Transitions UK
www.transitionsuk.org

Social Media (and web-based technology) Policy

Transitions UK is committed to practices and approaches which protect Children and Vulnerable Adults from harm and promote their welfare.

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers (including trustees) and casual workers and provides the acceptable standards for the use of social-media and web-based technology. This policy should be read in conjunction with the Safeguarding Policy. This policy will form the basis of training and induction for all staff and volunteers.

This policy covers the use of Social Media Sites and Applications, such as, but not limited to; Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, snapchat, You Tube, etc. It further includes: blogging, online discussion groups or social networking groups.

There is a tension here: Transitions UK wants genuine friendships to develop and for the young beneficiaries to see their cluster volunteers as friends. That is very much the ethos of this project. However, we also need to protect beneficiaries and volunteers from the possibility of abuse or the possible allegation of abuse.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that everyone working with Transitions UK, and anyone receiving a service from us, is aware of the responsibilities they and others have in relation to social media and web-based technologies.

This policy sets out clear guidance of the acceptable use of social media and web based technology sites and ensures the confidentiality of the charity and all charity staff and volunteers is maintained at all times.

This policy includes appropriate use of charity resources.

This policy also ensures that all charity staff and volunteers understand the consequences of failing to comply with the Social Media and Web-Based Technology Policy.

Responsibilities

Board of Trustees Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the board of trustees, delegated to the Chief Executive, to make this policy available to all current and future staff and volunteers.

To seek guidance on updating this policy as and when appropriate.

To also take corrective and disciplinary measures as are necessary in line with the safeguarding policy and procedures when a breach of this standard occurs.

Staff and Volunteers Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of charity staff and volunteers to comply with the Social Media and web based technology policy.

Line managers and supervisors must ensure that reporting staff and volunteers are directed to this policy and understands their need to comply. Project coordinators and managers will ensure this area is covered in induction training and worked through in team meetings.

Staff and volunteers are reminded that:

Everything posted online is public, even with the strictest privacy settings. Once something is online, it can be copied and redistributed. Therefore, assume that everything that may be written is then permanent and can/will be shared.

Staff and volunteers are reminded that at all times, they should:
- Have the highest standards of personal conduct (inside and outside of the charity projects).
- Ensure that their behaviour (inside and outside of the charities work) does not compromise their position within the charity.
- Ensure that their judgment and integrity should not be able to be brought into question.
- Ensure that their relationship with members of the community, via social media, does not compromise their position within the charity.
- Where there is any doubt, err on the side of caution and seek guidance/permission from your line manager.

Any failure to abide by the Social Media Policy will result in disciplinary action.

Staff and volunteers must alert their line manager where a breach of these standards is suspected or known to have occurred. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action. This is in line with the Safeguarding Policy.

Safeguarding Children and vulnerable adults

Communication between children and adults, by whatever method, should be transparent and open to scrutiny.

Safeguarding children is the responsibility of all charity staff and volunteers. The key principles in respect of this policy are:
- Charity staff and volunteers **must not** communicate, (including accepting 'friend' requests) with any beneficiaries of the charity via social media or web based technology sites without the express permission of the Project Manager and Chief Executive and without the written permission of their families. Such final permission will only be granted after the request has been risk assessed and where there is

demonstrable balance of benefit to the young person. Such permission will not normally be granted before the child has left school. (This would not apply to beneficiaries that an individual employee is directly related to, e.g. their child, niece or nephew). Staff and volunteers should not communicate with, including being 'friends' with, past beneficiaries whilst those beneficiaries are below the age of nineteen.

The principles apply:
- Regardless of whether access occurs during or outside of contracted work hours.
- To all technology whether provided by the Charity or owned by the employee/volunteer.

Unacceptable use of Social Media Sites/Applications

Through social media sites/applications, staff and volunteers (including trustees) **must not**:
- Disclose private and confidential information relating to beneficiaries, families, other staff and volunteers, or the charity.
- Discuss or reveal any matters relating to the charity, other staff and volunteers, beneficiaries or beneficiaries' families.
- Publish, share, distribute or comment on any material that may be deemed contrary to good practice.
- Identify themselves as in any way representing the charity's views.
- Write abusive comments regarding current/previous staff, volunteers, beneficiaries or beneficiaries' families.
- Harass or bully persons unrelated or related to the charity whether digitally or otherwise.
- Access or use personal social media during working hours. If in doubt, please seek advice from your line manager.
- Access or share illegal material.
- Publish any content, which may be deemed as defamation or discrimination.
- Post any images of beneficiaries of the charity.
- Without permission post any images of staff or volunteers on social networking sites.
- Set up and/or use any means to circumvent rather than follow this policy.
- Use it as a forum for raising and escalating concerns regarding the charity. Such concerns should be raised using the Whistle Blowing and grievance procedures and/or complaints policy.

Use of Phones in work time

Mobile phones should not be in use during work time for personal reasons especially on project and whilst supporting beneficiaries.

Use of a mobile phone for work purposes on project should be an authorised use cleared by your line manager. Emergency use or to support safeguarding and security etc. is of course permitted and a requirement of your role. Wherever possible seek authorisation but do not compromise safety or safeguarding in order to do so.

| **Review** |
| This policy will be reviewed every two years or earlier if there is a relevant change in legislation or need. |
| Next Review date; January 2018 |