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# **DISTANCE LEARNING and E-SAFETY POLICY**

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## **PURPOSE**

This policy shows the commitment of Project Inc (the College) to meeting the requirements to keep students safe when using technology and acknowledges its part in the College's overall Safeguarding policies and procedures. Our students can benefit from the opportunities provided by the Internet and other technologies used in everyday life. This purposes of this policy are to:

- safeguard and protect the students and College team
- identify the risks and mitigating actions to develop a set of safe and responsible behaviours
- establish clear reporting mechanisms to deal with online abuse such as bullying that are cross referenced with other College policies
- ensure that all members of the College community know unlawful or unsafe behaviour is unacceptable and that, where appropriate, disciplinary, or legal action will be taken

All members of our College team are required to be aware of this policy.

## **SCOPE**

The College has several Creative Learning Studios (CLS) that provide appropriate, challenging, and meaningful study programmes, to increase employability skills. This policy relates to distance learning and e-safety across all aspects of the work of the College.

Any reference to 'College' in this policy means each of the above CLS'.

Any reference to the College 'team' in this policy means all staff and volunteers working at each of the above CLS'.

This policy applies to all members of the College community (including the College team, students, parents/carers, visitors, and community users) who may be users of the College ILT systems including use on personal devices. It is pertinent to e-safety incidents covered by this policy, which may take place outside of the College but is linked to membership of the College community.

Complaints that relate to online bullying will be dealt with in line with our Safeguarding Policy.

## **OUR VALUES**

To be Respectful, Responsible, Safe and Kind, are at the core of our values. They are reflective of expected behaviours and set the foundation upon which the College builds its culture.

## **COMMUNICATION**

This policy will be:

- Displayed on the College website
- Brought to the attention of all students and their parents/carers
- Included as part of the induction pack for all new staff
- Shared through the ICT Acceptable Use policy agreed with the College team.

## **REVIEW AND MONITORING**

Online safety is integral to other College policies, which are detailed below. The Board of Governors and the College Lead are responsible for overseeing, reviewing, and updating this policy, which will be reviewed annually or more frequently in response to changing technology and/or online safety issues in the College. The College team will be informed of any updates or amendments.

## **RELATED POLICIES**

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

Safeguarding  
ICT Acceptable Use  
Data Protection  
Anti-bullying  
Positive Student Behaviour and Management  
Compliments, Comments and Complaints  
Equality and Diversity  
Health & Safety  
College Team Code of Conduct  
Whistle Blowing  
Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation

## **RISK**

The use of innovative tools and technology in College and at home has been shown to raise educational standards and promote learner/learner achievements. However, the use of these new technologies can put young people at risk within and outside the College. Some of the dangers they may face include:

- Access to illegal, harmful, unsuitable, or inappropriate content
- Unauthorised access to/loss of/sharing of personal information
- The risk of being subject to grooming by those with whom they make contact on the internet
- The sharing/distribution of personal images without an individual's consent or knowledge
- Inappropriate communication/contact with others, including strangers
- Cyber-bullying
- Access to poor quality, inaccurate and irrelevant information

- Plagiarism and copyright infringement
- Illegal file sharing
- Excessive use which may impact on the social and emotional development and learning of the young person

Many of these risks reflect situations in the off-line world and it is essential that this e-safety policy is used in conjunction with other relevant policies detailed above.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

As part of our commitment to e-safety we also recognise our obligation to implement a range of security measures to protect the College network and facilities from attack, compromise and inappropriate use and to protect College data and other information assets from loss or inappropriate use.

The College has a suite of Data Policies that are regularly reviewed and updated.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

### ***Board of Governors***

The Board of Governors annually review and sign off the updated policy. Through the termly reports presented by the College Lead, the Board of Governors monitor the security and safety of systems and review all reported incidents.

### ***The College Lead***

The College Lead will ensure that:

- The College technical systems meet their recommended requirements, are regularly reviewed and audits of the security and safety are carried out
- All users have clearly defined access rights to both the College technical systems and College owned devices
- All users are provided with a username and password
- Administrator passwords can be over-ridden by College Lead and are stored securely
- Internet access is filtered
- Illegal content is filtered by the Broadband or filtering provider by actively employing the Internet Watch Foundation CAIC list
- Content lists are regularly updated, and internet use is logged and regularly monitored
- There is a clear process in place to deal with requests for filtering changes
- The College allows different filtering levels for different groups of users ie the College team and students
- The College regularly monitors and records the activity of users on College technical systems and users are made aware of this via the ICT Acceptable Use Policy/Agreement
- The College team understand the requirements of the Data Protection Act in terms of sending and receiving sensitive personal information

- The College team receive regular training on online safety issues and the College's distance learning policy
- Ensure that the College team and students understand issues around plagiarism and copyright/intellectual property rights and understand how to critically assess the validity of the websites they use
- Information and guidance on the Safeguarding policy and the College's ICT Acceptable Use Policy is provided to all new members of the College team and governors
- Parents are supported to understand on-line risks through:
  - Regular, up to date information in newsletters and on the website, particularly in response to emerging trends
  - Opportunities to share in their student's online safety learning
  - Support and advice on online safety for their students outside of college
  - Signposting to further resources and websites.

### ***The College Team***

Members of the College team will:

- Plan internet use carefully to ensure that it is age-appropriate and supports the learning objectives for specific curriculum areas
- Remind students about their responsibilities when on-line
- Ensure they model safe and responsible behaviour in their own use of technology during lessons
- Use the college ICT systems in line with the Acceptable Use Agreements they have signed
- Understand the consequences of misuse or accessing inappropriate materials
- Be responsible for the security of their username and password
- Report any suspected misuse or issue to their CLS Lead
- maintain awareness of current Online issues and guidance.

If any team member has reason to believe that a student's electronic device has been used to cause harm, this must be recorded on a behaviour incident form or a safeguarding disclosure form (depending upon the type of misuse) and the CLS Lead immediately alerted. The form will guide to record where parents and other agencies may need to be involved.

## **STUDENT USE OF MOBILE PHONES**

Students are encouraged to moderate use of their mobile phones during lessons, in line with the College Values.

## **COLLEGE TEAM USE OF MOBILE TECHNOLOGIES**

Personal mobile phones and mobile devices brought into College are the responsibility of the device owner. The College accepts no responsibility for the loss, theft or damage of personal mobile phones or mobile devices.

The College team are not permitted to use their own mobile phones or devices for contacting students, young people, or their families within or outside of the setting in a professional capacity.

Where necessary and with the permission of the CLS Lead, the College landline or College mobile phone should be used in such required circumstances.

Mobile phones and other devices will be switched off or switched to 'silent' mode. Bluetooth communication should be 'hidden' or switched off and mobile phones or other personal devices will not be used during teaching periods. The College team should not use their own devices, such as mobile phones or cameras, to take photos or videos of students and will only use work-provided equipment for this purpose.

## **DIGITAL IMAGES AND VIDEO**

On enrolment, the College will seek permission from students, and parents and carers (where the student is aged 16-18), for the taking of digital photographs or video/film. This is completed on the enrolment form. Students are not identified in online photographic materials or the credits of any published College produced video.

## **SOCIAL NETWORKING**

The protocols for the College team and the use of social networking are set out in the College Team Code of Conduct policy. The College team are instructed not to:

- run social network spaces for student use on a personal basis
- open up their own spaces to their students.

The College team will ensure that in private use:

- No reference should be made in social media to students/pupils, parent /carers, or College team members
- They do not engage in online discussion on personal matters relating to members of the College community
- Personal opinions should not be attributed to the College
- Security settings on personal social media profiles are regularly checked to minimise risk of loss of personal information.

**More detailed information on contact with students, social networking, mobile phones and photography and filming is provided in the Data Protection, College Team Code of Conduct and Safeguarding Policies.**

## **DISTANCE LEARNING and ACCEPTABLE CONTACT ON SOCIAL MEDIA**

The usual operational practice of the College involves students attending a CLS or work placement to undertake and complete their study programme.

However, there may be times when it is not possible for a student to attend their Studio, such as:

- A period of significant anxiety or mental ill health
- Public transport strikes
- Illness

Where an illness or episode of anxiety or mental ill health mean that it would not be possible to participate in education and training, the student or their parent/carer should report their absence to their CLS Lead, email being the preferred medium, or via the studio landline or College mobile.

In some circumstances, the student will not be able to leave their house but will be able to participate in an online lesson or tutorial. This will involve abiding by the protocols detailed below.

Not all students will have access to technologies that will allow them to participate in online classes and other options may need to be considered to enable them to continue learning.

### ***Media platform***

- The College will ensure the chosen platform for communicating is safe and secure. Microsoft Teams and Skype are the safest options but Zoom can be used if the security has been tested and approved. For all options, a College account will be established and utilised. The College team must not set up any personal accounts but can use their College email address.

### ***Consent***

- On enrolment with the College, all students are required to sign a consent form confirming they are happy to participate in on-line lessons. Where students are under the age of 19, their parent/carer is also required to sign the consent form
- For each session of distance learning, the College team should ensure they have considered the circumstances, reason for absence and whether the student is able/should participate. This consideration and the reasons for their final decision must be evidenced and recorded
- A copy of the consent form is also available on the College website.

### ***College Team***

- Should only contact students under the age of 19 via their **parent/carers** email address
- All lessons should be timetabled during the normal College hours
- To ensure safeguarding protocols are observed, another member of the team should be present for the lesson where this is a 1:1 situation
- The College Lead, Governors and each CLS Lead should be able to observe lessons digitally for the purposes of quality assurance and safeguarding
- It is worth considering some ground rules, creating safe spaces, and explaining these as the introduction to each session (see the student section below)
- Must not accept any offers to do online teaching over webcam/video chats
- Should not accept or offer the opportunity to teach students privately outside of the agreed timetable
- Must report any safeguarding concerns to their CLS Lead as the deputy DSL
- Ensure language is always professional and appropriate.

### ***Live video and recording***

- Consider the security of the device, in particular cameras and microphones



- Consider the terms of service and privacy policies and whether there are any age requirements for the chosen service
- Consider if the system includes an online chat feature and if so, can it be moderated
- Consider privacy settings before posting
- What technologies and internet connection speeds will be required for everyone to participate?
- Consider the activities carefully. The College online access will have internet content filtering systems in place that are unlikely to be replicated in a home environment
- A note of the conference timing, length and who participated will form part of this recording
- If the College device records the conference, ensure all participants are aware of this and that the recording will be stored for one year after the date of the session. Only the CLS Lead and College Lead will be able to access the recordings. Any other team member should seek permission from the CLS Lead. Students and parent/carers can request access, which will be accommodated on the College premises only
- The consent form notes whether it is acceptable for students to record events and expectations and restrictions on onward sharing.

### ***Personal data***

The conference service may require the sharing of personal data, e.g. usernames to invite in. It is always best practice to use College-provided email addresses as Data protection laws still apply.

### ***Students***

The consent form outlines the code of conduct expected by the student. This includes:

- appropriate dress and behaviour. If there is inappropriate attire or behaviour, the session will be terminated
- that the lesson takes place in a main living area such as a study, lounge, dining room or kitchen. A bedroom or bathroom are not acceptable locations
- where possible, ask parents and carers, via email to remain nearby
- extra-care must be taken by all parents/carers to ensure that private or sensitive information and data is not accidentally shared during a video-lesson. Bills, receipts, documents (both physical and digital) and letters/emails should not be on display
- a neutral background is preferable. Recommended virtual backgrounds are available on Microsoft Teams (which block out any surroundings).

## **SAFEGUARDING**

- Young people are normally seen by lots of different adults every day, like neighbours, friends and teachers. But self-isolating because of illness or an episode of mental ill health will mean they are spending much more time at home and there are not as many opportunities for adults to spot the signs of abuse and help
- Online or offline, effective Safeguarding requires a whole-College approach
- Planning for online or distance learning activities should include the College DSL as part of the planning process
- Ensure online tuition follows best practice and is in-line with the College's Safeguarding Policy.

## PASTORAL CARE

There may be times when it is necessary for a member of the College team to contact a student when they are absent from College. This may be when an absence has not been reported or when a student is away for a period of time due to illness or an episode of anxiety and mental ill health.

All calls to a parent/carer or a student should be made during College hours and from either the College landline or the College mobile phone.

Team members making pastoral calls must set key boundaries, including a time limit, and giving an endpoint to the call. Notes of actions will be to seek further advice rather than offering direct support. Always stick to the agreed timescales of the calls e.g. weekly calls.

Where the student is aged 16-18 the first point of contact must always be with their parent or carer. If, following the conversation, a College team member has concerns, they should make a record of the call and the CLS Lead should be contacted to determine a way forward.

If no contact can be made with the parent/carer or the student, then a risk assessment must be carried out. If other agencies and services are involved with the student, the College should contact them to ensure a triangulated holistic approach to safeguarding is carried out. This may result in a co-ordinated home visit/well-being check, taking place. Safeguarding protocols must be followed at all times.

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