

1.7 Social Media Policy

(To be read in conjunction with the IT, Email and Internet policy)

Policy overview

The Social Media Policy sets out Acorn Child Care's expectations with regard to the use of social media.

As an employee at Acorn Child Care you are required to comply with the social media policy when engaging in activity on various social media outlets. The Social Media Policy is designed to provide guidance to employees around Acorn Child Care's expectations with regard to the use of social media. The policy covers matters relating to social media including:

- Professional use of social media;
- Personal use of social media;
- Breach of policy; and
- Related areas.

For the purpose of this policy, Social Media may include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Social networking sites (e.g. Facebook, Myspace, LinkedIn, Bebo, Yammer);
- Video and photo sharing websites (e.g. Flickr, YouTube);
- Blogs, including corporate blogs and personal blogs;
- Blogs hosted by media outlets (e.g. 'comments' or 'your say' feature on theage.com.au);
- Micro-blogging (e.g. Twitter);
- Wikis and online collaborations (e.g. Wikipedia);
- Forums, discussion boards and groups (e.g. Google groups, Whirlpool);
- Video on demand and podcasting;
- Online multiplayer gaming platforms (e.g. World of Warcraft, Second life);
- Instant messaging (including e.g. SMS); and
- Geo-spatial tagging (e.g. Foursquare).

What do I need to do?

You need to carefully read through the Social Media Policy and then complete the associated quiz. All staff are required to comply with the Social Media Policy as amended and implemented from time to time, as well as and any new or amended policies that are introduced from time to time. Failure to comply may result in disciplinary action.

Policy and further information

To the extent that the contents of the Social Media Policy refers to obligations on Acorn Child Care, they are guidelines for management or summaries of applicable legislative requirements only and are not contractual terms, conditions or representations on which a staff member may rely. Your manager is available to assist with any queries you have relating to the policy which is detailed below.

Scope

This Policy covers professional and personal use of social media where the social media engagement relates to Acorn Child Care, its products or services, its employees, its competitors and/or other related businesses or individuals.

This Policy applies to any use of social media through Acorn Child Care's information technology property, the Acorn Child Care's network or your personal property devices or personal networks.

Social media

As an education and care service we are extremely protective of our children, families and staff and the Acorn Child Care. Accordingly, our Social Media Policy may be perceived to be more onerous than the usual community standards. These rules are necessary to ensure the safety and comfort of employees, children and their families, and to ensure that Acorn Child Care operates in a professional and appropriate manner.

Employees must exercise extreme caution when using personal or work devices or computer equipment to access social media and online technology whether in the workplace or relating to external events or functions involving Acorn Child Care. It is a breach of confidentiality and privacy to make posts or comments about children, families, staff or management from Acorn Child Care on social media site. It may also be an offence under child care regulations in the State or Territory in which you are based to take, record or use a visual image of a child, including transmitting the image on the Internet, without the written consent of the child's parent.

Acorn Child Care specifically requires that, unless you have the express permission, you: Do not video or photograph anyone, or post photos or personal details of other Acorn Child Care staff, children or families;

- Do not post photos or videos of Acorn Child Care staff, children or families on your personal
- Facebook page, or otherwise share photos or videos of staff, children or families through social media;
- Do not create an Acorn Child Care branded Facebook page, or other pages or content on social
- media that purport to represent Acorn Child Care, it's staff, children or families;
- Do not post anything that could embarrass or damage the reputation of Acorn Child Care, your
- colleagues, children or families; or
- Remove content if requested by Acorn Child Care to do so.

Professional use of social media

Social media offers the opportunity for people to gather in online communities of shared interest and create, share or consume content. It is understood that a significant portion of ongoing professional learning is now offered through multimedia platforms that include social media sites. It is expected that staff will be accessing such professional learning using these sites but that staff who do so in work time or on work computers, do so with the permission of their Manager.

Employees must be authorised to act on behalf of Acorn Child Care before engaging in social media as a representative of Acorn Child Care. Employees must not comment as a representative of Acorn Child Care unless authorised to do so. All requests to act on behalf of Acorn Child Care in a social

media context must be directed to Acorn Child Care. If authorised to act as a representative of Acorn Child Care, employees must not:

- Post or respond to material that is, or might be construed as offensive, obscene, fraudulent, defamatory, threatening, harassing, bullying, discriminatory, hateful, racist, sexist, infringes copyright, constitutes a contempt of court, breaches a Court suppression order, or is otherwise
- unlawful;
- Use or disclose any confidential or secure information; or
- Make any comment or post any material that might otherwise cause damage to Acorn Child Care's
- Reputation or bring it into disrepute.

Personal use of social media

Acorn Child Care recognises that employees may choose to use social media in their personal capacity. This policy is not intended to discourage nor unduly limit employees using social media for personal expression or other online activities in their personal life. Employees should be aware of and understand the potential risks and damage to Acorn Child Care that can occur through their use of social media, even if their activity takes place outside working hours or on devices not owned by Acorn Child Care.

Unacceptable personal use of social media

If an individual can be identified as a stakeholder of Acorn Child Care on Social Media, that stakeholder must:

- Only disclose and discuss publicly available information;
- Ensure that all content published is accurate and not misleading and, complies with all relevant
- policies of Acorn Child Care;
- Expressly state on all postings (identifying them as an stakeholder of Acorn Child Care) the stated
- views are their own and are not those of Acorn Child Care;
- Be polite and respectful to all people they interact with;
- Adhere to the Terms of Use of the relevant social media platform/website, as well as copyright,
- privacy, defamation, contempt of court, discrimination, harassment and other applicable laws;
- Notify their Management if they become aware of unacceptable use of social media as described
- above.

Abusive, harassing, threatening or defaming postings which are in breach of this centre's policies may result in disciplinary action being taken, even if such comments are made using private social networks outside of working hours. All staff and orders connected with the service does not constitute unlawful discrimination, bullying or harassment in any form.

Employees and families must not:

- Post or respond to material that is, or might be construed as offensive, obscene, fraudulent, defamatory, threatening, harassing, bullying, discriminatory, hateful, racist, sexist, infringes copyright, constitutes a contempt of court, breaches a Court suppression order, or is otherwise
- unlawful or inaccurate;
- Make any comment or post any material that might otherwise cause damage to Acorn Child Care's
- reputation or bring it into disrepute;
- Imply that they are authorised to speak as a representative of Acorn Child Care, or give the impression that the views expressed are those of Acorn Child Care;
- Use an Acorn Child Care email address or any Acorn Child Care logos or insignia that may give the
- impression of official support or endorsement of personal comments;
- use the identity or likeness of another employee, contractor or other member of Acorn Child Care;
- Use or disclose any confidential information or personal information obtained in the capacity as an employee/contractor of Acorn Child Care; or
- Imply he/she is authorised to speak on behalf of Acorn Child Care, or give the impression that any views expressed are those of Acorn Child Care.
- Share photo's with other families children within public forum. E.G: Educa to Facebook

Acceptable personal use of social media

When using social media in their personal capacity, employees are permitted to update their Facebook status and post messages outside working hours including during a work break.

Staff are not permitted to access social media through Acorn Child Care's information technology property or Acorn Child Care's network, unless the access is approved by their Manager. Staff are expected to act in a manner that does not interfere with their work and is not inappropriate or excessive.

Consequences of Unacceptable Use of Social Media

Acorn Child Care will review any alleged breach of this policy on an individual basis. If the alleged breach is of a serious nature, the person shall be given an opportunity to be heard in relation to the alleged breach.

If the alleged breach is clearly established, the breach may be treated as grounds for dismissal/ termination of care. In all other cases, the person may be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with Acorn Child Care's Counselling, Performance Management and Disciplinary Policy. Acorn Child Care may request that any information contained on any social media platform that is in breach of this policy be deleted.

Acorn Child Care may restrict an employee's access to social media on Acorn Child Care's IT systems or equipment if they are found to have breached this policy or while Acorn Child Care investigates whether they have breached this policy.

Links to other policies

- Child Protection and Risk Management Policy
- Educator Professionalism and Ethics Policy
- Enrolment and Orientation Policy
- Photographs and Video Recording Policy
- Privacy and Confidentiality Policy
- Students, Volunteers and Visitors Policy

Sources

- Childcare Alliance Queensland. (n.d.). *Sample Social Media Policy* <http://childcareqld.org.au/support/hr/> accessed 23 January 2015
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- Guide to the National Quality Standard 2011

Further reading and useful websites

- Community Child Care Co-operative NSW. (2013). *Privacy online* <http://cccnsw.org.au/wp-content/uploads/privacy-online.pdf> accessed 13 January 2015

Date(s) reviewed:

01/01/2016					
01/01/2017					
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