

1 MINUTE GUIDE

Safeguarding Committee
online safety



The digital age has transformed the way we communicate and interact, bringing both opportunities and challenges. As staff at Witham Prospect, our priority is the **safety and well-being** of the young people in our care. This guide aims to equip you with **essential knowledge** to protect yourself and the young people in our care in the **online** world.

UNDERSTANDING THE UNIQUE NEEDS OF OUR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Our young people have specific needs and communication styles. iPads offer valuable support for learning, communication, and leisure. However, it's crucial to balance the benefits with potential risks.

SAFEGUARDING OUR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

- **Individualised Support:** Tailor online safety strategies to each young person's needs and abilities.
- **Accessibility:** Ensure technology and online content are accessible to all.
- **Communication:** Use clear and simple language when discussing online safety.
- **Supervision and Support:** Provide appropriate supervision and support based on individual needs.
- **Digital Literacy:** Teach essential digital skills in a way that is accessible and engaging.
- **Open Communication:** Encourage open conversations about online experiences, using alternative communication methods if necessary.

CREATING A SAFE ONLINE ENVIRONMENT

- **Device Management:** Implement clear guidelines for device use, including charging and storage.
- **Content Filtering:** Utilise content filtering tools to restrict access to inappropriate content.
- **Regular Monitoring:** Regularly review device usage and online activity.
- **Education and Awareness:** Provide ongoing training for staff on the specific online safety needs of young people with SEND.

IPAD USE AT WITHAM PROSPECT: A FOCUS ON SAFETY

Given that iPads are primarily used for communication and video content at Witham Prospect, specific online safety considerations apply.

While iPads offer numerous benefits, it's essential to be mindful of potential challenges. Video content accessed through platforms like YouTube should be carefully considered, as should the possibility of online interactions through comments or related videos. To prevent overreliance on technology and promote overall well-being, it's crucial to balance iPad use with other activities. By addressing these factors, we can maximize the positive impact of iPads while mitigating potential risks.

PROTECTING YOURSELF

As a residential support worker, your online safety is paramount. Your personal information is valuable, and protecting it is essential for maintaining your well-being and professional standing.

- **Strong Passwords:** Create complex passwords that are difficult to guess. Avoid using personal information or easily identifiable combinations. Consider using a password manager to securely store your credentials.
- **Beware of Phishing:** Be vigilant about suspicious emails, links, or attachments. Phishing attempts often mimic legitimate sources to trick you into revealing personal information.
- **Privacy Settings:** Regularly review and adjust privacy settings on social media platforms. Limit the visibility of your personal information to trusted contacts only.
- **Limit Sharing:** Be mindful of the personal information you share online. Avoid posting sensitive details about yourself or your work.
- **Secure Wi-Fi:** When using public Wi-Fi, avoid accessing sensitive information. Consider using a VPN for added protection.
- **Regular Updates:** Keep your devices and software up-to-date with the latest security patches.
- **Two-Factor Authentication:** Enable two-factor authentication whenever possible for an extra layer of security.



PROTECTING PERSONAL INFORMATION

Safeguarding personal information is paramount in a residential care setting. As staff members, we handle sensitive data daily, making it essential to protect it from unauthorised access, disclosure, or loss.

- **Data Minimisation:** Collect only the necessary personal information and dispose of it securely when no longer required.
- **Accuracy:** Ensure that all personal information is accurate and up-to-date.
- **Security:** Protect personal information through strong passwords, encryption, and secure data storage.
- **Sharing Restrictions:** Limit the sharing of personal information to those with a legitimate need to know.
- **Data Subject Rights:** Understand and comply with individuals' rights to access, rectify, erase, restrict, or object to the processing of their personal data.

Maintaining clear professional boundaries is essential for effective support work. The nature of our roles can create opportunities for blurring these lines, especially in the digital age.

- **Avoid Over-Sharing:** Refrain from sharing excessive personal information online, particularly details about your work or service users.
- **Professional Image:** Cultivate a professional online persona that reflects positively on the organisation.
- **Social Media Etiquette:** Use social media platforms responsibly and avoid engaging in unprofessional behaviour.
- **Interactions with Young People:** Avoid engaging in personal relationships with the families of our children and young people on social media.
- **Confidentiality:** Respect confidentiality by avoiding discussions about service users on social media or public forums.

REMEMBER: EVERYONE IS DIFFERENT, AND A PERSONALISED APPROACH TO ONLINE SAFETY IS ESSENTIAL.

UK Safer Internet Centre: This website offers a wealth of information and resources on online safety, including guidance for professionals working with children and young people. <https://saferinternet.org.uk/guide-and-resource>

Childnet: Dedicated to making the internet a safer place for children, Childnet provides resources and advice for parents, carers, and professionals. <https://www.childnet.com/>