ONLINE SAFETY POLICY

1. Introduction

Bridge Builders Wellbeing Ltd., a certified social enterprise, is dedicated to ensuring the online safety of all young people, parents/carers, vulnerable adults, staff, and volunteers involved in our services. This policy outlines our commitment to fostering a safe digital environment. It should be read in conjunction with our Safeguarding Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, and Data Protection Policy.

2. Policy Aims

The purpose of this policy is to:

- **Safeguard and protect** all members of the Bridge Builders community online.
- **Educate and raise awareness** of online safety among young people, parents/carers, vulnerable adults, staff, and volunteers.
- **Enable safe and responsible use** of technology by staff and volunteers, encouraging them to model positive online behavior.
- **Establish clear procedures** for responding to online safety concerns.

We recognize that online risks fall into three main categories:

- **Content**: Exposure to illegal, inappropriate, or harmful material.
- **Contact**: Personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of harm. Any harm resulting from online conduct involving young people or vulnerable adults (e.g. physical or emotional injury caused by cyberbullying, exclusion, or distressing online interactions) must be recorded in the Accident Book.
- **Conduct**: Personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of harm. Any harm resulting from online conduct (e.g. physical or emotional injury caused by cyberbullying, exclusion, or distressing online interactions) must be recorded in the Accident Book.

3. Policy Scope

This policy applies to:

- All **staff** (including mentors, support staff, and leadership team), and **volunteers**.
- **Young people** and **parents/carers** participating in our programmes.
- Vulnerable adults and anyone else involved in Bridge Builders activities.
- All use of the internet and technology, including personal devices used in connection with our programmes and organization-issued devices.

4. Monitoring and Review

- The **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** will monitor online safety incidents and report findings to the leadership team to ensure consistent application.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

5.1 Leadership Team

- Ensure online safety is embedded in all programmes and policies.
- Provide resources and support to the DSL.
- Oversee the implementation of appropriate filtering and monitoring systems.

5.2 Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

- Serve as the **online safety lead**.
- Stay informed about online safety trends, research, and legislation.
- Deliver regular training to staff and volunteers.
- Record and respond to online safety concerns, liaising with external agencies as needed.

5.3 Staff and Volunteers

- Model safe and professional online behaviour.
- Report concerns to the DSL promptly.
- Incorporate online safety education into mentoring and activities.

5.4 Young People

- Engage in online safety education provided by Bridge Builders.
- Follow the online safety rules and report any concerns.
- Treat others with respect online and offline.

5.5 Parents and Carers

- Reinforce online safety practices at home.
- Communicate concerns to Bridge Builders staff and volunteers.
- Review and discuss online safety with their children.

6. Education and Engagement Approaches

6.1 Young People

We will:

- Integrate online safety into mentoring programmes.
- Teach safe use of online tools, such as anonymous polls and brainstorm boards, in a supervised setting.
- Use age-appropriate resources and encourage youth input in policy development.

6.2 Staff and Volunteers

We will:

- Provide online safety training during induction and annual updates.
- Share resources to enhance understanding of risks and best practices.

6.3 Parents and Carers

We will:

- Offer guidance via newsletters, meetings, and our website.
- Foster open dialogue about online safety.

7. Reducing Online Risks

We will:

- Regularly assess and mitigate online risks in our programmes.
- Monitor all devices used in our activities.
- Educate young people on recognizing and managing online risks.
- Any harm or injury resulting from online conduct involving young people or vulnerable adults will be promptly recorded in the organisation's Accident Book and reported to the DSL in line with our Health and Safety and Safeguarding Policies.

8. Safer Use of Technology

- Devices used in our programmes will have up-to-date security software and safety measures.
- Staff and volunteers will supervise internet use by young people.
- Online tools (e.g., polls, brainstorm boards) will be vetted for safety and privacy before use.

9. Managing Internet Access

- All users must sign a T&C form before accessing Bridge Builders' devices or internet.

10. Filtering and Monitoring

- Filtering systems will block harmful content on our online platform.
- Internet use will be monitored, with breaches reported to the DSL for investigation and action.

11. Managing Personal Data

- Personal data will be managed in compliance with the **General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)** and our Data Protection Policy.

12. Website Safety

- Our website will comply with legal standards, ensuring no personal

information is shared without consent.

13. Publishing Images and Videos

- Written consent will be obtained before sharing any images or videos of young people.

14. Email Management

- Staff will use **work-provided email addresses** for official communication.
- Sensitive information will be sent via secure, encrypted methods.

15. Social Media

- Staff and volunteers must maintain professional behaviour online and avoid sharing work-related content on personal accounts.
- Official social media use will be limited to promotional purposes, approved by the leadership team.

16. Personal Devices

- Personal devices must be used responsibly during work hours.
- Staff and volunteers are prohibited from using personal devices to contact young people.

17. Responding to Online Safety Incidents

- Concerns must be reported to the DSL immediately.
- Responses will follow our Safeguarding Policy, with external agencies (e.g., police, social services) involved as necessary.
- Incidents that result in physical or emotional harm to young people or vulnerable adults (for example, distress leading to injury, panic attacks, or other negative physical effects during or after online activities) must also be recorded in the organisation's Accident Book (see Health and

Safety Policy) within 24 hours. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) must be informed immediately so that any necessary safeguarding or health & safety follow-up actions can be taken.

18. Procedures for Specific Online Incidents

We have tailored procedures for:

- **Cyberbullying**: Addressed per our Anti-Bullying Policy.
- **Sexting**: Managed per UKCCIS guidance, with DSL oversight and potential police referral.
- **Online Abuse/Exploitation**: Reported to police (101 or 999 if urgent) and safeguarded accordingly.
- **Radicalization**: Escalated per Safeguarding Policy, with DSL notifying relevant authorities.

19. Contact Details

- **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)**: bridgebuilderssafeguarding@gmail.com, 07421437484

External support:

- **Childline**: 0800 1111
- **NSPCC**: 0808 800 5000
- **Nottingham MASH**: 0115 876 4800
- **CEOP**: www.ceop.police.uk
- **Internet Matters**: www.internetmatters.org

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