



# St Peter's CE (VC) Primary School

## Social Media Policy

Social Media Policy- Document Status			
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Social media and social networking sites play an important role in the lives of many people. We recognise that sites bring risks, but equally there are many benefits. This policy provides clarity for the way in which social media/mobile phones are to be used by pupils, staff, governors, visitors and parents at St Peter's Bratton Primary School.

There key areas are dealt with in this policy:

- ❖ **The use of social networking sites by pupils within school**
- ❖ **Use of social networking by staff in a personal capacity**
- ❖ **Comments posted by parents/carers**
- ❖ **Dealing with incidents of online bullying**

### **The use of social networking sites by pupils within school**

The school's policy is that social networking sites should not be used/accessed in school unless under the direction of a teacher and for a purpose clearly apparent from the learning objective of the relevant learning experience.

If social media sites are used then staff should determine which tools are appropriate.

Parents will give permission for children to access these sites in school as well as permission for images of their child / child's work to be included on the site.

**Social networking sites, such as Instagram and Facebook require everyone to be at least 13 years old before they can create an account.**

### **Use of social networking by staff in a personal capacity**

It is possible that a high proportion of staff will have their own social networking site accounts. It is important for them to protect their professional reputation by ensuring that they use their personal accounts in an appropriate manner.

Guidelines are issued to staff:

- Staff must **never** add pupils as 'friends' into their personal accounts (including past pupils under the age of 16).
- Staff are **strongly advised** not to add parents as 'friends' into their personal accounts.
- Staff **must not** post comments about the school, pupils, parents or colleagues including members of the Governing Body.
- Staff **must not** use social networking sites within lesson times (for personal use).
- Staff should only use social networking in a way that does not conflict with the current National Teacher's Standards.

- Staff should review and adjust their privacy settings to give them the appropriate level of privacy and confidentiality.
- Staff must read and comply with 'Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who Work with Children and Young People'.
- Inappropriate use by staff should be referred to the Headteacher in the first instance and may lead to disciplinary action.

### Comments posted by parents/carers

- Effective communication following principles of mutual respect is the best means of ensuring the best learning experiences for the child.
- School policies and documents provide further information regarding appropriate channels of communication and means of resolving differences of opinion.
- Parents must not post pictures of pupils, other than their own children, on social networking sites where these photographs have been taken at a school event.
- Parents **must not** make complaints on social networking sites but through official school channels, to ensure that they can be dealt with appropriately.
- Parents **must not** post malicious or fictitious comments on social networking sites about any member of the school community
- In the case of inappropriate use of social networking by parents, the Governing Body will contact the parent asking them to remove such comments and seek redress through the appropriate channels.

In dealing with incidents of online bullying/inappropriate use of social networking sites the Governing Body understands that there are circumstances in which police involvement is appropriate. These include where postings have a racist element or where violence is threatened or encouraged.

“Laws of defamation and privacy still apply to the web and it is unlawful for statements to be written ... which:

- expose (an individual) to hatred, ridicule or contempt
- cause (an individual) to be shunned or avoided
- lower (an individual’s) standing in the estimation of right-thinking members of society or
- disparage (an individual in their) business, trade, office or profession.”

(National Association of Headteachers)