

5.07 Social Networking Policy

The internet provides a number of benefits for staff. However when someone is identified with the setting or discusses their work, they are expected to behave appropriately when on the internet. The principles set out in this policy should always be followed. If in doubt then details should be discussed in the first instance with the manager.

Social networking sites allow photographs, videos and comments to be shared with thousands of other users. However it is not appropriate to share work-related information whether written or pictorial in this way. Staff members should respect the privacy and the feelings of others.

Staff are in a professional position and are responsible for the care and education of children. Therefore they must not engage in activities on the internet which might bring the setting or its associated employees into disrepute.

Our use of social networking applications, such as Facebook, has implications for our duty to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults.

Aim

- That our duty to safeguard children is maintained
- That the setting is not exposed to legal risk
- That the reputation of the setting is not adversely affected
- That our users are able to clearly distinguish where information provided via social networking applications is legitimately representative of the setting
- That we do not damage our reputation
- That we recognise our legal responsibilities

Objectives

- Sites to be aware of include: Social networking sites (i.e. Facebook, Bebo, Myspace, Chat roulette), blogs (i.e. Blogger), discussion forums (i.e. Mumsnet, Ming), collaborative spaces (i.e. Wetpaint), media sharing services (i.e. You Tube) , microblogging (i.e. Twitter)
- All staff should bear in mind that information they share through social networking applications, even though they are on private spaces, are still subject to copyright, data protection and freedom of information legislation, The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and other legislation.
- There will be no mention of the setting, names of staff, Committee members or attending children or their families.
- Staff should not encourage parents as friends on social networking sites.
- There will be no uploading of photos of staff, or children and their families on any site.
- Any communications or content you publish that causes damage to the setting or any of its employees, children or families may amount to misconduct or gross misconduct and could lead to dismissal.

Using computers and storing data

Objectives

- No information containing personal details of children and families at the setting should be stored on a home computer.
- No photographs of children and families at the setting should be stored on a home computer.
- If staff have to use their own computers for planning, observations or other documents containing children's names they should transfer documents or print out and erase from their computer as soon as possible.
- Memory sticks if used should be held in a secure place if at home or at the setting.
- Photos of children should not be stored on the settings computer for longer than the time necessary to print them off.
- Photos of children should not be stored on the settings camera once printed off.
- The settings camera should be stored safely whilst the pre-school is closed.

Date to be reviewed – on or before end August 2024