Version: 2

Social Networking Policy

Introduction

Reepham Pre-school recognises that social networking has now become an integral part of every day life and that many people enjoy membership of social network sites such as Facebook or Twitter. Social media allows for the free and easy exchange of information, opinions and images, however, we are also well aware that these sites can become a negative forum for complaining or gossiping and care must be taken not to breach our confidentiality policy or offend anyone when using these sites. With particular regard to images of children and to enable our setting to comply with its strict safeguarding requirements, it is necessary to set out terms around the use of social media in connection with how our setting is presented publicly.

This policy covers all forms of social media and applies to all Staff members, Management Committee members, volunteers, students and parents/carers. It has been written to give Staff/Management Committee members, volunteers, students and parents/carers clear guidelines as to what we at Reepham Pre-School expect when accessing these sites.

Aim

* To inform Staff, Management Committee, volunteers, students and parents/carers within our setting of the procedures for any use on all social media sites.

Procedures

**Social Media and Employees/Management Committee members:**

Reepham Pre-School recognises that employees and Management Committee members may be regular users of social media and has no intention to curtail their use of it beyond reasonable requests to adhere to safeguarding regulations and professionalism. With this in mind the following procedures apply:

* You are advised not to reveal publicly on social media that you are employed by/manage Reepham Pre-School.
* You must not discuss pre-school (including colleagues, children, parents/carers or the organisation) in conversations that take place on social media in any way that goes beyond giving out information which is already freely available on our setting’s website, noticeboards or newsletters.
* Remember at all times in or out of working hours you are an ambassador for Reepham Pre-school, your online presence reflects on the setting. Be aware that your actions captured via images, posts or comments can reflect on our setting.

1

* It is recognised that potential parents may ask publicly for opinions on our setting and other establishments in the area. You are advised not to engage in such discussions.
* If you become aware of any conversation taking place on social media about our setting, and the tone of that conversation is critical of individual staff, Management Committee members, then it must be reported to the Manager/Chairperson for investigation.
* As tempting as it may be to defend colleagues and/or Management Committee members, you should not enter into such conversations, unless it is to repeat information already publicly available or to pass on an official statement prepared by the Manager/Chairperson in response to the discussion.
* Employees must not create any social media friendships with parents of current children at our setting – this is so that the Manager can be confident that the correct professional relationships are being maintained between staff and parents/carers. An exception to this rule will be made if an employee has an existing relationship with a child’s parent before that child begins at our setting. This rule will no longer apply once a child has moved on from our setting.
* You are advised not to place images of any children attending our setting, without consent, onto social media.
* Any breaches of this policy will be investigated and could result in disciplinary action being taken against the individual concerned, which may result in the termination of your contract/membership.

**Social Media and Volunteers/Students:**

Reepham Pre-School recognises that volunteers and students may be regular users of social media and has no intention to curtail their use of it beyond reasonable requests to adhere to safeguarding regulations and professionalism. It is also recognised that such individuals may not have the training on safeguarding that an employee has, so all volunteers and students will be shown a copy of appropriate policies and the following brief guidelines are provided:

* Remember that nothing you put onto social media can be considered fully private, no matter how strong your privacy settings are.
* Do not state on social media where you will be volunteering/on placement.
* Do not discuss our setting in any way on social media; this includes the organisation, its location, its policies and procedures, its staff/committee members, its children and its parents/carers. This rule continues to apply after you have finished your volunteering/placement and exists to ensure appropriate confidentiality and professionalism can be maintained by our setting and its staff in relation to how it is presented publicly.
* If you become aware of any discussion taking place on social media about our setting, do not enter into it. However, if anything about the discussion gives you cause for concern, then it should be reported to the Manager.

2

* Do not attempt to establish any relationships with parents/carers of children at our setting on social media during the course of your volunteering/placement. The only exception that will be allowed to this rule is if you have an existing social media relationship with a parent/carer that began before your volunteering/placement.
* Will not take photographs within our setting using your own phone. If you are asked to take photographs of children then they must only be taken using the camera that belongs to our setting. You are advised not to place images of any children attending our setting onto social media.
* Respect Copyright laws, and reference or cite sources appropriately. Plagiarism applies online as well.
* Nursery Logos and trademarks may not be used without written consent.

**Social Media and Parents/Carers**

Reepham Pre-School recognises that parents/carers and their families may be regular users of social media and has no intention to curtail their use of it beyond reasonable requests to adhere to safeguarding regulations and professionalism. It is also recognised that such individuals may not be wholly familiar with the requirements of safeguarding so the following brief guidelines are provided:

* Remember that nothing you put onto social media can be considered fully private, no matter how strong your privacy settings are.
* Be cautious how you discuss our setting in conversations on social media. Do not reveal:
* The location of Pre-School
* The names of staff members/volunteers working at our setting, or anything else that could reveal their identities.
* The names of other children and their parents/carers who attend our setting, or anything else that could reveal their identities.
* If you have any negative opinions or concerns about any aspect of how our setting is run, do not discuss it on social media. Such concerns should always be reported to the Manager so that they can be discussed, investigated and resolved formally.
* If any opinions are discussed on social media which result in any detrimental effect on our setting, its employees, its children or its parents/carers, then Reepham Pre-School will follow formal proceedings to investigate.
* Do not create any social media friendships with staff/volunteers/students at our setting – this is so that the Manager can be confident that the correct professional are being maintained between staff and parents/carers.

3

The only exception that will be allowed to this rule is if you have an existing social media relationship with an employee or volunteer/student that began before your child attended our setting. This rule no longer applies once your child has moved on from our setting.

* If you become aware of any conversation taking place on social media about our setting and the tone of that conversation is critical of individual staff members or of the organisation, then it must be reported to the Manager for investigation.
* Any photographs taken at special events that have happened within our setting are for personal use only and should not be put onto social media.
* Respect Copyright laws, and reference or cite sources appropriately. Plagiarism applies online as well.
* Personal blogs should have clear disclaimers that the views expressed by the author in the blog is the author’s alone and do not represent the views of the nursery Be clear and write in first person. Make your writing clear that you are speaking for yourself and not on behalf of the Pre-School.
* Nursery Logos and trademarks may not be used without written consent.
* Always be respectful to;
* The Pre-school
* Other staff members,
* Parents and relatives,
* Children,
* Partners,
* Competitors.

Other Relevant Policies

Confidentiality

Safeguarding Children

Volunteer

Student Placement

ICT and Mobile Phone Use

4

This policy has been adopted by Reepham Pre-school.

Signed on behalf of the setting by:

*…………………………………………………….……………*Committee

*………………………………………………………………….* Manager

Date:…………………………………

*Review Date:……………………….*

5