

# Westacre Infant School Social Media and Mobile Phone Policy



Headteacher: Mr A Edmunds

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## **Introduction to the Policy**

The school is aware and acknowledges that increasing numbers of adults and children are using social networking sites. The widespread availability and use of social networking applications bring opportunities to understand, engage and communicate with audiences in new ways. It is important that we are able to use these technologies and services effectively and flexibly. However, it is also important to ensure that we balance this with our status and values.

The policy and guidance is to protect staff and advise school leadership on how to deal with potential inappropriate use of social networking sites. The policy requirements in this document aim to provide this balance to support innovation whilst providing a framework of best practice.

## **Purpose**

**The purpose of this policy is to ensure:**

- **That the reputation of the school is not adversely affected**
- **That the school is not exposed to legal risks**
- **That our users are able to clearly distinguish where information provided via social networking applications is legitimately representative of the school**

## **Scope**

This policy covers the use of social networking applications by all stakeholders, including, Governors, employees, parents, pupils and visitors.

The requirements of this policy apply to all uses of social networking applications which are used for any school related purpose and regardless of whether the school representatives are contributing in an official capacity to social networking applications provided by external organisations.

All school representatives should bear in mind that information that they share through social networking applications, even if they are private spaces, are still subject to copyright, data protections and the safeguarding of vulnerable Groups Act 2006.

## **Terms of use**

### **Social Networking applications:**

Must not be used to publish any content which may result in actions for defamation, discrimination, breaches of copyright, data protection or other claim for damages. This includes but is not limited to material of an illegal, sexual or offensive nature that may bring the school into disrepute.

Must not be used for the promotion of personal financial interests, commercial ventures or personal campaigns.

Must not be used in an abusive or hateful manner.

Must not be used for actions that would put representatives in breach of school codes of conduct, acceptable use policies or policies relating to staff.

Must not breach the school's misconduct, equal opportunities or bullying and harassment policies.

Must not be used to discuss or advise any matters relating to school matters, staff, pupils or parents.

No staff member should have a pupil or former pupil under the age of 18 as a 'friend' to share information with.

Employees must not identify themselves as representatives of the school.

References should not be made to any staff member, pupil, parent or school activity/ event unless prior permission has been obtained and agreed with the Headteacher.

Staff should be aware that if their out-of-work activity causes potential embarrassment for the employer or detrimentally affects the employer's reputation then the employer is entitled to take disciplinary action.

Violation of this policy will be considered as gross misconduct and can result in disciplinary action being taken against the employee up to and including termination of employment.

All volunteers at Westacre Infant are informed of our Social Media and Mobile Phone Policy as part of our induction procedures.

All PTA members are also informed and adhere to our existing policies.

All visitors found in breach of these policies will be asked to delete any material and may be asked to leave the school premises.

### **Guidance/ protection for staff on using social networking**

No member of staff should interact with any pupil in the school on social networking sites.

No member of staff should interact with any ex-pupil in the school on social networking sites who is under the age of 18.

This means that no member of the school staff should request access to a pupil's area on the social networking site. Neither should they permit the pupil access to the staff members' area e.g. by accepting them as a friend.

Where family and friends have pupils in school and there are legitimate family links, please inform the Headteacher. However, it would not be appropriate to network during the working day on school equipment.

If you have any evidence of pupils or adults using social networking sites in the working day, you must inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

### **Safeguarding guidance**

**If the Headteacher receives a disclosure that an adult employed by the school is using a social networking site in an inappropriate manner as detailed above they should:**

Record the disclosure in line with the existing Safeguarding Policy.

Schools may refer the matter to the Local Authority Designated Officer.

The LADO will advise whether the member of staff should be suspended pending investigation after contact with the police.

If disclosure is from a child, follow your normal process in the Safeguarding Policy.