

Safeguarding and Welfare Requirement: Child Protection

The safeguarding policy and procedures must include an explanation of the action to be taken in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff, and cover the use of mobile phones and cameras in the setting.

1.7 Social media

Policy statement

Little Fingers Pre-school recognises that social media has become a part of everyday life for many individuals and families, including both staff and parents. Social media allows for the free and easy exchange of information, opinions and images. With particular regard to images of children and to enable the Pre-school to comply with its strict Safeguarding requirements, it is necessary to set our terms around the use of social media in connection with how the Pre-school is presented publicly. This policy covers (but is not limited to) the following social media channels:

- Facebook
- Twitter
- LinkedIn
- Personal Blogs
- Tapestry
- Instagram
- Snapchat
- Youtube

The scope of this policy applies to the following people:

- Employees
- Volunteers - to include committee members and work experience students
- Parents/Carers

This policy also refers to the Cameras and Mobile Devices Policy.

Little Fingers Pre-school holds a Facebook account, with only the Pre-school Manager and admin having access and it's secure in that no one else is able to post.

Social Media and Employees

Little Fingers Pre-school recognises that employees may be regular users of social media and has no intention to curtail their use of it beyond reasonable requests to adhere to Safeguarding regulations and professionalism.

- Employees are advised not to reveal publicly on social media that they are employed by Little Fingers Pre-school, this includes visible identification of the workplace through photographs (ie: logos on uniform etc).
- Employees must not discuss the Pre-school (including colleagues, children, parents or the organisation) in conversations that take place on social media in any way that goes beyond giving out information which is already freely available on the Pre-school website.
- It is recognised that potential parents may ask publicly for opinions on Little Fingers Pre-school and/or other pre-schools in the area. Staff are advised not to engage in such discussions.

- If an employee becomes aware of any conversation taking place on social media about Little Fingers Pre-school, and the tone of that conversation is critical of individual staff members or of the organisation, then it must be reported to the Manager for investigation.
- As tempting as it may be to defend colleagues and/or the organisation, employees should not enter into such conversations, unless it is to repeat information already publicly available on the Pre-school website or to pass on an official statement prepared by the Manager and/or the Committee in response to the discussion.
- Employees must not create or request any social media friendships with parents of current children at the Pre-school – this is so that the Manager can be confident that the correct professional relationships are being maintained between staff and parents.
- The Pre-school will make an exception to this rule if an employee has an existing relationship with a child's parent(s) before that child starts at the Pre-school. This rule no longer applies once a child has left the Pre-school.
- As per the Cameras and Mobile Devices Policy, employees must not place any images of the Pre-school children onto social media.
- Any breaches of this policy will be investigated and could result in disciplinary action being taken against the individual concerned.

Social Media and Volunteers to include Committee Members and Work Experience Students

Little Fingers Pre-school recognises that volunteers, to include committee members and work experience students, may be regular users of social media and has no intention to curtail their use of it beyond reasonable requests to adhere to Safeguarding regulations and professionalism. It is also recognised that such individuals may not have the training on Safeguarding that an employee has, so the following brief guidelines are provided:

- Remember that nothing you put onto social media can be considered fully private, no matter how strong your privacy settings are.
- Do not state on social media where you will be volunteering / on placement.
- Do not discuss the Pre-school in any way on social media; this includes the organisation, its location, its policies and practices, its staff/committee members, its children and its parents/carers. This rule continues to apply after you have finished your volunteering/work experience and exists to ensure appropriate confidentiality and professionalism can be maintained by the organisation and its staff in relation to how it is presented publicly.
- If you become aware of any discussion taking place on social media about Little Fingers Pre-school, do not enter into it. However, if anything about the discussion gives you cause for concern, then it should be reported to the Manager.
- Do not attempt to establish any relationships with parents/carers of children at the Pre-school on social media during the course of your volunteering/work experience.
- The only exception that will be allowed to this rule is if you have an existing social media relationship with a parent/carer before you began your role with the Pre-school.
- As per the Cameras and Mobile Devices Policy, do not take any photographs of the Pre-school children on your own phone. If you are asked to take photographs of children then they must only be taken using the camera/device that belongs to the Pre-school.

Social Media and Parents/Carers

- Little Fingers Pre-school recognises that parents/carers and their families may be regular users of social media and has no intention to curtail their use of it beyond reasonable requests to adhere to Safeguarding regulations and professionalism. It is also recognised that such parents/carers may not be wholly familiar with the requirements of Safeguarding, so the following brief guidelines are provided:
- Remember that nothing you put onto social media can be considered fully private, no matter how strong your privacy settings are.
- Be cautious on how you discuss the Pre-school in conversations on social media. Do not reveal: - the location of the Pre-school. - the names of staff members/volunteers working at the Pre-school, or anything else that could reveal their identities.
- The names of other children and their parents/carers who attend the Pre-school, or anything else that could reveal their identities.
- If you have any negative opinions or concerns about any aspect of how the Pre-school is run, do not discuss it on social media. Such concerns should always be reported to the Manager so that they can be investigated, discussed and resolved formally.
- If any opinions are discussed on social media which result in any detrimental effect on the Pre-school, its employees, its children or its parents/carers, then the Pre-school will follow formal proceedings to investigate.
- Do not create or request any social media friendships with staff/volunteers at the Pre-school – this is so that the Manager can be confident that the correct professional relationships are being maintained between staff and parents.
- The Pre-school will make an exception to this rule if a parent has an existing relationship with an employee/volunteer before your child starts at the Pre-school. This rule no longer applies once your child has left the Pre-school.
- If you become aware of any conversation taking place on social media about Little Fingers Pre-school and the tone of that conversation is critical of individual staff members or of the organisation, then it must be reported to the Manager for investigation.
- The Cameras and Mobile Devices Policy instructs parents/carers that any photographs they take at the Pre-school's special events are for personal use only and should not be put onto any social media channel.

This policy was adopted by

Little Fingers Pre-school

On

Date to be reviewed

March 2022

Signed on behalf of the provider

Name of signatory

Carolyn Coleman

Role of signatory (e.g. chair, director or owner)

Chair

Other useful Pre-school Learning Alliance publications

Safeguarding Children (2013)

