

Musinc Communications Policy

1. Context

This policy has been created to set out Musinc expectations of communications between its own staff, partner staff, practitioners, and young people.

Musinc relies on cross sector partnership working to effectively deliver its programme and this policy aims to provide a basis of good communication, across all activities, settings and with all people that Musinc works with.

We know that good communication can foster strong and positive relationships across an organization, allowing our workforce (office team and practitioners) and participants to function at their full capacity and potential.

2. Linked Policies

More detail on communications between Musinc practitioners and participants outside of Musinc activities can be found in [Musinc's Safeguarding Policy](#).

More detail on direct communications between Musinc practitioners and the Musinc office team can be found in [Musinc's Freelance Policy](#).

More detail on communications on Musinc's social media platforms can be found in [Musinc's Social Media Policy](#).

Musinc practitioner's contracts set out their responsibilities for communications outside of Musinc activity.

3. Communications Policy

We understand that every person is different. We have unique lived experiences, we communicate in different ways, and Musinc are committed to creating spaces for compassion, empathy, reflection and understanding.

With all Musinc communications we consider the most appropriate medium for conveying our messages, using factors such as the nature of matter to be communicated, the urgency of communication, and the distance and relationship between the communicator and the recipient.

Across all our work, Musinc practitioners and office staff follow these principles of good written, verbal and non-verbal communication:

Language

- Language is kept clear and simple, so it is easy to understand.
- We avoid using acronyms in written and verbal communication.
- We are authentically ourselves, and speak to participants, colleagues, and partners as we would with anyone else.
- We use language that is respectful and does not hurt or offend anyone.
- We're sensitive to words which describe circumstances that may be viewed as negative.
- We keep up to date with evolving vocabulary (particularly in relation to our EDI practices).
- We give space for people to self-describe when talking about their identity or circumstances they may be facing.

Trust and Respect

- We use 'person first' language, e.g. 'people with disabilities' but understand that this may not be the preference for all individuals.
- Our workforce and participants work collaboratively, with the opportunities for participants to contribute to decision making and planning.
- Our decision making is transparent, and considers the needs of our colleagues, participants, and partners.
- We understand that it takes time to establish strong relationships, and we allow space to build trust and rapport with new people.
- Everyone is given space to share, and all participants are encouraged to participate equally.
- We communicate in ways that allow for a two-way flow of conversation.
- We're open whilst maintaining boundaries, especially when communicating with young people. Our workforce are confident to explain when a boundary has been overstepped by personal questions or comments.
- Our workforce understands the boundaries of confidentiality in relation to safeguarding matters.
- We are consistent with our messaging, and messages are underpinned by our values, policies and programme objectives.

Non-Verbal Communication

- We maintain open body language, which is welcoming and non-threatening.
- We reduce power imbalances, communicating with others on the same physical level (e.g. Crouching or sitting down)
- We listen actively, nodding and repeating points to the speaker or asking questions to confirm understanding.
- We respect one another's personal space. We don't sit or stand too close to others and understand that not all people are comfortable with eye contact.

We understand that people take different amounts of time to digest and respond to new information. We give people space to process, especially to unexpected information.

This policy is discussed and reviewed annually to ensure best practice.

If you have any questions or concerns about this policy, please contact musinc@middlesbrough.gov.uk

If you have a safeguarding concern please contact our Designated Safeguarding Officer, Samantha Knight (Samantha_knight@middlesbrough.gov.uk)