

# Safeguarding Children

## 1.12.3 Social Networking

### Policy statement for St Joseph's Nympsfield Out of School Club

The Social Networking policy applies to:

- all staff members employed by St Joseph's Nympsfield Out of School Club – both paid and voluntary; and
- all parents/carers/relatives of children who attend St Joseph's Nympsfield Out of School Club.

St Joseph's Nympsfield Out of School Club (OOSC) realises that social media, professional network sites, rapid-fire communications, blog sites and personal websites are all useful technologies. Every individual has the opportunity to express and communicate on-line in many ways, and we do not wish to discourage on-line presence. However, we need to impose certain restrictions on an employee as to their profile content in relation to the Club and the pass of certain work related information and must comply with the Law with regard to copyright, plagiarism and the General Data Protection Regulations 2018 (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act (DPA) (2018).

The boundaries between the offline and online world are easily blurred; this can have potentially serious consequences for professionals.

The policy includes (but is not limited to) the following:

- Facebook
- Personal blogs
- Twitter
- Instagram
- Personal web sites
- Snapchat

### Procedures

- St Joseph's Nympsfield Out of School Club holds you the employee/parent/carer of children individually responsible for reading, knowing and complying with any Social Networking Terms of Service documents of the sites they use.
- Employees of the OOSC must not list St Joseph's Nympsfield Out of School Club on any social networking site.
- Employees must not identify themselves and employees of St Joseph's Nympsfield Out of School Club. A social networker becomes, to some extent, a representative of their workplace, and everything he/she posts has the potential to reflect on the group and its image. If a connection to the OOSC has already been revealed by an employee, posts should contain disclaimers that make it clear that opinions expressed are solely those of the authors and do not represent the views of the group.
- Employees of St Joseph's Nympsfield Out of School Club must NOT identify themselves as working with children – this can lead to being a specific target of unscrupulous members of the web in order to gain access to children for paedophile purposes.
- All information regarding anything to do with the OOSC is not to be discussed or referred to on any such sites, even in private messaging with restricted access between site members.

- There must not be any disclosures of personal information with regards to other members of the OOSC staff, children using the OOSC, parents and/or carers.
- Employees must not refer to children or their parents in any way. This includes coded references of people or incidents surrounding them. These can easily be worked out or misinterpreted with disastrous results. St Joseph's Nympsfield Out of School Club's relationship with parents is considered to be an important one and valuable asset that can be irrevocably damaged through thoughtless comment.
- If you are concerned about something you see on social media, such as comments posted by a parent/carer, make sure you report it to the OOSC's Designated Safeguarding Lead. If you are concerned about content posted by a colleague, then refer to the OOSC's Safeguarding policy<sup>1</sup> "managing allegations" section.

### **Friendship/Tagging**

- St Joseph's Nympsfield Out of School Club's employees must not have as or request parents of children currently attending the group or their known family members to be network friends. In this social setting it is easy to cross the line by inadvertently discussing the child even with the parent's permission. All OOSC staff must comply with the GDPR 2018 and DPA 2018 in and out of work time.
- Staff members must not equally accept friendship requests from parents or their family members. Polite refusal is perhaps embarrassing initially but carefully chosen words stating that it is the OOSC's policy (without naming the group) that disallows it. Remember it is other people too who can see posts.

### **Photographs**

- St Joseph's Nympsfield Out of School Club employees must never share or post photographs that show any child who attends the OOSC in any form, even with parental consent. This is strictly not allowed even if the picture format has no connection to the OOSC, ie. taken in a social aspect.
- The 'Mobile Phones, Digital Photography and Recording Devices' policy<sup>2</sup> and procedure gives additional parameters for the taking of pictures.

### **Defamatory statements**

- Defamatory statements can lead to Lawsuits against the author of the statement and can be at the very least bring bad publicity to St Joseph's Nympsfield Out of School Club.

### **Disciplinary action**

- If this policy has been agreed and signed, and not adhered to, disciplinary procedures will be followed (refer to the disciplinary policy and procedure).

### **St Joseph's Nympsfield Out of School Club Facebook page**

- The OOSC has a closed<sup>3</sup> Facebook page which is only accessible to staff and parents/carers of those children who attend the OOSC. Photographs of the children and information on the day-to-day activities are regularly uploaded.
- Anyone wishing to view the contents of the Facebook page has to apply to join.
- Staff members will be asked to support or edit the Out of School Club's Facebook page.

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<sup>1</sup> Policy 1.2 Safeguarding and Child Protection

<sup>2</sup> No 1.11

<sup>3</sup> 'Closed' in this context means a closed members group – invitation only

- Only photographs of children with written permission from parents/carers will be used.
- The overall administration of the Out of School Club's Facebook page lies with the Play Leader. They have responsibility to edit or remove posts that are distasteful.

### Support and Advice

- If you are worried about a child or a colleague you can also contact the following helplines for support and advice:
  - Professionals Online Safety Helpline – Advice and support for professionals working with children with any online safety issues children in their care may face – 0344 381 4772 or [helpline@saferinternet.org.uk](mailto:helpline@saferinternet.org.uk)
  - NSPCC helpline – Advice and support for anyone who is worried about a child or needs information about child protection – 0808 800 5000
- National organisations which provide advice to professionals working with children include:
  - [Childnet](#)
  - [London Grid for Learning](#)
  - NCA-CEOP [www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk) and [www.ceop.police.uk/Safety-Centre](http://www.ceop.police.uk/Safety-Centre)
  - [UK Safer Internet Centre](#)

### Legal Framework

- General Data Protection Regulations 2018
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Human Rights Act (1998)

### Associated Policies

- 1.2 Safeguarding and Child Protection
- 1.11.1 Mobile Phones, Digital Photography and Recording Devices
- 5.3 Data Protection

Version Number	Author	Purpose of change	Date
1.0	NP and HS	Updating policies	23.01.2023
2.0	KC	Reviewed and updated to include guidance of where to go for further support and advice.	16 Sept 2023 Club Secretary (L Benton)