



SOCIAL NETWORKING POLICY FOR PARENTS & CARERS

INTRODUCTION

'Social Media' is the term commonly given to websites and on-line tools which allow users to interact with each other in some way. The following guidelines are developed to provide the information to make responsible decisions whilst using these tools.

OBJECTIVE

- To promote safe use of social networking for parents, staff and trustees.
- To safeguard the welfare of children using York Childcare nurseries.
- To protect the reputation of each nursery within York Childcare Ltd (YCL) and of the organisation itself.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Confidentiality Policy.

PRINCIPLES

These principles apply to on-line participation in the context of being a user of a YCL nursery and set out the standard of behaviour expected.

YCL encourages positive representation and promotion of the organisation and therefore welcome this through the use of social networking websites. Comments reflect upon the reputation of YCL so we trust that users will act accordingly.

- As users, remember that participation on-line results in comments, activities and photographs being permanently available and open to being republished.
- Users must be responsible and honest at all times.
- Users must be credible, accurate and fair and make sure they are doing the right thing.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

- Children, staff and parents/carers must not be named on such sites to avoid any breaches of confidentiality.
- Users are personally responsible for any content they post.
- Users should never give out their personal details unless totally satisfied that they know who the recipient is and that they are not breaching any regulations in so doing.
- Respect copyright clauses and do not make reference to or quote staff, trustees, parents or any other stakeholders without their approval.
- Do not engage in behaviour which would not be acceptable in the nursery. Show proper consideration for the privacy of others and for topics that may be considered objectionable or inflammatory (eg topics relating to race, politics or religion).
- Do not be confrontational and, as a user, be the first to correct your own mistakes.
- Remember that once information or images are sent to a social networking site, they are no longer private but are classed as now being in the 'public domain'. YCL monitors the use of such sites and seeks the support of all parents and carers in raising awareness of any activity which may bring either an individual or the organisation into disrepute.



RAISING CONCERNS

If issues of concern are raised by individuals, the organisation has a duty of care to investigate and take appropriate action. In the first instance this would typically be a request to remove or amend the relevant text or images. However, if this request does not lead to a resolution, YCL reserves the right to take action. The individuals concerned may also initiate legal action independently of YCL. We are keen that parents and carers do not inadvertently post items which might lead to risk of action. If parents and carers have genuine concerns about postings, the most effective route to having these addressed is to raise the matter with their team leader or nursery manager, following YCL's complaints procedure. Parents and carers are reminded to carefully consider who they 'add as friends' and to be mindful of the links which could be directed to the YCL page as a result.

PROHIBITION OF INAPPROPRIATE MESSAGES

Messages must not be sent or posted if they might cause offence or harassment.

It is forbidden to send any material, in any format, which the recipient or other person who may come into contact with the message may find objectionable.

This would include material, which is:

- Defamatory
- Offensive, distasteful or obscene
- Untrue or malicious
- Spreads gossip
- Likely to constitute bullying or harassment
- In breach of any of York Childcare Ltd's policies
- Of a political or religious nature
- In breach of copyright
- For personal gain
- Likely to bring the organisation or any of its employees into disrepute

YCL reserves the right to block or ban a user from its social networking sites.

MONITORING

YCL appoints persons to hold responsibility for monitoring the use of social networking sites, although the support of all parents & carers, employees and trustees is necessary to make monitoring effective.

BREACH OF POLICY

If a parent or carer is found to be in breach of any of the Social Networking or related policies or procedures, then remedial action will be taken. After consultation with the Trustees, this may result in losing their child's place at the nursery.