



# Solihull Parent Carer Forum (SPCF)

## Code of Conduct

### INTRODUCTION

The SPCF Management Committee is responsible for all actions carried out by Management Committee members and any other individual parents or carers who are acting on behalf of Solihull Parent Carer Forum ("The Group"). We have drawn up this **Code of Conduct** in order that Group members, partners and funders have confidence in our work. We ensure that our actions and behaviour are safe, professional and inclusive for all who take part in our activities.

### COMMUNICATION

We understand that how we communicate with each other, with the wider Group membership and with all other stakeholders is the key to our successful leadership. We:

- use **assertive communication skills**: we ensure that what we say to each other and to our members is clear, accurate, appropriate and always in the interests of the safe, smooth running of the Group
- use **ground rules** for our meetings: we expect everyone present to agree and abide by these ground rules
- are **reliable and dependable**: we provide clear information to Group members, and explain when this has not been possible
- respect **confidentiality**: we do not share any confidential information outside of the Management Committee, unless we believe that a child or vulnerable adult is being harmed or is at risk of harm in which case we follow the *SPFC Safeguarding Policy and Procedures*
- are **honest** with each other when our private lives may affect our ability to carry out our responsibilities appropriately
- **acknowledge** our professional and personal boundaries so that we can be useful to the Group
- **share** leaderships tasks so that no individual at any time feels over-burdened by their role or responsibility

- allocate roles and tasks amongst ourselves to utilise individuals' **skills** and **strengths**
- are prepared to take up **learning** and development opportunities
- actively seek **support** when we face challenging situations
- adhere to the *SPCF Social Media Policy* to ensure **appropriate** communication

## EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

SPCF is committed to respecting and representing our members fairly and we aim to represent all parent carers in Solihull equally. We respect those with **cultures** and **values** different to our own. Whilst personal experience may inform this, we do not rely entirely on own experiences, views and judgements. We represent our members by listening to a diverse range of **opinions** and **experiences**. This reflects the *SPCF Equality and Diversity Policy*.

## PRINCIPLES

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

1. **Selflessness**: we take decisions for the good of all our members, and not only to gain individual financial or material benefits for ourselves, our family or friends
2. **Integrity**: we uphold our professional boundaries and do not place ourselves under obligations to individuals or organisations that might influence us in the performance of our duties.
3. **Objectivity**: we, at all times, ensure that we represent a range of: disability, Special Educational Needs, cultures, social backgrounds and geographical areas.
4. **Accountability**: we are accountable for our decisions and actions to the wider Group membership, funders and other stakeholders, and invite appropriate challenge.
5. **Openness**: we are open about decisions and actions that we take and we are able to give reasons for our decisions.
6. **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 Group
7. **Leadership**: we promote and support the above principles with effective leadership and by personal example.

## DISCLOSURE OF ALLEGATIONS

We disclose to the Management Committee's elected Officers any **allegation** that we may have committed, or that we are being investigated in relation to having

committed, a **crime**. In these situations, it is standard practice for the Steering Group member to temporarily stand down until the issues are resolved. This is a neutral and non-judgemental position, designed to protect SPCF and the individual, and to ensure the individual involved is able to focus all of their attention on the issue at hand.

### DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

This covers circumstances where an individual (or their close relative) could in theory receive a personal or business benefit as a consequence of SPCF activity. There are two main examples where a benefit could occur and both must be disclosed:

1. A **Duality of Interest**: Where the circumstances could potentially bring about some personal or business gain
2. A **Conflict of Interest**: Where a SPCF interest and a personal/business/other Voluntary Sector interest occurs over the same matter

### POLITICAL ACTIVITIES

SPCF's work may take it into the political arena but we must ensure that we demonstrate our non-political nature, and are impartial about **party politics**. When making any representation, the Group must clearly be seen as presenting a balanced case in support of the Group's key objectives. Group members can engage in political activities, including standing for election to public office, as long as it is legal to do so. However, participation will be entirely personal and their political opinions will not represent the Group's position.

### FAILURE TO FOLLOW CODE OF CONDUCT

We recognise that failure to follow this Code of Conduct may **damage SPCF**. In the event of an alleged breach of the Code, an **investigation** will be undertaken in accordance with the *SPCF Complaints Policy and Procedure*. Depending on the severity and impact of any alleged breach, a range of actions may be taken, from seeking appropriate training and support for the individual member, to asking them to permanently step down from the Management Committee.

### REVIEW

Agreed by Interim Steering Group members: Jat Mann, Julia Mann, Linda Gifford, Bernie Dornan

This Code of Conduct will be reviewed once a year – next review **July 2018**