

St. John's School

Social Media Policy

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. St John's School use a variety of different ways of communicating with parents. These include ParentMail, school website, parent consultations, informal parent/teacher meetings, emails and phone calls. In addition to this we use social media to share updates and information with parents and the wider community.

The purpose of using social media as a way of communicating with parents is to provide quick and relevant information about school life and will not replace the main forms of communication listed above. By 'liking' us on Facebook or following us on Twitter, you are agreeing to our rules about safe use of Social Media.

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. The only forms of social networking used by the pupils within school will be via their own personal school email addresses and through our makewav.es platform, which is geared towards teaching e-safety.

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.

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 by ensuring that they use their personal accounts in an appropriate manner.

Guidelines are issued to staff:

- Staff must **never** add pupils as 'friends' into their personal accounts (including past pupils under the age of 16).
- Staff are **strongly advised** not to add parents as 'friends' into their personal accounts, although we appreciate that some staff do have personal connections with parents outside of school.
- Staff **must not** post information or opinions about St. John's Primary School or pictures of school events via their personal accounts.
- Staff must not use social networking sites within lesson times unless sharing learning to one of the schools social networking platforms.
- Staff should review and adjust their privacy settings to give them the appropriate level of privacy and confidentiality.

Comments posted by parents/carers/other

Parents and carers will be made aware of their responsibilities regarding their use of social networking. Methods of school communication include email, phone calls, newsletters, 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. We have the right to delete inappropriate comments and ban followers from anyone who does not adhere to this policy.

- 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.

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.

In the case of inappropriate use of social networking by parents, the school will contact the parent asking them to remove such comments and seek redress through the appropriate channels such as those already listed.

Think before you post. Remember that even if you have tight privacy settings, everything that you put on Facebook or Twitter is in public view. Think about this rule – if you don't want people to see it and if you wouldn't have the conversation face to face –don't post it. We would encourage everyone to check their Facebook privacy settings.

Use of Digital Photography Policy

Children have their photographs taken by staff and each other to provide evidence of their achievements.

We do not want to prevent parents taking photographs in the school. However, we ask that if you take photographs of school events or during school time, that the photographs you publish on any social media pages do not include other people's children.