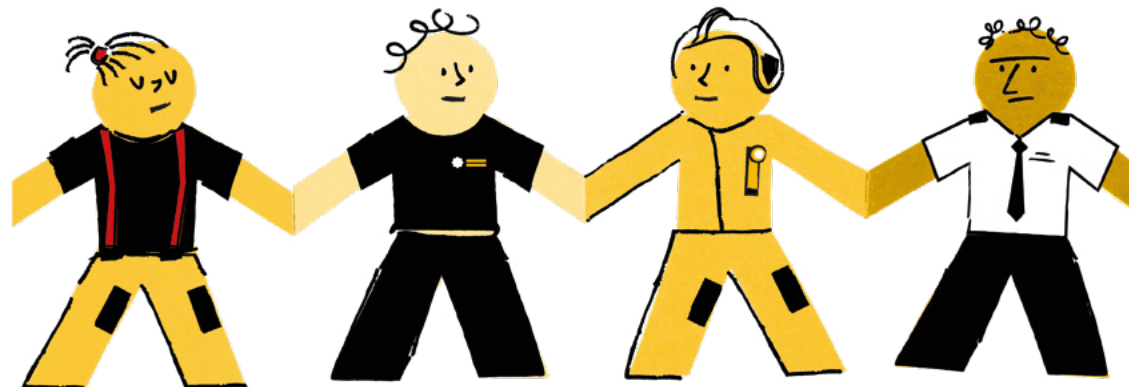




**South Yorkshire  
FIRE & RESCUE**

# MANAGER'S GUIDE

*South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue*



# ABOUT THIS GUIDE

We've put together this guide for anyone with responsibility for managing other people.

We want to explain what our behaviours mean, what we stand for as a service and why this matters.

We also want to give you some practical advice on how to have what can sometimes be difficult conversations with staff, for example when they fall short of the standards expected of them.

*“To embody our values you need to be honest with yourself and the people around you. Take ownership, good or bad, and take pride in everything you do. Be respectful at all times, whether it's in the workplace or in public.”*

*Rainy Liversidge, Information Officer*



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# WHAT ARE OUR BEHAVIOURS

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*and what do they mean?*

Our behaviours were developed by our own staff several years ago. They represent the standards we expect of all our people. Regardless of rank. Regardless of role.

**Our behaviours are:**



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## HONESTY

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*Be open and honest in everything we do.*

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## INTEGRITY

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*Do what we say we will do and follow through on our promises.*

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## RESPECT

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*Respect people and trust them to do a good job.*

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# WHAT'S THE CORE CODE OF ETHICS?

Since introducing our behaviours a new national core code of ethics has been shared for all fire and rescue service staff.

Much of the core code reflects and complements our existing behaviours, but with an additional focus on diversity and inclusion.

We've asked all new and existing staff members to voluntarily sign up to the code as a demonstration of their commitment to the values of the fire and rescue service.

*“ Our organisational values of honesty, integrity and respect indicate to me that staff at SYFR hold themselves to a high standard of both moral and ethical conduct. If we all embody these morals and behaviours, staff will feel appreciated, empowered and most importantly happy, creating a healthy and positive working environment. ”*

*Kirsty Thorley, Health and Wellbeing Manager*



# WHY DOES ANY OF THIS MATTER?

Posters and pin badges are all very well - but why does any of this matter?

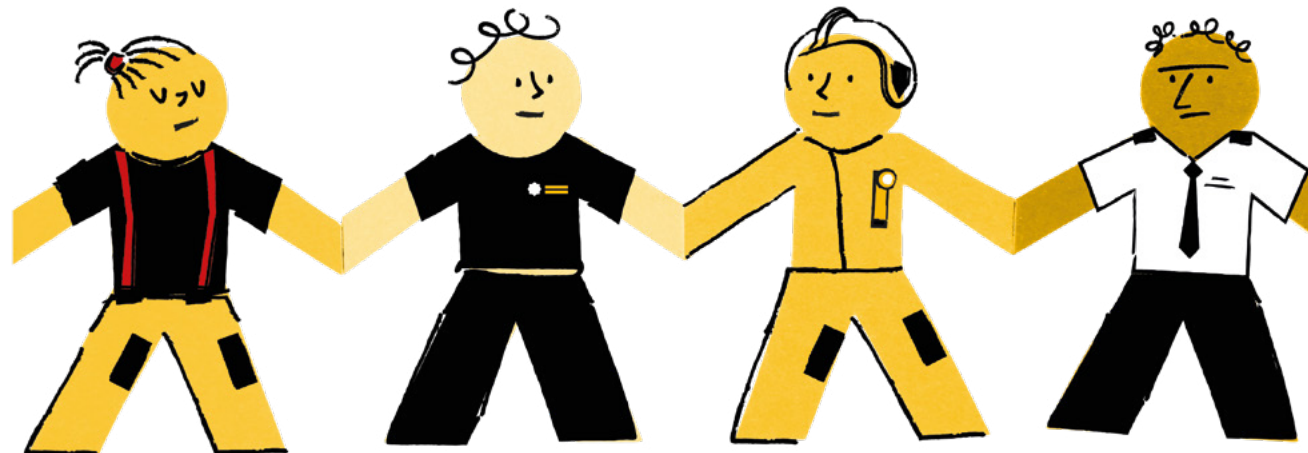
Many of the values and behaviours we ask staff to uphold might seem obvious. They are all basic human behaviours after all.

But organisations which are really clear and upfront about what they stand for are often the best at creating a strong environment where individuals and teams trust each other and thrive.



*“ We embody the values through personal professionalism so that we can gain the respect of our work colleagues. Together we strive to make the workplace a safe environment for all. ”*

*Parkway Green Watch*



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# WHAT DO WE STAND FOR?

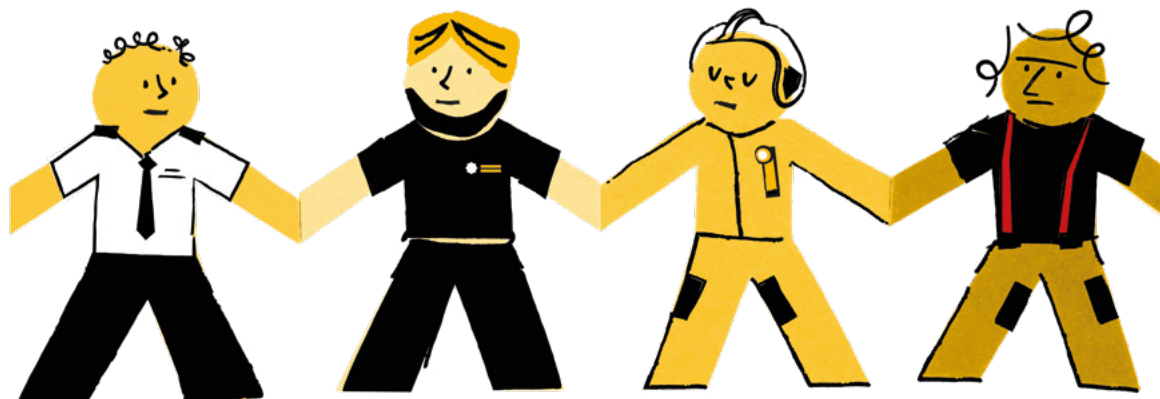
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We aspire to be a great place to work - where everyone can bring their whole selves and properly thrive.

We know that the vast majority of our staff are committed to our service's behaviours and the national code of ethics for fire and rescue staff.

But we will not stand for behaviour which makes other people feel uncomfortable.

We will not stand for behaviour that demonstrates deliberate attempts to bully, harass or intimidate.



# WHAT'S MY ROLE AS A MANAGER?

It can be hard to speak up when someone does or says something which falls short of the standards we expect of our staff.

As a manager, you aren't the only person who can speak up either. Indeed, we want everyone to feel like they can appropriately and respectfully challenge others.

But as a manager, you also have responsibility and others will often look to you to set standards of behaviour in your work environment.

What you permit, you promote and others will think it's OK to act that way in the future if you don't speak up.

*“For me our values of Honesty, Integrity and Respect are about our behaviours towards the people we serve and work with. It's about respecting the opinions and ideas that others bring to the room and being open and transparent about everything we do.”*

*Mushrat Javaid, Community Safety Co-ordinator*



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# WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO SPEAK UP?

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Difficult conversations can feel so daunting that we're tempted to just avoid them.

But if you avoid discussing an issue with a colleague, you deny both them and you the opportunity to improve an uncomfortable situation.

We've all seen miscommunication devolve into long-held grudges or anxieties, just because neither party addressed the initial issue.

It can also be a mistake to rush into a difficult conversation: you're more likely to make incorrect assumptions or just start venting. At its worst, confronting a problem without a plan may make the other person may feel attacked or withdrawn.



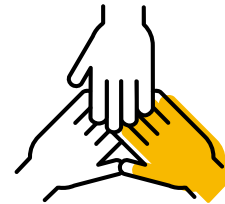


# HOW SHOULD I SPEAK UP?



## CHALLENGE CALMLY, QUICKLY AND DECISIVELY

Be clear, honest and transparent about why you are having this discussion. If it's wrong, it's wrong. Challenge on behalf of others and remember not everyone has the confidence to speak up for themselves.



## ENCOURAGE EMPATHY

Sometimes people understand another point of view better if they can relate it to their own circumstances, or people they know. So if you need to, ask how they would feel if their family member was treated that way.



## STICK TO THE FACTS

Tell them it goes against the service's policies, behaviours and human decency. Don't get drawn into an argument and be a broken record if you have to: "It's wrong, I don't want to hear or see it again".



## AGREE ACTION

A constructive conversation should result in some positive actions to rectify the situation, agreed by both of you. Often, this might be a simple apology with a commitment not to engage in that behaviour again.

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# I FEEL ANGRY AND UPSET

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*what should I do?*

Sometimes situations can make you or others feel frustrated, angry or upset. But often when we become extremely emotional, we don't actually express what we intend to.

To talk about feelings without our emotions hijacking the discussion, try using the phrase:

“

When you \_\_\_\_\_ ,  
I feel \_\_\_\_\_ .

”

*This avoids creating a victim and a perpetrator and can be a useful way of resolving a situation calmly and professionally.*

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# WHAT IF I HAVE A DIFFICULT CONVERSATION

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*and nothing changes?*

If the other person seemed unreceptive during your conversation or you weren't able to communicate everything you wanted to, repeat the discussion. Maybe you were nervous the first time and didn't quite get your point across.

That said, some people won't care how you feel and won't change. In cases where the other person isn't ready to be self-reflective and meet you halfway, you are allowed to finish the conversation.

If a conversation you've had didn't go the way you wanted, or if poor conduct persists then there is support available to you via your district People Partner.

Details of  
support available  
to managers:  
[syfrwellbeing.co.uk](https://syfrwellbeing.co.uk)



# WHAT IS ALLYSHIP

## *and why does it matter?*

Most people don't realise the enormous power their own simple actions - like speaking up to address poor language or behaviour - can have when it comes to creating real change.

Being an ally for your colleagues is one of the most impactful things you can do to create a positive workplace culture where everyone can thrive.

We particularly need allies to support others from under-represented groups who might feel weary of having to constantly challenge things themselves. Or perhaps they feel unable or uncomfortable to speak up in some environments.

**Anyone can be an ally - but think of it as an action rather than a label.**

*“ I believe integrity is taking responsibility and being accountable for your actions. I believe this should include reflecting on your own performance and being able to admit to when you would have acted differently, either positively or negatively. Respect is about listening to what everyone has to say, having open discussions as a team and respecting each other's opinion, even if you disagree. Always be honest. Be honest about your own personal shortcomings when giving feedback or when handling conflict, so it can be as constructive as possible. ”*

*Helena Rooke, FF at Tankersley*



*Here are some things you can do:*

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## **LISTEN**

without judgement to other people's perspectives and experiences.



## **EDUCATE YOURSELF**

on inequalities and obstacles faced by others.



## **SPEAK UP**

and call out discrimination or inappropriate behaviour where you see it - even when someone from an under-represented group is not in the room.



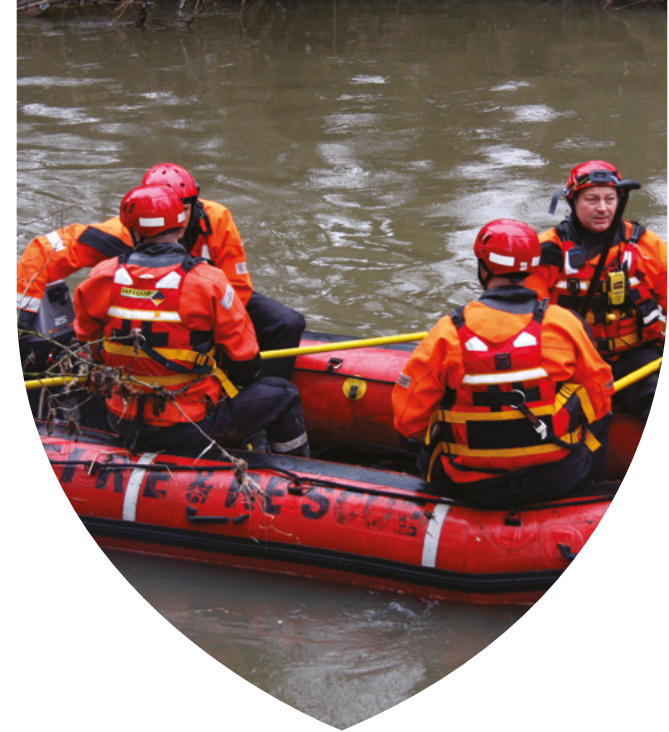
## **CHALLENGE**

your own assumptions and biases you didn't realise you had - be open to being wrong sometimes.



## **ACCEPT**

and own your mistakes in the language you use - breathe, apologise and ask for guidance if needed.



“ People hear what you say and they see what you do. If these things align then you will be acting with integrity. So if you make agreements, stick to them. If you can't stick to them, then be honest and explain why. We are all often successful but we all sometimes fail.

We can only learn if we embrace both outcomes, look to move on, make improvements and place value in our ability to accept when we get things wrong.”

Chris Kirby, CFO

“ Honesty is feeling comfortable in voicing my honest opinion without fear of offending. It means acting transparently so that there are no secrets or hidden agendas. Integrity is about doing what is morally right and being consistent and reliable in everything we do. Respect is about appreciating and celebrating everyone's role and treating people how I'd like to be treated. It is about acknowledging that everyone's role is important within the organisation.”

Becky Eastes, Project and Programme Manager

“ Behaving in a respectful way is something I witness every day within SYFR. Treating others the way we would expect to be treated is the 'golden rule'. This creates mutual trust so that we all feel valued and able to do the best that we can whilst at work.”

Lee Patterson, Health and Safety Manager

“ Honesty to me means being not just with others, but yourself too. It is important to be proud when you have accomplished something and accountable when something has not gone so well. I believe this creates openness in the workplace, leads others by example, and empowers us to make changes without fear of failure.”

Jess Grayson, WM Control



  
**South Yorkshire  
FIRE & RESCUE  
MALTBY**

# Thank you

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for your help in making South Yorkshire  
safer and stronger.



**South Yorkshire  
FIRE & RESCUE**