



Wragby Primary School
Social Networking Website Policy

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Aim

The aim of this policy is to set clear guidelines for the use of social networking websites by school, staff, pupils and parents. This policy is not intended to be contractual and may be updated from time to time by way of memorandum at the School's absolute discretion. However, this policy contains some important rules about the use of social networking sites to protect the interests of the School and its pupils. Consequentially, breach of this policy will be considered a disciplinary matter.

Background

As the Internet is an ever growing environment, more and more social networking websites are appearing, including those that are not primarily a social networking website but do offer such features. Whilst it is not currently illegal for people under the age of 13 to have an account on social networking websites (eg: Facebook), it is written in most of their Terms of Service documentation that users should not be under the age of 13. However, it is very easy for young people (or indeed adults) to enter an incorrect date of birth or false information to open an account.

It is essential that, if children under the age of 13 are using social networking websites, they need to be aware of how to protect their information, how to report abuse or inappropriate content and that their parents/carers must be aware that they are online.

Equally, it is essential that school safeguards children through schools own use of social media, i.e. for promotion purposes, and that children are not put at risk through school social media practice.

School Using Social Networking Websites for School Promotion

School Social Networking Accounts

We have social networking accounts set up to provide parents with information and share images of the school day, enabling us to communicate more effectively with parents.

Access to Official School Social Media Accounts

The Headteacher and class teachers have access to Twitter networking account on their devices only. The administrator and Headteacher have access to the Facebook account on their devices. Other staff and students do not have unsupervised access.

Content of Official School Social Media Accounts

Content will be monitored by the E-Safety coordinator, Administrator and Headteacher. Posts by School should not include any forenames or surnames of staff, children or their families. Permission to post on pages or accounts, wherever possible, will be limited by settings to School only. In the event where settings do not allow this, posts or messages by anyone else will be removed if they are deemed to include any of the following:

- Names of staff, children or their families.
- Defamatory remarks about school or members of its community.
- Offensive, insulting and/or abusive remarks about school or members of its community.

Child Image Consent

Seeking Permission

The safeguarding of our children is of paramount importance and we take seriously the right of Parents and Carers to protect the identify of their child(ren). As such, we will request signed written permission for school to use:

- their child's image and name within the school environment.
- their child's image in school printed publications and website.
- their child's image (without name) on school social media, such as Facebook and Twitter.
- their child's image (without name) and my child being photographed or filmed in press or media events, such as newspaper articles, agreed by the school.

Use of a Child's Image

A child's image and/or name will not be used without the aforementioned consent.

Staff Using Social Networking Websites

Staff are strictly prohibited from accessing, using, viewing or otherwise connecting to any social networking site on school computers. In addition, appropriate filters are in place and do not allow access to any social networking website on school account logins.

Staff are within their rights to access, use, view or otherwise connect to a social networking site on their own computer outside of working hours and we are not, nor would not want to be, in a position to prevent staff from using them. However, we do ask that staff adhere to the following aspects of our policy:

- Under no circumstances should pupils or ex-pupils under the age of 13 be befriended on a social networking website (eg: no accepting of 'friend requests' on Facebook). If a child requests the befriending of a staff member, their parents should be informed.
- In the event that a parent makes contact with a staff member through a social networking website, the staff member must use extreme caution and it is recommended that they provide their school email address as a point of contact for professional purposes. In the event of communicating with a parent or adult associated with a child who attends the school, no comments should be made about the school, children, staff or parents.
- Any statements or status remarks should not contain any comments about the school, staff, parents or children.
- All views expressed by staff members on social networking websites are their personal views and are in no way endorsed, nor supported, by the school. Staff should always assume that anything posted on social media would be attributed to them as a professional and ensure that anything posted is appropriate.
- School employees and volunteers must not identify themselves as associated with the school in any way, unless expressly authorised by the Head Teacher. If the school sets up an official social media account, authority to use it will be given to individual members of staff by the Head Teacher

Children Using/Accessing Social Networking Websites

Under no circumstances should a child access social networking websites in school. The school network system prohibits children from accessing these websites but the bypassing of the system or accessing through a mobile phone is strictly prohibited.

If any reports are received of children making inappropriate comments about staff or other children, hard copies will be obtained and the child will be reported immediately (to the website host) to have their account terminated. The parents/carers of the child will also be notified and this could result in further action. If the comment is about a member of staff a referral will be made to the county's legal services.

Parents Using Social Networking Websites

If hard copies of inappropriate comments about school, members of staff, children within the school or school decisions are received, the matter will be initially dealt with by the Headteacher/ Chair of Governors. In the most serious cases, the matter will be referred to the county's legal services and subsequent action will follow.

Parents must not, under any circumstances, access social networking accounts whilst assisting on school visits. If there is evidence to prove that this has happened then the parent will no longer be used as a helper on subsequent visits.

Disclosure

If there is a breach of this policy, inadvertently or otherwise, the Head teacher should be notified immediately in confidence and, if possible, be provided with a copy of any transcript or text which they believe may breach this policy

If staff become aware that any individual working for the School may have breached this policy, they should notify the Head Teacher in confidence immediately.

Complaints Procedure

If a Parent or Carer has any concerns or complaints with regard to social media, an appointment can be made by them to speak to the Headteacher or E-Safety coordinator, who will investigate the complaint and if necessary will be able to advise on formal procedures for complaint.

Breaches of Policy

Any breaches of policy not already detailed above will be dealt with by the Headteacher accordingly.

July 2022