

PETER PAN PLAYGROUP

SOCIAL NETWORKING, MOBILE PHONE AND CAMERA USAGE (INCLUDING VIDEO RECORDINGS) POLICY

Peter Pan Playgroup recognises that the use of modern day technology plays an important part in the daily work we all do with children and realises the significance of the use of cameras and computers in supporting children's learning and development. Whilst there is an absolute need to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all children in our setting, a sense of proportion and common sense is needed in making decisions around the use of technology.

This Policy is applicable to all Peter Pan Playgroup's staff, committee members and parents/students who volunteer within the setting.

Social Networking

We realise the usefulness of social networking media and Peter Pan Playgroup does not wish to discourage staff, committee members or parents/students who volunteer within the setting from having an online presence and everyone needs to use their good judgement on what material makes its way online.

This Policy sets guidelines that staff, committee members and parents/students who volunteer within the setting should follow for all online communications in reference to Peter Pan Playgroup and includes (but is not limited to) Twitter, Facebook, My Space, Digg, Bebo, personal blogs, forums, and personal websites.

Responsibility of any material posted online in reference to Peter Pan Playgroup, either by name or inferred, by any staff, committee member, parent/student who volunteer within the setting lies with the poster.

At no time should any posts be made in reference to children, parents, colleagues, visitors or other professional that a staff member may come into contact with through work.

At no time must any photographs or materials be published that identify the setting or children, other than Playgroup's own Facebook page. Photographs of children will only be used with the prior written consent of their parent/guardian and no names of children will be used.

Use of social networking sites to promote fundraising activities, social events and playgroup activities is permitted with the permission of committee members. Pictures of staff, committee, parents and children may only be used with the express permission of those concerned.

Staff should remember professional boundaries and should avoid having parents (or older children of parents) as friends on social networking sites. Where this is unavoidable, ie a member of their own family or a friend becomes a parent at the setting), staff should ensure that they do not discuss any matters in relation to the setting with the family member/parent/friend.

With regards to the practices of social networking, staff, committee members and parents/students who volunteer within the setting are encouraged to follow guidelines below:

- Maintain professionalism, honesty and respect.
- Use good judgement for every activity in connection with Peter Pan Playgroup which would include statements of fact about Peter Pan Playgroup, its products/services, information contained on Playgroup's website and facts that are already public information.
- If you use an alias or you may think you are anonymous, you may be recognised.
- Remember that no information sent over the web is totally secure. If you do not wish the information to be made public refrain from sending it over a social network site.

Any staff or committee member found to be posting remarks or comments that breach 'Confidentiality' and/or are deemed to be of a detrimental nature to Peter Pan Playgroup or other staff members/parents, either by direct reference or inferred, or posting/publishing photographs unless permission has been gained, may face disciplinary action in line with the Playgroup's Disciplinary Procedures.

If any staff, committee member or parent becomes aware of social networking activity that would be deemed distasteful, or not using "good judgement", please contact the Playgroup Supervisor or Chair of the Management Committee in confidence.

The use of Playgroup's computers, internet access, e-mail, memory sticks, etc, is intended for purposes relevant to the responsibilities assigned to each staff member or committee member. Social networking sites are not deemed a requirement for any position within Peter Pan Playgroup.

Any online communications (e-mails) regarding strategic decisions, employees or policy and procedures is deemed 'Confidential' until released in the public domain. Any attachments deemed to be of a sensitive nature must be password protected and to be opened by addressee only.

Mobile Phones

At the beginning of each session, all staff members' mobile phones are stored in a lockable container and stored in a safe place out of reach of children. All staff should be aware of the telephone number for the setting and this should be used as an emergency contact number for staff members' families, children's schools and friends during session times. In an absolute emergency, mobile phones may be used off premises.

All parents and visitors will be advised of this policy when they arrive at the setting and will be requested not to use their mobile phone whilst inside the setting (including the outside play area). If this is absolutely necessary, they should be requested to leave the premises in order to do so.

Where it is necessary for staff to take their own mobile phones on outings with the children (in case of emergency), they will be stored in the outings bag and must not be used to make or receive social calls or to take photographs of the children. They must not allow anyone else to use personal mobile phones to take photographs.

Cameras

Photographs should only be taken of children attending the setting for whom permission has been given by signed consent from parent/guardian for the purposes of documenting children's learning and development or promoting Playgroup's activities. (Staff should be aware of which children cannot be photographed.) Staff should not bring their own cameras into the setting.

Photographs should only be taken on a designated camera(s) for the sole use of the setting and usage will be monitored by the supervisor. There should be a designated place for camera storage.

All images from the cameras will be stored securely on the setting's computer/memory stick(s). Once printed for use images should be deleted from the camera(s), computer/memory stick(s). All staff are made aware of this procedure.

Children may on occasion be given the opportunity to photograph each other and their surroundings using only the setting's cameras within the setting's safe environment to support their learning and development needs.

Video Recordings

Guidance as previously (for camera usage) applies to use of video recording devices. All recordings should be for a valid purpose and should be stored safely. If parents wish to video a special event, permission must have been given by all parents for their child to be included in any recordings being taken by other parents or other relevant people.