



Online Safety Policy

(To be read in conjunction with the Safeguarding Policy)

Viabes Community Association works with children and families as part of its activities. These include, but are not limited to:

Parent and toddler groups, Boogie Babies dance group, Tiny Town, craft groups and various school holiday activities.

It also works with the elderly and adults at risk in activities that include, but are not limited to: The Memory Club

The purpose of this policy statement is to:

- ensure the safety and wellbeing of children, young people and the vulnerable is paramount when adults, young people or children are using the internet, social media or mobile devices
- provide staff and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide our approach to online safety
- ensure that, as an organisation, we operate in line with our values and within the law in terms of how we use online devices. The policy statement applies to all staff, volunteers, children and young people and anyone involved in Viabes Community Association's activities.

Legal framework

This policy has been drawn up on the basis of legislation, policy and guidance that seeks to protect children and the vulnerable in England

We believe that:

- no-one including children, young people and adults at risk should ever experience abuse of any kind
- children, young people and the vulnerable should be able to use the internet for education and personal development, but safeguards need to be in place to ensure they are kept safe at all times.

We recognise that:

- the online world provides everyone with many opportunities; however, it can also present risks and challenges
- we have a duty to ensure that all children, young people and adults involved in our organisation are protected from potential harm online whether or not they are using VCA devices or equipment

. We will seek to keep children, young people and the vulnerable safe by:



We will seek to keep children, young people and the vulnerable safe by:

- working in partnership with children, young people and the vulnerable, their parents, carers and other agencies to promote their welfare and helping them to be responsible in their approach to online safety. This includes supporting and encouraging the people using our service to use the internet, social media and mobile phones in a way that keeps them safe and shows respect for others
- appointing an online safety coordinator. This is the same as our Designated Safeguarding Officer.
- providing clear and specific directions to staff and volunteers on how to behave online through our behaviour code for adults
- providing supervision, support and training for staff and volunteers about online safety
- developing an online safety agreement (see appendix A) for use with children, young people and adults at risk and their parents/carers
- developing clear and robust procedures to enable us to respond appropriately to any incidents of inappropriate online behaviour, whether by an adult or a child/young person
- reviewing and updating the security of our information systems regularly
- ensuring that usernames, logins, email accounts and passwords are used effectively
- ensuring personal information about the adults and children who are involved in our organisation is held securely and shared only as appropriate
- ensuring that images of children, young people and families are used only after their written permission has been obtained, and only for the purpose for which consent has been given
- examining and risk assessing any social media platforms and new technologies before they are used within the organisation.

If online abuse occurs, we will respond to it by:

- having clear and robust safeguarding procedures in place for responding to abuse (including online abuse)
- providing support and training for all staff and volunteers on dealing with all forms of abuse, including bullying/cyberbullying, emotional abuse, sexting, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation
- making sure our response takes the needs of the person experiencing abuse, any bystanders and our organisation as a whole into account



- reviewing the plan developed to address online abuse at regular intervals, to ensure that any problems have been resolved in the long term. Related policies and procedures

This policy statement should be read alongside our organisational policies, including:

- Child protection
- Adults at risk
- Safeguarding
- Complaints

We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually.

Signatures:

This policy was last reviewed on:



Appendix A – Agreement for use of online platforms

Viabes Community Association understands the importance of children, young people and the vulnerable being able to use the internet for education, social inclusion and personal development. This includes social media platforms and apps that allow for group communication or social sessions. We aim to support children, young people and the vulnerable in making use of these in our work. However, we also recognise that safeguards need to be in place to ensure they are kept safe at all times. This agreement is part of our overarching code of behaviour for children, young people and the vulnerable, and staff and volunteers. It also fits with our overarching online safety policy. If you would like to know more about this, please speak to Luan Squire, Centre Manager

Parents/carers/adult family members:

Please read and discuss this agreement with your child or vulnerable person and when you are confident that it is fully understood, sign it, ask your child/vulnerable person to sign it, and return it to the group leader. If you have any questions or concerns, please speak to Luan Squire, Centre Manager or to your session facilitator.

Agreement

- I will be responsible for my behaviour when using the internet, social media platforms and apps that allow for group communication or social sessions. This includes the resources I access and the language I use.
- I will not deliberately browse, download or upload material that could be considered offensive or illegal. If I accidentally come across any such material I will report it immediately to the group leader.
- I will not send anyone material that could be considered threatening, bullying, offensive or illegal.
- I will not give out any personal information online, such as my name, phone number or address.
- I will not reveal my passwords to anyone.
- I will not arrange a face-to-face meeting with someone I meet online unless I have discussed this with my parents and/or group leader and am accompanied by a trusted adult.
- If I am concerned or upset about anything I see on the internet or any messages that I receive, I know I can talk to a member of staff or a known volunteer at Viabes Community Centre.



I understand that these rules are designed to keep me safe and that if I choose not to follow them, Viabes Community Association may contact me or my parents/carers.

We have discussed this online safety agreement and have understood its purpose and requirements.

Signatures:

Parent/carer/adult family member signature.....

Date

Young person signature.....

Date

Please return this form to the group leader or the Centre manager, Luan Squire