

SOCIAL MEDIA AND LIVE STREAMING POLICY

Procedure Statement

Wycombe Youth Action (WYA) is fully committed to and compliant with safeguarding regulations and will endeavour to ensure the safety of the young people they are working with at all times.

WYA uses social media as its primary method of advertising events, communicating with the young people it's working with and to hold live streaming events, groups and forums.

Live streaming is also used for specialist support to be provided to children, such as counselling and therapy.

However, WYA also recognises that there are risks to using social media and has endeavoured to put strong procedures in place to protect against that.

Social Media

WYA has accounts on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, Tic Toc and LinkedIn. All social media accounts:

- have their settings set so that any material is approved by an administrator before it can be posted onto the public domain.
- consideration is taken as to whether the posts will expose personal information about the young people, their home life or feelings. This will include taking consideration of visual clues in photographs that may make their location identifiable.
- are closely monitored for inappropriate comments whether it be evidence of bullying, radicalisation, grooming or sexually explicit.
- are closely monitored to ensure a young person is not revealing information about themselves in the comments that could make them vulnerable.

Photos of young people are only posted at the specific permission of the individuals involved and these photos are not tagged with people's names.

Live Streaming

Live streaming is used as a method of staying in touch with young people when it's not possible to meet up in person. Young people may be asked to participate in the live stream or to watch. Live streaming can be saved and kept on media platforms for later.

- WYA has considered the platform it uses to livestream and primarily uses Teams. Accounts are paid for as they offer greater security. WYA does not use YouTube or Facebook Live as these do not allow them to restrict the audience. It also will not use platforms that share information for anyone identified as being under the age of 18yrs old.

- Consideration has also been taken to ensure the platform is accessible to deaf and disabled children, with the use of subtitles and screen readers etc.
- Young people are asked to obtain written permission from their parent, guardian or carer prior to partaking in these activities and clear information should be given as to the purpose of the live streaming call, as well as an overview of attendees and presenters. Where WYA may record a stream, specific permission will also be sought. No recordings will be posted on social media unless WYA is confident it does not violate any privacy or safeguarding rules and only with the specific permission from the parent, guardian or carer.
- Where the live stream is not being hosted by WYA, they will endeavour to find out the content of the stream to ensure it is appropriate.
- Staff will ensure they are familiar with the platform so as to be able to mute people, remove people, are aware of the privacy settings and know how to report any offensive or abusive content. Where possible, they will use waiting rooms and lock meetings once they are in progress.
- Only those people who have been invited will be allowed to join the call and they will be asked to register to join the live stream, in order to receive the call ID and password.
- Settings will ensure young people are on mute with their video on when joining a meeting.
- Chat should be switched off wherever possible, unless required for the stream.
- Where a member of staff or a volunteer is appearing in the livestream, they will make sure their surroundings, environment and dress is appropriate for the call.

Before any livestream, remind children of the following, whether they are watching or participating.

- Live streaming is live, in real time. Any comments children make will be seen by others, and they may not be able to delete or edit what's been said. It can become part of their digital footprint.
- Young people shouldn't share any personal information during a livestream. Remind them what personal information is and not to respond to contact requests from people they don't know. Ask the young person to sign in using a first name or nickname by which they will be referred throughout the call.
- If they are to be seen, ensure they are dressed appropriately.
- Some livestreams request donations from the audience. Explain to young people that they don't have to contribute.
- Make sure they know who to tell if they see or hear anything upsetting or inappropriate.

Social media behaviour and codes of conduct

It is recognised that young people may decide to look up the personal social media accounts of the staff at Wycombe Youth Action and guidelines are in place to protect both the young person and the member of staff. With regards to their personal accounts, they are asked to:

- limit the amount of information a young person can see by using privacy settings.
- recognise that some social media platforms change their setting from time to time and so keep their accounts free of inappropriate or harmful content, and not provide any personal information such as a personal email address or phone number.
- not accept any friend requests to their personal accounts from any of the young people or families they work with.

Staff and volunteers are asked to:

- only use accounts that have been authorised by WYA to communicate with children and young people
- turn on privacy settings on accounts that are used to interact with children and young people
- use an organisational device to communicate with young people (if this isn't possible, the office manager should agree the device that will be used and keep a record of this authorisation and who can see the communication)
- ensure all communications are relevant to the work of the project and organisation
- use age-appropriate language.

Reporting concerns

- If you have any concerns over the vulnerability of an individual or over any perceived unacceptable behaviour on social media, for example bullying, the WYA Safeguarding guidelines set out the appropriate reporting procedure.
- If you believe the activity to be detrimental to the young person or illegal, the police should be contacted at the first possible opportunity and the Office Manager informed.
- Any young person or volunteer perceived to be acting out of the guidelines should be met with to discuss their actions and this discussion could result in them being removed and blocked from the social media account.
- Staff are expected to follow their HR guidelines and as such could face disciplinary action if their behaviour on social media is considered inappropriate.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, in the Autumn, and may be altered from time to time in light of legislative changes or other prevailing circumstances. All staff will be informed of any changes to the policy.

Date of next review: October 2023

Reviewed By: Sarah Lawton
Designation: Data Protection Officer
Review date: 26 October 2022