**Online Safety**

**and**

**Social Media Policy**

**Policy Statement:**

This policy provides guidance on how Music 4 U (M4U) uses the internet and social media and the procedures for doing so. It also outlines how we expect our workers and students to behave online.

**Workers:** All staff, self-employed / freelancers, volunteers and trustees.

**Students / Young Person:** All children and young adults attending M4U activities.

**Parent:** Anyone with guardianship or caring and parental responsibility for the student.

**The Aims of our Online Safety Policy are to:**

* + Protect all students involved with M4U and using technology (such as mobile phones and the internet) to access our workshops, projects and performances.
  + Provide workers with policy and procedure information regarding online safety and inform them how to respond to incidents.
  + Ensure M4U operates in line with our values and within the law regarding how we behave online.

1. **UNDERSTANDING THE ONLINE WORLD**

**As part of using the internet and social media, M4U will:**

* Ensure students must complete a Consent Form to / or not to give permission for photos, videos and content to be shared on social media.
* Assess and manage the safety aspects – including what is acceptable and unacceptable behavior for workers and children when using websites, social media including Facebook, TikTok, Instagram, Twitter or Snapchat, apps and video conferencing platforms including Zoom.
* Be aware of how our workers and the students they work with use social media both inside and outside our setting.
* Ensure that we adhere to relevant legislation and good practice guidelines when using social media or video conferencing platforms.
* Provide training for workers responsible for managing M4U’s online presence
* Regularly review existing safeguarding policies and procedures to ensure that online safeguarding issues are fully integrated including:
  + making sure concerns of abuse or disclosure that occur online are written into our reporting procedures.
  + incorporating online bullying (cyberbullying) in our anti-bullying policy.

1. **MANAGING ONLINE PRESENCE**

**Our online presence through our website or social media platforms will adhere to the following guidelines:**

* all social media accounts will be password protected and at least 2 workers will have access to each account and password.
* the accounts will be monitored by at least two designated workers (appointed by the Trustees) in order to provide transparency.
* the designated workers managing our online presence will seek advice from our Child & Vulnerable Adult Protection Officer to advise on safeguarding requirements.
* the designated workers will remove inappropriate posts by students, parents or workers, explaining why, and informing anyone who may be affected (as well as the parents of any student involved).
* we will make sure students are aware of who manages our social media accounts and who to contact if they have any concerns about something that’s happened online.
* we will have a separate social media account for members only.
* identifying details such as a student’s home address, school or telephone number shouldn’t be posted on social media platforms.
* any posts or correspondence will be consistent with our aims and tone.
* parents will be asked to give their approval for us to communicate with the young person through social media, via video conferencing platforms or by any other means of communication.
* parents will need to give to permission for photographs or videos of their young person to be posted on social media.

* video conferencing sessions will be via a secure link in order to maintain student’s privacy and prevent exposure to inappropriate or harmful content by third parties.

**M4U cannot accept any responsibility for content shared on our behalf beyond our own social media channels ie. if anyone publishes a defamatory review via their on social media page or mentions us in negative/damaging content way.**

1. **What we expect of our workers:**

* workers should be aware of this policy and behave in accordance with it.
* workers should seek the advice of the designated Child & Vulnerable Adult Protection Officer if they have any concerns about using the internet or social media.
* workers should not communicate with students via personal accounts.
* workers should not ‘friend’ or ‘follow’ students from personal accounts on social media and maintain the exact professional boundaries online as they would in person when using M4U’s accounts or website.
* workers should make sure any content posted on public personal accounts is accurate and appropriate, as students may ‘follow’ them on social media.
* rather than communicating with parents through personal social media accounts, workers should choose a more formal means of communication, such as face-to-face or via an M4U account or website.
* workers should not communicate with students via M4U email or M4U social media outside of regular office hours.
* emails or messages should maintain M4U’s tone and be written professionally, e.g. in the same way you would communicate with fellow professionals, avoiding kisses (x’s) or using slang or inappropriate language.
* workers should not delete any messages or communication sent to or from M4U’s accounts.
* workers should undertake all online safety training offered and gain a basic knowledge of the platforms students use and how to report or remove inappropriate content online.
* any concerns reported through social media should be dealt with, like a face-to-face disclosure, by reporting to the Operations & Creative Manager.
* No background images may be used on video conferencing platforms e.g. zoom backgrounds.
* any delivery of activities to students via video conferencing platforms will be supported by an additional worker (even if they’re not actively delivering) to ensure transparency.
* workers and students must not engage in ‘sexting’ or send photographs or pictures to anyone that are obscene.

**What we expect of our students:**

* students should be aware of this online safety policy and agree to its terms.
* we expect student’s behavior online to be consistent with these guidelines.

**What we expect of from parents:**

* parents should be aware of this online safety policy and agree to its terms.
* parents should protect all young person’s privacy online and think carefully about what content they share about our activities online, where they share it and who they’re sharing with.
* Parents must ensure at least one parent must be within the home during the delivery of any activities via video conferencing platforms at home.

1. **USING MOBILE PHONES OR OTHER DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY TO COMMUNICATE**

When using mobile phones (or other devices) to communicate by voice, video or text (including texting, email and instant messaging such as WhatsApp or Facebook Messenger) we’ll take the following precautions to ensure our student’s safety:

* If worker’s are using their own mobile device, they must agree and abide by Music 4 U’s Bring your own device policy.
* workers will avoid having students’ personal mobile numbers and will instead seek contact through a parent.
* for students over 16, If permission is granted, it is acceptable to contact via their mobile number.
* a method of accountability will be arranged, such as copies of texts, messages or emails also being sent to workers or to parents. For emails, a parent/guardian should always be copied in.
* smartphone users should respect the private lives of others and not take or distribute pictures of other people if it could invade their privacy.
* workers should have a separate phone from their personal one for any contact with parents of students.
* texts, emails or Whats App messages will be used to communicate information - such as reminding students about upcoming events, what to bring, timings etc and not engaging in conversation.
* If a student misinterprets such communication and tries to engage a worker in conversation, the worker will take the following steps:
* end the conversation or stop replying
* suggest discussing the subject further at the next M4U activity
* inform the Child Protection & Vulnerable Adult Officer in the interest of transparency
* if concerned about the student, provide contact details for the Child & Vulnerable Adult Protection Officer following M4Us procedures

1. **Using Mobile Phones during M4U activities**

So that all students can enjoy and actively participate in our activities, we discourage using mobile phones during Workshops, Projects, Rehearsals and Performances. As part of this policy we will:

* make tutors/enablers aware of how and who to contact if there is an emergency or a change to previously agreed arrangements.
* inform the parents of appropriate times they can contact students and discourage them from attempting contact outside these times.
* advise parents that it may not be possible to contact students during activity and provide a contact within M4U who will be reachable should there be an emergency.
* explain to students how using mobile phones during activities impacts their safe awareness of the environment and the level of participation and achievement.

**CONTACT DETAILS:**

Debra Baxter

Operations & Creative Manager / Child & Vulnerable Adult Protection Officer

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Tara Duncan

Operations/Office Administrator

Telephone: 01224 061155

Email: tara.duncan@m4u.org.uk

**NSPCC Helpline:**

0808 800 5000

1. **FURTHER INFORMATION**

**For parents about keeping young people safe online:**

NSPCC

The NSPCC’s guidance for parents on online safety

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/talking-child-online-safety/>

Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre

<https://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/>

The UK Safer Internet Centre

<https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/>

**For workers about keeping young people safe online:**

Youth Scotland’s quick tips for online youth work

<https://www.youthscotland.org.uk/resources/quick-tips-for-online-youth-work/>

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| **This Policy was written in line with NSPCC Guidelines** | |
| **Implemented on** | 22 February 2024 |
| **Reviewed no later than** | 21 January 2025 |

**This policy forms part of Music 4 U’s Core Values and should be read collectively with:**

* Anti Bullying Policy
* Child & Vulnerable Adult Protection & Safeguarding Policy
* Child & Vulnerable Adult Protection Reporting Procedure
* Code of Behavior Adults
* Code of Behavior Students
* Comments, Compliments & Complaints Procedure
* Equality & Diversity Policy
* GDPR Policy
* Health & Safety Policy
* Online Safety & Social Media Policy
* Photography & Film Policy
* Whistleblowing Policy
* Bring Your Own Device Policy

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