

Code of Conduct

Last Reviewed | 27.06.2025 by Nikki McNulty - Director of Childcare



uGroup Staff Code of Conduct: Promoting Professionalism and Safeguarding

This Code of Conduct outlines the expected standards of professional behaviour, conduct, and ethics for all staff and volunteers ("Team Members") engaged with **uGroup** clubs, including wraparound care (Breakfast and After School Clubs), sports clubs, and Alternative provisions.

By accepting a role with uGroup, all Team Members commit to upholding these standards and the core values of our organisation. This Code should be read in conjunction with all **Policies and Protocols**, which are available on our website and through your manager.

1. Purpose and Scope

This Code of Conduct aims to:

- Ensure the safety, well-being, and positive experience of all children in our care.
- Define clear expectations for professional conduct and ethical behaviour.
- Promote a culture of respect, integrity, and accountability.
- Support Team Members in understanding their responsibilities.

This Code applies to all Team Members at all times when representing uGroup, during working hours, and in any interactions related to their role, including online and social media.

2. Core Principles

All Team Members must embody the following principles:

- **Child-Centred Approach:** Always act in the best interests of the child, prioritising their safety, welfare, and development.
- **Respect and Dignity:** Treat all children, parents/guardians, colleagues, and external partners with respect, fairness, and dignity, regardless of background, ability, or belief.
- **Integrity and Honesty:** Maintain the highest standards of honesty, trustworthiness, and transparency in all dealings.
- **Professionalism:** Demonstrate a high level of professionalism in conduct, appearance, and communication.
- **Accountability:** Take personal responsibility for actions and adhere to all uGroup Policies and Procedures.

3. Professional Conduct

3.1. Interaction with Children:

- Speak to children in a positive, encouraging, and age-appropriate manner.
- Listen actively to children and value their opinions and ideas.
- Ensure all interactions are supportive, nurturing, and free from any form of discrimination, ridicule, or unkindness.
- Avoid favouritism or showing preferential treatment towards any child.

3.2. Professional Boundaries:

- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries with children and their families at all times.
- Avoid forming inappropriate personal relationships.
- Physical contact with children must be appropriate, necessary (e.g., for comfort, safety, first aid, or teaching a skill), and always open to observation and scrutiny.
- Never exchange personal contact details (e.g., phone numbers, social media handles) with children.

3.3. Language and Behaviour:

- Use appropriate language at all times, free from swearing, offensive terms, or discriminatory remarks.
- Avoid gossip or spreading rumours about children, parents, or colleagues.
- Model positive behaviour and language, setting an example for children.

3.4. Confidentiality:

- Treat all information relating to children, their families, and colleagues as strictly confidential.
- Only share information on a "need-to-know" basis, in accordance with uGroup's Data Protection and Confidentiality Policies, and safeguarding procedures.
- Never discuss confidential information in public places or on social media.

3.5. Personal Appearance:

- Present a professional image by dressing appropriately for the role and activity.
- Ensure clothing is clean, tidy, and suitable for active work with children.

3.6. Substance Abuse:

- Team Members must not be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs during working hours or when representing the uGroup.
- Smoking or vaping is strictly prohibited on uGroups premises or during any uGroup activity.
- Prescription medication use must not impair a Team Member's ability to perform their duties safely and effectively. Any concerns should be discussed with a manager.

4. Safeguarding and Child Protection

4.1. Duty to Report:

- All Team Members have a legal and moral responsibility to safeguard children.
- Any concern about a child's welfare, including suspected abuse, neglect, or harm (physical, emotional, sexual, or online), or concerns about the behaviour of another adult, must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy DSL.
- Follow uGroups' Safeguarding and Welfare Policy without delay, even if unsure. "It's better to be safe than sorry."

4.2. Awareness:

- Be familiar with the signs and indicators of different forms of abuse and neglect.
- Understand the risks children may face, including online safety and exploitation.

4.3. Safer Working Practices:

- Avoid situations where you are alone with a child unless necessary, and always ensure visibility to others.
- Ensure physical contact is always appropriate, observable, and in the best interest of the child's safety or well-being.

- Do not take children off-site without explicit permission from management and parents, and strict adherence to uGroups' procedures.

5. Health, Safety & Well-being

5.1. First Aid and Emergencies:

- Be aware of designated First Aiders on site.
- Familiarise yourself with emergency procedures, including fire evacuation routes and assembly points.
- Report all accidents, incidents, and near misses, no matter how minor, in accordance with uGroups' Health & Safety Policy.

5.2. Hygiene and Cleanliness:

- Maintain high standards of personal hygiene.
- Ensure the environment and equipment are clean, tidy, and safe for children's use.
- Follow food hygiene protocols when handling or serving food.

5.3. Risk Assessment:

- Be aware of and contribute to risk assessments for activities and the environment.
- Report any potential hazards or unsafe conditions immediately to the lead team member for the session.

5.4. Inclusion and Diversity:

- Actively support an inclusive environment where all children feel valued and respected, regardless of their background, SEND, or individual needs.
- Follow individual care plans and support strategies for children with SEND or medical conditions.

6. Communication

6.1. With Parents/Guardians:

- Communicate respectfully and professionally.
- Provide appropriate updates on their child's day while respecting confidentiality.
- Direct specific queries regarding bookings, payments, or serious concerns to the lead team member for the session or the central office.

6.2. With Colleagues:

- Foster a supportive and collaborative working environment.
- Communicate openly and honestly, addressing issues constructively.
- Support new Team Members and share best practices.

6.3. With the School/Venue:

- Adhere to all agreed venue rules and procedures, including site-specific security protocols.
- Maintain positive and respectful relationships with school staff and representatives.

7. Digital and Social Media Conduct

7.1. Personal Devices:

- The use of personal mobile phones or smart devices for personal use is strictly prohibited during working hours when directly supervising children.

- If a device is required for uGroups' operational purposes, it must be used responsibly and following uGroups' Digital Safety Policy.

7.2. Online Interactions:

- Do not engage with children from uGroup sessions on personal social media accounts.
- Never post photos or videos of children from uGroup sessions online without explicit, signed consent from uGroup and the child's Parent/Guardian. Even with consent, consider privacy implications carefully.
- Do not post any negative or inappropriate comments about uGroup, the School, children, parents/guardians, or colleagues online.

7.3. Privacy:

- Respect the privacy of children and their families, both online and offline.
- Do not disclose any confidential or personal information about children or their families on any public or private online platform.

8. Compliance and Accountability

8.1. Adherence to Policies:

- All Team Members are responsible for reading, understanding, and adhering to this Code of Conduct and all uGroups Policies and Procedures.
- Regular training will be provided to support understanding and compliance.

8.2. Reporting Concerns about Colleagues:

- If you have a concern about a colleague's conduct or believe they may be breaching this Code or a uGroup Policy, you have a professional and ethical obligation to report it immediately to the Site Manager or, if the concern is about the Manager, to the Director of Childcare or via uGroups' Whistleblowing Policy.

8.3. Consequences of Breach:

- Any breach of this Code of Conduct will be treated seriously and may result in disciplinary action, up to and including immediate dismissal, and/or referral to relevant external authorities (e.g., DBS, Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO), Police) where appropriate.

9. Review

This Code of Conduct will be reviewed regularly, at least annually, and updated as necessary to reflect changes in legislation, best practice, or organisational needs.