

Broad Chalke Primary School

School Social Media Policy

Mission Statement: With the love of God we learn, care, grow and share

Social media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn etc) is a broad term for any kind of online platform which enables people to directly interact with each other.

Broad Chalke Primary School recognises the numerous benefits and opportunities which a social media presence offers. However, there are some risks associated with social media use, especially around the issues of safeguarding, bullying, additional workload and reputation. The Governors and Senior Leadership Team (SLT) have agreed that the school will have an official online social media account but this will not replace the more traditional newsletter which is sent out by email, and we are mindful that social media is not for everyone, so any use of social media will be to enhance rather than replace what we already do. This policy aims to explain the purpose and safe use of social media by staff, parents, carers and children **specifically when using the school's official online social media account.**

Purpose of the school social media account

- to communicate to our parents and wider community
- to celebrate events and achievements
- to raise awareness about what happens at school
- to inform or remind parents about events
- to raise the profile of the school
- to foster positive engagement with the school community

Choice of social media account

All of the larger social media accounts are for age 13+ so our school social media account is aimed at parents and other people interested in our school, not at pupils. We are aware that some parents may choose to share the content with their children or give them access to it. However, the school advises against primary aged pupils having their own social media accounts.

The SLT have chosen to use an **Instagram account** in the first instance. The rationale behind this is that Instagram is, in our opinion, the best platform for sharing images in an engaging and positive way. We have also considered the following points:

1. Instagram is less controversial and can be one way (i.e. closed for comments). It is not that we do not wish to engage with comments; it is simply that we are taking a cautious approach to social media. This will make it much easier to monitor the page, otherwise there is a huge workload issue of monitoring our account 24/7 in case of any inappropriate comments. The account will be private with approved followers only.
2. As Instagram is primarily for the sharing of images, there is no need for long detailed descriptions, as the images are intended to provide a quick insight into life at our school. Unlike our website, which is full of essential and interesting content, Instagram will add that 'instant' factor to share our 'wow' moments.
3. Instagram is not the largest of the social media platforms (currently Facebook) but it is the fastest growing particularly amongst the under 40s. It also links to and can be set to post to Twitter and Facebook should it be decided at a later date to expand our social media presence. However, this would not happen without approval from the governors and a change to this policy.
4. We can show rather tell. Rather than explaining how great our school is, the image can say it all rather like an online visual brochure with photographs and videos.
5. We can build an online community to showcase pupils' work such as artwork and special projects, reading recommendations, plays, sport or even just images of our stunning school environment.

Scope

This policy is subject to the school Code of Conduct and Acceptable Use Agreement. This policy:

- Applies to all staff and to all online communications which directly represent the school.
- Applies to such online communications posted at any time and from anywhere.
- Encourages the safe and responsible use of social media through training and education
- Defines the monitoring of public social media activity pertaining to the school

Managing school social media accounts

The SLT will:

- Develop and implement the School Social Media Account policy
- Approve account creation
- Store account details, including passwords securely
- Ensure only senior leaders are authorised to publish content
- Delete the images from personal devices once uploaded
- Be responsible for monitoring and contributing to the account
- Control the process for managing the account if the lead staff member leaves the school

Promoting our school account

- A 'badge' will be placed on our school website to directly link to our school social media account.
- We will add relevant #hashtags to images, so that they can be easily found. We will always include the hashtag of our school name in the format #BCPS.
- The school account may follow some other schools for ideas and non-controversial organisations e.g. the world wildlife fund
- The school account will not follow any pupil, staff, governor or parent feeds.

Monitoring

School accounts must be monitored regularly and frequently (preferably 7 days a week, including during holidays). Regular monitoring and intervention is essential in case a situation arises where inappropriate behaviour arises on a school social media account. As any comments, queries or complaints made through those accounts should be responded to within 24 hours (or on the next working day if received at a weekend) we have decided to initially have an account without the facility for followers to comment nor will there be any facility to send a private message via Instagram.

Behaviour

- Digital communications by staff must be professional and respectful at all times and in accordance with this policy. Staff will not use social media to infringe on the rights and privacy of others or make ill-considered comments or judgments about school life. School social media accounts must not be used for personal gain.
- Unacceptable conduct, (e.g. defamatory, discriminatory, offensive, harassing content or a breach of data protection, confidentiality, copyright) will be considered extremely seriously by the school and will be reported as soon as possible and escalated where appropriate.
- The school will take appropriate action in the event of breaches to the social media policy. Where conduct is found to be unacceptable, the school will deal with the matter internally. Where conduct is considered illegal, the school will report the matter to the police and other relevant external agencies, and may take action according to the disciplinary policy.

Legal considerations

- Users of social media should consider the copyright of the content they are sharing and, where necessary, should seek permission from the copyright holder before sharing.
- Users must ensure that their use of social media does not infringe upon relevant data protection laws, or breach confidentiality.

Tone

The tone of content published on social media should be appropriate to the audience, whilst retaining appropriate levels of professional standards. Photographs and messages should be engaging and informative.

Use of images

It's important to remember that anything digital can be copied and shared by others – it only takes a screen shot so even though settings can be private no image online is really ever private. Any image whether in a school newsletter sent by email or on the school website already has the capacity to be taken and stored. Therefore, school use of images can be assumed to be acceptable, providing the following guidelines are strictly adhered to:

- **Parents will be informed about our new school social media policy.**
- **Parental permission to use any identifiable photos or video recordings on social media will be sought in our starter pack.** If anyone, for any reason, asks not to be filmed or photographed then their wishes should be respected.
- **Under no circumstances should the SLT or any staff share or upload pupil pictures online other than via the school social media account or school newsletter which are then posted online on the school website.**
- **There will be no individual photographs, only group photographs.**
- The SLT should exercise their professional judgement about whether an image is appropriate to share on the school social media account. Pupils should be appropriately dressed, not be subject to ridicule and must not be on any school list of children whose images must not be published.
- If a member of staff inadvertently takes a compromising picture which could be misconstrued or misused, they must delete it immediately.
- We will never post a pupil's full name alongside an image.
- If parents do not give consent then we will not include their child in the group photo.

Policy agreed by FGB: Spring 2018

Policy due for review: Spring 2020

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