



PYRFORD CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Approval Date: 4 April 2019

Review Date: Spring 2024



Pyrford Church of England Primary School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment

Introduction

The school acknowledges that increasing numbers of adults and children are using social networking sites. The use of social networking applications has implications for our duty to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults. This policy and associated guidance is to protect staff and advise school leadership on how to deal with the potentially inappropriate use of social networking sites.

The widespread availability and use of social networking applications bring opportunities to understand, engage with and communicate with audiences in new ways. It is important that we are able to use these technologies and services effectively and flexibly. However, it is also important to ensure that we balance this with our personal and professional reputation and that of the school.

The policy requirements in this document aim to provide this balance, so as to support innovation whilst providing a framework of good practice. The policy covers the use of social networking by all school stakeholders.

The policy is in place to:

- assist school staff working with children to work safely and responsibly with the internet and other communication technologies and to monitor their own standards and practice
- set clear expectations of behaviour and/or codes of practice relevant to social networking for educational, personal or recreational use
- give a clear message that unlawful or unsafe behaviour is unacceptable and that, where appropriate, disciplinary or legal action will be taken
- support safer working practices
- minimise the risk of misplaced or malicious allegations made against adults who work with pupils
- reduce the incidence of positions of trust being abused or misused

Social Media Applications

These include but are not limited to:

- Blogs, for example Blogger
- Online discussion forums, such as netmums.com



- Collaborative space, such as Facebook
- Media sharing services, for example Youtube
- 'Micro-blogging' applications, for example Twitter
- Instant messaging services, for example MSN

Terms of use

Staff should:

- not use social networking applications in work time for personal use, unless permission has been given by the Head Teacher.
- review their social networking settings to ensure privacy settings are appropriate and that information available publicly is accurate and appropriate. This also includes photos that may cause embarrassment to themselves and the school if published outside of the site.
- ensure that their profile/posts are kept private to friends, where possible. This also includes personal information such as phone numbers, email addresses, etc.
- not accept 'friends' under the age of 18 on social media sites such as Facebook. This is to avoid any possible misinterpretation.
- take extra care when posting online anything, including photos, which could be misconstrued by others and reflect in an unprofessional manner on the individual or school.
- ensure that, if their communication is fully public (e.g. blogs/Twitter), they maintain their professionalism at all times and remember that they are a representative of the school.
- be aware that electronic texts can sometimes be misinterpreted or misconstrued, so should endeavour to minimise the possibility of this happening.
- not use social media to discuss confidential information, or specific children, or the school.
- check with the ICT leader if they need advice on monitoring their online persona and checking their security settings.
- understand that use of social networking sites can present dangers to the user, but by following this guidance these are limited.
- inform the Headteacher if a pupil attempts to join a staff member's area on networking sites; and parents will be informed of this happening. (See over)





Pupils should not be signed up to most social networking sites, due to the over-13 age limit. However, we recognise that many are signed up, either with or without parental knowledge. As a school we will monitor the use of social networking and ensure that teaching internet safety is part of our curriculum. We will also ensure that parents are fully aware of how to minimise the risk if their children are using these sites. As a school, we do reserve the right to contact sites such as Facebook and ask them to remove our children's accounts should any issues, such as cyber-bullying, occur.

Parents should:

- not post photos, videos or comments that include other children at the school.
- not use social media on their own devices while at school premises.
- not access social media while helping at school or on school visits.
- raise queries, concerns and complaints directly with the school rather than posting them on social media – whether on their own pages, in closed groups (eg groups set up for school parents to communicate with each other) or on the school's pages.
- not post anything malicious about the school or any member of the school community.

