



Social Media Policy

July 2020

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Policy Purpose and Statement:

This policy provides practical assistance on the use of social media by Be Free Young Carers' employees and volunteers.

It covers all forms of social media, including Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram, Wikipedia, other social networking sites, and other internet postings, including blogs. It applies to the use of social media for both professional and personal purposes, during working hours and in your own time to the extent that it may affect Be Free Young Carers.

Social media can offer significant benefits from appropriate use, it is also important to be aware that it poses significant risks to our organisation. These risks include disclosure of confidential information, damage to our reputation and the risk of legal claims. To minimise these risks this policy sets out the rules applying to the use of social media which must always be appropriate and in the interests of Be Free Young Carers.

In response to the increased use of social networking websites, Be Free Young Carers has developed the following guidelines for employees and volunteers. This is intended to promote the safety of children, and employees from any risks associated with using social networking sites, whilst maintaining the reputation of Be Free Young Carers. Please also see Safeguarding and Equality and Data Protection policies for additional information regarding Internet usage.

Social media is an important tool to update and engage supporters and reach a wider audience. However, there are risks. This policy is vital to:

- Ensure the information we post and receive is treated sensitively
- Ensure our social media is secure and safe for all to access
- Have a plan in place for if a crisis or breach does happen
- Make employees social media responsibilities clear to them
- Ensure we are keeping children safe, if they choose to engage with us on social media
- Give advice to volunteers

As an employee or volunteer of Be Free Young Carers, you are expected to demonstrate best practices and appropriate etiquette on social media, including but not limited to the following:

- Be respectful to all. Be Free Young Carers has zero-tolerance to any hate speech, racism or inappropriate language, and will formally report any instances to the relevant agency.
- Staff should not add any young carer or volunteer under the age of 18 on their personal social media account.

- Do not post any photos of you that could be deemed inappropriate.
- Posts should only be made in the interest of Be Free Young Carers and to promote our charities goal.
- Posts should not contain any confidential company information. Nor should they contain any personal information of another staff member, volunteer, young carer or their family. Staff should always be mindful of the GDPR.
- If one of our social media accounts receives a private message, the staff member who replies should do so in a professional manner, as if replying to a work email.
- If any message or comment is assessed as a child protection disclosure the Safeguarding policy should be followed, and the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) notified.

Staff Responsibilities:

Director-John Tabor- Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

- The DSL has passwords for Be Free Young Carer's social media sites and keep them safe.
- The DSL should also have the passwords for any staff social media accounts, so that they can check any private messages, conversations or posts.

Support Workers- Lead, maintain and update 13+ support group Facebook page and main BeFreeYC Facebook page.

- In order to reduce the risks that can be associated with social media and maintain boundaries, Be Free Young Carers' staff have organisational profiles separate to any personal profiles. For these profiles, Be Free Young Carers employees will share their log-in details with the safeguarding lead so that their actions are open to scrutiny.
- Be Free Young Carers employees are expected to keep all communications with young carers for future reference, and to not delete any communications from their organisational profile.
- Conversations over social media with young carers must be recorded on Charity Log.

Volunteer Befriending Coordinator- Advise Befrienders that if they do engage with Be Free Young Carers, talk about Be Free Young Carers, or adults associated with Be Free Young Carers, on social media their behaviour may be under scrutiny.

- Volunteers should ensure they are following the correct social media etiquette outlined above. They should also strongly consider setting their privacy settings to 'high'.
- If a volunteer adds a young carer over the age of 18, or adds a parent of a family they are/were working with, they must inform Be Free Young Carers. You must be mindful of each other's privacy, and the Befriending guidelines e.g. Do not have long discussions over social media, or organise meet-ups outside of Befriending scheme.
- Befrienders should only communicate with their matched young carer over SMS if necessary.
- No personal details should be shared over social media.

All questions and concerns should be referred to the Safeguarding Lead without delay, who is responsible for e-safety. Any inappropriate behaviour between staff/volunteers and Be Free Young Carers members via social media or non-compliance with the above guidelines will be considered under the organisation's disciplinary procedure.

Supporter and Client Inquiries:

If a parent or adult contacts Be Free Young Carers over social media:

The staff member who receives the message should respond professionally, and be as helpful as possible. Anything that could be assessed as a child protection disclosure should be reported to the DSL. The staff member should be cautious if the messenger is not recognised, before giving details associated with Be Free Young Carers or an events with us. GDPR should always be followed.

If a young carer or person under 18 years contacts Be Free Young Carers over social media:

The staff member who receives the message should respond professionally, and be as helpful as possible. They should also be aware of age and make sure their reply is appropriate for that age range. Anything that could be assessed as a child protection disclosure should be reported to the DSL and the Safeguarding policy followed. The interaction must also be recorded on Charity Log. The parent should be contacted if the information does not put the young carers at risk, and they agree for you to share this information. GDPR should always be followed.

Questionable content:

Be Free Young Carers will ensure all posts are of an appropriate nature and fulfil our goal of helping and promoting young carers in Oxfordshire. If any content is shared on our social media that is inappropriate, it will be removed. If a comment is made on a social media post that is inappropriate, it will be removed. If a supporter or member of the public engages with our social media in an inappropriate way they will be blocked and, if a follower, removed from that form of social media.

If our social media account is hacked, we will make a public apology for this to notify our followers that it is not Be Free Young Carers posting, and close the social media account.

Consequences of Breach:

If a staff member or volunteer fails to comply with the social media policy the Director will decide an appropriate course of action, depending on the severity of the breach. The organisation's disciplinary procedure should also be consulted, depending on the severity of the breach.

Annual Review:

As social media is constantly changing and being updated, this policy will be reviewed annually.

All employees will be provided with access to a copy.

Volunteers will be expected to have read this policy as part of their training before starting volunteering with us.