



Internet and Social Networking Policy

November 2018

Date of Review: November 2018
Approved by: Trust Board
Next Review Date: October 2020

We believe this policy should be a working document that is fit for purpose, represents the Trust ethos, enables consistency and quality across the schools and is related to the following legislation:

- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Employment Rights Act 1996
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998
- Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998
- School Standards and Framework Act 1998
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (Transitional Provisions) Regulations 2008
- Employment Act 2008
- Equality Act 2010

The following documentation is also related to this policy:

- Acas Code of Practice 1 - Disciplinary and Grievance
- Bullying and Harassment at Work: A Guide for Managers and Employers (Acas)
- Code of Practice on Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures (Acas)
- Discipline and Grievances at Work - The Acas Guide (Acas)

We acknowledge that social networking has become part of everyday life with many people of all ages using social networking sites on a daily basis.

Many feel that there are valid reasons for exploring the educational benefits of these sites because research shows that the most discussed topics on these sites by young people are those dealing with homework and lessons.

However, school based staff need to be aware that 'posting' anything on these social networking sites about themselves, others or their place of work must be prepared for the possibility that anyone could gain access to it. This has been a major factor in identity theft.

In terms of school personnel's use of social networking and the web, they must be careful what information is posted due to potential security risks.

School personnel should use social networking sites wisely and cautiously and if absolutely necessary bearing in mind they should not jeopardise themselves, others or their place of work. The school will monitor its IT system for inappropriate usage and will take the necessary disciplinary measures if need be.

We believe the following recommendations should be considered if school personnel use social networking websites:

- Use only your name for the profile.
- Do not put your date of birth on the profile.
- Be wary of what photographs you put online of yourself, family or friends.
- Remember you must have their permission to publish.
- Make your profiles 'invite' only and thus only allow people you trust with certainty to view your information.
- Do not post your occupation.
- Do not discuss your work or place of work.

- Do not place derogatory, defamatory, discriminatory or offensive remarks about the school, work colleagues, parents, pupils, governors or anyone else connected with the school.
- Do not divulge confidential information of any form.
- Do not publish photographs taken at your work.
- Do not discuss your political or religious views.
- Be careful what viewpoints you express.
- If you do post anything online be mindful of the fact you could lose total control of it.
- Be careful of what other people post on your profile. You might be careful but are your friends?

We strongly recommend that school personnel do not use the school's IT system to access social networking sites for their own personal use.

We believe Facebook is a useful tool for marketing the school by promoting and explaining our values, aims and work. All school personnel and other members of the school community are reminded that when using this social media platform for the school they must contribute to it mindful of school protocol and that they are not derogatory of the school or anyone connected with it.

We support all school personnel and will ensure that any abusive comments made about them on social media by pupils or parents brought to our attention will be taken very seriously and will be reported to the appropriate authorities.

We as a school community have a commitment to promote equality. Therefore, an equality impact assessment has been undertaken and we believe this policy is in line with the Equality Act 2010.

We believe it is essential that this policy clearly identifies and outlines the roles and responsibilities of all those involved in the procedures and arrangements that is connected with this policy.

Aims

- To ensure all school personnel are aware of the dangers of using internet social networking sites.
- To ensure that all school personnel use internet social networking websites wisely and cautiously and not jeopardising themselves, others or their place of work.
- To ensure compliance with all relevant legislation connected to this policy.
- To work with other schools and the local authority to share good practice in order to improve this policy.

Responsibility for the Policy and Procedure

Role of the Trustee Board

The Trustee Board has:

- delegated powers and responsibilities to the Headteacher to ensure all school personnel and stakeholders are aware of and comply with this policy;
- appointed a member of the school personnel to be in sole charge of the school's website and the school's social networking website;
- responsibility for ensuring that the school complies with all equalities legislation;
- nominated a designated Equalities governor to ensure that appropriate action will be taken to deal with all prejudice related incidents or incidents which are a breach of this policy;
- responsibility for ensuring funding is in place to support this policy;

- responsibility for ensuring this policy and all policies are maintained and updated regularly;
- make effective use of relevant research and information to improve this policy;
- responsibility for ensuring all policies are made available to parents;
- nominated a link governor to:
 - visit the school regularly;
 - work closely with the Headteacher and the coordinator;
 - ensure this policy and other linked policies are up to date;
 - ensure that everyone connected with the school is aware of this policy;
 - attend training related to this policy;
 - report to the Governing Body every term;
 - annually report to the Trustee Board on the success and development of this policy.
- responsibility for the effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation of this policy.

Role of the Headteacher

The Headteacher will:

- ensure all school personnel comply with this policy;
- monitor the school website and the school's social networking website;
- take disciplinary action in accordance with the school's disciplinary policy if any employee breaches this policy;
- support all school personnel that are subjected to abusive comments made about them on social media by pupils or parents;
- report to the appropriate authorities any abusive comments made on social media to and about school personnel;
- work closely with the link governor;
- provide leadership and vision in respect of equality;
- provide guidance, support and training to all staff;
- monitor the effectiveness of this policy;
- annually report to the Trustee Board on the success and development of this policy.

Role of School Personnel

School personnel will:

- comply with all aspects of this policy
- not access social networking sites during the school day;
- not post confidential school information or information about any member of the school personnel on any social networking site;
- Not, under any circumstances, use/post any photographs of children or staff, taken in school time or in a school related activity, on their own social networking sites.
- not make reference to the school or anyone connected to it when using any social networking site;
- not bring the school into disrepute by making any derogatory, defamatory, discriminatory or offensive comments on any social networking site;
- not make discriminatory or offensive comments about any member of the school personnel on any social networking site;
- not make contact with parents or pupils via social networking websites;
- be aware that the Trust Board will take the necessary disciplinary action if any member of the school personnel breaches this policy;
- implement the school's equalities policy and schemes;

- report and deal with all incidents of discrimination;
- attend appropriate training sessions on equality;
- report any concerns they have on any aspect of the school community.

Role of Parents/Carers

Parents/carers will:

- be aware of and comply with this policy;
- not make contact with school personnel via social networking websites;
- not make abusive comments about any member of the school personnel on social media;
- work in partnership with the school;
- comply with this policy for the benefit of their children;
- be asked to take part periodic surveys conducted by the school;
- support the school Code of Conduct and guidance necessary to ensure smooth running of the school.

Raising Awareness of this Policy

We will raise awareness of this policy via:

- the Staff Handbook
- meetings with school personnel
- reports such annual report to parents and Headteacher reports to the Governing Body and Trust Board

Training

All school personnel:

- have equal chances of training, career development and promotion
- receive training on induction which specifically covers:
 - All aspects of this policy
 - School Personnel Code of Conduct
 - Anti-Bullying and Anti-Harassment at the Workplace
 - Grievance Procedure
 - Disciplinary Procedure
 - Whistle Blowing
 - Equal opportunities
 - Inclusion
- receive periodic training so that they are kept up to date with new information
- receive equal opportunities training on induction in order to improve their understanding of the Equality Act 2010 and its implications

Equality Impact Assessment

Under the Equality Act 2010 we have a duty not to discriminate against people on the basis of their age, disability, gender, gender identity, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

This policy has been equality impact assessed and we believe that it is in line with the Equality Act 2010 as it is fair, it does not prioritise or disadvantage any pupil and it helps to promote equality at this school.

Monitoring the Implementation and Effectiveness of the Policy

The practical application of this policy will be reviewed biennially or when the need arises by the coordinator, the Headteacher and the nominated governor.

A statement of the policy's effectiveness and the necessary recommendations for improvement will be presented to the Trust Board for further discussion and endorsement.