

# Forest Glade Primary School



## Social Media Policy

## **Social Media Policy**

### **Introduction**

This policy is provided to all staff and should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Online Safety Policy
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Visitors Code of Conduct

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, social media/mobile phones are to be used by pupils, governors, visitors, parent helpers, volunteers and school staff at Forest Glade Primary School. It also provides guidance for parents.

There are five key areas:

1. The use of social networking sites by pupils within school
2. Use of social networking by staff in a personal capacity
3. Comments posted by parents/carers
4. Dealing with incidents of online bullying
5. The use of social networking sites by pupils within school

The school's E-Safety Policy 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, who has sought agreement with the headteacher and/or member of SLT, 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.

### **Use of social networking by school and its staff in a professional capacity.**

Forest Glade Primary School has a Facebook and Twitter account. This is used to communicate to parents/carers and the community news and to share learning that has been happening. Mrs N Jackson and Miss P Bradshaw are the only adults in school who have access to these accounts and make posts. Parents/carers agree to their child's photos being displayed on these sites and no child without permission will have photos published online.

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

This policy applies to all school staff regardless of their employment status. This policy does not form part of the terms and conditions of employee's employment with the school and is not intended to

have contractual effect. It does however set out the school's current practices and required standards of conduct and all staff are required to comply with its contents. Breach of the provisions of this policy will be treated as a disciplinary offence which may result in disciplinary action up to and including summary dismissal in accordance with the School's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

This policy deals with the use of all forms of social media including Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Wikipedia, all other social networking sites, and all other internet postings, including blogs.

It applies to the use of social media for both work and personal purposes, whether during work hours or otherwise. The policy applies regardless of whether the social media is accessed using our IT facilities and equipment or equipment belonging to members of staff.

This policy may be amended from time to time and staff will be notified of any changes no later than one month from the date those changes are intended to take effect.

### **Staff Personal Use of Social Media**

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.

#### **10 rules for school staff on Facebook:**

1. Change your display name – use your first and middle name, use a maiden name, or put your surname backwards instead
2. Change your profile picture to something unidentifiable, or if you don't, make sure that the image is professional
3. Check your privacy settings regularly
4. Be careful about tagging other staff members in images or posts
5. Don't share anything publicly that you wouldn't be happy showing your pupils
6. Don't use social media sites during school hours
7. Don't make comments about your job, your colleagues, our school or your pupils online – once it's out there, it's out there
8. Don't associate yourself with the school on your profile (e.g. by setting it as your workplace, or by 'checking in' at a school event)
9. Don't link your work email address to your social media accounts. Anyone who has this address (or your personal email address/mobile number) is able to find you using this information
10. Consider uninstalling the Facebook app from your phone. The app recognises WiFi connections and makes friend suggestions based on who else uses the same WiFi connection (such as parents or pupils)

#### **Check your privacy settings**

- Change the visibility of your posts and photos to ‘Friends only’, rather than ‘Friends of friends’. Otherwise, pupils and their families may still be able to read your posts, see things you’ve shared and look at your pictures if they’re friends with anybody on your contacts list.
- Don’t forget to check your old posts and photos – go to [bit.ly/2MdQXMN](https://bit.ly/2MdQXMN) to find out how to limit the visibility of previous posts.
- The public may still be able to see posts you’ve ‘liked’, even if your profile settings are private, because this depends on the privacy settings of the original poster.
- Google your name to see what information about you is visible to the public.
- Prevent search engines from indexing your profile so that people can’t search for you by name – go to [bit.ly/2zMdVht](https://bit.ly/2zMdVht) to find out how to do this.
- Remember that some information is always public: your display name, profile picture, cover photo, user ID (in the URL for your profile), country, age range and gender.

#### **What to do if ...**

##### **A pupil adds you on social media:**

- In the first instance, ignore and delete the request. Block the pupil from viewing your profile.
- Check your privacy settings again, and consider changing your display name or profile picture.
- If the pupil asks you about the friend request in person, tell them that you’re not allowed to accept friend requests from pupils and that if they persist, you’ll have to notify senior leadership and/or their parents/carers. If the pupil persists, take a screenshot of their request and any accompanying messages.
- Notify the senior leadership team or the headteacher about what’s happening.

##### **A parent/carer adds you on social media:**

- It is at your discretion whether to respond. Bear in mind that:
  - Responding to 1 parent/carer’s friend request or message might set an unwelcome precedent for both you and other teachers at the school.
  - Pupils may then have indirect access through their parent/carer’s account to anything you post, share, comment on or are tagged in.
  - If you wish to decline the offer or ignore the message, consider drafting a stock response to let the parent/carer know that you’re doing so.

##### **You’re being harassed on social media, or somebody is spreading something offensive about you:**

- Do not retaliate or respond in anyway.
- Save evidence of any abuse by taking screenshots and recording the time and date it occurred.
- Report the material to Facebook or the relevant social network and ask them to remove it.
- If the perpetrator is a current pupil or staff member, our mediation and disciplinary procedures are usually sufficient to deal with online incidents.
- If the perpetrator is a parent/carer or other external adult, a senior member of staff should invite them to a meeting to address any reasonable concerns or complaints and/or request they remove the offending comments or material.
- If the comments are racist, sexist, of a sexual nature or constitute a hate crime, you or a senior leader should consider contacting the police.

### **Expectations of pupils when using social media guidance**

The school is aware that there are many social media sites that state that they are not for under the age of 13 including Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat and WhatsApp. They have a no under 13, and in some instances a no under 16, registration policy and recommend parental guidance for 13 to 16 year olds. Children are taught the dangers of being an underaged member of social networking sites in their online safety lessons.

#### **Rules for Pupils:**

- No pupil under 13 or 16 should be accessing social networking sites. This guidance is from the relevant social network sites.
- No pupil may access social networking sites during the school working day.
- All mobile phones must be handed into their class teacher at the beginning of the school day. Failure to follow this guidance will result in a conversation with parents regarding our Acceptable Use Policy.
- No pupil should attempt to join a staff member's area on networking sites. If pupils attempt to do this, the member of staff is to inform the headteacher. Parents will be informed if this happens.
- No school computers or other devices are to be used to access social networking sites at any time of day.
- Pupils are to report any improper contact or cyber bullying to their class teacher in confidence as soon as it happens.
- We have a zero tolerance to cyber bullying.

Children, alongside their parent/carer, sign an acceptable use agreement that outlines rules that have to be followed when using school IT equipment and systems. Please refer to our Acceptable Use Policy.

### **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 Class Dojo, the website, Twitter and Facebook accounts, 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 media/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.

### **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. No child is permitted to use a mobile phone during school hours and any use of computers/electronic device is directly supervised by adults. Should a child use any form of technology to bully another child in school, the behaviour policy will be used to guide staff in dealing with the resolutions and consequences.

The school cannot and will not be held responsible in any way for the behaviour of pupils online or otherwise, outside of school hours (other than on trips and events agreed and supervised by ourselves). At these times it is strongly recommended that parents/carers monitor closely their child's use of both online media and social media. Clearly, it can be helpful for parents to inform the school if there is an issue of inappropriate use of online/social media between pupils, so that the school can monitor closely any further behaviour that may need addressing. However, it is entirely the parent/carers responsibility to address inappropriate behaviour outside of school hours.

In the case of inappropriate use of social networking by parents, members of the SLT will contact the parent asking them to remove such comments and seek redress through the appropriate channels such as the Complaints Policy or speaking to school staff.