

**SOCIAL MEDIA, NETWORKING AND ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS POLICY**

Pegasus Childcare Centre realises that social networking and the use of e-mails has now become an integral part of everyday life and that many people enjoy membership of social network sites. We are also well aware that social media sites can become a negative forum for slander, victimisation and bullying and care must be taken not to breach our confidentiality policy or offend anyone when using them.

It is important when using social networking sites and e-mails that staff members maintain confidentiality and ensure proper practice at all times. This is to protect the children and families of the setting along with the staff. It is also to protect the Nursery reputation and the staff’s own personal reputation.

This policy has been designed to give staff members and committee members clear guidelines as to what we are at Pegasus Childcare Centre expect of our staff when accessing social media.

This policy includes but is not limited to, the following specific technologies:

* Personal blogs
* E-mails relating to Pegasus Childcare Centre
* Twitter
* Facebook
* Myspace
* Personal website
* Tiktok
* Google Accounts
* Instagram

When using social networking sites staff/committee members should give careful consideration to the following:

* Staff/committee must not mention any of the children from Nursery on their own profiles/social media unless of their own child/ren
* Staff / committee must not write direct or indirect suggestive comments about work on their social media
* Staff/ committee must not publish photo of other staff members on their social media unless got consent
* Staff/ committee must not write anything about other staff members on their social media unless got consent
* Staff/committee must not mention any of the companies that Pegasus Childcare Centre works with on social media unless got consent
* In order to maintain professional boundaries, staff/committee should not accept personal invitations to be friends from parents/carers at the nursery unless they know them in a personal capacity
* Staff members/committee are advised to set their own personal social media to private so that only friends are able to see their information
* Staff/committee 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
* Any breaches of the social media and social networking policy could result in disciplinary action.
* Personal blogs should have clear disclaimers that the view expressed by the author of the blog is the authors alone and does not represent the views of the setting
* Information published on personal account is subject to the settings confidently and data protection policy
* All postings and photographs posted on blogs, forums, social networking sites are subject to the settings confidentiality and data protection policies.
* Staff/committee should be aware that any disrespectful comments may be seen as libellous.
* Social media activities should not interfere with work commitments.
* Staff/committee must be aware that their actions captured via images, posts, comments, videos etc can be reflected on the setting.
* Respect copyright laws, use references or site sources appropriately. Plagiarism applies online as well.
* Nursery logos and trademarks may not be used without permission given by management.
* Any employee who becomes aware of social networking activity that would be deemed distasteful, should make their manager/committee aware by implementing the whistle blowing policy.

**Pegasus Childcare Centre Facebook Page**

The Pegasus Childcare Centre Facebook Page is a communication and advertising tool for the setting. We use it to promote certain events, keeping others updated with what we are doing and advertising our setting. We do this by posting status, photos and/or videos.

The Page administrator is Paige Shackleton and Emma Thornalley and they will update the page on a regular basis. Paige Shackleton and Emma Thornalley reserves the right to remove any comments at any time. The intent of the policy is to protect the privacy and rights of the Nursery, 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 or do not show proper consideration for others, breach copyright or fair use laws or contain any photos of children without the necessary parenteral consent.

* Parental consent is given in child’s emergency contact information and a letter or email will get sent out for asking for permission again if their child is going to be in the newspaper / parish pump / website etc
* If a parenteral consent has not been given that’s child’s artwork / hands / feet etc will not be uploaded onto the Pegasus social media page / newspaper / website etc

Here is a quick outline -

* **At no point will there ever be a child's name on our Facebook page or any photos of the children posted, unless has permission for parent/carers**
* We ask parents/carers for permission for their child’s artwork to go on the Facebook page. They give this in written permission.
* All things that are being uploaded to our Facebook page will be checked 2 by staff members before uploading.
* We also keep a very close eye on who can see our page, comment on posts and share our posts. Any negative comments or behaviour will be removed straight away.

Any breaches of this policy will be subject to the setting’s Disciplinary Procedure, please also see ICT policy, confidentiality policy, safeguarding policy for more information.

Posts and messages from followers

Sending a message/post via Facebook or Twitter will not be considered as contacting the Centre for official purposes and we will not be obliged to monitor or respond to requests for information through these channels. Instead, please make direct contact with the Centre by emailing Pegasuschildcare1@outlook.com

We retain the right to remove comments or content that includes:

* Obscene or racist content
* Personal attacks, insults, or threatening language
* Potentially libellous statements.
* Plagiarised material; any material in violation of any laws, including copyright
* Private, personal information published without consent
* Information or links unrelated to the content of the forum
* Commercial promotions or spam
* Alleges a breach of a Centre policy or the law

The Centre’s response to any communication received not meeting the above criteria will be to either ignore, inform the sender of our policy or send a brief response as appropriate. This will be at the Centre’s discretion based on the message received, given our limited resources available. Any information posted on the Facebook page not in line with the above criteria will be removed as quickly as practically possible. Repeat offenders will be blocked from the Facebook page. The Centre may post a statement that ‘*A post breaching the Centre’s Policy has been removed*’. If the post alleges a breach of a Centre’s policy or the law the person who posted it will be asked to submit a formal complaint to the Centre or report the matter to the Police as soon as possible to allow due process.

Pegasus Childcare Centre Website

Where necessary, we may direct those contacting us to our website to see the required information, or we may forward their question to one of our committee members for consideration and response. We may not respond to every comment we receive particularly if we are experiencing a heavy workload.

Pegasus Childcare centre emails

The Centre has a generic email address:

Pegasuschildcare1@outlook.com

The email account is monitored mainly during opening hours, though if we are busy this will not be undertaken every day. We aim to reply to all questions sent as soon as we can. An ‘out of office’ message will be used when appropriate.

The Manger is responsible for dealing with email received and passing on any relevant mail to staff, trustees or external agencies for information and/or action. All communications on behalf of the Centre will usually come from the Manager, Deputy Manager or Chair of the management committee and/ where appropriate will be copied to these individuals,

Individual staff members may, with the consent of the manager communicate directly with parents or other agencies in relation to their work and these emails will be copied to the manager and/or Chair.

These procedures will ensure that a complete and proper record of all correspondence is kept.

Do not forward personal information on to other people or groups outside of the Centre, this includes names, addresses, email, IP addresses and cookie identifiers.

SMS (texting).

Staff and trustees may use SMS as a convenient way to communicate at times. All are reminded that this policy also applies to such messages.

Internal communication and access to information within the Centre.

The Centre is continually looking at ways to improve its working and the use of social media and electronic communications is a major factor in delivering improvement.

Staff and trustees are expected to abide by the Code of Conduct assigned to them and the Data Protection Act in all their work on behalf of the Centre.

 As more and more information becomes available at the press of a button, it is vital that all information is treated sensitively and securely. Staff and Trustees are expected to maintain an awareness of the confidentiality of information that they have access to and not to share confidential information with anyone. Failure to properly observe confidentiality may be seen as a breach of the Centre’s Code of Conduct and will be dealt with through its prescribed procedures (at the extreme it may also involve a criminal investigation).

Staff and trustees should also be careful only to cc essential recipients on emails i.e. to avoid use of the ‘Reply to All’ option if at all possible, but of course copying in all who need to know and ensuring that email trails have been removed.

**This policy was reviewed and adopted on** 1st July 2024

 **Signed (Manager)**

**Signed (Chair)**

The Policy will be reviewed every year.

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| **Date of Review** | **Policy Updated** | **Signed (Chair)** |
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