

Braunstone Community Primary
School

Social Media Policy

2016-17

Social Media Policy

Statement of intent

At Braunstone Community Primary School, the safety of the children is paramount and, with that in mind, this policy has been created in order to safeguard everyone.

We believe that the use of the Social Media such as Facebook and Twitter is an integral part of 21st century life. As such, it is our duty to ensure that appropriate and safe use of Social Media should be taught in school. It can also be an effective way of communicating instantly with parents and raises the profile of all the good things that are happening in school.

Although the school currently uses its own website for information and to promote events, there may be a time when we look to develop our social media offering as a more immediate way of communicating with parents.

Whilst every attempt has been made to cover a wide range of situations, it is recognised that this policy cannot cover all eventualities. There may be times when professional judgements are made in situations not covered by this document, or whereby new or emerging technology not mentioned. It is expected that in these circumstances staff in schools will always advise their headteachers in the first instance.

Aims & Objectives

At Braunstone Community Primary School we aim to:

- enable children to navigate social media in a safe manner;
- promote responsible usage of social media;
- help children grow into reliable, independent and positive e-citizens.
- Set clear expectations of behaviour and/or codes of practice relevant to social networking for educational, personal or recreational use
- Set safer working practises.
- Minimise the risk of misplaced or malicious allegations made against adults who work with pupil

Scope

This document applies to all staff who work in Braunstone Community Primary School as adopted by the governing body. This includes teachers, support staff, supply staff, governors, contractors and volunteers.

Links to other policy

The policy should not be read in isolation, but in line with our other policy including E-safety, Anti-bullying, Complaints, Grievance and Behaviour policies.

Safer Social Media Practice in Schools

What is social media?

For the purpose of this policy, social media is the term commonly used for websites which allow people to interact with each other in some way – by sharing information, opinions, knowledge and interests. Social networking websites such as Facebook, bebo and MySpace are perhaps the most well-known examples of social media but the term also covers other web based services such as blogs, video and audio podcasts, wikis, message boards, photo document and video sharing websites such as YouTube and micro blogging services such as Twitter.

This definition of social media is not exhaustive as technology develops with new ways of communicating advancing every day.

For the purpose of this document the terminology Social Media is not exhaustive and also applies to the use of communication technologies such as mobile phones, cameras, PDAs / PSPs, watches or other handheld devices and any other emerging forms of communications technologies.

Expectations of Staff

All staff must follow the procedures set down in this policy.

All staff are expected to uphold public trust and to maintain reasonable standards in their own behaviour. This includes the use of social media sites. School staff should always maintain appropriate professional boundaries and avoid behaviour, during their use of the internet and other communication technologies, which might be misinterpreted by others. They should report and record any incident with this potential.

Social media provides the opportunity to celebrate our successes and portray our school in a positive light. If staff have a particular issue they wish to raise with the school or local authority this must be done through the normal procedures.

Safer online behaviour

- Managing personal information effectively makes it far less likely that information will be misused.
- In their own interests, staff need to be aware of the dangers of putting personal information onto social networking sites, such as addresses, home and mobile phone numbers. This will avoid the potential for pupils or their families or friends having access to staff outside of the school environment. It also reduces the potential for identity theft by third parties.
- All staff, particularly new staff, should review their social networking sites when they join the school to ensure that information available publicly about them is accurate and appropriate. This includes any photographs that may cause embarrassment to themselves and the school if they are published outside of the site.
- Staff should never 'friend' a pupil, ex-pupil or parent at the school where they are working onto their social networking site.
- Staff should never use or access social networking sites of pupils, ex-pupils or parents and should never accept an invitation to 'friend' a pupil, ex-pupil or parent. Any such request should be explicitly reject and not just ignored.

- There will be occasions when there are social contacts between pupils, parents and staff, where for example the parent and teacher are part of the same social circle. These contacts however, will be easily recognised and openly acknowledged.
- Confidentiality needs to be considered at all times. Social networking sites have the potential to discuss inappropriate information and employees need to ensure that they do not put any confidential information on their site about themselves, their employer, their colleagues, pupils or members of the public.
- Employees need to ensure that when they are communicating about others, even outside of work, that they give due regard to the potential for defamation of character. Making allegations on social networking sites (even in their own time and in their own homes) about other employees, pupils or other individuals connected with the school, or another school, or local council could result in formal action being taken against them.
- Some social networking sites and other web-based sites have fields in the user profile for job title etc. If you are an employee of a school and particularly if you are a teacher, you should not put any information onto the site that could identify either your profession or the school where you work.

Protection of personal information

- Staff should ensure that they do not use school ICT equipment for personal use, e.g. camera or computers.
- Staff should keep their personal phone numbers private and not use their own mobile phones to contact pupils or parents except when express permission is given or an emergency arises (e.g school trip).
- Staff should never share their work log-ins or passwords with other people.
- Staff should not give their personal e-mail addresses to pupils or parents.
- Staff are advised to understand who is allowed to view the content on their pages of the sites they use and how to restrict access to certain groups of people.

Communication between pupils / schools staff

- Communication between pupils, parents and staff should be within the official channels set out by the school.
- Currently the school does not use any social media platform to communicate with parents or pupils. If the school decides to engage on these platforms the procedures and responsibilities will be agreed in details by the Senior Leadership Team.
- It is to be recognised that social media presents an opportunity to celebrate successes and portray the school in a positive light. Parents and pupils who wish to communicate with the school this must be done through the normal channels and will be dealt with under the normal school procedures.

Reporting Concerns

We will not tolerate any form of bullying using social media. Nor will we tolerate any comments or posts that are defamatory, rude or abusive towards any member of our school community, whether that be children, parents, staff or governors.

If any member of our community has concerns over something that has been posted online by a parent, pupil or member of staff, then they should advise the Headteacher or a member of the Senior Leadership Team. This will then be dealt with under normal school procedures.

The school will ban and report anyone who breaks the terms of service for a social media platform.

Cyberbullying

- Cyberbullying can be defined as ‘the use of modern communication technologies to embarrass, humiliate, threaten or intimidate an individual in the attempt to gain power and control over them.’
- The school promotes a zero-tolerance approach to cyberbullying, whether it is to a child or member of staff.
- If cyberbullying does take place involving a child the school will follow its procedure outlined in the anti-bullying and anti-cyberbullying policy.
- If cyberbullying does take place to a member of staff employees, the employee should keep records of the abuse, text, e-mails, website or instant message and should not delete texts or e-mails. Employees are advised to take screen prints of messages or web pages and be careful to record the time, date and place of the site. Staff may wish to seek the support of their trade union or professional association representatives or another colleague to support. The school will then follow

Safer Working Practices

This guidance should be read with the school’s e-safety policy. It is important that staff consider Safer Working Practices at all times. When recording either images or videos for school, this should normally be done using school equipment. However, the school recognises that occasionally, in order to capture a learning point, that it may become necessary to use personal equipment, e.g. mobile phone. This should only be done at that member of staff’s discretion and with their agreement. The image or recording should then be transferred to the school’s system at the earliest convenience and deleted from the staff’s personal equipment. No image or recording should be kept on personal equipment indefinitely.