



OBS Volunteer Code Of Conduct

Thank you for volunteering with Oxfordshire Breastfeeding Support (OBS). We recognise and are grateful for the essential contribution made by OBS volunteers, and we aim to make your volunteering experience as enjoyable and rewarding as possible. We have drawn up this Code of Conduct to set out expectations of our volunteers and our relationship with you.

This Code of Conduct applies to volunteers, whether providing infant feeding peer support to families or supporting OBS's work in other ways. This Code of Conduct should be read in conjunction with [OBS Policies and Procedures](#) and with the [International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes and subsequent World Health Assembly resolutions](#), also known as The WHO Code.

Volunteers perform their role under the supervision of the facilitator responsible for the session or service in which they volunteer. Normally your facilitator is your first point of contact for raising concerns, but at times contacting the Operations Manager, the Designated Safeguarding Lead, the Designated Safeguarding Trustee or the Chair of Trustees may also be appropriate.

The following series of statements explain what good practice looks like, and the standards and values that volunteers are expected to uphold. There is a separate section further down specifically for volunteers providing feeding support to service users.

Personal Expectations

- 1) Be responsible and accountable for personal conduct and practice. Act as a role model of professional behaviour, being respectful, kind and upholding the dignity of colleagues, service users and partners. Uphold the reputation of OBS, and do not bring OBS into disrepute.
- 2) Act with honesty and integrity, treating colleagues, service users and partners fairly and without discrimination, bullying or harassment. Respect the beliefs and opinions of others, recognising diversity of background, experience and individual choice, especially where they may differ from your own. Do not allow your personal views to unduly influence your work and the support you offer. All work should be carried out with regard for the [OBS Equity and Diversity Policy](#).
- 3) Ensure you are mentally and physically fit for your volunteer work. It is not permitted to be under the influence of alcohol, drugs or medication that may adversely affect behaviour or performance whilst supporting families or representing OBS in public, online or via video or

phone. Withdraw voluntarily if you feel you are not fit to volunteer. If you have any concerns, speak to the facilitator responsible for the session or service in which you volunteer or the Operations Manager.

- 4) OBS requires the disclosure of any criminal convictions as part of the volunteer recruitment process. Inform the Operations Manager as soon as possible if you are arrested or are the subject of a police investigation.
- 5) Declare any potential conflicts of interest to the facilitator in charge of the session or service in which you volunteer or the Operations Manager.
- 6) Provide honest and constructive feedback to colleagues. Use feedback to improve your practice and performance. Deal with differences of professional opinion with colleagues by discussion and informed debate, respecting their views and opinions.
- 7) Do not accept monetary gifts, personal favours or hospitality in return for support given to service users. Never ask for or accept loans from anyone using the service. Act with honesty and integrity in any financial dealings you have in your role.
- 8) Be responsible for any money, equipment, property, digital accounts and data belonging to OBS.
- 9) Do not make direct contact with the media or respond to media enquiries where you will be identified as an OBS volunteer unless it has been agreed in advance with the Operations Manager. If writing, giving an interview or speaking publicly on any matter which could be seen as representing OBS, reflect the policies and stance of OBS.
- 10) Take care when discussing potentially controversial topics in public or online, whether or not they are directly relevant to infant feeding, and be mindful of your connection with OBS, even when you're not volunteering.
 - Maintain professional boundaries online: avoid social media connections with service users or their supporters while you are supporting them.
 - You are responsible for any information you make available online. Content uploaded or opinions expressed can be considered in the public domain, and privacy cannot be guaranteed, regardless of privacy settings applied to personal accounts. This includes the sharing of confidential, discriminatory, illegal or threatening content.
 - Inform the facilitator in charge of the session or service in which you volunteer or the Operations Manager of public or online incidents that could negatively impact OBS's reputation.

What we expect of you as you work

OBS recognises that not all volunteers have direct contact with service users, and some of this section may not apply to you in your role.

- 11) Be clear about the limits of your role and the kind of support you are qualified and authorised to give to service users in a session or service. Contact the facilitator responsible for the session or service in which you volunteer or the Operations Manager if you are not sure.
- 12) Treat all service users equitably, and meet individuals' needs with support that is culturally appropriate, evidence-based and in line with best practice.

- 13) Work in partnership with service users, listening to and respecting their needs, preferences, concerns and goals. Respond sensitively and compassionately.
- 14) Communicate clearly and effectively, using terms people can understand. Share information sensitively. Take reasonable measures to meet people's language and communication needs.
- 15) Keep up to date with safeguarding training in line with the [OBS Safeguarding Policy](#), and know where to find the contact details of Designated Safeguarding Leads and the Designated Safeguarding Trustee.
- 16) Raise safeguarding concerns promptly with the facilitator responsible for the session or service in which you volunteer, or the Designated Safeguarding Lead, in accordance with the [OBS Safeguarding Policy](#). Acknowledge and act on all concerns raised to you by OBS colleagues, service users and partners, investigating, escalating or dealing with those concerns as appropriate. The Safeguarding Policy also provides details of the whistleblowing process.
- 17) Respect others' right to privacy and confidentiality, in accordance with GDPR law and [OBS's Privacy and Safeguarding Policies](#). Be mindful of sharing personal information sensitively and only as necessary, and obtain consent where possible.
- 18) Be aware of, and reduce as far as possible, any potential for harm. Keep to and promote recommended practice in relation to health and safety, controlling and preventing infection. Take all reasonable personal precautions necessary to avoid any potential health risks to colleagues, people receiving support, and the public.
- 19) In order to maintain professional boundaries, avoid sharing personal contact information or making contact with service users outside of official OBS channels. Be mindful of the limits of your role, the limits of OBS services and the boundaries of your relationships as a volunteer.
- 20) Assist the facilitator responsible for the session or service in which you volunteer to keep clear, complete and accurate records. Take steps to ensure that records are kept securely.
- 21) Work to further OBS's mission, vision and values in providing local families with skilled, non-judgemental support.
- 22) Obtain written consent when taking photographs or videos of service users and their families in OBS sessions.
- 23) Avoid endorsing or being seen to endorse specific products, services or practitioners.

Additional expectations of feeding supporter volunteers

This section applies to all volunteers providing feeding support, including peer supporters and other infant feeding specialists.

- 24) Provide information and support within the scope of your training and role, even if you are qualified to provide different types of support in different contexts (for example an NHS health professional). Be mindful of what kinds of activities are covered by OBS's organisational insurance. If you are unsure about what information to give, consult with the facilitator responsible for the session or service in which you volunteer or the Operations Manager.

- 25) If you hold roles with other infant feeding or related organisations or practice privately, make clear to families that you are supporting them in your OBS capacity, and be clear about the limits of this support. In OBS settings, be mindful of personal information that you may have obtained while working in a different role.
- 26) Service users who attend and contribute to OBS sessions may transition into a volunteer role with OBS. Be clear about professional boundaries with others in your sessions. Be mindful of how any relationships you may have with OBS facilitators, service users and other volunteers will have shifted as a result of your volunteer role.
- 27) Take advantage of opportunities to debrief your helping situations with the facilitator responsible for the session or service in which you volunteer. Attend OBS volunteer supervision and education sessions when possible. Take advantage of opportunities to further your infant feeding support skills and knowledge.
- 28) Be open and candid with all service users about the support they have been given, including when any mistakes have been made. Report mistakes to the facilitator responsible for the session or service in which you volunteer and where appropriate help them to rectify mistakes or misinformation that could cause potential harm, and participate in reflective practice.
- 29) Document all complaints or mistakes reported formally, which will be dealt with as set out in the [OBS Complaints and Allegations Policy and Procedure](#). Do not allow a person's complaint to affect the support that you provide them. Use complaints as feedback and an opportunity for reflection and learning.

Accountability

While volunteering at OBS takes place under supervision, OBS volunteers are responsible for their actions and omissions while representing OBS, which helps to ensure that OBS standards are upheld, that services are delivered consistently and that the safety and wellbeing of service users is preserved.

Breaches of any standards outlined in the Volunteer Code of Conduct may result in a meeting that may include a volunteer's session or service facilitator, the Operations Manager, one or more trustees and/or the Designated Safeguarding Lead to assess suitability of a team member for their role. Should this happen, the volunteer will be given the opportunity to be heard. Consistent or substantial breaches of the Code of Conduct may result in initiation of procedures to terminate their volunteer agreement with OBS.

**Oxfordshire Breastfeeding Support
Policy date: March 2026
Due for revision: March 2029**