COURTNEY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Learning together we can achieve great things

Social Media Policy

Courtney Primary School

Ratified by: Governors
Date Ratified: 11th July 2017

Date Reviewed: June 2017

Signed by:
Position:

1. Introduction

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the School's Twitter Policy.

1.1. The Governing Body of the school is committed to ensuring that all school staff are aware of their responsibilities in connection with the use of social networking sites. It recognizes that the use of such sites has become a significant part of life for many people. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that school staff are aware of their responsibilities in connection with the use of social networking sites, and how this may impact on their employment.

1.2. School staff are expected to maintain a professional distance from pupils, and therefore should not be involved in social networking with pupils either in or outside of school.

1.3. The Governing Body believes it important that school staff are able to use technology and related services effectively and flexibly. However, this must be balanced with the Governing Body's duty to safeguard children, the wider community and the reputation of the school.

2. Scope

2.1. This Policy applies to all individuals engaged by the school in a paid or voluntary capacity, including parent helpers, governors, agency workers, and those on work experience placements (collectively referred to as 'staff' in this policy).

2.2. Staff are expected to comply with this policy at all times to safeguard and protect the privacy, confidentiality and interests of the School, pupils, Local Authority, and the wider school community.

3. Aims

3.1. The policy aims to:

- Enable school staff to use social networking sites safely and securely;
- Ensure that staff are aware of the risks associated with the inappropriate use of social networking sites;
- Safeguard school staff in connection with the use of social networking sites and to ensure they do not put themselves in vulnerable positions.

4. Definition

4.1. For the purposes of this policy, social media is a type of interactive online media that allows parties to communicate instantly with each other or to share data in a public forum. This includes, but is not limited to, online social forums such as Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. Social media also covers blogs and video and image sharing websites such as YouTube Instagram and Flickr.

4.2. There are many more examples of social media than those listed above, and this is a constantly changing area. Staff should follow these guidelines in relation to any social media that they may use.

5. Use of Social Networking Sites

5.1. All school staff should be aware when using social networking sites that anything said, shown or received could be made available to a wider audience than originally intended. They should follow and understand the following principles:

- Employees and individuals otherwise engaged by the school are not permitted to access social networking sites for personal use via school information systems or school equipment at any time.
- They must not accept pupils/students as 'friends' and must not approach pupils/students to become their friends on social networking sites. Personal communication of this nature could be considered inappropriate and unprofessional, and make that individual vulnerable to allegations.
- Any student initiated communication, or on-line friend requests must be declined and reported to the Headteacher or designated school child protection colleague.
- Staff are advised not to be on line friends with ex or recent pupils of the school or other schools.
- They should not share any personal information with any pupil; including personal contact details, personal website addresses or social networking site details.
- If staff are on line 'friends' with any parent/carer linked with the school, they must ensure that they do not disclose any information or otherwise post details which may bring themselves or the school into disrepute. Staff must not engage in any on-line discussion about any child attending the school.
- School staff must not disclose, on any social networking site, any information that is confidential to the School, Governing Body, or Local Authority; or post anything that could potentially bring the School, Governing Body or Local Authority into disrepute.
- They must not disclose any personal data or information about any individual/colleague/pupil, which could be in breach of the Data Protection Act.
- Staff should not post photographs of pupils under any circumstances, and should not post photographs of colleagues or others in the school community without their express permission.
- Care should be taken to avoid using language which could be deemed as offensive to others.
- Staff are strongly advised to take steps to ensure their on-line personal data is not accessible to anybody they do not wish to access it. For example, they are advised to check the security and privacy settings of any social networking site they subscribe to and set these to maximum.

6. Breaches of the Policy

6.1. While the Governing Body does not discourage school staff from using social networking sites, staff should be aware that the Headteacher/Governing Body will take seriously any circumstances where such sites are used inappropriately, including any usage that is considered to be online bullying or harassment.

6.2. The Headteacher may exercise his/her right to monitor the use of the School's information systems, including internet access, where it is believed unauthorised use may be taking place. If such monitoring detects the unauthorised use of social networking sites, disciplinary action may be taken.

6.3.1. If any instances or allegations of inappropriate use of social networking sites are brought to the attention of the Headteacher/Governing Body, disciplinary action may be taken.

6.4. The Governing Body reserves the right to take action to remove any content posted by school staff which may adversely affect the reputation of the school or the wider school community, or put it at risk of legal action.