

# Duke of Norfolk CE Primary School

## Social Media Policy 2019

Social media and social networking sites play an important role in the lives of many people. We recognise that sites bring risks, but equally there are many benefits to be reaped. This policy gives clarity to the way in which social media/mobile phones are to be used by pupils, governors, visitors, parent (in relation to the school) and school staff at Duke of Norfolk CE Primary School. It will also provide guidance for parents.

### **There are four key areas:**

- A. The use of social networking sites by pupils within school
- B. Use of social networking by staff in a personal capacity
- C. Comments posted by parents/carers
- D. Dealing with incidents of online bullying

### **A. The use of social networking sites by pupils within school**

The school's Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) outlines the rules for using IT in school and these rules therefore apply to use of social networking sites. Such sites should not be used/accessed in school unless under the direction of a teacher and for a purpose clearly apparent from the learning objective of the relevant learning experience. If social media sites are used, then staff should carry out a risk assessment to determine which tools are appropriate. Possible social media sites to be used in school include blogging sites and Twitter. Parents will give permission for children to access these sites, as and when they are used in school. General permission will be sought as children enter the school for use of their images/images of work to be included on our website, Facebook group and in the media.

**Please refer to Photographic and Video Consent Form.**

In terms of private use of social networking sites by a child it is generally understood that children under the age of 13 are not permitted to be registered, including Facebook and Instagram to name two.

### **B. Use of social networking by staff in a personal capacity**

It is possible that a high proportion of staff will have their own social networking site accounts. It is important for them to protect their professional reputation by ensuring that they use their personal accounts in an appropriate manner.

Guidelines issued to staff:

- Staff must never add pupils as 'friends' into their personal accounts (including past pupils under the age of 18).
- Staff are strongly advised not to add parents as 'friends' into their personal accounts.
- Staff must not post comments about the school, pupils, parents or colleagues including members of the Governing Body.
- Staff must not use social networking sites within lesson times (for personal use).
- Staff should only use social networking in a way that does not conflict with the current National Teacher's Standards.

- Staff should review and adjust their privacy settings to give them the appropriate level of privacy and confidentiality.
- Staff should read and comply with 'Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who Work with Children and Young People'.
- Inappropriate use by staff should be referred to the Head teacher in the first instance and may lead to disciplinary action.

### **C. Comments posted by parents/carers**

Parents and carers will be made aware of their responsibilities regarding their use of social networking. Methods of school communication include the the website, newsletters, letters and verbal discussion and school Facebook group. School policies and documents provide further information regarding appropriate channels of communication and means of resolving differences of opinion. Effective communication following principles of mutual respect is the best means of ensuring the best learning experiences for the child. Our school Facebook group or the school PTA page are not the place to raise complaints. Issues should be addressed to the school and communicated through the appropriate channels rather than posting them on social networking sites. Parents should not post malicious or fictitious comments on social networking sites about any member of the school community. Comments of this nature will be removed from school-run social media pages.

Parents must not post pictures of pupils, other than their own children, on social networking sites where these photographs have been taken at a school event.

### **D. Dealing with incidents of online bullying/inappropriate use of social networking sites**

The school's Anti-Bullying Policy sets out the processes and sanctions regarding any type of bullying by a child on the school roll. In the case of inappropriate use of social networking by parents, the Governing Body will contact the parent by letter asking them to remove such comments and seek redress through the appropriate channels such as the Complaints Policy. The Governing Body understands that, *"There are circumstances in which police involvement is appropriate. These include where postings have a racist element or where violence is threatened or encouraged."* Furthermore, *"Laws of defamation and privacy still apply to the web and it is unlawful for statements to be written...which:*

- *expose (an individual) to hatred, ridicule or contempt*
- *cause (an individual) to be shunned or avoided*
- *lower (an individual's) standing in the estimation of right-thinking members of society or*
- *disparage (an individual in their) business, trade, office or profession."*

(National Association of Headteachers)

This policy was adopted by governors: March 2019

It will be reviewed: March 2023

Signed (Chair of Governors): \_\_\_\_\_