



## **EAST SUSSEX EARLY DAYS CIC SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY/GUIDELINES**

### **Introduction**

The use of online social and business sites e.g., Facebook, X, Blogs, YouTube, LinkedIn and all other public online communications is now commonplace and used by people to maintain contact with friends as well as being employed in certain circumstances as a work tool. As a proactive and innovative organisation, East Sussex Early Days CIC (ESED CIC) actively welcomes and supports the use of these tools in the workplace, as they help in publicising and raising awareness of the unique work we do.

However, there have been several cases where the use of social media has harmed the reputation of an employer or its employees and volunteers. This policy is intended to help employees and volunteers avoid potential pitfalls. If information on any of the sites we use raises concern for you, you must contact your line manager.

### **Scope and Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to minimise risks to our business through the use of social media.

This policy deals with all forms of social media including but not limited to Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, X, Google+, Wikipedia, Instagram, and Tumblr.

When based at or seconded to other organisations ESED CIC staff members will be expected to comply with the host organisations policies. This policy outlines ESED's expectations of workers and volunteers regarding the use of social or business media.

### **Breaches of the Policy**

Whether accessed at work or at home, the following can result in disciplinary action, including dismissal:

- Any reference, direct or indirect, on social or business networking sites, blogs or other such sites, to your employer, employment, individuals or organisations, or funding partners and members that could cause ESED's reputation to be damaged; or
- Use of a site that contravenes ESED's policy or an illegal site; or
- Use of a site where ESED's or your individual duty of confidentiality is breached, where the dignity at work of colleagues and volunteers are undermined or the values of ESEC are compromised, where any other policies of ESED are breached.

### **Use of Social and Business Network Sites**

Social media should never be used in a way that breaches any of our policies. If an internet post would breach any of our policies in another forum, it will also breach them in an online forum.

#### **Best interests**

You are expected, when using social and business networking sites and the internet, to always act in the best interests of ESED.

#### **Social Media Content**

If you are creating or posting content on social media about infant feeding please remember to remain within the remit of which you are trained. Resharing posts from groups and IBCLCs is fine if the source is reputable. When you create your own content please keep within your remit. You should also always provide a link to the source of the information.

#### **Adding families onto social media**

Be mindful of adding families to your social media friends list. Volunteers should try to ensure that families do not develop a dependency on you within your role. Volunteers are there to provide support during a drop-in and not outside of those hours. Parents should be encouraged to access social media or text support options outside of drop-in hours. We do not want you to burn out or feel overwhelmed with families contacting yourselves for support.

#### **Social or business networking activities should not interfere with your primary job responsibilities.**

#### **Disrepute**

You must not use sites in such a way that ESED's interests or reputation is, or could be, damaged, whether directly or indirectly.

You must not use social media to defame or disparage ESED, our IBCLCs, Directors or any third party; to harass, bully or unlawfully discriminate against workers or third parties; to make false or misleading statements; or to impersonate colleagues or third parties.

#### **Confidentiality**

You are not to refer to or publish contact details or pictures of any staff, volunteers, supporters, children or young people without obtaining express written permission to do so from the parties concerned. In all circumstances you must inform your line manager prior to publishing.

Confidential information is defined as any information that is described as such by ESED as the employer. This shall include any personal information, embargoed press releases, and any information, not legitimately available to the public, which relates to the commercial, financial and other activities of ESED.

Information shared on social and business networking sites, or personal blogs, even in private spaces, are still subject to copyright, data protection and defamation laws and may give rise to claims against an individual or ESED.

**Remember, once you make a comment online it is extremely difficult to remove the comment.**

### **Dignity at work**

Sites should not be used to abuse, ridicule, bully, harass, intimidate staff, volunteers, members or supporters, children or young people or stakeholders e.g., defamatory, threatening, harmful, homophobic or obscene comments. The privacy and feelings of others should always be respected.

### **Contacting children and young people**

Under no circumstances should social or business networking sites be used inappropriately by you to contact children, young people or any of our members.

### **Illegal file sharing**

Sites should not be used by you for accessing or sharing illegal or inappropriate content at any time.

### **Values**

Under no circumstances should members of staff make any comments or post items, photos or materials that compromise ESED's values.

### **Disclaimer**

Any personal blogs and other personal posts by you, **whereby you identify yourself in any way as an employee or volunteer**, must contain a disclaimer stating *"the opinions expressed are solely those of the author and do not represent the views of East Sussex Early Days CIC"*.

Be respectful to others when making any statement on social media and be aware that you are personally responsible for all communications which will be published on the internet for anyone to see.

### **Privacy**

You must consider your privacy settings carefully, and that initially private postings may not remain so.

## **Offensive Material**

You must not access pornographic, sexually explicit, religious hatred or any material which may be construed as discriminatory or unsuitable or download such material onto IT equipment belonging to ESED CIC or other, or in any way associate ESED CIC with such material.

Any breach of this policy or misuse of social networking sites or the internet may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. You may be required to remove or be refused access to any social media that ESEC CIC consider to constitute a breach of this policy.

**If you are concerned, or unsure, about the appropriateness of any statement or posting, please refrain from posting it until you have discussed it with your line manager. If you see social media content that disparages us, or reflects poorly on us, you should contact your manager.**

If you wish to report any suspected wrongdoing in relation to a suspected breach of this policy, please speak to your Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy DSL for ESED.

## **Monitoring**

This policy is designed to reduce risks to both ESED's activities and reputation that might occur as a result of inappropriate use of social or business networking sites and personal blogs. Users must be aware that the use of IT systems, including the internet and email, can be monitored and electronically logged.

Monitoring is performed in accordance with the **Employment Practices Data Protection Code, Part 3: Monitoring at Work**, as issued by the Information Commissioner.

We reserve the right to monitor, intercept and review, without further notice, staff activities using our IT resources and communications systems, including, but not limited to, social media postings and activities, to ensure that our rules are being complied with and for legitimate business purposes and you consent to such monitoring by your use of such resources and systems.

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