

# E-SAFETY POLICY

## Policy statement for Children and Young people

The Brain Tumour Charity is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the children and young people we support. This policy should be read alongside The Brain Tumour Charity's Safeguarding policy and procedure.

### Policy Aim

The Brain Tumour Charity works with children and families as part of its activities. This includes direct contact with children and young people at family days, young adult and other charity wide events. Being a digital-first charity, we provide a large proportion of our support online, through email, social media, Live Chat and also via telephone and post. We engage with children and young people online mostly through direct messaging, our Closed Young Adult Facebook groups (which includes 16&17 year olds) and our private Instagram account for teenagers between the ages of 13-17 years of age. We also hold Online Teen and Young Adult meet ups for the age ranges noted above.

The purpose of this policy statement is to:

- Ensure the safety and well-being of children 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. Staff will need to read and sign their agreement to the contents of this policy.
- Ensure that, as an organisation, we operate in line with our Charity's values and pay due regard to the legislation, policy and guidance (as outlined in our Safeguarding policy) that seeks to protect children and young people.

This policy statement applies to all staff, volunteers, children and young people and anyone involved in The Brain Tumour Charity's activities.

### Why do we need an E-Safety policy

Recent advances in the internet, mobile phone and other electronic technology has made access to information and communication increasingly easy for everyone, especially children and young people who we know spend a significant proportion of their time online. According to Ofcom (2019), 8-11 year olds spend 13 hours and 36 minutes a week online and 12-15 year olds spend 20 hours and 30 minutes.

We recognise that:

- There are both benefits and risks to children being online.
- We have a duty to ensure that all children, young people and adults involved in our organisation are protected from potential harm online.
- We have a responsibility to help keep children and young people safe online whether or not they are using The Brain Tumour Charity's network and devices.
- All children, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse.

- Working in partnership with children, young people, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting young people's welfare and in helping young people be responsible in their approach to online safety.

## What are the risks to children and young people online?

There are many potential risks including children and young people:

- Accessing age inappropriate or illegal websites.
- Receiving unwanted or upsetting text or e-mail messages or images.
- Being "groomed" by an adult with a view to meeting the child or young person for their own illegal purposes including sex, drugs, or crime.
- Viewing or receiving socially unacceptable material such as inciting hatred or violence.
- Sending bullying messages or posting malicious details about others.
- Ignoring copyright law by downloading music, video or even homework cheat material.
- "Sexting" sharing sexual images which risk breaching laws on child pornography and may be shared or uploaded to the internet without the sender's knowledge or consent.

## What are some of the potential signs of online abuse?

A child or young person experiencing abuse online might:

- Spend a lot more or a lot less time than usual online, texting, gaming or using social media.
- Seem distant, upset or angry after using the internet or texting.
- Be secretive about who they're talking to and what they're doing online or on their mobile phone.
- Have lots of new phone numbers, texts or email addresses on their mobile phone, laptop or tablet.

## We will seek to keep children and young people safe by:

- Paying due regard to concerns regarding E-Safety. The Safeguarding lead will oversee the Charity's approach to E-Safety along with the Safeguarding Team. We will respond to concerns about online abuse in line with The Brain Tumour Charity's Safeguarding policy and procedure.
- Providing clear and specific directions to staff and volunteers on how to behave online including Sections 12 (Use of Company IT Hardware, Software or Other Equipment) and 13 (Social Networking Policy) of the Employee Handbook.
- Supporting and encouraging the teenagers using our Instagram account and Young Adults Facebook group to use the internet, social media and mobile phones in a way that keeps them safe and shows respect for others. We will do this by regularly posting content about how they can keep themselves safe online; by demonstrating practical solutions (such as how to deal with online bullying) and empowering statements aimed to try and build a young person's self-confidence. All group members are sent a Code of Conduct upon joining the groups.
- Supporting and encouraging parents and carers to do what they can to keep their children safe online. We post content in our Parents Facebook group about online safety for children and young people and we direct parents to information about keeping their children safe online when a child signs up for our Instagram account.
- 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.
- Providing supervision and support for staff and volunteers about online safety.
- Examining and risk assessing any social media platforms and new technologies before they are used within the organisation.

## What to do if I am concerned?

- Refer all concerns to the Safeguarding Team (refer to Safeguarding team procedure) in the first instance, who will discuss next steps and if the case needs to be referred on to the police or Social Services. Other concerns may be referred onto the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre or the Internet Watch Foundation as appropriate).
- If you have concerns that a child is in immediate danger, always dial 999.

## Further reading:

- Net Aware developed by the NSPCC and O2, is a guide to the interactive social networks, apps or games that children use most frequently.

<https://www.net-aware.org.uk/>

- Thinkuknow is a website from National Crime Agency's CEOP Command about keeping children and young people safe on the internet.

<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/professionals/resources/>

- NSPCC website  
[www.nspcc.org.uk/](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/)

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