

# SOCIAL NETWORKING POLICY

## INTRODUCTION

Social networking sites, such as Facebook and Twitter, are now the communication form of choice amongst young people, parents and professionals alike, providing them with a powerful voice to express opinions, contact friends and share multimedia content at little to no cost. For this very reason, Daisies Montessori Nursery School has set up a Facebook page as a contemporary means of marketing our services. The Facebook account will be used to market our services, share information about ongoing events (in addition to all our usual channels), as a way to meet other providers in the area and create links with our community.

## RISKS

There are always going to be risks to using any form of communication which lies within the public domain. Therefore, it is imperative that there are clear rules, procedures and guidelines to minimise those risks to:

- The staff managing the social networking account (e.g. allegations and inappropriate contact)
- Members of the public who are linked to the social networking account, particularly children and young people (e.g. grooming, cyberbullying or exposure to harmful and inappropriate content)
- Reputational damage to the company's name and brand (e.g. bad language, inappropriate comments from the public, complaints etc.)

Whilst Daisies Montessori Nursery School acknowledges that every effort will be made to safeguard against all risks, it is likely that we will never be able to completely eliminate them. Any safeguarding related incidents that may occur will be dealt with quickly and according to our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy to ensure children and young people continue to be protected.

## SCOPE OF POLICY

This policy applies to all staff members involved in the daily operations and management of the social networking account. All staff must be aware of the guidelines and procedures for contacting and communicating with young people and members of the public via the social networking account. This is not only to ensure professionalism in staff communications, but also to safeguard against misunderstandings or allegations. For this reason, all staff involved are required to read and sign acceptable use rules before commencing work on the account.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

The very nature of social networking means that it is never truly possible to connect exclusively with one demographic (e.g. parents) meaning that contact with, or connections to, young people is inevitable at some point. For this reason, appropriate consideration must be given towards ensuring that the social networking account is a safe environment for all members of the community to participate in.

## SENIOR STAFF

- Read and sign the code of conduct for professional behaviour when using the Facebook group.
- Only the owner and manager will have administrative rights for the page and will be allowed to publish content on the page.
- To create the account, a generic work/business email address should be used and never an individual's work email address, or personal Facebook details. This allows for any future personnel changes within the team and prevents individuals from receiving unwanted contact.
- Only pictures of the setting and the activities (hands in action) might be used on the page. We don't post pictures of the children on the page.
- Report any illegal online content to the Internet Watch Foundation ([www.iwf.org.com](http://www.iwf.org.com))

## ALL STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

- Be aware of relevant Policies and know how to report a Safeguarding and Child Protection concern.
- Know who the designated lead for Child Protection is within Daisies Montessori Nursery School.
- Be able to signpost young people or parents to further online safeguarding support e.g. [www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk).
- Ensure that privacy settings for their personal social networking sites are set to a maximum to minimise the risk of members of the public accessing inappropriate information or images of a staff member.
- Avoid linking their personal online presence (i.e. Facebook account) to the corporate social networking account. Private communications, or the potential to establish private contact between staff and the public, is inadvisable and strictly prohibited where children and young people are concerned.
- Ensure that professional email addresses are used for any correspondence with the public, particularly young people, so as to minimise risk of misunderstanding or allegations.
- Ensure that children and young people are protected and supported in their use of technologies so that they know how to use them in a safe and responsible manner. Children and young people should know what to do in the event of an incident.

## INAPPROPRIATE USE BY A STAFF MEMBER OR VOLUNTEER

In the event that a member of staff is believed to have misused the social networking group in an abusive or illegal manner, a report must be made to the designated lead for Child Protection immediately. The Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy should then be followed to deal with any misconduct and all appropriate authorities contacted.