HERD THYME

E-Safety Policy

1. Introduction

The purpose of Herd Thyme's online safety policy is to:

- Safeguard and protect all members of the Herd Thyme organisation online
- Identify approaches to educate and raise awareness of online safety
- Enable all staff to work safely and responsibly, to role model positive behaviour online and to manage professional standards and practice when using technology
- Identify clear procedures to use when responding to online safety concerns.

On-line issues can be broadly categorised into three areas of risk:

- **Content:** being exposed to illegal, inappropriate or harmful material
- **Contact:** being subjected to harmful online interaction with other users
- **Conduct:** personal online behaviour that increases the likelihood of, or causes, harm.

2. Policy Scope

- Herd Thyme believes that online safety is an essential part of safeguarding and acknowledges its duty to ensure that all students and staff are protected from potential harm online.
- Herd Thyme identifies that the internet and associated devices, such as computers, tablets, mobile phones and games consoles, are an important part of everyday life.
- Herd Thyme believes that students should be empowered to build resilience and to develop strategies to manage and respond to risk online.
- This policy applies to all staff including the proprietor, external contractors, visitors, volunteers and other individuals who work for, or provide services on behalf of the organisation (collectively referred to as "staff" in this policy) as well as students, parents and guardians.
- This policy applies to all use of technology, including personal devices.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

The Designated Safeguarding Lead, Kara Dhyan, has overall responsibility for online safety. However, Herd Thyme recognises that all members of the organisation have important roles and responsibilities to play with regards to online safety.

<u>Staff Members</u>

It is the responsibility of all members of staff to:

- Read and adhere to the E-Safety Policy
- Model good practice when using technology and maintain a professional level of conduct in their personal use of technology, both on and off site.
- Have an awareness of a range of online safety issues and how they may be experienced by the students in their care.

- Identify online safety concerns and take appropriate action by following the organisations safeguarding policies and procedures.
- Know when and how to escalate online safety issues, including signposting to appropriate support, internally and externally.
- Take personal responsibility for professional development in this area.

Students

It is the responsibility of students (at a level that is appropriate to their individual age and ability) to:

- Engage in age appropriate online safety education opportunities.
- Respect the feelings and rights of others both on and offline.
- Take responsibility for keeping themselves and others safe online.
- Seek help from a trusted adult, if there is a concern online, and support others that may be experiencing online safety issues.

4. Training and engagement with staff

Herd Thyme will:

- Provide and discuss the online safety policy with all members of staff as part of induction.
- Provide up-to-date and appropriate online safety training for all staff on a regular basis, within the Safeguarding training provision
- Make staff aware that their online conduct outside of the organisation, including personal use of social media, could have an impact on their professional role and reputation.
- Ensure all members of staff are aware of the procedures to follow regarding online safety concerns affecting students, colleagues or other members of the organisation.

5. Reducing Online Risks

Herd Thyme recognises that the internet is a constantly changing environment with new applications, devices, websites and material emerging at a rapid pace.

All members of the organisation are made aware of our expectations regarding safe and appropriate behaviour online and the importance of not posting any content, comments, images or videos which could cause harm, distress or offence to members of the organisation.

6. Safer Use of Technology

6.1. Teaching Sessions/Activities

Herd Thyme uses a limited range of technology during teaching sessions and activities, which includes the use of staff mobile phones and a digital camera for pictures or videos of students undertaking activities.

6.2. Managing the Safety of our Website

We will ensure that information posted on our website is regularly monitored and updated and ensure that staff or students' personal information will not be published.

6.3. Publishing Images and Videos Online

We will ensure that all images and videos shared online are posted with the student's and/or parent's/guardian's permission and will comply with the organisation's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

7. Social Media

7.1. Expectations

- The expectations regarding safe and responsible use of social media applies to all members of the Herd Thyme organisation.
- The term social media may include (but is not limited to): blogs; wikis; social networking sites; forums; bulletin boards; online gaming; apps; video/photo sharing sites; chatrooms and instant messenger.
- All members of staff are expected to engage in social media in a positive, safe and responsible manner.
- Concerns regarding the online conduct of any member of the organisation on social media, should be reported to the DSL.

7.2. Staff Personal Use of Social Media

- The safe and responsible use of social networking, social media and personal publishing sites will be discussed with all members of staff as part of staff induction and will be revisited and communicated via regular staff training opportunities.
- Safe and professional behaviour will be outlined for all members of staff (including volunteers).

<u>Reputation</u>

- All members of staff are advised that their online conduct on social media can have an impact on their role and reputation within the organisation.
- All members of staff are advised to safeguard themselves and their privacy when using social media sites.
- All members of staff are encouraged to carefully consider the information, including text and images, they share and post online and to ensure that their social media use is compatible with their role
- Members of staff will notify the proprietor immediately if they consider that any content shared on social media sites conflicts with their role.

Communicating with students and parents/guardians

- All members of staff are advised not to communicate with or add as 'friends' any current or past students or their family members via any personal social media sites, applications or profiles.
    - Any pre-existing relationships or exceptions that may compromise this, will be discussed with the proprietor
- Staff will not use personal social media accounts to contact students or parents, nor should any contact be accepted
- Any communication from students and parents received on personal social media accounts will be reported to the DSL.

7.3. Official Use of Social Media

- Herd Thyme official social media channel is:
    - Facebook – https://www.facebook.com/herdthyme.co.uk/

- Official social media use will be conducted in line with existing policies
- All communication on official social media platforms will be clear, transparent and open to scrutiny.
- Parents and guardians will be informed of any official social media use with students; written student and/or parental consent will be obtained.

8. Use of Personal Devices and Mobile Phones

Herd Thyme recognises that personal communication through mobile technologies is an accepted part of everyday life for students, staff and parents/guardians, but technologies need to be used safely and appropriately within the organisation.

8.1. Expectations

- All use of personal devices (including but not limited to; tablets, games consoles and 'smart' watches) and mobile phones will take place in accordance with the law and appropriate policies
- Electronic devices of any kind that are brought onto site are the responsibility of the user.
    - All members of the organisation are advised to take steps to protect their mobile phones or devices from loss, theft or damage; we accept no responsibility for the loss, theft or damage of such items on our premises.
    - All members of the organisation are advised to use passwords/pin numbers to ensure that unauthorised calls or actions cannot be made on their phones or devices; mobile phones and personal devices should not be shared.
- Mobile phones and personal devices are not permitted to be used in specific areas within the site such as toilets
- The sending of abusive or inappropriate messages or content via mobile phones or personal devices is forbidden by any member of the organisation; any breaches will be dealt with as part of our Staff Behaviour Policy (Code of Conduct).

- All members of Herd Thyme organisation are advised to ensure that their mobile phones and personal devices do not contain any content which may be offensive, derogatory or would otherwise contravene our behaviour or child protection policies.

8.2. Staff Use of Personal Devices and Mobile Phones

Mobile phones and personally-owned mobile devices may not be used for personal reasons during lessons or formal teaching time. They should be switched off (or silent) at all times. The Bluetooth functionality of a mobile device should be switched off at all times and may not be used to send images or files to other mobile devices.

Mobile phones can be used for emergencies. Staff must be logged into the student calendar with access to each student's emergency contact.

Mobile phones and personal mobile devices are not permitted to be used in certain areas within the site such as toilets.

Mobile phones and personally-owned mobile devices are the responsibility of the device owner. Herd Thyme accepts no responsibility for the loss, theft or damage of personally-owned mobile phones or mobile devices.

8.3. Student Use of Personal Devices and Mobile Phones

Herd Thyme will encourage students to leave mobile phones and personal devices in a secure location for the duration of teaching sessions.

- If a student needs to contact his/her parents/guardians, they will be allowed to use an organisation phone or be given access to their mobile phone if necessary
- Parents are advised to contact their child via the organisation office; exceptions may be permitted on a case-by-case basis, as approved by the Proprietor

8.4. Visitors' Use of Personal Devices and Mobile Phones

- Parents/guardians and visitors will be expected to comply fully with the areas in the policy relevant to staff members
- Members of staff are expected to challenge visitors if they have concerns and will always inform the proprietor of any breaches of the policy.

9. Responding to Online Safety Incidents and Concerns

- All members of the organisation will be made aware of the reporting procedure for online safety concerns and must respect confidentiality and the need to follow the official procedures for reporting concerns.
- If we are unsure how to proceed with an incident or concern, the DSL will seek advice from the Education Safeguarding Service.

10. Concerns about Student Welfare

- The DSL will be informed of any online safety incidents involving safeguarding or child protection concerns and will record these issues in line with our child protection policy.
- The DSL will ensure that online safety concerns are escalated and reported to relevant agencies as appropriate

11. Staff Misuse

Any complaint about staff misuse will be referred to the proprietor. Appropriate action will be taken in accordance with our Staff Behaviour Policy (Code of Conduct).

12. Monitoring and Review

Technology in this area evolves and changes rapidly and Herd Thyme will review this policy at least annually. The policy will also be revised following any national or local policy requirements, any child protection concerns or any changes to the technical infrastructure

We will regularly monitor and evaluate online safety mechanisms to ensure that this policy is consistently applied.

Any issues identified via monitoring will be incorporated into our action planning.

APPENDIX 1

Confirmation of Compliance – Herd Thyme E Safety Policy

I hereby confirm that I have read, understood and agree to comply with the above policy.

Name ……..

Position Held ……

Signed ……..

Date ……

Once completed, signed and dated, please return this form to the Proprietor for holding on file.