



Evergreen Education and Therapy –

Code of Conduct for Staff

Created by:	R Peacock Head of Therapeutic Services
Date created:	August 2023
Last reviewed	August 2026
Next Review Date:	August 2027

I confirm I have read and will adhere to the code of conduct	Sign and Date
I understand that this is the over-arching contract for work with Evergreen Education and Therapy Ltd	Sign and Date
I will submit accurate invoices monthly and I am responsible for my tax and national insurance payments	Sign and Date
I will ensure I have the correct coverage of insurance and will send copies of insurance certificates to Evergreen Directors	Sign and Date
I confirm I am up to date with my safeguarding training to a minimum of level 2 and I have submitted a copy to the Directors.	Sign and Date
I confirm I am up to date with Prevent Training and I have submitted the certificate to the Directors	Sign and Date
I have read and understand my responsibilities as set out in the safeguarding policy.	Sign and Date

Policy brief & purpose

This Policy is the over-arching Contract with each member of staff and must be signed by each staff member annually.

The safety and well-being of every client at Evergreen is of paramount importance.

Every child has the right to grow up and to live in a safe environment.

Every member of staff should read this code of conduct in conjunction with the:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Allegations Against Staff Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Low Levels Concern Policy
- KCSIE 2026
- Working Together to Safeguard Children

This code of conduct is reviewed annually.



Evergreen Education and Therapy –

Code of Conduct for Staff

The guidance below is taken from the DfE document ‘Guidance for safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings, October 2015’ and KCSIE 2026 document.

The purpose of this guidance is to provide clear advice on appropriate and safe behaviours for all adults working with children in paid or unpaid capacities, in all settings and in all contexts.

In conjunction with the DfE document, this guidance seeks to raise awareness of ‘illegal, unsafe, unprofessional, and unwise behaviour’. It should assist staff to monitor their own standards and practice and reduce the risk of allegations being made against them.

In any disciplinary proceedings, this document and the DfE document may be referred to.

This document aims to:

- keep children safe by clarifying which behaviours constitute safe practice and which should be avoided
- assist adults working with children to do so safely and responsibly, and to monitor their own standards and practice
- support managers and employers in setting clear expectations of behaviour and codes of practice
- support safer recruitment practice
- minimise the risk of misplaced or malicious allegations made against adults who work with children
- reduce the incidence of positions of trust being abused or misused.

Background

The vast majority of adults who work with children act professionally and aim to provide a safe and supportive environment which secures the well-being and very best outcomes for children and young people in their care.

However, it is recognised that in this area of work, tensions and misunderstandings can occur. It is here that the behaviour of adults can give rise to allegations of abuse being made against them.

Allegations may be malicious or misplaced.

They may arise from differing perceptions of the same event, but when they occur, they are inevitably distressing and difficult for all concerned.

Equally, it must be recognised that some allegations will be genuine and there are adults who will deliberately seek out, create or exploit opportunities to abuse children.

It is therefore essential that all possible steps are taken to safeguard children and young people and ensure that the adults working with them are safe to do so.

Some concerns have been raised about the potential vulnerability of adults in this area of work; this document has been produced in response to these concerns.



Evergreen Education and Therapy –

Code of Conduct for Staff

What to do if you are worried a child is being abused

All staff should be familiar with Evergreen's procedures and protocols for safeguarding the welfare of children and young people; they are required to confirm their reading of documents related to safeguarding and child protection with the Directors. Staff have a duty to report any child protection or welfare concerns to a designated member of staff as indicated in these procedures. The safeguarding policy gives the detail of procedures for Dorset, BCP, Somerset and Wiltshire Councils.

Underpinning Principles

- The welfare of the child is paramount. (Children Act 1989)
- Staff should understand their responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils.
- Staff are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions.
- Staff should work, and be seen to work, in an open and transparent way.
- Staff should acknowledge that deliberately invented/malicious allegations are extremely rare and that all concerns should be reported and recorded.
- Staff should discuss and/or take advice promptly from their line manager if they have acted in a way which may give rise to concern.
- Staff should apply the same professional standards regardless of culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious belief and sexual orientation.
- Staff should not consume or be under the influence of alcohol or any substance, including prescribed medication, which may affect their ability to care for children.
- Staff should be aware that breaches of the law and other professional guidelines could result in disciplinary action being taken against them, criminal action and/or other proceedings including barring by the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) from working in regulated activity, or for acts of serious misconduct prohibition from teaching by the National College of Teaching and Leadership (NCTL) and for therapists reports to regulatory bodies ie HCPC, BACP, BPS.
- Staff and managers should continually monitor and review their practice to ensure they follow the guidance contained in this document.
- Staff should be aware of and understand the Safeguarding Policy



Evergreen Education and Therapy –

Code of Conduct for Staff

- All adults who work with children and young people have a crucial role to play in shaping their lives. They have a unique opportunity to interact with children and young people in ways that are both affirming and inspiring. This guidance has been produced to help staff establish the safest possible learning, therapeutic and working environments which safeguard children and reduce the risk of staff being falsely accused of improper and unprofessional conduct. Staff should remember that their behaviour has a significant impact on children and they must therefore adopt a professional approach to all aspects of their work; this includes dress, communication and social contact. Children must not be burdened with staff members' personal problems. Children who have experienced trauma are hyper-vigilant and constantly monitor situations for signs of threat and will be adversely affected by low mood, upset, anger etc. exhibited by staff who work with them. It is therefore important for staff to ensure they are well regulated before entering an environment with vulnerable children.
- The safeguarding culture is exercised through the development of respectful, trusting, caring and professional relationships between adults and clients, and behaviour by the adult that demonstrates integrity, maturity, trustworthiness, consistency and good judgement.
- If in doubt, staff should discuss any uncertainties or confusion with the Directors and managers. This guidance cannot provide a complete checklist of what is, or is not, appropriate behaviour for staff. It does highlight, however, behaviour which is illegal, inappropriate or inadvisable. There will be rare occasions and circumstances in which staff have to make decisions or take action in the best interest of a pupil which could contravene this guidance or where no guidance exists. Individuals are expected to make judgements about their behaviour in order to secure the best interests and welfare of the children in their charge and, in doing so, will be seen to be acting reasonably. These judgements should always be recorded and shared with the Directors. Adults should always consider whether their actions are warranted, proportionate, safe and applied equitably.

This policy applies to all our employees and freelance practitioners, regardless of employment agreement or rank.

Power and positions of trust and authority:

All those working with children are in a position of trust in relation to all clients.

The relationship between a person working with a child is one in which the adult has a position of power or influence.

It is vital for adults to understand this power; that the relationship cannot be one between equals and the responsibility they must exercise as a consequence.

Adults have a responsibility to ensure that an unequal balance of power is not used for personal advantage or gratification.

Where a person aged 18 or over is in a position of trust with a child under 18, it is an offence (Sexual Offences Act 2003) for that person to engage in sexual activity with or in the presence of that child, or to cause or incite that child to engage in or watch sexual activity.



Evergreen Education and Therapy –

Code of Conduct for Staff

Confidentiality:

Staff may have access to confidential or personal information about pupils and their families which must be kept confidential at all times and only shared when legally permissible to do so and in the interest of the child. The company provides email for the use of company business only. Data on children and families is also securely kept on Learn Trek and SharePoint and staff should upload notes, reports, handovers, safeguarding in a timely manner. Staff need to familiarise themselves with these platforms. However, where freelance staff use their own computers or smart phones, it is imperative that the devices are in full working order and that updates are regularly downloaded to prevent data breaches, viruses etc. WhatsApp groups are for staff to communicate logistics and must not mention children or family details at any time.

Records should only be shared with those who have a legitimate professional need to see them.

Information must never be used to intimidate, humiliate, or embarrass the child.

In circumstances where a pupil's identity does not need to be disclosed, the information should be used anonymously.

If there is any doubt about whether to share information or keep it confidential, staff should seek guidance from the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy – Kirsty and Rebecca.

Information given to a member of staff by a pupil – or their parent/carer – must be passed to a designated person if there is any issue of child protection; confidentiality must not be promised to a child or a parent, but staff should give reassurance that the information will be treated sensitively.

Any media or legal enquiries should be passed on to the Directors.

Dress and appearance:

A person's dress and appearance are matters of personal choice and self-expression and some individuals will wish to exercise their own cultural customs.

However, staff should consider the manner of dress and appearance appropriate to their professional role and the standards expected at Evergreen.

Staff should be dressed decently, safely, and appropriately for the tasks they undertake.

Those who dress or appear in a manner which could be viewed as offensive or inappropriate will render themselves vulnerable to criticism or allegation.



Evergreen Education and Therapy –

Code of Conduct for Staff

It is important that staff wear appropriate footwear that covers the toes and heels and is suitable for use on differing terrains, i.e. trainers.

Infatuations and 'crushes':

All staff need to recognise that it is not uncommon for children to be strongly attracted to a member of staff or develop a 'crush' or infatuation.

They should make every effort to ensure that their own behaviour cannot be brought into question, does not appear to encourage this, and be aware that such infatuations may carry a risk of their words or actions being misinterpreted.

Any member of staff who feels a young person has become or is becoming infatuated with them or another member of staff, should immediately report this to the Directors.

Early intervention can prevent escalation and avoid hurt, embarrassment or distress for those concerned.

A plan to manage any situation involving infatuation is put in place, involving all parties, sensitively and in a robust manner, and be regularly monitored.

Social contact outside of the workplace:

It is acknowledged that staff may have genuine friendships and social contact with parents/carers of pupils/clients, independent of the professional relationship.

Staff should, however, also be aware that professionals who sexually harm children often seek to establish relationships outside of the workplace with both the child and their parents, in order to 'groom' the adult and the child.

It is also important to recognise that social contact may provide opportunities for other types of grooming, such as for the purpose of sexual exploitation or radicalisation.

Some staff may, as part of the professional role, be required to support a parent or carer. If that person comes to depend upon the staff member or seeks support outside of their professional role, this should be discussed with the Directors and where necessary, referrals made to the appropriate support agency.

Staff should still maintain professional contact and boundaries.

Communication with pupils (including the use of technology):



Evergreen Education and Therapy –

Code of Conduct for Staff

Staff should ensure that they establish safe and responsible online behaviours, working to local and national guidelines.

Communication with children in the 'real' world and online should take place within explicit professional boundaries.

This includes the use of computers, tablets, phones, texts, e-mails, instant messages, social media such as Facebook, X, Instagram, chat-rooms, forums, blogs, websites, gaming sites, digital cameras, videos, webcams, and other hand held devices. This list gives examples and is not exhaustive.

Staff should not respond to any personal information request from children other than that which may be necessary in their professional role.

They should ensure their communications are open and transparent.

Staff should not give their personal contact details to children, for example, e-mail address, home or mobile telephone numbers, details of web-based identities.

For older teens with Gillick Competence they may wish to contact their therapist directly. The parents and carers should be informed about this. If children locate these by any other means and attempt to contact the member of staff, the adult should not respond and must report the matter to their manager. However, in the case of child protection this must be managed sensitively and reported to DSL immediately.

Staff may use social networking sites and gaming sites for personal use outside of work time. However, Evergreen requires that profiles, photos and gaming IDs of the member of staff are made private so that pupils and parents/carers do not have access to personal data or images.

Staff should be aware that they leave themselves open to a charge of professional misconduct if images of themselves or of other members of staff in a compromising situation are made available on a public profile. Reposting online articles that contain disinformation, misinformation or conspiracy theories on a public site ie Instagram could lead to disciplinary procedures.

Staff conduct outside of work may impact on their suitability to work with children and pose a transferable risk – KCSIE 2025/6.

Any concerns about pupils gaining access to a staff member's account fraudulently must be reported immediately to the Directors.

Communication with former clients who are over 18 is left to staff discretion. Staff must be conscious of the fact that ex-clients may be in contact with current clients and of the general instruction to refrain from discussing Evergreen's business through public domain social media without prior agreement.



Evergreen Education and Therapy –

Code of Conduct for Staff

Any comments made in the public domain about Evergreen Education and Therapy which bring the company into disrepute may lead to disciplinary action being taken.

Physical contact:

Evergreen is not a company which bars physical contact; there are activities which require it such as in PE and there may be circumstances where a distressed client may need comfort.

Such contact must always remain appropriate for the task and staff should stop immediately if it is apparent that it causes the child discomfort; where possible, adults should seek the client's permission before initiating physical contact.

Such contact should always be open and take place in an environment which could not be regarded as secret; or can be open to misinterpretation.

If there has been a need to reassure a distressed client/child then the incident should be documented and passed to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Contact should be relevant to a pupil's age and understanding, and adults should remain sensitive to any discomfort expressed verbally or non-verbally by the client.

If a member of staff believes that an action by them or a colleague could be misinterpreted, the incident and circumstances should be immediately reported to the DSL who will consult with the Local Authority Designated Officer if appropriate.

Extra caution is required where it is known that a child has suffered previous abuse or neglect.

Unacceptable physical contact:

Physical contact may be misconstrued by a pupil, parent/carer or observer.

Such contact can include well-intentioned, informal gestures such as putting a hand on a shoulder or arm, which, if repeated with an individual pupil, could lead to serious questions being raised.

Therefore, it is unwise to employ touching as part of a teaching style or as a way of relating to clients/children.

Intimate / personal care:

Clients are encouraged to undertake as much of their own personal care as is possible and practicable. When assistance is required, this should normally be undertaken by one member of staff, however, they should try to ensure that another appropriate adult is in the vicinity who is aware of the task to be undertaken and that, wherever possible, they are visible and/or audible.



Evergreen Education and Therapy –

Code of Conduct for Staff

Any vulnerability, including those that may arise from a physical or learning difficulty should be considered when formulating the individual pupil's plan- risk assessment.

Clients are entitled to respect and privacy at all times, and especially when in a state of undress, including, for example, when changing, toileting, and showering.

However, there needs to be an appropriate level of supervision in order to safeguard clients, satisfy health and safety considerations, and ensure that bullying or teasing does not occur.

This supervision should be appropriate to the needs and age of the young people concerned and sensitive to the potential for embarrassment.

Behaviour management:

Corporal punishment and smacking is unlawful.

Staff should not use any form of degrading or humiliating treatment to punish a child.

The use of sarcasm, demeaning or insensitive comments towards children is completely unacceptable.

The use of control and physical intervention:

Any physical restraint is only permissible when a child is in imminent danger of inflicting an injury on themselves or on another, and then only as a last resort, when all efforts to diffuse the situation have failed.

Another member of staff should, if possible, be present to act as a witness.

All incidents of the use of physical restraint should be recorded in writing and reported immediately to the Directors.

Sexual conduct:

All staff are fully aware of any behaviour that may constitute 'grooming' and of their responsibility to always report to the DSL any concerns about the behaviour of a colleague which could indicate that a client is being groomed.

Comments by staff to clients can be misconstrued either individually or by a group; comments to or about pupils should not be construable as having a sexual connotation.

It is unacceptable that staff introduce or encourage debate amongst pupils which could be construed as having a sexual connotation that is unnecessary given the context of the session.

In therapy the therapist encourages open dialogue and can use a psycho-education approach to help the client gain knowledge in response to themes in the session.



Evergreen Education and Therapy –

Code of Conduct for Staff

However, it is acknowledged that a topic raised by a pupil is better addressed than ignored.

One to one situations:

Staff working in a one-to-one situation are more vulnerable to allegations or complaints.

Staff should recognise this and plan meetings accordingly.

Meetings should not be in remote, secluded areas, and there should be visual access and/or an open door.

Other staff should be informed of the meeting beforehand, and the use of engaged signs should be avoided.

Except in therapy when interruptions to therapy sessions can cause distress, especially during a disclosure, thus creating an unsafe environment.

If a child becomes distressed, always report it to the Directors.

Staff should be aware of the dangers which may arise from private interviews with clients.

See also Health and Safety Policy

Home visits:

On occasion it may be necessary to make one-off or regular home visits.

Appropriate policies and risk assessments need to be adhered to, to safeguard both staff and pupils, who can be more vulnerable in these situations.

See Health and Safety Policy

Conversations on sensitive topics:

Staff may be involved in conversations about sensitive topics.

Staff must, in these circumstances ensure that discretion is used so that, for example, any probing for details cannot be construed as unjustified intrusion.

Staff may at times be approached by pupils for advice.

Pupils may appear distressed.



Evergreen Education and Therapy –

Code of Conduct for Staff

In such cases staff must judge whether it is appropriate for them to offer counselling and advice or whether the pupil should be referred to the Head of Therapeutic Services. It is important for staff to remember that they cannot keep secrets and that the child should be made aware of this.

See also Safeguarding Policy.

Transporting pupils:

Except in an emergency, transporting pupils in a staff vehicle would always be with parental consent.

Company transport is not something that is offered.

It is a legal requirement that all passengers wear seat belts, and the driver should ensure that they do so.

Photographs, videos and other images:

We do not take photographs or videos of Clients. Photographs of work can be taken in Education to record progress. With signed parental permission photographs of children could be taken – but not on staff's personal devices. Therapeutic sessions are not recorded – video or audio.

Children are not permitted to photograph or video record staff on their phones or devices. If this occurs the Directors and parents must be informed immediately. All data will be deleted.

Exposure to inappropriate images:

There are no circumstances that will justify adults: making, downloading, possessing or distributing indecent images of children.

Accessing these images, whether using the company's or personal equipment, on or off the premises, or making, storing or disseminating such material is illegal.

If indecent images of children are discovered at work, an immediate referral should be made to the Local Authority Designated Officer.

There should be no attempt to view or delete the images as this could jeopardise necessary criminal action.

If the images are of children known to the company a referral should also be made to children's social care.



Evergreen Education and Therapy –

Code of Conduct for Staff

Under no circumstances should any adult use company equipment to access pornography.

Personal equipment containing pornography or links to it should not be brought into or used in the workplace.

Curriculum/ Therapy:

Many areas of the curriculum can include or raise subject matter which is sexually explicit or of a political or sensitive nature.

Care should be taken to ensure that resource materials cannot be misinterpreted and clearly relate to the learning outcomes identified.

Session preparation should highlight particular areas of risk and sensitivity (special attention should be paid to children who have experienced trauma, who do not live with birth parents or who are bereaved) and care should especially be taken in those areas of the curriculum where usual boundaries or rules are less rigorously applied.

Care should be taken to comply with the Promotion of British Values.

Punctuality:

If you are working a full day in Therapeutic Education it is expected that you start work to prepare and attend briefing 30 minutes before children arrive. If children arrive at 10 am you should arrive at 9.30 am.

It is expected that you stay 30 minutes after the children leave to clear away and to debrief. If children leave at 3 pm you should leave at 3.30 pm. Sessions are to be recorded on Learn Trek, for therapists brief session notes are to be recorded on SharePoint but in depth clinical notes should be held securely by the therapist.

Therapists should arrive 15 minutes before the start of the session.

Requests for information:

Written requests for information must receive a timely written response. Verbal rejoinders in passing are unfair to the colleague charged with obtaining and acting on the information.

Attendance at Meetings:

If you are unable to be at a meeting you should attend, an apology must be tendered in advance and in writing to the Directors.

Sharing concerns and recording incidents:



Evergreen Education and Therapy –

Code of Conduct for Staff

Following an incident where a member of staff feels that his/her actions have been, or may be, misconstrued, he/she should discuss the matter with the Directors and supply a written report if requested.

It is imperative that the Directors should be informed in cases where a member of staff has been obliged to restrain a child physically or when a complaint has been made by a child, parent or other adult. In the event of an allegation being made, the relevant information should be immediately recorded and reported to the appropriate senior member of staff.

Where staff have any concerns about someone who works with children, they should immediately report this to the Directors.

See forms on Allegations policy, Low Level Concerns Policy, Safeguarding Policy

Whistleblowing:

Whistleblowing is the mechanism by which staff can voice concerns, made in good faith, without fear of repercussion.

Staff should acknowledge the individual responsibilities to bring matters of concern to the attention of the Directors, or to the relevant external agencies, as appropriate, and that not to do so may result in charges of serious neglect on their part where the welfare of children may be at risk.

Alternatively, if staff feel that they are unable to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures of the company's safeguarding regime, the NSPCC's whistleblowing helpline is available on 0800 028 0285.

This information is duplicated in a Whistleblowing Policy

General:

Kindness, courtesy, tolerance and understanding should underpin all our interactions - with other staff members, with our clients, their parents and carers and other professionals. It is important to remember that worry about a child may cause some parents/ carers to become upset, agitated or even aggressive. Mentalisation is a key skill for Evergreen staff to possess in order to understand and relate to what is going on under the surface and to help people to regulate their emotions and feel confident that we are able to help and support them in the right way.



Evergreen Education and Therapy –

Code of Conduct for Staff

Aggression towards other adults and children is not tolerated. Evergreen staff model the behaviour they want to see and they want to experience. Evergreen staff are always supportive of each other.

It is expected that all Evergreen staff are resilient and maintain positivity when working with the children who attend sessions. Personal problems should not enter the workspace when children are present. Staff are encouraged to speak with the directors outside of contact time to discuss any matters that may affect their work. It is the responsibility of staff to be aware of their own needs, seek support e.g. therapy or supervision to ensure they can maintain professionalism in their role.

All members of staff are expected to have a high level of familiarity with the company's policies and procedures, and to be able to enact them.

It is also strongly recommended that all staff, new and current, refresh their understanding of the policies at the start of each academic year.

All members of staff receive mandatory Safeguarding training as a regular part of meetings. Freelance staff are expected to self-fund Level 2 or 3 certificates in safeguarding and copies need to be emailed to info@evergreeneducationandtherapy.com. Safeguarding is an agenda item on all training days and staff meetings.

In addition, all members of staff must have read, understood and be able to act upon the relevant sections of 'Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026)'. Staff are expected to email confirmation that they have read and understood the updated KCSIE.

All employees must protect our company's legality. They should comply with all environmental, safety and fair dealing laws. We expect employees to be ethical and responsible when dealing with our company's finances, products, partnerships and public image.

All employees should treat our company's property, whether material or intangible, with respect and care. As well as the buildings and property of the venues we work in.

Safeguarding contact details:

Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole – Children's First Response Hub:	01202 123334 childrensfirstresponse@bcpcouncil.gov.uk
Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole Out of Hours Service:	01202 738256 childrensOOHS@bcpcouncil.gov.uk



Evergreen Education and Therapy –

Code of Conduct for Staff

BCP LADO – allegations against staff	Telephone: 01202 817600 Email: LADO@bcpcouncil.gov.uk
Dorset - Children's Advice and Duty Service (ChAD) Professionals Number: This is a professionals-only number to discuss your concerns, Dorset Out of Hours Service: Dorset LADO Dorset Families and Members of the public	01305 228558 01305 228558 01305 221122 or LADO@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk 01202 228866
Somerset: Children's Social Care Somerset Emergency Duty Team (EDT) on If you are the Designated Safeguarding Lead for your organisation, you can get advice and guidance from: Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO),	0300 123 2224 childrens@somerset.gov.uk 0300 123 23 27. Children's Social Care consultation line 0300 123 3078 (9:00am - 4:00pm) 0300 123 2224 Email: SDinputters@somerset.gov.uk



Evergreen Education and Therapy –

Code of Conduct for Staff

Wiltshire:

Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), standard working hours:

- Monday to Thursday from 8.45am to 5pm
- Friday from 8.45am to 4pm

- Out of hours service:

- Monday to Thursday 5pm to midnight, Friday 4pm to midnight
- weekends and Bank Holidays from 9am - midnight
- phones are diverted to the Social Work Standby Service from midnight to 9am (7 days a week)

Contact Details for the LADO Service

0300 456 0108

0300 456 0100

Email LADO@wiltshire.gov.uk

Phone: 0300 456 0108 (Option 6)