

SAFFRON WALDEN NURSERY SCHOOL

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/deputy.

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 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 roulettes), 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.

- Any communications or contents you publish that causes damage to the setting or any employees, children or families may amount to misconduct or gross misconduct and could lead to dismissal.

Cyber bullying

Saffron Walden Nursery School is committed to ensuring that all of its staff are treated with dignity and respect at work. Bullying and harassment of any kind will not be tolerated in the work place. Cyber-bullying methods could include using text messages, mobile phone calls, instant messenger services, by circulating photos or video clips or by posting comments on web sites, blogs or in chat rooms. Personal blogs that refer to colleagues without their consent is also unacceptable. Employees who cyber-bully a colleague could also face criminal prosecution under various laws, including the Malicious Communications Act 1988.

Security and identity theft

Employees should always be aware that social networking websites are a public forum, particularly if the employee is part of a 'network'. Employees should not assume that their entries on any websites will remain private.

Employees must also be security conscious and should take steps to protect themselves from identity theft, for example by restricting the amount of personal information that they give out. Social networking websites allow people to post detailed personal information such as date of birth, place of birth, place of work, which can all form the basis of security questions and passwords.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of Saffron Walden Nursery School on.....

Signed on behalf of the Management Committee by.....

Reviewed by.....

Signed on behalf of the Management Committee by.....