**Staffordshire’s Children’s Homes Local Policy**

**Acceptable Internet use Policy**

Acceptable internet use policy sets out employees' responsibilities when using Staffordshire County Councils’ internet access in their day-to-day working activities.

**Acceptable internet use policy statement -**

Use of the internet by employees of Staffordshire County Council is permitted and encouraged where such use supports the goals and objectives of the service

However, the use of the internet whereby employees must ensure that they:

* Comply with current legislation
* Use the internet in an acceptable way
* Do not create unnecessary risk to the service/County Council by their misuse of the internet

**Unacceptable Behaviour**

In particular the following is deemed unacceptable use or behaviour by employees:

* Visiting internet sites that contain obscene, hateful, pornographic, or otherwise illegal material
* Using the computer to perpetrate any form of fraud, or software, film or music piracy
* Using the internet to send offensive or harassing material to other users
* Downloading commercial software or any copyrighted materials belonging to third parties, unless this download is covered or permitted under a commercial agreement or other such license
* Hacking into unauthorised areas
* Publishing defamatory and/or knowingly false material about the County Council, your colleagues and/or our Service users on social networking sites, 'blogs' (online journals), (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram or any other social media platform)
* Revealing confidential information about the County Council in a personal online posting, upload or transmission - including financial information and information relating to our young people, business plans, policies, staff and/or internal discussions.
* Undertaking deliberate activities that waste staff effort or networked resources
* Introducing any form of malicious software into the network
* Using work time to update any personal social media accounts, websites or sending emails from personal email accounts using the County Council computer equipment.

**Monitoring**

The County Council accepts that the use of the internet is a valuable tool. However, misuse of this facility can have a negative impact upon employee productivity and the reputation of the service.

In addition, all of the services internet-related resources held on the intranet are provided for business purposes. Therefore, the County Council maintains the right to monitor the volume of internet and network traffic, together with the internet sites visited. The specific content of any transactions will not be monitored unless there is a suspicion of improper use.

**Sanctions**

Where it is believed that an employee has failed to comply with this policy, they may face the County Councils disciplinary procedure. If the employee is found to have breached the policy, they may face a disciplinary penalty.

**Agreement**

All employees, agency or temporary staff who has been granted the right to use the County Councils internet access are required to sign this agreement confirming their understanding and acceptance of this policy.