

MORTAL FOOLS

Online Behaviour Code for Employees & Volunteers



This document provides the guidelines for employees and volunteers to keep themselves and the beneficiaries they work with safe when working digitally and online either from Mortal Fools' offices, remotely or from home.

This Code should be read alongside our organisational policies and procedures, including:

- Mortal Fools Safeguarding Policy Suite
- Mortal Fools Code of Conduct
- Mortal Fools Equality & Dignity Policy
- Mortal Fools Confidentiality Policy
- Mortal Fools Whistleblowing Policy
- Mortal Fools Recruitment of Ex-Offenders Policy
- Mortal Fools Privacy Policy
- Mortal Fools Responding to Allegations and Concerns Procedures
- Mortal Fools Cyber Security Policy

KEY CONTACTS:

Designated Safeguarding Officer / Online Safety Coordinator:

Kiz Crosbie (Artistic Director / CEO) / 07779 579558 / kiz@mortalfools.org.uk

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officer:

Helen Ferguson (Creative Producer) / 07594 797767 / helen@mortalfools.org.uk

Link Trustee:

Rachel Pattinson / 07939 591833/ rachel.pattinson@ncl.ac.uk

WORKING FROM HOME

When working from home, Mortal Fools core staff team will have their own accounts to access emails and a log-in to our Box cloud-based storage account. All Mortal Fools files are saved on Box and files with personal and contact details are password protected.

In addition:

- Mortal Fools staff are employed and using a combination of company equipment and their own equipment for work. When they are required to store young people's details or images on their computers, these will only be stored via our secure company google drive, only be used for work purposes and stored securely, in accordance with our Privacy Policy.
- Mortal Fools staff will ensure that they have up to date virus / malware protection installed on their personal computers, in accordance with our cyber security policy.
- Mortal Fools staff will not share their accounts or log-ins with other members of staff and only log into their own accounts.
- Mortal Fools practitioners have a dedicated, secure google drive account for storing session information such as session plans and artistic devising content.



- If young people's images need to be downloaded for photo or video editing, then they will be deleted once the edit has taken place and the edited film is saved appropriately (e.g., on the company google drive or hard drive).

COMMUNICATION VIA TELEPHONE

As Mortal Fools staff are employed and self-employed, they are using company and personal mobile phones for work. All their mobile phones are PIN locked to ensure data is not accessible by others, in accordance with our Privacy Policy. Employees should not use personal phones to contact young people. Employees can use personal phones to contact parents or carers if required and a Mortal Fools phone is not available, e.g., if a sessional practitioner needed to contact a parent mid-session.

COMMUNICATION VIA EMAIL

Staff may be required to email young people's personal email addresses. Staff should only email young people's email addresses from a dedicated Mortal Fools' email address and not from a personal email address. In such cases staff should use clear language to avoid any misunderstanding on the part of the recipient. Another member of staff and/or the young person's parent/carer should always be copied into emails for transparency. Staff members who have concerns regarding the content of an email that they send or receive from a young person should consult the DSO or Deputy DSO for guidance.

COMMUNICATION VIA SOCIAL MEDIA

Mortal Fools uses social media to communicate with young people. Current social media applications Mortal Fools used include WhatsApp, Twitter, Facebook/Facebook Live, Facebook Messenger, Tiktok, Instagram/Instagram Live and YouTube.

Contact with young people through such forums should only take place through organisational accounts. Mortal Fools' individual staff will not follow young people's accounts and only invite members to follow Mortal Fools' organisational accounts (see interconnected policies for further details).

If a Mortal Fools staff member receives content from a young person which they believe is inappropriate they will not forward the content or delete it but immediately contact the DSO to report the content and the DSO will follow the safeguarding incident procedure of Mortal Fools (see main safeguarding policies).

All Mortal Fools social media accounts are managed by Rachel Horton, Communications and Audience Development Manager, contributed to by Elinor Bryant, Marketing Assistant and overseen by Kiz Crosbie, DSO.

COMMUNICATION VIA LIVE DIGITAL PLATFORMS

When communicating with young people via live digital platforms such as Zoom (used for Online Youth Theatre sessions and digital meetings), the following protocols should be followed:

- Mortal Fools staff will communicate via Mortal Fools accounts only and not use personal accounts.
- Mortal Fools staff will ensure that the personal numbers or email addresses of young people and freelancers are not shared in the public domain or with anyone outside of the company.

- A minimum of two Mortal Fools staff will be present in all sessions or meetings with children and young people.
- Mortal Fools staff will be the only adults present in Mortal Fools digital platforms, other than when a child under 13 is accompanied by a parent or carer at the start and end of a session. It is vital during live sessions that other members of the staff member's household are not present, do not come into view or see any of the participants online during sessions.

If an emergency situation occurs for a staff member during the sessions, the other host (staff member) must disable video and audio for all participants, communicate the situation to them via the chat feature, and only resume the session with audio and video when it is safe to do so. If the session cannot continue, staff members must inform parents/carers and the DSO/Deputy DSO.

- Staff should be in a neutral area where nothing personal or inappropriate can be seen or heard in the background. Staff should not use virtual backgrounds, unless for a specific activity.
- You must always have your video camera enabled if you are in a session, unless you are participating in or delivering an activity that requires you to turn it off and on again. It should not be turned off for a prolonged period of time.
- All parents/carers will be informed in advance of the platforms to be used and the dates and times of sessions and the adults who will be in these platforms.
- All meetings will have a private link and password emailed in advance to participants and their parents/carers. Participants have to be admitted by the meeting organiser.
- Mortal Fools staff will set clear rules of engagement for working on digital platforms. These rules will be in line with the three Mortal Fools Youth Theatre expectations:

Be Brave Be Kind Be Yourself

- Mortal Fools will collect email confirmation of agreement from members and parents/carers confirming that they understand the Online Behaviour Code for Members, Parents and Carers (Mortal Fools staff should familiarise themselves with the Online Behaviour code for members, parents and carers).
- Staff will remind young people of the rules for online sessions at appropriate intervals.
- Staff will also remind young people that this is not a private space and whatever they share online will be seen by the group.
- If a child or young person urgently needs individual support or urgently needs to be spoken to about their behaviour during a session, staff will use the breakout room function with a minimum of 2 staff members are in a breakout room at one time when only one child is present – staff should call the on call safeguarding staff member to join the session in the event of this occurrence. If this is not possible, one of the staff members in the session should contact the child's parent/carers and remove the child from the session. If the child does not need urgent support or behaviour management, the staff members should continue the session and arrange support at a separate time e.g., after the session has ended or at a separate time in the week. They can speak to the group coordinator about this. See detailed step by step guidance below if required.

- Practitioners are permitted to use breakout rooms during sessions when required for facilitation purposes (e.g., an exercise that requires participants to breakout into smaller groups), but the following protocols must be followed for the safety of participants:
 - In **'Breakout Rooms' → 'Options'**, uncheck the box that says **'Allow participants to return to the main session at any time'** this means participants cannot come back to the main session until you allow them to
 - Practitioners should circulate round breakout rooms regularly to provide support and check that participants are following the behaviour code.
 - The same guidelines for young people and staff regarding safeguarding still apply when using breakout rooms (e.g., if a young person is worried about something, they still have the option to send their practitioner a message or leave the meeting).
 - Staff members shouldn't be 1 to 1 with a child or young person in a breakout room or the main room. If this happens accidentally – aim to rectify the situation by returning to the room with other beneficiaries/practitioner.

The following settings are to be used by Mortal Fools staff running sessions on Zoom with young people. Mortal Fools' Projects Producer will set up the Mortal Fools company Zoom account to automatically apply the relevant settings. Mortal Fools staff are responsible for checking the settings before young people join the Zoom meeting, in case these have been altered.

- Set **'Screen Sharing'** to host only. If you need a participant to share their screen you can enable them manually.
- Set the **'Chat'** feature so that young people can only communicate with everyone or with the hosts (staff). Participants should not have the option to use the chat feature to talk privately to other individuals in the group.
- All **sessions should be recorded** but only by the host of the meeting
- The **'waiting room'** feature will be enabled and participants should not be allowed to join the meeting until all staff members are present. Hosts (staff) will admit young people when the session is ready to start.
- Set **'play entrance/exit chime'** to on – this will enable practitioners to keep track more easily if a participant leaves the meeting
- At the end of the meeting, the host (staff member) will always **'end the meeting for everyone'** and not allow the meeting to continue without them there.

BREAKING RULES

If any young person breaks the rules in their guidelines, Mortal Fools staff must follow this procedure:

- The Mortal Fools staff member will attempt to resolve the issue immediately, if the issue is resolved then the session can continue. Issues like this may include:
 - If a participant accidentally turns off their camera during a session – ask them to turn it back on

- If someone from the participant's household accidentally comes into the room, ask them to leave immediately
 - If someone has used their full name, change it immediately by 'renaming' them
 - If a participant is displaying mildly disruptive or disrespectful behaviour, speak to them as you would in a usual group session to resolve the situation
 - See paragraph above about managing support needs/disruptive behaviour (and whether it is urgent/not urgent).
- If a resolution cannot be found immediately:
 1. Tell the participant that you are going to remove them from the session
 2. Remove them from the session
 3. Phone their parent or carer and explain why they have been removed from the session
 4. If the staff member is reassured that the issue has been resolved and the young person is able to continue safely, the participant can re-join the session.
 5. Staff members will monitor the participant's behaviour, if rules are broken consistently, the young person will be removed from the platform by Mortal Fools staff and parents/carers will be informed.

These procedures should be followed during live sessions. If any Mortal Fools staff members are unsure about how to proceed with a participant's behaviour, they should contact the Designated Safeguarding Officer or the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officer.

RECEIVING AN ALLEGATION OR CONCERN ONLINE OR VIA MOBILE PHONE

Mortal Fools' existing safeguarding procedures, code of conduct and procedure for reporting allegations or concerns should still be adhered to when delivering activity online. Staff members must ensure they fully understand these procedures. Staff members should always contact Mortal Fools designated safeguarding officer and/or deputy if they have any concerns about a child or young person. This may be because:

- a staff member sees or hears something worrying during an online lesson
- a child communicates information about abuse during a phone call or via email.

We recognise that at times, members might communicate information to staff members via texts, calls or digitally.

If a staff member receives a worrying message that they think may indicate that the young person communicating with them is at immediate risk during or outside of work hours, they should immediately refer it for action to the DSO or Deputy DSO, ideally by speaking to them by phone. The DSO/Deputy DSO will follow the procedure below. If the staff member cannot get hold of the DSO/DDSO, or the link trustee, they should also follow this procedure.

- Check with the young person – What is happening? Where are you? The staff member should not attempt to solve the problem.
- Contact the young person's parent/carers, or – if applicable – the social worker/key worker associated with that young person. If there is no response, alert the emergency services (in most cases this will be the police) by calling 999 and giving as much information as possible.
- Write up a *Concern or Allegation Reporting Form* on the situation within 24hrs (included at the end of this document)

SHARING WORK CREATED ONLINE

When Mortal Fools share work created online, Mortal Fools will take the following steps;

- Share the final edits with the young people and their parents/carers before sharing to check they are happy with the content.
- Not use a child's surname in photography or video content.
- Gain parental/carer consent for children under 18 to be photographed and videoed, providing details of where content may be shared and getting consent.
- Only use images of children in suitable clothing to reduce the risk of inappropriate use.
- Only share content through Mortal Fools' official accounts.

If, for whatever reason, a parent/carer or young person is not happy with the use of content, then Mortal Fools will not share the content.