

# SAFEGUARDING & WELFARE REQUIREMENT: CHILD PROTECTION

## 1.8 Social Media and Professional Partnerships



### Policy Statement

The purpose of this policy to ensure safeguarding policies are adhered to and that staff are aware of their responsibilities in connection with the use of social networking and of the risks associated with the inappropriate use of social networking sites and any impacts in relation to their employment. We will ensure that we safeguard staff at the setting in connection with the use of social networking children sites and minimise the risk that they make themselves vulnerable to allegations. We will ensure that the setting maintains its duty to safeguard children, the reputation of the setting and those who work for it.

### Social Media Guidelines

- Staff who have personal relationships with parents *prior* to their child attending pre-school must be able clarify the pre-existing personal relationship to their line manager/designated safeguarding officer. Staff are made aware that if there is no prior personal relationships with parents, they must not be added to their online social networks. Social networks include personal web pages, Facebook, Pinterest, Snapchat, WhatsApp, Instagram, MSN, Twitter, YouTube, Blogs, Wikis, Forums, Bulletin boards, Chatrooms, Multi-player online gaming, Viral worlds and instant messenger.
- Staff must follow the guidance below regarding their personal social networking. If staff do not follow this guidance, disciplinary action will follow.
  - Staff must not write about their work on any social media sites. Under no circumstances should children, staff, parents/carers be discussed and staff members must not disclose any information that is confidential to the setting or disclose any personal data or information about staff or children and their families which could be in breach of the Data Protection Act.
  - Staff must never link their own personal sites to the setting site or use the setting logo on their personal pages.

### Professional Relationships

- Staff and parents must ensure that professional boundaries are put into place when there is a pre-existing relationship between a member of staff and parent or carer.

- No communication about the child should be used through social media sites between the two parties.
- The child will always remain the setting's priority at all times therefore any personal relationships must stay outside of the setting so the child is not affected by any personal relationships.
- Any employee who has a personal relationship with a parent will not be allocated the child as their key person.
- If any safeguarding concerns are raised with a child whose parent has a personal relationship with an employee, the employee must remain impartial and professional at all times.
- Employees must not relay any other staff members personal information to any parent or carer.
- Parents who need raise any issues, must do so through their key person, manager or designated safeguarding person.
- All employees sign confidentiality agreements and understand that disciplinary procedures will be followed if they are not adhered to.
- While a child attends pre-school, the key person should only see parents outside of the setting in a professional capacity, e.g. arranged babysitting. Staff members should not interact with their key child's parents or carers in a social capacity while the child remains enrolled in pre-school.

#### **Further Guidance**

- Guidance for safer working practice 2015

**This policy was adopted at a meeting held by St John's Playtime Pre-school committee on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2019.**

**This policy was reviewed & updated on: March 2021**

**This policy will be reviewed again on: March 2022**

**Signed on behalf of the Management committee and provider:**

**Name of Signatory:** Chris Coyle 

**Role of Signatory:** Committee Chairperson