



Social Networking Guidance

The widespread availability and use of social media applications bring opportunities to understand, engage, and communicate in new and exciting ways. However, it is also important to ensure that we balance this with our duties to our school, the community, our legal responsibilities and our reputation.

This guidance sets out the key principles and code of conduct that we expect of everyone from the school community: staff, volunteers, governors and parents.

If you have any questions regarding the content of this leaflet, please do not hesitate to contact our Head Teacher.

In the context of this guidance 'everyone' refers to staff, volunteers, governors and parents.

Key Principles:

- Everyone from the school community has a responsibility to ensure they protect the reputation of the school and to treat each-other with respect
- It is important to protect everyone from the school community from allegations and misinterpretations which can arise from the use of social networking sites
- Safeguarding our children is a key responsibility of us all and it is essential that everyone at Himbleton considers this and acts responsibly if they are using social networking site

Use of Social Media in Practice

School Staff:

- School staff will not invite, accept or engage in communications with parents or children from the school community in any personal social media whilst in employment at Himbleton School, unless there is a legitimate family link.
- All e-mail communication between staff and members of the school community on school business will only be made through the school's e-mail accounts.
- Staff will not use personal mobile phones to make contact with members of the school community on school business, nor will any such contact be accepted, except in circumstances given prior approval by The Head Teacher.
- Staff will not use any social media in work time for personal use.

Parents are asked to join us in setting a good example for our children by:

- Demonstrating courtesy and respect for staff, governors, other parents and pupils when comments are placed on social networking sites
- Using appropriate language when discussing school
- Addressing any issues or concerns regarding school, directly with the Head Teacher or governors.

Parents are asked to join us in setting a good example for our children by not:

- Using social network sites to make derogatory comments or posting photographs which could be deemed as defamatory, including making comments about pupils, parents, staff, governors, Local Authority or the wider community.
- Posting photographs on social network sites taken at school related events if they show any other child apart from your own.
- Posting on social network sites any images of staff, governors, parents, other children, or anyone at or connected with the school.

Parents are reminded of the Facebook Privacy Policy:

"If you are under age 13, please do not attempt to register for Facebook or provide any personal information about yourself to us. If we learn that we have collected personal information from a child under age 13, we will delete that information as quickly as possible. If you believe that we might have any information from a child under age 13, please contact us."

Social networking applications include, but are not limited to:

- Blogs ~ eg. Blogger
- Online discussion forums ~ eg. netmums.com
- Collaborative spaces ~ eg. Facebook
- Media sharing services ~ eg. YouTube
- 'Micro-blogging' ~ eg. Twitter

Everyone should remember that information they share through social network sites, even if they are on private spaces, are still subject to copyright, data protection and Freedom of Information legislation, the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and other legislation.

Potential & Actual Breaches of the Code of Conduct

In instances where there has been a breach of the Code of Conduct stated in this guidance the following will apply:

- Any breaches of this policy will be fully investigated by the school.
- The Governing Body will take appropriate action in order to protect the school's reputation and that of its staff, parents, governors, pupils and anyone else directly linked to the school.

