



POLICY ON MANAGING COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS

September 2020

TÚSLA
An Ghníomhaireacht um
Leanaí agus an Teaghlach
Child and Family Agency

CONTENTS

- 1. Use of email, internet and social media**
- 2. Use of the media**
- 3. Communications systems**

1. USE OF EMAIL, INTERNET AND SOCIAL MEDIA

This policy applies to all employees and volunteers who are granted the use of BRiLL FRC's internet, social media and email facilities. **Emails fall under the scope of the Data Protection Act. Please see relevant Data Protection Policy.** Under this legislation, the email originator, all email recipients and any person named in the email are entitled to view the information about them and it is incorrect they are entitled to have it corrected.

Home or personal use has a "domestic exemption" from data protection law. However, BRiLL FRC has no such exemption, even for personal emails if they originate from the organisation's equipment.

Privacy

BRiLL FRC reserves the right to access and disclose the contents of any employee's work email messages from a work computer or work mobile within the organisation, in accordance with its legal and audit obligations, and for legitimate operational reasons.

1.1 Use of email

All Board members, staff and volunteers must adhere to the following when using email facilities:

- Staff and volunteers are expected to act ethically and responsibly in their use of emails and to comply with relevant national legislation;
- Discrimination, victimisation or harassment via email on the nine grounds of gender, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race, and membership of the Traveller community is prohibited;
- Staff and volunteers must not bully/harass/sexually harass or hassle individuals via email;
- Messages which are likely to be considered abusive, offensive or inflammatory should not be sent. The sending of such emails is prohibited;
- The creation and/or forwarding of pornographic mail/images is prohibited and constitutes gross misconduct;
- In the event that staff or volunteers are found to be using email to commit a criminal offence, the relevant authorities will be notified as a matter of course.

All of the above are prohibited and will be dealt with in accordance with BRiLL FRC's disciplinary procedures.

Also employees should be aware of the following:

- Emails can be easily forwarded to other parties. Individuals should be aware that anyone mentioned in an email under data protection has the right to see it;
- The creation or forwarding of advertisements, chain letters or unsolicited emails is prohibited;
- Caution should be exercised when opening emails and attachments from unknown sources;
- All equipment must have up-to-date anti-virus software installed and be operational on the computer from which they access emails;
- All emails or attachments which are encrypted or compressed should be decrypted or decompressed and scanned for viruses by the recipient.

1.2 Use of the internet:

BRiLL FRC's staff and volunteers must adhere to the following when using its facilities/equipment to connect to the internet:

- Access to the internet is provided by the organisation for the purposes of dealing with work-related issues and must not be abused for personal use;
- Commercial use, which is not connected to or approved by the Board, is strictly prohibited and will be dealt with in accordance with the disciplinary procedures;
- Individuals are expected to act ethically and responsibly in their use of the internet and to comply with the relevant national legislation;
- The Board, staff and volunteers must not use BRiLL FRC's internet connection to scan or attack other individuals/devices/organisations.
- The accessing or downloading of pornographic material or any other offensive material is strictly prohibited and will be dealt with in accordance with the disciplinary procedures.
- The downloading or distribution of adult pornography constitutes gross misconduct and will be dealt with in accordance with the disciplinary procedures.
- In the event that staff or volunteers are found to be using the internet to commit a criminal offence such as downloading child pornography, the relevant authorities will be notified as a matter of course.

1.3 Use of social media

Social media refers to the creation, sharing and exchange of information between people in virtual communities and networks. BRiLL FRC recognises it as the term used to describe the generation of digital, computerised or networked information and communication technologies.

Social media technologies take on many different forms, including internet forums, social networks, blogs, wikis, podcasts and picture, music and video sharing. Examples of well-known social media applications are Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, MySpace and Wikipedia.

BRiLL FRC acknowledges the value of social media. However, the organisation is also aware that it is different from traditional media in many aspects, including quality, reach, frequency, usability, immediacy and permanence. The internet is largely unregulated and the following risks are acknowledged:

- The potential for employees or volunteers using social media to inadvertently or deliberately leak sensitive/confidential information;
- Employee misuse of social applications while at work;
- Damage to the reputation of the organisation from negative, inaccurate or misleading posts;
- Loss of trust about the ethos and work of BRiLL FRC from any of the above.

This policy takes full account of the organisation's Confidentiality Policy and staff and volunteers with BRiLL FRC should be aware that, through their relationship with the organisation, they may have access to information that is confidential and should not be made public. The guidelines below are categorised into two key areas – the use of social media in the workplace and the use of social media outside of the workplace.

1.3.1 The use of social media in the workplace

Personal use of social media is prohibited during working hours for all staff.

However, the organization does have designated people to manage our different social media sites.

a). Management of facebook:

BRiLL FRC currently has several facebook pages. Line Managers of each area of work are allocated responsibilities for managing the day to day running and posting of these pages, and these are currently:

- **Overall FRC Page:** Manager – Glenn Lynch
- **The Key Project:** CE Supervisor – Leona Basquill
- **Education Project:** Youth Education Coordinator – Hugh Delahunty
- **Ballybeg Horticulture Initiative:** Asst. Coordinator
- **Ballybeg Greens:** Manager – Ray Power

Role of allocated persons managing the organisation's facebook page:

- To discuss with the overall Manager any issues or queries in relation to content;
- Double-check all information for accuracy, transparency and accountability – before it is posted;
- Welcomes feedback, including comments and questions. (However, BRiLL FRC expects users not to post content that is disrespectful or offensive and reserves the right to remove postings that are defamatory or obscene, fraudulent, deceptive or misleading; in violation of the law; that breach the policies of BRiLL FRC or that are abusive in any way);
- Block any facebook user who persistently post, tags or shares inappropriate content to our facebook pages;
- Respects intellectual property rights;
- Promotes the ethos of BRiLL FRC in all postings and demonstrates respect for all individuals, ethnicities, cultures and religions;
- Strictly upholds the organisation's confidentiality policy and only provides factual, non-confidential information and perspective;
- Only shares/provides links to pages/sites that are fully reputable;
- Protects individual privacy rights and operates by the principle of "informed consent" (see below);
- BRiLL FRC operates by the principle of "informed consent", whereby participants are informed of the purpose of any image that will be used and have been asked for their permission in writing prior to taking photographs or recording images that will be posted on the organisations Facebook page. This will ensure that any photos of children, service users or staff will not be posted **without the written consent of parents of minors, service users or staff.**

b). Management of the Website

BRiLL FRC has one official website. The FRC Manager is the overall administrator of the website. Each Line Manager as indicated below will be allocated responsibilities for managing the content of their specific sections within the website:

- **Overall FRC** : Manager – Glenn Lynch
- **The Key Project**: CE Supervisor – Leona Basquill
- **Education Project**: Youth Education Coordinator – Hugh Delahunty
- **Ballybeg Horticulture Initiative**: Asst. Coordinator
- **Ballybeg Greens**: Manager – Ray Power

Role of allocated person / s managing the organisation's Website page:

- To discuss with Manager any issues or queries in relation to content;
- Double-checks all information for accuracy, transparency and accountability – before it is posted;
- Welcomes feedback, including comments and questions. However, BRiLL FRC expects users not to post content that is disrespectful or offensive and reserves the right to remove postings that are defamatory or obscene, fraudulent, deceptive or misleading; in violation of the law; that breach the policies of BRiLL FRC, or that are abusive in any way;
- Respects intellectual property rights;
- Promotes the ethos of BRiLL FRC in all postings and demonstrates respect for all individuals, ethnicities, cultures and religions;
- Strictly upholds the organisation's confidentiality policy and only provides factual, non-confidential information and perspective;
- Only shares/provides links to pages/sites that are fully reputable;
- Protects individual privacy rights and operates by the principle of "informed consent" (see below);
- BRiLL FRC operates by the principle of "informed consent", whereby participants are informed of the purpose of any image that will be used for and have been asked for their permission in writing prior to taking photographs or recording images that will be posted on the organisations website page. This will ensure that any photos of children, service users or staff will not be posted **without the written consent of parents of minors, service users or staff.**

1.3.2 The use of Social Media by staff outside of the Workplace:

Guidelines for staff and volunteers re posting information relating to BRiLL FRC on their personal social media sites:

- Staff who work in BRiLL FRC may share information of up and coming events or activities of the organisation through their personal facebook page;
- However, staff / should not post information about the business of the organisation, the participants, other employees, members of the Board or other volunteers working with the organisation;
- **Any member of staff found posting photographs of any stakeholder or child using the services of BRiLL FRC from their personal facebook page** will face disciplinary proceedings;
- Never comment on the organisation's financial status or on legal matters relating to BRiLL FRC;
- Always ensure that any information that is posted is accurate and correct at the time, by verifying references or sources of information;
- Always disclose your connection with BRiLL FRC (whether as a staff member or volunteer) and clarify that you are posting information in a personal capacity. Use a disclaimer such as "the postings on this site are my own and do not necessarily represent the position of, or the policy of BRiLL FRC"
- Use good judgement to ensure that communications are respectful and in good taste;
- Do not make comments or respond to postings about BRiLL FRC that are of a confidential or sensitive nature;
- All members of BRiLL FRC should know that they are personally responsible for the content that they publish online and that electronic information is a permanent, transferable record;
- Always report inappropriate content relating to BRiLL FRC, or the work that it does, to the Manager or Chairperson of the organisation;
- Staff should not tag BRiLL FRC in their private social media networks.

2. USE OF THE MEDIA

2.1 Policy on media use

BRiLL FRC believes in giving the community a full and honest account of the work that the organisation is doing and encouraging participation in its activities. Traditional media, including print, radio and TV, is important in conveying information to the community. BRiLL FRC aims to maintain positive, constructive media relationships and openness and transparency is an integral part of the ethos of the organisation. The Voluntary Board of Directors is ultimately responsible for all dealings with the media on behalf of the organisation is responsible for appointing a chief spokesperson.

This is currently: Glenn Lynch, FRC Manager.

This policy takes full account of the organisation's Confidentiality Policy. Staff and volunteers with BRiLL FRC should be aware that, through their relationship with the organisation, they may have access to information that is confidential and should not be made public.

2.1.1 Legal Framework

- The organisation operates strictly on a non-party-political basis;
- Details of local issues will be presented clearly, fairly and as simply as possible and supported by facts/figures where relevant;
- BRiLL FRC will not engage in sensationalism and publicity that will not undermine generally accepted moral standards;
- Confidential information/documents will not be leaked to the media. Examples could include financial records / salaries of individual staff / minutes of meetings / private information about staff – volunteers – service users etc;
- If a leak occurs, it will be investigated, and appropriate disciplinary action will be taken;
- BRiLL FRC reserves the right to withhold sensitive information, particularly concerning local families and/or individuals;
- Legal advice will be sought by BRiLL FRC, if it is required.

2.1.2 General Guidance

BRiLL FRC will be proactive about contacting the media about the work of the organisation and highlighting the supports and services that are available. Every effort will be made to keep the media fully up to date and informed about new developments and press releases will be issued as required. Where possible, and resources permitting, the organisation will access media training for staff and volunteers.

In situations where there is a controversial issue to be dealt with the Board will agree as to who responds. This will be in most cases the:

- Chairperson of the Board;
- The Manager of BRILL FRC.

2.1.3 Members of the Voluntary Board of Directors

All dealings with the media are the responsibility of the Voluntary Board of Directors. In situations that are potentially controversial, the Board will agree the position to be communicated by all concerned, both staff and volunteers. No one member of the

Board is entitled to represent, either verbally or in writing, the organisation without the knowledge and consent of the full Board of Directors.

2.1.4 Employees

It is agreed that employees as part of their work may use the media for the purposes of promoting events and programmes running from the organisation. These will be checked with the Manager, prior to submission.

However, employees of BRiLL FRC may not give interviews, issue press release statements or other materials for publication about any controversial issues that may arise about the organisation or the community without prior approval.

Where this is necessary, the knowledge and consent of the Voluntary Board of Directors will be sought. Approaches from the media should be discussed with the PR officer (or Chairperson, as appropriate), before a response is made on behalf of the organisation. While it is important to build allies within the media, employees should resist pressure from the media for an instant response.

3. COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS

3.1 Principles

Communication systems and methods will be used for the purpose of achieving the organisation's Vision and Mission currently, as aligned to its contract with our relevant funders. BRiLL FRC intends that:

- Communications are clear, informative, ethical and based on best practice;
- Communication methods used with all stakeholders are carried out in a professional non-oppressive manner;
- All stakeholders are informed of relevant information, as required, and in a timely manner;
- Systems for delivering communication protects confidentiality and privacy of all stakeholders.

This policy does not provide guidance on the organisation's:

- Data Protection guidelines;
- Complaints procedures for client organisations;

- Grievance procedures for staff;
- Code of Conduct for Board members.

These are all available in separate policies in the organisation.

3.1.1 Internally

Internal communications systems are to ensure that BRiLL FRC develops positively as an organisation and that all staff and Board members are behind decision-making and actions to protect and sustain the organisation in the longer term. This includes:

- The staff team;
- The Board of Directors.

3.1.2 Externally

External communication systems are to ensure that all are informed of BRiLL FRC's ethos and practice, as well as given increased awareness of issues relevant to the following stakeholders:

- The individuals and families we support;
- The funders;
- The wider community and voluntary sector organisations that the organisation supports.

3.2 Risk management

All staff and Board members will be expected to read this document, in line with the Data Protection/Confidentiality Policy during induction, and will be provided with ongoing support to assist them to use the internal communications system effectively.

The information in the template below outlines:

- Mechanisms for dissemination information (internally and externally);
- Who communication is for (stakeholders) and for what purpose;
- The intended impact;
- Frequency;
- Review process;
- Recommended changes.

This policy was discussed and agreed at a Board meeting on _____ .

Signed: _____
Chairperson

Review History

- :

MANAGEMENT OF COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS

1. MANAGEMENT OF INTERNAL COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS – JUNE 2019						
MECHANISMS/ METHODS FOR COMMUNICATIONS	STAKEHOLDER AND PURPOSE	INTENDED IMPACT	FREQUENCY	IS THIS STILL AN EFFECTIVE FORM OF COMMUNICATION?		RECOMMENDED CHANGES
				YES	NO	
1.1 Emails	Frequently used to disseminate information to all staff/individual staff and Directors	To ensure both staff and Board are informed of all developments; To share information regarding practice or developments within the programme; To raise awareness of issues arising or look for support on an issue.	Daily and/or as need arises			
1.2 Mobile phone calls	To make individual calls to staff or Board members , as required for the purpose of day-to-day management and information sharing; To respond to requests or enquiries.	To ensure that staff and Board are informed of all developments.	As need arises			
1.3 Texting	To inform relevant staff/Board members of meetings/events/information	To ensure that staff and Board are informed of all developments	As need arises			
1.4 Sub-group meetings	To ensure that decisions made and work-related actions are implemented and carried out in a confidential and professional setting, particularly in relation to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finance; • Employment issues; • Family support. 	Board are engaged in and informed of relevant work related issues; Board and staff are working together in partnership; Minutes are taken of decisions made and accountability is enhanced.	At regular meetings agreed at sub-group level.			

INTERNAL COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS CONTINUED

MECHANISMS/ METHODS FOR COMMUNICATIONS	STAKEHOLDER AND PURPOSE	INTENDED IMPACT	FREQUENCY	IS THIS STILL AN EFFECTIVE FORM OF COMMUNICATION?		RECOMMENDED CHANGES
				YES	NO	
1.5 Board meetings	BRiLL FRC is protected and sustainable for the long-term support of families in the community; The responsibilities in relation to compliance, governance and monitoring of progress in the work are implemented.	Local people have a say in how BRiLL FRC is managed and to bring about positive change in their own community.	Monthly			
1.6 Staff team meetings	All staff are informed of any changes, events, training opportunities and new areas of work.	To ensure that staff team is working together with a common purpose.	As agreed and when required			
1.7 Minutes of meetings	Minutes of all sub-group, Board and staff team meetings are maintained, to ensure that there is follow-up on decisions made and accountability is in place. All minutes of meetings are maintained in a confidential setting, as appropriate.	To ensure that decisions are followed up and actions are recorded for accountability purposes.	After each meeting			
1.8 Internal Reporting mechanisms	Reports on progress of work are made through supervision and appraisal meetings and at Board meetings, through reports by BRiLL FRC Manager.	To ensure that all stakeholders are internally aware of progress in the work, challenges and actions that are required to address challenges; To strengthen accountability.	Monthly to six weeks			

2. MANAGEMENT OF EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS / JUNE 2019

MECHANISMS/ METHODS FOR COMMUNICATIONS	STAKEHOLDER AND PURPOSE	INTENDED IMPACT	FREQUENCY	IS THIS STILL AN EFFECTIVE METHOD OF COMMUNICATION?		RECOMMENDED IMPROVEMENTS
				YES	NO	
2.1 Emails	Frequently used to disseminate information to other organisations, colleagues and funders for the purposes of clarifying dates of meetings/ responding to requests for support/sending documentation/sending written records of meetings and agreements.	To ensure that all emails are responded to in a timely manner; To ensure that BRILL FRC has a record of all communications with external stakeholders.	Ongoing			
2.2 Mobile calls	Used as a method of maintaining contact with external stakeholders when key staff are not in the office. Key staff who have work mobile phones are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisational Name Manager • Development Worker 	To support the most effective communication responses and to ensure that key staff can be contacted when not in work premises	Ongoing			
2.3 Texting	As above	As above	Ongoing			
2.4 Facebook/ social media	To ensure that all external stakeholders can have easy access to information about BRiLL FRC and be informed of activities and opportunities arising.	For BRiLL FRC to have great visibility and enhance the understanding of stakeholders on what the services the organisation provides.	Ongoing			
2.5 Website	As above	As above	Ongoing updating			

2. EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS CONTINUED

MECHANISMS/ METHODS FOR COMMUNICATIONS	STAKEHOLDER AND PURPOSE	INTENDED IMPACT	FREQUENCY	IS THIS STILL AN EFFECTIVE METHOD OF COMMUNICATION?		RECOMMENDED IMPROVEMENTS
				YES	NO	
2.6 Speaking on behalf of the organisation	<p>There may be different reasons why a spokesperson will be required for the organisation eg:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launches / celebrations/dealing with the media/meeting with agencies and funders; <p>The designates spokesperson will be agreed by the Board for the purposes of each event.</p>	<p>To ensure all stakeholders are appropriately informed and BRiLL FRC is represented well.</p>	As need arises			
2.7 Writing up of reports on work undertaken	<p>All funders will receive a report of work undertaken, as requested, and using the methods stipulated by the funders.</p>	<p>To share progress in the work;</p> <p>To demonstrate evidence of using public funding for its intended purpose;</p> <p>To create a record of work undertaken on an annual basis.</p>				