



Lancing Parish Council

Online Safety Policy

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The need for this policy is because Lancing Parish Council works with young people as part of its Youth Council activities.
- 1.2 The purpose of this policy statement is to:
 - ensure the safety and wellbeing of young people is paramount when adults, young people or children are using the internet, social media or mobile devices;
 - provide staff, Councillors and volunteers with the overarching principles that guide the Council's approach to online safety; and
 - ensure that, as an organisation, the Council operates in line with its values and within the law in terms of how online devices are used.
- 1.3 The policy statement applies to all staff, Councillors and young people and anyone involved in the Youth Council's activities.
- 1.4 This policy should be read alongside the Council's other policies and procedures on child protection and safeguarding.

2.0 LEGAL FRAMEWORK

- 2.1 This policy has been drawn up on the basis of legislation, policy and guidance that seeks to protect children and young people in England.
- 2.2 The Council believes that:
 - children and young people should never experience abuse of any kind;
 - children 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.
- 2.3 The Council recognises that:
 - the online world provides everyone with many opportunities; however, it can also present risks and challenges;
 - it has a duty to ensure that all children, young people and adults involved in its organisation are protected from potential harm online;
 - it has a responsibility to help keep children and young people safe online, whether or not they are using Lancing Parish Council's network;
 - 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 to be responsible in their approach to online safety.
- 2.4 The Council will seek to keep children and young people safe by:
 - providing clear and specific directions to staff, Councillors and volunteers on how to behave online through its behaviour code for adults;
 - supporting and encouraging Youth Council members to use the internet, social media and mobile phones in a way that keeps them safe and shows respect for others;
 - supporting and encouraging parents and carers to do what they can to keep their children safe online;

- developing an online safety agreement for use with young people and their parents/carers;
- developing clear and robust procedures to enable it 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 its information systems regularly;
- ensuring that usernames, logins, email accounts and passwords are used effectively;
- ensuring personal information about the young people who are involved in the Youth Council 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, support and training for staff, Councillors and volunteers about online safety.

2.5 If online abuse occurs, the Council 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, Councillors and volunteers on dealing with all forms of abuse, including bullying/cyberbullying, emotional abuse, sexting, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation;
- making sure the Council's response takes the needs of the person experiencing abuse, any bystanders and the Council as a whole into account;
- reviewing the plan developed to address online abuse at regular intervals, in order to ensure that any problems have been resolved in the long term.