

Alive Safeguarding Children and Young People - Policy and Procedures

Aims of the Policy and Procedure

The aim of this policy is to protect, as far as is reasonably practicable, all children and young people who come into contact with Alive, both face to face and online, from harm caused by abuse. The policy works within the South West Child Protection Procedures (<http://www.proceduresonline.com/swcpp/>).

Context

Alive delivers a range of interactive workshops for older people in around 200 care homes and day centres in the South and South West of England. Activities include music and poetry, reminiscence, dance and movement, art appreciation, practical art and energising activities. Alive also deliver specific gardening activity workshops, which include indoor and outdoor nature-based activities. Following the COVID 19 Pandemic, Alive have also started running online activity sessions with care homes. Our beneficiaries are people who are very old, people with dementia, physical and/or learning disabilities, brain injury or degenerative illnesses such as Parkinson's and motor neurone disease.

Alive also runs intergenerational projects, which links care homes with local primary schools. This involves children visiting the homes to spend time with a group of residents in an hour-long workshop, which could include any of the activities given above. Alternatively, sessions are also run online by an Alive Facilitator, linking the care home residents and school pupils digitally.

Principles of the Policy

The policy recognises the following principles:

- It is every child and young person's right to live in safety and to be free from abuse or fear of abuse from others regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity.
- Alive has a duty to promote the welfare of all children and young people and to keep them safe in accordance with the Children Act 1989.
- It is the responsibility of Alive to actively work to help prevent the abuse of children. This will be achieved by raising awareness, valuing, listening to and respecting children and young people, and by putting safeguards in place.

- When a situation is discovered in which a child or young person reports abuse, or is thought to be at risk of abuse, Alive will react quickly in a co-ordinated manner, sharing any concerns and relevant information with agencies who need to know, and involving children, young people, parents, families and carers appropriately.
- A child Focused Practice – The child is at the centre of all we do
- The child’s voice – it is vital to hear the child’s voice in all we do and to focus on their experiences and the impact these experiences have on their life.

Children state they want:

1. Vigilance: adults notice when something is troubling children and young people
2. Understanding: children are heard and understood, and that understanding is acted upon
3. Consistency: adults provide a stable relationship of trust
4. Respect: children are treated with respect and presumed competent rather than not
5. Engagement: children are informed about and involved in procedures, decisions, concerns and plans
6. Explanation: to be informed of the outcome of assessments and decisions and reasons when their views have not met with a positive response.

Definitions of Abuse

The characteristics of child abuse can take a number of forms and cause victims to suffer pain, fear and distress reaching well beyond the time of the actual incident(s). Victims may be too afraid or too embarrassed to raise any complaint. They may be reluctant to discuss their concerns with other people or unsure who to trust or approach with their worries. There may be some situations where victims are unaware that they are being abused or have difficulty in communicating this information to others. Furthermore, abuse may be intentional or unintentional.

- In accordance with child safety legislation and DfE guidance, including “Keeping Children Safe In Education” September 2019 https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/835733/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2019.pdf and “Working Together to Safeguard Children July 2019 https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/779401/Working_Together_to_Safeguard-Children.pdf

lists four categories of abuse:

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating, or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.

Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only in so far as they meet the needs of another person and can include cyberbullying.

For more information:

- https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/835733/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2019.pdf and "Working Together to Safeguard Children July 2019" https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/779401/Working_Together_to_Safeguard-Children.pdf

Risk Areas and Procedures

Potential safeguarding and protection risk areas:

We recognise bringing children into a care home, or connecting them online to work with vulnerable adults raises the following key risks:

- **Pupil supervision** – appropriate adult/s must accompany the children to the care setting, and be present during the workshop at all times. This also applies to online activity, where an appropriate number of adult/s must be present with the pupils throughout any online session.
- **Interaction with residents** – the residents taking part in the workshop must be able to act appropriately around children.
- **Hazardous activities** – all activities undertaken in the workshop should be safe and inclusive for all participants

- **Workshop Facilitators** – staff facilitating workshops including children must act appropriately, and should be fully trained and aware of safeguarding regulations and procedures, and their role and responsibilities regarding safeguarding
- **Media consent** – the sharing and use of images, videos, or any other digital material which includes children participating in workshops.

Responsibilities

- In accordance with child safety legislation and DfE guidance, including [‘https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/835733/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2019.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/835733/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2019.pdf)

the school has the main responsibility for the children in their care during visits to the care homes and online activity sessions.

Alive is committed to:

- Communicating with the schools and the homes to ensure both are adequately prepared for the activity sessions (see Appendix 1 Safeguarding Statement for Schools).
- Supporting the schools to obtain consent from parents for the children to participate in the project, and obtaining consent for Alive to include images and videos on our website and promotional literature. Alive will ensure all surnames of participants are removed, and we will not use images where the parent or care-giver hasn't given consent. This includes use on social media, as well as in Alive or any partner organisation's promotional or media materials.
- Ensuring that any photos or videos taken by Alive Facilitators are only taken on their Alive iPads, not on any personal devices.
- Following the GDPR guidelines for storage of any digital material that includes images of pupils.
- Ensuring a high ratio of care staff to residents, meaning that the sessions are always well supervised.
- Ensuring all children are accompanied by a teacher/school staff member for all visits and activity sessions and meet recommended adult staff to child ratios.
- Ensuring all appropriate project staff, Alive facilitators and volunteers attending sessions have undergone a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, to an enhanced level.
- Supporting, resourcing, training, monitoring and providing supervision to all Alive facilitators who undertake this work.
- Discussing the planning and logistics with care staff before any workshops and making decisions about whether the relevant residents are suitable for engaging in this particular session. We therefore take into account whether it may be sensible for any individual resident not to attend.
- Ensuring the workshop content is suitable for children

- Providing support to the school in supporting children through bereavement, should a resident die during the course of intergenerational projects.

Procedures

Designated Officers

Alive will appoint three Safeguarding Officers, who will have responsibility for ensuring that this policy is reviewed and updated annually, and that all responsibilities are met. They will also guide and advise staff and volunteers on their responsibilities under this policy, and on dealing with specific safeguarding issues as they arise.

The designated officers will be the Training and Delivery Manager and Service Development Manager

The Safeguarding Officers will receive external training, updated 3-yearly or more frequently as required, and it is their responsibility to keep abreast of local authority guidelines in each area where Alive delivers services. The Safeguarding Officers are also responsible for updating this policy.

Recruitment and Induction

- On appointment, all staff and volunteers who may have direct contact with vulnerable adults will be subject to the appropriate level of Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks.
- Staff, sessional facilitators and volunteers receive training on appointment to ensure they are able to recognise abuse and are therefore alert to potential signs and symptoms. Long-serving staff may be asked to attend a refresher course at 3-yearly intervals.
- A log of safeguarding training undertaken will be kept by line-managers and recorded centrally.
- The Safeguarding Officers take responsibility for ensuring the organisation follows up-to-date best practice around safeguarding adults and prevention of abuse.
- A culture of openness is promoted within the organisation and efforts are made to ensure staff, sessional facilitators and volunteers feel able to discuss concerns within Alive.

Reporting Procedures

It is the responsibility of all staff, sessional facilitators and volunteers to be alert to, and recognise any signs of abuse or potential abuse, and act on any concerns which may arise. It is important that any allegations or suspicions of abuse are acted upon and reported as specified in this procedure.

If there is a serious risk to the vulnerable person which could involve injury or serious harm the Police must be contacted immediately. You must ensure the person is safe if the risk is immediate.

Remember. It is not Alive's responsibility to investigate the abuse. This is the responsibility of the local authority or the Police.

Doing nothing, ignoring what you've seen or heard and hoping you are wrong are not options. Here are some tips for how to handle the situation:

Do:

- Stay calm and try not to show if you are shocked
- If someone makes a disclosure of abuse to you, listen carefully, be sympathetic and reassure the person they have done the right thing in telling someone
- Tell the person that what they have told you will be taken seriously
- Tell the person you will do your best to support them. Clarify whether the abuse requires an urgent response.
- Ask the person just enough questions to establish what has happened and whether there is ongoing immediate danger.
- Ensure the person is safe and supported. If there is immediate danger, or if the child is seriously injured, call the emergency services on 999.
- Try not to touch things and don't clean anything up – you may be destroying evidence.

Don't:

- Press for more details – this is the job of the investigation. Asking for more than is necessary could jeopardise any criminal proceedings
- Contact the alleged abuser
- Make promises you cannot keep
- Pass on information to anyone who doesn't have a legitimate need to know
- Make judgements

Step 1

Any allegation, suspicion and incidence of abuse must be reported to the appropriate staff member (see below) by calling their mobile phone. This should be done immediately. Even if there is uncertainty, the concerns must be reported as soon as possible. A member of staff will take over responsibility from a volunteer if the volunteer is the first person to notice the abuse or potential abuse.

Training and Delivery Manager, Nicola Taylor: 0117 377 4756 / 07767 148774

Service Development Manager, Georgina Densley: 0117 377 4756 /07429 601798

Incidents should be reported to the Service Development Manager, as above, in the first instance

The Manager should then report the incident to the Training and Delivery Manager as soon as possible.

All staff will be made aware of this responsibility by the Chief Executive

Step 2

The reporter of the abuse must record what they have observed, heard or any other information gained including; information to identify the person concerned, details of reason the abuse was suspected or observed or described, and anyone else was spoken to, what they said, and what action was taken. This information should be recorded on the Alive incident form (see Appendix 2 below) and sent to the Service Development Manager within 24 hours of the incident taking place. They will take and log any further action necessary and keep the Chief Executive fully informed.

All staff, sessional facilitators and volunteers will be made aware of this responsibility.

Step 3

There must be agreement between the relevant Manager and member of staff, sessional facilitator or volunteer about what happens next. Where the concerns are unclear this may involve seeking more information.

There may be indications or statements that the matter is already under investigation. The concerns from Alive must still be reported to whoever is investigating as further information may assist this investigation.

All Managers will be made aware of this responsibility and will undertake training to ensure they are able to carry out this role. Managers are encouraged to seek further advice if required.

Step 4

The Training and Delivery Manager and Service Development Manager have the responsibility for ensuring that the abuse or potential abuse is reported to the school and local authority without delay. Also, that all necessary steps have been taken to make sure the person is safe, and that the member of staff reporting the allegation is supported to continue their work and is clear about their responsibilities.

See Appendix 3 for a list of local authority safeguarding contact numbers.

Safeguarding Contacts

See Appendix 3 for a list of local authority safeguarding children contacts. You will need to give the following information:

- Why you're concerned
- If anyone lives with them
- If they're getting help from any organisation
- Who may be doing the abuse

Regardless of the local authority, if a crime is suspected the police must also be contacted by telephoning 101 (or in an emergency, 999).

Allegations against Alive staff and volunteers

Any allegation concerning a member of Alive staff being a suspected perpetrator of abuse must be reported by the Chief Executive to the nominated Safeguarding Trustee, or in their absence, the Chair of Trustees. Further action, including the suspension of the member of staff concerned is to be agreed and the Board of Trustees has the responsibility for overseeing the action decided. Alive will provide full co-operation with any investigation by the Police or the local authority undertaken as a result of the allegation. The Board of Trustees may commission an external independent investigation following the statutory investigation to ensure lessons are learned from such an incident.

Central records

A record of all allegations of abuse and the outcome and action taken, together with the original notes, will be kept centrally by Safeguarding Officers who will be aware of this responsibility. Records will be kept in a confidential locked cabinet and/or in a secure area of Alive's HR drive.

'Whistleblowing'

It is acknowledged that there may be times where the staff 'witness' an incident, action or event that may give them cause for concern.

All staff are required to share any concerns in regard to any staff practices that compromise the safety of the child to Alive's designated safeguarding officer. Any staff member who discloses a concern will be given assurance of confidentiality as far as practically possible, without jeopardy to any investigations by external authorities or our own investigation. Any staff member expressing a concern about their safety following a disclosure will be given all necessary support to enable them to continue in their role with security safely.

Code of Conduct

All staff working for Alive, in whatever role will adhere to Alive's Code of Conduct. See Appendix 4.

If it is found that a member of staff is not following the Code of Conduct they will be subject to an internal investigation following Alive's disciplinary procedure.

Please see **Appendix 5** for our Social Media Policy for how Alive staff should behave on-line.

Appendix 1 Alive Safeguarding statement for schools

Alive Safeguarding Statement for schools

At Alive we are committed to the safeguarding of all participants in this scheme and ensuring their well-being. We take the safeguarding of children very seriously so we take the following steps and measures:

We recognise:

- In accordance with child safety legislation and DfE guidance, including “Keeping Children Safe In Education” September 2019 https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/835733/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2019.pdf and “Working Together to Safeguard Children July 2019” https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/779401/Working_Together_to_Safeguard-Children.pdf
the school has the main responsibility for the children in their care. Due to this, all schools undertake a thorough risk assessment for any activity for children outside the school, or any online activity (any queries or concerns can be discussed with them).
- Meeting up with an older person is something that the residents really look forward to. This means that they may want to hold their hands or touch their faces. At Alive we think that touch is very important for communication and expression, and we have a high ratio of staff to residents meaning that the sessions are always well supervised but please speak to your school/home education group or contact Alive if you have any questions.

We are committed to:

- Ensuring all photos and digital material are vetted and surnames and/or addresses removed. No online activity sessions will be recorded, and only organisations that are recognised by the Facilitator will be allowed to enter a video call.
- Obtaining consent from parents for including images or videos on our website, social media and promotional literature at the start of the project, and ensure all surnames of participants are removed.
- Supervising the children at all times whilst in the care home, employing workshop facilitators who are DBS certified to an enhanced level
- Supporting, resourcing, training, monitoring and providing supervision to all those who undertake this work. This includes training on Safeguarding children and their roles and responsibilities.
- Discussing the planning and logistics with care staff before any workshop and making decisions about whether the relevant residents are suitable for engaging in this particular session. We therefore take into account whether it may be sensible for any individual resident not to attend.

Appendix 2

Alive Safeguarding Incident Form

You must report any allegation, suspicion or incidence of abuse to the Service Development Manager immediately **by phone**. Please refer to Alive's Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults or Child policy for more information.

Please record what you observed and what action was taken on the form below and email or post it to the Service Development Manager within 24 hours.

Your name:
Name of care home / day centre/ other care setting:
Name of person affected:
Date and time of incident:
Where did the incident take place?
Please describe exactly what happened: (you can expand this box as needed)

Name(s) of any witnesses:	
Please describe how you or a member of staff responded to the incident. (you can expand this box as needed)	
Please describe any other action taken	
Did you phone and then inform an Alive Manager of the incident by email or post? Y/N	
If yes, name of person at Alive:	
Your signature:	Date you completed this form:
Name of Safeguarding Officer / Manager receiving this form	Date received:
Action taken by Safeguarding Officer:	

Appendix 3

Local Authority safeguarding contacts

Bristol – go to <https://www.bristol.gov.uk/social-care-health/first-response-for-professionals-working-with-children> to report your concern to First Response (run by Bristol City Council).

Gloucestershire - contact the Children and Families Services Helpdesk on 01452 426565 (during office hours). Alternatively you can send an email to childrenshelpdesk@gloucestershire.gov.uk

Appendix 4 Code of Conduct

Code of Conduct

1. Principles

As an adult working and representing Alive, whether as a member of staff or a volunteer – you have a responsibility to ensure that everyone, including staff and in particular children and vulnerable adults and children attending Alive’s activities, are protected from harm. It is the responsibility of each adult working and representing Alive to ensure that:

- their behaviour is appropriate at all times;
- they are not acting illegally
- they observe the rules established for the safety and security of children, young people and vulnerable adults;
- they follow the procedures following suspicion, disclosure or allegation of abuse;
- they recognise the position of trust in which they have been placed; and
- in every respect, the relationships they form with the vulnerable adults and children in their activity are appropriate

All persons who wish to work with Alive must accept and understand this policy. They must also agree to put Alive’s policies on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults into practice.

2. Meeting your responsibilities

To give positive guidance the Code of Conduct (below) provides a list of 'do's and don'ts' to help you ensure that:

- the welfare of vulnerable adults and/or children for whom you are working with is safeguarded;
- you avoid compromising situations or opportunities for misunderstandings or allegations.

3 Code of conduct

- **DO** put this code into practice at all times;
- **DO** treat everyone with dignity and respect;
- **DO** respect everyone’s rights and do not discriminate on the grounds of gender, race, colour, disability, sexuality, age, marital status, occupation or political opinion
- **Do** listen to everyone in the meeting or activity;
- **DO** set an example you would wish others to follow;
- **DO** treat all people equally - show no favouritism;
- **DO** dress appropriately for the activity;

- DO be on time for all activities and meetings;
 - DO plan activities that involve more than one other person being present, or at least are within sight and hearing of others;
 - DO follow recommended adult/young people ratios for meetings and activities;
 - DO ensure that online activity sessions are run in a neutral area, where nothing personal or inappropriate can be seen or heard in the background.
 - DO Ensure that a “waiting room” and password is always set up for the online session
 - DO use electronic devices that have been provided by Alive to run activity sessions online
 - DO run activity sessions when there is a member of staff from the school present on the call
 - Do keep to one group call – breakout rooms are not appropriate unless two adults can be in each breakout room
 - DO respect the right to personal privacy of a vulnerable adult or child
 - DO avoid unacceptable situations within a relationship of trust, *eg:* a sexual relationship with a young person or vulnerable adult over the age of consent;
 - DO allow vulnerable adults and children to talk about any concerns they may have;
 - DO encourage others to challenge any attitudes or behaviours they do not like;
 - DO avoid being drawn into inappropriate attention seeking behaviour, *eg:* tantrums and crushes;
 - DO follow *Alive's* 'no alcohol' guidance when working;
 - DO make everyone aware of *Alive's* procedures for safeguarding children, and vulnerable adults;
 - DO remember this code even at sensitive moments, *eg:* when responding to bullying, bereavement or abuse;
 - DO keep other members of staff/volunteers informed of where you are and what you are doing;
 - DO remember someone else might misinterpret your actions, no matter how well-intentioned;
 - DO take any allegations or concerns of abuse seriously and refer immediately.
 - DO follow our social media policy
 - DO follow all current health and safety policy and guidelines
- DO NOT trivialise abuse;
 - DO NOT form a relationship with a member of staff, child or vulnerable adult that is an abuse of trust;
 - DO NOT engage in inappropriate behaviour or contact - physical, verbal, sexual;
 - DO NOT make suggestive remarks or threats to a member of staff or vulnerable adult or child, even in fun;
 - DO NOT use inappropriate language - writing, phoning, email or internet;
 - DO NOT let allegations, suspicions, or concerns about abuse go unreported;
 - DO NOT just rely on your good name to protect you.

If there are any concerns regarding a Member of Staff's behaviour, this must be reported to the Chief Executive, or to the Chair of Trustees if it concerns the Chief Executive Officer. All complaints raised will be fully considered and, where necessary, investigated formally under the Disciplinary Procedure.

Appendix 5 Social Media Policy

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

A guide for staff on using social media to promote the work of Alive and in a personal capacity. Date of last review: 13/2/2020

This policy will be reviewed on an ongoing basis, at least once a year. Alive will amend this policy, following consultation, where appropriate.

Introduction

What is social media?

Social media is the term given to web-based tools and applications which enable users to create and share content (words, images and video content), and network with each other through the sharing of information, opinions, knowledge and common interests. Examples of social media include Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram.

Why do we use social media?

Social media is essential to the success of communicating Alive's work. It is important for some staff to participate in social media to engage with our audience, participate in relevant conversations and raise the profile of Alive's work.

Why do we need a social media policy?

The difference between a personal and professional opinion can be blurred on social media, particularly if you're discussing issues relating to Alive's work. While we encourage the use of social media, we have certain standards, outlined in this policy, which we require everyone to observe. Publication and commentary on social media carries similar obligations to any other kind of publication or commentary in the public domain.

This policy is intended for all *staff members of all levels, volunteers and trustees* and applies to content posted on both an *Alive* device and a personal device. Before engaging in work-related social media activity, staff must read this policy.

Setting out the social media policy

This policy sets out guidelines on how social media should be used to support the delivery and promotion of Alive and the use of social media by staff in both a professional and personal capacity. It sets out what you need to be aware of when interacting in these spaces and is designed to help staff support and expand our official social media channels, while protecting the charity and its reputation and preventing any legal issues.

Internet access and monitoring usage

There are currently no access restrictions to any of our social media sites in the Alive office. You are permitted to make reasonable and appropriate use of personal social media activity during your lunch breaks. But usage should not be excessive and interfere with your duties.

Point of contact for social media

Our CEO is responsible for the day-to-day publishing, monitoring and management of our social media channels. If you have specific questions about any aspect of these channels, speak to the CEO. Currently, the Service Development Manager is the only other staff member who can post content on Alive's official channels without the permission of the CEO.

Which social media channels do we use?

Alive uses the following social media channels:

Facebook
Twitter
Instagram

Guidelines

Using Alive's social media channels — appropriate conduct

1. The CEO is responsible for setting up and managing Alive's social media channels. Only those authorised to do so by the CEO will have access to these accounts.
2. The CEO and her support team will put up content in working hours during the week and at weekends when required.
3. Be an ambassador for our brand. Staff should ensure they reflect Alive's values in what they post and use our tone of voice. Our brand guidelines set out our tone of voice that all staff should refer to when posting content on Alive's social media channels.
4. Make sure that all social media content has a purpose and a benefit for Alive and accurately reflects Alive's agreed position.
5. Bring value to our audience(s). Answer their questions, help and engage with them
6. Take care with the presentation of content. Make sure that there are no typos, misspellings or grammatical errors. Also check the quality of images.
7. Always pause and think before posting. That said, reply to comments in a timely manner, when a response is appropriate. If the comments are negative or relate the unsatisfactory service or conduct on the behalf of Alive, refer the comment to the CEO before responding.
8. If staff outside of the digital team wish to contribute content for social media, whether non-paid for or paid for advertising, they should speak to the digital team about this.
9. Staff shouldn't post content on Alive's page about supporters or service users without their written consent. If staff are sharing information about supporters, service users or third-party organisations, this content should be clearly labelled so our audiences know it has not come directly from Alive. If using interviews, videos or photos that clearly identify a child or young person, staff must ensure they have the written consent of a parent or guardian before using them on social media. Facilitators or staff should not be posting images from activity sessions they have run on their own personal social media. They can provide content to members of the team who are able to post online but must not be put on their own accounts.
10. Always check facts. Staff should not automatically assume that material is accurate and should take reasonable steps where necessary to seek verification, for example, by checking data/statistics and being wary of photo manipulation.
11. Be honest. Say what you know to be true or have a good source for. If you've made a mistake, don't be afraid to admit it.

12. Staff should refrain from offering personal opinions via Alive's social media accounts, either directly by commenting or indirectly by 'liking', 'sharing' or 'retweeting'. If you are in doubt about Alive's position on a particular issue, please speak to the CEO

13. Staff should not encourage people to break the law to supply material for social media, such as using unauthorised video footage. All relevant rights for usage must be obtained before publishing material.

14. Staff should not set up other Facebook groups or pages, Twitter accounts or any other social media channels on behalf of Alive. This could confuse messaging and brand awareness. By having official social media accounts in place, the Alive can ensure consistency of the brand and focus on building a strong following.

16. Alive is not a political organisation and does not hold a view on party politics or have any affiliation with or links to political parties. We have every right to express views on policy, including the policies of parties, but we can't tell people how to vote.

17. If a complaint is made on Alive's social media channels, staff should seek advice from the CEO before responding. If they are not available, then staff should speak to the Chair of Trustees.

18. Sometimes issues can arise on social media which can escalate into a crisis situation because they are sensitive or risk serious damage to the charity's reputation. The nature of social media means that complaints are visible and can escalate quickly. Not acting can be detrimental to the charity.

The CEO regularly monitors our social media spaces for mentions of Alive so we can catch any issues or problems early.

If any staff outside of the Alive become aware of any comments online that they think have the potential to escalate into a crisis, whether on Alive's social media channels or elsewhere, they should speak to the CEO immediately.

Use of personal social media accounts — appropriate conduct

This policy does not intend to inhibit personal use of social media but instead flags up those areas in which conflicts might arise. Alive staff are expected to behave appropriately, and in ways that are consistent with Alive's values and policies, both online and in real life.

1. Be aware that any information you make public could affect how people perceive Alive. You must make it clear when you are speaking for yourself and not on behalf of Alive. If you are using your personal social media accounts to promote and talk about Alive's work, you must use a disclaimer such as: "The views expressed on this site are my own and don't necessarily represent Alive's positions, policies or opinions."

2. Staff who have a personal blog or website which indicates in any way that they work at Alive should discuss any potential conflicts of interest with their line manager and the CEO. Similarly, staff who want to start blogging and wish to say that they work for Alive should discuss any potential conflicts of interest with their line manager and the CEO.

3. Those in senior management, and specialist roles where they are well known in their field of expertise, must take particular care as personal views published may be misunderstood as expressing Alive's view.

4. Use common sense and good judgement. Be aware of your association with Alive and ensure your profile and related content is consistent with how you wish to present yourself to the *general public, colleagues, partners and funders*.

5. Please don't approach high profile people from your personal social media accounts to ask them to support the charity, as this could hinder any potential relationships that are being managed by the CEO. This includes asking for retweets about the charity.

If you have any information about high profile people that have a connection to our cause, or if there is someone who you would like to support the charity, please speak to the CEO to share the details.

7. If a staff member is contacted by the press about their social media posts that relate to Alive they should talk to the CEO immediately and under no circumstances respond directly.

8. Alive is not a political organisation and does not hold a view on party politics or have any affiliation with or links to political parties. When representing Alive staff are expected to hold Alive's position of neutrality. Staff who are politically active in their spare time need to be clear in separating their personal political identity from Alive and understand and avoid potential conflicts of interest.

9. Never use Alive logos or trademarks unless approved to do so. Permission to use logos should be requested from the CEO.

10. Always protect yourself and the charity. Be careful with your privacy online and be cautious when sharing personal information. What you publish is widely accessible and will be around for a long time, so do consider the content carefully. When you are using social media sites at work, it is important that you do so safely.

11. Think about your reputation as well as the charity's. Express your opinions and deal with differences of opinion respectfully. Don't insult people or treat them badly. Passionate discussions and debates are fine, but you should always be respectful of others and their opinions. Be polite and the first to correct your own mistakes.

12. We encourage staff to share tweets and posts that we have issued. When online in a personal capacity, you might also see opportunities to comment on or support Alive and the work we do. Where appropriate and using the guidelines within this policy, we encourage staff to do this as it provides a human voice and raises our profile. However, if the content is controversial or misrepresented, please highlight this to the CEO who will respond as appropriate.

13. Facilitators or staff should not be posting images from activity sessions they have run on their own personal social media. They can provide content to members of the team who are able to post online but must not be put on their own accounts.

Further guidelines

Libel

Libel is when a false written statement that is damaging to a person's reputation is published online or in print. Whether staff are posting content on social media as part of their job or in a personal capacity, they should not Alive into disrepute by making defamatory comments about individuals or other organisations or groups.

Copyright law

It is critical that all staff abide by the laws governing copyright, under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988. Never use or adapt someone else's images or written content without permission. Failing to acknowledge the source/author/resource citation, where permission has been given to reproduce content, is also considered a breach of copyright.

Confidentiality

Any communications that staff make in a personal capacity must not breach confidentiality. For example, information meant for internal use only or information that Alive is not ready to disclose yet. For example, a news story that is embargoed for a particular date.

Discrimination and harassment

Staff should not post content that could be considered discriminatory against, or bullying or harassment of, any individual, on either an official Alive's social media channel or a personal account. For example:

- making offensive or derogatory comments relating to sex, gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, age, religion or belief
- using social media to bully another individual, either publicly or privately.
- posting images that are discriminatory or offensive or links to such content

Lobbying Act

Charities are legally allowed to campaign to bring about a change in policy or law to further their organisational purpose. In most cases, spending on charity campaigns that are in accordance with charity law will not be regulated under electoral law. However, the Lobbying Act, which was passed in January 2014, states that during national elections (known as regulated periods) spending on campaigning activities may be regulated.

Charities which spend more than £20,000 in England or £10,000 in Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland, during the regulated period, need to register with the Electoral Commission. To abide by the Lobbying Act, campaigning activities on social media must not be seen as intending to influence people's voting choice. During these periods, all campaigning activity will be reviewed by the CEO.

Use of social media in the recruitment process

Recruitment should be carried out in accordance with the Recruitment Policy and associated procedures and guidelines. Any advertising of vacancies should be done by the CEO and the recruiting Line Manager.

There should be no systematic or routine checking of candidate's online social media activities during the recruitment process, as conducting these searches might lead to a presumption that an applicant's protected characteristics, such as religious beliefs or sexual orientation, played a part in a recruitment decision. This is in line with Alive's Equal Opportunities Policy.

Protection and intervention

The responsibility for measures of protection and intervention lies first with the social networking site itself. Different social networking sites offer different models of interventions in different areas. For more information, refer to the guidance available on the social networking site itself. For example, Facebook. However, if a staff member considers that a person/people is/are at risk of harm, they should report this to their line manager immediately.

Under 18s and vulnerable people

Young and vulnerable people face risks when using social networking sites. They may be at risk of being bullied, publishing sensitive and personal information on their profiles, or from becoming targets for online grooming.

Where known, when communicating with young people under 18-years-old via social media, staff should ensure the online relationship with Alive follows the same rules as the offline 'real-life' relationship. Staff should ensure that young people have been made aware of the risks of communicating and sharing information online, and given guidance on security/privacy settings as necessary. Staff should also ensure that the site itself is suitable for the young person and Alive's content and other content is appropriate for them. Please refer to Safeguarding Policy.

Responsibilities and breach of policy

Everyone is responsible for their own compliance with this policy. Participation in social media on behalf of Alive is not a right but an opportunity, so it must be treated seriously and with respect. For staff, breaches of policy may incur disciplinary action, depending on the severity of the issue. Please refer to our HR Policy] for further information on disciplinary procedures. Staff who are unsure about whether something they propose to do on social media might breach this policy, should seek advice from the CEO.

Public Interest Disclosure

Under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, if a staff member releases information through Alive's social media channels that is considered to be in the interest of the public, Alive's Whistleblowing Policy must be initiated before any further action is taken.