



Oaklands Estate Kindergarten

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**Government
of South Australia**

Department for Education
and Child Development

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

The use of social media websites and applications as a means of communication has grown rapidly over the last few years. The Department for Education endorses and encourages the use of social media as a legitimate tool for aiding communication and enhancing teaching and development.

Social media are online services and tools used for publishing, sharing and discussing information and may include, forums, blogs, wikis, social networking websites, microblogging and any other platform that allows individual users to easily upload and share content.

We at Oaklands Estate Kindergarten believe there is a place for the use of social media to share information about the kindergarten and its educational programs with families and the community.

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers and contractors working within or for the department who use a social media platform in their professional capacity, or who identify themselves as a departmental employee, volunteer or contractor in a personal capacity.

The account administrators of the Oaklands Estate Kindergarten's social media shall be the kindergarten staff, with the Director and at least one other staff member holding administrator responsibilities at any one time. In accordance with the Department for Education and the following guidelines the administrators shall be responsible for updating the page with relevant information about the kindergarten, uploading photos of the educational program, promoting kindergarten events, responding to questions from the local community, creating links to the Oaklands Estate Kindergarten website or other relevant websites and moderating or removing any comments deemed to be unacceptable or inappropriate.

Staff need to be aware that their responsibilities under the Code of Ethics for South Australian Public Sector also apply when using social media.

The same principles apply to online comment as to any other kind of public comment, however there are some additional considerations that apply to online participation:

- Due to the speed and reach of online communication comments posted online are available immediately to a wide audience
- material online effectively lasts forever and is not private, may be replicated endlessly, and may be sent to recipients who were never expected to see it, or who may view it out of context.

We shall inform Online Communication Services of our new social media presence via phone 8226 2068 or email dec.d.socialmedia@sa.gov.au.

Upon enrolment families shall be informed of the Social Media Policy and will be asked to sign a "permission to use likeness, image, voice, performance and/ or creative work of children" form.

Local processes, user agreements and protocols shall be reviewed on an annual basis – or as conditions of use and/or licensing arrangements change.

WHEN PROVIDING INFORMATION ON SOCIAL MEDIA ON BEHALF OF OAKLANDS ESTATE KINDERGARTEN

Social media administrators shall:

- be familiar with the social networks and how they function
- have an understanding of the code of conduct and ethical/professional behaviours of the organisation
- have the authority to respond to feedback and inquiries
- know when to seek advice from others (for example, about content of response, how to respond or legal/ethical advice)
- know when to escalate the matter to the director for response
- be confident in uploading or linking to files
- know how to link to other online content (for example, web pages, videos, images).

The Department for Education has policies relating to social media that must be adhered to:

- be aware of the specific social media channels and etiquette and understand the views and feelings of the target community
- ensure all material published is respectful of all individuals and communities, Oaklands Estate Kindergarten, the Department for Education and/or the specific social media site
- be respectful and professional in your duty of care and when communicating and referring to students, parents/carers and their families
- not publish any material that is offensive, obscene, defamatory, threatening, harassing, bullying, discriminatory, hateful, racist, sexist, breaches a Court Suppression Order, or is otherwise unlawful
- ensure that all content published is accurate, not misleading and complies with privacy guidelines
- respect copyright, privacy, financial disclosure and other applicable laws when publishing on social media platforms
- respect copyright laws and attribute work to the original source wherever possible
- only offer information, support or comment on topics that fall within your area of responsibility
- ensure all information posted or comments made on government policy is appropriate to the individual's area of expertise and authority, remains politically neutral and does not breach any confidentiality guidelines, and that unless specifically given permission to do so a person is not the first to make a significant announcement
- use government branding in accordance with the Government of South Australia branding guidelines
- protect personal details
- ensure that you protect the identity of children, families and other parties
- departmental staff may use the Government's name to endorse companies, products, opinions or causes only where official endorsement already exists
- undertake training when requested to do so.

DUTY OF CARE, ETHICAL AND LEGAL OBLIGATIONS

Before sharing content you shall need to consider:

- **duty of care** – if you are working with children, young people or vulnerable people you have a duty of care for their wellbeing and need to be aware of your legal and ethical obligations before posting any personal details, their name, photos, video and work
- **privacy, confidentiality and sensitive content** – if there are likely to be any privacy or confidentiality issues or if content is of a sensitive nature you need to give thought to whether it should be posted at all. If you are unable to make this decision you should seek advice and help from your leader, manager or from units like Legislation and Legal Services or Online Communications Services.

The kindergarten director or their nominated delegate/s must ensure appropriate standards are maintained with particular focus on removing any information that may identify a student or child.

You must ensure appropriate standards are maintained and no public information should identify a student or child.

Particular Consideration Should Be Given To:

- **vulnerable children** and people need special consideration and can be defined as those whose circumstances and/or personal characteristics place them at increased risk of harm when using social media. This may include children under Court Orders where contact between a child and another person, including a family member may be unlawful for example, children under the Guardianship of the Minister, children subject to a Witness Protection Order; children subject to a Family Court Order
- **links to external websites** must not contravene the Department's Social Media policy. Sites can be compromised when externally linked websites have changed to something undesirable.

POSTING CHILD IMAGES AND WORK

To protect the interests of children, personal or private information must not be included on any publicly available webpage.

When written permission is received and child protection obligations met photos, videos and news may be shared. Where any doubt exists regarding the sensitivity of the information, provisions must be made to limit access to a specific, relevant group of users (for example, use a closed community instead of a public one or host your own community).

When posting images of children or using their work the following apply:

- a consent form must be signed by the parent or guardian prior to taking images of any child who is under the age of 18 years
- administrators must ensure each child shown in the image has a signed consent form. Where a photograph is taken of a group of children (for example, six children have a signed consent form on record but one has not) the image cannot be used unless consent is obtained for all children
- images of children on a social media platform must not include any names identifying any of the children in the image, or any part of the face that identifies the child and care must be taken not to reveal personal information about the subjects
- only text identifying the kindergarten can be used and/or a description of the activity (for example, children from Oaklands Estate Kindergarten visiting the wetlands)
- only photographs with children wearing day clothing are used. Photos of single children and of children in swimming attire should be avoided
- parents should be aware of the privacy and security concerns of identifying their children online, within the 'acceptable use' conditions. If they still choose to identify their children, then it is their right. In the case where parents disagree do not identify the child
- some social media and websites allow people to tag images with names and may also use facial recognition to identify the subject of a photo. Where allow staff will restrict or switched this off.

INAPPROPRIATE CONTENT

If staff notice inappropriate or unlawful online content relating to the department, or content published in breach of this policy, this should be reported to Online Communication Services at DECDintraweb@sa.gov.au or 8226 2068.

What Is Inappropriate Content?

Inappropriate content includes any content that could be seen as:

- pornographic, obscene or offensive
- harassment (racial, religious, sexual orientation physical characteristics, gender, ability, disability, economic status)
- impersonating by using another person's online profile to access social networking
- intimidation or threatening behaviour.

What Content Should Be Removed?

The aim of social media is to promote conversation. Moderation is not about removing comments and content that you don't like or disagree with – it's about ensuring content is relevant, on-topic and respectful.

As a guide, content should be removed that is:

- abusive, offensive in nature or contains offensive language
- bullying, harassing, defaming or giving offence to other people
- contains personal and/or cultural attacks or insults
- promotes hate of any kind

- potentially libellous or defamatory
- off-topic or spam
- plagiarised material
- commercial content
- unauthorised copyright material
- detrimental in any way.

Write down the web address and the name/user name of the person posting the defamatory material. You may also wish to take a screenshot or picture and/or print the defamatory material, whether you are able to delete it or not (sometimes you may not have the rights to delete material).

Contact the social media network or community in question for example, Facebook or check their 'Help' section for the process for reporting content of this nature.

If inappropriate content is posted, the police may need to be involved. Please ensure you are aware of the contact numbers for your local police service area.

The misuse of school or agency- sanctioned social media may require disciplinary action.

If you are unsure what to do contact the Department for Education Online Communication Services on 8226 2068 or via email dec.d.socialmedia@sa.gov.au for advice.

Online Defamation

If the defamer is a student or staff member, contact the department's Legislation and Legal Services on 8226 1555. If the defamation is being perpetrated by a member of the community (this includes parents/carers) avoid responding until you have received legal advice.

RECORDS MANAGEMENT

All South Australian government agencies and Department for Education sites and services are required to retain hard copies of:

- parental feedback
- anything that may have policy implications
- anything that may have legal implications – for example, if you remove inappropriate content a record may be required for future reference.

You shall need to print copies of such information on social media sites and file it in a hard copy file, but it is not necessary to save all general chat – common sense should prevail.

Staff may want to take a soft/electronic copy of content as a back-up of general information.

PERSONAL USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Oaklands Estate Kindergarten supports staff who choose to use social media in their capacity as private citizens, however they should be aware that content published on social media sites is publicly available even on their personal accounts. Educators and other staff can be held accountable for their actions outside of business hours.

As such, you should ensure:

- You are mindful that your behaviour is still bound by the Code of ethics for South Australian public sector, even outside work hours.
- You don't make comments that are obscene, defamatory, threatening, harassing, discriminatory or hateful to or about your work or about another person or entity.
- Your comments are not or could not be perceived to be:
 - made on behalf of Oaklands Estate Kindergarten or the Department for Education, rather than an expression of a personal view
 - so harsh or extreme in your criticism of the Oaklands Estate Kindergarten or the Department for Education that they raise questions about your capacity to work professionally, efficiently or impartially as a Department for Education employee (such comments would not have to relate to the employee's area of work)
 - compromising your capacity to fulfil your duties as a Department for Education employee in an unbiased manner. This applies particularly where comment is made about policies and programmes of the department

- so strong in your criticism of the Department for Education administration that it could seriously disrupt the workplace. (Department for Education employees are encouraged instead to resolve concerns by using internal dispute resolution mechanisms)
- a gratuitous personal attack connected with your employment
- criticism of Oaklands Estate Kindergarten's children, families and other stakeholders
- compromising public confidence in Oaklands Estate Kindergarten and the Department for Education.
- Where staff participate in a discussion not directly related to their work but that draws on their expertise in a field, such as child development, teaching or education, this would be considered personal use. However, staff should not reveal information about Oaklands Estate Kindergarten or the Department for Education that isn't publicly available.
- It may not be appropriate to make connections with everyone who follows your posts for example, 'liking', subscribing or 'following'. Keep in mind these guidelines:
 - develop guidelines to help you make decisions about who you might 'follow/friend/like' or subscribe to
 - do not 'friend' children (or their parents) on Facebook, not even with a 'teacher' presence. You can 'like' a page or participate in a group together but don't click 'Add as friend'
 - do not 'friend', 'follow' or subscribe to posts from under- aged students/children
 - be aware that some people create accounts to spam you – block or report these accounts
 - decide whether you will 'follow/ friend/like' or subscribe to all of your users. Think about whether there are any risks, such as whether they might be children, minors or parents, whether they might have inappropriate content on their profile or site.

Discussing Oaklands Estate Kindergarten, the Department for Education and Their Work In A Non-Official (Personal) Capacity

If staff are involved in online discussions that relate to their work and general information is not available or will not suffice as a response, it is your responsibility to:

- identify yourself as a Department for Education employee if you refer to Oaklands Estate Kindergarten or the Department for Education, its people, products and services.
- ensure you do not imply in any way that you are authorised to speak on 's behalf.
- use a disclaimer to ensure your views and opinions are understood to be your own and not those of the Oaklands Estate Kindergarten or the Department for Education. An example of a disclaimer is: "I am not speaking on behalf of my employer, this is my personal opinion". A disclaimer is required when you:
 - refer to the work done by Oaklands Estate Kindergarten, the Department for Education and its agencies
 - comment on any Oaklands Estate Kindergarten or the Department for Education issue, or
 - provide a link to a Department for Education or Oaklands Estate Kindergarten website.
- not include Oaklands Estate Kindergarten, the Department for Education or agency logos in your postings
- disclose only publicly available information. This includes information available on relevant Oaklands Estate Kindergarten or the Department for Education websites or in annual reports
- provide a direct link to a webpage where the information is available on the internet, so if changes are made to the content/rules people continue to access the most current information.

Personal Privacy and Security Online

If you identify yourself as an employee of the Department for Education in a social media site, you should be aware that this information may be searchable, even by people who are not your 'friends' or 'followers' online.

Staff should familiarise themselves with the terms and conditions and privacy notices of the social media sites they use, and adjust their privacy settings according to their own needs. However, staff should not rely on a site's security settings for a guarantee of privacy, as material posted in a relatively secure setting can still be copied and reproduced elsewhere. Further, comments posted on one site can also be used on others under the terms and conditions of many social media sites. Likewise, Department for Education employees must still uphold the SA Public Sector Code of Ethics and Values even when material is posted anonymously, or using an 'alias' or pseudonym.

They should bear in mind that even if they do not identify themselves online as a Department for Education employee or an employee of their agency, they could nonetheless be recognised as such.

As a rule of thumb, irrespective of the forum, anyone who posts material online should make an assumption that at some point their identity and the nature of their employment will be revealed. Social media websites are public forums.

Inappropriate public comment on such sites could put employees at risk of breaching the Code of Ethics. If employees have concerns relating to the Department for Education or Oaklands Estate Kindergarten, they can seek advice within the Department for Education or from the Ethical Conduct Unit about appropriate avenues for raising these.

RELATED POLICIES, PROCEDURES, GUIDELINES, STANDARDS, FRAMEWORKS

Education and Care Services National Regulation 168

National Quality Standard 7.3

Department for Education Social Media Policy

Department for Education Social Media Guideline

- Code of Ethics for the South Australian Public Sector
- Social Media: Guidance for agencies and staff (SA Government)
- Electronic Mail Access and Use Policy
- ICT Security Policy
- Internet Access and Use Policy
- Information Management Policy – Custodianship and Ownership
- Information Management Policy – Privacy and Confidentiality
- Cyber-Safety: Keeping Children Safe in a Connected World Guideline
- Practical Guide for the Use of Email and the Internet Guideline
- Protective practices for staff in their interactions with students Guideline
- Acceptable Use Policies for Schools, Preschools and Children’s Services Sites Standard

This policy has been developed in consultation with Oaklands Estate Kindergarten staff and Governing Council, as representative of the kindergarten community.

Oaklands Estate Kindergarten Governing Council endorsed this policy on 27th August 2019.

This policy shall be reviewed every two years or as necessary.

Approved by:

Governing Council Chairperson:

Oaklands Estate Kindergarten Director: