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SAFEGUARDING & CHILD PROTECTION UPDATE

ISSUE: 7 **Monday 17th April 2023**

We hope that you have had a well-rested Easter break and feel refreshed as we return. To help you prepare, please read our latest instalment of our termly Safeguarding and Child Protection Update. We hope you find the update useful, and we appreciate you taking the time to read it in full.

Policies & procedures

School policies & procedures

On **day one** of your placement, you should be aware of certain school policies and procedures, including:

- **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**
- **Behaviour Policy, and**
- **Code of Conduct Policy.**

These are usually available on the school's website – we'd recommend reading them before you start your placement if you can. Alternatively, If the school policies are not presented to you on arrival, you must request a copy eg from the school office.

Agency policies & procedures

We have recently updated some of our own policies and documents and would appreciate it if you would take the time to familiarise yourself with these documents:

- **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**
- **Code of Conduct, and**
- **Important Information for Supply Staff.**

All of our other policies and procedures can be viewed online at:

- **www.visionforeducation.co.uk/documents**
- **www.abc-teachers.co.uk/documents**
- **www.smartteachers.co.uk/documents**

Social media

Social media can be a brilliant and powerful tool for learning and communication, but it is important to remember that online conduct is equally as important as real-life conduct for those in the education sector. It is crucial that you remain professional online. You can learn more about our expectations for appropriate boundaries online in our **Social Networking Policy.**

Privacy settings

We would encourage you to review your social media profiles and privacy settings at regular intervals to ensure that you portray yourself online in the most appropriate way. Different platforms can be used for different purposes, eg LinkedIn for your professional life and Facebook for your personal life. You should consider how you use each platform and make sure that your privacy settings align. The South West Grid for Learning Trust provide some great social media checklists to help you manage your settings on popular apps.

SWGfl: Social media checklists

It's important to remember that even with a limited friends list, anything you post online can be turned into a lasting record via a screenshot (also known as a 'screengrab' or 'screencap'). This is a record that can then be saved, duplicated and shared by another user. This also applies to encrypted messaging platforms, such as WhatsApp, where you may assume that your content is private. Your photos, thoughts and words may reach a wider audience than you intend, including the school that you are working in. Just as with social media platforms, it is also important that you maintain professional boundaries in relation to gaming profiles. You should adhere to the same rules as you would for social media and be aware that your position of trust within education settings prohibits you from 'friending', 'following' or interacting with students via these channels.

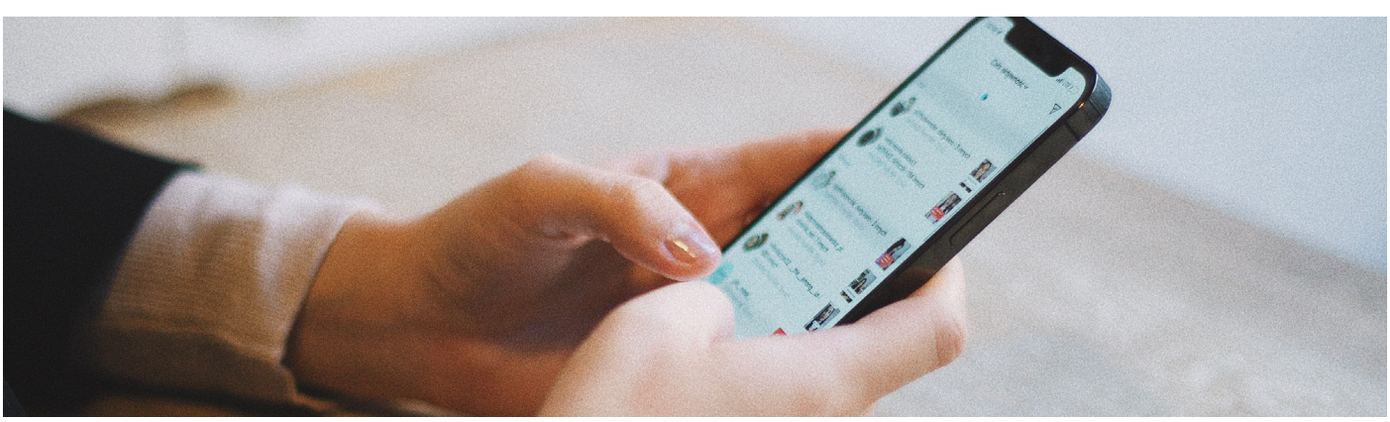
Students could attempt to follow and interact with your content, and in some cases, you may not realise that they are a pupil from a current or previous placement. To avoid this scenario and maintain professional boundaries, we recommend you ensure that your social media profiles, eg Facebook, Twitter and TikTok, are private and you should consider a username that cannot be easily identified by students. This is particularly a consideration for those who actively create social media content in their personal lives and strive to increase their following.

Harms threshold

As we have seen in the Department for Education's **Keeping Children Safe in Education Guidance** for schools and colleges, the harms threshold can be met by an allegation that you have behaved in a way that indicates that you may not be suitable to work with children, and this behaviour may have happened outside of school, college or other relevant placement settings. The Safer Recruitment Forum's **Guidance for Safer Working Practice** advises that 'email or text communications between an adult and a child/young person outside agreed protocols may lead to disciplinary and/or criminal investigations. This also includes communications through internet-based websites'.

Not on social media?

For those who do not use social media profiles, it is still important to consider whether information is posted about you online by friends and family, for example photos posted from a night out which you feature in. It's a good idea to have conversations with those around you about how your portrayal on social media can affect your professional life, and to advise them of your expectations around posting.



No contact policy

We operate a no contact policy, which should always be adhered to apart from in the following circumstances:

- In the event that a student is at risk of harming themselves.
- In the event that a student is at risk of harming others.
- Where you are providing personal care as part of your agreed job role. You should carry out the task with sensitivity and respect. Ensure another appropriate adult is in the vicinity and is aware of the task to be undertaken.
- Supply workers who are Team Teach trained (please provide your consultant with your proof of qualification if you have not already done so).
- Supply workers who are first aid trained and are in a situation where first aid is required (please provide your consultant with current proof of qualification if you have not already done so).

If physical contact is necessary, always be mindful that physical contact with a child, young person or vulnerable adult may be misinterpreted.

If you find yourself in a situation where you deem it necessary to use physical contact, eg to maintain safety, or in a situation where an accidental physical contact is made, you should always let a member of the school SLT, or the school Designated Safeguarding Lead, know about it so that the contact can be recorded and followed up accordingly.

Usually, you should never be on your own with a child. If you cannot avoid this, make sure you keep the classroom door open and do not block any exits.

Child mental health – NSPCC

NSPCC Learning has published a podcast episode on children's mental health in schools. The episode explores what education professionals can do to build a positive mental health culture in schools and recognise when young people are struggling. The episode also looks at how to manage safeguarding concerns and supporting children's mental health and wellbeing.

NSPCC Learning: Supporting children's mental health and wellbeing in schools

Online safety

Report Remove tool - NSPCC

Read the NSPCC's guidance for professionals on Childline and the IWF's 'Report Remove' tool and learn how to support young people to report nude images shared online, to see if they can be taken down.

NSPCC: Childline and IWF's Report Remove

Advice for professionals

Internetmatters.org has created an inclusive Digital Safety Hub which contains advice for professionals and tools to help you have meaningful interactions to keep the children and young people you work with safe online. You can also access a range of relevant external resources via this site.

Internet Matters: Inclusive Digital Safety advice

Training

It's important to keep your training record with us up-to-date. If you have completed any recent safeguarding or child protection training via schools, in voluntary roles or with other agencies, please email copies of your certificates to your consultant.

The following free training course is also available:

Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) guidance (via EduCompli)

This course can be completed on a web browser or via the EduCompli app on your mobile phone. We would recommend this course if you have not undertaken a safeguarding course within the previous 12 months, but anyone who would like to refresh their knowledge can complete it. Please contact your consultant if you wish to complete this training. To enrol you on the training, your consultant will need to provide EduCompli with your name and email address – please see our **Privacy Policy** for more details on how we share your information.

If you have identified any additional training requirements during the previous term, please contact your consultant, who will endeavour to source a suitable resource to support your professional development.

Your data and privacy

Protecting your data is important to us. Find out more about how we comply with legislation in the **Data retention and privacy** section on our website.

Please note that some of the resources detailed in this bulletin are from third party providers and are not part of The Edwin Group (Vision for Education/ABC Teachers/Smart Teachers/Edwin Education) and should be used at your own discretion.