

THE MERIDALE ORGANISATION

CODE OF CONDUCT

The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to provide members of staff, volunteers and Trustees with clear guidelines as to their standard of behaviour, responsibilities and best practice in fulfilling their obligations to the Meridale Organisation, including associated Youth Groups.

They must always observe this policy when conducting business or acting as a representative of Meridale.

They are expected to act with integrity, honestly, conscientiously, reasonably, in good faith and in the best interests of Meridale at all times.

They have an obligation to Meridale to:

- be aware of and have a full understanding as well as adhere to all policies and procedures and to be sure that they keep up to date with any amendments
- carry out agreed duties in an efficient and competent manner, and maintain specified standards of performance
- maintain a good understanding of and be sympathetic to the vision, mission, values and principles of Meridale
- comply with lawful and reasonable instructions and policies and to follow agreed procedures
- respect the privacy of individuals and use confidential information only for the purposes for which it was intended
- treat others with respect, fairness and dignity at all times
- neither use, nor allow the use of, Meridale's property, resources, or funds for other than authorised purposes
- incur no liability on the part of the Meridale Organisation without proper authorisation
- not demand, claim or accept any fee, gratuity, commission or benefit from any person or persons other than the organisation in payment for any matter or thing concerned with their duties and responsibilities
- provide written notification to the Chair of Trustees of the existence and nature of any gift or hospitality related to Meridale within 28 days of receiving any gift or hospitality
- avoid conflicts of interest. This can be described as – A situation that has the potential to undermine the impartiality of a person because of the possibility of a clash between the person's self-interest, professional interest or public interest
- always disclose an activity if they are in doubt about whether it represents a conflict of interest in order that it is managed effectively
- dress appropriately and safely for the activities they are undertaking and for the environment in which they are working.

Members of staff, volunteers, and Trustees must follow agreed standards of behaviour as follows:

- always remember that they are in a position of trust and their responsibilities to the users of Meridale and the organisation must be uppermost at all times.

- model good behaviour for children and young people to follow Do not smoke in front of any child or young person
- promote relationships that are based on openness, honesty, trust and respect
- challenge all unacceptable behaviour and report any breaches of the Code of Conduct or any concerns without delay to the Centre Manager or Chair of Trustees
- never behave in a way that frightens or demeans any Meridale user or colleague.
- do not use any discriminatory or offensive language
- generally, they should not give young people presents or personal items. Exceptions to this would be a custom such as buying children a small birthday token or leaving present or help to a family in need such as equipment to enable them to participate in an activity. Both types of gift should come from the organisation and be agreed with the Designated Safeguarding Officer and the child or young person's parent. Similarly, do not accept gifts yourself other than small tokens for appropriate celebrations, which you should mention to the centre manager.
- respect the privacy of individuals and use confidential information only for the purposes for which it was intended.
- neither use, nor allow the use of, Meridale property, resources, or funds for other than authorised purposes.
- staff need to disclose (to their line manager) an activity if they are in doubt about whether it represents a conflict of interest in order that it is managed effectively.

They must not:

- encourage or assist others to break the law in any way
- patronise or treat young people as if they are silly
- allow concerns or allegations to go unreported
- distribute any material to children which has not been approved by the trustees of Meridale
- take unnecessary risks
- develop inappropriate relationships such as contact with young people or vulnerable adults that is not a part of the work of Meridale or agreed with the manager or leader
- conduct a sexual relationship with a young person or vulnerable adult or indulge in any form of sexual contact with them. Any such behaviour between an adult member of staff or volunteer and a young person or vulnerable adult using the services of Meridale represents a serious breach of trust on the part of the staff member or volunteer and is not acceptable under any circumstances
- let young people have your personal contact details (mobile number, email or address) or have contact with them via a personal social media account
- make sarcastic, insensitive, derogatory or sexually suggestive comments or gestures to or in front of young people
- act in a way that can be perceived as threatening or intrusive
- make inappropriate promises to young people, particularly in relation to confidentiality
- jump to conclusions about others without checking facts
- either exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues
- rely on your reputation or that of Meridale to protect you.

The Trustees will review this statement periodically and no later than three years from the date below.

Signed: (On behalf of the Meridale Organisation)

Name:

Position:

Date: