

## **YSS Code of Conduct 2024/2025**

### **1. Introduction**

#### **1.1 Purpose of the Code of Conduct**

Throughout the year YSS runs a series of competitions and programmes. These may take place at a variety of locations including, but not limited to, YSS premises and host schools. It is very important that all the participants in YSS events have a common understanding of the standards of behaviour expected of them in order to maintain a safe and enjoyable event for everyone involved. The purpose of this Code of Conduct is thus to help maintain a pleasant, safe and healthy environment for all participants in our events.

#### **1.2 To whom does the Code of Conduct apply?**

This Code of Conduct shall apply to the following participants in YSS events:

- (a) pupil participants, including pupil spectators
- (b) YSS staff and volunteers
- (c) school teachers and coaches
- (d) any external volunteer involved in administering a YSS event

#### **1.3 All participants must agree to abide by this Code of Conduct**

- (a) At the start of every school year or whenever an individual begins work with YSS, he/she will be required to sign the undertaking at the conclusion of this Code of Conduct to indicate that (s)he will abide by it for the remainder of the year.
- (b) No participant shall be allowed to be involved in a YSS event unless he/she has signed such an undertaking.
- (c) In the case of schools, the relevant teachers in charge of debating will be required to sign this undertaking on behalf of themselves and all participants they bring along to YSS events.

#### **1.4 What do the terms in this Code of Conduct mean?**

- (a) **“YSS event”** refers to any event, competition, workshop or programme run by YSS. This includes YSS events taking place at host schools, as well as online events run by YSS.
- (b) **“Participant”** refers to anyone defined by 1.2 (a)-(d).
- (c) **“Adult”** refers to any participant over the age of 18.
- (d) **“Sexual harassment”** means any unwanted, unwelcome or uninvited behaviour of a sexual nature which makes a person feel humiliated, intimidated or offended. Sexual harassment can take on many different forms and may include physical contact, verbal comments, jokes, propositions, the display of offensive material or other behaviour which creates a sexually hostile environment. Examples of sexual harassment include but are not limited to uninvited touching, smutty jokes or comments, sex-based insults, repeated invitations to go out after prior refusal or persistent insinuations about a person’s private life.

### **2.1 What participants must do**

*During YSS events, all participants must:*

- (a) behave in a respectful and courteous manner towards other participants in the event and members of the public in attendance.
- (b) Abide by any rules imposed by their school or the school hosting the relevant YSS event.

## **2.2 What participants must not do**

*During YSS events, participants must not:*

- (a) make insulting comments, jokes, insults, or insinuations about another person's culture, race, religion, gender or sexual orientation or which may be construed as being derogatory or as harassment, whether in the presence of that person or in any other forum in which the person may not be present.
- (b) stalk or physically harass another individual.
- (c) engage in any form of violence or threats of violence.
- (d) engage in any form of sexual harassment [as defined in paragraph 1.4 (d)].
- (e) take or use other people's property without permission.
- (f) intentionally cause damage to the property of other individuals or of any host venues.
- (h) consume or be under the influence of alcohol or drugs in a way which may bring YSS into disrepute.

## **2.3 Behaviour during debates**

- (a) Participants in YSS events, especially coaches and debaters, must not confront adjudicators in an aggressive manner before, during or after a debate.
- (b) Feedback between teams and adjudicators must be given and received in a constructive and non-confrontational manner.

## **2.4 Behaviour during online events**

*Participants in online YSS events must:*

- (a) ensure they abide by all usual parts of this Code of Conduct.
- (b) remain appropriately dressed at all times.

*Participants in online YSS events must not:*

- (c) instigate or request private online contact with other participants.
- (d) engage in any form of sexual harassment [as defined in paragraph 1.4(d)].
- (e) require any participant to turn on their camera.
- (f) require any participant to give up personal contact information.

*In addition, adult participants in online YSS events must not:*

- (g) engage in any communication with participants in a forum without a YSS staff member present. This includes:
  - I. Private chat messages.
  - II. Interaction on private rooms.
  - III. Instigating private calls.
  - IV. Emailing feedback directly to a participant.

## **Enforcement of the Code of Conduct**

### **3. What happens if a participant breaches the Code of Conduct?**

#### **3.1 Breaches can be reported to YSS**

If a participant believes that another participant has breached this Code of Conduct, s/he may report the breach to YSS. Complaints can be emailed to the Programmes Director at [jordan@youngspeakersscotland.org.uk](mailto:jordan@youngspeakersscotland.org.uk)

If the complaint involves the Programmes Director, it can be emailed to Child Protection Trustees – Jennifer Broadley at [jbroadley@youngspeakersscotland.org.uk](mailto:jbroadley@youngspeakersscotland.org.uk) or Elspeth Hough at [elspethinedinburgh@gmail.com](mailto:elspethinedinburgh@gmail.com)

**3.2 Breaches will be dealt with by YSS**

YSS will be responsible for:

- (a) investigating any breaches reported.
- (b) Supporting the complainant, including possibly referring him/her to other authorities when appropriate.

**3.3 An update on all reports will be delivered to the individual who made the report within four weeks of the report being made.**

**3.4 YSS will never publicly reveal the identity of anyone reporting a breach of the Code of Conduct, but we may be required to share this information internally or with a relevant authority.**

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**Undertaking**

*Undertaking required to be signed by all participating in YSS events.*

*If signing on behalf of school, put both your name and your school name in the name section.*

I \_\_\_\_\_

undertake that:

- (a) I have read and understood the Code of Conduct above and
- (b) I will abide by the Code of Conduct for the duration of YSS’s 2024/2025 events.

Signed .....

Dated .....