**Homerton Early Years Centre**

**Use of Professional Social Media Accounts Policy**

**This Policy relates to the following other policies:**

Keeping Children Safe in Education

Code of Conduct for All Adults

Guidance for Safer Working Practice

Social Media Policy

E-Safety Policy

Online Safety Policy

Data Protection Policy

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Serial and Unreasonable Complaints Policy

Bullying and Harrassment Policy

Responding to Prejudice Related Incidents Policy

Anti-bullying Policy

Complaints Policy

Acceptable Use Agreement – Digital Images

Acceptable Use agreement – ICT

Acceptable Use Agreement – Parent WhatsApp Groups

**Statement of Intent**

**We are committed to:**

* Encouraging the responsible use of social media by all staff and parents in support of Homerton Early Years Centre’s vision, values and objectives.
* Protecting our pupils, families and staff from potential harms arising from the use of social media
* Upholding the reputation of the school through responsible use of social media

**This Policy currently relates to the use of the following social media platforms:**

**X (Formerly known as Twitter):** *a social media tool used primarily as a method of communication, made up of 140 characters known as a ‘tweet’. A tweet may also include web links and / or photographs. X users are able to follow or to be followed. If someone or something is being followed then their activity and comments appear in the followers’ news feed.*

**Instagram:** *a photo and video sharing social networking service. It allows users to upload media that can be edited by filters and organised by hashtags and geographical tagging. Posts can be shared publicly or with pre-approved followers.*

**Facebook:** *a social media network that connects people through an online platform. By sharing content like text, status posts, images, videos and external links, Facebook users can share news, contribute ideas and join conversations with other people. If a facebook user with a personal account “likes” a page, they will receive content from that page and their profile will be visible to others visiting the page.*

**Whatsapp**: *a messaging service which allows individuals to send text, voice or video messages to other individuals or groups of people. Links, photos and user locations can be shared and voice and video calls can be made. In order to connect with other people users need other users’ contact details.*

**What is the purpose of the school social media accounts?**

As a school we are aware of the need to have an online presence in order for families and the local community to find about more about Homerton, to communicate with Homerton families and as a vehicle for advertising events or job vacancies and spaces for children.

* The Homerton social media accounts (@HomertonEYC on Facebook, Instagram and X) will be public accounts for the purpose of sharing and celebrating the wonderful things that happen at Homerton Early Years Centre.
* Tweets and posts will contain details of everyday and special events at Homerton Early Years Centre to showcase the activities that take place and to give reminders about upcoming events.
* They will also be used to share news with families and share content from other providers which may be of interest, to advertise vacancies and share details of upcoming events.
* They may also serve some advertising purposes e.g. as followers may retweet @HomertonEYC tweets / share posts on Facebook and Instagram.
* They may also be used to share educational content with families for example, suggestions for activities or pre-recorded stories for children to listen to at home.
* They will also be used to demonstrate safe and responsible use of social media and encourage the use of 21st Century technology.

If in the future other social media accounts are set up for other purposes, or the scope of these accounts is extended e.g. for staff to engage in educational discussions to enrich their own practice, then this policy will be amended.

**Who will be followed?**

Homerton EYC accounts will only follow educationally linked accounts e.g. government departments, other early years providers or the professional accounts of early years practitioners, e.g. @annaephgrave (Anna Ephgrave, author of Planning in the Moment with Young Children).

HomertonEYC accounts will not follow other personal accounts, e.g. parents, ex-pupils or current pupils, even if they are following HomertonEYC.

**Who will be allowed to follow**

Anyone can follow HomertonEYC on Facebook, X or Instagram and parents will be encouraged to do so.

However, in accordance with the Local Authority Social Media Model Policy, Homerton staff are reminded not to follow or like @HomertonEYC accounts. This advice is given for the protection of all parties involved, including staff, parents and the centre.

Please also see e-safety policy for further details regarding staff usage of social networking sites and interaction with parents online.

Regular checks will be carried out by those using HomertonEYC social media accounts to monitor followers. Any user following the school account that is deemed unsuitable e.g. for safeguarding, reputational or related reasons, will be blocked. Decisions regarding blocking a user will be made on a case by case basis and may refer to details of the user’s social media account such as the content of their bio or the images on view in their account.

If any follower is interacting with HomertonEYC online in an inappropriate way, e.g. by sharing inappropriate content (see below), they will also be blocked.

**Safeguarding**

* Homerton EYC tweets or posts may contain photos or videos of children provided their families have given permission for their children’s photos to appear online on social media sites. It will be the responsibility of anyone posting to ensure that permission has been obtained for a particular child’s photos to be shared online.
* Consent to use photos may be withdrawn by parents or carers at any time in which case records of consent for photo / video use will be updated. Where consent is withdrawn it will not affect the processing of any images or videos prior to when consent was withdrawn or amended but processing will cease immediately in line with parents’ or carers’ requirements following this. Wherever it is reasonably practicable to do so, the school will take measures to remove any posts before consent was withdrawn or amended, such as removing an image from a social media site.
* Only photos of children wearing suitable clothing may be posted. For example, photos of children using the paddling pool in the summer will not be shared.
* Children’s names, including first names, will **not** be used in tweets or posts. Neither will individual classrooms be referenced.
* Staff must take into account the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy when making any posts on school social media accounts.
* Official Homerton Early Years Centre social media sites will include the Homerton Early Years logo and name in order that they can be easily identified.
* Social Media sites must be entirely separate from any personal social media accounts held and be linked to an official school email account.
* If a social media site is identified which purports to be on behalf of Homerton Early Years Centre but is not an official Homerton Early Years Centre site steps will be taken in accordance with the social media platform’s policies to report it and have it removed.

**X / Facebook & Instagram usage**

**Once posted, content is no longer “owned” by the school and can be used without the school’s consent or knowledge. Therefore the following restrictions are in place to safeguard Homerton Early Years Centre and its children and families.**

* Individually targeted content will not be posted, e.g. “Well done (child’s name) for learning to ride a 2 wheeled bike”
* Posts will not contain any personal information such as name, age, class the child is in, etc.

**In addition**

* Post will not contain any inappropriate content (see below) or contain any wording or context which could be construed as offensive.
* Posts will only express neutral opinions and not include any personal views. They will use appropriate and school-friendly language.
* Posts will be sensitive towards the cultural diversity of those who will read it
* Posts will not contain material that might be considered party political in nature
* Content on school social media accounts will not breach copyright or GDPR
* The content of any school-sanctioned social media site and/or social media accounts using the name of Homerton Early Years Centre should be entirely professional and should reflect well on the School.

**What hardware will be used to tweet / post**

Only adult Homerton iPads will be used to sign in to Homerton social media accounts and at no time will children’s iPads be used to sign into these. Due to the fact that social media platforms are not accessible via the school’s WiFi, personal devices may be used outside of school to sign into by those who are authorised to sign in, with the caveat that if posts or tweets include photos of children these photos will be deleted from the storage of those personal devices as soon as they have been posted.

**Who will post messages?**

Currently tweets and posts are posted by the ICT coordinator. While using Homerton’s social media online, all staff will demonstrate safe and responsible use of social media and abide by the terms and conditions of the social media which they are using.

**Frequency of posting**

The Homerton EYC social media posts will be updated regularly. Posts will not be overly repetitive and will ensure an even representation of classes on the account where possible.

**Replying, direct messaging, favouriting, re-tweeting, hashtags, tagging**

* HomertonEYC will acknowledge “replies” received to its tweets / posts but will keep replies brief and general and will not engage in prolonged discussions with either individuals or organisations.
* Responses given on social media will be respectful, polite and positive, using the same code of conduct as would be used during face-to-face interactions and within the school setting.
* HomertonEYC accounts will not make use of the Direct Messaging services which are integral to social media accounts.
* HomertonEYC accounts may “like” or bookmark tweets or posts by other educational providers or relevant organisations in order to retain useful information in line with the purposes of the accounts account but will refrain from “liking” tweets or posts from parents / families in order to remain impartial.
* HomertonEYC may retweet tweets / share posts if in accordance with the purpose of the account.
* Any links to external sites from the accounts must be appropriate and safe and verified as reputable sites.
* Only appropriate hashtags should ever be used which are in accordance with the purpose of the account.
* Only other appropriate professional bodies will be tagged in a post, e.g. Life Education Cambridgeshire following a visit to Homerton.

**Timing and location of posts**

* Tweets / posts will usually be posted between the hours of 8am-6pm Monday to Friday. Exceptions to this might include, e.g. posts as an additional method of communication for urgent school news e.g. school closure or posts to mark a particular event, e.g. Mothering Sunday
* A scheduling tool, such as Tweetdeck or Agorapulse, might be used to send tweets / posts during those hours.
* To protect children at Homerton Early Years Centre and as a further safeguarding measure, any tweets / posts regarding off site activities will be sent once back at the Centre to ensure that individual children cannot be placed at a specific off site location at a given time.

**Passwords**

* Will be known to the Head, the ICT coordinator and the Office manager and will be changed at the start of each academic year.

**Security**

* Users are expected to take reasonable safeguards against the transmission of security threats via the school’s social media account. This includes not opening or distributing infected files or programs and not opening files or programs of unknown or untrusted origin.

**Use of WhatsApp**

Parent governors will set up a WhatsApp group for each classroom at Homerton and parents will be invited to join the group for their room using a QR code which will be displayed at Homerton. These groups will be for the purpose of sharing information between parents and for allowing parents to connect with each other.

Parents will be notified that by joining their class group, they are agreeing to the Acceptable Use Agreement for those groups, namely that it will be used for the purposes mentioned above and not contain any inappropriate content (see below). The Acceptable Use Agreement also sets out what action will be taken in the event of inappropriate content being posted.

**Inappropriate content**

Homerton Early Years Centre deems any of the following as inappropriate:

* Offensive language or remarks aimed at the school, its staff, pupils, parents, governors, or others affiliated with the school
* Unsuitable images or content posted into its feed
* Unsuitable images or content finding its way from another account into HomertonEYC’s feed or pages
* Images or text that infringe upon copyright or GDPR
* Incidents of cyberbullying against pupils, families or staff

This is not intended to be an exhaustive list and Homerton Early Years Centre reserves the right to use its own judgement when deciding if content is inappropriate or not. Homerton Early Years Centre aims to have a constructive relationship with families and any complaints about management, policies or procedures can be directed to the Headteacher or teaching staff who will be happy to discuss them.

Any inappropriate content will be reported to the ICT coordinator and the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately. It is the responsibility of everyone using these social media sites to report abuse immediately. Such content will be deleted, its users may be blocked and may be reported to X / Facebook or Instagram. Incidents of cyber bullying will not be tolerated under any circumstances and will be dealt with in line with the Anti-Bullying Policy and the Bullying and Harassment Policy. Furthermore, incidents of a more serious nature may be reported to the appropriate authority. Any complaints directed at Homerton via social media accounts will be removed and complaints will be dealt with in line with the Complaints Policy.

Further details on safety advice related to these online platforms can be found here:

 <https://help.twitter.com/en/safety-and-security>

<https://www.facebook.com/help/592679377575472/?helpref=uf_share>

<https://help.instagram.com/377830165708421>