THE HAVEN

Operated by the Autistic Girls Network charity — 1196655 (England and Wales), SC054837 (Scotland)

Staff Conduct Policy

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1. Purpose

At The Haven, we uphold the highest standards of professional and ethical conduct to create a nurturing, neurodivergent-affirming, and emotionally safe learning environment. This policy outlines our collective responsibility to act with integrity, professionalism, and care in all interactions—with learners, families, and each other.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all The Haven team members, including employees, freelance educators, SENCOs, mentors, volunteers, and contractors—regardless of contract type, location, or working hours.

3. Standards of Conduct

3.1 Professionalism

Staff are expected to uphold The Haven's mission of trauma-informed, inclusive practice and act with professionalism in all circumstances—showing reliability, discretion, and alignment with The Haven's learner-centred values.

3.2 Respect & Boundaries Every human at The Haven — learner, parent carer, colleague, or partner — must be treated with dignity, compassion, and fairness. Bullying, exclusion, harassment (including sexual harassment, racial harassment, and harassment based on any protected characteristic), or any demeaning behaviour is not tolerated.

The **Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act 2010) Act 2023** places a preventive duty on The Haven to take *reasonable steps* to prevent sexual harassment of staff, including by third parties (parent carers, commissioners, contractors, and any other person staff encounter in the course of work). All staff are expected to:

- Treat colleagues, learners, families, contractors, and partners with respect at all times.
- Recognise that the preventive duty extends to third-party harassment — staff are protected from harassment by parent carers and commissioners, not only by colleagues.
- Report any harassment they experience or witness, using the routes in section 8 (and the Grievance and Disciplinary Policy v10.25 / Whistleblowing Policy v10.26).
- Take active-bystander responsibility — if you witness harassment, do not stand by.
- Engage with annual training on the Equality Act 2010, the Worker Protection Act, and active bystander practice.

Reporting in good faith is protected; retaliation is itself a disciplinary matter.

3.3 Confidentiality
Staff must protect personal and sensitive information. Data relating to learners, families, and colleagues must be handled in line with **UK GDPR** and the **Data Protection Act 2018**, and only disclosed where legally required or explicitly authorised.

3.4 Compliance
Staff must comply with all applicable safeguarding laws, professional standards, and internal policies, including those related to online education, child protection, and digital safety.

3.5 Cyber Safety
As an online-first setting, staff must follow secure digital practices, use only approved platforms for communication, and report any safeguarding or technical concerns without delay.

3.6 Use of AI and Digital Tools

Staff may use AI or automation tools only through school-approved accounts within The Haven domain. The safe and responsible use of digital and AI-based tools is a shared duty across the following roles:

DSL/SENCO - Lead on confidentiality for safeguarding / SEND data. Ensure staff follow this guidance; report breaches to the DPO.

All staff - Follow the expectations in this agreement, and seek advice if unsure.

DPO (CEO) - Ensure compliance with UK GDPR, monitor incidents, maintain records, and configure AI and data-retention settings — with technical support from the Systems Architect - ensuring AI tools and Workspace remain The Haven-owned and compliant.

No identifiable learner, family, or colleague information may be entered into AI systems. Any uncertainty or suspected data exposure must be reported to the DPO and, where safeguarding is affected, to the DSL.

4. Appearance and Environment

4.1 Virtual Learning Space
Staff should use The Haven's approved backgrounds during live sessions and ensure their environment is calm, quiet, and free from distractions.

4.2 Clothing & Presentation

While we encourage authenticity, clothing should be appropriate for a learning setting and culturally respectful. Branded The Haven wear will be provided where appropriate.

5. Communication & Social Media

5.1 Sensitive Information

Staff must never share confidential information about The Haven learners or staff on social media.

5.2 Online Boundaries

Personal social media interaction with learners is strictly prohibited. All professional communication must take place on The Haven platforms, which are secure and monitored.

5.3 Professional Channels

Staff may not use personal email, phone numbers, or messaging apps for work-related contact. Use of unapproved platforms for learner communication is a breach of this policy.

6. Pre-Employment Checks

All prospective staff must complete enhanced DBS checks, safeguarding declarations, and social media screening before being onboarded.

7. Expectations & Development

7.1 Timeliness & Reliability

Staff are expected to be punctual, prepared, and responsive.

7.2 Continuous Development

Regular CPD is core to our work. All staff must engage in relevant training, especially in ADHD, autism, trauma-informed practice, and safeguarding.

7.3 Reporting Challenges

If you're struggling in your role, communicate openly with a senior leader or designated support contact. We operate on mutual respect and proactive care.

8. Violations

Any breach of this policy may lead to formal action, including termination of contract. Concerns or breaches must be reported without delay — safeguarding concerns to the DSL, and data-protection or technical breaches to the DPO.

9. Amendments

This policy is reviewed annually, or in response to legal, strategic, or pedagogical changes. All staff will be notified of updates and expected to comply with the latest version.

10. Acknowledgement

By joining The Haven, staff confirm that they have read, understood, and agreed to abide by this *Staff Conduct Policy*, including expectations for digital safety, confidentiality, and the responsible use of AI and data-protection practices.

Purpose
This addendum sits alongside The Haven *Staff Conduct Policy* (2025). It clarifies professional boundaries, digital expectations, and data protection responsibilities for all staff, tutors, contractors, and volunteers working with The Haven.

It should be read in conjunction with The Haven's **Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy v10.26**, **Whistleblowing Policy v10.26**, **Data Protection (UK GDPR), Confidentiality & Privacy Policy v10.26**, and **Staff Acceptable Use Guidelines**.

Section 1: Professional Boundaries and Social Media Use

All staff are expected to maintain clear, professional boundaries in both their **personal and professional** online interactions.

1.1 Social Media Conduct

- Staff must **not connect with learners, former learners, or parent-carers** on personal social media platforms.
- **Private accounts** must remain private; staff must not share classroom content, photos, or any information about learners or colleagues on personal accounts.
- Staff may follow or engage with *The Haven's official accounts* for professional updates but must not communicate privately with learners through social media, messaging, or gaming platforms.
- Professional curiosity online (e.g., viewing a student's social media for safeguarding reasons) may only occur **under DSL guidance** and must be recorded.
- All communication with learners and families must take place **via approved Haven platforms** (Google Meet, Google Classroom, TutorCruncher or The Haven email).

Any breach of these boundaries is treated as a **low-level concern** under The Haven's Low-Level Concerns Procedure and may lead to further investigation.

Section 2: Use of Personal Devices and Laptops

The Haven recognises that staff may occasionally use personal devices to deliver sessions or access work systems, provided this is in line with data protection and safeguarding expectations.

2.1 Screen Sharing and Online Materials

- Before sharing screens, staff must ensure **no personal content, notifications, or open applications** are visible.
- Only **Haven-approved materials** (lesson slides, curriculum documents, or approved resources) may be shared.
- Sensitive data or files containing learner information must never be shared or displayed.
- If a staff member accidentally shares personal or confidential information, they must **report immediately to the DSL and DPO**.

2.2 Secure Use of Personal Laptops

Staff using personal devices for work must:

- Ensure the laptop is **password-protected** and has up-to-date antivirus software.
- Keep all **work platforms logged out or closed** when using the laptop for personal reasons.
- Never allow unauthorised persons (including family members) to access The Haven materials or platforms.
- Store work-related files securely, using encrypted folders or approved The Haven drives.
- Report immediately to the **DPO** and **DSL** in the event of theft, loss, or suspected data breach.

Failure to report such incidents promptly may constitute a breach of the **Data Protection (UK GDPR), Confidentiality & Privacy Policy v10.26** and could result in disciplinary action.

Section 3: Safeguarding and Confidentiality

- All staff have an **ongoing duty** to uphold The Haven's **Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy v10.26** during and outside of teaching hours.
- This includes maintaining professional boundaries in all communications, both digital and in-person, and being alert to safeguarding disclosures at all times.
- Staff must handle all learner, family, and colleague information with **strict confidentiality**, sharing only on a "need to know" basis through secure channels.
- Discussions about learners must never take place in public spaces or on personal messaging apps.

Breaches of confidentiality or safeguarding expectations must be reported immediately to the DSL or through The Haven's **Whistleblowing Policy v10.26**.

Section 4: Cross-Referenced Policies

Staff must familiarise themselves with and follow these related policies at all times:

- **Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy v10.26
  > **
- **Data Protection (UK GDPR), Confidentiality & Privacy Policy v10.26
  > **
- **Navigating the Digital Age of Consent_ A Guide for Parents at The Haven v10.25: Parent Guide
  > **
- **Whistleblowing Policy v10.26
  > **
- **Staff Conduct and Low-Level Concerns Guidance
  > **
- **Prevent Duty Policy v10.26**

Section 5: Accountability and Review

This addendum forms part of the contractual obligations of all Haven staff and is subject to annual review or earlier if statutory or local authority guidance changes.

Non-compliance may result in disciplinary action in accordance with The Haven's HR and Safeguarding procedures.

This PDF was generated from the published policy at policies.thehavenonline.school on 20 November 2026. The website is the authoritative, most current version of this policy.