

Mentoring Code of Conduct

City Lions are responsible for making sure everyone taking part in our mentoring programme has seen, understood and agreed to follow the Code of Conduct to ensure both you and your mentee feel comfortable, are safe and get the most out of the experience.

This behaviour code outlines the conduct City Lions expects from all our volunteer mentors. The Code of Conduct aims to help us protect young people and mentors, ensuring all parties are safe and reduce the possibility of unfounded allegations being made.

Your role:

In your role at City Lions 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.

You are responsible for:

- Prioritising the welfare of children and young people.
- Providing a safe environment for children and young people.
- Ensuring equipment (if used) is used safely and for its intended purpose.
- Having good awareness of issues to do with safeguarding and child protection and taking action when appropriate.
- Following our safeguarding principles, policies and procedures.
- Staying within the law at all times.
- Modelling good behaviour for children and young people to follow.
- Challenging all unacceptable behaviour and reporting any breaches to the City Lions 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.

When working with young people to protect their 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 and encourage young people and adults to speak out about attitudes or behaviour that makes them uncomfortable.

- 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.
- When you are one to one with a 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 staff or volunteers know where you and the child are.
- Only provide personal care in an emergency and make sure there is more than one adult present if possible.

When working with young people to respect them 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.
- If you need to break confidentiality in order to follow child protection procedures, it is important to explain this to the young person at the earliest opportunity.

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, including having any form of sexual contact with a young person.
- Let children and young people have contact with you 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 by making sarcastic, insensitive, derogatory or sexually suggestive comments or gestures to or in front of them.

Upholding this code of behaviour

You should always follow this code of behaviour to protect young people and never rely on your reputation or that of our organisation to protect you. If this code of conduct is breached, depending on the seriousness of the situation, you may no longer be able to work with City Lions and may be subject to disciplinary actions. We may also make a report to statutory agencies such as the police and/or WCC Children's Services.

If you become aware of any breaches of this code by anyone involved in the City Lions Mentoring Programme, you must report them to the City Lions team.

This code has been created to ensure the safety of both you and your mentee. To help us do this please ensure you:

- Always meet in a public place and check your mentee is comfortable with the location.
- You should not visit a mentees home, nor should they visit your home. If this becomes an issue please contact us.
- End the meeting if you believe you or your mentee is at risk.
- Remember your role is to offer guidance and set appropriate boundaries, it's important that the young person is empowered to make their own choices.
- Don't lend money, give or receive large or significant gifts. Please talk to us if you have any questions or issues related to this.
- You should not be in a car together.
- If you are introducing your mentee to another professional within your network, please ensure either you or a member of the City Lions team are cc'd into any communication.
- You will need to accompany your mentee to any meetings (in-person or virtual) where they are meeting contacts without a City Lions DBS.
- If during your care you accidentally hurt a young person and they seem distressed in any manner, appear sexually aroused by your actions and/or if they young person misunderstands or misinterprets something you have done, this must be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Officer/s as soon as possible.
- Young people may benefit from being reminded about mentoring sessions via text rather than email. If you do choose to text with your mentee, please do this from your work telephone number if possible and discourage phone/text conversations that are not about conveying information.

Key tips for successful in-person mentoring:

- Arrange a set time and date in advance.
- Discuss together where and when works best for you, taking into consideration travel constraints.
- Make sure you are in a public place where you can easily hear each other. For example, a library, museum or coffee shop.
- It's a good idea to have discussed which structured session or what you would like to cover (if meeting for a check in session) in advance of your meeting so you're both able to prepare appropriately.
- Send documents/links to one another in advance of your meeting especially if they need to be printed. For example, if you are planning on reviewing a CV.
- You may want to consider if the location you are meeting in has Wi-Fi/internet access if you would like to use any internet dependent devices.

Online Code of Conduct

To ensure our programme is accessible we allow the option for pairs to meet virtually. Keeping you and young people safe online is our priority. To help us do this ensure that you:



- Agree together on a platform before reaching out via a video call. Consent to participate in the video chat means that you will be sharing their personal data online, such as your email address in order to sign up. Ensuring you are both comfortable with whatever platform you choose is essential.
- Keep video calls to appropriate hours that you would meet in person. For example, we would advise that you don't speak before 8am or after 8pm
- Never add or accept your each other on social media or communicate via a social media channel.
- If possible, avoid using public Wi-Fi where connections may not be as secure as your private connection.
- If possible, avoid video calling from your bedroom. If a bedroom is the only private space in the house, try and make your background as neutral as possible
- Do not allow or engage in inappropriate and sexual online communications or make sexually suggestive comments.
- Do not record or take screenshots of the video call.
- Do not have anything that could cause offense in the background whilst on a video call. For example, pornography or potentially inappropriate images.
- Do not have your address on show.

Key tips for successful remote mentoring:

- Arrange a set time and date in advance, as you would for a face-to-face meeting.
- Discuss together what method works best for both of you. For example, do you both have the technology/Wi-Fi available to use video calls?
- Make sure you're in an environment that has minimal distractions around you. For example, don't have your meeting in a room with the TV on!
- It's a good idea to set an agenda in advance of your meeting so that you can ensure you have focus throughout the session, as you won't have the visual stimulus immediately in front of you as you may do in real life. What do you want to speak about/achieve in your chat?
- Send documents/links to one another in advance of your meeting. For example, if you planned to look through a personal statement together, this should be shared in advance of the remote meeting
- Record the outcomes of your meeting and the goals you set from it for you to then revisit at your next meeting
- Communication is key: keep each other and us up to date on how you are, any concerns and questions that you have.

I have read the Code of Conduct, and agree to adhere to the rules it sets out:

Name:

Signature:

Date:

