

# 2018

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*St James the Great Catholic  
Nursery and Primary School*

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## Social Media Policy

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Reviewed 4/16/2018

## **1. What is social media?**

1.1 For the purpose of this policy, social media is the term commonly used for websites which allow people to interact with each other in some way – by sharing information, opinions, knowledge and interests. Social networking websites such as Facebook, Instagram, SnapChat and Twitter are perhaps the most well known examples of social media but the term also covers other web based services such as blogs, video and audio podcasts, wikis, message boards, photo document and video sharing websites such as YouTube. This definition of social media is not exhaustive as technology develops with new ways of communicating advancing every day.

1.2 For the purpose of this document the terminology Social Media is not exhaustive and also applies to the use of communication technologies such as mobile phones, cameras, PDAs / PSPs or other handheld devices and any other emerging forms of communications technologies.

## **2. Overview and expectations**

2.1 All adults working with pupils have a responsibility to maintain public confidence in their ability to safeguard the welfare and best interests of pupils. It is therefore expected that they will adopt high standards of personal conduct in order to maintain the confidence and respect of their colleagues, pupils or students, public in general and all those with whom they work in line with the school's code of conduct.

2.2 Anyone whose practice deviates from this document may bring into question their suitability to work with children and young people and may result in disciplinary action being taken against them.

### **How does this fit in with our disciplinary policies?**

2.3 Adults within the school setting should always maintain appropriate professional boundaries and avoid behaviour, during their use of the internet and other communication technologies, which might be misinterpreted by others. They should report and record any incident with this potential.

## **3. Safer online behaviour**

3.1 In their own interests, adults within school settings are to be aware of the dangers of putting personal information onto social networking sites, such as addresses, home and mobile phone numbers. This will avoid the potential for pupils or their families or friends having access to staff outside of the school environment.

3.2 All adults will be made aware that all photos, comments, videos and links that they publish to the internet become public and cannot be deleted.

3.3 All adults, particularly those new to the school setting, should review their social networking sites when they join the school to ensure that information available publicly about them is accurate and appropriate. This includes any photographs that may cause embarrassment to themselves and the school if they are published outside of the site.

3.4 Staff, pupils and parents will be asked to sign an AUP form at the beginning of each school year which outlines the following rules.

## **4. Rules for Adults working in the school**

4.1 Staff personal use of social networking, social media and personal publishing sites will be discussed as part of staff induction and safe and professional behaviour will be outlined in the school Acceptable Use Policy.

4.2 Adults working in the school including teaching, non-teaching staff and governors.

Adults working in the school should:

4.3 understand who is allowed to view the content on their pages of the sites they use and how to restrict access to certain groups of people.

4.4 make clear any existing links in social media with pupils who are family members and take steps to ensure their profiles cannot be seen by any other children within the school community.

Adults working in the school should not:

4.5 make allegations or derogatory remarks or offensive comments on social networking sites (even in their own time and in their own homes) about other employees, pupils or other individuals connected with the school.

4.6 must not be used to publish any content which may result in actions for defamation, discrimination, breaches of copyright, data protection or other claim for damages. This includes, but is not limited to material of an illegal, sexual or offensive nature that may bring the school into disrepute.

4.7 discuss any confidential information on their site about themselves, the school, their colleagues, pupils or members of the public.

4.8 use or access social networking pages of pupils and should never accept an invitation to invite a pupil or ex-pupil to become a 'friend' other than where a family link is present.

4.9 I ensure actions do not expose the school to legal risks.

4.9ii there may be occasions when there are social contacts between pupils and staff, where for example the parent and teacher are part of the same social circle. These contacts however, should be openly acknowledged with the Head Teacher where there may be implications for the adult and their position within the school setting. Where such social contacts exist, staff members are responsible for ensuring that they maintain a professional distance when school matters are discussed and do not engage in any discussions with the parent or child about school that they would not be happy to share in a formal setting.

## **5. Rules for pupils:**

5.1 Pupils should not access social media sites within school unless given permission by a teacher.

5.2 Pupils should only access sites that are suitable for their age group.

5.3 Should a pupil, by becoming a member of a social media site, contravene the sites age restriction, the school will inform the parents/carers in the first instance. Should the contravention remain, the pupil will be reported to the site using the sites report systems.

5.4 Any comments made by a pupil on a social media site should be on line with the school's Acceptable Use Policies.

5.5 Please report any improper contact or cyber bullying to you tutor / class teacher in confidence as soon as it happens. We have a zero tolerance approach to cyber bullying.

## **6. Rules for parents:**

6.1 Parents should not upload pictures or videos of children taken during a school even without the express permission of the parents/carers of all children in the image.

6.2 Parents should not write or upload 'off-hand', hurtful, rude or derogatory comments and materials. To do so is disrespectful and may upset, distress, bully or harass.

6.3 Parents should not post comments that can be considered as being intimidating, racist, sexist, homophobic or defamatory. This is cyber-bullying and may be harassment or libel.

6.4 When such comments exist online, parents should not forward such emails, tweets, videos, etc. By creating or forwarding such materials we are all liable under the law.

6.5 Any actions online that impact on the school and can potentially lower the school's (or someone in the school) reputation in some way or are deemed as being inappropriate will be responded to.

## **7. Response to a breach of this policy**

7.1 In the event that any member of staff, pupil or parent/carer is found to be posting libellous or inflammatory comments on any social network sites, they will be reported to the appropriate 'report abuse' section of the network site.

(All social network sites have clear rules about the content which can be posted on the site and they provide robust mechanisms to report contact or activity which breaches this.)

7.2 In serious cases we will also consider legal options to deal with any such misuse.

**Date of adoption: 16/4/18**

**Date for Review April 2019**

Also see:

Online Safety policy, Acceptable Use Policies, Computing Policy, Behaviour Policy, Staff Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Policy.