

Social Media Policy

There are benefits and challenges of using social media platforms in the early childhood setting. This policy has been developed to provide employees, families, volunteers, and students with standards of use as they engage in conversations or interactions using social media for official, professional, and personal use while employed at Raleigh St.

National Quality Standard-

QUALITY AREA 7: GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP		
7.1.1	Service philosophy and purposes	A statement of philosophy guides all aspects of Raleigh St's operations
7.1.2	Management Systems	Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of our service
7.1.3	Roles and Responsibilities	Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, and understood and support effective decision making and operation of Raleigh St
7.2	Leadership	Effective leadership builds and promotes a positive organisational culture and professional learning community

Education and Care Services National Regulations/Law-

84	Awareness of child protection law
181	Confidentiality and storage of records
183	Storage of records and other documents

Related Policies-

Child Safe Environment Policy	Occupational Health and Safety Policy
Code of Conduct Policy	Privacy and Confidentiality Policy
Complaints and Grievance Policy	Respect for Children Policy
Interactions with Children, Family and Staff Policy	Student and Volunteer Workers Policy

Purpose-

Being part of Raleigh St assumes a position of trust and responsibility. We aim to ensure that our service, children, educators, or families are not compromised in any form on social media

and that the use of Facebook or other social media platforms complies with Raleigh St's philosophy, relevant policies, and the Code of Conduct.

We also endeavour to maintain a cyber safe culture which works in accordance with privacy and legislative requirements to ensure the cyber safety of enrolled children, educators, and families.

Scope-

This policy applies to children, families, staff, management, the CoM, students, and visitors of Raleigh St.

Implementation-

Social media is defined as "forms of electronic communication (such as websites for social networking and blogging) through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content (such as videos)" (Merriam-Webster dictionary).

We recognise that there are many advantages in using social media to network within service operations. It is important to approach usage with caution, through careful and systematic management. Whilst healthy debate may provide thought-provoking discussion, these guidelines are in place to ensure that Raleigh St remains open and welcoming for children, families, and staff.

The National Principles for Child Safe Organisations recognise the importance of safe physical and online environments to promote safety and wellbeing of all children. Raleigh St Community Children's Centre (Raleigh St) has the responsibility to ensure children and educators are protected from harm when they engage with digital technology including social media.

This policy applies to all forms of social media including (but not limited to):

- Social networking sites e.g., Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn
- Image sharing sites e.g., Instagram, Snapchat, and Imgur
- Music/dance videos e.g., Tik Tok
- Video hosting sites e.g., YouTube and Vimeo
- Community blogs e.g., Tumblr and Medium
- Discussion sites e.g., Reddit and Quora

Raleigh St Facebook Account-

Raleigh St has a Facebook account to share information with our families and community, which is administered by the Director and the CoM. The intent for Raleigh St's Facebook page is to keep families in touch with what is happening at Raleigh St, including upcoming and special events.

Only current enrolled families and staff will have access to the Raleigh St Facebook page. The page is locked as "Privacy type: Closed: Limited public content. Members can see all content."

The intent for the Raleigh St (Official) Facebook page is to:

- keep families in touch with what is happening at Raleigh St, including upcoming and special events.
- provide appropriate research-based information on common child rearing issues.
- provide educational information to families and employees.
- The Facebook page will **not** be considered the sole source of important information for families but is to act as an additional source of interesting information that may be relevant to the Raleigh St community that engage with Facebook.

NOTE: The Raleigh St Facebook account must not be used for personal comments or discussions.

Privacy-

- All staff and educators must remain aware that they represent and could be identified as an employee of Raleigh St through *any* online activity, whether the Service is named or not.
- Staff and educators must maintain appropriate privacy of families, employees, students, children, and volunteers, including when they have obtained permission to publish content to Raleigh St Facebook account.
- Absolutely no written content will be published to Facebook without the written permission of families to whom the content relates.
- Our Service will gain written family permission prior to posting photos of children.
- Passwords will not be shared without authorisation from management.
- Our Service will remain up to date with any changes to Facebook ensuring privacy setting remain up to date.

Regarding the Raleigh St Facebook page the Director and/or CoM will:

- obtain written authorisation from a child's parents prior to posting any comment or photos of their child to the page
- ensure personal information about families, children and staff is not posted on-line
- ensure the highest level of privacy settings are established and maintained on the account
- ensure all passwords are kept confidential
- log out of Facebook when not in use and prior to leaving Raleigh St
- regularly scan online content related to Raleigh St to ensure appropriateness.
- adhere to our *Complaints and Grievance Policy* and procedures to investigate any occurrences where a person working at Raleigh St may:
 - post photos or information about Raleigh St or children
 - defame, harass, or bully any other person who works at Raleigh St or is connected to Raleigh St.
- ensure that any staff or educator found guilty of any social media misconduct (on both the Raleigh St Facebook page and any private page) is aware that this may result in termination of employment.

Regarding all social media, the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, educators, staff members, volunteers and students will not:

- access personal Facebook accounts or any other social media accounts on any workplace device
- access personal Facebook or any other social media accounts whilst educating and caring for children
- post any photos taken of the children enrolled at Raleigh St on their personal Facebook or any other social media account
- post any information about Raleigh St, colleagues, children, or families on any personal social media account
- vilify, harass, defame, or bully any other person who works at Raleigh St, the families or community members connected to Raleigh St
- post offensive or derogatory comments or information that could bring their professional standing or that of Raleigh St into disrepute, even if the Service is not mentioned by name
- use their personal camera or phones to take photos or video whilst at Raleigh St.

Personal Social Media Accounts-

When using social media in their personal life, Raleigh St staff must:

- Ensure they do not represent their personal views as those of Raleigh St; and
- Not disclose confidential or private work information.

It is extremely important that staff members not to post information about Raleigh St, colleagues, children, or families on their personal social media accounts (including information that indirectly identifies Raleigh St or people associated with it), as this not only contravenes Raleigh St policies and Code of Conduct but would breach the Commonwealth *Privacy Act 1988* and the Victorian *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014*.

Staff members must not approach families currently attending Raleigh St to add them as 'friends' to their personal social media accounts. Staff members may use their personal discretion in deciding whether to accept a request from a Raleigh St family on their personal social media accounts. However, Raleigh St does not recommend that staff accept such requests. If they do add families to their personal social media accounts, staff members will be a representative of Raleigh St and must therefore adhere to all relevant policies, including the Raleigh St Code of Conduct, at all times.

Families are asked to respect that staff may have a personal or professional reason for not accepting requests from families on their personal social media accounts, and to note that Raleigh St does not recommend staff have families as contacts on their personal social media accounts.

Consequences for inappropriate conduct on social media-

For inappropriate conduct to be unlawful, there is a need to demonstrate a connection between the behaviour and the employment relationship that:

- is likely to cause serious damage to the relationship between the employee and Raleigh St
- damages or harms Raleigh St's interest or reputation
- is incompatible with the employee's duties in the education and care sector.

A person who has been involved in inappropriate conduct may require reprimand as per our *Code of Conduct Policy*. This may lead to termination of their position.

Continuous Quality Improvement-

Raleigh St will continue to evaluate and assess our online safety practices through critical reflections, checklists, professional learning and discussions with families and staff.

Educators and staff will complete online training through the e-Safety Commissioner to ensure staff remain up to date with current research and are aware of how to report inappropriate content on social media sites.

Resources-

Australian Government Office of the e-Safety commission www.esafety.gov.au/early-years

e-Safety Early Years Online safety for under 5s.

<https://www.esafety.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-02/Early-years-booklet.pdf>

e-Safety Early Years Checklist <https://www.esafety.gov.au/educators/esafety-early-years-program-for-educators/checklist>

Sources-

- Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority (2014)
- Dictionary by Merriam-Webster: <https://www.merriam-webster.com/>
- ECA Code of Ethics
- e-Safety Commissioner: <https://www.esafety.gov.au/educators/esafety-early-years-program-for-educators>
- Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2015
- Guide to the National Quality Standard (2020)
- *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth)
- *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* (Vic)
- Revised National Quality Standard. (2018).

Review-

Policy review	Modification	CoM endorsement	Next review date
July 2019	Policy created for RSCCC based on CC Desktop template- KC	August 2020	August 2021
August 2020	Policy reformatted and updated to specify current social platforms- JR	August 2020	August 2023