Social Media and Networking Policy

September 2018

St. Osmund's Catholic Primary School

Approved: 1st September 2018

Review Timescale: Biennially

Review: September 2020

Reviewed by: Headteacher

St Osmund's Catholic Primary School

Love for God ~ Love for Each Other ~ Love for Learning

St Osmund's Catholic Primary School Social Media and Networking Policy

Written: January 2016
Review: September 2016
Review: October 2017
Review: September 2018 and biennially from now on

Introduction

This document sets out the school's policy on social media and networking. New technologies are an integral part of our lives and are widespread powerful tools which bring new communication opportunities in teaching and learning for school staff in many ways. It is important that we are able to use these technologies and services effectively, but that this should be balanced with protecting our professional reputation and integrity. With this in mind, all staff working with pupils have a responsibility to maintain public confidence in their ability to safeguard pupils' welfare, and to behave in the best interests of the pupils and the school that they work for. This procedure is also designed to protect staff from possible harassment by a colleague via a social networking site.

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the school's e-safety, Child Protection and any other related policies and should also be read in conjunction with the school's Code of Conduct. If staff fail to adhere to the guidelines set out in this Policy, their conduct could be called into question and may result in disciplinary action being taken against them which could ultimately lead to their dismissal.

Whilst this Policy has attempted to cover a wide range of situations, it cannot cover all eventualities. Staff using social media and networking sites should avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motives and intentions. The School understands that employees have the right to a private life and would respect this so long as employees follow the guidelines set out in this Policy and other documents it refers to. The School expects employees to maintain reasonable standards in their own behaviour such that enable them to maintain an effective learning environment and also to uphold public trust and confidence in them and their profession. Employees should avoid any conduct which is likely to bring the school into disrepute.

2. Scope

(i) This Policy applies to all staff who work in the school. This includes all teaching and non- teaching staff. The general principles set out in this policy should also be followed by adults who work at the school but are not employed by the school.

(ii) For the purpose of the policy, social media and social networking sites are websites by which personal information or opinions can be presented for public consumption and websites which allow people to interact with each other. Examples of social media and social networking sites that could leave an everlasting digital footprint, and which could be used as evidence for criminal prosecution, include blogs, Facebook, Twitter, Youtube and MySpace, Skype, Snapchat and Instagram. This list is not exhaustive as new technology is emerging on a daily basis, but it seeks to provide examples to staff. The definition of social networking and social media may be widened as new technologies emerge.

3. Staff guidelines in relation to social networking and media activity

(i) Staff wishing to have a social media presence should make sure that their employer is not identified on this presence unless there is, on an objective assessment, a legitimate reason for doing so and should ensure that comments made are from their own behalf, for example by writing in the first person and using a personal email address as opposed to their employer's e-mail address.

(ii) Staff are personally responsible for their communication in social media and should exercise good judgement at all times. This includes any media attachments like photographs or videos. What staff publish on a social media site will be available for any member of the public to read (including parents, members of the Governing Body, colleagues, members of the Local Authority and prospective employers) for a long time. Staff should always think carefully about this when posting personal content.

(iii) Staff should not post any media attachments, such as photographs or videos, which have subjects (pupils/colleagues etc.) of the school in them. Anyone wishing to post such items should always speak to the Headteacher in the first instance.

(iv) Staff should not place any information regarding their employer, their colleagues, pupils or people they come into contact with as part of their employment on a social networking or media site.

(v) Staff are advised for their own protection not to put personal information such as home addresses or personal telephone numbers on a social networking or media site.

(vi) Staff should only use social networking in a way that does not conflict with the current national Teacher's Standards.

(vii) Staff should review and adjust their privacy settings to give them the appropriate level of privacy and confidentiality.

4. Staff guidelines in relation to pupil contact

(i) Staff will not interact with any pupil (or past pupil under the age of 18) of the school on a social media or networking site. For example, the school would not think it appropriate for staff to 'friend' a pupil or request that a pupil 'friend' them. If a member of staff receives a request to interact with a pupil or past pupil under the age of 18, they should inform the Headteacher.

(ii) Any electronic communication regarding the school or the work staff are carrying out in the school (including telephone and text messaging contact) with pupils or parents/carers should only take place using the school's formal communication systems. Staff should use only the school's website, the schools e-mail address or the school's telephone number when communicating with pupils and parents/carers.

(iii) Staff should not post remarks or comments on-line or engage in online activities which may bring the school into disrepute.

(iv) Staff should ensure that personal mobile phones are not on view in teaching spaces

5. Social media and networking sites and cyberbullying

(i) Staff should never use social media to abuse or bully or otherwise comment about colleagues, pupils, carers of the pupils or anyone associated in the wider context of the school (e.g. member of the Governing Body, Local Authority, sponsor etc.). Staff are expected to act respectfully when using social media and to avoid language which may be deemed as offensive to other people. For example, the school would not expect any member of staff to post anything which:

• could be construed as discriminatory

• could be construed as racist

• is untrue or misleading

• engages in criminal activity

• is defamatory about people or organisations

(ii) Staff who feel that they are subject to social media bullying by another member of staff or a pupil should where possible save evidence (e.g. e-mails, screen prints, text messages) and immediately report this to the Headteacher for further investigation. Where the complaint is against the Headteacher, the concern should be raised with the Chair of the Governing Body for further investigation.

(iii) Staff who feel that a colleague is not adhering to this policy should report their concerns to the Headteacher for further investigation. Where the complaint is against the Headteacher, the concern should be raised with the Chair of the Governing Body for further investigation.

See extract from Staff Code of Conduct:

1. **Communication with Children** (Including Use of IT and Social Media)

In order to make best use of the many educational and social benefits of new and emerging technologies, pupils need opportunities to use and explore the digital world. E-safety risks are posed more by behaviours and values than the technology itself. Adults should ensure that they establish safe and responsible online behaviours, working to local and national guidelines and acceptable use policies which detail how new and emerging technologies may be used.

All Adults Should:	All Adults Must NOT:
* Always maintain appropriate professional boundaries and avoid behaviour, during their use of the internet and other communication technologies, which might be misinterpreted by others *Work and be seen to work, in an open and transparent way *Support children to work safely and responsibly with the internet and other communication technologies and to monitor their own standards and practice *Set clear expectations of behaviour and/or codes of practice relevant to social networking for educational, personal or recreational use *Give a clear message that unlawful or unsafe behaviour is unacceptable and that, where appropriate, disciplinary or legal action will be taken *Support safer working practice *Minimise the risk of misplaced or malicious allegations made against adults who work with children and young people *Prevent adults abusing or misusing their position of trust *exercise reasonable and proper judgement when putting personal information onto social networking sites, such as addresses, home and mobile phone numbers	*Betray confidentiality agreements *Make a 'friend' of a child or young person where they are working on their social networking page, and should not become 'friends' with children or young person no longer receiving a service *Use or access social networking pages of children and young people and should never accept an invitation to become a 'friend' of a child or young person *Post derogatory remarks or offensive comments on-line or engage in on-line activities which may bring the agency into disrepute or could reflect negatively on their professionalism *Give their personal mobile numbers or personal e-mail addresses to children/young people or families - unless the need to do so is agreed with senior management and parents/carers *Request, or respond to, any personal information from a child/young person, other than that which might be appropriate as part of their professional role. Should staff be approached, they should inform their line manager *Accept requests to connect with pupils and ex-pupils. Where this has been requested the adult should inform their manager who will decide whether to discuss with the child's parents/carers