



ELVES CIC Code of Conduct & Reporting Handbook

1. Purpose

At ELVES CIC, we are committed to fostering a welcoming, inclusive, and respectful working environment. This handbook outlines the behavioural standards expected from everyone involved in our organisation and provides a clear and confidential mechanism for reporting any concerns.

2. Expected Standards of Behaviour

All staff, volunteers, collaborators, and partners are expected to:

- Treat everyone with dignity, kindness, and respect
- Actively support equality, diversity, and inclusion
- Communicate clearly and constructively
- Take shared responsibility for a positive and safe working culture
- Respect personal boundaries and protect confidential or sensitive data in line with UK GDPR

3. Unacceptable Behaviour

Inappropriate or harmful behaviour of any kind will not be tolerated. This includes:

- Offensive or discriminatory language, slurs, or derogatory remarks
- Aggressive behaviour, including shouting, intimidating posture, or physical gestures
- Inappropriate tone, such as sarcasm, passive aggression, or patronising speech
- Verbal abuse, bullying, or deliberate exclusion
- Sexual harassment, unsolicited advances, or inappropriate physical contact
- Abuse of authority, including coercion, manipulation, or favouritism

- Threats of violence or retaliation in any form

We recognise that aggression can be expressed through words, tone, body language, or even written communication. Everyone is expected to maintain professionalism and mutual respect—even during high-pressure moments.

4. How to Report a Concern

Step 1: Informal Resolution (if safe to do so)

- Calmly and respectfully raise your concern with the person involved
- Seek support from a colleague for mediation if helpful

Step 2: Formal Reporting

Submit your concern directly to the ELVES CIC Director:

Jakob Kaye – jakob@elvescic.org

Please complete an Incident Reporting Form including:

- The date, time, and location of the incident
- A description of the behaviour or concern
- Individuals involved or present as witnesses
- Any steps taken so far

Step 3: Escalation (if no response within a reasonable timeframe)

If both Directors are unavailable or concerns remain unaddressed within a reasonable timeframe, you may seek external advice or support:

- Acas Helpline: 0300 123 1100
- Equality Advisory Support Service (EASS): 0808 800 0082
- Local Safeguarding Lead (if relevant)
- Police (in the case of threats or criminal activity)

5. Protection from Retaliation

We are committed to protecting anyone who raises a concern in good faith. Retaliation or victimisation of whistleblowers is strictly prohibited and may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

6. Legal Framework

This handbook complies with the following UK legislation and guidance:

- Equality Act 2010
- Employment Rights Act 1996
- UK GDPR & Data Protection Act 2018
- Acas Code of Practice on Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (where applicable)

7. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
Directors	Investigate concerns promptly and fairly. Maintain a culture of respect and s
All Staff / volunteers	Behave professionally. Raise concerns or seek support when necessary.

8. Conduct When Dealing with Clients

All staff and volunteers representing ELVES CIC must uphold the highest professional standards when engaging with clients, service users, or members of the public. This includes:

- **Professionalism and Respect**
Always treat clients with patience, courtesy, and empathy. Remember that many clients may be experiencing vulnerability, health challenges, or emotional distress.
- **Clear Communication**
Use plain, positive, and inclusive language. Avoid jargon, sarcasm, or overly familiar terms. Confirm understanding and ensure clients feel heard and supported.
- **Confidentiality**
Protect client information in accordance with UK GDPR. Only share personal or sensitive data with authorised personnel and for legitimate operational purposes.
- **Boundaries**
Maintain appropriate professional boundaries at all times. Do not share personal contact information, engage in relationships outside the scope of ELVES CIC work, or accept gifts or favours that could create a conflict of interest.
- **Safety and Safeguarding**
Follow all ELVES CIC safeguarding procedures when working in clients' homes or gardens. Immediately report any concerns about neglect, abuse, or unsafe conditions to a Director.

- **Representation of ELVES CIC**

Present yourself as a positive ambassador for the organisation by wearing appropriate attire, using official identification when required, and acting in a manner that reflects our values of inclusion, respect, and community care.

Failure to meet these standards may result in additional training, supervision, or disciplinary action depending on the severity of the issue.

*Reviewed and approved by ELVES CIC Directors
Last updated: [07/10/2025]*