



Out of School Club

Policies and Procedures Parents' version

Ofsted registered in accordance with the Early Years Foundation Stage,
Ofsted Education Standards and the Children Act 1989

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Written Policy for Admissions to the Out of School Club

The Chelmsford YMCA Out of School Clubs will admit children aged 4 years to 11 years inclusive. The Out of School Clubs will accept children on a weekly or daily basis.

The Out of School Club will accept children from Barnes Farm Infant and Junior Schools and Chancellor Park School.

You will receive on request a threefold leaflet giving basic information about the Out of School Club and a letter advising you to make an appointment to view the Out of School Club.

Following this viewing you are requested to submit the registration forms (copies of registration forms enclosed). Please see the prospectus for details of the required registration and fees which will need to be paid before securing a space in the Club.

All parents agree to abide by the written admission policy as found in the prospectus when they sign the registration document.

Written policy on the partnership with parents

It is important to recognize the importance of the settling in period for both you and your child. You are encouraged to play a full part in this transition. A period of adjustment is needed when you start to share your child's care and we are aware of this. We will work together with you, your child and their school sharing information.

The bond between new parents, children and the Out of School Club begins at the viewing and is reinforced via the pre-visits. For full details regarding the pre-visits, please refer to the written policy for Admissions within this booklet.

Verbal communication is paramount and information is shared through various ways; either verbally, written or via the parents' notice board. Parents are welcome to discuss their child's day and progress with the staff within the Out of School Club.

Written policy for dropping off / collecting from schools for the Out of School Club

When a booking is made for Out of School Clubs, you will be asked to notify the school that the Chelmsford YMCA will be dropping off or collecting your child.

If your child will not be attending the Out of School Club you must ring the Chelmsford YMCA to inform them that your child does not need to be collected.

If your child is not at school and the YMCA has not been advised that your child will not be attending the staff will in the first instance speak to the school to check if your child attended that day and then make every effort to contact you to confirm your child does not need collecting.

The staff/child ratio is 1-6 walking to and from Breakfast and After School clubs.

Staff and children **must** wear a high visibility jacket when walking to and from schools.

Written policy for the non-collection of a child at the Out of School Club

In the event of a child having not been collected by 6pm and having had no call by the parents to inform us that they are going to be late, this procedure will be followed.

The Fit Person on duty will endeavour to contact all persons listed on the registration form as collectors /emergency contacts after 15 minutes of the Out of School Club closing. If none of these persons on all of the numbers given to us can be contacted we will then contact Chelmsford police station after 30 minutes of the Out of School Club closing to find out if there have been any accidents involving any of these people.

The situation will be explained and advice will be sought.

Written policy for bringing and collecting children at the Out of School Club

Children attending the Holiday Club for a reduced day cannot be accepted before 9.30am and must be collected by 4pm. A full day will be charged if a child exceeds these times. Children doing reduced days should be in by 10am.

Children must be collected no later than 6pm each evening.

The Out of School Club closes at 6pm. If your child is collected after this time, the register will be marked appropriately and the collector will be requested to sign the register. A charge of £4.00 per 15 minutes is made if your child is collected late.

You are requested to provide photographs of persons authorised on the registration forms to collect your child. Full details of authorised persons must be stated on the registration form.

If an unauthorised person is to collect, then a written letter is required along with a full description (preferably a photo) and a password.

If you ring to notify a change in collector the Out of School Club staff will take the full name, description of the collector and a password. The Out of School Club will then call you back to confirm that it was you previously on the phone.

A child will not be allowed to leave with any unexpected collector. The Out of School Club staff will then telephone you for confirmation and the child will not be released to that collector until confirmation is received. This person will be asked to wait until confirmation is received.

N.B All collectors must be over the age of sixteen.

In some situations where a family is undergoing marital problems or are no longer one family unit, there may be specific requests and authorisations. We cannot withhold a child from a parent unless we have seen a copy of any court order appropriate to the child. However if a request has come from a parent, we endeavour to get in touch with the parent concerned to allow them to make a decision.

Revised Sep 2012

Written Equal Opportunities Statement and English as an additional language policy within the Chelmsford YMCA Day Nursery

All parents and children are treated with equal concern and in doing so respect each child's/parents religious persuasions. Each child's specific needs with regard to their gender, ability, ethnic origin, cultural and linguistic background will be met. All children are valued as individuals whilst ensuring each child has equal opportunities.

We help the children to learn about themselves as well as other cultures and aim to develop their respect and tolerance for ethnicity. (Ethnicity is defined as relating to groups of people sharing a common and /or distinctive racial, national linguistic or cultural heritage.) Positive relationships between the children are encouraged.

Boys and girls are treated equally and given equal access to all activities and appropriate responsibility.

Equality Needs Coordinator (ENCO) : Hazel Chester

The Chelmsford YMCA believes that all of our children are equally important as one another, so being the speaker of more than one language is no disadvantage to their educational achievements in fact being able to speak and understand more than one language (Multilingualism) is associated with success.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is the guidance we as practitioners follow and this document states that all children are to access certain areas of learning and thereby to acquire the knowledge, the understanding, the skills and attitudes that are necessary not only for their self-fulfilment, but also for their development as responsible citizens. We seek to honour this entitlement through the opportunities and educational content that is offered in our setting.

The aim of this policy is therefore to help and support all children to ensure that we meet all the needs of those children who are learning English as an additional language.

This is in line with the requirements of the Race Relations Act 1976 and the Equal opportunities act 2010.

Written Policy for Safeguarding children

It is our responsibility to maintain the welfare of all children in our care. All our staff are trained to follow Essex County Council's Safeguarding procedures and have an enhanced Criminal Records Bureau check prior to appointment.

If abuse or non accidental injury is suspected:

- A written record of concerns is made
- Concerns are shared with the Safeguarding Officers
- Concerns are reported to Social Services if necessary to do so.

All staff have read and understand their role in implementing the Safeguarding policy and their role within that policy.

For the full procedure please see the Chelmsford YMCA Safeguarding policy which is in every unit.

The Chelmsford YMCA is under obligation to report to Social Services any incident where they consider a child has been abused, neglected or is at risk. This may be done without notifying the parents or guardian.

**Safeguarding Officers: Stacey Murphy, Childcare Manager
Heather Venables, Director of Client Services.**

Written Policy for accidents at the Out of School Club

We ask for permission within the registration form to seek medical advice or to take your child to the doctor/hospital in the event of an emergency.

In the event of your child needing medical assistance you will be contacted immediately. A member of staff will accompany your child to the hospital and stay with them until you arrive.

A record of any accident together with any treatment given is recorded in the accident book, you will be asked to sign this sheet to confirm that you have been made aware of the accident when you collect your child.

Any treatment given to your child will always be carried out in conjunction with your child's medical records.

Ofsted are notified of any accidents that involve the YMCA taking the child to the hospital via an ambulance.

Written Policy for dealing with an unwell child and medication at the Out of School Club

If your child becomes ill at the Out of School Club, every effort will be made to contact you to advise you of the situation and in some cases to arrange immediate collection.

If your child has a contagious illness we ask that you contact the Out of School Club to advise us as soon as possible so that we can notify other parents. Your child cannot return to Out of School Club until the appropriate exclusion period has ceased.

Children with sickness and/or diarrhoea must not return to the Out of School Club for at least 48 hours after the last bout of sickness or diarrhoea.

Children must be in general good health and free from infectious illness or disease to attend the Out of School Clubs.

All medication must be clearly labelled with the child's name and dosage required. Any medication without this information cannot be administered.

When the Out of School Club is required to administer medication the following information must be completed on the permission to give medication sheet. The name of the medication along with dosage and time to be administered must be recorded in the medication folder when the medicine is handed in; this is then to be signed to confirm that the information is correct. On collection you must sign to acknowledge that the medication was administered.

Each medicine and/or dosage must be recorded separately.

Written policy for clothing and footwear at the Out of School Club

All clothing and footwear must be clearly named and no responsibility will be accepted for the loss of unnamed items.

In the winter we ask that your child brings appropriate outdoor clothing so that we can still take them out and during the summer please provide a suitable sun hat and sun cream (factor 30 or above). In addition to this for health and safety reasons children are not permitted to wear open toed sandals or shoes. Children will not be able to participate in outside play or walks if they do not have suitable attire.

Whilst every effort is taken to protect your child's clothing the Out of School Club cannot be held responsible for any damage to clothing that occurs whilst children enjoy activities such as painting, cooking and outside play.

Written policy for food and drink provided at the Out of School Club

Children attending the Breakfast Club will be provided with breakfast up until 8.15am, at the After School Club your child will be offered a snack at 4.00pm and a light tea at 5.00pm and at the Holiday Club snack is provided at 9.30am and a light tea at 5.00pm. Your child should be supplied with a suitable packed lunch for lunch time

The menus cover a four week period and are balanced with fish, meat, fruit and vegetables. It has all the nutritional values providing the children with a variety of foods and tastes. A computer programme has been used to produce the menus and the menus are reviewed and amended in light of any comments or new guidelines.

All children that have dietary requirements are respected, whether for example it is vegetarianism, religious beliefs or food intolerance and will be provided with an alternative to that day's menu.

The staff set an example at mealtime by sitting with children and eating their meal with them to encourage table manners and promote a positive atmosphere. Children are encouraged to say please and thank you at all times.

No child will be deprived of food or be force fed. Small amounts will be offered to each child to encourage them to eat. Food is not used as punishment.

You will be informed on a daily basis, at the end of a session if your child has not eaten well.

Slow eaters are given time to finish their food and are not rushed. Small quantities of food are placed onto the plates taking into account the age and appetite of children.

Water is given rather than juice so that good dental hygiene is promoted although diluted fruit juice is provided at tea time. Water is available throughout the day.

Written policy for maintenance of toys and equipment at the Out of School Club

Where children can safely tidy up they are encouraged to do so.

All toys and equipment are continuously checked for wear and tear and any equipment damaged during play is removed immediately. The Out of School Club implements a cleaning rota for cleaning toys in order to minimize infection.

Children are taught to care and respect the equipment and their surroundings and encouraged to play constructively.

Written policy for unwanted behaviour within the Out of School Club

When talking about 'bad' behaviour, we must remember that young children in the Out of School Club are still very egocentric and that much of what society deems desirable e.g. politeness, honesty, consideration for others etc has still to be learned.

Unwanted behaviour almost always occurs when children are bored or frustrated; therefore it is important for us as carers to consider what their needs are and how we can best meet them. Every child is treated and respected equally.

Children are always given praise and encouragement. This is used in all areas of the Out of School Club and children are praised for trying, not achieving.

Unwanted or challenging behaviour is dealt with in a positive manner. In the first instance a clear and firm NO is used if behaviour is continued a warning is given. If the child does not stop, he/she will be removed from the activity; the reason explained and play redirected. If the child continues to display unwanted behaviour, he/she will be removed from the Out of School Club area to a quiet place and a member of staff will talk to the child about why they have behaved in this manner.

The child learns to understand that they receive attention and praise for positive behaviour so that unwanted or challenging behaviour is not encouraged or reinforced.

The child is taught to understand that it is not wrong to express their feelings but that there are ways to do this that are acceptable.

Repetitive behaviour should be noted and any pattern recorded and any concerns will be discussed with you and any decisions or plans of action regarding your child will be made jointly.

The behaviour that is not tolerated at the Out of School Clubs includes misuse of equipment inappropriate language and the lack of respect for the personal space of others. If the unwanted behaviour is in the form of bullying this will be recorded to identify a pattern. A staff member will sit and talk with the child about why they have behaved in this way. A senior member of staff will discuss with the parents any concerns.

Children are never humiliated, criticized or put down. Physical punishment is forbidden and the word naughty is never used to describe a child's behaviour.

There is an open communication policy between the school and the Out of School Club to ensure both parties are aware of any issues or concerns. This is to ensure the children's individual needs are met.

**Behaviour Management Coordinators: Claire Horler
Georgina Rudd**

Revised Sep 2012

Written policy for unwanted behaviour within the Out of School Club

Within the Out Of School clubs we operate a written warning system, so should our general approach as listed on the opposite page not be enough to prevent the unwanted behaviour we will issue the child with the written warning.

If the child's behaviours persists we will issue further warnings—each time asking the child in question to sign the form so that they show they understand and we will also endeavour to get the parents/careers to sign as well.

If your child receives 3 written warnings per term or we feel that their behaviour is that significant that the staff and children are put at risk we reserve the right to terminate your child's space.

Revised: Sep 2012

Written policy for responding to complaints by parents at the Out of School Club

It is hoped that any problems you have with the Out of School Club can be resolved informally. You should first speak to the member of senior staff on duty at the time of the complaint or later to the Out of School Unit Manager.

If concerns cannot be resolved in the above manner, you may wish to take up the complaint with the Out of School Coordinator.

If you are still dissatisfied you should seek an appointment with the Childcare Manager or the Director of Children's Services.

If you wish to put your complaint in writing the letter should be addressed to the Childcare Manager in the first instance (unless the complaint is about the Childcare Manager) or subsequently to the Director of Children's Services.

When a complaint is made you will receive a written response within twenty eight days.

Parents at any time may contact Ofsted:

**Early Years Ofsted
National Business Unit
Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD**

Tel: 0300 123 1231

Written policy for the action to be taken if a child goes missing from the Out of School Club

In the event of a child being lost whilst within our care the following action is taken.

On noticing that the child is missing the person in charge of the group will contact the police immediately to notify them of this.

The Childcare Manager, the Director of Client Services or the Senior Staff member on duty at the YMCA should then be informed of the situation.

You will then be called by a senior member of staff to be informed of the situation and requested to meet the group.

A full report with evidence from all parties will be taken. Ofsted will be notified.

Written Policy for Child Protection at the Out of School Club

It is our responsibility to maintain the welfare of all children in our care.

If abuse or non accidental injury is suspected:

- A written record of concerns is made.
- Concerns are shared with a senior member of staff.
- Concerns are reported to Social Services if the need is there.

All staff are aware of the Child Protection policy and their role within that policy.

For the full procedure, please request the Chelmsford YMCA Child Protection booklet.

Chelmsford YMCA Childcare Programme is under obligation to report to Social Services any incident where they consider a child has been abused, neglected or is at risk. This may be done without notifying the parents or guardian.

There is an open communication policy between the school and the Out of School Club to ensure both parties are aware of any issues or concerns. This is to ensure the children's individual needs are met.

YMCA Child Protection Officer: Stacey Murphy

School Child Protection Officer: Tim Barratt

Written Policy for Special Needs at the Out of School Club

All children, regardless of their ability, gender, or any other governing factor, have the right to quality childcare which develops their skills in all areas of the curriculum. No child will be restricted in his/her play through lack of provision.

A child is deemed to have special educational needs if he or she has additional needs which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her. This does not include children who have a main language other than English or Welsh.

All children have access to toilet facilities and support will be given to children if required

If there is a concern about your child staff will discuss this with you. You will be involved from the onset of the concern and full support will be provided whilst in investigating the child's needs further.

Detailed records and observations are made to ensure your child's needs are met.

Special Educational Needs training is given to staff to assist them in working effectively with children with special needs.

There is an open communication policy between the school and the Out of School Club to ensure both parties are aware of any issues or concerns. This is to ensure the children's individual needs are met.

**Special Educational Needs Coordinators: Clare Horler
Georgina Rudd**

Camera and Recording Device Use Policy

We ensure that any photographs or recordings taken of your children in our nursery are only done with prior written permission from each child's parent. This is gained when each child is registered and is updated on a regular basis to ensure that this permission still stands.

We ask for individual permissions for photographs and video recordings for each different use, including use in the child's learning journey, for display purposes, for promotion materials including our website and brochures and for use in the local press. We ensure that parents understand that their other children may also be on another photograph, but not as the primary person, that may be used in another child's learning journey.

If a parent is not happy about one or more of these uses, then the nursery will respect their wishes and find alternative ways of recording their child's play or learning.

Staff are not permitted to take photographs or recordings of a child on their own devices and only use those provided by the nursery. The Childcare Manager will monitor all photographs and recordings to ensure that the parent's wishes are adhered to. Childcare staff are the only staff permitted to take photographs or recordings unless permission has been given to do so by the Childcare Manager.

Parents are not permitted to use any recording device or camera on the nursery premises without the prior consent of the Childcare Manager.

During special events, e.g. Christmas or leaving parties, staff may produce group photographs to distribute to parents on request. In this case, individual permission will be asked for each child before this event. This will ensure all photographs taken are in line with parental choice.

Social Networking Policy

This policy sets out the Chelmsford YMCA policy on social networking and applies within work and to behaviours outside the work environment. New technologies are an integral part of our lives and are powerful tools which open up opportunities and challenges for staff and volunteers and organisations in many ways. This document aims to:

- Assist staff working with children to work safely and responsibly with the internet and other communication technologies and to monitor their own standards and practice
- Set clear expectations of behaviour and/or codes of practice relevant to social networking for educational, personal or recreational use and details the aspects of safer online behaviour
- Give a clear message that unlawful or unsafe behaviour is unacceptable and that, where appropriate, disciplinary or legal action will be taken
- Minimise the risk of misplaced or malicious allegations made against staff or volunteers who work with children and young people Prevent adults abusing or misusing their position of trust

Whilst every attempt has been made to cover a wide range of situations, it is recognised that this policy cannot cover all eventualities.

This policy takes account of employment legislation and best practice guidelines in relation to social media.

What is social media?

For the purpose of this policy, social media is the term commonly used for websites which allow people to interact with each other in some way – by sharing information, opinions, knowledge and interests. Social networking websites such as Facebook, bebo and MySpace are perhaps the most well known examples of social media but the term also covers other web based services such as blogs, video and audio podcasts, wikis, message boards, photo document and video sharing websites such as YouTube and micro blogging services such as Twitter. This definition of social media is not exhaustive as technology develops with new ways of communicating advancing every day. This will also include the use of communication technologies such as smart & mobile phones, tablets, cameras, PDAs / PSPs or other handheld devices and any other emerging forms of communications technologies.

All staff are expected to adopt high standards of personal conduct in order to maintain the confidence and respect of their colleagues, children and young people, and public in general and all those with whom they work across all the business streams. Adults in contact with children and young people should therefore understand and be aware that safe practice also involves using judgement and integrity about behaviours in places other than the work setting. All staff within their work setting should always maintain appropriate professional boundaries and avoid behaviour, during their use of the internet and other

Online behaviour

Managing personal information effectively makes it far less likely that information will be misused.

1. All social networking with children or young people engaged with as part of a member of staff's job role should only be via the Chelmsford YMCA social networking pages i.e. not through personal social pages.
2. In their own interests, staff need to be aware of the dangers of putting personal information onto social networking sites, such as addresses, home and mobile phone numbers. This will avoid the potential for children, young people or their families or friends having access to the adult outside of the work environment.

It also reduces the potential for identity theft by third parties.

3. All staff should review their membership of social networking sites to ensure that information available publicly about them is accurate and appropriate. This includes any photographs that may cause embarrassment to themselves and or the YMCA if they are published outside of the site or are accessible to others via their 'page'.
4. 'Friendships' with children of colleagues/family or their own children's friends must be subject to the same level of expectations of behaviour set out in this document.
5. Confidentiality needs to be applied at all times. Social networking sites have the potential to discuss inappropriate information.
6. Staff should ensure that they do not put any confidential information on a site about themselves, their employer, their colleagues, children and young people or members of the public.

7. Staff need to ensure that when they are communicating about others, even outside of work, that they give due regard to the potential for defamation of character. Making allegations on social networking sites (even in their own time and in their own homes) about other employees, children, young people or other individuals connected with the YMCA could result in formal action being taken against them.
8. Staff are also reminded that they must comply with the requirements of equalities legislation in their on-line communications.
9. Staff must never post derogatory remarks or offensive comments on-line or engage in on-line activities which may bring the YMCA into disrepute or could reflect negatively on their professionalism.
10. Some social networking sites and other web-based sites have fields in the user profile for job title etc. Staff should not put any information onto the site that could identify the YMCA where they work.

Protection of personal information

Staff should:

- Ensure that they do not use YMCA IT equipment for unauthorised personal use, e.g. camera, phones, laptops or computers.
- Keep their personal phone numbers private and not use their own mobile phones to contact children, young people
- Mobile phones or recording equipment may not be taken into any childcare area without the permission of the Childcare Manager and will be for a specific purpose only. (Full information on social networking, and the use of mobile phones and recording equipment in Childcare areas is attached.)
- Never share their work log-ins or passwords with other people.
- Never give their personal e-mail addresses to children, young people or parents.
- Keep a record of their phone's unique international mobile equipment identity (IMEI) number and keep their phone secure whilst on YMCA premises.
- Understand who is allowed to view the content on their pages of the sites they use and how to restrict access to certain groups of people.

Communication between children, young people and staff

1. Communication between children, young people and adults by whatever method, should take place within clear and explicit professional boundaries.
2. This includes the wider use of technology such as smart and mobile phones, text messaging, e-mails, digital cameras, tablets, skype etc, videos, web-cams, websites and blogs.
3. The YMCA may provide a work mobile and e-mail address for communication between adults and children/young people where this is necessary for particular reasons.
4. Staff should not request, or respond to, any personal information from a child/young person, other than that which might be appropriate as part of their professional role.
5. Staff should ensure that all communications are transparent and open to scrutiny. They should also be circumspect in their communications with children/young people so as to avoid any possible misinterpretation of their motives or any behaviour which could be construed as 'grooming' in the context of sexual offending.
6. E-mail or text communications between an adult and a child/young person outside agreed protocols may lead to disciplinary investigations. This also includes communications through internet based web sites. Internal e-mail systems should only be used in accordance with the YMCA's policy.

Social contact

1. Staff should not establish or seek to establish social contact via social media / other communication technologies with children or young people known via their professional/volunteering capacity other than through our own CYMCA Social networking pages.
2. There will be occasions when there are social contacts between children/young people and staff, where for example the parent and staff member are part of the same social circle. These contacts however, will be easily recognised and should be openly acknowledged where there may be implications for the staff member and their position within the YMCA setting.

Cyber Bullying

1. Cyberbullying can be defined as ‘the use of modern communication technologies to embarrass, humiliate, threaten or intimidate an individual in the attempt to gain power and control over them.’
2. Prevention activities are key to ensuring that staff members are protected from the potential threat of cyberbullying. All staff are reminded of the need to protect themselves from the potential threat of cyberbullying. Following the advice contained in this guidance should reduce the risk of personal information falling into the wrong hands.
3. If cyberbullying does take place, employees should keep records of the abuse, text, e-mails, website or instant message and should not delete texts or e-mails. Staff are advised to take screen prints of messages or web pages and be careful to record the time, date and place of the site.
4. Staff are encouraged to report all incidents of cyberbullying to their line manager. All such incidents will be taken seriously and will be dealt with in consideration of the wishes of the person who has reported the incident. It is for the individual who is being bullied to decide whether they wish to report the actions to the police.

Access to inappropriate images and internet usage

1. There are no circumstances that will justify staff possessing indecent images of children. Staff who access and possess links to such websites will be viewed as a significant and potential threat to children. Accessing, making and storing indecent images of children is illegal. This will lead to criminal investigation and disciplinary action being taken as gross misconduct.
2. Staff should not use equipment belonging to the YMCA to access any adult pornography; neither should personal equipment containing these images or links to them be brought into the workplace. Accessing any such images within work time will be subject to the Disciplinary Procedures and will lead to disciplinary action being taken and will raise serious concerns about the suitability of the Staff member continue to work with children.
3. Staff should ensure that children/young people are not exposed to any inappropriate images or web links. Managers need to ensure that internet equipment used by children/young people have the appropriate controls with regards to access e.g. personal passwords should be kept confidential.
4. Where indecent images of children are found, the police and CEO and Chairman of the YMCA should be immediately informed. The Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures should be followed and no attempt to investigate the matter or evaluate the material themselves, as this may lead to evidence being contaminated which in itself can lead to a criminal prosecution.
5. Where other unsuitable material is found, which may not be illegal but which raises concerns about a staff member the CEO should be informed and advice sought.

Internet Conduct

Our overarching aim is to protect and develop young people, the continued expansion of social network sites make it very difficult to police what information is out there on the world wide web. Therefore we are setting out these conduct pointers to assist staff and volunteers to understand and follow our guidance on the use of the internet.

- The main site on Facebook is Chelmsford YMCA and the majority of information traffic should be posted to this site. Where staff need to set up a 'YMCA- Your Name' site to contact a specific group of young people this is acceptable but this social networking policy will cover all activity on all YMCA designated sites.
- Whether staff are using the main site page, their own YMCA page or the their own personal facebook or other social media site, staff are reminded that in the public domain they are representing the YMCA and are therefore positive role models to young people. Therefore staff should refrain from posting inappropriate photos, comments, postings and general information to any site. Any such inappropriate data posted will be assessed and if deemed necessary may be taken to a disciplinary process and may ultimately lead to dismissal.
- We do wish to use social media to interface with young people as we see this as a positive way of communication, but we would ask staff to be aware of what might cause offence or bring the YMCA in its broadest sense into disrepute. If you are unsure of a potential posting or become aware of a posting that is inappropriate please report the posting (with hard copy if possible) to either the Director of Client Services or Director of management Services.

Link with other policies

1. This document should be read in conjunction with the YMCA's relevant policies on;
IT and security standards
Disciplinary Policy and Procedures
Equal Opportunities Policy
Staff Handbook
1. All staff must adhere to, and apply the principles of this document in all aspects of their work and to behaviour outside the work environment. Failure to do so may lead to action being taken under the disciplinary procedure.

Relevant Legislation

Staff should be aware of the legislative framework which currently surrounds use of social media / communication technology in the UK. It is important to note that in general terms an action that is illegal if committed offline is also illegal if committed online. The following Acts of Parliament apply or acts that may have superseded them:

Computer misuse act

This Act makes it an offence to:

- Erase or amend data or programs without authority;
- Obtain unauthorised access to a computer;
- “Eavesdrop” on a computer;
- Make unauthorised use of computer time or facilities;
- Maliciously corrupt or erase data or programs;
- Deny access to authorised users.

Data protection Act

This protects the rights and privacy of individual’s data. To comply with the law, information about individuals must be collected and used fairly, stored safely and securely and not disclosed to any third party unlawfully. The Act states that personal data must be:

- Fairly and lawfully processed;
- Processed for limited purposes;
- Adequate, relevant and not excessive;
- Accurate;
- Not kept longer than necessary;
- Processed in accordance with the data subject’s rights;
- Secure;
- Not transferred to other countries without adequate protection.

Freedom of information Act

The Freedom of Information Act gives individuals the right to request information held by public authorities. All public authorities and companies wholly owned by public authorities have obligations under the Freedom of Information Act. When responding to requests, they have to follow a number of set procedures.

Communications Act

Sending by means of the Internet a message or other matter that is grossly offensive or of an indecent, obscene or menacing character; or sending a false message by means of or persistently making use of the Internet for the purpose of causing annoyance, inconvenience or needless anxiety is guilty of an offence liable, on conviction, to imprisonment. This wording is important because an offence is complete as soon as the message has been sent: there is no need to prove any intent or purpose.

Malicious communications Act

It is an offence to send an indecent, offensive, or threatening letter, electronic communication or other article to another person.

Regulation of investigatory powers Act

It is an offence for any person to intentionally and without lawful authority intercept any communication. Monitoring or keeping a record of any form of electronic communications is permitted, in order to:

- Establish the facts;
 - Ascertain compliance with regulatory or self-regulatory practices or procedures;
 - Demonstrate standards, which are or ought to be achieved by persons using the system;
 - Investigate or detect unauthorised use of the communications system;
 - Prevent or detect crime or in the interests of national security;
 - Ensure the effective operation of the system.
- Monitoring but not recording is also permissible in order to:
- Ascertain whether the communication is business or personal;
 - Protect or support help line staff.

Trade Marks Act

This provides protection for Registered Trade Marks, which can be any symbol (words, shapes or images) that are associated with a particular set of goods or services. Registered Trade Marks must not be used without permission. This can also arise from using a Mark that is confusingly similar to an existing Mark.

Copyright, designs and patents act 1988

It is an offence to copy all, or a substantial part of a copyright work. There are, however, certain limited user permissions, such as fair dealing, which means under certain circumstances permission is not needed to copy small amounts for non-commercial research or private study. The Act also provides for Moral Rights, whereby authors can sue if their name is not included in a work they wrote, or if the work has been amended in such a way as to impugn their reputation. Copyright covers materials in print and electronic form, and includes words, images, and sounds, moving images, TV broadcasts and other media (e.g. youtube).

Telecommunications Act

It is an offence to send a message or other matter that is grossly offensive or of an indecent, obscene or menacing character. It is also an offence to send a message that is intended to cause annoyance, inconvenience or needless anxiety to another that the sender knows to be false.

Criminal Justice & Public Order Act

This defines a criminal offence of intentional harassment, which covers all forms of harassment, including sexual. A person is guilty of an offence if, with intent to cause a person harassment, alarm or distress, they: -

- Use threatening, abusive or insulting words or behaviour, or disorderly behaviour; or
- Display any writing, sign or other visible representation, which is threatening, abusive or insulting, thereby causing that or another person harassment, alarm or distress.

Racial and Religious Hatred Act

This Act makes it a criminal offence to threaten people because of their faith, or to stir up religious hatred by displaying, publishing or distributing written material which is threatening. Other laws already protect people from threats based on their race, nationality or ethnic background.

Protection from Harassment Act

A person must not pursue a course of conduct, which amounts to harassment of another, and which he knows or ought to know amounts to harassment of the other. A person whose course of conduct causes another to fear, on at least two occasions, that violence will be used against him is guilty of an offence if he knows or ought to know that his course of conduct will cause the other so to fear on each of those occasions.

Protection of Children Act

It is an offence to take, permit to be taken, make, possess, show, distribute or advertise indecent images of children in the United Kingdom. A child for these purposes is anyone under the age of 18. Viewing an indecent image of a child on your computer means that you have made a digital image. An image of a child also covers pseudo-photographs (digitally collated or otherwise). A person convicted of such an offence may face up to 10 years in prison.

Sexual Offences Act

The new grooming offence is committed if you are over 18 and have communicated with a child under 16 at least twice (including by phone or using the Internet) and you arrange to meet them or travel to meet them (anywhere in the world) with the intention of committing a sexual offence. Causing a child under 16 to watch a sexual act is illegal, including looking at images such as videos, photos or webcams, for your own gratification. It is also an offence for a person in a position of trust to engage in any sexual activity with any person under 18, with whom they are in a position of trust. (Typically, teachers, social workers, health professionals, connexions staff fall in this category of trust). Any sexual intercourse with a child under the age of 13 commits the offence of rape.

Public Order Act

This Act makes it a criminal offence to stir up racial hatred by displaying, publishing or distributing written material which is threatening. Like the Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006 it also makes the possession of inflammatory material with a view of releasing it a criminal offence.

Publishing an “obscene” article is a criminal offence. Publishing includes electronic transmission.

Human rights act

This does not deal with any particular issue specifically or any discrete subject area within the law. It is a type of “higher law”, affecting all other laws. In the school context, human rights to be aware of include:

- The right to a fair trial
- The right to respect for private and family life, home and correspondence
- Freedom of thought, conscience and religion
- Freedom of expression
- Freedom of assembly
- Prohibition of discrimination
- The right to education

These rights are not absolute. The YMCA is obliged to respect these rights and freedoms, balancing them against those rights, duties and obligations, which arise from other relevant legislation.

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