



St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Social Network & Social Media Policy

Revision	Date	Author	Reviewed	Approved	Next Review	Responsible Committee
1	18/02/2022	E Broyd	S Douglas 18/02/22	31/03/2022	March 2023	C & SI

- Safeguard colleagues at the school in connection with the use of social networks and social media and minimise the risk that they make themselves vulnerable to.
- Ensure the Governing Body maintains its duty to safeguard children, the reputations of the school and those who work for it, the wider community and the Local Authority.

Scope and general principles

In this policy “colleague” means all individuals engaged by the school in a paid or voluntary capacity. Third parties acting on behalf of or in partnership with the school are also expected to adhere to this guidance. Any reference to “pupil” should be taken to include any child or young person attending or visiting the school. The term “the school” means St Joseph’s Catholic Primary School, Portishead.

This policy applies to social networking sites and applications, personal web pages, personal spaces provided by internet providers and internet presences which make available personal information and opinions to the general public. This policy will be part of the induction programme for all new colleagues at the school.

The Governing Body does not discourage colleagues at St Joseph’s from using social networking sites or applications. However, all colleagues should be aware that the Governing Body will take seriously any occasion where such services are used inappropriately. Instances of online bullying and harassment will be regarded as a serious matter and will be dealt with under the school’s Disciplinary Policy. Depending on the severity of the matter disciplinary action may be taken which may result in dismissal. A serious breach of the Policy may be regarded as gross misconduct, leading to summary dismissal. Any school colleague who feels that they are being bullied or harassed online should report this to the Headteacher.

Where any allegations have a children’s safeguarding dimension, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) must be contacted at the earliest opportunity and guidance outlined with the DfE’s *Keeping Children Safe In Education (2021)* must be followed: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

These allegations might include where an individual or group of individuals has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child.
- Committed a criminal offence against or related to a child.
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates they would pose a risk of harm to children.

Responsibilities

The Governing Body shall:

- Ensure this policy is implemented and procedures are in place that deal with the use of social networking sites and applications.

- Ensure that all colleagues at the school have access to this policy and that colleagues are made aware of it.

The Headteacher shall:

- Be familiar with this policy and ensure that colleagues understand the policy and their own responsibilities.
- Ensure that colleagues at the school are aware of the risks associated with using social networking sites and applications and the possible implications of their inappropriate use.
- Make any third parties aware of this guidance where relevant.
- Instigate disciplinary procedures where appropriate to do so.
- Seek advice where necessary from an appropriate source (e.g. LADO, Local Authority Human Resources) on the approach to be adopted if they are made aware of any potential issue.

Colleagues at the school shall:

- Behave responsibly and professionally at all times in connections with the use of social networking sites and applications.
- Ensure that all communication with pupils takes place within clear and explicit professional boundaries.
- Raise any concerns where they feel colleagues are not acting in accordance with this policy to the Headteacher, in person or via CPOMS (Safeguarding software for Schools).
- Act in accordance with the school's whistleblowing policy.
- Use their professional judgement and, where no specific guidance exists, take the most prudent action possible. This could include consulting with the Headteacher, LADO or the Police.
- Cooperate with the Headteacher in ensuring the implementation of this policy.
- Respect the privacy and feelings of others.
- Report to the Headteacher any occasion where a pupil attempts to involve them in online or social networking activity not linked to the planned curriculum delivery of the school.

Parents and third parties should raise any concerns about colleagues not acting in accordance with this policy with the Headteacher or Chair of Governors.

Use of social networking sites and applications

When used responsibly and safely, social networking sites and applications can have a positive impact on a colleagues mental health, personal life and career development. Colleagues should lead by example when using such sites and applications and should follow the guidance and procedure within this policy. Should a colleague believe that they

will have difficulty in doing so (if they are related to a pupil or parent, for example), they should discuss the matter with the Headteacher.

- Colleagues at school should not access social networking sites or applications for personal use via school information systems or using school equipment.
- Colleagues should not accept pupil's or parent's connection requests on social networking sites or applications as this could be considered unprofessional and make them vulnerable to allegations. Where a colleague is considering not following this advice, they should discuss the matter with the Headteacher.
- Should a colleague receive any messages on a social networking platform that they believe to be from a pupil (past or current) they should report it to the Headteacher and discuss any appropriate action.
- Colleagues at the school should not share any personal information with pupils online; including personal contact details, personal website addresses, social networking site or application details.
- Where a colleague chooses to post views about the school on social networking sites or applications, they should make it clear that their views are their own and they are not representing the views of the school, Local Authority, Governing Body or Clifton Diocese. They should not post any information which is confidential to the school/Local Authority/Clifton Diocese/an individual or disclose any information about the school which is not yet in the public domain.
- Colleagues should not post photographs of pupils under any circumstances without the expressed permission of their parent/guardian. They should be aware that this permission can be withdrawn at any time by the parent/guardian.
- Colleagues should not make abusive, defamatory, undermining or derogatory remarks about the school, other colleagues, pupils, parents, the Governing Body, Clifton Diocese or the Local Authority. They should not post anything that misrepresents or could potentially bring the school or any of the above parties into disrepute.
- Colleagues should not use social networking sites or applications to influence pupils regarding their own political or religious views or recruit them to an organisation of their kind, using their status as a trusted adult to encourage this.

Any communication via social networking sites or applications should be made with the awareness that anything said, shown or received could be made more available, intentionally or otherwise, to an audience wider than originally intended. Colleagues at the school are strongly advised to take steps to ensure that their online personal data is not accessible to anybody whom they do not wish to have permission to access it. Training and awareness about this should be given by the school each year and to new members of staff who join the school part-way through an academic year. For further information see the South West Grid for Learning (SWGfL) resources:

<https://swgfl.org.uk/resources/>

The school reserves the right to take action to obtain the removal of any content posted by colleagues which may adversely affect the reputation of the school, Clifton Diocese,

Local Authority or Governing Body or put them at risk of legal action. Should the school decide to pursue this course of action, advice would be sought from an appropriate body such as the Local Authority or the Police. We would expect all former colleagues to continue to be mindful of good safeguarding practice and of the school's reputation when using social networking sites or applications.

Use of school social networking accounts and applications

The aims of using social networking in our school are as follows:

- To share and celebrate pupils' achievements, successes and any appropriate school updates, giving parents and families an insight into the life of the school.
- To demonstrate the safe and responsible use of social networking and encourage the positive uses of technology.

In order to keep the pupils, colleagues and other members of our school community safe the follow guidelines should be followed:

- The use of social networking sites and applications should be monitored by the Headteacher or other designated colleague or third party. Any content which is not appropriate should be removed.
- Links to other personal or corporate accounts should only be made if they are educationally appropriate and relevant (a children's author or illustrator, for example).
- Where photographs or posts about pupils have been made using the school's social networking profile, permission must first have been obtained from parents or guardians.
- Names, classes or anything that puts a pupil at risk to safeguarding concerns should not appear on social networking sites or applications.

Every care should be taken by colleagues to promote the positive image of the school, behave in a positive manner and avoid any use that could bring the school, Governing Body, Clifton Diocese or other colleagues into disrepute.

This policy will be reviewed by:

- Curriculum and School Improvement
- Full Governing Board

Authorisation



Signed by

(Chair of Governing Board)

Approved by Governing Body:

Review Date: March 2023