

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

This policy provides guidance and advice to employees, volunteers, parents and families associated with the Geelong Kindergarten Association (GKA) around using and managing social media.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance and advice around how to manage and use social media in an early childhood education and development setting.

POLICY STATEMENT

1. VALUES

This policy aims to establish guidelines by which GKA's social media interactions can be managed with the best interests of GKA's brand and reputation in mind.

GKA values the benefits of social media as an effective tool for communication and relationship building with community and stakeholders.

It is crucial that representatives of GKA use social media to champion GKA and its services.

2. SCOPE

The information outlined in this policy applies to staff in GKA's Administration Unit, Centre based Educators, Volunteers / Students, Parents and Families of children associated with GKA kindergartens.

3. BACKGROUND AND LEGISLATION

Background

GKA is developing an increasing presence across a range of media channels, both at an Administrative and Centre based level. These channels provide a useful tool in assisting with communication and promotion, by complementing its existing avenues.

Predominately, social media is being used by GKA employees in order to provide information and updates to parents and families.

GKA encourages its Centres to use social media as a tool to communicate details of events, programs, and projects.

Legislation and standards

Legislation relevant to this policy includes:

- Information Privacy Act (2000) Vic
- Equal Opportunity Act (2010) Vic

4. DEFINITIONS

Social media refers to a range of on-line services and tools used for sharing, publishing and discussing information, along with promoting, interaction and dialogues, opinion and other content, across open networks.

Social media may include (but is not limited to):

- Networking sites (such as MySpace, Facebook, Google+, LinkedIn, Yammer, Edmodo, Bebo)
- Photo, video, and audio sharing websites (such as YouTube, Sound Cloud, iTunes, Flickr, Vimeo)
- Instant messaging (such as SMS)
- Podcasting and Vod
- On-line collaborations and wikis (such as Wikipedia)
- Discussion boards, Message boards, Groups and Forums (such as Whirlpool, Google Moderator, Power Boards)
- Gaming Platforms (such as Second Life)
- Geo-spatial tagging
- Blogs (Personal, corporate or those hosted by other media outlets)
- Micro-blogs and micro-forums (such as Twitter)

5. SOURCES AND RELATED POLICIES

Sources

- Information Privacy Act (2000) Vic
- Equal Opportunity Act (2010) Vic

Service policies

- Code of Conduct
- Occupational Health and Safety
- Privacy Policy

PROCEDURES

Official Use

Official use is when an employee or volunteer is using social media as a representative of GKA with permission from GKA Management. Centre based Educators will require formal permission from their Team Leader, to represent their particular service. Centre based staff will have a responsibility to ensure that their social media is maintained, and that best practice is in place. Administration staff will require permission from the Managing Director, to represent GKA through GKA's accounts. All GKA staff must ensure that they operate within guidelines outlined in GKA's Code of Conduct and Privacy Policy.

Personal Use

Personal use is when an employee, volunteer, or parent is using social media as themselves, not officially representing GKA as an organisation, but identifying themselves as being associated with GKA on their own profiles, posts, blogs, etc. Posts of this nature must also comply with the guidelines outlined in GKA's Code of Conduct and Privacy Policy.

Guidelines

As a guide, the following principles should be followed when interacting on social media:

- Do not criticise colleagues, children, parents or families associated with GKA
- Do not talk on behalf of the organisation only on behalf of the individual
- Do not do anything that will breach GKA's terms of employment
- Do not post inaccurate information
- Do not post opinions, only state the facts
- Do not post identifying photographs or details of children
- Respond to comments or queries promptly
- Remove any inappropriate or abusive content / posts immediately
- Only post information which can be publicly obtained
- Behave respectfully and politely
- Do not disclose confidential information
- Do not post material that is offensive, defamatory, obscene, harassing, bullying, discriminatory, racist, sexist, breaches a court order, or is unlawful
- Do not post anything that infringes copy right

Policy Breach

Misuse of social media can have serious consequences for GKA, and consequently that misuse can have serious consequences for staff and associates of GKA.

Non-compliance with this policy may constitute a breach of contract of employment, misconduct, harassment, discrimination or defamation.

EVALUATION

GKA will actively monitor and review this policy, in order to ensure that it remains effective and compliant under current legislation and best practice.

GKA will ensure that it will observe changes and trends around social media, and revise this policy in order to remain relevant and up to date.

This policy was adopted by GKA on 6th November 2013

Review Date 6TH November 2014

Review Date 1st June 2016