

## ST. CHAD'S C.E. (C) PRIMARY SCHOOL

# Social Media Policy

"Building Together for a better future"

### **Aims**

This policy is in place to minimise the risks to the school through use of social media and to provide guidance for staff to ensure that social media is used responsibly.

This policy deals with the use of all forms of social media, including but not limited to Facebook, MySpace, LinkedIn, Twitter, Google+, Wikipedia, Whisper, Instagram, Vine, Flickr, YouTube, Tumblr and all other social networking sites, internet postings and blogs. It applies to the use of social media for St Chad's C.E. Primary School business as well as personal use that may affect the school in any way.

This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and the school may amend it at any time.

### **Policy**

This policy applies to the school's governing body, all teaching and non-teaching staff, trainee teachers, other trainees, volunteers and individuals or external contractors who provide services to the school. These individuals are collectively referred to as staff in this policy.

This policy applies to the personal use of social media and the use of social media for official school purposes. This includes any social media sites hosted or maintained on behalf of the school.

### **Personnel responsible for implementing the policy**

Our Governing Body has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy, but has delegated day-to-day responsibility for its operation to the Headteacher.

Responsibility for monitoring and reviewing the operation of this policy and making recommendations for change to minimise risks lies with the Governing Body who will review this policy regularly to ensure that it meets legal requirements and reflects best practice. Senior leaders have a specific responsibility for operating within the boundaries of this policy, ensuring that all staff understand the standards of behaviour expected of them and taking action when behaviour falls below its requirements.

All staff are responsible for the success of this policy and should ensure that they take the time to read and understand it. Any misuse of social media should be reported to the Headteacher. Questions regarding the content or application of this policy should be directed to the Headteacher.

### Compliance with related policies and agreements

Social media should never be used in a way that breaches any of the school's other policies. If an internet post would breach any of the schools policies in another forum, it will also breach them in an online forum. For example, staff are prohibited from using social media to:

- breach the school's Information and Communications Systems Policy;
- breach the school's obligations with respect to the rules of relevant regulatory bodies;
- breach any obligations contained in those policies relating to confidentiality;
- breach the school's Disciplinary Policy and procedures;
- harass or bully other staff in any way;
- unlawfully discriminate against other staff or third parties;
- breach the school's Data Protection Policy (for example, never disclose personal information about a colleague online); or
- breach any other laws or regulatory requirements.

Staff should never provide references for other individuals on social or professional networking sites, as such references, positive and negative, can be attributed to the school and create legal liability for both the author of the reference and the school.

Staff who breach any of the above policies will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

### Data protection

All staff are bound by a duty of confidentiality in relation to information obtained during the course of their employment. The school is committed to protecting the confidentiality of information covered by the Data Protection Act 1998. This will include (but is not limited to):

- Pupil information/data;
- Staff records; and
- Commercially sensitive information relating to the school.

### Personal use of social media

Personal use of social media is never permitted during working hours or by means of the school computers, networks and other IT resources and communications systems.

Staff should at all times keep their personal use of social media separate from their professional use of social media (where use of social media on behalf of the school is permitted under this policy).

When using any personal social media sites, staff **must not**:

- identify themselves as employees of the school
- **contact pupils** from the school or any other school (unless the pupil is a family member and the member of staff does not pass on any confidential information gained during the course of their employment to that family member);
- **contact members of a pupil's family;**
- **accept a friend request from a pupil, an ex-pupil or a member of a pupil/ex-pupil's family;**
- post any details or information obtained during the course of their employment with the school

- post any photographs, videos or any other type of image of pupils, in particular pupils wearing their school uniform;
- post any photographs, videos or other type of image of other staff members wearing clothing that could be associated with the school;
- post the contact details of the school on any personal social media papers;
- link any official contact details or school email addresses to their personal online social media accounts or use these addresses to communicate;
- use part copies of any logos or brands linked to the school;
- put themselves in a situation where there is conflict between their personal interests and the interests of the school and
- post anything on their personal social media sites which could bring the school into disrepute.

Staff must report any communications received from pupils, ex-pupils or family members of pupils on their personal social media site to the Headteacher.

Staff must not edit online encyclopaedias such as Wikipedia in a personal capacity whilst at work using IT equipment owned by the school.

### **Prohibited use**

Staff must avoid making any social media communications that could damage the school's interests or reputation, even indirectly.

Staff must not use social media to defame or disparage the school its staff or any third party; to harass, bully or unlawfully discriminate against staff or third parties; to make false or misleading statements; or to impersonate colleagues or third parties or publish any content which may result in a claim for defamation, discrimination, breaches of copyright, data protection or any other claim(s) for damages.

Staff must not express opinions on the school's behalf via social media, unless expressly authorised to do so by the Headteacher. Staff may be required to undergo training in order to obtain such authorisation.

Staff must not post comments about sensitive topics, such as the school's performance, or do anything to jeopardise its confidential information or intellectual property on any social media sites.

Staff are not permitted to add contacts made during the course of their employment to personal social networking accounts.

Staff must report any misuse of social media to the Headteacher.

### **Use of social media on behalf of the school**

Any use of social media on behalf of the school must be approved by the Headteacher. Staff may be required to undergo training before they use social media on behalf of the school or certain requirements and restrictions may be imposed with regard to the use of social media on behalf of the school.

Staff must not create social media accounts on behalf of the school without obtaining prior approval to do so from the Headteacher.

Any use of social media on behalf of the school must be in accordance with the rules and regulations of the social media service provider, particularly with regards to minimum age requirements.

Staff members must act in the best interests of the school, its staff and its pupils when using social media on behalf of the school and must not post anything online which could be

interpreted as being discriminatory, derogatory, defamatory or abusive, or would otherwise cause the reputation of the school to be damaged.

Any communications on behalf of the school using social media must be made from an official school social media account.

If a member of staff is contacted for comments about the school for publication anywhere, including in any social media outlet, they must direct the enquiry to the Headteacher and must not respond without written approval.

Staff must not represent their personal views as those of the school when using social media on behalf of the school.

### **Guidelines for responsible use of social media**

Staff should:

- make it clear in social media postings, or in their personal profile, that they are speaking on their own behalf. Staff should write in the first person and link a personal e-mail address to their account;
- keep all personal log-in information and passwords confidential. Staff are advised not to disclose personal contact information on any social media site;
- set their privacy settings to the highest possible levels on all personal social media sites; and
- be respectful to others when making any statement on social media and be aware that they are personally responsible for all communications which will be published on the internet for anyone to see.

If a member of staff discloses their affiliation with the school on their profile or in any social media postings, they must state that their views do not represent those of the school (unless they are authorised to speak on behalf of the school).

Staff should also ensure that their profile and any content they post is consistent with the professional image they present to pupils and colleagues.

If a member of staff is uncertain or concerned about the appropriateness of any statement or posting, they must refrain from posting it until they have discussed it with the Headteacher.

If a member of staff sees social media content that disparages or reflects poorly on the school they should contact the Headteacher.

### **Monitoring**

The school reserves the right to monitor, intercept and review, without further notice, staff activities using its IT resources and communications systems, including but not limited to social media postings and activities, to ensure that its rules are being complied with and for legitimate business purposes and staff consent to such monitoring by their use of such resources and systems.

### **Recruitment**

The school reserves the right to use internet searches to perform due diligence on candidates in the course of recruitment. Where it does this, the school will act in accordance with its data protection and equal opportunities obligations.

### **Breach of this policy**

Breach of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. Any member of staff suspected of committing a breach of this policy will be required to co-

operate with the school's investigation, which may involve handing over relevant passwords and login details.

Staff may be required to remove any social media content that the school considers to constitute a breach of this policy. Failure to comply with such a request may in itself result in disciplinary action.

Any providers contracted by the school must inform the Headteacher immediately if a breach of this policy comes to light so that appropriate action can be taken to limit any reputational damage to the school and to protect any confidential information. If further action is necessary in relation to these breaches, it should be taken in accordance with the provider's disciplinary procedure.

**Approved : Summer 17**

**Review: Summer 18**