



Hambledon Youth Hut
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1.14 Internet Usage & Social Networking

Policy statement

This policy outlines the Pre-School's approach to internet usage, social networking and the use of blogs. It details the procedures for staff, volunteers and committee members, who should ensure that internet usage and content of their social networking sites/blogs does not bring the setting into disrepute or breach of their obligations under the setting's Code of Conduct.

Hambledon Pre-School recognises that staff may use the internet for personal purposes and may participate in social networking on sites such as Facebook, Instagram Twitter. Staff must ensure they do not breach the law or disclose any confidential information about the setting, children or families of the Pre-School. All staff should bear in mind that information they share through social networking applications, even though they are on private spaces, are still subject to copyright, data protection and freedom of information legislation, the safeguarding vulnerable groups act 2006 and other legislation.

Definitions

The term '**blog**' is short for 'web log'. A blog is an online diary detailing personal insights and experiences. This is shared with an online audience.

A '**social network site**' is a website, which allows individuals to construct a public or semi-public online profile and to connect with others who share similar interests and views.

Sites to be aware of include:

- Social networking sites i.e. Facebook, Bebo, Myspace, Chat roulette
- Blogs i.e. Blogger
- Discussion forums i.e. Mumsnet, Ming
- Collaborative spaces i.e. Wetpaint
- Media sharing services i.e. You Tube
- Microblogging i.e. Twitter

Aims

- That our duty to safeguard children is maintained
- That the setting is not exposed to legal risk
- That the reputation of the setting is not adversely affected
- That our users are able to clearly distinguish where information provided via social networking applications is legitimately representative of the setting
- That we do not damage our reputation
- That we recognise our legal responsibilities

Procedures

Technology has developed over recent years and is continuing to evolve. The internet contains a wealth of information as well as having a profound effect on the way we communicate including instant messaging, emailing and text messaging.

Hambledon Pre-School staff are expected to:

- use a range of technological resources to manage their roles as professionals
- to be enabled to use the internet to research and communicate professionally

- to use online systems to track and record the progress of children and to share their work
- to communicate with parents and carers through newsletters, email or the internet
- to be able to manage administrative tasks and systems.

All of the above points are recognised for their indirect value in supporting the learning and development of children and young people.

- Any abusive, inappropriate or illegal misuse of ICT equipment by a member of staff should be reported immediately to the e-safety person. Where misuse relates to abuse and safeguarding, Children's Social Care, the Local Authority Designated Officer, Ofsted or the Police must be notified as applicable.
- Our e-safety person is: Emily Moore
- **Our designated person for LADO**
Barbara Piddington / Eric Skates
Tel: 01962 876364 Fax: 01962 876229 (secure line)
E-mail: child.protection@hants.gcsx.gov.uk
- Under no circumstances does our setting justify adults possessing indecent images of children. Adults who access and possess links to such websites will be viewed as a significant and potential threat to children. Accessing, making and storing indecent images of children is illegal. This will lead to criminal investigation and the individual being barred from working with children, if proven. Adults should not use equipment belonging to the Pre-School to access adult pornography; neither should personal equipment containing these images or links to them be brought into our setting. This will raise serious concerns about the suitability of the adult to continue to work with children.

- Where possible, our setting ensures that children are supervised at all times when using the internet and are not exposed to unsuitable material, images or web links on the internet.
- Our setting ensures that internet equipment used by children have the appropriate controls with regards to access. e.g. personal passwords should be kept confidential
- Where possible, our setting makes sure that virus and network security settings (ie Firewall) are in place. In order to protect our setting, staff must be aware of viruses which could lurk in emails. Whilst using the Pre-School internet facilities, staff must not open any emails from names that aren't recognised in order to protect the Pre-School computer from potential viruses.
- Staff must not access personal blogs/social networking sites on work premises or use the setting's internet systems or email address for their own use, without prior agreement or in accordance with the setting's policy.
- The setting does not condone employees writing about their work on social networking sites or web pages but asks them not to do so. If employees choose to do so, they are expected to follow the procedures below.

Staff must not:

- Disclose any information that is confidential to the setting or any third party or disclose personal data or information about any individual child, colleague or service user, which could be in breach of the Data Protection Act.
- Disclose the name of the setting or allow it to be identified by any details at all (i.e. branded clothing). This includes posting photos of **children and young people**, the premises or events with work colleagues.

- Link their own blogs/personal web pages to the setting's website.
- Make defamatory remarks about the setting, colleagues or service users or engage in online bullying of staff, children, parents or committee members.
- Misrepresent the setting by posting false or inaccurate statements.

Communication with children and young people, by whatever method, should always take place within clear and explicit professional boundaries. Staff should avoid any misinterpretation of their motives or any behaviour that could be construed as grooming.

Staff should not:

- Give their personal email details to children, young people and parents who use the setting.
- Send social networking site 'friend requests' to, or accept them from, children, young people or parents who use the setting.

Failure to adhere to the rules and guidelines in this policy may be considered misconduct and could lead to disciplinary and /or criminal investigations.

Remember that anything posted online could end up in the public domain to be read by children, parents or even future employers – so be careful what you post and who you post it to. For example, posting explicit pictures of yourself could damage your reputation and that of your profession and organisation. Parents may question your suitability to care for children