



JPYC Team Communication & Operational Procedures Policy

Version: 1.0

Approved by: Vicky Heales, Lead Youth Worker

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Purpose

At JPYC, positive communication is at the heart of everything we do. The way we communicate with one another, our young people, families, partners and the wider community reflects our values as a relationship-based youth organisation.

This policy aims to promote open, respectful and consistent communication, ensuring that everyone understands their roles, responsibilities and lines of accountability.

Our shared approach helps us:

- provide a consistent experience for young people and families;
- work collaboratively as one team;
- maintain professional standards;
- safeguard young people and staff;
- ensure decisions are made transparently and appropriately.

Our Communication Values

As a team we will:

- Treat one another with kindness, respect and professionalism.
- Communicate openly, honestly and constructively.
- Assume positive intent and seek clarification before making assumptions.
- Address concerns directly and respectfully.
- Celebrate successes and recognise one another's contributions.
- Keep young people's needs at the centre of our communication.

Internal Communication

We recognise that clear communication supports safe and effective youth work.



Team members are expected to:

- Read and respond to team communications within a reasonable timeframe.
- Inform the Lead Youth Worker as soon as possible if they are unable to attend a session.
- Share safeguarding concerns immediately in line with the Safeguarding Policy.
- Raise any concerns, ideas or suggestions respectfully.
- Maintain confidentiality regarding young people, families and colleagues.

Where differences of opinion arise, these should be discussed professionally and privately rather than through group messages or in front of young people.

Professional Boundaries

JPYC is committed to maintaining professional relationships built on trust, respect and appropriate boundaries.

Staff are not expected to discuss confidential matters relating to:

- colleagues;
- volunteers;
- safeguarding concerns;
- complaints;
- disciplinary matters;
- allegations or investigations;
- management decisions.

If approached by anyone outside the management process, including councillors, committee members, volunteers, parents, members of the public or partner organisations, with questions relating to confidential matters, staff should respond politely by explaining that they are unable to discuss operational matters and should refer the individual to the Lead Youth Worker or appropriate Parish Council officer.

Staff should never feel pressured to express opinions about colleagues or become involved in discussions that could compromise professional relationships or confidentiality.



Where a member of staff feels uncomfortable about an interaction of this nature, they should inform the Lead Youth Worker as soon as practicable so that appropriate support can be provided.

Lines of Accountability

JPYC encourages initiative, creativity and shared leadership. However, clear accountability is essential.

The Lead Youth Worker has overall responsibility for:

- operational decision-making;
- safeguarding oversight;
- budgets and expenditure;
- external partnerships;
- communications on behalf of JPYC;
- strategic planning.

Session Leads are responsible for:

- leading the safe delivery of their session;
- supporting and directing the session team;
- reporting concerns or significant issues to the Lead Youth Worker.

All staff remain accountable to the Lead Youth Worker regardless of their session responsibilities.

Governance and Respectful Communication

JPYC values the contribution of councillors, committee members, volunteers, staff and partner organisations.

To protect everyone involved, operational matters should be managed through the appropriate reporting lines.

Staff should not be placed in situations where they feel pressured to discuss confidential matters, comment on colleagues or management decisions, or provide information outside their role.



Any concerns regarding the conduct of staff, volunteers or committee members should be raised through the appropriate management or Parish Council procedures rather than through informal conversations.

Decision-Making & Communication Framework

JPYC is built on trust, collaboration and shared responsibility. We encourage every member of the team to contribute ideas, use their initiative and take ownership within their role. At the same time, some decisions require oversight to ensure consistency, safeguarding, financial accountability and compliance with Parish Council procedures.

The following framework sets out how decisions should be made.

You can decide independently	Please discuss with the Lead Youth Worker	Lead Youth Worker approval required
Planning activities within an agreed session plan	New activities with higher levels of risk	All purchases using JPYC or Parish Council funds
Organising the running order of your session	Changes to the structure or purpose of a session	Applying for funding or grants
Building relationships with young people and families	Concerns regarding young people's wellbeing	Entering into partnerships with external organisations
Suggesting new resources or equipment	Ideas requiring additional staffing or volunteers	Public statements or media enquiries
Supporting volunteers during sessions	Significant behaviour management concerns	Official communication on behalf of JPYC
Day-to-day problem solving during sessions	Changes to staffing arrangements	Changes to policy or procedures
Sharing ideas to improve provision	New projects or programmes	Purchase orders or financial commitments



Our Approach

We actively encourage staff to:

- Bring ideas.
- Challenge constructively.
- Be creative.
- Share opportunities.
- Identify needs.
- Suggest improvements.

We ask that these ideas are discussed through the appropriate channels before commitments are made externally.

This ensures:

- everyone has the same information;
- decisions remain transparent;
- budgets are managed responsibly;
- safeguarding and risk assessments are considered;
- communication with councillors, funders and partners remains consistent.

No member of staff should feel unable to suggest ideas. Equally, no member of staff should commit JPYC to expenditure, projects or external agreements without prior approval from the Lead Youth Worker.

As Lead Youth Worker, my role is not to gatekeep ideas, but to coordinate them, ensuring they align with our vision, resources, safeguarding responsibilities and strategic priorities. This enables the whole team to work towards shared goals while maintaining consistency across our provision.

Authorisation and Purchasing

To ensure transparency and appropriate use of public funds:

- All purchases using JPYC funds must be authorised by the Lead Youth Worker before any commitment is made.



- Staff should not independently request approval, funding or reimbursement from councillors, council officers or committee members.
- Quotes, funding opportunities and ideas are welcomed and should be shared with the Lead Youth Worker for consideration.
- Session Leads may identify resources they feel would benefit their sessions but should seek approval before placing orders or making commitments.

This process protects both staff and the organisation by ensuring appropriate financial oversight and consistency.

External Communication

To ensure consistent messaging:

The Lead Youth Worker is responsible for:

- communication with councillors regarding operational matters;
- media enquiries;
- funding applications;
- partnership agreements;
- official statements;
- newsletters and organisational updates.

Staff are encouraged to build positive relationships with families and partners during sessions but should refer strategic, financial or organisational enquiries to the Lead Youth Worker where appropriate.

Working with the Parish Councils

JPYC is proud to operate as part of the joint parishes of Steyning, Upper Beeding and Bramber. To ensure clear governance and accountability, operational communication with councillors and council officers should normally be coordinated through the Lead Youth Worker.

Staff are, of course, welcome to build positive relationships with councillors and officers during events and sessions. However, requests relating to expenditure, operational changes, staffing, policy, funding or strategic decisions should be directed through the Lead Youth



Worker. This ensures consistent communication, avoids duplication and enables the Lead Youth Worker to fulfil their management responsibilities.

Communication with Families

We value positive relationships with parents and carers.

Staff should:

- be welcoming and approachable;
- provide factual information about sessions;
- refer safeguarding concerns or complaints to the Lead Youth Worker;
- avoid making promises or commitments without appropriate authority.

Where significant conversations take place with families, these should be shared with the Lead Youth Worker.

Communication with Young People

Our communication should model the relationships we want young people to develop.

We will:

- listen without judgement;
- communicate respectfully;
- use language appropriate to age and understanding;
- encourage participation and independence;
- maintain professional boundaries at all times.

Social Media & Digital Communication

To protect young people, staff and the reputation of JPYC, all communication with young people must remain professional and appropriate.

Staff must:

- Communicate with young people only through approved JPYC communication channels where appropriate.
- Never use personal social media accounts to communicate with young people.



- Not accept or send friend requests, follow requests or similar connections with current young people attending JPYC sessions on personal social media accounts.
- If a young person follows or sends a friend request to a member of staff, the request should be declined or the young person removed as a follower where the platform allows.
- Ensure personal social media accounts are appropriately secured with suitable privacy settings.
- Never share confidential information, photographs or identifying information about young people without the appropriate consent and authorisation.
- Report any accidental or inappropriate online contact with a young person to the Lead Youth Worker as soon as possible.

Staff should remember that they remain representatives of JPYC outside of sessions and should conduct themselves online in a way that maintains professional boundaries and public confidence in the organisation.

This policy does not prevent staff from maintaining public professional profiles where these are unrelated to their role at JPYC. However, current JPYC young people should not be encouraged to engage with these profiles, and staff should maintain appropriate professional boundaries at all times.

Professional Boundaries

Staff should not:

- bypass agreed management processes;
- commit JPYC to activities, purchases or partnerships without authorisation;
- speak on behalf of JPYC unless authorised;
- undermine colleagues through communication with families, councillors or external organisations.

Questions, concerns and new ideas are always welcomed and should be raised through the appropriate management channels.



Timesheets and Payroll

Accurate payroll is an important part of our operational responsibilities.

To ensure consistency and appropriate authorisation:

- All timesheets must be submitted to the **Lead Youth Worker** by the agreed deadline.
- The Lead Youth Worker will review and authorise timesheets before forwarding them to the Parish Office for processing.
- Timesheets should **not** be sent directly to the Parish Clerk or other council officers unless specifically requested by the Lead Youth Worker.
- Any additional hours, overtime or changes to normal working hours should be agreed in advance wherever reasonably possible.
- Staff are responsible for ensuring the hours recorded are accurate.

This process provides an appropriate audit trail and supports accurate payroll administration.

Raising Ideas

JPYC values innovation and creativity.

We encourage staff to:

- suggest new activities;
- identify training opportunities;
- recommend equipment;
- propose partnerships;
- share ideas that improve young people's experiences.

Ideas should be discussed with the Lead Youth Worker so they can be considered alongside budgets, safeguarding, staffing capacity and strategic priorities.

If Things Go Wrong

Mistakes happen.

We are committed to a culture of learning rather than blame.

Where communication difficulties arise, we will:



- address them early;
- speak directly and respectfully;
- seek solutions collaboratively;
- reflect on learning;
- maintain positive working relationships.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if organisational needs change.

Staff Declaration

I have read and understood the JPYC Communications Policy.

I understand my responsibilities regarding professional communication, confidentiality, decision-making and authorisation processes, and agree to work in accordance with this policy.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____