Woolhampton Church of England Primary School
Enabling All To Flourish

Social Media and Internet Policy

Category: Non-Statutory	Approved by: Full Governing Body
Last Approved: June 2022	Next Approval due: June 2025
Initial Review by: Head Teacher & Website Lead Governor	Formal Review by: Teaching Learning & Care Committee
Linked Policies: Teaching & Learning, Curriculum, Child Protection & Safeguarding, Complaints, Data Protection, On-line Safety.	

Our Christian Vision:
Built on the rock of Christian faith, we work as a community to create an environment which enables all to flourish. Jesus welcomed everyone and we embrace diversity, celebrating our different gifts and successes. Like St Peter, we are motivated by our values, learn from our mistakes and strive for the best outcome for all.

Introduction
Woolhampton CE Primary School recognises the potential of new technologies and platforms available within the school curriculum. Social networking sites bring schools and their wider communities a whole host of opportunities to understand, engage and communicate with the wider world. The nature of social networking and the mobile technology on which it is deployed allow all users to access it in an immediate and flexible way.

As a school we have to plan and ensure we balance the use of social networking and the associated risks and take necessary steps to protect the image and reputation of the staff, school community and the school itself.

Aim
The aim of this policy is to support and develop all members of the school communities understanding of the risks involved and develop a structure of good practice that supports innovation and provides a framework of good support, whilst protecting the school's reputation and that of the staff and community.

Purpose
The purpose of this document is to ensure that:

- The school and staff are not exposed to legal challenge as a result of school employees or volunteers using and providing information on social networking sites e.g. data protection, discrimination and other sensitive information.

- All staff and volunteers ensure all children are safeguarded.

- The reputation of the school or staff is not adversely affected through the use of social networking sites.

- All members of the school community understand how the school use social media technology to support communication and leaning in school.

- All members of the school community understand what is classed as acceptable behaviour when using social media technology within a professional context.

- All members of the school community are clearly able to distinguish where information provided via a social networking application is a legitimate representative of the school.

- Enables clarification on how the school uses social networking and internet-based research in the recruitment process.

- The Headteacher or Senior Teacher should make all staff aware of this policy and the expectations of staff conduct relating to social networking. This document should also form part of any new member of staff's induction.

What is Social Networking Technology

Social networking covers a range of internet-based technologies that have been developed to aid communication between individuals and groups. A social networking service is an online service, platform, or site that focuses on facilitating the building of social networks or social relations among people, who for example, share interests, activities, backgrounds, or real-life connections.

Social networking applications include, but are not limited to Blogs, Vlogs, Online discussion forums, Collaborative spaces, Media sharing services, 'Microblogging' applications. Examples include Twitter, Facebook, MSN, You Tube, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram.

The role of Staff, Volunteers and Governors.

All members of staff (including volunteers at school) must be aware that all communication via social networking sites could be made available, intentionally or otherwise, to an audience wider that that originally intended. Therefore, staff should comply with the following protocols:

- Staff must not access social media sites whilst at work for their own personal use. Staff may access social media to work on the school's social media accounts.

- Staff must not provide parents or pupils with personal contact details, home email, home telephone number or private mobile number.

- Staff must not use personal devices, (phones, iPads, tablets etc.) to record images or videos of children or colleagues.

- Staff must not disclose any information that is confidential to the school or disclose personal data or information about any individual, colleague or pupil, that would be in breach of the Data Protection Act.

- Staff must not disclose any information about the school or Local Authority that is not yet in the public arena e.g. OFSTED report.

- Staff must not make any defamatory remarks about the school, colleagues, pupils or the Local Authority or post anything that could potentially bring the school or Local Authority into disrepute.

- Staff must not disclose confidential information relating to his or her employment at the school.

- Staff must take reasonable action to secure private sites, profile and accounts.

- Staff must not accept or connect with current pupils as 'friends' or 'followers' – personal communication could be considered inappropriate and unprofessional and makes staff vulnerable to allegations. Staff are strongly advised not to "friend" or all allow recent pupils to 'follow' them as this could be viewed as a safeguarding issue.

- Staff must be mindful that their conduct on social media can have an impact on the public perception of the school and influence the way in which they are perceived by pupils, parents and prospective parents of the school.

- Staff should be aware their online behavior could affect their professional standing, dignity and perception of their integrity.

- Staff must be mindful of the potential problems that might occur when accepting parents as friends. They must not disclose any confidential information or other information that may bring the school or a colleague into disrepute.

- Staff are advised not to place inappropriate photographs publicly on their social media networking accounts.

- Staff are advised not to post indecent remarks, or remarks that could be deemed as defamatory or offensive.

- Staff should discuss or seek advice on their personal use of social networking sites and/or report concerns about the inappropriate use of social networking sites/applications by another member of the staff to either the Headteacher or the Senior Teacher.

- Inappropriate behavior from a pupil to a member of staff on social networking sites should be reported immediately to the Headteacher or Senior Teacher and dealt with through the school's pupil disciplinary process.

The West Berkshire Model Code of Conduct for schools' states "*In general terms, the school expects that the conduct of it's employees is such that no justifiable complaint can be made by parents, pupils, colleagues, Governors, other bodies or agencies or members of the community in relation to conduct and behavior of school staff.*" This principle also applies to Social Networking sites.

The Model Disciplinary Rules state that the following are examples of gross misconduct:

1. *Conduct that is serious abuse of position – e.g. entering in to a personal relationship with a pupil.*

2. *Criminal offences and other conduct outside employment could cause an employee's position at the school to become untenable particularly in circumstances where the conduct or offence is unacceptable to colleagues, management or parents or where the conduct or offence has the potential to affect the reputation of the school.*

3. *Making defamatory statements in the course of employment (e.g. making statements that are or could be slanderous or libelous) whether orally, written, or in electronic communication.*

Breach of these disciplinary rules above in relation to social networking or inappropriate use of social networking sites and applications by staff will be dealt with through the School's Disciplinary Procedure.

The role of Parents and Carers.
Although social networking sites may appear to be the quickest and easiest way to express frustrations or concerns about the School (and those associated with it), it is rarely appropriate to do so.

The school asks that parents and carers follow our Complaints Policy and contact the school office or Headteacher directly if they have a concern or complaint about a member of staff or an incident that occurred during the school day. Please do not post details of a complaint or grievance publicly on social networks / media sites. Such action could be prejudicial in respect of the formal grievance / complaints procedure.

The school and governing body have a legal right to protect the reputation of the school and will use all necessary means to remove any defamatory comments, sites or posts from the internet. Parents should not post confidential material including details from meetings, reviews and parent teacher conferences online. If the School considers material/comments on social media sites inappropriate, it will consider taking the following action:

- Take legal advice and/or legal action where the information posted is defamatory in any way or if the circumstances warrant this.

- Set out the School's concerns to you in writing, giving you a warning and requesting that the material in question is removed

- Contact the Police where the School feels it appropriate, for example, if it considers a crime (such as harassment) has been committed; or in cases where the posting has a racial element, is considered to be grossly obscene or is threatening violence.

- Contact the host/provider of the Social Networking site to complain about the content of the site and ask for removal of the information.

- Take other legal action against the individual.

Whilst on school premises the school asks that all parents and carers follow these rules to ensure that the school environment is protected and safe.

- Mobile Phones must be switched off at the main entrance and not used whilst inside the building, unless authorised.

- Whilst collecting and dropping off their children parents should not use their mobile devices to take pictures within the school building and playground areas.

- Whilst the school is happy for parents to take images of our school events, trips and performances using digital cameras or mobile phones, they should not post them publicly on social media sites or image hosting sites such as

Facebook or Flickr. If images are found or reported to the school, we will contact the account holder or the service provider and ask that they be removed.

Parents should also ensure that their children are using social media / networking and internet sites in an appropriate manner. It is expected that parents/carers explain to their children what is acceptable to post online. Parents/carers are also expected to monitor their children's online activity, including in relation to their use of social media. Parents and carers should be aware that many social media sites including Facebook, You Tube, Google+, Flickr and Instagram require that all users are 13 years old before they can create a profile.

The school will support this with Safer Internet days to educate about digit footprints and the importance of keeping personal safe.

The role of Children
Whilst on school premises all of our children should follow these rules to ensure that our school environment is protected and safe.

- Children should not bring mobile devices into school.

- No pupil may access social networking sites during the school working day.

- No pupil should attempt to join a staff member's areas on networking sites. If pupils attempt to do this, the member of staff is to inform the Headteacher. Parents will be notified if this happens.

- No school computers are to be used to access social networking sites at any time.

- Any attempt to breach firewalls will result in a ban from using any school ICT equipment other than with close supervision.

- Children should support the school's approach to online safety and not deliberately upload or add any images, video, sounds or text that could upset any member of the school community.

The school makes all children aware that their use of School ICT resource both inside and outside of the school can be checked and their parent / carer will be contacted if a member of school staff is concerned about their eSafety or their use of IT resources.

School's Social Media Accounts

Aims of using social media
- To positively promote our school to the community and also potential new parents.
- To share events and announcements.
- To celebrate the work of students and our school as a whole.
- To engage more with parents, particularly those hard-to-reach parents.

Responsibility / who is allowed to post
The senior leader will be responsible for overseeing the use of social media and posting updates. The school office staff will also be able to publish posts. Any staff member wishing to post should consult the senior leader for approval.

Dealing with derogatory/inappropriate comments

Any inappropriate comments or activity by parents, staff or other persons will be dealt with as detailed above.

Use of photographs and videos

Photos/videos of a child will only be posted if the school has written parental permission to do so.