



# YLEUK Social Contact with Juniors (under 18) Policy

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## Section 1: Introduction

Young Learners English UK proposed policy. Members agree to abide by the following advice for staff regarding social contact with under 18s.

## Section 2: Definitions of Terms Used in this Document

- *Child* – person under 18.
- *Pupil* – any person under 18 who a member of staff may come into contact with as a result of their employment in an educational establishment.
- *Social contact* - the exchange of personal information between two or more people.
- *Electronic contact* – the communication or publication of information (including images) between two or more people using an electronic device. This may occur using, but is not limited to: landline and mobile phones; other handheld electronic devices; gaming equipment and computers. Electronic contact may include, but is not limited to: voice communication; text communication; instant messaging; e-mail; social networking sites; blogs; photos and videos.
- This policy applies to the relationship between pupils and staff before, during or after a course.

## Section 3: Appropriate Social Contact (Electronic or Otherwise)

- Staff must maintain neutral, friendly relationships with pupils while avoiding exclusivity or overfamiliarity.

- Staff must resist any attempt by a pupil to develop an overfamiliar or exclusive social relationship.
- If a pupil confides sensitive personal information, staff have a duty to listen and respond in a professional manner in accordance with organisational guidelines.

## Section 4: Electronic Contact

- Staff must request permission from the employer for any electronic contact with a pupil before, during or after a course.
- In any electronic contact with pupils staff must pay particular attention to use neutral, unemotive language that will not be misconstrued.
- Staff must not exchange any information with a pupil that they would not be happy to share with the child's parent or carer.
- Staff must avoid the exchange of personal information, personal photos, virtual gifts or the use of any application that suggests or encourages the sharing of personal feelings.
- Staff must not publish photos, videos or any other information about pupils except with the express agreement of the employer.
- Staff should be aware that personal information about them may be available in various forms online. Staff should be particularly cautious about their public web profiles and privacy settings.
- Staff should attempt to find ways of setting up and maintaining separate 'personal' and 'professional' electronic profiles.

## Section 5: Social Networking Sites

- If schools or classes set up social networking forums like Facebook for pupils, they should be closed groups.
- Staff and pupils must not share the same social networking group, other than those adults necessary to monitor and administer the group.
- Staff who monitor or administer social networking sites for pupils should use professional accounts that are, as far as possible, devoid of personal information.
- Staff must not initiate or agree to 'friendship' requests or similar with pupils that will result in the sharing of personal information, photos, status updates, etc.

## Section 6: Duty to Report

- Staff have a duty to report to the employer any actual or perceived inappropriate development of the relationship between pupil and staff, electronic or otherwise.
- Any sensitive information communicated by a pupil to a member of staff, electronic or otherwise, must be reported to the employer.

## Section 7: Failure to Comply

- Non-compliance with the above policy will result in disciplinary procedures.
- Employers have a duty to remove an individual from regulated activity where there is risk of harm to children.
- Employers have a 'duty to refer' to external authorities\* any suspicion or allegation of inappropriate contact by an individual engaged in regulated activity where there is risk of harm to children. (\*ISA, police, local child protection authorities.)

Reviewed Annually. Last updated: January 2016.