



Values and Code of Conduct

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1. Policy Statement

Harpenden Mencap expects that all staff should always act competently and professionally in line with the Values of the organisation. In addition all Support Workers must adhere to the Code of Conduct for Health Care Support Workers and Adult Social Care Workers in England:

<https://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/Documents/Standards-legislation/Code-of-Conduct/Code-of-Conduct.pdf>.

This policy sets out the key Values and Conduct expected of all Harpenden Mencap employees including Casual Staff, Agency Employees and Contractors.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all employees directly employed by Harpenden Mencap, agency employees and interim contractors.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

Chief Executive Officer (CEO): The CEO has overall responsibility for this policy.

Managers: Managers are required to familiarise themselves with the content of the policy and ensure that all staff adhere to the conduct.

Employees: -Employees should familiarise themselves with the Values and Code of Conduct and apply them to their work.

Contractors: Will adopt the Values and Code of Conduct in their dealings with anyone involved with Harpenden Mencap.

4. Values

Harpenden Mencap's Values have been developed to ensure that we respond to the needs, wishes and aspirations of people with learning disabilities in our local area. These values underpin everything we do at Harpenden Mencap and we expect everyone that works for us to use these to ensure we provide excellent care and support at all times. They can be remembered as "We CARE".

Figure 1: Harpenden Mencap Values 2022

We COLLABORATE by working in partnership with the people we support, their families and the community

We are AMBITIOUS for the people we support and celebrate every success

We are RESPONSIVE to wishes, needs and aspirations at all times

We EMPOWER by providing opportunities and possibilities to inspire change

5. Code of Conduct

All Staff working for and with Harpenden Mencap must:

- Treat the people we support, other staff, relatives and visitors to the home with respect and courtesy at all times;
- Behave honestly and with integrity;
- Act with care and due diligence;
- Comply with all applicable UK laws, Health and Safety Legislation, employment law legislation and other relevant codes of conduct;
- Comply with any lawful and reasonable direction given by a senior member of staff or member of Harpenden Mencap's management team;
- Maintain appropriate standards of confidentiality and data protection;
- Take reasonable steps to avoid any conflict of interest (real or apparent) in connection with their employment;
- Use Harpenden Mencap resources in an appropriate manner;
- Not provide false or misleading information in response to a request for information that is made for official purposes in connection with employment;
- Not make improper use of the employee's duties, status, power or authority, in order to gain, or seek to gain, a benefit or advantage for the employee or for any other person;
- At all times behave; in a way that upholds Harpenden Mencap's values, integrity and good reputation
- Not accept casual gifts or favours from service users, relatives or visitors in line with the Gifts and Hospitality Policy.

6. Confidentiality

All employees, volunteers, Trustees and contractors must keep all information given or created during their contact with Harpenden Mencap confidential at all times during employment and after employment ends.

6.1. Confidential Information

Confidential information applies to all personal communication or information relating to Harpenden Mencap that is unknown to the public. Examples include:

- Unpublished financial information;
- Resident, tenant and family lists or data;
- Intellectual property;
- Data from external parties such as the Local Authority or other contractors;
- Business and product information such as pricing and marketing strategies;
- Staff information;
- Unpublished strategies or plans.

Harpenden Mencap holds personal data about staff, the people we support and members which must only be used for the purposes for which it was gathered and must not be disclosed to anyone outside the organisation without prior permission in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 (see Information Governance Policy).

6.2. Obligations on Employees

All staff should ensure that:

- All confidential information is locked or secured at all times. It should not be taken outside the organisation's premises;
- All paper-based and electronic data should be stored in accordance with the principles and guidance of the Data Protection Act 2018;
- Information should only be disclosed to others when authorised by a manager;
- Confidential information must not be used for personal profit or benefit;
- Confidential information must not be replicated and stored on insecure devices

All personal data must be dealt with sensitively and in the strictest confidence internally and externally.

6.3. Breaches of Confidentiality

Harpenden Mencap recognises that occasions may arise where individual workers feel they need to breach confidentiality. Confidential or sensitive information relating to an individual may be divulged where there is a risk of danger to the individual, volunteer or employee, or the public at large, or where it is against the law to withhold it. Where an employee feels that confidentiality should be breached, they should raise the matter with their Line Manager who will discuss the options available.

The duty of confidentiality is always subject to the legal requirements of the Public Disclosure (Whistleblowing) Act 1998 provided any disclosure is made in accordance with the provisions of the Act.

6.4. Wilful Breach of Confidentiality

Any employee who wilfully breaches confidentiality guidelines will face disciplinary action under Harpenden Mencap's disciplinary procedures. The breach or breaches may constitute potential gross misconduct which may result in dismissal and legal action. This policy applies to all individuals even after they have left Harpenden Mencap's employment.

6.5. Training and Review

All existing and new employees should be made aware of the confidentiality policy through induction and further training.

7. Dress Code

Employees should note that their appearance matters when representing Harpenden Mencap, in front of the people we support, visitors and other parties. An Employee's appearance can create a positive or negative impression that reflects on the organisation or the culture.

Staff must ensure that they are appropriately dressed and prepared for the tasks they may be required to undertake.

- All Employees must be clean and well-groomed;
- All clothes must be work appropriate and include low, supportive footwear suitable for the weather;
- Care and Support Workers should be 'bare below the elbows' in line with the Control of Infection policy;
- Care and support staff should not wear loose clothing or clothing that is too tight as to restrict movement;
- Jewellery should be limited to a wedding or engagement ring and stud earrings;
- Watches should not be worn by staff carrying out personal care or food preparation. Smart watches containing cameras are not allowed to be worn in services;
- Staff must not have acrylic, gel or varnish on their nails. They must be short, clean, bare nails.

- All clothes must project professionalism; clothes that are too revealing or inappropriate for the task are not allowed;
- All clothes must be clean and in good repair;
- Employees must avoid clothing with offensive or controversial messages or pictures.

Staff who are deemed to be inappropriately dressed may be asked to leave the premises to change. This will result in a loss of pay for the day.

8. Staff Speakers of Other Languages

It is important that staff whose first language is other than English should not cause offence to others by communicating with one another in their first language in the presence of the people we support, relatives or other staff whose first language is English.

Where staff members' first language is not English they should only carry out conversations in their own language away from colleagues and the people they support. Persistent use of another language whilst carrying out care and support duties will be seen as disrespectful and discourteous to service users and colleagues.

The use of another language whilst working could also have other consequences by compromising the Health and Safety of the people we support and others. Where Harpenden Mencap deems that a person's means of communication has affected the following, it will be treated as a disciplinary matter:

- Causing offence as described above;
- Showing a lack of respect and not meeting the service user's need to be treated with dignity;
- Putting a service user's safety at risk.

9. Implementation

All employees have a duty to ensure that the Code of Conduct is applied at all times. Any concerns about the conduct of colleagues must be immediately reported to a senior member of staff.