



# Ballygawley Early Years Playgroup

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## E-safety and Social Networking

### **Principle**

The Child (NI) order 1995 and publication of "Our Duty to Care", place paramountcy on the "welfare of the child". With this in mind, the purpose of this policy is to safeguard children and staff of Ballygawley Early Years Playgroup from the misuse of the internet, email and social networking sites.

### **Statement of intent**

Ballygawley Early Years Playgroup will ensure the safe practice in the use of the internet, effective control measures to enable children and staff to use ICT (Information Communication Technology) resources in a safe online environment and provide guidance to staff to prevent the misuse of internet and social network sites.

E-safety and Social Networking Policy will apply to internet access through any medium, for example, computers, mobile phones and gaming machines. The policy will cover the children in attendance at Ballygawley Early Years Playgroup, staff, volunteers, visitors, students, committee members and contractors.

### **Guidance for safe practice when working with Children**

1. All staff and adults working with children in attendance at Ballygawley Early Years Playgroup will understand the risks when working with ICT equipment and their "Duty of Care" towards children, with regards to child protection.
2. When conducting ICT sessions, one member of staff will be present at all times to provide adequate supervision.
3. All staff and adults working with children in attendance at Ballygawley Early Years Playgroup will ensure that only child appropriate sites are accessed.
4. Computers used by the children will have unsuitable sites blocked or barred.
5. Regular checks to ensure blocking/ barring of unsuitable sites will be carried out by the designated officer.



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## Staff responsibilities

1. All staff will understand the playgroup e- safety and social networking policy, and significance of their role in e-safety.
2. Staff will use the internet in an acceptable way that does not create an unnecessary business or child protection risk by the misuse of internet or email within the playgroup setting.
3. Staff will work within the boundaries of professional behaviour and comply with all e-safety legislation.
4. Due care will be taken by all staff to ensure confidentiality, data protection and any personal information that must be sent via email goes to the correct recipient.
5. Staff will not take part in deliberate activities to waste staff effort or network resources.
6. Work email system will not be used to setup or send chain letters, viral emails or spam.
7. No staff member will send an unauthorised email on behalf of an individual inside or outside of Ballygawley Early Years without their knowledge or consent.
8. ICT equipment or internet provided in playgroup will at no time be used for personal purposes during work time. After work time will be at the discretion of playgroup leader.
9. Staff using Playgroup ICT equipment will not participate in any form of fraud, theft, and software or music piracy.
10. Staff are prohibited from using the internet or email to send offensive or harassing materials to others.
11. Staff are barred from visiting internet sites that contain obscene, hateful, pornographic or other illegal material.
12. Staff who use the internet, email or social networking will not make any improper or discriminatory reference to a person's race, colour, religion or belief, sex, age, national origin, sexual orientation, disabilities or physique, and not forwarding or distribute any material which does so.
13. Publishing defamatory and/ or knowingly false material about Ballygawley Early Years playgroup will result in disciplinary procedures and possible dismissal from post.



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14. At no time should staff make reference to a child/ children in attendance to Ballygawley Early Years playgroup on a social networking site, internet chat room or email, as this is a breach of confidentiality.
15. Staff should report all suspicions of misuse of this policy to the playgroup leader, were suspicions are suspected of the leader, staff should report to the committee chairperson, as per whistle blowing policy.

## **Manager/deputy manager or designated person responsibilities**

1. Ensuring staff are aware of and understand this policy and how it relates to other relevant polices.
2. Required training is received for relevant staff on e-safety.
3. Relevant systems in place to ensure the protection of information and appropriate access to Internet, e.g. passwords on computers, limited access to certain sites.
4. Monitoring the policy to ensure that staff are complying with it; this includes the rights of managers'/ deputy managers' right to access emails, images and internet sites visited where there has been a suspicion of improper use.
5. Dealing with breaches of policy and ensuring that the highest standards of practice are maintained.
6. Reporting issues or incidents to Committee Chairperson e.g. need for further support on e-safety or breach of policy.



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## **Breach of policy**

All employees should be aware that any failure to comply with this policy will be taken seriously and may be dealt with in accordance with Ballygawley Early Years playgroup disciplinary policy and procedures. If an employee is found to have breached the policy, they will face a disciplinary penalty ranging from a verbal warning to a dismissal from post. Where criminal offence is suspected, the matter will be referred to Police.

This policy was reviewed and accepted at a meeting of Ballygawley Early Years Management Committee on 06/2015, and reviewed on 01/2016 and 12/2016.

## **Links**

This policy links to a number of other policies and should be read alongside them:

- Safeguarding Children and Child Protection Policy
- Whistle Blowing Policy
- Confidentiality Policy
- Data protection Policy
- Disciplinary Policy
- Photography and Videography Policy
- Mobile phone Policy