culture and ethos that champions diversity and respect for difference, which places students' well-being at the heart of everything we do. We strive to provide a caring, friendly, and safe environment for all our students, so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere free from oppression and abuse. Bullying is an anti-social behaviour and affects everyone. All types of bullying are unacceptable at our academies and **will not** be tolerated. All students should feel able to tell and when bullying behaviour is brought to our attention, prompt and effective action will be taken. We are a **TELLING** place. This means that **anyone** aware of any type of bullying that is taking place is expected to tell a member of the PQA Team immediately.

What Is Bullying?

"Bullying behaviour abuses an imbalance of power to repeatedly and intentionally cause emotional or physical harm to another person or group of people. Isolated instances of hurtful behaviour, teasing or arguments between individuals would not be seen as bullying" (Torfaen definition 2008)

Bullying generally takes one of four forms:

1. Indirectly being unfriendly, isolating students (not letting them join in) spreading rumours, excluding, tormenting (e.g., hiding bags)
2. Physical pushing, kicking, hitting, punching, slapping or any form of violence
3. Verbal name-calling, teasing, threats, sarcasm
4. Cyber - All areas of internet misuse, such as nasty and/or threatening emails, misuse of blogs, gaming websites, internet chat rooms and instant messaging mobile threats by text messaging & calls and misuse of associated technology, i.e., camera and video facilities

Although not an exhaustive list, common examples of bullying include:

- Racial bullying
- Homophobic bullying
- Bullying based on disability, ability, gender, appearance or circumstance

Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying?

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be bullied. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Students who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.

PQA has a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying that occur within the academy.

Bullying that takes place outside the academy and/or on private social media may not be within our control however, we will always listen, advise and support wherever possible.

Objectives of this Policy

- ❖ All Team Members, students and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is
- ❖ All Team Members should know what the policy is on bullying and follow it when bullying is reported
- ❖ All Team Members and parents should know what the policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises
- ❖ At PQA we take bullying seriously. Students and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported
- ❖ Bullying will not be tolerated

Implementation

Academies:

The following steps may be taken when dealing with incidents:

- If bullying is suspected or reported whilst students are at the academy, the incident will be immediately reported to the Principal by the team member who has been approached
- A clear and precise account of the incident will be recorded and given to the Principal
- The Principal will interview all concerned and will record the incident
- Parents will be kept informed
- Punitive measures will be used as appropriate and in consultation with all parties concerned
- If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted

Students:

Students who have been bullied will be supported by:

- Offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a Team Member of their choice
- Encourage interaction with students and Team Members
- Reassure the student for example: 'this is not your fault; you have done nothing wrong'
- Restore self-esteem and confidence – encourage them to never feel afraid to speak up as they will always be heard.
- Praised for being brave to talk to someone

Pupils who have bullied will be helped by the Principal:

- Discussing what happened
- Discovering why the student became involved
- Establishing the wrongdoing and the need to change
- Encouraging the efforts of the student, where appropriate in the aftermath of the incident, as they try to make that change. *It's easy to be punitive, accepting the child's wrongdoing and showing the bully they can be accepted back into the community is important to everyone moving on.*
- Informing parents or guardians to help change the attitude and behaviour of the student

The following disciplinary steps can be taken:

- Fixed-term exclusion
- Cancellation of membership with immediate effect

Monitoring, evaluation and review

PQA will review this policy annually and assess its implementation and effectiveness. The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout each academy.

Prevention

We will use some or all of the following to help raise awareness of and prevent bullying. As and when appropriate, these may include:

- Writing and implementing a set of academy rules
- Using drama, film or music to reinforce awareness
- Performing shows, scenes or creating films about bullying
- Performance pieces that have bullying within them, will also contain discussion on how it affects young people.

Possible Signs and Symptoms

Many children and young people do not speak out when being bullied and may indicate by signs or behaviour that they are being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and should investigate if a student:

- is frightened of walking to or from the academy
- begs to be driven to the academy
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to the academy (phobic)
- begins to truant
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- uses excuses to miss attendance (headache, stomach ache etc)
- begins to suffer academically
- has possessions which are damaged or " go missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay the bully)
- has Tuck Shop monies continually "lost"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises or shows signs of being in a fight
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- changes their eating habits (stops eating or overeats)
- goes to bed earlier than usual
- is unable to sleep
- wets the bed
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives unlikely excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous and jumpy when a text message or email is received

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should always be investigated.

APPENDIX 3 – Behaviour Code for Adults Working with Children

This behaviour policy outlines the conduct PQA expects from all our Team Members and volunteers. This includes Team Members, students on work placement and anyone who is undertaking duties for the organisation, whether paid or unpaid.

The behaviour policy aims to help us protect children and young people from abuse and reduce the possibility of unfounded allegations being made.

PQA is responsible for making sure everyone taking part in our services has seen, understood, and agreed to follow the policy of behaviour, and that they understand the consequences of inappropriate behaviour.

The role of PQA Team Members

In your role at PQA, you are acting in a position of authority and have a duty of care towards the children and young people we work with. You are likely to be seen as a role model and are expected to act appropriately.

Responsibility

You are responsible for:

- prioritising the welfare of children and young people
- providing a safe environment for children and young people
- ensuring equipment is used safely and for its intended purpose
- having a good awareness of issues to do with safeguarding and child protection and acting when appropriate
- following our principles, policies, and procedures
- be a suitable person to work with children
- including our policies and procedures for child protection/safeguarding,
- working within legislation and guidance, policies, and procedures at all times
- modelling good behaviour for children and young people to follow
- challenging all unacceptable behaviour and reporting any breaches of the behaviour policy to the Safeguarding Team
- reporting all concerns about abusive behaviour, following our safeguarding and child protection procedures
- this includes 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, 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.

Relationships

You should:

- promote relationships that are based on openness, honesty, trust, and respect
- avoid favouritism
- be patient with others
- exercise 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
- ensuring that whenever possible, there is more than one adult present during activities with children and young people
- if a situation arises where you are alone with a child or young person, ensure that you are within sight or hearing of other adults.
- if a child specifically asks for or needs some individual time with you, ensure other Team Members know where you and the child are and that you are within sight of others.
- only provide personal care in an emergency and make sure there is more than one adult present if possible, unless 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

You should:

- always listen to and respect children
- 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.
- 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

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
- have any form of sexual contact with a child or young person.
- let children and young people 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 children and young people
- make sarcastic, insensitive, derogatory, or sexually suggestive comments or gestures to or in front of children and young people

Upholding this code of behaviour

You should always follow this code of behaviour and never rely on your reputation or that of PQA LTD to protect you.

If you have behaved inappropriately:

- harmed a child
- pose a risk of harm to a child
- accessed or have been in possession of sexual abuse material relating to children
- accessed or have been in possession of sexually explicit images depicting violence against someone
- sexually abused a child
- or have received a caution or conviction for a relevant offence

We may make a report to statutory agencies such as the police and/or the local authority child protection services.

As a responsible adult, you must be a suitable person to work with children and young people.

If you become aware of any breaches of this code, you must report them to the Safeguarding Team. If necessary, you should follow our whistleblowing procedure and safeguarding and child protection procedures.