



## **TELEPHONES & SOCIAL NETWORKING POLICY**

Clyde Nursery Ltd staff should be completely attentive during their hours of working, to ensure all children in the Nursery receive good care and education.

Company telephones within playrooms MAY NOT be used for personal calls without prior permission from the Nursery Manager.

### **MOBILE PHONES**

- Staff should always store mobile phones securely in their personal locker or bag during working hours.
- Mobile phones SHOULD NOT be used in the playrooms
- Mobile phones should only be used on a designated work break and in a private area away from children and parents. The Nursery hallway and garden area should not be used to make personal calls.
- Staff should not leave the playroom to check their mobile phone.
  
- Disciplinary action may be taken if the above is not adhered to.

### **USING SOCIAL MEDIA**

This guidance is derived from the Scottish Social Services Council Code of Practice Guidance.

Many people now use social networking and file sharing sites like Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, YouTube and TikTok for staying in touch and sharing information. But it can be easy to blur the lines between your personal voice and your professional life as a registered social service worker.

Social media is a set of online tools to communicate and engage with people and includes things like:

- Writing a blog or commenting on other people's blogs
- Micro-blogging, e.g., Twitter
- A personal profile page on a social or business networking site, e.g., Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, and Tinder.
- Product or service reviews on retailer sites or customer review sites
- Taking part in online votes and polls
- Taking part in conversations on public and private web forums (message boards)

There are lots of benefits from taking part in social networking but there are important elements which staff need to look out for and think about in their role as a professional social service worker.

As a registered worker, staff must work to the SSSC Code of Practice for Social Service Workers. Code 5 states that registered workers must “uphold public trust and confidence in social services whether you are in work or outside of work”.

Both personally and professionally, staff need to follow the same standards in online activities as in any other aspect of their life. The same professional expectations and guidelines for interacting with people apply online as in day to day activities.

#### To friend or not to friend?

‘Friending’ or allowing a person who uses the services of Clyde Nursery Ltd to be your online friend or follower is discouraged for a registered social service worker as it creates a personal relationship outside of your workplace. It leaves workers and service users open to allegations from comments they might post.

In the situation where a friendship or relationship has existed prior to being a professional relationship within Clyde Nursery Ltd, staff must always act in a professional and trustworthy manner, adhering to the Confidentiality Policy regarding discussing children in the care of Clyde Nursery Ltd.

#### No comment!

Staff must be responsible for the way they behave and for what they post, using common sense and judgement, and as a social service worker, always being respectful of the privacy and feelings of others. Using social media for attack or abuse, to make comments – whether malicious or thought to be playful banter, to air concerns about issues at work or provide privileged and confidential details about work or other individuals **COULD BE A BREACH OF THE SSSC CODE OF PRACTICE.**

How staff behave online can have an impact on them professionally and personally. Anything posted online could leave a member of staff open to scrutiny from the public and service users and this could be viewed as misconduct and subject to disciplinary action.

#### Is private really private?

Staff MUST be aware that anyone can search for information about them online, just as they can for information about a product or service. Privacy DOES NOT exist in the world of social media even though all social networking sites have "privacy settings".

No matter how 'private' staff believe they are, once something is posted out there, it is out there. That said, staff must make the most of privacy settings, watching out for important updates from the host site as the settings are continually changed and are applied to all users unless they opt out.

The internet is not anonymous, nor does it forget. Everything written on the internet can be traced back to its author very easily and there is a permanent record.

Search engines like Yahoo or Google are extremely sophisticated. Information is backed up often and posts in one forum can be replicated in others through reposts and references.

#### Top Tips

1. Staff must check their personal security settings. To keep accounts private, staff must choose settings that mean only the people on your 'friends', followers or contact lists can see information, photos, videos and posts. Unless you need tracking, services turned on, staff should turn them off.
2. Staff are discouraged from requesting service users to be their online friends as it creates a personal relationship and can leave a member of staff open to allegations regarding comments, they may make online.
3. Staff SHOULD NOT put information about Clyde Nursery Ltd on their own pages, e.g., do not list employer as Clyde Nursery Ltd.
4. Staff should ensure that anything posted on social networking sites is accurate and as a guide, should ask themselves if they would be willing for their family, friends, or manager to read it.

Clyde Nursery Ltd must protect the professional reputation of the Company and staff MUST NOT post anything onto social networking sites that could be construed to have an impact on the Nursery's reputation or that could or would offend any other member of staff or parent using the Nursery. At no time should any practice compromise the standards of professional care provided within Clyde Nursery Ltd.'s childcare establishments. If any member of staff is found to be acting against the above Policy regulations, they will face disciplinary action.

#### Parents Social Networking

Social Media has become an extremely valuable communication tool for many parents to quickly share information and updates with family and friends. It can have important benefits and we support its increased use.

We would, however, ask for parents to be responsible and restrained when discussing Nursery matters on platforms such as Facebook and Twitter. Some negative comments can cause distress to Nursery communities, alarm other parents or unfairly tarnish employees. Whatever the circumstances, we believe it is completely unacceptable for anyone to use social media to make remarks about named, or unnamed but identifiable staff, parents, or children. We would also respectfully ask that parents refrain from posting photographs of their children with any staff member which may have been taken throughout their child's time at Nursery or at special events such as Christmas parties or Graduation.

If you have an individual complaint about a Nursery matter, we would call upon parents to raise this directly with Nursery, following the complaints procedure, rather than via social media.

A copy of this policy is available to view in the Policy Folders held in the Nursery Office, Reception Area, Nursery Playrooms.

Reviewed: September 2021

Date of Next Review: September 2022

Appendix: Complaints Procedure (see policy in folder)