



Cornerstone Nurseries Policy on Social Media

Whilst it is a great way to keep on top of news, events and general goings on and a good way to communicate with friends and family etc. sites such as facebook, Instagram, X, Threads, Snapchat and others can pose potential issues with regards to professionalism for nursery practitioners.

Whilst Cornerstone Nurseries has no intention of interfering with staff/parents social lives outside of work, we do as an employer/nursery, have to set certain rules to ensure that the sites are enjoyable for all and do not pose dangers to us as a company nor our reputation, staff, parents or the children in our care.

- **Employees are asked not to friend request nursery parents (clients) and only to accept parents as friends if they knew the parent before they registered with the nursery**, however in doing so you must then ensure that you act in a way which is seen as professional at all times. For example, a status reading that a member of staff has been out drinking on a Monday night could cause a parent concern "is this person fit to look after my child today?"

Parents who request you to befriend or follow their online accounts will understand you are unable to accept them if you drop them a message to say something along the lines of...

"I am sorry, company policy prevents me from being friends/following parents from the nursery, so I am unable to accept your request, I hope you understand".

When a child leaves the setting, you may then befriend/follow the parent, if they ask you to, however if they re-register at the setting you must explain to them that this means you can no longer follow or befriend them on social media - Do so sensitively similar to the example given above.

- Photographs uploaded onto these sites can still sometimes be viewed by parents and colleagues so **please ensure your accounts are set to private.**
- Staff are not permitted to upload any photographs of themselves wearing their nursery uniform unless they are behaving appropriately, e.g. a photo of yourself smoking even if you are at home is not acceptable if you are in uniform as you appear to represent the nursery.
- Staff should think about how status updates affect their colleagues/parents of children in their care e.g. "..... has had a bad day today" may make the colleagues working with them feel they have done something to upset that person or parents wonder if you have been in a bad mood all day whilst caring for their child. Saying you've had a stressful day at work could make a parent wonder if the nursery was overstretched due to staffing issues and so on.

- Staff are not permitted to discuss colleagues, nursery parents or nursery children online under any circumstances. Please refer to the confidentiality policy.
- In line with the nursery's policy for the use of personal cameras and mobile phones, it should not be possible to upload any photographs containing images of nursery children.
- Social networking sites are not to be used from nursery computers / tablets to look at personal accounts however for some purposes Facebook will be looked at on a nursery computer by a member of the management team to upload any information onto the nursery group page.
- Staff must not share advertisements or recruitment posters for other nurseries or similar business activities, we like to believe that staff will want to ensure the future successes of their own workplace over those of our competitors and will choose to share our own advertisements and recruitment campaigns.
- Cornerstone Employees must set their profiles to 'Private'

Cornerstone Nurseries have a ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY regarding Bullying, Harassment and Sexual Harassment of any kind. All reported incidents will be taken seriously including any form of bullying or harassment on social media

Cornerstone Nurseries are committed to providing a working and learning environment free from harassment, including sexual harassment. Harassment of any kind will not be tolerated, and we are committed to addressing all complaints promptly, confidentially, and in line with legal requirements.

Harassment is defined as unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic (e.g., age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation) that violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating, or offensive environment.

Sexual Harassment is against the law. It includes but is not limited to:

- Unwanted sexual advances, comments, or physical contact.
- Inappropriate jokes, remarks, or gestures of a sexual nature.
- Displaying or sharing offensive or sexually suggestive material, including online.
- Any behaviour that coerces, pressures, or intimidates someone based on their sex or sexual orientation.

Cornerstone Nurseries will never cover up or ignore a sexual harassment complaint

Whilst we are confident that most staff are able to use these sites professionally, sites such as these further blur the boundaries between employee's private lives and working life and as an employer we must ensure we are clear as to what is and what isn't acceptable.

Cornerstone Day Nurseries have a Facebook page available. This is a communication tool for the setting. We will use it to;

- Promote certain events such as parent group meetings, trips, social events and visitors,
- Update parents on policies and procedures
- Update parents on child development training etc
- Give hints and tips for activities the children have enjoyed and home learning ideas
- Displays photos (with parental written consent) on the children taking part in fun activities within the nursery
- To give news
- To show photos of activities, trips or special events.

The nursery managers and deputies are the page administrators and will update the page on a regular basis.

The page administrators reserve the right to remove any comments at any time. The intent of the policy is to protect the privacy and rights of the nursery, staff and families
We will remove any posting that

- Name specific individuals in a negative way
- Are abusive or contain inappropriate language or statements
- Use defamatory, abusive or generally negative terms about any individual
- Do not show proper consideration for others privacy
- Breach copyright or fair use laws
- Contain any photos of children without necessary parental consent.

Although we enjoy reading your reviews, welcome positive feedback and comments as well as your recommendations to others on our services, we ask parents/carers to consider their own use of social network sites in relation to nursery topics and how their own usage could affect the privacy or reputation of the setting, or those that work here or use our services.

Staff should not be mentioned/named on social media or online without their consent. Please also consider the nursery's reputation when making comments online, as an example, if you have a complaint, we respectfully request that you use our formal complaints procedure rather than putting a negative comment online as this can be very damaging to any company's social and public profile.

The same applies to "memes" which could be hurtful to your colleagues or managers. As an example, sharing a meme about "bad managers" could make your own manager or direct room supervisor feel that the post is directly or indirectly about them. Please be mindful of this when sharing memes.

Social media when absent from work

If staff are absent due to sickness, we ask that staff think wisely about photographs or statuses that they post online.

Not all illnesses which make someone unfit for work will also mean that the employee cannot continue as normal in other parts of their life. As an example, an employee signed off with depression will likely be advised not to stay indoors and to carry on with social activities, however if your colleagues are not aware of your reason for absence due to our confidentiality procedures then it may cause bad feeling amongst the team to see staff off sick and posting photos online of themselves at the zoo or attending a party. Employees should be mindful of this and refrain from sharing such images at times when they are absent due to sickness.

Employees should also consider that photographs posted online which contradict the reasons given for absence may be used as evidence in disciplinary procedures. As an example, if an employee is signed off with a sprained ankle claiming they can't walk and then posts a picture on social media of themselves at a theme park this will lead employers to understandably question the validity of their reason for absence.

Reviewed 22/03/24 CJS review annually