



Social Media and Social Networking Policy

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Date reviewed: 27/06/2023

Introduction to Brookside pre-school's policy on the use of social media.

Social networking sites allow for more personal information to be accessed by the public than ever before. With this in mind, because of the very nature of our business we have a strict policy regarding our employees' and volunteers use of social networking sites.

Whilst we do not discourage employees' and volunteers from using social networking sites, we need to impose certain restrictions on an employee or volunteer as to their profile content in relation to Brookside pre-School and the passing of certain work-related information and must comply within the law with regard to copyright, plagiarism and the Data Protection Act.

This policy covers (but is not limited to) the following social media channels:

Facebook Instagram Twitter LinkedIn Personal Blogs

The scope of this policy applies to the following people:

- Employees, volunteers and students (referred to as "Staff" for the purpose of this policy).
- Parents/Carers

1. Social Media Use Procedure for Members of Staff

Brookside pre-school recognises that staff 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.

- Staff must not list the name 'Brookside pre-school' on any social networking site and must not identify themselves as an employee of Brookside pre-school. All members of staff are reminded that nothing you put onto social media can be considered fully private, no matter how strong the privacy settings are.
- A social networker becomes, to some extent, a representative of their workplace, and everything s/he posts has the potential to reflect on the pre-school and its image.
- Staff must not discuss Brookside pre-school (including colleagues, children, parents 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 the Brookside pre-school website.
- If a member of staff becomes aware of any conversation taking place on social media about Brookside pre-school, and the tone of that conversation is critical of individual staff members or of the organisation, then it must be reported to the pre-school Manager for investigation.

- As tempting as it may be to defend colleagues and/or the organisation, staff should not enter such conversations, unless it is to repeat information already publicly available on the Brookside pre-school website or to pass on an official statement prepared by the Manager and/or the Committee in response to the discussion.
- Staff must not have, accept or request parents of children currently attending the setting or their known family members to be network friends. This measure is to ensure that the Manager can be confident that the correct professional relationships are being maintained between staff and parents. This rule no longer applies once a child has left Brookside pre-school. It also does not apply to parent committee members.
- Any member of staff who is friends with a parent must complete and sign a disclosure stating that they are existing friends, and that the friendship will not affect their professional relationship as a member of staff and parent.
- All pre-school staff must comply with the Data Protection Act in and out of work time.
- Staff must never share or post photographs that show any child from the preschool in any form; on personal social networking accounts / websites / blogs; even with parental consent and even if the format has no connection with the setting (e.g. taken at a social occasion).
- Any breaches of this policy will be investigated and could result in disciplinary action being taken against the individual concerned.

3. Social Media Use Procedure for Parents and/or Carers

- Brookside 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 Brookside pre-school's Safeguarding regulations.

It is also recognises that such parents/carers may not be wholly familiar with the requirements of early years Safeguarding requirements, 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 on how you discuss Brookside pre-school, members of staff and other pre-school children and their families, in conversations on social media.
- If you have any negative opinions or concerns about any aspect of how Brookside pre-school is run, do not discuss it on social media. Such concerns should always be reported to the Manager so that they can be investigated, discussed and resolved formally.
- If any opinions are discussed on social media which result in any detrimental effect on preschool, its staff, its children or its parents/carers, then Brookside pre-school will follow formal proceedings to investigate.
- Do not create any social media friendships with staff/volunteers at Brookside pre-school. This is so that the Manager can be confident that the correct professional relationships are being maintained between staff and parents. This rule no longer applies once your child has left Brookside pre-school.
- If you become aware of any conversation taking place on social media about Brookside pre-school 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.