



Technology & Social Media Policy

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Introduction

Prism LGBTQ recognises that use of the internet, social media platforms and mobile phones play an important part in the lives of our members, and they have a significant impact on their social and emotional development.

There are both benefits and risks associated with the internet and social media and other technology.

The benefits of social media include being:

- A platform for advertising our group
- A means of engaging with the local community
- An effective way of communicating with our group members, for example to communicate information about workshops or cancelled youth group sessions

The risks are boundaries could be breached leading to safeguarding concerns. In accordance with Prism LGBTQ "Safeguarding Young People & Vulnerable Adults Policy", we must take all possible steps to protect our Members from significant harm or risk whilst using the internet or any other form of technology.

This Policy aims to set out guidance for Mentors with regards to appropriate usage of social media and electronic communication.



This Policy and its implementation will be reviewed as required to keep in line with changing legislation and at least every three years.

If any training needs are identified relating to this policy or its implementation then these will be met as appropriate.

All Prism LGBTQ Mentors must abide by this Policy. Any breach of this Policy will be investigated and may result in disciplinary action.

Section 1 - Usage of Social Media & Email

Any electronic communication between Mentors and Members should only be carried out through either the Official Prism Social Media Accounts or the Official Prism Email Account to ensure full accountability.

Mentors should not engage with Members via social media or email using their personal accounts/profiles. This includes adding Members as 'Friends' or 'Followers' on their personal social media accounts, accepting 'Friend Requests' from Members or 'Following' Member's social media accounts. This also includes the use of messaging services (for example, Snapchat).

The above applies to interacting with all Members, irrespective of age or personal circumstances.

Section 2 - Maintaining Communication Audit Logs

Records of any communications sent through the Official Prism Social Media Accounts or Official Email Account should be retained and not deleted, so full transactional history can be maintained.

Full access to the Official Prism Social Media Accounts and the Official Prism Email Account should always be granted to more than one Mentor so transparency is maintained.

Section 3 - Acceptable Content

The Official Prism Social Media Accounts and Official Prism Email Account should only be used for reasons relating to working with young people or causes/topics relating to Prism LGBTQ and its aims or related content. They should not be used for general socialising.

Mentors must ensure that the content or links to other content posted on or shared by the Official Prism Social Media Accounts does not contain:

- Libellous, defamatory, bullying or harassing statements
- Breaches of Data Protection



- Material of an illegal nature
- Inappropriate offensive sexual references, etc.

Judgement should always be used regarding what counts as acceptable content, and err on the side of caution. Remember at all times that safeguarding Members is the priority, and that the public reputation of the group is also at stake.

Mentors should respect the privacy of Members and other Mentors and should not divulge personal information. Please see the Prism LGBTQ+ "Confidentiality Policy" for more information.

To respect the privacy of Members, photos or images of Members (where the Member can be clearly identified) should not be published on social media.

Section 4 - Mobile Phones

The same principle applies to mobile phone usage as outlined above with social media. Mentors should not share their personal phone number with Members and nor should they be contacting Members via their personal mobile phones.

Section 5 - Cyber-Bullying

Prism LGBTQ has a zero tolerance approach to bullying. All Members should be aware of this and reminded of it regularly.

If a young person says they are being cyber-bullied by another Member, the Mentors should investigate, following the procedures outlined in the Prism LGBTQ "Safeguarding Children & Vulnerable Adults Policy" and take action to show this is not acceptable. The consequences of these actions may include temporary or permanent suspension from the group.

If a Member says they are the victim of cyberbullying and the perpetrator is not a Prism Member, Mentors should encourage them to:

- Block the perpetrator so further contact can be minimised
- Save the messages as evidence
- Report the abuse via the social media reporting platform
- Escalate the issue to a parent/guardian or an appropriate individual at their school or college.

For further information and guidance, see <https://www.gov.uk/bullying-at-school/reporting-bullying>



Section 6 - Possession & Distribution of Images of Child Sex Abuse

Mentors should remind Members regularly that although the legal age of consent in the United Kingdom is 16, it is still illegal to create, share or receive sexual/indecent images of people under age of 18. It should also be emphasised to Members that this law still applies if they themselves are the subject of this image.

Any Mentor found to be in possession of (or distributing) indecent material involving children will be immediately expelled from the organisation, and their actions reported to the Police as well as the local safeguarding authority.