Shockout Safeguarding: Social Media Policy

Aim

Shockout would like to make all staff members aware of the cautions we must take when using **social media**. As this is a new area that is rapidly growing, therefore it is important to continuously refresh our team and update yourself with the precautions you must when communicating with staff and students on behalf of Shockout in work and outside work hours.

Purpose

Shockout staff and students recognise we are now in a heightened position of trust, therefore it is paramount we all uphold this to the highest degree. We wish to ensure make sure everyone does not put themselves in any way in a position that can be misunderstood. Shockout is absolutely clear that you **do not have any communication whatsoever with students on any social networking site such as Instagram, Facebook, Whatsapp, snapchat, , twitter, or any other form of social media unless it has been directed by the Principal via the WeareShockout, Shockout Academy or Shockout Arts channels.**

1. Social contact with students

1.1   Staff must not establish or seek to establish any contact with a student, via any channels including social media unless the Principal signs it off.

1.2   All contact with students through personal contact channels is forbidden.   All staff members should only use their Shockout email address to communicate with students and must not communicate with students on a personal email address, social media accounts or phones (whether that is the staff or the student's.) All communication should be kept strictly to academic lessons, tutorials, one to one feedback sessions, SEND provisions, or safeguarding purposes.

1.2.1 Shockout recognise that staff members will come into contact with students outside of the studio building. We expect staff to use their professional judgment in any situations, and to report to the Principal and Designated Safeguarding Leads, if any contact with a student that they are concerned about or could be misinterpreted by students.

2. Social Media

2,1   All references to social media are intended to encompass any form of online communication, including, but not limited to, social media platforms (e.g. Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, LinkedIn etc), instant messaging platforms (e.g. WhatsApp/Facebook Messenger etc), dating sites/apps, online chat forums and online gaming.

2.2   Shockout recognizes that because of the nature of the Performing Arts industry staff have active social media profiles, all staff members must ensure that no students follow them on their personal social media profiles and that any communication does not negatively impact their work for Shockout. To make it clear, <u>all staff must</u> avoid following/commenting/sharing personal online/social media/contact channels as this may result in students/parents being able to identify a staff members profile and could result in triggering disciplinarily proceedings and obstructing safeguarding regulatory best practice.

2.3   All staff personal social media profiles should be set with the highest level of security and privacy settings, in order to mitigate any potential issues that may arise from students/parents being able to access Shockout staff members personal profile. Where a staff members profile relates to something other than themselves in person or company, i.e. a home, pet or business, and is therefore an open and easily accessible profile, extra care must be taken to ensure that themselves and Shockout are protected.

2.4   Ideally, Shockout staff should not be easily identifiable through online profiles, however in the Performing Arts Industry this is extremely difficult to achieve, but where they are, staff members should consider whether this may, have a detrimental impact on the reputation Shockout. Any open profiles where staff, are identifiable must be reported to the Principal so that they are able to make a decision on whether the profile breaches this guidance.

2.5   Shockout students must not be encouraged to communicate with any personal social media accounts owned or managed by a staff member.

2.6   Staff members must not request or accept 'friend requests', 'follow', 'like' or 'share' personal messages from students or their parents/carers. It is recognised that an employee may already be acquainted with a parent/carer prior to a student joining Shockout. in these circumstances the staff member should inform the Principal and DSO's of the relationship and evidence when this level of engagement started. All social media contact with a student that has been established previous to the student enrolling at Shockout and proceed to deploy professional boundaries set by the organisation.

2.7   Staff members must use with careful consideration of any potential risks and/or issues that may arise from such contact, communication, engagement with existing or former students on social media once the student is no longer present at Shockout for a period of 3 consecutive years.

3   Online Dating sites

3.1   Shockout recognise that staff members may use online dating platforms and must take extra care to ensure that students and their parents/carers are not able to access any personal profiles. As these are open profiles, it is the responsibility of the staff member to ensure that all personal content and/or

images are in line with the most appropriate code of conduct. If a staff member is contacted by a student or their parent/carer through an online dating profile, they must inform the Principal and DSO's immediately.

<u>Linked Policies</u>
Safeguarding Policy