

Little Elves Community Pre-School

Safeguarding children

Social networking

Introduction

The use of online social networking sites (including, but not limited to, Facebook, Myspace, LinkedIn, and Twitter etc) has become a very significant part of life for many people. These sites provide a very positive way to keep in touch with friends and colleagues, and can be used to exchange ideas and thoughts on common interests, both personal and work-related. However, there have been occurrences where these services have been used for less positive reasons or during working hours, hence the need for formal guidance.

Use of Social Network Sites - Employment Conditions

If an employee's personal internet presence does not make any reference to the Setting or cannot be identified, the content is unlikely to be of concern to the Setting. If employment at Little Elves Community Pre-School is referred to then the information posted **MUST** comply with the employment conditions outlined below.

- Instances where the Setting is brought into disrepute may constitute misconduct or gross misconduct and disciplinary action will be applied.
- An employee **MUST NOT** disclose confidential information relating to his/her employment at Little Elves Community Pre-School.
- An employee **MUST NOT** disclose details of any children attending the setting.
- Sites **MUST NOT** be used to verbally abuse or harass staff, committee members or parents. Privacy and feelings of others must be respected at all times. Employees must obtain the permission of individuals before posting contact details or pictures. Care should be taken to avoid using language

which could be deemed as offensive to others. Remember that what you consider to be appropriate may be considered offensive by others.

- If information on the site raises a cause for concern with regard to conflict of interest, employees should raise the issue with their line manager.
- Viewing and updating personal sites may not take place during working times, unless in exceptional circumstances, such as where activities form part of a project, and this has been agreed in advance as appropriate by the line manager
- Safeguarding is paramount and no reference whatsoever may be made relating to any child/family/staff/ committee member at the setting.
- Sites **MUST NOT** be used for accessing or sharing illegal content.
- Any serious misuse of Social Networking sites which has a negative impact on Little Elves Community Pre-School will be regarded as a disciplinary offence. This includes any conduct which may, in the Manager's opinion, damage Little Elves Community Pre-School's reputation or undermine our policies, breach confidentiality, or defame a third party. Please consider whether your communications are appropriate and professional. This includes comments made through Instant Messenger applications.
- If parents/staff/committee members become 'friends' on the social networking site, staff and committee members should ensure that no discussion/statement relates to the setting or anyone involved at the setting, whether it be negative or positive. Status updates must be appropriate and may not include any reference to work. Remember how statements such as 'I have had a terrible day' may be viewed irrespective of whether they relate to work.
- What you post on a site is open to scrutiny by others, and may impact on your role within the setting where outside activities are discussed.

Little Elves Community Pre-School does not discourage staff from using such services. However, all should be aware that Little Elves Community Pre-School will take seriously any occasions where the services are used inappropriately.

Use of Social Network Sites – Personal Safety

Protect your own personal information online. The threat of identity theft can be significantly reduced if you exercise caution regarding the data you make public. Do not publish personal data (including, but not limited to, address, telephone numbers, birth date) or any details which advertise, for example, that your home is empty for 2 weeks whilst you are away on holiday.

If you decide to meet someone in person from online, go to a public place and let friends and family know your plans.

This policy was adopted at a meeting of	Little Elves Community Pre-School
Held on	<hr/> 31 March 2011 (date)
Date to be reviewed	<hr/> (date)
Signed on behalf of the management committee	
Name of signatory	<hr/> Victoria Rawlinson
Role of signatory (e.g. chair/owner)	<hr/> Chairperson

Other useful Pre-School Learning Alliance publications:

- Child Protection Record (2007)