



## INTERNET, SOCIAL MEDIA AND ONLINE ABUSE POLICY

Last reviewed:	November 2025
Next review due:	November 2026

### Statement of intent

This policy applies to all permanent and temporary staff working for The Little Firefly. It offers guidance on staff using The Little Firefly's social media accounts, as well as their own personal accounts and it applies at all times, both inside and outside working hours, while staff are employed with The Little Firefly.

The Little Firefly recognises that social media offers a way to communicate key messages and engage with pupils, parents, carers and other stakeholders. It also offers opportunities for public consultation, a two way dialogue with pupils, staff, carers and parents for the purposes of influencing school policy and direction.

When using social media and internet sites The Little Firefly draws no distinction between the conduct online and conduct offline. The Little Firefly will take a view about staff actions in respect of social media and the internet either inside or outside of work that affect employee's work performance, the performance of others or the interests of the nursery.

### The Little Firefly's social media accounts

At the time of writing this policy, The Little Firefly has two social media accounts, which only the nursery owner has access to:

- Facebook: [The Little Firefly - Outdoor Day Nursery and Forest School | Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/thelittlefireflythame)
- Instagram: [@thelittlefireflythame](https://www.instagram.com/thelittlefireflythame)

### Rights and responsibilities

When using social networking sites and the internet, staff should ensure that this does not damage the reputation of The Little Firefly (or themselves). Staff are personally responsible for the content they publish on social media sites and the internet and must be mindful that this information will be in the public domain. Employees must have regard to the fact that they will be responsible for any commentary which is deemed to be a breach of copyright, defamatory, libellous or obscene.

### The Little Firefly staff obligations

It is the policy of The Little Firefly that staff:

1. will NOT post confidential or privileged information about the nursery on their personal social media accounts (eg Facebook, Instagram , X etc)
2. will NOT form friendships on social media with the parents or carers of children enrolled in the nursery
3. will NOT form friendships on social media with any children enrolled in the nursery or who attend events run by The Little Firefly.

### **Staff online safety**

Staff need to be aware that due to the nature of the role that they play in caring for children may make them more at risk of being targeted and groomed. Staff should take all precautions when setting their privacy settings, should be cautious of accepting friend requests from someone unknown to them and speak to their manager or designated safeguarding lead if they suspect that they have been contacted by someone who poses a risk to children.

### **Transparency**

It is recognised that the line between professional and personal business can sometimes be blurred. It is important that individuals are thoughtful about the content and potential audiences for anything contributed to a social media site or the internet. It is vital that employees should be honest about their identity, and, where appropriate, be clear that any views shared are the employees as an individual and not necessarily the views of The Little Firefly.

The use of social media on behalf of The Little Firefly should only be used with the consent of the manager or owner. Any member of staff contacted by the published media or radio or television about a post they have made on a social networking site should inform the nursery manager immediately.

### **Monitoring**

While The Little Firefly does not monitor employees through social networking sites or the internet, if there were concerns with regard to the activities of a member of staff or an investigation was taking place then The Little Firefly would consider accessing social media sites. This covers both private and professional use of social media.

### **Legal issues**

All employees of The Little Firefly should take the following into consideration when using social media:

- Be aware of The Little Firefly's policy and guidelines for using social media whether this is for personal use or as part of the working role
- Be familiar with the legal areas outlined below before writing about colleagues or sharing information about The Little Firefly
- Ensure that posted material does not disclose privileged or confidential information
- Remember that defamation is the act of making a statement about a person (or an institution) that is considered to harm their reputation. Where such a defamatory statement is written down (either in print or online) this is referred to as libel.

In drafting this policy The Little Firefly recognises that it may be held responsible for something an employee has written or said if it is on behalf of the nursery or on a nursery sanctioned site.

Action can also be taken against anyone repeating libellous information from another source so careful checks are needed before quoting statements from other social network sites or the internet.

## **Conclusion**

The Little Firefly respects the legal rights of employees with regard to the use of social networking and the internet. In general, what an employee does in their own time is their affair and the nursery recognises that some staff may wish to publish private material on the internet including, but not limited to, social networking websites. Any activities, however, in or outside of work involving the internet are prohibited by this policy if they affect or could affect The Little Firefly's reputation or service delivery interests, job performance (of the member of staff concerned or others) in a negative way in the reasonable opinion of the directors.

Employees may face disciplinary action if they harass, intimidate or demean other employees or stakeholders in the nursery on a social networking site. Employees must make every effort to ensure that any remarks on a social media website are credible and accurate with a disclaimer that the views are those of the member of staff and not of the employer. It is likely that sharing confidential or private information about The Little Firefly, its employees or directors on a social media site or the internet will result in a disciplinary investigation.

Policies, procedures and risk assessments referred to in this document:

- Information sharing policy
- Relationship, behaviour and communication (inc anti-bullying) policy
- Safeguarding policy

External references:

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