



ACCEPTABLE USE OF ICT POLICY

1. Purpose

This policy sets out how Information and Communication Technology (ICT) will be used safely and responsibly within coaching and mentoring sessions. It protects young people, families, and the mentor by ensuring clear expectations and safeguarding practices.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- ICT devices used during sessions (mentor's laptop, tablet, phone).
- Online communication (video calls, emails, messaging apps).
- Storage and sharing of data relating to young people.

3. Principles

- **Safety first:** ICT is used in a way that protects children and young people from harm.
- **Boundaries:** Communication with young people is professional and appropriate.
- **Confidentiality:** Personal information is stored and shared securely.
- **Transparency:** Parents/carers are aware of any online communication or use of ICT in sessions.

4. Communication

- Contact with young people will be through agreed professional channels only (e.g., work email, secure platforms).
- Personal phone numbers, email addresses, or social media accounts will not be used.
- Parents/carers will be copied into or informed of online communications where appropriate.

5. Use of Devices and Internet

- Devices belonging to the mentor (laptop, tablet, phone) are the responsibility of the mentor.
- Internet access will be safe and supervised if used in sessions.
- Young people will not access inappropriate websites or applications.
- Social media is not used as a method of communication between mentor and young person.

6. Data Security

- Personal data is stored securely on password-protected and encrypted devices.
- Files and notes will not be stored on shared/public devices.
- Reports and session notes will only be shared with parents/carers and professionals on a "need to know" basis, in line with safeguarding and data protection laws.

7. Consent

- Parents/carers must give written consent if sessions are delivered online (e.g., video calls).
- No recordings or photographs will be taken without explicit consent.

8. Breaches

Any misuse of ICT will be taken seriously. Depending on the circumstances, this may include:

- Withdrawal of ICT access during sessions.
- Review of the mentoring agreement.
- Reporting concerns in line with safeguarding procedures.

9. Legal Compliance

This policy aligns with:

- UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2025).
- DfE guidance on online safety and safeguarding.

10. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if new technology, risks, or safeguarding concerns arise.

Last review: September 2025