

ONLINE SAFETY POLICY (Children)

This policy statement applies to all staff, volunteers, children and young people and anyone involved in our activities and work.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and young people is paramount when adults, young people or children are using the internet, social media or mobile devices
- Provide staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to online safety
- Ensure that, as an organisation, we operate in line with our values and within the law in terms of how we use online devices.

We believe that children and young people should never experience abuse of any kind, and that children should be able to use the internet for education and personal development. However safeguarding needs to be in place to ensure they are always kept safe.

We recognise that:

- The online world provides everyone with many opportunities; however, it can also present risks and challenges
- We have a duty to ensure that all children, young people and adults involved in our organisation are protected from potential harm online
- We have a responsibility to help keep children and young people safe online, whether they are using our network and devices
- All children, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse
- Working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare and in helping young people to be responsible in their approach to online safety.

We will seek to keep young people and children safe online by:

- Appointing an online safety coordinator
- Providing clear and specific directions to staff and volunteers on how to behave online through our related policies and handbooks, as well as our Social Media and Internet Use Policy, which can all be found on our website.
- Supporting and encouraging the young people using our service to use the internet, social media and mobile phones in a way that keeps them safe and shows respect for others

- Supporting and encouraging parents, guardians and carers to do what they can to keep their children safe online
- Developing an online safety agreement for use with young people and their parents/carers
- Developing clear and robust procedures to enable us to respond appropriately to any incidents of inappropriate online behaviour, whether by an adult or a child/young person
- Reviewing and updating the security of our information systems regularly
- Ensuring that usernames, logins, email accounts and passwords are used effectively
- Ensuring personal information about the adults and children who are involved in our organisation is held securely and shared only as appropriate
- Providing supervision, support and training for staff and volunteers about online safety
- Examining and risk assessing any social media platforms and new technologies before they are used within the organisation.

How we will respond if online abuse occurs:

- Have clear and robust safeguarding procedures in place for responding to abuse (more details can be found in our Safeguarding Policy, available on our website)
- Provide support and training for all staff and volunteers on dealing with all forms of abuse, including bullying/cyberbullying, emotional abuse, sexting, sexual abuse, and sexual exploitation
- Make sure our response takes the needs of the person experiencing abuse, any bystanders, and our organisation into account
- Review the plan developed to address online abuse at regular intervals, to ensure that any problems have been resolved in the long term.