

## The College of Animal Welfare Online Safety Policy

This policy applies to all members of the College (including staff, volunteers, learners, parents/carers and visitors.) who have access to and are users of communications technologies (whether these belong to the College or to the users themselves)

The following section outlines the roles and responsibilities for the online safety of users within the College.

### Roles and responsibilities

The College has relevant online safety/safeguarding policies and guidance. Staff, learners and all users should be aware of these guidelines which are:

- available on the VLE and CAWPERS.
- included / referred to in this policy Staff, learners, and other users are also governed by relevant legislation, which is referred to in this policy and by the guidance provided by the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (with regard to safeguarding/child protection and how incidents should be reported).
- The Principal has overall responsibility for ensuring the safety (including online safety) of all staff, learners, and members of the College, though the day to day responsibility for online safety is delegated to others (i.e. Centre Managers and senior course tutors).
- The Principal, Vice Principal Corporate Services and Head of IT are aware of the procedures to be followed in the event of a serious online safety allegation being made against a member of staff or learner.
- The Head of IT will ensure that there is a system in place to allow for the College to review content and use of all College IT systems for the purposes of monitoring online safety.

#### The Head of IT

- ensures that staff/learners have an up to date awareness of the College's current online safety policy and practices
- implements the procedures that need to be followed in the event of an online safety incident taking place including immediate reporting to the Principal
- takes day to day operational management of online safety issues and has a leading role in establishing and reviewing the online safety policies / documents
- manages the advice and support provided to students
- keeps up to date with developments in online safety and recommends to the Principal any appropriate upgrades
- manages the College's processes for advice for staff and learners
- liaises with the national / local organisation / associations as relevant
- receives reports of online safety incidents and creates a log of incidents to inform future online safety developments,
- monitors incident logs
- reports to the Principal immediately any concerns they may have ref online safety breaches
- they have an up to date awareness of the College's current online safety policy and practices

- they report any suspected misuse or problem to the relevant staff – particularly where it is believed that a young person's welfare is at risk.
- digital communications with learners and young people should be on a professional level and where possible only carried out using the official systems of the college.
- they are aware of online safety issues particularly those related to the use of mobile phones, cameras, gaming consoles and hand held devices and that they monitor their use and implement the College's policies with regard to these devices

#### Learners

- are expected to abide by the various college policies relating to online activity and social media
- need to understand the importance of reporting abuse, misuse or access to inappropriate materials and know how to do so
- should demonstrate positive online behaviour

Parents / Employers play a crucial role in ensuring that their learners understand the need to use the internet / mobile devices in an appropriate way.

- (where relevant) Parents / carers should endorse (by signature) the Acceptable Use Policy for Young People.
- Parents / carers should sign the relevant permission forms on the taking and use of digital and video images. Whilst regulation and technical solutions are very important, their use should be balanced by making learners and young people aware of the need to take a responsible approach to online safety. Learners and young people need help and support to recognise and avoid online safety risks and build their resilience.

**Online safety awareness** will be provided in the following ways:

- Key online safety messages should be reinforced as part of all relevant planned programmes of activities for young people.
- Online safety issues should be discussed/highlighted, when possible, in informal conversations with young people.
- When the opportunity arises young people should be advised to be critically aware of the materials/content they access on-line and be guided to validate the accuracy of information.
- Young people should be made aware of the need to respect copyright when using material accessed on the internet and, if applicable, acknowledge the source of information used.
- Rules for the use of devices / internet will be posted in areas where these devices are in use and, where possible, displayed on log-on screens.
- Staff should act as good role models in their use of online technologies.

Staff are responsible for ensuring that:

- they have an up to date awareness of the College's current online safety policy and practices

- they report any suspected misuse or problems to the Principal particularly where it is believed that a person's welfare is at risk to a Safeguarding Officer
- digital communications with children and young people should be on a professional level and where possible only carried out using the official systems of the College.
- young people in their care are aware of online safety
- they are aware of online safety issues particularly those related to the use of mobile phones, cameras, gaming consoles and hand held devices and that they monitor their use and implement the group policies with regard to these devices.

Whilst regulation and technical solutions are very important, their use should be balanced by making learners, children and young people aware of the need to take a responsible approach to online safety. Children and young people need help and support to recognise and avoid online safety risks and build their resilience.

Communication between adults and between children / young people and adults, by whatever method, should take place within clear and explicit boundaries. This includes the wider use of technology such as mobile phones, text messaging, social networks, e-mails, digital cameras, videos, web-cams, websites and blogs.

When using digital communications, staff should:

- only make contact with learners for professional reasons and in accordance with the policies and professional guidance of the College
- not share any personal information with learners, children or young people e.g. should not give out their personal contact details to including e-mail, home or mobile telephone numbers.
- not request, or respond to, any personal information requests, other than that which might be appropriate as part of their professional role, or if the learner is at immediate risk of harm.
- be aware of and use the appropriate reporting routes available to them if they suspect any of their personal details have been compromised.
- ensure that all communications are transparent and open to scrutiny.
- be careful in their communications so as to avoid any possible misinterpretation.
- ensure that if they have a personal social networking profile, details are not shared with learners, children and young people in their care (making every effort to keep personal and professional online lives separate).
- not post information online that could bring the College into disrepute.
- be aware of the sanctions that may be applied for breaches of policy related to professional conduct.
- E-mail, text or other web based communications between staff / volunteers and a child / young person should (wherever possible) take place using the group's official equipment / systems.
- Any communications outside the agreed protocols (above) may lead to disciplinary and/or criminal investigations.