



Sweet Circus CIC

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Staff, Volunteer and Student Code of Conduct

Ethos

Sweet Circus is a non-profit circus organisation with the mission of improving the physical, mental and social health of the community through engagement in circus and play. We believe that circus is for all and strive to be as inclusive and encouraging as possible in all our classes. Our goal is to improve individual and group wellbeing by participation towards acquisition of Circus Skills, rather than being driven by mastery of the skill itself as the goal. We celebrate effort over achievement; encourage social connections and champion peer support throughout our programmes.

Sweet Circus Staff, Volunteer, and Student Code of Conduct

We endeavour to make all interactions with sweet circus to be positive ones. In respect of this we expect all staff, volunteers, students, parents, carers and other visitors to uphold our code of conduct while they are with us. As it says in the code, we all get things wrong sometimes, and that's OK if we use that as a way to learn and improve.

We are all on our circus journey. The journey is open to Every Body who wants it. We started in different places at different times and are taking different routes at different speeds, but we are all on a voyage of self-improvement, acceptance and discovery.

We are accepting of all people and respectful of their identity (including pronouns, checking boundaries regarding language / touch / volume etc).

We share, look after, value and respect each other, our equipment and our venues but our journey is our own.

We help each other to see our improvements and celebrate together.

We can ask for help, and help others, but we also look after, value, and respect ourselves.

We don't take ourselves too seriously and give ourselves permission to have fun.

We are welcoming and friendly, and want to help everyone feel included.

We wear cool socks, odd socks are cool but not wearing cool socks is also cool.

We get things wrong sometimes but we learn from that and use it to improve.

We are supportive and embrace effort over achievement – No one-upmanship!

Sweet Circus is a Community Interest Company. We are a not for profit organisation aiming to promote health and happiness through engagement in Circus Arts. Circus Fun for Everyone!

Our code of conduct is influenced by a number of policies and practises:

Engagement & enjoyment

Although there may be specialist classes / workshops with a separate set of objectives the main aim of all interactions with sweet circus is engagement and enjoyment. Staff will plan and deliver sessions with this in mind, adapting activities and teaching styles to suit individual participants.

Inclusion

Sweet circus aims to be as inclusive as possible. All staff and volunteers will be made aware of our inclusion policy and agree to work within its parameters. We will strive to adapt our practices and promotion to enable all people to participate.

Staff will nurture an encouraging, friendly atmosphere that celebrates diversity. They will challenge language, humour or behaviour that people find offensive e.g. sexist, racist or homophobic jokes or terminology which is derogatory to someone with a disability.

Risk policy

Being able to assess and take risks is important, both as children and adults. Sweet Circus use the phrase "bruises make you better broken bones do not" when assessing the risk in our activities. Students, especially children, should be educated on this policy. If the likely outcome of an activity someone wants to try going wrong (or sometimes right) is that it will bruise them, that is fine, go ahead with appropriate risk management strategies (i.e. crash mats, wrist splints). If, however, if it likely to cause longer term injury, then the students and instructor need to work together to see if they can find a suitable way for the student to experience this without the risk of such harm. This may be as simple as providing a heavy spot, but at other times this calls for more creative problem solving. If you cannot come to a solution there and then, you should explain your reasons why and defer until your instructor can discuss with the team to see if there is a way.

Play Policy

Sweet Circus draws on research from Play England, Play Scotland and Play Wales. We see play as a most important developmental tool as well as an antidote to stress. While unstructured and free play opportunities are not always appropriate within a circus environment, due to safety issues, staff will support opportunities where possible to explore, adapt, and create. Circus will be promoted as a form of play and the benefits discussed. Our play policy is currently under development.

Continual development & consultation

Sweet Circus believes in continual development. We will strive to continually adapt, improve and respond to the needs of our community. We passionately believe that we have much to learn from each other and value everyone's knowledge and ideas. This includes other staff, parents, students and the community at large. We will regularly consult with students, parents and the wider community to improve our services and influence our development.

We see our students as the expert at being them. Within our sessions we aim to provide opportunities for students to take the lead and make suggestions and decisions.

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Circus Works

Sweet Circus is a member of CircusWorks. The UK's umbrella organisation for Youth Circus. Along with other such organisations across Europe they have developed a Manifesto to which we adhere:

This Space Is For You

Here, we all have the right to join in, learn circus, and have fun

Circus has its roots in all cultures

We welcome all learners, thinkers, genders and bodies

We listen to everyone and respect their needs

In this space, we all have the responsibility to:

- *Be kind*
- *Involve and respect everyone*
- *Support and encourage each other*
- *Learn from each other*
- *Celebrate our own and each others' unique creativity*
- *Express what we need*
- *Create a safe space together*
- *Challenge unfriendly behaviour*

Circus has the power to generate WONDER. We use it to become strong, resilient, compassionate and joyous.

In this space, we have ZERO TOLERANCE of violence, racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, body negativity, sexual harassment, discrimination of age, religion or belief, gender or sexuality, visible or non-visible mental or physical limitations, economic status or clothing/appearance.