

QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY BELFAST

Childcare Services

Social Networking Policy

Personal information relating to all children within the care of Childcare Services at Queen's will be treated in the strictest confidence and must not be shared or disclosed on **any** social networking site.

Social networking sites and problems of online gossip are routinely making new headlines – therefore for the protection of the children in our care we ask staff to be mindful of the personal information they use on social networking sites and to protect themselves and the integrity of Childcare Services at Queen's.

In order to ensure this, guidelines are given which staff members must adhere to:

- Staff must not discuss/mention any of the children from the setting on their online profiles
- Staff must not write direct or indirect suggestive comments about work
- Staff must not publish photographs of children from the setting on their online profiles
- Staff must not publish photographs of colleagues when at work in the setting on their online profiles
- Staff must not use mobile phones to take photographs in the setting or to access social networking sites during their working hours
- Staff are advised to set their online profiles to private to ensure that only 'friends' are able to see their information
- Personal profiles should not contain any images/videos which may be perceived as inappropriate behaviours for a childcare professional
- In order to maintain professional boundaries, Staff should not accept personal invitations/friend requests from parents of the setting
- Staff must use social networking in a professional, safe, responsible and respectful way
- Staff must be mindful that everything that is posted online is public, even with the strictest security settings, therefore staff must assume that everything is permanent and may be shared

We wish to remind staff of the 'Whistleblowing Policy' and ask if they are aware of any information pertaining to any person or activity concerning Childcare Services Department being shared or disclosed on any Social Networking site to report immediately to Childcare Manager. Any breaches of the Social Networking Policy could result in disciplinary action.

This Policy works in conjunction with the Mobile Telephone Policy, Confidentiality Policy, Photograph and Video Policy and Safeguarding Policy.

This Policy also works in conjunction with the QUB Social Media Guide and QUB Social Media / Networking Policy.

All staff are requested to sign agreement to the conditions of this Policy annually or upon the Policy being revised.