

Positive Communication and Managing Vexatious Communication Policy

Introduction

At Kingston Child Contact Centre, we are dedicated to fostering a positive, safe, and respectful environment for all children, parents, guardians, visitors and staff (volunteers). We believe that constructive communication and mutual respect are essential for achieving the best outcomes for the children in our care. This policy outlines the expected standards of behaviour for all parties and provides clear guidelines on how we manage communication, particularly when it becomes challenging, or vexatious.

Expected Behaviour

We expect all individuals interacting with our organisation, whether in person, by phone or online to:

1. Communicate Respectfully: Use polite and constructive language at all times.
2. Collaborate Positively: Work with staff (volunteers) to resolve issues in a cooperative and non-confrontational manner.
3. Respect Boundaries: Understand that staff (volunteers) may have limited availability and that excessive demands on their time can impact the quality of care provided to all children as well as their own wellbeing.
4. Our staff volunteer their time to run our Child Contact Centre. They also have other full time life commitments and responsibilities. Our wellbeing is a core feature of our centre, where all are treated with respect, fairness and dignity (The Equality Act 2010).

Managing Communication

To ensure effective communication and the wellbeing of all involved, the following steps outline how we manage and address communication:

1. Initial Response:
 - Emails are acknowledged generally within 4 working days
 - If a face-to-face or virtual meeting is needed, it will be scheduled at a mutually convenient time.
2. Managing Excessive Communication:
 - If communication from a parent, guardian, or visitor becomes excessive, repetitive or demanding, we may limit responses to key issues already addressed. This will be an email, short sentences to key points raised.
 - Staff will not engage in further communication once a reasonable response has been provided unless new information or concerns are raised.
3. Addressing Inappropriate Behaviour:
 - If an individual is rude, abusive or uses inappropriate language, staff will politely end the communication (call, email, or meeting).

- The individual will be informed of this action and reminded of our communication expectations.
- A copy of this policy may be forwarded to the individual to reiterate our standards.
- Communications may cease for a period of reflection and reset (eg., 7days, one month etc)

Managing Vexatious Behaviour

When communication becomes vexatious, meaning it is unreasonable, unjustifiable or places undue demands on our resources, the following steps will be taken:

1. Review and Warning:
 - The behaviour will be reviewed by the Centre Manager and/or Centre Coordinators to determine its impact and whether it meets the criteria for vexatious communication.
 - If deemed necessary, a written warning will be issued, explaining why the behaviour is concerning and requesting that it cease.
2. Imposing Restrictions:
 - If the behaviour continues, we may impose restrictions on future communication. These may include:
 - Limiting communication to a single, named staff member eg., Centre Manager or Coordinator
 - Restricting the mode or frequency of communication (e.g., only in writing - email).
 - Declining to respond to communications unless they raise new, substantive issues.
 - The individual will be notified in writing of the restrictions, the reasons for them, and when they will be reviewed (within six months).
3. Review and Monitoring:
 - The imposed restrictions will be reviewed by the Centre Manager or Coordinator(s) at the end of the review period.
 - The individual will be informed of the outcome, whether the restrictions will continue, be amended or lifted.
 - All decisions and communications will be recorded and monitored for consistency and fairness.

Conclusion

We are committed to maintaining a positive and productive environment for all children, parents, guardians and staff (volunteers). By adhering to this policy, we ensure that communication remains constructive and that all parties can work together effectively for the benefit of the children and families in our care.

If you have any concerns about this policy or require further clarification, please contact us at: admin@kingstonchildcontactcentre.org.uk

This policy is designed to be transparent and accessible, ensuring that all interactions with our centre are conducted in a manner that supports the well-being and safety of everyone involved.

Also see our Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy, Complaints Procedure, Data Protection Policy, Data & Security Policy, Domestic Violence & Conflict Management Policy, Equal Opportunities, Inclusion & Diversity Policy, Health & Safety Policy

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