

Online Safety Policy for Inclusive Outsource LTD

Effective Date: November 2024

Reviewed by: Directors

Next Review Date: November 2025

At Inclusive Outsource LTD, we are committed to creating a safe, inclusive, and supportive online environment for everyone involved in our activities, including children, young people, vulnerable adults, staff, and volunteers. As part of our wider safeguarding efforts, this **Online Safety Policy** outlines our approach to protecting individuals from online risks while participating in our services, including mentoring, group sessions, workshops, and other digital interactions.

1. Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this policy is to:

- **Protect** children, young people, and vulnerable adults who engage in online services with Inclusive Outsource LTD from potential online harm.
- **Provide guidance** to staff and volunteers on best practices for ensuring online safety during all interactions, including mentoring, group sessions, and online events.
- **Promote digital well-being** and ensure that our online environments are safe, accessible, and inclusive.

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, sessional workers, agency staff, students, and any third-party contractors working on behalf of Inclusive Outsource LTD.

2. Our Commitment to Online Safety

We believe that everyone has the right to engage with online spaces safely and respectfully. We are dedicated to:

- **Valuing, listening to, and respecting** the needs and preferences of neurodivergent individuals and other vulnerable participants in our digital interactions.
- **Fostering a culture of inclusivity**, where all individuals can participate in our online activities without fear of harm, bullying, or discrimination.
- **Recognising the unique challenges** faced by children, young people, and vulnerable adults in online spaces, particularly those with neurodiverse needs or disabilities.

3. Online Risks

We recognise the following potential online risks and take steps to address them:

- **Cyberbullying:** Any form of bullying or harassment that takes place online, including social media platforms, messaging apps, or online chat.
- **Inappropriate Content:** Exposure to harmful or age-inappropriate material, including violence, hate speech, or explicit content.

- **Online Grooming:** Attempts by individuals to build relationships with vulnerable individuals with the intent to exploit or harm.
- **Privacy and Data Protection:** The risk of personal information being shared or misused without consent.
- **Radicalisation and Extremism:** The use of online platforms to influence individuals towards extremist views or behaviours.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

All staff, employed and self employed, and volunteers at Inclusive Outsource LTD have a responsibility to maintain online safety. The following roles and responsibilities will be in place:

4.1 Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):

- Responsible for overseeing online safety and ensuring that any concerns raised about online interactions are dealt with appropriately.
- Monitors online activities and provides guidance on emerging online risks.
- Ensures that online safety is integrated into all safeguarding and child/vulnerable adult protection procedures.

4.2 Staff and Volunteers:

- Ensure that all online interactions with children, young people, and vulnerable adults are conducted safely and respectfully.
- Use appropriate platforms and settings to maintain the privacy and safety of participants during online mentoring sessions, group work, and other digital interactions.
- Follow the organisation's policies on the use of social media, online communication, and video conferencing tools.
- Report any concerns about online safety, including instances of cyberbullying, inappropriate content, or suspected online grooming, to the DSL.

4.3 Children, Young People, and Vulnerable Adults:

- Encourage safe online behaviour, including protecting personal information, reporting concerns, and treating others with respect in digital environments.
- Be made aware of the potential online risks through ongoing discussions and training.

5. Online Platforms and Communication Tools

Inclusive Outsource LTD uses secure, appropriate online platforms for all digital activities. The following measures are in place to ensure the safety of participants:

- All online mentoring and group sessions will take place on approved video conferencing platforms with privacy settings enabled. Links to sessions will be shared only with participants and will not be made public.
- Any communication between staff, volunteers, and participants will occur through official channels. Staff will avoid using personal accounts to interact with participants and will use organisational email addresses and accounts.
- Online sessions will not be recorded unless explicit, written consent is obtained from all participants and/or their guardians.

6. Data Protection and Privacy

Inclusive Outsource LTD takes the protection of personal data very seriously. All online activities must comply with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), ensuring:

- **Confidentiality:** Personal information shared during online sessions is treated confidentially and not shared without consent.
- **Secure Storage:** Any personal data collected during online activities will be stored securely in line with our Data Protection Policy.
- **Data Sharing:** Personal data will only be shared with third parties where it is legally required, or where safeguarding concerns necessitate such sharing.

7. Cyberbullying and Online Abuse

We are committed to creating an online environment free from bullying and abuse. Cyberbullying will not be tolerated, and any reports of bullying or harassment will be addressed immediately.

Our approach includes:

- Providing training and resources to staff, volunteers, and participants on recognising and responding to online bullying.
- Encouraging an open and supportive culture where individuals feel comfortable reporting instances of cyberbullying or harassment.
- Intervening swiftly to address incidents of bullying and ensuring that appropriate action is taken to support the victim and prevent further abuse.

8. Responding to Online Safety Concerns

All concerns related to online safety should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) immediately. The following steps will be taken:

- All concerns will be logged and assessed by the DSL.
- The DSL will investigate the concern and take necessary action, which may involve liaising with external agencies such as the police or social services.
- The individual(s) affected by the concern will receive support throughout the investigation process, with the goal of resolving the issue as swiftly as possible.
- Appropriate actions will be taken based on the investigation's findings, ensuring the safety and well-being of all participants.

9. Training and Education

We recognise the importance of educating staff, volunteers, and participants about online safety. To that end, we will:

- Provide regular online safety training for staff and volunteers, including updates on emerging online risks.
- Educate participants on the importance of online safety, helping them understand the risks and empowering them to protect themselves.
- Offer resources and support to parents, carers, and families to help them support their children and vulnerable adults in navigating the digital world safely.

10. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if necessary, in response to new online safety threats or changes in legislation. Inclusive Outsource LTD will ensure that all practices remain current, effective, and supportive of the needs of all participants.

Contact Information

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