Volunteering online health and safety policy

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Contents

1. Overview

This policy outlines the health and safety considerations for volunteering as an online tutor with The Access Project, and where additional information can be accessed

2. Safeguarding of the young people supported by The Access Project

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

The Access Project believes that the welfare of children within its care is paramount and that a child or young person should never experience abuse of any kind. The Access Project understands that everyone who comes into contact with children and their families and carers has a role to play in safeguarding children.

All children have a right to protection from mistreatment, abuse, violence and exploitation. The Access Project will protect all children within its care from abuse equally and without regard to their gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality or beliefs.

All volunteers will be required to undertake and pass an online, accredited child safeguarding course prior to becoming eligible to volunteer. DBS checks and character references will be sought for all volunteers prior to commencing volunteering.

Volunteers are required to report any safeguarding concerns and/or allegations to The Access Project via the Designated Child Protection Officer (DCPO):

E: stayingsafe@theaccessproject.org.uk
T: 0204 513 5999 (option one for safeguarding)

The Access Project's safeguarding children policy can be found here and should be read by all volunteers ahead of undertaking volunteering activity.

3. Volunteers - staying safe online

All volunteers are required to attend a tutor training session prior to commencing volunteering. This session will provide information for volunteers with regards to staying safe during tutorials, and the opportunity to ask questions will be provided.

Volunteers can also help to keep themselves safe whilst volunteering online by considering their tutoring environment and the external perception of their tutorials.

Volunteers should ensure they only use the secure, online platform that The Access Project provides. At the point of pairing with a tutee, volunteers will be given further information about this. Online tutorials must not happen on Facebook, Skype, Zoom or any other form of social media or alternative platform under any circumstances. Tutorials which take place on the authorised online platform are recorded and monitored by The Access Project for safeguarding purposes.

Communications between the volunteer and the young person they are tutoring should only be conducted via email, phone (text or call), or the official online tuition platform. Any other form of communication method is not permitted.

4. The online volunteering environment

Volunteers should consider the physical set-up of their workspace when volunteering, and configure this not only to ensure their safety, but to maximise the effectiveness of the tutorial.

Workstation

Volunteers may wish to undertake a [Display Screen Equipment check (DSE)](#) to ensure the area used for their tutorials is as comfortable and practical as possible to avoid any associated health issues.

Surrounding environment

- Volunteers should consider the location and background of their tutorials and ensure it is as quiet and as neutral as possible, and is free from distractions
- Any personal objects or items which the volunteer would not wish to share with their tutee (personal photographs, items of clothing, etc) should be removed from view
- Other people (such as family members, children) should be discouraged from appearing in the background of tutorials
- Volunteers are encouraged to consider their personal appearance when using a webcam and to ensure that their clothing is professional and appropriate
- Volunteers are also encouraged to monitor any background noise and ensure this is appropriate (for example avoid any inappropriate language from the television).

Lone working

- Volunteer tutors delivering tutorials online will be working independently of other volunteers or The Access Project staff
- Volunteers are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the [Lone working policy](#).