

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Quality Areas 6 and 7

PURPOSE

This policy will provide guidelines for:

- the safe and appropriate use of social media, including Facebook and apps such as, but not limited to, WhatsApp, within the context of Friend Street Kindergarten.

POLICY STATEMENT

1. VALUES

Friend Street Kindergarten is committed to:

- engaging and communicating with families of children enrolled at the centre as well as prospective families and the local community;
- maintaining the privacy and confidentiality of children attending the kindergarten and the families of children who attend;
- ensuring the online safety of children and families of children who attend the kindergarten. **2.**

SCOPE

This policy applies to the Committee of Management, staff, parents/guardians who wish to have their children enrolled at the kindergarten, or have children already enrolled at the kindergarten, their extended families, and volunteers or students undertaking placement at the kindergarten.

3. LEGISLATION

The following have been considered –

- Privacy Act 1988 – www.privacy.gov.au/law/act
- Privacy Amendment (Enhancing Privacy Protection) Act 2012
- Regulations 2013
- Privacy Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics
- Guide to the National Quality Standard (3) Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA) 2011

The most current amendments to listed legislation can be found at:

- Victorian Legislation – Victorian Law Today: <http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/> •
- Commonwealth Legislation – ComLaw: <http://www.comlaw.gov.au/>

4. BACKGROUND

The Committee of Management at Friend Street Kindergarten has established a Facebook page to promote the kindergarten to the local community including prospective families, as well as providing an additional form of communication with current families.

Some social groups at Friend Street Kindergarten may also use apps such as WhatsApp as a communication tool.

Social media such as Facebook and apps such as WhatsApp represent a growing form of communication and can play an important role in building and maintaining relationships with families, prospective families and the local community.

However, it is also an area in which rules and boundaries are constantly being tested and we must be mindful of the effects of the use of social media on children and families within our kindergarten community, particularly in relation to privacy and confidentiality.

5. PROCEDURES

1. Educa remains the primary communication tool between teachers/committee of management and families on a daily basis.

2. The Friend Street Kindergarten Facebook page is used as an additional means of communication between the service, current families, past families, prospective families and the local community.

Facial images of children, family members, staff members and committee members will not be posted on Friend Street Kindergarten's Facebook page. Children's names will not be included in posts.

The Administrators of the Facebook page will be the educational leader and nominated co educators. They will need to –

- be familiar with Facebook and how it functions;
 - have an understanding of the Code of Conduct and accepted ethical/professional behaviours of the kindergarten;
 - have the authority to respond to feedback and enquiries;
 - know when to seek advice from others (eg. about content of response, how to respond or legal/ethical advice);
 - know when to escalate the matter to the Educational Leader for response; •
- be confident in uploading or linking to files.

The Friend Street Kindergarten Facebook page must not be used for the promotion of personal financial interests, commercial ventures, personal campaigns or to promote other businesses. However, the page may be used to thank local businesses for their support of the kindergarten.

Any complaints relating to the content of the Facebook page or breaches of this policy will be dealt with in accordance with the kindergarten's Complaints and Grievances policy where appropriate.

Any person using the Facebook page inappropriately may be blocked by Administrators.

3. Families using apps such as WhatsApp to communicate with other families will ensure that comments posted are within the parameters of The Code of Conduct Policy and the Privacy Policy.

6. KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

The Committee of Management is responsible for –

- ensuring this policy is implemented;
- developing and reviewing this policy;
- authorizing any changes to this policy;
- monitoring complaints and incidents regarding this policy.

The Administrators are responsible for –

- regularly reviewing and updating the content of the Facebook page;
- ensuring the content of the Facebook page and apps such as WhatsApp reflect the values and purpose of this policy and philosophy of the kindergarten;
- ensuring the content, including comments, of the Facebook page and apps such as WhatsApp adhere to the Kindergarten's code of conduct;
- removing any inappropriate comments or posts.

Parents/guardians are responsible for –

- respecting the rights and confidentiality of other children and their families when using the Facebook page or apps such as WhatsApp;
- adhering to the points contained within this policy and the kindergarten's Code of Conduct when using the Facebook page or apps such as WhatsApp;
- Notifying Committee of Management if there are concerns over a breach of this policy.

7. EVALUATION

In order to assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, the Approved Provider of Friend Street Kindergarten will:

- regularly seek feedback from everyone affected by the policy regarding its effectiveness;
- monitor the procedures in relation to this policy;
- keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research, policy and best practice;
- revise the policy and procedures as part of the service's policy review cycle, or as required;
- notify parents/guardians at least 14 days before making any changes to this policy or its procedures.

AUTHORISATION

This policy was adopted by the Approved Provider of Friend Street Kindergarten on 9 August 2023.

REVIEW DATE: AUGUST 2025