

Fountain Primary School & Nursery Unit



POLICY ON SOCIAL MEDIA

DATE CREATED: September 2020

DATE APPROVED BY BOARD OF GOVENORS: September 2020

NEXT POLICY REVIEW DATE: June 2021

REVIEWD BY: ICT Co-ordinator, Child Protection Officer, Principal

SIGNED: _____

PRINT: _____

DATE: _____



MISSION STATEMENT

As a school we wish to uphold a positive image with all stakeholders; pupils, staff, parents, governors and community members. (For the purposes of this policy, the aforementioned individuals will be referred to collectively as 'school community members').

We strive at all times to create an environment where there is mutual respect, where each person is valued as an individual and pastoral care is an integral part of education. Each pupil will be encouraged to fulfil his or her moral, intellectual, spiritual, physical, social, aesthetic and emotional potential.

SOCIAL NETWORKING

Social networking is everywhere. It is common to find parents, children, co-workers and others on such sites. Examples of these sites include, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, TikTok, Snapchat etc.

With social networks people across the world have access to tools and options that were previously non-existent. However, there are now just as many new opportunities to connect as there are to get into potential danger.

One thing we often forget while having fun on social networks is that almost anybody can see what we are doing. While we are tagging photos of our friends or are posting comments to them, it can be easy to forget that someone else who has been invited onto a social networking site can also view them. Often there is a minimal amount of control over who ultimately gets to see our post.

Once something appears on the Internet, it's almost impossible to remove. As these sites continue to grow in popularity, so too does the value of the information on them to parties other than those directly involved.

Social networking users need to take a step back and think about what they are posting onto the Internet as it can have serious ramifications.

This policy serves to convey the guidelines which members of our school community in Fountain Primary School and Nursery Unit should operate within.

We recognise that as a school we hold no jurisdiction in policing social media platforms, but urge the whole school community to work collaboratively to communicate appropriately.

As educators, we believe that the partnership of parent and school is intrinsic to realising the best educational outcomes for our pupils.

This policy outlines the context of social media and the responsibilities that staff and parents have in role-modelling effective and safe communication on social media.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF STAFF

People who work with children and young people should always maintain appropriate professional boundaries, avoid improper contact or relationships and respect their position of trust.

With regard to relationships, individuals who work with children and young people should not attempt to establish a relationship, which might include:

- communication of a personal nature
- inappropriate dialogue through the internet



- sharing of personal contact details including email address, online identity or phone numbers
- the sending of emails or text messages of an inappropriate nature

Individuals, who work with children and young people, should be extremely careful in corresponding with people on social networking sites. Staff relationships with children and young people should, at all times, remain professional and they should **not** correspond with children and young people through such sites or add them as 'friends'.

It is worth bearing in mind that, on such sites, an inappropriate or even misconstrued communication may have the potential to impact upon their careers, or even result in criminal investigation.

In addition, staff should bear in mind **who** may access their own profiles on such websites. Staff should therefore take care as to the information they display about themselves, their personal lives and should not make any reference to school or individuals within it. They **should not** disclose on their online profile anything of a lewd/explicit/racist/discriminatory etc. nature or any other action which is capable of bringing the school into disrepute. They should also ensure that they are using appropriate privacy settings.

Individuals, who work with children and young people, should not make, view or access illegal or inappropriate images of children.

Individuals who work with children and young people and others, with whom they may be in a position of trust, should exercise caution when using social networking sites and avoid inappropriate communication of any kind.

Staff should not post any images of employees, children, governors or anyone directly connected with the school whilst engaged in school activities without prior permission from the Principal. Before posting any images of school community members taken at events not related to school, for example at social events, permission should be directly sought from the parties involved.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Parents and Guardians will be made aware of their responsibilities regarding their use of social networking by the school. The policy will not only confirm their responsibilities but also make them aware that they should notify the school in writing, should they disagree with its content.

Pictures taken of pupils within the school setting/at school events should not be posted on social networking sites without parents' permission. Before posting any images of school community members, taken at events, not related to school, for example at social events, permission should be directly sought from the parties involved.

Furthermore, parents should report any incidents of cyber bullying (and/or bullying) as soon as they are discovered. Complaints made in public through social media are detrimental and could be damaging to the school community and as such are not beneficial to the children. Parents/carers should bear this in mind before publishing such complaints online. Any complaints, should they arise, should be pursued through the appropriate channels by making contact with the Principal. A meeting can then be arranged at a mutually convenient time to bring about a resolution to the issue. Parents/ carers should also be aware that defamatory comments are unlawful and may result in legal action.

GUIDANCE/PROTECTION FOR PUPILS AND STAFF ON USING SOCIAL NETWORKING



Any breaches of this policy will be fully investigated. Where it is found that there has been a breach of policy this may result in action being taken under the EANI Disciplinary Procedures. A breach of this policy will be considered to be a serious disciplinary offence which is also contrary to the school's ethos and principles.

No pupil under 13 should be accessing social networking sites. This has been adopted into UK law and therefore is the policy of all social media websites/apps operating here.

The Board of Governors will take appropriate action in order to protect the school's reputation and that of its staff, parents, Governors, children and anyone else directly linked with Fountain Primary School and Nursery Unit.