

Safeguarding ~ Communication Guidelines for communicating with young people & families

GDPR Guidelines

All contact details of young people and families should be stored under DACYP GDPR Guidelines i.e. securely, not kept for longer than necessary, not shared with other organisations.

Written Correspondence

- The personal address of a DACYP employee or volunteer should not be revealed in any written correspondence with young people or parents/carers. Make use of an administrative address. (Possibly youth worker's school address).
- Written communication with a young person should be done in a format which can be viewed by the parent/carer. The two options are:
 - A Postcard
 - A letter or card to the young person within an envelope addressed to the responsible adult. Include a note to the adult stating who it is from and requesting that they pass the letter on to the youngster. The letter to the young person could be addressed to them in an open envelope within the main envelope.

Telephone Contact

- There are very few situations when direct telephone contact with a young person is necessary.
- If at all possible, telephone contact with young people should be made from an ELC (school) phone.
- DACYP personnel should not phone a young person under the age of 16 directly and should not be in possession of a young person's personal mobile number (other than family members).
- If necessary, DACYP personnel can request contact with a young person under 16 via their parent or carer. They should explain the reason for their call and should encourage the adult to remain present during the call.
- If a young person under 16 should phone the personal number of a DACYP worker or volunteer they should politely but firmly decline to continue the conversation and follow one of the actions above. However, see exception to this below.

- If DACYP personnel should receive a phone call from a young person indicating that they are in crisis or danger then take one of the following actions as appropriate:
 - If in distress, suggest that they phone Childline Tel. 0800 1111. You may wish to notify local agencies such as school or social work. If a Child Protection issue follow the guidelines.
 - If in crisis or imminent danger, phone the police and/or Emergency Social Work Team Tel. 01875 824 309 or 0800 731 6969 (out of hours).

Email Contact

- DACYP personnel should not directly email a young person under 16 or be in possession of their out of school email address.
- DACYP personnel should not use their own email address to contact young people. They should use a DACYP contact address or email via the DACYP Administrator.
- If DACYP personnel receive an email to their personal email address from a young person they should reply *'Thank you for your email. For Safeguarding reasons, I am not allowed to email you directly. You can contact me via the DACYP Administrator or Youth Worker. (Give email addresses)'*
- DACYP personnel may communicate with parents/carers of young people via email using a DACYP email address or via Administrator.

Social Media, Games and Online Platforms

By social media we currently mean platforms such as Facebook, "X", Snapchat and Instagram. Many games and gaming platforms have multi-player options which give players the opportunity to engage with each other via a headset and microphone. These platforms are ever developing and others may arise. The principles outlined below will apply.

- DACYP's Youth Worker provides some material for Dunbar Primary School's "X" feed which operates under East Lothian Council guidelines.
- Any use of social media as a means of communication by DACYP must not make use of a personal account of DACYP personnel. A DACYP account should be set up with approval of Management Committee if required.
- If a DACYP person is contacted by a young person on their personal social media account they should say *'Thank you for contacting me. For safeguarding reasons, I am not free to communicate with you in this way. Please make any contact via DACYP Youth Worker or Administrator'*.

Video conferencing & Chat Online

The use of Zoom, Facebook Messenger, WhatsApp Video, FaceTime etc have come to the fore during the Covid19 Lockdown when people could not meet normally. To date DACYP

has not used any of these platforms other than that our Youth Worker has access to Google Classrooms via the school and operates under their guidelines.

Online Gaming:

Many games and gaming platforms have multi-player options which give players the opportunity to engage with each other via a headset and microphone.

- If a DACYP person is contacted by a young person on their personal gaming account they should say *'Thank you for contacting me. For safeguarding reasons, I am not free to communicate with you in this way. Please make any contact via DACYP Youth Worker or Administrator'.*

Could possibly be incorporated in the Social Media section.