

Bawtry Mayflower Primary School

Social Media Policy February 2019

In this policy, the following definitions apply:

Social media - means any type of interactive online media that allows parties to communicate instantly with each other or to share data in a public forum. Social media includes but is not limited to, online social forums such as Twitter, Facebook and Snapchat and also covers blogs, chatrooms, forums podcasts and video-image-sharing websites such as YouTube, Tik Tok, Instagram and Fortnite. The internet is a fast moving technology and it is impossible to cover all examples of emerging social media in this policy.

Adults/adults working in school - means all members of staff (including teaching and non-teaching staff) who work in Bawtry Mayflower Primary School as an employee or on a self-employed basis. It also includes trainee teachers, other trainees and apprentices, volunteers, agency staff, external consultants and school Governors.

Information - means all types of information including but not limited to, facts, data, comments, audio, video, photographs, images and any other form of online interaction.

Inappropriate information - means information as defined about which any reasonable person would consider to be unsuitable or inappropriate in the circumstances and taking into account the adult's position within the school.

The school and the wider school community - means Bawtry Mayflower Primary School, its pupils, all adults working in school (as defined above), parents/carers of pupils, former pupils, the Local Authority and any other person or body directly or indirectly connected with Bawtry Mayflower Primary school.

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 to be reaped. This gives clarity to the way in which social media/mobile phones are to be used by pupils, school staff, governors, visitors and parent helpers at Bawtry Mayflower Primary School.

There are four key areas:

- A. The use of social networking sites by pupils within school
- B. Use of social networking by staff in a personal capacity
- C. Comments posted by parents/carers
- D. Dealing with incidents of online bullying

A. The use of social networking sites by pupils within school.

The school's Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) outlines the rules for using IT in school and these rules therefore apply to use of social networking sites. Such 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 carry out a risk assessment to determine which tools are appropriate. Social Media sites/apps to be used in school include Twitter and YouTube (only accessible by teachers). In terms of private use of social networking sites by a child, it is generally understood that children under the age of 13 are not permitted to be registered, including Facebook and Instagram to name two.

B. 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 and the reputation of the school by ensuring that they use their personal accounts in an appropriate manner.

Guidelines that are issued to staff:

- Staff must never add pupils as 'friends' into their personal accounts (including past pupils under the age of 18).
- Staff are strongly advised not to add parents as 'friends' into their personal accounts.
- Staff must not post comments about pupils, parents or colleagues or members of the Governing Body.
- Staff must not post comments relating to the school in any way.

- 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/Teaching Assistant's Standards.
- Staff should review and adjust their privacy settings to give them the appropriate level of privacy and confidentiality.
- Staff should 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.

C. Comments posted by parents/carers

Parents and carers will be made aware of their responsibilities regarding their use of social networking. Methods of school communication include the prospectus, the website, newsletters, letters and verbal discussion. School policies and documents provide further information regarding appropriate channels of communication and means of resolving differences of opinion. Effective communication following principles of mutual respect is the best means of ensuring the best learning experiences for the child.

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 should make complaints through official school channels rather than posting them on social networking sites. Parents should not post malicious or fictitious comments on social networking sites about any member of the school community.

D. Dealing with incidents of online bullying/inappropriate use of social networking sites

The school's Anti-Bullying Policy sets out the processes and sanctions regarding any type of bullying by a child on the school roll. 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 such as the Complaints Policy and will send a letter.

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." Furthermore, "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
- disparage (an individual in their) business, trade, office or profession." (National Association of Headteachers)