

# Libra Children Services

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## Social Media Policy, Procedures and Guidance 2025 Version

### 1. Introduction

Libra Children Services (LCS) is responsible for ensuring that all volunteers and staff behave in ways that are safe, professional and consistent with our values. As a supervised contact provider, we work closely with children and families who may be vulnerable, and therefore everyone representing LCS must conduct themselves thoughtfully both offline and online.

Social media platforms are widely used for communication and sharing personal content. While these platforms can enhance connections in personal life, they also present risks when used without care. This policy outlines expectations for the safe and responsible use of social media by LCS volunteers, staff and committee members.

LCS has a duty to safeguard children and young people. Any individual associated with LCS must avoid actions online that compromise professional boundaries, confidentiality or the reputation of the organisation.

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### 2. Purpose of the Policy

This policy aims to:

- protect children and families from potential harm arising from inappropriate online activity
- safeguard volunteers and staff from allegations or misunderstandings linked to social media use
- maintain the reputation and integrity of LCS
- set clear expectations for online conduct

This policy applies to all forms of internet based social networking, including but not limited to Facebook, X (Twitter), Instagram, WhatsApp, TikTok, Snapchat, message boards and online forums.

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## 3. Social Media Checks

### 3.1 Recruitment Stage

As part of safer recruitment, LCS may carry out open source checks on publicly available social media content. These checks:

- will be completed by authorised staff
- will take place during the early stages of recruitment
- are limited to publicly accessible information
- do not require volunteers to provide passwords or private account details

If concerning material is identified, this will be discussed with the applicant and considered in line with LCS safeguarding responsibilities.

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## 4. Managing Online Risks

Social networking platforms can be used to exploit or manipulate children and young people. LCS volunteers and staff must be alert to the risks of:

- unintentional sharing of personal details
  - inappropriate or misleading photographs or comments
  - communication that could breach confidentiality
  - families accessing personal information about volunteers
  - volunteers being drawn into communication with families outside agreed boundaries
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## 5. Expectations for Good Practice

Volunteers and staff should:

- review privacy and security settings regularly
- think carefully before posting content or opinions online
- avoid posting anything that could bring LCS into disrepute
- avoid referencing any child, family or case connected with LCS
- clarify that personal views expressed online do not represent LCS
- refrain from using social networks to criticise or discuss organisational matters
- treat others with respect and avoid posting offensive or derogatory content

Volunteers should also give careful thought before adding any child or young person as an online contact and should only consider doing so with the explicit agreement of their parent or guardian. LCS strongly discourages volunteers from having online connections with families using our services.

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## 6. Professional Boundaries

To maintain appropriate safeguarding boundaries:

- volunteers and staff must not communicate privately with children or families through social media
- families using LCS services should not be added as online “friends” or contacts
- volunteers must avoid sharing photographs, videos or identifying information about children or families without written consent and organisational approval
- volunteers must not identify themselves online as working with a particular child or family

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## 7. Security and Privacy

LCS recommends that everyone associated with the organisation:

- restricts access to their social media accounts through strong privacy settings
- avoids sharing personal details that could compromise their safety
- vets friend requests carefully
- keeps LCS related communication separate from personal accounts
- never posts images or information relating to LCS families without explicit written consent and organisational approval

Children and young people should be encouraged to tell a trusted adult if they encounter inappropriate online comments or behaviour.

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## 8. Responding to Concerns

Any breach of confidentiality, inappropriate posting or behaviour that raises safeguarding concerns may:

- affect a volunteer’s suitability
- lead to further assessment or supervision
- result in disciplinary action
- lead to removal from a volunteering or staff role

Concerns should be reported to the appropriate manager or safeguarding lead immediately.

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## 9. Legal Framework

This policy aligns with relevant legislation including:

- The Human Rights Act 1998
- Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000
- Data Protection legislation (UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018)

LCS will only carry out social media checks or monitoring that is lawful, proportionate and consistent with safeguarding responsibilities.

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## 10. Review of Policy

This policy is reviewed annually and updated in response to changes in technology, safeguarding guidance or organisational needs.

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