



Social Media Policy

1. Overview

Social networking is now widely used. Access to social networking provides staff and parents the opportunity to communicate and socialise. However, such sites may be used inappropriately to discuss matters in relation to Abacus Pre-School Nursery Limited ('Abacus') that may be confidential, or to express negative or offensive views about Abacus, their employees, trustees, children who attend Abacus or Abacus' servants, agents or anyone associated with them. This document sets out Abacus' approach to such use of social media for employees, parents, trustees and all who may be associated with Abacus.

2. Objectives

The purpose of this policy is to:

- 2.1 Safeguard children who attend Abacus, employees trustees, servants, agents and anyone associated with Abacus.
- 2.2 Safeguard Abacus Pre-School Nursery Limited and its reputation.
- 2.3 Clarify what Abacus considers to be appropriate use of social networking sites for employees, parents, trustees and all who may be associated with Abacus.
- 2.4 Set out the procedure that Abacus will follow if it is considered by Abacus (in their absolute discretion) that employees, parents, trustees, Abacus' servants, agents or anyone associated with them have inappropriately or unlawfully used social networking sites to the detriment of Abacus Pre-School Nursery Limited, its reputation, employees, parents, children who attend, trustees and all who may be associated with Abacus.

3. Definition of Social Media

- 3.1 For the purposes of this document, social media is any type of interactive online media that permits parties to communicate with each other instantly or to share data in a public forum. For the avoidance of doubt, this includes email, online social forums, blogs, video and image sharing websites and similar facilities.



- 3.2 All parties should be aware that there are many more examples of social media than as listed in clause 3.1 above and the list is not exhaustive as social media is a constantly changing area.

4. Definition of Inappropriate Use

Abacus considers the following to be inappropriate uses of social media. This list is not exhaustive and is intended as a guideline only:

4.1 Making (direct or indirect)

- 4.1.1 allegations, complaints, defamatory statements or posting negative or offensive comments; or
- 4.1.2 negative or offensive comments which for avoidance of doubt include but are not limited to a person's race, gender, religion or sexual orientation
- 4.1.3 comments which threaten violence.
- 4.1.4 negative comments which could be discussed in a private forum with regard to Abacus, its employees, trustees, children who attend, servants, agents or anyone associated with them.

5. Employees and Trustees

- 5.1 All employees and trustees are required to adhere to these guidelines.
- 5.2 Employees and Trustees should be aware at all times that while contributing to social media activities that they represent Abacus and should use their best judgment in posting material that is neither inappropriate nor harmful to Abacus, its employees, trustees, children who attend, parents, servants, agents or anyone associated with them.
- 5.3 Employees and Trustees should not
 - 5.3.1 use social media inappropriately;
 - 5.3.2 breach confidentiality by publishing, posting or releasing any information or image that is considered confidential or not public on social media; or
 - 5.3.3 communicate on social media websites such as Facebook with current parents of children at Abacus in an appropriate manner.
 - 5.3.4 use any photographic or video recording devices within the preschool unless authorised by the Manager.



- 5.4 Enquiries that employees or trustees may receive via social media should be referred to the Manager or the Chair of Trustees.
 - 5.5 If employees or trustees find or encounter a situation whilst using social media that threatens to become antagonistic or unpleasant, they should disengage from the dialogue in a polite manner and refer to the matter to the Manager and/or the Chair of Trustees. If the person concerned is the Manager and/or the Chair of Trustees, each should refer to the other. In all cases and if appropriate the matter should be discussed by the trustees at the next meeting of trustees or sooner if necessary.
 - 5.6 Employees should be aware that the use of social media in a way that may be deemed as a deliberate or inadvertent misuse which could be a breach of these guidelines may lead to disciplinary action under Abacus' Disciplinary Policy. Serious breaches of these guidelines, for example, incident of bullying of colleagues, may constitute gross misconduct and may lead to action under the disciplinary procedure up to and including dismissal.
 - 5.7 Trustees should be aware that the use of social media in a way that may be deemed as a deliberate or inadvertent misuse which could be a breach of these guidelines may lead to the Officers of Abacus requiring that trustee to resign. Serious breaches of these guidelines may lead to the remaining trustees of Abacus to consider taking action under the laws of England and Wales.
- 6. Parents**
- 6.1 Parents should not:
 - 6.1.1 use social media inappropriately; or
 - 6.1.2 breach confidentiality by publishing, posting or releasing any information or image that is considered confidential or not public on social media and for the avoidance of doubt they should not publish, post or release any information of any child other than one for which they have parental responsibility.
 - 6.1.3 use any photographic or video recording devices within the preschool unless authorised by the Manager.



- 6.2 Parents should be aware that the use of social media that may be deemed as a deliberate or inadvertent misuse which could be a breach of these guidelines may lead to one or all of any of the following being taken by Abacus:
- 6.2.1 Legal advice and/or action as may be appropriate;
 - 6.2.2 Write to you setting out the concerns and request that the material is removed;
 - 6.2.3 Report the matter to the Police;
 - 6.2.4 Take action to block or restrict the individual's access to the website or forum concerned, which may include contacting the host/provider of the site to complain about the content and request its removal.
- 6.3 Parents and carers are requested to adhere to the guidelines set out in this policy and should they have any queries or concerns they should raise them with the Manager or a Trustee of the Committee.

Abacus Committee

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