



Communication Guidelines for Volunteers

Last reviewed: September 2019

Date of next review: September 2020

The Access Project is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

These guidelines relate to electronic communication between volunteer tutors and students on The Access Project. These guidelines explain how to keep the same boundaries and follow same safeguarding practice as in the physical, offline world.

Social Media

Volunteers must not use their personal social networking or instant messaging accounts for contact with young people involved with The Access Project.

For the purpose of this policy, social media is defined as websites and applications that enable users to create and share content or to participate in social networking. This includes, but is not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Facetime, Instagram, Whatsapp and Skype.

As an individual in a position of trust, you should not have any Access Project students as “friends” on social networking sites. Instead, encourage them to “follow”/“like” The Access Project’s official Twitter/LinkedIn pages.

Language and content of emails/text messages

Outside of tutorials, volunteers and students may only contact each other via email (preferred method of communication), phone calls or text messages.

It is not appropriate to have private non-work or Access Project related contact with the young people we work with - this includes electronic communication.

When communicating with young people, it is important to take great care over the language used. Over-familiarity or language that could be misinterpreted or misconstrued should be avoided at all times.

When sending emails, both parties should not use informal language as this can be misunderstood and lead to further complications. Texts and emails should remain



brief and unambiguous.

Email should not be used as a relationship building tool but used only to communicate specific information - for example, times dates and location of a tutorial.

Volunteers must not use language that is directly (or could be misinterpreted as being) racist, sexist, derogatory, threatening, abusive or sexualised in tone in any communication with a student.

Hours of communication

When communicating with students outside of tutorials (within the guidelines above) this should take place in the daytime or early evening between 09.00-19.00. Volunteers must not text, email or call students late in the evening, as this has the potential to be viewed as inappropriate.

Reporting concerns

All volunteers at The Access Project have a duty of care towards their student. Any concerns about an Access Project student should be passed on to The Access Project's Designated Safeguarding Officer following our Safeguarding Procedures. Please refer to the policy relating to this.

In the event of an emergency, the NSPCC or police should be called.

Useful Contacts

Designated Child Protection Officer (DCPO)

Name: Jennifer Guerin

Email: stayingsafe@theaccessproject.org.uk

Phone number: 07542 881 501/020 3960 6592

NSPCC helpline: 0808 800 5000