



# GHM Online & Phone Safeguarding Policy



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## 1. Introduction

GreenHouse Mentoring (GHM) is a project of Stopsley Baptist Church (SBC), a company limited by guarantee, Registered in England and Wales, Company Number - 7605036, Registered Charity Number - 1150563, Registered Office - Stopsley Baptist Church, St Thomas' Road, Luton, LU2 7XP

GreenHouse Mentoring (GHM) has been operating since 2002.

This document describes GHM's policy on the use of technology e.g. online access and smartphones, to communicate with Service Users.

This document should be read in conjunction with the SBC Safeguarding Policy, GHM Safeguarding Practice Reflection Policy, GHM Lone Working Procedure, GHM Photographic Policy, SBC Child Protection Policy and 7 Golden Rules of Information Sharing, copies are available on request from GHM.

## 2. Applicability

This policy applies to all GHM Staff and Volunteers.

## 3. Definitions

Within this document, the following definitions are understood:

<b>Volunteers</b>	any person currently volunteering with GHM with a signed Volunteer Agreement;
<b>Service User</b>	any young person who has or is receiving service from GHM;
<b>Staff</b>	any member of the GHM Team with a formal written and signed contract;
<b>Buddy</b>	any person who agrees to assist a volunteer by ensuring that mentoring sessions are completed on time and safely;
<b>External Persons</b>	any other person or organisation that has had or is having contact with GHM and does not fall into the above three categories;
<b>Workers</b>	any person who is a Volunteer or Staff Member or Buddy.

## 4. Policy Authority

This document is approved by the GreenHouse Mentoring Manager.

<b>Written By</b>	<b>Version/ Date</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Ian Pirks	18/09/2015	Initial Issue
Ian Pirks	02/10/2015	Appendix B – Best Practice Guide added

## 5. Principles of Policy

GHM will only use electronic communication for genuine reasons relating to work with a young person, not for general socialising or unnecessary contact. Genuine reasons could include responding to a question or comment from a young person, contacting them to reassure them of support or confirming arrangements for a meeting or activity. Unnecessary contact could include sharing personal issues or anything that might burden a young person. Excessive contact will also be inappropriate.

The following principles will apply within GHM:

- ◆ In all cases, GreenHouse Mentoring Staff and Volunteers will work within the GHM Vision, Mission & Values statement.
- ◆ Where consent is required it will be obtained from the Parent/ Guardian/ Carer for Service Users under 16. For Service Users 16 or over, consent may also be obtained from the Service User themselves.
- ◆ No GHM Worker will befriend a Service User on Social Media websites.
- ◆ GHM Workers should not place themselves or Service Users in dangerous situations.
- ◆ Continuous review of safeguarding practice forms the backbone of safe working for young people and volunteers and staff.
- ◆ GHM Workers will normally communicate with the Service Users' Parent, Guardian or Carer, rather than directly with the Service User.
- ◆ GHM Workers will not instigate electronic communication with a Service User. However, if a Service User initiates or requests electronic communication then the GHM Worker may reciprocate provided that written consent is received before responding.
- ◆ The overriding attitude is a concern for the young people we are working with, and their well-being, and a desire to keep GHM Staff Members, Volunteers and Buddies from unnecessary suspicion.

- ◆ Detail points are covered in Appendix A.

## 1.2 Advice to Mentees & Volunteers

During training Volunteers will be encouraged to help their mentees and are given the advice opposite to share:

### What Can Your Mentee Do?

1. Don't put pictures on your online profile that you wouldn't show your Mum, Dad or Granny
2. Don't put personal information online
  - Phone no and address
3. Keep all your user settings Private & regularly check them
4. Make sure you know exactly who is in your buddy list
5. Find the Report Abuse button and Be ready to use it
6. Tell Someone



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Volunteers will also be encouraged to help their mentee as outlined in the slides opposite and below.

### What Can You Do?

Watch  Listen 

Talk about It 

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### What Can You Do?

to learn safe practice

Encourage them 

[www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk)  
[www.ceop.gov.uk](http://www.ceop.gov.uk)  
<http://www.saferinternet.org.uk/>

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### What Can You Do?

 with them

- Watch these videos

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### What Can You Do?

- Get them to show you what they like
- Point them to security settings



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### The Challenge

- Live it - get into some of this stuff
- Talk about it, especially with young people
- Encourage Parents:
  - Educate themselves
  - Watch the video
  - Set Boundaries
    - Social Networks - yes, Chat rooms - no
    - Check friends
- Encourage Youth Workers
  - Put this on your agenda
  - Many parents won't

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## **6. Monitoring, Evaluation & Reporting**

Adherence to this policy is reviewed regularly by the GHM Manager through one to one meetings and staff meetings. Any failures will be investigated, reported in the SPR Actions Summary and a root cause analysis be carried out to prevent future failures.

## **7. Policy Review**

Next policy review due before: September 2018

Policy last reviewed on: 20/09/2015

**Approved by:**

Sue Pirks .....

(GreenHouse Mentoring Manager)

Date .....

Lysle Osborne .....

(SBC Executive Director)

Date .....

## **Appendix A – SBC Detailed Policy Electronic Communication**

### **1) Modern Technologies and Safe Communication**

Electronic communication includes using mobile phones, smartphones, computers and other devices for email, text, instant messaging and social networking.

Volunteers and GHM Staff will be given a copy of the GHM Online & Phone Safeguarding Policy in their Volunteer Pack and asked to read and sign to confirm their acceptance of the policy.

It is not appropriate to use these communication methods with primary school aged children, 11 years and younger.

Where consent is required it will be obtained from the Parent/ Guardian/ Carer for Service Users under 16. For Service Users 16 or over, consent may also be obtained from the Service User themselves.

No GHM Worker will befriend a Service User on Social Media websites.

GHM Workers should not place themselves or Service Users in dangerous situations.

Continuous review of safeguarding practice forms the backbone of safe working for young people and volunteers and staff.

GHM Workers will normally communicate with the Service Users' Parent, Guardian or Carer, rather than directly with the Service User.

GHM Workers will not instigate electronic communication with a Service User. However, if a Service User initiates or requests electronic communication then the GHM Worker may reciprocate provided that written consent is received before responding.

### **2) Workers' Communication with Young People**

All young people need to be aware of the protocols that workers follow in relation to electronic communication. It is important to remember that as well as the parent/carer, young people will have a right to decide whether they want a worker to have their email address, online id (e.g. Skype Id) or mobile telephone number and will not be pressurised into divulging information they would rather keep to themselves.

### **3) Email**

Email could sometimes be used by Workers to remind young people about meetings. If email is being used Workers ensure messages are in the public



domain by copying each message to [ghm@stopsley.net](mailto:ghm@stopsley.net). It is important workers use clear and unambiguous language to reduce the risk of misinterpretation, and although it should be obvious when an email is ending, Workers should never use inappropriate terms such as 'luv' to round things off.

#### 4) Communicating using Instant Messaging (eg. MSN Messenger, AOL AIM, Yahoo Messenger, Facebook)

Instant messaging should be kept to a minimum. Workers should save significant conversations as a text and also keep a log of any significant communication on the GHM Contacts Database stating with whom and when they communicated.

#### 5) Mobile Phones

Particular diligence needs to be applied when Workers use mobile phones to communicate with young people:

- All mobile phone use will be primarily about information sharing.
- Workers should keep a log of significant conversations/texts.
- Any texts or conversations that raise concerns should be passed on/shown to the worker's supervisor.
- Workers should use clear language, particularly when texting, and should not use words such as 'luv' or abbreviations like 'lol' which could mean 'laugh out loud' or 'lots of love'.
- Paid children's/young people's Workers should only use a mobile phone under a contract that provides itemised billing.
- Workers should not take photos on their personal equipment. (see GHM Photographic Policy)

#### 6) Social Networks

No GHM Worker will befriend a service user on any social media site.

#### 7) Taking Video and Photographs of Children

See GHM Photographic Policy.

## Appendix B –How to Remain Safe on the Internet – Best Practice Guide<sup>1</sup>

The internet is filled with websites allowing you to connect with friends, share information and upload your personal photographs. As useful and attractive as joining Facebook, Twitter, Flickr and other similar websites can seem, there are also potential downsides.

One key thing you must always remember is that social networking sites ensure that information about you is permanently and freely available.

By actively using these websites you create a record that will follow you throughout your life. When you're uploading that shot of your friend in that humorous situation, stop and think. What would a future employer or family member think?

Another of the major risks of sharing information on social networking sites is the potential for cyber bullying.

### How can you protect yourself online?

- ◆ **Never** leave your computer without locking it.
- ◆ Always check your emails before opening or replying– if it's from a company, check the email address. If it's from a bank, check with your bank that they emailed you before responding to anything.
- ◆ Read disclaimers/terms and conditions **before** registering with websites.

### Did You Know?

A survey by the Anti Bullying Alliance in 2009 revealed that one in five Year 6 primary school pupils (aged 10 or 11) had been cyberbullied in the past 12 months. The study also showed 22 per cent of Year 6 pupils did not know how to protect themselves against cyber bullying. Of the 10 and 11 year olds surveyed, 18 per cent have been cyber bullied while at home.

Results from:  
[www.antibullyingalliance.org.uk/press\\_centre/latest\\_news/new\\_research\\_on\\_cyberbullying.aspx](http://www.antibullyingalliance.org.uk/press_centre/latest_news/new_research_on_cyberbullying.aspx)

*Internet safety is all about finding ways to protect your Personal information and data on the web. This can range from your name, to your mobile number, to your bank details.*

<sup>1</sup> Provided by NSPCC. Registered charity numbers 216401 and SC037717.

- ◆ **Do not** use the same password for all of your accounts or profiles. Alternatively, use a password that includes **upper case** letters, **lower case** letters and **numbers**.
- ◆ You may wish to use a password generator to create a random password.
- ◆ Change your password regularly, preferably every three months if possible.
- ◆ When using social networking sites such as Facebook, keep a close eye on what information you're sharing because you might be sharing more than you think!
- ◆ When using social networking sites, **never** add or talk to anyone who you do not know. Remember that people can pretend to be someone different from who they really are.
- ◆ Always check that your personal information – email address, phone numbers and home address – is not on display for others to see.

Prepared by the British Youth Council's Programmes Advisory Council for the Safe Network.

### What might happen if you don't protect yourself?

- ◆ Your online banking information could be stolen and used to access other information or to steal from your account.
- ◆ Your social networking accounts could be used by someone else. They might be used to post abusive messages about you or to your friends, which appear to be sent by you.
- ◆ You could be at risk of unwanted attention from people who you may not know or like, or who may pose a risk to you or others.

## Did You Know?

Cyberbullying occurs when someone repeatedly makes fun of another person online or repeatedly picks on another person through emails or text messages, or uses online forums with the intention of harming, damaging, humiliating or isolating another person. Childnet International describes cyberbullying as a sub-set or method of bullying. It can be used to carry out many different types of bullying (such as racist bullying, homophobic bullying, or bullying related to special educational needs and disabilities) but instead of the perpetrator carrying out the bullying face-to face, they use technology as a means to do it.

Results from:  
[www.huwy.eu/uk/topics/cyberbullying/cyberbullying-definition/](http://www.huwy.eu/uk/topics/cyberbullying/cyberbullying-definition/)  
[old.digizen.org/cyberbullying/fullguidance/understanding/default.aspx](http://old.digizen.org/cyberbullying/fullguidance/understanding/default.aspx)

Research with 11 to 19 year olds found that one in five young people (20 per cent) had experienced bullying or threats via email, internet chatrooms or text message. Bullying using text messaging was the most common of these three, experienced by 14 per cent of young people. Almost three quarters (73 per cent) of young people who had been bullied by email, internet chatroom or text message said they knew the person who bullied or threatened them, while a quarter (26 per cent) said it was done by a stranger.

Results from: NCH and Tesco Mobile (2005) Putting U in the picture: mobile bullying survey 2005 (PDF)

### Facebook?

Over the years, facebook has introduced new safety methods and tools. However there are many dangers in using facebook.



You can avoid these by making your profile private and hiding your information from strangers.

### Top facebook tips

1. Keep your password secret
2. Make sure you regularly change your password
3. Ensure your password isn't easy to guess
4. Ensure you log out after finishing a session
5. Set your profile to private and ensure only friends can see your personal information
6. What is true for facebook is also true for all social networking sites e.g. twitter, Instagram, pinterest etc.

### Top five things to keep in mind when on the internet:

1. Make sure everyone you talk to, connect with, share with or tweet is someone you know and trust.
2. Any pictures you share can be viewed and shared by anyone on the internet.
3. Anything you post online is permanent. Once it's been uploaded you can never truly retract it.
4. Information, stories and rumours can spread fast on the internet. If you become a target for cruel or damaging rumours or pictures, talk to a trusted adult about it, or to ChildLine (0800 1111). You can also report it to the site and, in certain circumstances, to CEOP (The Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre – [www.ceop.police.uk](http://www.ceop.police.uk)).
5. Make sure that emails you receive, the conversations you have online, and the websites you visit are what you think they are.

*Facebook is a key social networking site. It has over 1.49 billion people and that number just keeps going up*

### Did You Know?

Ofcom social networking sites research found that 41 per cent of children aged 8-17 who had a visible profile had it set to be visible to anyone. Out of adults, 44 per cent who had a current profile said their profile could be seen by anyone. 25 per cent of registered social networking users had posted sensitive personal data about themselves on their profiles. This included details such as their phone number, home address or email address. Younger adults are even more likely to do this, with 34 per cent of 16-24 year olds willingly posting this information.

Results from: <http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/market-data-research/medialiteracy/medlitpubrss/socialnetworking/summary/>