

Guidelines on Young People's Internet Access and Use

Staff and volunteers are responsible for monitoring young people's internet use and must be familiar with this Policy.

It is mandatory for staff and volunteers to attend Group 2 Safeguarding training which will include information on internet safety and Child Sexual Exploitation indicators. Staff and volunteers are encouraged to revisit Safeguarding information regularly.

1. Control and monitoring

Young people are allowed to access the internet at the Yard on their own phones and on the Yard computers.

Whenever the internet is being used adults must be proactive in listening out for, asking about and being willing to discuss the content being viewed by the young people. On Wednesdays, an adult or trained youth club volunteer should be in any room in which the internet is being used.

If the content is unsuitable an adult will (depending on the content, the session and whether anyone present is upset by the content) challenge the messages of the content, identify and challenge misleading information, let the young people know it is unsuitable for their age group and/or ask the young people to stop viewing the content. Staff and volunteers should be open to discussion of personal safety issues with young people and honestly give the reasons for decisions when they are questioned, in an age appropriate way, including discussion of the potential consequences of following these guidelines, and not following them.

Before young people access the internet at the youth club they need to discuss the Yard guidance (on the wall) for being safe online, with an adult, and shown they have agreed to them.

On Wednesdays searches online i.e. for music must be "clean" only.
Update: Including the word "clean" in the search no longer protects young people from viewing explicit content. Music can be played on our premium Spotify account with explicit content toggled OFF to ensure no explicit lyrics or advertising. If young people wish to dance to videos on YouTube this needs to be closely monitored on a search by search basis to ensure videos are safe to view.

What is unacceptable internet use at our Youth Club at all times

Content promoting hatred or contempt, i.e. storylines, actions, song lyrics
Violent behaviour or messages that violence is ok or a good way to solve issues
Messages that illegal behaviour is acceptable, eg theft, prank calls, graffiti, drink driving or driving irresponsibly
Any messages promoting potentially harmful or dangerous pranks
Storylines or lyrics showing recreational drug use or alcohol abuse as acceptable
Any storylines or lyrics that promote self-harm
Messages or storylines that promote radicalisation, acts of terrorism or political violence, in accordance with our Radicalisation Policy
Videos, messages, lyrics or story lines that are insensitive to the experience of “being different” whether through culture, income level, physical difference or neurodiversity.

These are unacceptable on Tuesdays / age group 11 +

Excessive sexual references or content
Excessive swearing
Images or messages showing drug taking, smoking or alcohol use unless for informative purposes within a young-person led discussion or educational activity.

Additionally these are unacceptable on Wednesdays age group 8 +

All sexual references
Swearing
Images or messages showing drug taking, smoking or alcohol use
Political broadcasts (age appropriate, balanced political content or news from a trusted source is acceptable). Science based, factual environmental information from trusted sources is not political.

2. Discussion

Any work around inappropriate content must be age appropriate and young-person led. Young people of similar ages and abilities will have vastly different experiences online because this also depends on family attitudes, access to technology, friendship groups, etc.

It may be possible to ask why the young person is drawn to the content ie lyrics as an alternative to ‘shutting it down’ and create an environment in which the young person feels it’s safe to talk, or to generate a discussion that challenges problematic content.

Young people who have access to the internet do so even in environments where it is not allowed (ie on phones at school). The content they access is discussed and analysed with peers.

Banning internet access through personal technology in one place does not prevent young people accessing the content they search for. They choose to go elsewhere to do so. Internet access is allowed at the Yard in our space to enable staff and volunteers to support young people to come to their own conclusions about internet content, stay safe online and identify safeguarding or radicalisation concerns.

Reviewed September 2021

be safe online

→ **keep your search terms clean / safe**

→ **violent or sexual images or song lyrics are not appropriate at youth club**

→ **TALK TO US** if you are upset about
any online content

→ **Don't** give out personal information to random strangers via social media or online chat

and never arrange to meet up with someone you only know from the internet, by yourself.

remember

→ **what goes online....stays online**

content can be available for years and could potentially be seen by your family, school, college or future employers.

→ **Please do not download and install software here without asking first- thanks :-)**

○ → **ENJOY THE INTERNET SAFELY :-D**