

## **PYCF POLICY ON WORKING ONLINE WITH YOUNG PEOPLE**

as an addition to our Social Media Policy



PYCF workers are recruited robustly and have DBS checks and Safeguarding training. When they work online with young people they must adhere to our usual policies and in particular to our Social Media and Safeguarding Policies, the code of conduct for working with young people and agreement to standards working with PYCF.

If working with a third party e.g., a school, please check you are meeting their requirements. We know many young people prefer direct contact in person but during the COVID-19 pandemic we have needed to keep people safe and explore more work online.

All digital interactions must take place through PYCF accounts using PYCF mobiles and also when possible, PYCF devices. If using own computer due to need to work at home, ensure Chief Officer and Trustees are aware and that personal information is not stored on your own computer. Make sure phones and computers are well charged before a session. Typed recordings of session will be put on Gropo as usual.

It is best practice to have at least two adults present when working with children and young people. This applies both on- and offline. Groups set up with Zoom or similar will aim to have 2 PYCF DBS checked adults in the session, for some young people they may cope best with one person doing the talking, each situation will be set up according to needs. Breakout rooms would need appropriate supervision. Some young people find meeting online easy and others may need more time in getting to know the worker and feeling comfortable.

Invites will go to young people already known or referred to us. Unlike adult events, we cannot just publish log ins and passwords. Some groups are meeting instead of in the youth club and know us well and provide fun sessions and prevent isolation, but log ins are shared carefully. This is to ensure inappropriate people are not involved in any groups. Should someone enter the meeting without an invite and the worker needs to shut it down it is good practice to already know the phone number to contact the young person at that time. The usual standards and vigilance are needed to ensure young people's safety and wellbeing as when we meet seeing people in person. This vigilance also helps young people consider how to keep themselves safe on- line in other agendas.

Workers need to make sure the PYCF Chief Officer is aware of any online work and that permissions have been sought from parents and this is recorded. For some this will be on a PYCF membership form for others the consent form, a record of any verbal consent is needed. Some young people will be well known to use from youth club sessions and a decision on can be made if they have suitable understanding and age to join a club session of their own accord. There is a risk assessment for the worker to undertake for online work, If the young person is working for us from the Alternative Providers list then that risk assessment applies. It is important the young person has access to an adult if they should become distressed or need adult support in a session. In school staff will be in the building but at home this needs to be carefully explored.

For any group sessions we recommend that staff make the session private/lock the session to avoid members of the public gaining access. Make sure all devices are fully charged and plugged in. At every session remind participants about PYCF's confidentiality policy- any concerns you have will be shared with their knowledge /permission with others within PYCF or managed as safeguarding when needed. We suggest using headphones to support confidentiality and create a safe space.

At the start of a session check with participants where they are and if emergency contact is nearby ideally in the same building. Explain the reason for this -in case of medical emergency we would ring 999 on their behalf and we could communicate their location. It would be good practice to run through the behaviour expected online from participants and what will happen if the agreement is not held. This will include getting permission from the host on taking any screen shots. This permission is only given when needed for the work in hand and will not include other young people. The host will only take a screen shot of people when they have consent for taking photographs and this will only be considered in youth club sessions not when working with a third party. Consider if Chat option to be disabled and screen sharing by anyone other than the host.

Do not respond to any request for personal information other than that which is appropriate to your role,

Hold all online sessions in a neutral space for the worker where nothing personal or inappropriate can be seen such as family photos, other people, your bed etc and others not seen or heard in the background If required use a screen saver as background screen. Be professionally presented and appropriately dressed during online sessions. Use age appropriate and respectful language and make sure all communication is relevant to the intention of that session.

We will be mindful of guidance from Groop, NYA, UK Youth, and The Mix and DYA. CEOP, Safe Schools, Thinkuknow.

Joyce Spiller Trustee 21.1.2021