

Facebook and Social Networking

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Child Protection

The provider must take necessary steps to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Social media and social networking sites play an important role in the lives of many people. We recognise that sites bring risks, but equally there are many benefits to be reaped. This gives clarity to the way in which social media/mobile phones are to be used by the pre-school staff, committee and students at Yaxley & Mellis Pre-School.

It will also provide guidance for parents and carers.

There are too many sites to mention them all by name. This policy covers them all.

A. Use of social networking by staff and committee members in a personal capacity.

B. Comments posted by parents/carers.

A.

Use of social networking by staff and committee members in a personal capacity.

It is possible that a high proportion of staff and committee members will have their own social networking site accounts. It is important for them to protect their professional reputation by ensuring that they use their personal accounts in an appropriate manner. Staff and committee members must maintain confidentiality to protect the children, parents & families and guard Yaxley & Mellis Pre-school's reputation.

Staff/Committee guidelines when using social media sites include but are not limited to:

- In order to maintain professional boundaries staff and committee members should not accept personal invitations to be friends from parents of the pre-school - exceptions to this could be family or pre-existing friendships, prior to a child starting at our setting.
- Staff and committee members will not use the pre-school's name anywhere in their personal profile.
- Staff and committee members must not mention any of the children from the pre-school on their online profiles.
- Staff must not write direct or indirect suggestive comments about work on their online profiles.
- Staff and committee members must not publish photos of the children on their online profiles.
- Staff must not publish photos of other staff while in the pre-school on their online profiles.

- Staff must not write anything about other staff members on their online profiles.
- Staff must not use mobile phones or other personal devices to take photos in the pre-school or to access social networking sites during their working hours.
- Staff must not mention any other settings that work with Yaxley & Mellis Pre-School on their online profile.
- Staff and committee members should review and adjust their privacy settings to give them the appropriate level of privacy and confidentiality.
- Staff and committee members are responsible for adhering to the terms of service of each site they use.
- Personal profiles should not contain any images or videos which may be perceived as inappropriate behaviour for a childcare professional.
- Staff should read and comply with 'Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who Work with Children and Young People'.

Any breaches of the Facebook & Social networking policy will result in disciplinary action, which could result in dismissal.

B. Comments posted by Parents/Carers.

Parents and carers will be made aware of their responsibilities regarding their use of social networking. Methods of pre-school communication include the prospectus, the website, newsletters, letters and verbal discussion. Pre-School policies and documents provide further information regarding appropriate channels of communication and means of resolving differences of opinion. Effective communication following principles of mutual respect is the best policy.

- Parents/carers must not post pictures of pupils, other than their own children on social networking sites where these photographs have been taken at a pre-school event. The pre-school cannot police these sites, and if other children are included in any photographs, you may be asked to remove them as other parents/carers may object.
- Parents/carers should make complaints through official pre-school channels rather than posting them on social networking sites.
- Parents/carers should not post malicious or fictitious comments on social networking sites about any member of the pre-school community.
- The pre-school strongly recommends that parents/carers adhere to the Social Networking Policy and refrain from sending friend requests to staff on social networks.

Yaxley & Mellis Pre-School has a Facebook page available. This is a communication tool for the setting. We will use it to:

- Promote certain events such as parent consultations, trips, social events and educational visitors.

- Give hints and tips for activities the children have enjoyed and home learning ideas.
- To give news - e.g. Committee Meeting dates.

We also want to invite your thoughts and comments.

Our Pre-School Chair, Team Leader and Administration Manager will update the page on a regular basis. They reserve the right to remove any comments at any time. The intent of this policy is to protect the privacy and rights of the pre-school, staff and families.

We will remove any postings that:

- Name specific individuals in a negative way.
- Are abusive or contain inappropriate language or statements.
- Use defamatory, abusive or generally negative terms about any individual.
- Do not show proper consideration for others privacy.
- Breach copyright or fair use laws.
- Contain any photos of children.

Use of Mobile Phones and Digital Photography Policy.

Photographs taken for the purpose of recording a child or group of children participating in activities or celebrating their achievements is an effective form of recording their progression in the Early Years Foundation Stage. However, it is essential that photographs are taken and stored appropriately to safeguard the children in our care.

Staff, visitors and students are not permitted to use their own mobile phones or other personal devices to take or record any images of pre-school children for their own records during the pre-school day.

Procedures

- Under the Data Protection Act of 1998 Yaxley and Mellis Pre-school must seek parental consent to take photographs and use video recorders. Photographs maybe be stored on the pre-school laptop which is password protected until the pre-school ceases to operate, should this occur then all photographs will be deleted from the pre-school network.
- The pre-school tablets and digital camera must not leave the pre-school setting (unless on an educational visit).
- Photographs are printed in the setting by pre-school staff and images are then removed from the tablet/camera memory.
- Photographs of children may be taken and used in accordance with parental consent obtained via the children's admission form.

- Often photographs may contain other children in the background. Events such as Sports Day, outings, Christmas and fundraising events may be recorded by video and photographs by staff and parent/carers but always in full view of all attending.
- Parents/carers must not post photographs or video containing other children on social media websites. (See Policy above).
- Many mobile phones have inbuilt cameras so staff mobile phones must not be used to take pictures of children in our pre-school. .
- **Visitors may only use their phones outside the pre-school building and should be challenged if seen using a camera inappropriately or photographing children. Parents/carers need to use common sense when recording children at sporting events and could be challenged by parents/carers who do not wish their children to be filmed. Parents/carers must also use common sense regarding posting pictures of children on their own social media. (Please see Policy above).**
- The use of cameras and mobile phones are prohibited in toilets.

We believe our staff should be completely attentive during their hours of work to ensure all children in the pre-school receive good quality care and education. Mobile phones must **not** be used during working hours.

- Mobiles must be kept on silent or switched off during working hours and placed in the office in the mobile phone box, located on top of the filing cabinet.
- Staff are asked not to make personal calls during their working hours. However in urgent cases a call may be made from the pre-school land line.
- The pre-school mobile should be used on outings however in the event that this is not available staff may use mobiles on outings for pre-school/emergency use only.

It is the responsibility of all members of staff to be vigilant and report any concerns to the Pre-School Chair. Concerns will be taken seriously, logged and investigated appropriately.

Other policies that relate to this are:

- E-Safety including Mobile Phone & Camera Images
- Safeguarding policy
- Confidentiality policy

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