

DIGITAL PLATFORMS: YOUTHWORK, SUPPORT and TRAINING – POLICY

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PROCEDURES

The 'Digital Platforms Procedures (Youth Work, support and Training)' comprise a separate document which accompanies this Policy. The Procedures MUST be followed as they provide detailed guidance concerning the implementation of the Policy.

RELATED POLICIES

This Policy MUST be read and considered with the following GDPR Policies created by Priviness (Data Protection Advisor/Officer to Southend YMCA) as approved by the Board.

- Data Protection Policy
- Acceptable Use Policy

And

With reference to the following Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIAs).

- DPIA – SYMCA home working
- DPIA – SYMCA Safe Data
- DPIA - Wifi

The DPIAs are an extension of the Digital Platform Policy and comprise documented evidence that we have considered digital working and this has been rated as low risk

1. INTRODUCTION

Southend YMCA (SYMCA) provides a range of projects for children, young adults and the wider community. In the main these have been delivered via in person, face to face interactions (1-2-1 and group work). Key approaches include: intensive key work, mentoring and coaching, counselling, group work, larger scale and activity based initiatives (such as youth- clubs, music making and sport), through to tutoring and teaching.

This Policy has been written in response to Covid 19 pandemic & the recent regulations regarding social distancing. It is no longer possible to deliver projects in established formats due to the pandemic. The risks of transmission, the need to maintain social distancing and isolation measures prevent this.

In these extraordinary times SYMCA has considered how we can continue to provide support to children, young adults and the wider community through a variety of online platforms.

What has changed?

- All timetabled in person - Face to Face work has been postponed
- 121's are being offered through telephone appointments supplemented by emails
- Staff are working remotely from home where possible.
- The SMT communicate daily via Microsoft Teams and with their staff in online practice forums.
- A staff rota is in operation in housing & detailed risk assessments updated regularly for staff & residents
- All live events have been postponed (23rd March until 30th June) in the first instance.
- Professional and interagency meetings are being conducted using Teams, Google Hangout and Zoom

For this reason, Southend YMCA has determined to provide youth work, 1-2-1 support and training via digital, online means. In many ways this accelerates an 'online' change programme we were mobilising with various projects (each working up different forms of engagement). It is also the case that digital transformation projects were also mobilising across the sector (pre Covid 19) in response to the requests of service beneficiaries.

The Charity recognises that online activity is part of peoples' daily lives. This medium is accessible and relevant-offers live interaction and viewed (posted) content. It can help children, young adults and communities to interact, feel engaged and avert isolation. However, extensive online activity is also correlated to poor mental impacts for children and young adults.

It is known that the web and other digital spaces presents e-safety risks to children and vulnerable adults-particularly from the **3 Cs**:

- I. **CONTENT** i.e. exposure to inappropriate, illegal or harmful content such as violence, pornography and terrorism/radicalisation content;
- II. **CONTACT** i.e. with persons who wish to perpetrate abuse, promote radicalisation or further crime and
- III. **CONDUCT** i.e. the risk of harm due to peer on peer abuse sexting, cyberbullying etc.

For this reason safeguarding is a paramount consideration in all digital interactions.

It is also known that cyber-crime and malicious activity is prevalent on the web. Cyber breaches present a threat to the operations of Southend YMCA. We hold sensitive personal information which must be secure and protected. For this reason effective IT protocols must support all digital work and all personnel will be vigilant to avoid new threats. These are typically caused by using the wrong type of hardware or software, technological failures, the behaviour of people involved, or unauthorised intrusion by third parties.

SYMCA's existing policies in relation to data protection, child protection, image use and acceptable use of technology (AUPs) still apply in remote learning situations.

2. PURPOSE of the POLICY

The purpose of the Policy is to ensure that youth-work, support and training delivered by Southend YMCA through digital means:

- i. Is safe and effective
- ii. Complies with GDPR legislation and good practice in this area.
- iii. Complies with the requirements of our insurers
- iv. Safeguards children and young adults (given their age, vulnerabilities and online exploitation risks)
- v. Protects the integrity and security of our IT systems
- vi. Provides staff, volunteers and consultants with clear instruction and protect them through safe working approaches;
- vii. Is engaging and appropriate for children, young adults and communities and leads to beneficial outcomes which are in line with funders expectations

3. APPLICATION - To whom does the Policy apply?

TRUSTEES

The Board of Trustees will do all it reasonably can to limit the exposure of children, young adults and the wider Community from the risks associated with digital (online) working.

In furtherance of this aim Trustees will ensure that appropriate policies are put in place and resources are made available so that digital platforms, promote e-safety and effective working.

STAFF, VOLUNTEERS and CONSULTANTS

This Policy and associated procedures applies to staff, volunteers and consultants delivering projects with children, young adults and the community, on behalf of Southend YMCA.

Southend YMCA takes a whole setting approach towards online safety to fulfil statutory obligations. So, in turn children, young adults and the wider community must be provided with information and instruction so they can safely take part in digital activity.

This Policy also covers emails, text and phone interactions through which projects may be delivered AND applications which are used to gathering information on our website such as: Bookwhen, Easy fundraising, jotform, mail chimp, PayPal etc.

“e-Safety” covers the safe use of the Internet, mobile phones, tablets and other electronic communications technologies, in a range of settings including the home. The online safety agenda is focussed on enabling users to manage risk and develop resilience, as well as selecting platforms and processes which “remove” hazards.

The terms ‘MUST’ and ‘MUST NOT’ are used in this Policy and procedures when the person in question is required to do something.

The Term Child/children refers to any person under the age of 18. For the purpose of this Policy we distinguish between younger children (under the age of 13) where parental consent MUST be obtained and older children (between the ages of 13 to 18) who may give consent themselves subject to them having the necessary capability.

The Term volunteers covers Trustees and persons on work placement.

4. THE POLICY

It is the Policy of Southend YMCA that:

4.1 INSURANCE

Digital youth work, support and training **MUST ONLY** be delivered where confirmation has been received from the Association's insurer that Professional Indemnity Insurance (PII) is in place. Where Consultants are providing professional services to SYMCA they must provide confirmation from their insurers to the Charity that PII is in place for digital working.

4.2 PROFESSIONAL CODES

Staff, volunteers and consultants working on behalf of the Charity **MUST** refer to and comply with any professional Code of Ethics and Professional Practice governing their specific field of practice and online working. This is to ensure that any digital activity upholds professional standards and regulatory compliance.

4.3 DATA PROTECTION

Staff, volunteers and consultants **MUST** comply with the European General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

Data Controllers **MUST** assure themselves that any platforms are suitable, raise no privacy issues and offer moderation and control/disablement functions. Digital platforms **MUST NOT** be used in ways which breach the provider's terms and conditions (for example, no business use).

When new software or systems are proposed the Charity's Data Protection Officer (DPO) **MUST** be informed. A Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) will be completed by the relevant project Manager and added to the Record of Processing Activities (ROPA).

4.3 APPROVED PLATFORMS

Staff, volunteers and consultants **MUST ONLY** use digital platforms which have been approved by Southend YMCA for direct work with children, young adults and the wider community. Skype, facetime and WhatsApp should be avoided as they automatically share directories of contact details with the potential for GDPR breach.

Southend YMCAs approved digital platforms are:

FACEBOOK / MICROSOFT TEAMS / YOU-TUBE / GOOGLE HANG OUT/ SOUND CLOUD/ ZOOM /TWITTER / TIK TOK

4.4 IT SUPPORT and ADVICE

In all instances, Service Managers **MUST** seek specialist advice on the technical and security features of digital platforms from our IT provider through our internal IT lead. SYMCA staff, volunteers and consultants **MUST ONLY** use password protected devices from which to launch digital work on behalf of the Charity.

4.6 TRAINING

Specialist training **MAY** be commissioned and provided to the team to develop digital capability so they can effectively and safely use systems.

4.7 APPROPRIATE CONTENT

Staff, volunteers and consultants **MUST NOT** use racist or inflammatory language; post any message that might be construed as likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress; or allow digital platforms to be used for party political purposes. The use of digital platforms/ social media **MUST NOT** breach Southend YMCA's misconduct, equal opportunities or bullying and harassment policies (as detailed in the Staff Handbook) .Any such breaches may lead to disciplinary action.

Staff, volunteers and consultants **MUST** provide content which is accurate, impartial and up-to-date. Content which is professionally assured deriving from credible and reputable sources. Remembering at all times the principle of the Matrix Quality Standard (held by the Charity) which is to provide information, advice and guidance (IAG) to support our beneficiaries to make informed decisions.

4.8 CONFIDENTIALITY

Staff, volunteers and consultants **MUST NOT** reveal any confidential or sensitive information concerning Southend YMCA. Neither should they criticise other organisations or individuals as this could cause reputational damage to the Charity and breach legislation. Any such breaches may lead to disciplinary action.

4.9 BOUNDARIES

Staff, volunteers and consultants **MUST NOT** accept a friend request from a child, young person or member of the community using Southend YMCA services or make any contact from their private social media account. Likewise they **MUST NOT** share personal phone numbers, or personal email addresses with a Southend YMCA service user.

Usage of pictures is a part of social media content. Staff, volunteers and consultants who wish to take pictures **MUST** do so with a SYMCA work mobile phone or camera only and have the necessary written consent.

4.10 COMPLAINTS

Staff, volunteers and consultants **MUST** notify their line or contract Manager immediately if they receive notice of a complaint concerning online engagement, who will in turn escalate this to the Internal IT lead and CEO.

4.11 INCLUSIVITY

It is our Policy to work in accessible and inclusive ways. Staff, volunteers and consultants **MUST** consider digital accessibility and inclusivity.

It is the case that children, young adult and communities will have different levels of access to digital platforms: phone, tablet, laptop, PC. Projects must consider whether children and young adults have the means, competence and facilities to conduct online/remote working safely and securely and whether this is appropriate and suitable for them (when their needs and strengths are considered).

It may be necessary to provide access to devices (through loaning or gifting equipment) to avoid exclusion and/or providing online credit where young adult have limited financial resources. This **MUST** be done in a fair and transparent way [See Procedures]. Projects will set aside a budget for this purpose and devise allocation criteria.

Special consideration **MUST** be given to children, young adults and participants who have Special Educational Needs (SEND) and learning difficulties and reasonable adjustments made.

4.12 BEST INTERESTS

It must be decided if it is in the best interests of both the child and young adult to switch to remote working. Each instance must involve careful consideration and cannot involve a simple continuation of previous work. The change of context necessitates a new agreement and a re-evaluation of the projects intention in the short and medium term.

A risk assessment **MUST** be undertaken prior to implementation within projects. Refer to the Procedures for an example risk assessment concerning an individual project. There is also an overarching assessment. The assessment **MUST** detail how safeguarding decisions were reached, including what information was known at the time; any alternative courses of action that were considered, and an explanation of why it was decided not to take these courses of action. Decisions must be recorded clearly.

All children and young adult participating in online interactions **MUST** be provided with:

- A Code of Conduct/Rules of Engagement so they are clear on what they can expect from SYMCA and clear on the standards of behaviour we expect when they are online and the Boundaries.
- Safeguarding resources - which details how they can keep themselves safe on line and how to report any concerns[see appendices]
- Clear access instructions with changing passwords to maintain security

All children participating in online interactions **MAY ONLY** do so with explicit consent and this WILL (depending on the age of the child) require consent from parents.

The Term Child/children refers to any person under the age of 18. For the purpose of this Policy we distinguish between:

- Younger children (under the age of 13) where parental consent **MUST** be obtained and
- Older children (between the ages of 13 to 18) who **MAY** give consent themselves subject to them having the necessary capability.

Where parental consent is required parents **MUST** be provided with the Code of Conduct/Rules of Engagement to detail the expectations of digital interactions and safeguarding resources to support them in keeping their child safe online.

Whereas adults can be encouraged to ensure that they are in a safe and confidential space prior to online or telephone interaction, this capacity in children will be age, competency and context dependent.

To protect staff, volunteers and consultants 'live' online interactions with groups of children **MAY ONLY** take place with two staff members presents one of whom undertakes the role of moderator and should remove any content which is of concern, and direct any private or sensitive conversations off line. The other staff member will facilitate the session.

5. APPENDICES

1	<p>References</p> <p>Avery R (2020) 'Safer remote learning during Covid-19: Information for School Leaders and DSLs'. Available at: https://www.theeducationpeople.org/blog/safer-remote-learning-during-covid-19-information-for-school-leaders-and-dsls/</p> <p>BACP (2019) Working online in the Counselling Professions - Good Practice in Action 047 Fact Sheet. Available at: https://www.bacp.co.uk/media/2162/bacp-working-online-supplementary-guidance-gpia047.pdf</p> <p>Essex County Council (2020) 'Social Media Internet, Video and Conferencing Guidance'. Available at:</p> <p>DfE - Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2019 see Annex C (online). Available at https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/835733/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2019.pdf</p> <p>The Proud Trust (2020) 'LGBT + Digital Youth Work Suite of Resources'. Available at</p> <p>UKCP (xxx) Guidance for Moving to Remote Working with Existing Child Clients during the Covid 19 crisis. Available at: https://www.psychotherapy.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/CCYP_Guidance_on_remote_working_in_response_to_Covid-19.pdf</p>
2	<p>Essex Safeguarding Children's Board (ESCB)</p> <p>Miller S (2020)</p> <p><i>Online Safety Resources for Professionals, Parents/carers and Children + young adults.</i></p>

Online safety resources for professionals, parents/carers and young people

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Source	For Parents/carers	Online link/s	Documents
ESCB	Parents/carers to help them understand online safety and general exploitation	https://www.escb.co.uk/parentcarer/online-safety/	
ESCB	Booklet for parents and carers from the 'Did You Know' campaign, raising awareness of the signs of exploitation and online grooming, tips to manage this and resources to help.		 CSE Leaflet for parents and carers.pdf
ESCB	Directory of national and local services to support parents/carers with issues regarding online grooming, missing and child exploitation.		 Parent directory CE and Missing.xlsx
NSPCC	Explains latest games and apps used by children to parents/carers and tips on keeping children safe online.	https://www.net-aware.org/?	
The Breck Foundation	Self-funding charity, raising awareness of playing safe whilst using the internet.	http://www.breckfoundation.org/	
Thinkuknow	Home activity packs for various age groups for parents/carers to carry out with their children to develop their awareness of online safety.	https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/Support-tools/home-activity-worksheets/	
CEOP	Factsheet for parents about what online grooming is, signs, risks and resources.		 Online grooming factsheet.pdf

Online safety resources for professionals, parents/carers and young people

Safer Derbyshire	Practical advice for parents/carers about online safety, such as setting parental controls and keeping up to date with new apps.	https://saferderbyshire.gov.uk/news-and-events/news-items/staying-safe-online-during-the-covid-19-pandemic.aspx	
Childnet International	Leaflet for parents/carers with checklist on ways to keep their children safe online and some suggested family ground rules for use.	https://www.childnet.com/ufiles/Supporting-Young-People-Online.pdf	
Thinkuknow	Advice for foster carers in keeping Children In Care safe online.	https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/parents/articles/Looked-after-children-Specific-risks/	

Source	For Children & Young	Online link/s	Documents
Thinkuknow	Safety advice in child-friendly way for 6-7 year olds on watching videos, sharing pictures, chatting online, sharing personal information and gaming online.	https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/4_7/6-7-year-olds/	
Thinkuknow	Thinkuknow has launched Band Runner , an interactive game for 8-10 year olds to help build their knowledge, confidence and skills to stay safe from risks they might encounter online.	https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/8_10/	
Thinkuknow	Safety advice for 11 years plus, includes details about online photo sharing, online grooming through online gaming and chat rooms.	https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/11_13/ https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/14_plus/	
Childline	Safety advice for children of all ages about online grooming.	https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/online-mobile-safety/staying-safe-online/	

Online safety resources for professionals, parents/carers and young people

UK Safer Internet Centre	Games, storybooks, films and quizzes for 3-19 years olds to help them explore ways to stay safe online.	https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/	
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Source	For Professionals	Online link/s	Documents
Internet Watch Foundation	Details about increased risks of child exploitation due to Covid-19 and advice on safety online.	https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/blog/iwf-warning-during-coronavirus-outbreak	
CEOP	Details on reporting online abuse of children and other resources such as the 'online safety at home activity pack' which professionals can share with parents/carers.	https://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/	
NSPCC	Advice for professionals on how to remain in contact with children and families during pressures of Covid-19 and spotting signs of abuse.	https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/reporting-abuse/coronavirus-abuse-neglect-vulnerable-children/	
The Children's Society	Advice for professionals on conversations with parents/carers to share safety advice to keep their children safe online.	https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/news-and-blogs/our-blog/invite-only-parties-and-staying-safe-online-during-covid-19-lockdown	
Childnet	Advice for social workers and foster carers to ensure online safety is part of placement planning for Children In Care.	https://www.childnet.com/ufiles/Supporting-Young-People-Online.pdf	