

Blackhall Nursery

Computer Use, Mobile Phone and Social Media Policy

In line with other pre-school and school establishments, we have introduced clear computer and mobile phone usage guidelines in the best interests of the Nursery and Nursery children.

Staff Responsibilities

If staff access data or information pertaining to a child or children (e.g. observations and pictures) from outside Nursery they are responsible for maintaining the privacy of their device/account and for maintaining the confidentiality of the information they are accessing. To this end, they must ensure:

- that confidentiality of children's information is paramount at all times;
- that the device they are using to access personal information about a child or children is password protected and that the password is not saved on the device;
- that the device is set up to log-out within 2 minutes of becoming idle;
- that when using a Nursery device they do not allow any other person to use this and follow all other terms of use for that device;
- that when using a Nursery device that contains children's photographs that the above conditions are strictly followed;
- that at all times they adhere to the Codes of Practice for Social Service Workers and, in particular, Code 1.4 which states that practitioners must respect and maintain the dignity and privacy of service users and Code 2.3 which states that practitioners must respect confidential information.

Computer Use

The Nursery computers may not be used for personal purposes during Nursery hours.

Mobile phone use

Staff (and children!) must not use mobile phones for personal use during Nursery hours (08.15-16.15) except during staff breaks. It is not acceptable, safe or polite for Nursery staff (and children) to be referring to, or using, their mobile phones during Nursery hours. To use Nursery time for personal business is clearly inappropriate, except in exceptional circumstances (e.g. for an urgent medical appointment) and will be regarded as a disciplinary matter.

Any emergency call to staff or children can be made using the Nursery telephone on 0131 332 8296.

Using Social Media

The following guidance will apply to all members of staff as well as volunteers, students, trainees and work experience placements, whether or not they are registered with the SSSC:

Guidance from the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC)

As the use of social networking sites continues to grow, it is essential that members of staff think about their roles as professional social service workers and are clear about their responsibilities when using social media.

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

Both personally and professionally, members of staff need to follow the same standards in online activities as they would in any aspect of their lives. The same professional expectations and guidelines for interacting with people apply online as in the real world.

As both employees of Blackhall Nursery and as workers registered with the SSSC, members of staff must follow the attached guidance from the SSSC, which is summarised below. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary measures being taken.

In relation to the use of social media:

Do:

- Use your common sense
- Always think twice
- Protect privacy
- Respect any policies of your employer
- Remember your responsibilities as a social services worker

Don't:

- Friend or follow a service user or their carer (i.e. current parents or board members) or allow them to friend or follow you. This is not appropriate as it creates a personal relationship outside your workplace.
- Discuss confidential information
- Post inappropriate material
- Compromise yourself or your colleagues
- Make malicious or derogatory comments

See also the attached SSSC guidance

N.B.

- This policy cross-refers to the Volunteer Policy and the Student and Trainee Policy
- This policy should be read in conjunction with the Confidentiality and Data Protection Policy

Using social media

Many of us now use social networking and file sharing sites like Facebook, Twitter and Youtube. They're great for staying in touch and creating communities and for most people, joining in is trouble free and fun. But it can be easy to blur the lines between your personal voice and your professional life as a registered social service worker.

First of all, exactly what is "social media"?

It's really just a set of online tools for us to use to communicate and engage with people and includes things like:

- writing a blog or commenting on people's blogs
- micro-blogging eg Twitter
- a personal profile page on one of the social or business networking sites eg LinkedIn, Facebook
- 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).

And while there are lots of benefits from taking part in social networking there are things that it's important to look out for and think about in your role as a professional social service worker.

Remember that as a registered worker you must work to the SSSC Code of Practice for Social Service Workers eg Code 5 says that you must "uphold public trust and confidence in social services whether you are in work or outside of work".

Both personally and professionally, you need to follow the same standards in online activities as you would in any aspect of your life. The same professional expectations and guidelines for interacting with people apply online as in the real world.

To friend or not to friend?

"Friending" or allowing a person who uses services or their carer to be your online friend or follower is not acceptable for a registered social service worker as it creates a personal relationship outside of your workplace. And it leaves both workers and people who use services open to allegations from comments they might post.

This policy refers to:

HGIOELC: 1.4, 2.1

HSC Standards: 3.4, 3.20, 4.23

UNCRC: Articles 3, 16

Adopted on: 24 October 2024