

General Welfare Requirement: Safeguarding and Promoting Children's Welfare

Children's behaviour must be managed effectively and in a manner appropriate for their stage of development and particular individual needs.

Safeguarding children

1.12.3 Social Networking

Policy statement for St Joseph's Pre-school

The Social Networking policy applies to:

- all staff members employed by St Joseph's Preschool – both paid and voluntary; and
- all parents/carers/relatives of children who attend St Joseph's Preschool.

St Joseph's Pre-school realises that social media, professional network sites, rapid-fire communications, blog sites and personal websites are all useful technologies. Every individual has the opportunity to express and communicate on-line in many ways, and we do not wish to discourage on-line presence. However, we need to impose certain restrictions on an employee as to their profile content in relation to the pre-school and the pass of certain work related information and must comply with the Law with regard to copyright, plagiarism and the General Data Protection Regulations 2018 (GDPR).

The policy includes (but is not limited to) the following:

- Facebook
- Personal blogs
- Twitter
- Instagramme
- Personal web sites
- Snapchat

Procedures

- St Joseph's Pre-school holds you the employee/parent/carer of children individually responsible for reading, knowing and complying with any Social Networking Terms of Service documents of the sites they use.
- Employees of the Pre-school must not list St Joseph's Pre-school on any social networking site.
- Employees must not identify themselves and employees of St Joseph's Pre-school. A social networker becomes, to some extent, a representative of their workplace, and everything he/she posts has the potential to reflect on the group and its image. If a connection to the Pre-school has already been revealed by an employee, posts should contain disclaimers that make it clear that opinions expressed are solely those of the authors and do not represent the views of the group.
- Employees of St Joseph's Pre-school must NOT identify themselves as working with children – this can lead to being a specific target of unscrupulous members of the web in order to gain access to children for paedophile purposes.
- All information regarding anything to do with the Pre-school is not to be discussed or referred to on any such sites, even in private messaging with restricted access between site members.

- There must not be any disclosures of personal information with regards to other members of the Pre-school staff, children using the Pre-school, parents and/or carers.
- Employees must not refer to children or their parents in any way. This includes coded references of people or incidents surrounding them. These can easily be worked out or misinterpreted with disastrous results. St Joseph's Pre-school's relationship with parents is considered to be an important one and valuable asset that can be irrevocably damaged through thoughtless comment.

Friendship/Tagging

- The Pre-school's employees must not have as or request parents of children currently attending the group or their known family members to be network friends. In this social setting it is easy to cross the line by inadvertently discussing the child even with the parent's permission. All pre-school staff must comply with the GDPR 2018 and DPA 2018 in and out of work time.
- Staff members must not equally accept friendship requests from parents or their family members. Polite refusal is perhaps embarrassing initially but carefully chosen words stating that it is the Pre-school's policy (without naming the group) that disallows it. Remember it is other people too who can see posts.

Photographs

- St Joseph's Pre-school employees must never share or post photographs that show any child from the group in any form, even with parental consent. This is strictly not allowed even if the picture format has no connection to the Pre-school, ie. taken in a social aspect.
- The Use of Mobile Phones, Digital Photography and Recording Devices policies¹ and procedure gives additional parameters for the taking of pictures.

Defamatory statements

- Defamatory statements can lead to Lawsuits against the author of the statement and can be at the very least bring bad publicity to St Joseph's Pre-school.

Disciplinary action

- If this policy has been agreed and signed, and not adhered to, disciplinary procedures will be followed (refer to the disciplinary policy and procedure).

St Joseph's Pre-school Facebook page

- Staff members will be asked to support or edit the Pre-school's Facebook page.
- Only photographs of children with written permission from parents/carers will be used.
- The overall administration of the Pre-school's Facebook page lies with the Lead Practitioner. She has responsibility to edit or remove posts that are distasteful.

¹ Policy 1.11 Use of Mobile Phones, Digital Photography and Recording Devices

Associated Policies

- 1.2 Safeguarding Children and Child Protection
- 1.11.1 Use of Mobile Phones, Digital Photography and Recording Devices

Legal Framework

- General Data Protection Regulations 2018
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Human Rights Act (1998)

| Version Number | Author | Purpose of change | Date |
|-----------------------|--------------------|---|-------------|
| 1.0 | K Coupe | New policy | Sept 2014 |
| 2.0 | K Coupe C Ajayi | To comply with GDPR 2018 & DPA 2018, version control and review. Updated following 2 nd ready by C Ajayi. | 7 Nov 2018 |