

# Workplace Use of Social Media Policy

To be reviewed Bi-Annually.

Policy Agreed April 2019. To be reviewed April 2021.



## 1. Introduction

- Everton Nursery School and Family Centre recognises its statutory responsibilities related to employment. Day to day management of staff is delegated to the Headteacher; ultimate responsibility lies with the Governing Body.
- The Governing Body of Everton Nursery School and Family Centre is committed to ensuring that all staff are aware of their responsibilities in connection with the growing use of social networking sites. It recognises that the use of such sites has become a very significant part of life for many people. They provide a positive way to keep in touch with family, friends and colleagues, and can be used to exchange ideas and thoughts on common interests. Examples of such sites include, but are not limited to, blogs (short for web logs), MySpace, Facebook, Bebo, YouTube, Windows Live Spaces, LinkedIn, forums, bulletin boards, multiplayer online games, chatrooms and instant messenger apps.
- The Governing Body will ensure that all staff are made aware of this policy and any other related ICT protocols. This policy will be easily accessible to staff and the headteacher will make any new or temporary staff aware of this policy.
- The Governing Body expect staff to keep a professional distance from students and to make a clear separation between their private social lives and those of students. Social networking between staff and students is prohibited. The exception to this is where the school social networking sites as a communication tool with parents, the community and the wider population.
- It is important that all staff are able to use technologies and services effectively and flexibly whilst ensuring that they do not make themselves vulnerable. The Governing Body must balance this with their duty to safeguard students and the reputation of the school and the wider community.

## **2. To whom does this policy apply?**

- This policy applies to all employees, governors and volunteers at the school.

## **3. Aims:**

- To enable staff and volunteers to use social networking sites safely and securely
- To ensure staff and volunteers are aware of the risks associated with inappropriate use of social networking sites
- To safeguard staff and volunteers with respect to use of social networking sites and make sure they do not make themselves vulnerable
- To ensure the Governing Body maintains its duty to safeguard students and the reputation of the school
- To ensure duty of care towards staff and volunteers is not adversely affected

## **4. Legislation**

This policy has taken account of the following legislation:

- Human Rights Act 1998
- Data Protection Act 1998/General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) which came into force from 15<sup>th</sup> May 2018
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- Computer Misuse Act 1990, amended by the Police and Justice Act 2006

## **5. Responsibilities**

The Governing Body will:

- Ensure this policy is implemented.
- Ensure that all staff and volunteers have access to this policy and all new employees and volunteers are made aware of it.
- Seek professional advice and support from the Human Resources provider when necessary.
- Take appropriate action, up to and including referring the matter to the police in the case of staff and volunteers being subjected to abuse on social media.

The headteacher will:

- Know this policy and make sure that staff and volunteers also understand the policy and their own responsibilities.
- Ensure that staff and volunteers understand the risks of the use of social networking sites and the possible implications of inappropriate use.
- Instigate disciplinary procedures where appropriate.
- Seek advice from HR providers where necessary in the case of potential misuse.

Staff will:

- Behave responsibly and professionally in connection with their use of social networking sites.
- Co-operate with the headteacher and Governing Body in implementing this policy.

## **6. Use of Social Networking Sites**

For their own security, staff should regularly review their privacy settings on all their social networking sites; however all communication via social networking should be made with the awareness that anything said, shown or received could be made available intentionally or otherwise to an audience wider than that originally intended. If in doubt guidance should be sought from an appropriate manager.

- Staff must not access social networking for personal use through school information systems or using school equipment.
- In no circumstances should staff post photographs of children, except where the staff member's own children attend the school. In these circumstances, staff members may post images of their own children and friends at social events; members of staff should take care to ensure the suitability of the images and that they are not posted in relation to the school.
- Staff must not place inappropriate photographs on any social network.

- Staff must not post indecent or inappropriate remarks.
- If a member of staff receives messages via social networking that they think could be from a student, they must report it to their line manager and contact the internet service or social network so that they can investigate and take the appropriate action.
- Staff are advised not to disclose their affiliation with the school on their profile(s), or write about their work.
- Staff must not disclose any information that is confidential to the school or disclose personal data or information about any individual which could be in breach of the Data Protection Act.
- Staff must not disclose any information about the school that is not yet in the public arena.
- Staff must not make defamatory remarks about the school/colleagues/students/parents or post anything that could potentially bring the school into disrepute.
- Staff must not disclose confidential information relating to their employment at the school.
- Staff must avoid language which could be deemed as offensive.
- Where a school uses social networking for communication purposes, these networks can be accessed via school equipment. School will monitor this closely and only those with administrator rights should communicate in this way. Any misuse or abuse by staff, students or the wider community **must** be reported to the Headteacher.

## **7. Breaches of the Policy**

- The Governing Body does not discourage staff from using social networking; however staff must be aware that they will take inappropriate use of social networking seriously. Any posts or comments which could be deemed online

bullying or harassment will be dealt with in the same way as other instances of bullying or harassment.

- The headteacher may take disciplinary action in the case of allegations of inappropriate use of social networking, depending on the seriousness of the allegations.
- There may be instances where the school would be obliged to inform the police of any activity or behaviour where there are concerns about its legality.
- From time to time, staff and volunteers at school may be subject to abuse on social networking sites in connection with their role in school. Any such abuses must be reported immediately to the headteacher, who will inform governors and take whatever action is possible to deal with the situation and support the affected colleagues.

### **9. Legal Considerations**

It is recognised that all materials on the Internet are copyright unless copyright is specially waived. It is the school's/centre's policy that the copyright of Internet materials will be respected. Where materials are published on the Internet as part of staff professional duties copyright will remain with the City Council. Internet materials will contain due copyright acknowledgements for any third party materials contained within them.

### **Policy Review**

This policy was agreed by the Personnel, Finance and Resources Committee on behalf of the Governing Body of Everton Nursery School and Family Centre on 23/04/2019.