

Welton Primary School



Social Media Policy

Policy Date	April 2019
Policy Review Date	In light of new guidance, regulations or feedback
Lead Person	Phil Selke Jayne Patrick

Related Policies: Online Safety Policy, Computing Policy, Acceptable Use Policies (pupils/staff/parents), Anti-Bullying Policy (Cyber Bullying), School Technical Security Policy

Introduction:

This policy outlines the use of social media at Welton Primary School.

Social media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter) is a broad term for any kind of online platform which enables people to directly interact with each other. However some games, for example Minecraft or World of Warcraft and video sharing platforms such as You Tube have social media elements to them.

Welton Primary School recognises the numerous benefits and opportunities which a social media presence offers. However, there are some risks associated with social media use, especially around the issues of safeguarding, bullying and personal reputation. This policy aims to encourage the safe use of social media by the school, its staff, parents, carers and children.

Aims:

This policy is subject to the school's Codes of Conduct and Acceptable Use Agreements.

This policy:

- Applies to all staff and to all online communications which directly or indirectly, represent the school.
- Applies to such online communications posted at any time and from anywhere.
- Encourages the safe and responsible use of social media through training and education.
- Allows for the monitoring of known social media usage in relation to the school, staff and children where this can impact the working and reputation of the school.
- Welton Primary School respects privacy and understands that staff may use social media forums in their private lives. However, personal communications likely to have a negative impact on professional standards and/or the school's reputation are within the scope of this policy.
- **Professional communications are those made through official channels, posted on a school account or using the school name. All professional communications are within the scope of this policy.**
- Personal communications are those made via personal social media accounts. In all cases, where a personal account is used which associates itself with the school or impacts on the school, it must be made clear that the member of staff is not communicating on behalf of the school with an appropriate disclaimer. Such personal communications are within the scope of this policy.
- Personal communications which do not refer to or impact upon the school are outside the scope of this policy.

Roles & Responsibilities

SLT

Facilitating training and guidance on social media use.

Developing and implementing the social media policy.

Taking a lead role in investigating any reported incidents.

Making an initial assessment when an incident is reported and involving appropriate staff and external agencies as required.

Computing Leader/Social Media Leader

Store account details, including passwords securely.

Be involved in monitoring and contributing to the account.

Control the process for managing an account after the lead staff member has left the organisation (closing or transferring)

Staff

Know the contents of and ensure that any use of social media is carried out in line with this and other relevant policies

Attending appropriate training

Regularly monitoring, updating and managing content he/she has posted via school accounts

Adding an appropriate disclaimer to personal accounts when naming the school

Behaviour

The school requires that all users using social media adhere to the standard of behaviour as set out in this policy and other relevant policies.

Digital communications by staff must be professional and respectful at all times and in accordance with this policy.

Staff will not use social media to infringe on the rights and privacy of others or make ill-considered comments or judgments about staff.

School social media accounts must not be used for personal gain.

Staff must ensure that confidentiality is maintained on social media even after they leave the employment of the school.

If a journalist makes contact about posts made using social media staff must follow the school media policy before responding.

Unacceptable conduct, (e.g. defamatory, discriminatory, offensive, harassing content or a breach of data protection, confidentiality, copyright) will be considered extremely seriously by the school and will be reported as soon as possible to a relevant senior member of staff, and escalated where appropriate.

The school will take appropriate action in the event of breaches of the social media policy.

Where conduct is found to be unacceptable, the school will deal with the matter internally.

Where conduct is considered illegal, the school will report the matter to the police and other relevant external agencies, and may take action according to the disciplinary policy.

Legal considerations

Users of social media should consider the copyright of the content they are sharing and, where necessary, should seek permission from the copyright holder before sharing.

Users must ensure that their use of social media does not infringe upon relevant data protection laws, or breach confidentiality.

Handling abuse

When acting on behalf of the school, handle offensive comments swiftly and with sensitivity.

If a conversation turns and becomes offensive or unacceptable, school users should block, report or delete other users or their comments/posts and should inform the audience exactly why the action was taken.

If you feel that you or someone else is subject to abuse by colleagues through use of a social networking site, then this action must be reported using the agreed school protocols.

Tone

The tone of content published on social media should be appropriate to the audience, whilst retaining appropriate levels of professional standards. Key words to consider when composing messages are:

Engaging

Conversational

Informative

Friendly (on certain platforms, e.g. Facebook)

Use of images

School use of images can be assumed to be acceptable, providing the following guidelines are strictly adhered to.

Permission to use any photos or video recordings should be sought in line with the school's digital and video images policy. If anyone, for any reason, asks not to be filmed or photographed then their wishes should be respected.

Under no circumstances should staff share or upload student pictures online other than via school owned social media accounts.

Staff should exercise their professional judgement about whether an image is appropriate to share on school social media accounts.

Students should be appropriately dressed, not be subject to ridicule and must not be on any school list of children whose images must not be published.

If a member of staff inadvertently takes a compromising picture which could be misconstrued or misused, they must delete it immediately.

Personal use

Staff

Personal communications are those made via a personal social media accounts. In all cases, where a personal account is used which associates itself with the school or impacts on the school, it must be made clear that the member of staff is not communicating on behalf of the school with an appropriate disclaimer. Such personal communications are within the scope of this policy.

Staff are responsible to check their security settings on their personal social media accounts are appropriate.

Staff are not permitted to 'follow', 'friend' or engage with current or prior (under the age of 18) pupils of the school on any personal social media network account.

Personal communications which do not refer to or impact upon the school are outside the scope of this policy.

Where excessive personal use of social media in school is suspected, and considered to be interfering with relevant duties, disciplinary action may be taken

Pupils

Pupils should not send 'friend requests', 'follow requests' or messages to members of staff at Welton Primary School on social media.

Our education programme should enable the pupils/students to be safe and responsible users of social media, although the use of social media will not be directly taught. Although most social media sites have a minimum age recommendation of 13, Welton Primary School cannot enforce this recommendation but will make parents aware of any child known to be actively using social media sites.

Any children who we know to be under the age of 13 who 'follow' us or 'like' anything that we post will be blocked to reinforce the minimum age recommendation. Parents will be alerted.

Parents/Carers

If parents/carers have access to a school learning platform where posting or commenting is enabled, parents/carers will be informed about acceptable use.

The school has regular parent/carer meetings regarding online safety and social media usage which support the safe and positive use of social media. This includes information on the website.

Parents/Carers are encouraged to comment or post appropriately about the school. In the event of any offensive or inappropriate comments being made, the school will ask the parent/carer to remove the post and invite them to discuss the issues in person.

If comments made by Parents/Carers on social media directly reference individual pupils, staff or are overly negative about the school, these may be referred to Humberside Police who will decide if further action is necessary.

Monitoring posts about the school

As part of active social media engagement, it is considered good practice to pro-actively monitor the Internet for public postings about the school.

Where appropriate, individual comments referencing the pupils, staff or the school may be followed up on with external agencies dependent on the nature of the comment made.

Appendix A

Managing school Social Media accounts

The Do's

Check with a senior leader before publishing content that may have controversial implications for the school

Use an appropriate and professional tone

Be respectful to all parties

Ensure you have permission to 'share' other peoples' materials and acknowledge the author

Think before responding to comments and, when in doubt, get a second opinion

Seek advice and report any mistakes using the school's reporting process

The Don'ts

Don't make comments, post content or link to materials that will bring the school into disrepute

Don't publish confidential or commercially sensitive material

Don't breach copyright, data protection or other relevant legislation

Consider the appropriateness of content for any audience of school accounts, and don't link to, embed or add potentially inappropriate content

Don't post derogatory, defamatory, offensive, harassing or discriminatory content

Don't use social media to air internal grievances

Managing your personal use of Social Media:

"Nothing" on social media is truly private

Social media can blur the lines between your professional and private life. Don't use the school logo and/or branding on personal accounts

Check your settings regularly and test your privacy

Keep an eye on your digital footprint

Keep your personal information private

Regularly review your connections – keep them to those you want to be connected to

When posting online consider; Scale, Audience and Permanency of what you post

If you want to criticise, do it politely.

Take control of your images – do you want to be tagged in an image? What would children or parents say about you if they could see your images?

Know how to report a problem