**Social Networking Policy**

**Introduction**

Social networking activities conducted online outside work, such as blogging (writing personal journals to publicly accessible internet pages), involvement in social networking sites, such as Facebook and Twitter, and posting material, images, or comments on sites such as You Tube can have a negative effect on an organisation’s reputation or image. In addition, Happy Kids has a firm commitment to safeguarding children in all aspects of its work. This policy has been written to set out the key principles and code of conduct that we expect of everyone with respect to their responsibilities in connection with the use of social networking sites.

**Key Principles**

Everyone at Happy Kids has a responsibility to ensure that they protect the reputation of Happy Kids, and to treat colleagues and members of the setting with professionalism and respect.

It is important to protect everyone at Happy Kids from allegations and misinterpretations which can arise from the use of social networking sites.

Safeguarding children is a key responsibility of all members of staff and it is essential that everyone at Happy Kids considers this and acts responsibly if they are using social networking sites out of Happy Kids opening hours. Anyone working in the setting either as a paid member of staff or volunteer must not communicate with children via social networking.

**Aims**

* To set out the key principles and code of conduct expected of all members of staff, friends, and volunteers at Happy Kids with respect to social networking.
* To further safeguard and protect children and staff.

**Personal Responsibility**

* Everyone is personally responsible for the content they publish online
* Online behaviour should reflect the same standards of honesty, respect and consideration that are used face-to-face.
* When publishing to social networking sites the information is representative of the individual’s views and opinions and not the views of Happy Kids.
* By posting comments or by having online conversations etc. on social media sites, everyone must be aware that they are broadcasting to the world, and that even with the strictest privacy settings it is not always possible to know the security level of the social networking sites of any contacts.
* What is posted online should be within the bounds of professional discretion. Code of Conduct for Everyone at Happy Kids – social networking

**The following are not considered acceptable at Happy Kids:**

* The use of Happy Kids name, logo, or any other published material without written prior permission from owner. This applies to any published material including the internet or written documentation.
* The posting of any communication or images which links the setting to any form of illegal conduct or which may damage the reputation of the setting. This includes defamatory comments.
* The disclosure of confidential or business-sensitive information; or the disclosure of information or images that could compromise the security of the setting.
* The posting of any images of employees, children or anyone directly connected with the setting whilst engaged in Happy Kids activities.

**In addition to the above everyone at Happy Kids must ensure that they:**

* Do not make any derogatory, defamatory, rude, threatening, or inappropriate comments about the setting, or anyone at or connected with Happy Kids.
* Use social networking sites responsibly and ensure that neither their personal/professional reputation, nor the settings reputation is compromised by inappropriate postings.
* Are aware of the potential of on-line identity fraud and to be cautious when giving out personal information about them which may compromise their personal safety and security.

**Potential and Actual Breaches of the Code of Conduct**

* Happy Kids will take appropriate action to protect the settings’ reputation and that of its staff, children, families and anyone else directly linked to the setting.

**In instances where there had been a breach of the above Code of Conduct, the following will apply:**

* Any breaches of this policy will be fully investigated.
* Where it is found that there has been a breach of the policy this will result in action being taken under the Disciplinary Procedure