



BARNSOLE PRIMARY TRUST

**SOCIAL NETWORKING CODE
OF CONDUCT POLICY**

Policy reviewed by:
Policy date:
Next review due:

Board of Trustees
May 2018
May 2021

Principles Statement

At Barnsole Primary Trust we offer all pupils, parents and staff equal opportunities regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, ability or background. To achieve this, we provide support for individual learning needs to ensure that all pupils meet their potential. We recognise the range of needs and value the wide diversity of cultures of each child. We do not tolerate discrimination of any kind against our pupils, parents or staff.

This Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Vision

Our vision is that through education at this school, children will grow and develop as learners. Children will be encouraged and taught skills that enable them to become independent in their learning. We want them to learn to persevere, solve problems and to think creatively. Our wider aim is that our pupils will develop as effective communicators, able to express themselves. Through varied learning experiences and opportunities our aim is to equip and prepare our children for their lives.

Equality Impact Assessment

An adverse impact is unlikely, and on the contrary the policy has the clear potential to have a positive impact by reducing and removing barriers and inequalities that currently exist.

Policy adapted from	Medway Code of Conduct
Policy written by	Miss Ellie Shea
Policy date	May 2018
Policy review	May 2021

Rationale and context

Over the past years the use of social networking sites and APPs such as Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat and Facebook have become increasingly popular. These sites and APPs are used to share information, photographs and news with friends across the world.

Whilst the use of such sites and APPs (known as social networking) has very many benefits there are potential problems concerning privacy and appropriate usage. These may include breaches of confidentiality, unsuitable language or images, and in some cases breaches of the law.

Examples of such problematic usage of publicly accessible social networking could be:

- Breaches of confidentiality, such as referring to children or families by name
- Staff referring to school matters such as pupil discipline
- Staff using derogatory or offensive language about pupils and families
- Staff posting images of themselves in inappropriate dress or situations
- Staff participating in illegal activities such as the sharing of indecent images of children
- Partners or friends posting inappropriate comments concerning staff
- Partners or friends posting images that show staff members in situations which may not be in keeping with their professional status

This code of conduct is designed to protect school staff who may use such sites and APPs in their private lives. Whilst it is not intended to govern private use of social networking, it does set out expectations around online behaviour that could affect professional standing, integrity and dignity.

What this code does not cover:

- Social online contact between adult colleagues. However, staff need to be mindful of what they are posting and who can see it. This is important in respect of confidentiality, workplace relationships, and the fact that their online contacts may not appreciate the difference between private and professional comments.
- Online contact with young people made as part of professional duties and using agreed online professional lines of communication.
- Membership of professional networks or forums is not covered by this code as these are usually covered by a professional body's own code of conduct.
- Membership of other chat rooms or forums is not covered, although in extreme cases legal restrictions may apply. Staff should however remember that what they say may reflect upon their professional lives and moderate their comments accordingly.

Code of conduct:

- Staff should be wary of entering into online contact with parents or carers. Friend requests from adults in this context should be politely declined by explaining that it is against school guidance, which is designed to protect staff and the public from abuse and misunderstandings.
- Staff should not create web pages, groups or contact lists concerning professional activities carried out on behalf of their school unless they have expressed written permission from their Head of School to do so.
- There must be absolutely no private online contact between professionals and any young people with whom they have a work-related relationship.
- Online contact made as part of professional duties should always be logged and the content recorded securely. This requirement extends to the use of instant messaging services and private chat rooms, where content can be stored by switching the system's "history" setting on.
- Staff are strongly advised to be careful about what they say online in contact with other young people such as relatives or family friends. This caution should apply to images or video material.

Staff privacy and dignity

Staff are strongly recommended to check that their online privacy settings only allow "friends" to see their profiles. It is also advised that as a general measure to protect their personal safety and identity, staff do not accept friend requests from people who are not personally known to them.

Staff should remember that once something has been put online they have lost control of it for good. Even something sent to a trusted friend could be seen by anyone else having access to that phone or computer.

Staff may wish to ask friends to check before photographs are posted which may cause them embarrassment. Staff posting their own images should bear in mind the fact that any image can easily be downloaded and manipulated and they should choose which images they share accordingly.

It is recommended that staff do not post images that could be used to identify their homes or families.

All staff are advised to make themselves familiar with the parent/carer pages on the CEOP "Think You Know" site at www.thinkuknow.co.uk