



7.03 Social Media Policy

POLICY STATEMENT

The use of social media such as Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, Twitter, Weblogs, Flickr and Instant Messaging (including SMS) has increased significantly in recent years. Approved Providers generally accept that staff will use social media in their personal lives to keep in touch with friends, share ideas and engage in online discussions. However, they also recognise the potential for damage that the misuse of social media can cause to their business, staff members, children and families. Such damage can be occasioned when the comments are untoward, and the staff members can be identified within the service.

All staff need to be aware that they are personally responsible for the content they publish in a personal capacity on any social media platform. They also need to accept that any comments they post are usually available to a far wider audience than intended and may be permanent.

AIM

Our service aims to ensure that the preschool, children, staff and families are protected from being compromised in any form of social media. This policy provides guidelines for the publication of, and commentary on, social media by staff and others who can be identified as relating to the preschool.

STANDARDS AND PROCEDURES

When participating in social media, staff should:

- Be respectful to and about others at all times;
- Assume that the comments that they post may be available to persons other than those for whom the communication was intended;
- Be certain not to disclose other people's personal information or publish images of others without permission. Recognise that a person may be readily identifiable even when not named;
- Re-read and reconsider what is being said before posting it.

When participating in social media, staff must not:

- Imply they are authorised to speak for the preschool nor for the Approved Provider unless they have permission or instruction to do so;
- use the preschool's email or any logos or branding pertaining to the preschool when conducting personal business or expressing personal views;
- Use the identity or likeness of another employee, customer, supplier or business partner, etc;
- Publish or report on conversations or information that is deemed confidential or classified or deals with matters that are internal in nature;
- Use or disclose any information (including photographs or videos) relating to children and families, other staff or anyone connected with the preschool, obtained through their employment at the preschool; and
- Make any comment or post any material that might otherwise cause damage to staff member's reputation or bring the preschool into disrepute. This includes any comments that are defamatory, harassing, bullying, discriminatory, insulting, obscene or in any other way harmful.

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Identifying inappropriate use:

- Staff who notice inappropriate or unlawful content online in any way relating to the preschool, or content that may be in breach of this policy, should inform the Nominated Supervisor immediately.

Harassment, bullying and discrimination

- Abusive, harassing, threatening or defaming postings which are in breach of any of the preschool's policies may result in disciplinary action being taken, even if such comments are made using private social media networks outside of working hours. All staff and others connected with the preschool are expected to treat each other with respect and dignity, and ensure their behaviour both online and while at the preschool does not constitute unlawful discrimination, bullying or harassment in any form.

Access to social media at preschool

- The preschool's computers and other communication devices are for work purposes only, and not for conducting personal business or for participating on social media websites during working hours or otherwise;
- Staff are not to use their personal mobiles, computers or other electronic devices to access social media in any form during rostered work hours except during lunch breaks;

Photographs

- Staff are not to use their personal cameras, mobile phones or other electronic devices to take photographs while at the preschool or on excursion unless prior permission is given by the Nominated Supervisor. This may be in relation to a specific experience, research with children, shortage of room cameras, etc. The requirements of this policy are to be met at all times with regard to this usage.
- If prior permission is given for staff to use their personal devices for photographs, these must be downloaded and deleted from that device as soon as possible.
- No photographs taken at preschool can be used on social media without permission and consultation with the Nominated Supervisor
- Photographs stored on staff USB drives can only be used for the purpose of authorised preschool documentation. At the end of each year, all photos should be backed up onto the shared drive at preschool and permanently deleted from the staff member's USB. Staff are reminded to use this back-up process on a weekly basis to ensure the photographs they have taken are not lost as a result of USB failure or loss.
- Any staff member whose actions are deemed to be in breach of this policy could face disciplinary action.
- Where necessary, disciplinary action will be determined by the Approved Provider according to the circumstances of the case. Counselling, mediation, retraining and the issue of written warnings may be considered by the Approved Provider as possible remedies. In severe circumstances, failure to act in accordance to this policy could result in termination of employment.

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS

Children (Education and Care Services) National Law NSW

- 168 - Education and care service must have policies and procedures
- 181 - Confidentiality of records kept by approved provider

SOURCE LIST

This section contains websites, industry bodies, or Legislation that have been used to assist in sourcing the information for this policy. It also acts as a guide to sourcing further reading on each relevant policy.

- [Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority](#)
- [Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011](#)
- [Guide to the National Quality Standard](#)
- [ECA Code of Ethics](#)
- [Revised National Quality Standard](#)
- [NSW Department of Education Social Media Policy](#)

RELATED POLICIES

- 1.03 Technology Policy
- 4.01 Bullying, Discrimination and Harassment Policy
- 4.02 Code of Conduct Policy
- 4.03 Grievance Policy (Educator)

POLICY REVIEW

The review schedule has been developed using a risk assessment methodology with consideration given to sector, industry, and legislative changes.

Date reviewed	Policy changed		Modifications	Next Review Date
September 2018	Yes	No	Terminology improvements made to support clearer understanding and implementation	October 2019