

## **Internet Safety Policy and Procedures for Staff and Volunteers**

It is important that everyone who uses the internet at Gateway into the Community is aware of this document and that staff and volunteers discuss the policy regularly with members, adults and children.

Care should be taken that members access only suitable material and sites. Staff should monitor which sites have been accessed by checking history and looking over members' shoulders regularly during sessions and anyone found to be misusing the internet will be dealt with accordingly. Just because a member is over 18, this does not give them the right to use their time at Gateway into the Community to look at sites that we would consider unsuitable for use in our services.

Staff and volunteers will check regularly which sites people are using and what they are writing on these sites. This is not an invasion of privacy: we have a duty of care in our groups to all members and group sessions are not suitable occasions for private activity. Members in the past have received unpleasant messages; we need to ensure that they are free from this form of bullying at Gateway into the Community.

No personal information should be given out by members about other people and activities at group meetings without checking with a member of staff. This applies at all times, not just in our sessions. No pictures or videos are to be uploaded onto websites, including the Gateway into the Community website, without first checking with staff that permission has been granted by parents of under-18s and by the person themselves if they are over 18. Staff and volunteers should not accept members as friends on social networking sites e.g. Facebook.

Anyone who comes across inappropriate material by accident is to report it immediately to staff, who will make a note of it before closing down the website and making sure that the Coordinator is aware of the incident. This is in case there is a need to make a report to the police or if the site is accessed again.

The internet contains much information that is useful or fun but it can also expose children and vulnerable people to harm, for example by exposing them to age-inappropriate material or illegal content, or to sexual predators or bullies or to financial exploitation.

It is important that Gateway into the Community helps its members to stay safe by explaining the consequences of giving out personal information on line and the risk this exposes the member to. Use the Guidelines for members on acceptable use of the internet to talk to members about the use of the internet at Gateway into the Community as well as general internet safety.

If members who have been asked not to misuse the internet continue to do so, they will not be allowed to use the internet at Gateway into the Community's activities. If they do not accept this or continue to use the information acquired at our activities inappropriately, they may be asked not to attend for a period of time.

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